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CHAPTER IV

INNER FEMININITY: ANIMA REALITY AND RELIGION

WE HAVE been led to discuss the inner woman by many paths: befriending the dream and the feeling rapport with the inner world, the passive attitudes of silence, stillness, acceptance and listening, the cultivation of eros and the perfection of love; and even the words for soul – *psyche* and *anima* – are themselves feminine in origin and connotation. So the subject of this chapter is the feminine, but the women that shall now occupy us are our own inner women, those female images and impulses passing through the corridors of the psyche, often neglected, sometimes cheapened, and certainly misunderstood. We cannot proceed farther with a description of the experience of the unconscious or its connection to religion without becoming acquainted with this inner femininity.

In the dreams of men, a richness of women flows by. It is a defence against the feminine to try to reduce this grand spectrum to “mother-substitutes” or “daughter-imagos”. The usual view that the women in men’s dreams reflect family figures needs to be expanded to include all the variety of the feminine which a man meets in the course of life.

Let us look at some of the more familiar images, beginning with that older woman who is school-teacherish, perfectionist, critical. For her, one can never do right, or enough, and in waking life one is continually under pressure to do better, to attack what has been done, or to fall into the complaining mood. She wants us to be better, yet in her urging for the best, she undermines the good that is. In the name of high ideals, she ends up convincing us of our worthlessness. We

lose initiative and get lazier. How unfortunate it is when this inner woman becomes projected on someone nearby, for instance a wife, who then begins to act the role and even to look like the image nagging a man from his own unconscious.

This woman, so often presented as older than the dreamer, may have beneficent qualities too. There are figures – aunts, professional women, mature friends – who are encouraging, give one an ear, offer wisdom built on experience, with whom a relationship is possible without sexual involvement. They have a lofty position, one of authority and even of power, yet seem to rule by restraint and caution rather than by direct action. To label this image the “positive mother” is not enough. She continues to appear from time to time in a man’s dreams, indicating his possibility for the development of his own wisdom, his own counsel, his own knowledge of life and how to handle it. There is a kindness in her, and a charity, and yet she accepts neither compromise nor delay.

A third figure, resembling the one just described, is too positive. She whispers simplicities of encouragement day and night, until a man believes he is really quite a remarkable figure, for she is in love with him – which means nothing other than that he is in love with himself. We find her in dreams as someone rather worldly, often ambitious, often expensive and fast, but sometimes just the opposite: simple and dumb and good, but very much in love with the dreamer. She has the ability to turn him into a lion, a dominant, magnificent, and lazy roarer. There is pride and vanity, a striving for power, and empty conceit. This sort of encouraging positive female figure inflates only one side of the man – his externals, his persona, his worldliness. Although representing the anima, that is, the image of the soul, she actually leads a man away from its values and depths. She is the false bride who marries a man to the wrong values.

The values and depths of the soul are sometimes represented in dreams by a feminine figure without much character,

with a nondescript face, a person from the past whom one hardly noticed and gave little credit to, and yet who reappears in various guises in dreams, waiting for attention, or worse, ill, in danger, dying. For it is up to me to do something for the neglected values and depths, etch out character through attentive interest, discern just what I have in me that remains undiscovered, give trust to values which have seemed until now to be of not much worth. Above all, the sick and lonely, poor and unwanted figure who is in danger is an image of the soul which presages depression, psychological poverty, perhaps even loss of soul. Her need constellates the heroic efforts of my ego.

This figure is usually presented by the unconscious as younger, which points to a part of us which is less mature. Positively seen, this means a potential which can grow and change, which carries something new, fresh and hopeful; on the negative side, it is too-young, unawake, a pull backwards to adolescence. To go about with too wide a discrepancy between inner age and outer age is as much strain on the psyche as it is for a man to go about in public at forty with a high-school girl on his arm.

There is another favourite: the figure of the cool, pale blonde. She comes from remote regions such as Norway or Alaska, or has a wintry quality that is cold, distant, silent. She is aloof, and offers detachment and something spiritual and sublime. She can be very exciting in that her frigidity and distance activate a man to superhuman efforts of warmth and relatedness. This sort of anima can be felt by others as a coolness in emotional life, as if a man is somewhere aloof, hard to get at, uncaring even, despite appearances and despite what he says. He tends to fade away, to disappear into remote regions – all of which can be fascinating because it is so frustrating. He is difficult to attach and commit, as if he were not there in flesh and blood, as if his soul were something very rare and thin, like northern air or that fine-spun flaxen hair. Emotional life is withdrawn and secretive, and at the same

time intensely passionate, for passion is not warmth; it is rather the blue flame constellated by ice.

Sometimes a whore appears in dreams and shows a man that he is in too-easy commerce with any passing spirit. His emotions do not react genuinely, but can be picked up for an hour or two and then forgotten. His feelings are for sale or at the call of others. Moreover, he does not value his own inner life of feeling beyond the kicks it gives him. His emotional promiscuity keeps him unmarried and uncommitted to his own self. In dreams this image is sometimes depressed, lonely and abused. Because he misuses himself in this way, he is abused by others and abuses them. Relationships are based mainly upon the principle of usefulness. The old whore, on the other hand, can have a more positive meaning: she reflects a certain impersonality in human affairs, having been through it all and seen so much that nothing perverse astonishes. Her image tells a man of his own blend of cynical permissiveness, cheerfulness, and compassion.

The true materialistic vulgarities of a man's eros and soul values are represented less by the whore than by the collective popular images of entertainment and publicity. Like the Goddesses before, they too have their world-wide simultaneous epiphanies, but now projected in the darkened temples of a hundred thousand film theatres or flickering from the home altars of a hundred million television screens. With animal-headed consorts and castrated devotees they roam the continents. Everything not permitted mortals is allowed them. Their cult priests maintain their images with paint, relics, and manufactured legends. Their vast commercial success replaces a man's inner personal failure. The more the inner woman is represented by images of the film or fashion industry, the more collectively common, the more just like everyone else's will be that man's soul qualities. The prettier the anima, the less beautiful may be the soul; the more popular the image, the less individual a man's form of relating; the more sexually attractive the collective Goddess, the less

chance a man has to free himself from Ishtar's animal compulsion, to disengage soul and flesh.

The girl who is a bird is another familiar figure of the mythology of the inner feminine. Perhaps she is pink and fancy in a ball-gown or downy baby underwear, but whatever the fluffy encasement she is an ethereal creature flitting through the air. She takes a man on magic flights of fantasy, puts him in the rosy glow of optimism, and fills his head with the feathery thoughts of pseudo-philosophy and impractical schemes that have no substance and are blown about by every current of opinion. A man has trouble settling down and brooding; he always hears the sirens singing somewhere else. This sentimentally romantic image can be placed upon an outer woman so that she begins to live as baby-doll, bird-brained and fantastic.

Her opposite has feet of clay, is mud itself. The reduction of the anima to mere matter, to a woman from the backwoods, is also an image of our dreams. That thick-thighed, big-breasted peasant, dumb and slow and half-cretin, reflects the low position relegated to the feminine by the intellectual of the city. She belongs only in the kitchen, or back of the barn where he can tell his obscene jokes and make unfeeling insulting remarks with her full uncouth approval. Woman or animal, front or back, mother or wife – it is of no consequence. This image of an archaic earth soul is the ugly, materialistic and uncreative counterpart to that modern man locked in his high and dry structures of cynical, critical, and technical sophistication.

A more positive counterpart of modern ego-consciousness is the girl of an older culture. She may be Jewish, Egyptian, Mediterranean, Chinese, and she points to a layer in time before sensuousness and spirit are split apart. She too connects to the earth, to some solid background of tradition out of which new things can grow. Her image is accompanied by the experience of historical depth. She is a repository of human warmth and gives the sense of ancient meanings, the

sense that one has a long inner past, a soul entangled in antiquity, which if allowed across the threshold has in it a cultured wisdom able to intuit underlying patterns far more imaginatively than can the up-to-date ego.

Another of the more usual figures is the young and seductive girl, sometimes tawny-skinned, sometimes nude, often dancing or swimming – that is, associated with colour, body, music and water. Her hair is a marked feature and may be the only part we distinctly recall on waking. She may be aggressively pursuing or she may be quietly fascinating, but she mobilises libido and her appearance is a call. She knows the secret of play, and has pagan or heathen associations of another religion and moral system. Sometimes she is on an island, closed in or simply “unable to come out”; sometimes she is unreachable by telephone, the line is cut; sometimes she is associated with animals or is half-animal. Often she has an interesting father – as the legends where there is only a princess and a powerful king – repeated in our dreams today by the college girl who reappears, perhaps herself not so interesting, but who, when one remembers, did have a father of significance.

This image alone tells us a great deal; it is what Jung calls a typical anima figure. It is associated with animal and water life – that is, with the instincts, with the flow of emotion, liquidity and rhythm, with nature and physical pleasure. Her fascination and compelling attraction point to the importance of this element for one’s psychic completeness. (For we may remember that as when I am chased in a dream, it means as well that I am running away, so when something is attractive it means as well that this aspect of the psyche wants attention. When I do not pay attention to the unconscious, then the inner world uses seduction to make the ego pay attention. The seductive motions of the enchantress catch my sexual energy.)

The significant father who stands behind the anima-figure reveals in part why her influence is so compelling. Behind her, or rather through her, one is led into one’s own full

fatherhood, one's own masculinity. In other words, the way to the larger, stronger, firmer manhood is through intimate association with one's inner femininity. One cannot sidestep this confrontation, avoid the anima, since it will only become more unruly, more seductive, and more demanding.

Since men do live psychologically in a harem, it is useful to get to know one's inner household. We do well to know by what fascination we are bewitched: turned into phallic animal, petrified into immobility, or lured underwater and away from real life. We do well to know whom we are unconsciously following in counsel, where our Cinderella sits in dirt and ashes or Snow White lies in poisoned sleep, what hysterical feminine tricks we play deceptively on ourselves with affects and moods, which Muse inspires or Beatrice ignites and which is the true favourite who moves the deepest possibilities of our nature and holds our fate.

All these women are images of the anima, of the soul. Through them is revealed a man's internal life, his personal relationship to himself and to what is beyond himself. In as much as they express my responsiveness and inwardness, they also present forms in which my religious life unfolds. If my soul image is too young, or too cold, or too materialistic, or too critical, then there will be corresponding distortions of my religious life. The soul in tradition was Christian (*anima naturaliter christiana*) but the anima in modern man may be anything but. Without this confrontation with the inner feminine, the confessional affiliation of even the clergyman may affirm only his commitment on the ego level. Within and below much else may be going on.

There is another way of approaching one's inner femininity, and that is through the emotion or the mood. As we have already noted, we stumble upon the unconscious through dreams and fantasies, but also in affects.

Some affects are particularly feminine in nature – for example, self-pity, sensitivity, sentimentality, the sense of

weakness and despondency, depression. It is not that these affects particularly pertain to women. (On the contrary, the affects of women are usually more masculine: causes, opinions, principles, arguments of all sorts expressed through her lawyer / salesman / policeman / preacher / statesman animus. Sometimes it just smashes things, slamming doors and giving other exhibitions of the bullfighter/discus-thrower/six-day-bike-rider/trapeze-artist.) Self-pity, depression, sentimentality and the sense of despondency are feminine in that to a man they feel feminine. They do not have "go-ahead" in them. They lessen a man's ability to achieve, just as arguing and fighting often lessen a woman's ability to connect. Therefore the familiarity with one's own femininity may have to take the course of a journey through some of the places visited by the Pilgrim in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Only within intimate situations will men reveal this inner femininity, this sensitive, delicate, touchy spot. Particularly difficult is *self-pity*. When people come to us, they are often despondent and perhaps too maudlin and ready with self-pity: the unjustly accused in a married dispute, the hard-working father who has to have the wrong sort of son, etc. But there is a self-pity which is perhaps harder to realise because it is harder to admit. This differs from the self-pity which is rather a self-justification and defence. It is harder to realise, I think, because of the long tradition supported by the churches.

The clergy have long urged that I must love my neighbour, but this love has too often been at the cost of loving myself – especially since this self of mine is blemished from the beginning with sinfulness. Love has been put on me as a demand, an exhortation to love neighbours and even enemies, to love where I cannot and do not feel love. Even where my love does not flow, I am nonetheless urged to will love into action. But the development of the feeling side of the personality often begins not where it is supposed to begin, not with feeling for another person. Rather, it often begins in shadow, with self-

pity, with feeling for oneself. From the need for caressing and tenderness, to be taken up and listened to and cared for, there comes the real caring for oneself. Self-pity is the beginning of caring deeply about oneself. And through self-pity I can be led to rediscover a host of neglected values in myself which have waited for this plunge into yearnings for redemption, into lost aspirations and regrets over wrong choices. For self-pity is a form of self-discovery, self-revelation; it reveals my longings to myself. What really matters to my deepest, most vulnerable and touchy part is revealed. It is a beginning of extending downward the vertical connection.

The sentimentality and bathos which assails us takes us back again to earlier days, college songs and their words, the girl we never made, the rejections and hurts and betrayals. Unless reopened and felt afresh, these repressed remainders become the very barriers which separate adults from their own teen-age children. The incestuous impulse is intensified by one's unredeemed adolescent longings to join again a world which is split off and carried in the unconscious by the images of the too-young girl. Moving towards one's teen-age children is less problematic when one is no longer threatened by the teen-age child within.

Perhaps sadness is a better word than despondency. It is more familiar and simple. Despondency has its antidote: more heart, more spirit, more faith, more effort. But sadness is an increasing undertone, the lengthening shadow on the sundial as the day moves towards evening. This sadness seems to be a complaint of men, a statement of their feminine side as they grow older. It is as if women carried sadness with them consciously as part of their feminine sense of reality, since they are usually more aware of the reality of ageing anyway. But then a man reaches thirty-five or forty, or sometimes not until near fifty, and he feels sad; there is a weight on the heart and no matter what he does it does not go away. This is typical of an anima state, an anima mood, the steady accompaniment of the soul which has become a burden since it has not been

given what it needs. This is the time when he is most vulnerable for the love-affair which may or may not solve something; and should it solve the enduring undertone of sadness it will prove only a short-term alleviation unless the relationship does something for the feminine side of himself, cultivating it, letting it express itself, and even more, re-orienting his usual habitual masculine point of view in terms of the feminine values of life. For just this – the re-orientation of the masculine point of view – seems to be the purpose of these feminine emotions which depress and weaken us. They peel off our crust, they soften our heart, they sap our right arm in favour of the left where we are awkward and unable to manage. If all psychological events have intentionality, they move towards some meaning. The disturbance to masculine consciousness of the feminine would then have for its meaning the weakening and feminisation of the usual point of view. This implies that after mid-life, providing that life up to its midpoint has seen a certain masculine development, the way is not the continuation along the same line, "more of the same", but rather the extension of the personality through its opposite. One aspect of the ego's opposite we saw in the previous chapter: the dark side of the shadow; the other aspect faces us now: the inner femininity.

Let us connect these psychological observations on personality development with the feminine symbols and patterns in religious experience. Let us amplify further aspects of the feminine side as exemplified in comparative religion.

The Shaman, of whom Eliade has written an extraordinary book,* in some cultures performs in the course of his initiation into the mysteries of his priesthood a ritual and symbolic change of sex, including transvestism and homosexuality, living as a wife to another man. He is called a "soft man" or a "man similar to women". The integration of one's female side through living it out in a ritual can be found in Siberia,

* M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, London and New York, 1964.

Patagonia, and Indonesia, and among Asiatic Eskimos and American Indian tribes.

The greatest of the Greek exemplary figures, Hercules, that man of men, that hero of heroes, after completing his twelve labours served Queen Omphale. After the process of becoming a conscious man through the laborious effort of struggling through task after task was over, Hercules did not go on to greater heights and glories. He went mad; and more important for our theme, he was a servant to a woman. There are vase images of him in women's clothing. Later variations of the mythologem have Hercules doing women's work, spinning at the Queen's bidding.*

Ulysses, on his ten-year journey back from the wars, again a hero of more than human size, the faithful husband and wily leader of men, passed a whole year on Circe's isle, abandoning his urgent journey, the goal of his captaincy, to the joys of her table and her bed; then ornamented, girded, attired by that female hand, he delayed and re-oriented his course, gaining thereby foreknowledge, help, strength, and wisdom to meet the next phases of his journey homeward.

An amplification in reverse would be that of Orpheus. Orpheus is perhaps the earliest statement in Western culture of a non-worldly religion, where the rewards are in another life, another world. After the death of his wife, he shunned all women, refusing to initiate them into the mysteries or to allow his followers to take part in the Dionysion celebrations, which had a marked feminine component. Orpheus' reward for being a misogynist was death at the hands of women. They brutally beat him to death and tore him apart. The feminine side – nature and the dance of life imaged in the Maenads – which he denied, returned, as the repressed always returns, and killed him with raving passions. Against these feminine forces not even his music or his otherworldly ascetic religion was defence.†

* K. Kerényi, *The Heroes of the Greeks*, London, 1959.

† *Idem.*

In the statuary of Hinduism, the female aspect, as the vitality or Shakti, is represented as a distinct image with its own attributes. He who worships Shiva (or Krishna and Vishnu) worships as well the various Goddesses associated with the incarnations of the God. Contemplation and worship of the feminine brings with it exhilaration and love of life, for its rhythmical changing beauty is an essential even if paradoxical part of ascetic Shaivism.

The Buddha's feminine characteristics are obvious: the heavy, silent, full-bellied, soft-breasted receptivity; the huge ears, open and taking in; the tree under which he sits and the lotus posture; compassion.

The amplifications of integrated femininity in the Judeo-Christian religion are well known. Let us nevertheless review – only as hints and indications – a few themes. The Sabbath in Jewish tradition is feminine. It is welcomed on Friday evening as a female guest, as a Queen, bringing joy. It is a time for comfort and ease at the end of work, time for the senses, for relationship – the feminine side – and hence has become the time for family. In the Kabbala one side of the tree of the ten Sephirot, the side of God's mercy or love, is feminine, as is too the Sechinah, the mystical body of Israel, the People as a unity, the People as God's chosen bride, or vagrant harlot, the land of Zion, and all longed-for, not yet attained images of fulfilment. For it is as a woman, the psyche in its female form, that the soul receives and knows God.

The importance of women in the New Testament is too familiar to dwell upon, as is the swelling importance of women and feminine symbolism in the passion of Jesus. Of all Jesus' strengths, above all the strength of his *weakness* stands out, his sympathy and understanding for human weakness. "Jesus wept." There is also no need to enter into Mariology, or the litany or the symbolism of roses, gardens, wells, palms, lilies, associated with the archetypal image of Mary. But it is worth recalling that the Holy Ghost, now usually conceived as another masculine aspect of the Trinity, has for its image –

even of the Holy Spirit – the dove, which once belonged to Aphrodite and which meant, throughout the ancient world, Love and the Goddess who is that love's inspirer.

During the Renaissance, many aspects of the story of Jesus were taken up in painting. One particular image seemed to draw the interest of painter after painter, century after century: the Annunciation. There Mary is depicted as a young childish innocent, carefully dressed and set down in a walled interior – nothing more than a school-girl at home in her room, often doing hand-work or at her studies, who is suddenly confronted with the Angel. In her body redemption will be prepared. She is shocked, astonished. In her face horror and rejection mingle with acceptance.

This motif occurs in men and women today. In that school-girl image of our dreams, in those too-young emotions – too naïve, too innocent, too self-centred – something redemptive can grow, which might in the end lead to our own redemption, and to the maturing of the feminine side towards that figure of wisdom and compassion which Mary becomes at the end of the story. But in the beginning it is astonishment and shock, for somewhere we are all virgins, sensitive, shy, psychologically naïve, unexplored in our emotional life, unwilling to be called into involvements, unawakened to the terribleness of truth, resistant to the major challenge, preferring where it is safe, at home, familiar and protected, with books or bits of handiwork, kindly, charitable, obedient, well-meaning. Yet from all this goodness little can come unless the psyche's womb receive the fiery seed of one's own unique essence which fulfils its creative longing and from which inner fertilisation issues the experience of renewal.

This condensed description has aimed to give an indication *why* the cultivation of one's own world of image and mood, of feeling and fantasy, of one's own garden, is essential for what might be called the religious moment. Because the religious moment requires a passive mood to God's intentions, a recep-

tive state to Divine Will, a wounding experience which opens us, it is feminine in nature. Although I may have said something about the what and the why, the question which remains is *how*.

How does one come to terms with this feminine side; how does one cultivate it? How does one develop the inner barrenness that can conceive no new start, the school-girl virginity that plays at life, the cold spinster or impatient harlot? The simplest answer, the way which is most general and happens most often is: with and through women, intimacy and intercourse with women. Unfortunately, this statement is taken naïvely, upon its literal face. If the human connection between people depends to some extent on the inner connection within people, then the same will be true for the development of the feminine side. Honesty may mean directness, but surely "honest to God" does not mean direct to God. That is naïve, and just as naïve is the belief in the direct approach of the promiscuous solution to differentiate the femininity of the psyche.

Sexual intimacy and intercourse become compelling very often when all other forms of intimacy and intercourse have broken down; similarly, when interest in the feminine side of oneself is neglected, when one shows no concern to learn from or to change one's anima states of mood and temper, of taste and manner, then does the outer woman become the only way to learn. Love cannot be accurately defined, so the reasons why two people meet and fall in love – in spite of all the world literature dedicated to this theme and the psychological case studies documenting its details – have yet to be catalogued. But one thing is certain: when two people are moved towards each other, there is a fall or call or pull into union with an unknown, whether heavenly or hellish, which through this union becomes familiar and intimate. But there are other ways than the sexual to find familiarity and intimacy with the unknown.

My point is not to argue for or against individually deter-

mined sexual relationships. This debate to a psychologist has little substance, since people live their lives according to their own most obscure and individual patterns of reasoning. (Besides, the system for regulating the relations between the sexes, because it is the fundamental expression for regulating the relations of the opposites, is subject to infinite variety, from strict and life-long abstinence and seclusion to legalised incest, polygamy and child-spouses, of any which models provide justification for almost any sort of behaviour.)

Often, too, the green pastures of an affair are a way of avoiding the constricting sterility of a marriage. If we should try to find where love is most torn and tormented today it would seem to be in modern Western marriages, as if to say that the crucifixion of love, of Christ, is to be found right in our own homes, in the intolerable situation of marriage to which many are nailed. Modern marriage carries an immense burden without vessel of living sacrament or support of tradition. If this is a Gethsemane, then to go to sleep pretending it is a quiet garden or to walk out on the impossible agony of marriage, actually experienced as the very death of love by so many who come for counselling, would be to walk out, separate, or divorce from the place where Christ as love actually is. Held through the night, it may indeed only lead to more pain. On the other hand, can love not resurrect?

We have the opportunity to live the union of opposites and cultivate eros every day in marriage. A good marriage would mean a good union. But such a union is mainly reserved for those couples where each fits exactly into the other's missing parts. The "good" marriage is therefore at the expense of individual wholeness. The sort of union represented by the "good" marriage prevents development, for my mate blocks me from filling in my own lacunae with my own growth. She is already there ahead of me, habitually, competently. In marriage, two halves do not make a whole; so that there can hardly be "good" marriages until there are first "bad" marriages, that is, where the individual's process towards

wholeness produces needs often contrary to the usual image of a "good" marriage.

Marriage as the sanctification of the mystery of the couple has no hand-book. Some of its problems, but never its mystery, may nevertheless be referred to that model of the cross of love in Chapter One. Often one or the other axis is overloaded, and marriage crises refer to the re-adjustments in proportions between love as active communication and love as inward depth. Sometimes it happens that love as a state of being grows in the barren acres left where love as desire burnt itself out. Sometimes this is impossible. It is safe to say only that marriage can be a miracle in the midst of the daily if attention is given perhaps less to each other and "our marriage problem" and more to the feminine qualities within ourselves, man or woman. It is said that marriage is three-quarters the responsibility of the woman, which means that the feminine carries the larger part of marriage. But the feminine is in both, man and woman. It is the man's loss of anima and his over-compensated mother-boundness, and the woman's ageing away from her femininity, that quick-dry-freeze the couple into instant husbands and wives so archetypally similar everywhere, harsh, bitter, without specific taste, yearning for the water of life which each hopes to find through a new experience.

But there are other ways of gaining knowledge of the feminine and of discovering one's other side. Because this psychological truth is often lost today, it deserves emphasis. The distaff side is not only outside; it is also within, for only a slight preponderance of chromosomes makes us male. That chaste and shy man, D. H. Lawrence, discovered women to themselves intimately and validly without having first to pillage the countryside for personal research. The development of sensitivity and feeling is only in one aspect sexual, and then sometimes in the last, rather than at the first. Mainly it seems a matter of timing.

Curiously, when sexuality is lived in for a while as fantasy

instead of acted out, erotic life is given the opportunity to undergo re-mythologisation or re-sacralisation. It tends to take on a new consecration through its containment by the psyche. When the heat is held the psyche can be ignited into imagination. And, at the same time, the psyche, as anima or soul, gives the human touch. It provides the feminine form and feeling differentiation, expanding urges into love. Sometimes this quickening, this re-sacralisation of sexuality is ushered in with cosmic *welt-schmerz*, with body-sensations in the chest, with dream women in blue and their eyes, with fascination with Woman as such – all of which have given rise to and been differentiated through the cult of the Love Goddess as well as by theories of cosmogonic eros, the harmony of the spheres, and the spiritualisation or divinisation of love. The archetypal origin of all seems to be the self-inhibition of eros, which is neither a prohibition nor a moralistic restraint. Sexuality is neither condemned nor acted out, nor is it sublimated into something else. Sexual feelings and fantasies are lived vividly within the person; then, through a feminine image they can spread, like light or like odour (hence the classical religious symbols of the “celestial flower of divine love”) out into the universe. The lover loves all the world as the world loves him.

But once re-consecrated by these higher realms, love homes downward again to the middle region which is simply the human psyche, calling for something human for its fulfilment. Falling out of love is falling into humanity. The higher reaches of eros, just as its lower, are utterly unconcerned with human love and the human person. In itself, sexuality is impersonal. Sexual eros is a brutal demon or a winged god compelling us out of the human unless it be united with and contained by the psyche. Bringing cosmic exhilaration down to earth again, letting it become human and incarnated and thereby re-consecrating the mundane, may or may not require an actual other person, but always this process of psychisation takes time.

Another way for the cultivation of eros within oneself requires that one be open to the unconscious as already discussed. Am I willing to go where I stumble upon it, especially where I am attracted – not only to that person but especially to that person's image? This is the radical internalisation of eros: one treats the outer as if it were inner, "only a dream". One lets oneself be dreamt along, yet retaining a consciousness within these movements. Also, one follows one's dreams, those spontaneous natural bridges thrown up every night between consciousness and the other side. The more remote we are and the darker the abyss between day and night, the more tempting and seductive will be the images to lure us. The psyche uses the seductress when the ego is unwilling to move. The proud warrior hard of heart and hard of hearing is called by sexual fantasies. These are often the only way the unconscious can make itself felt and heard.

Openness to the dream implies openness to every dream and dream fragment, every image. It is a convenience of the ego to decide in the morning which dreams are of use and which dreams are not, which can be happily forgotten and which are important. Too often the ego's decision of what is important serves only the ego and the ego's importance, whereas a major function of the dream is making the ego relative within the psyche as a whole. This often feels to the ego like a negative humiliation, even though it can also be a positive humbling. If the ego is allowed to choose among the dreams, a subtle form of self-treachery begins, leading to oneness and eventual inflation or depression. The energy is not balanced. To take the unconscious seriously means to listen to as much of it as one can and not only to the parts which are pleasing.

Despite all earnestness, the assimilation of dreams depends – as we have already discussed in regard to the shadow – upon playful acceptance of their incomprehensibility. Again, we have a paradox: arduous analysis of them coupled with foolish submission to them. Though I must work at re-capturing my dreams, without the playful feminine indirectness and patient

feminine indecisiveness little will be assimilated. The integration of dream and consciousness takes something besides effort.

The technical method by which the inner world of dream and image is cultivated – the internalisation of eros, to call it by another name – is briefly described in three phases. At first, it is an attitude of consciousness to accept what comes, yet not to act this out. From the energetic viewpoint alone it is easy to see how this will increase the realm of psychic reality, for much is flowing in and nothing is flowing out. Of course the fantasies that flow in – as desires, projects, impulses – are all urges to action. It is indeed a difficult task to separate the fantasy from its dynamic root, its urge to action. We tend either to repress everything because it cannot be brought into life, or, if we do allow fantasy in, then we want to live it out immediately.

This method inhibits the ego as “doer”. Nevertheless, consciousness can be extended although the ego be thwarted. Consciousness may even grow at the expense of the ego, if we keep to a difference between consciousness as reflection and consciousness as action.

Here we may remember how the ego grows. The ego develops its focus from infancy onward by gathering to itself the more diffuse light of general consciousness. Its growth is at the expense of the whole being, of the Self. On the one hand, this development gives the ego its force for specialised directed attention and action. But on the other hand, this development robs consciousness from the psyche as a whole, leaving much of it in the dark. (Archetypal ego-figures showing how the ego-complex often gains its consciousness are frequently thieves: Eve, Jacob, Hermes, Prometheus.) The continued intensification of consciousness to the ego and by the ego causes more and more darkness, more and more unconsciousness elsewhere. The diffuse consciousness of the land-in-between narrows to the specifications of the ego or falls into the abyss. We lose our ability to see in the penumbral world,

and lost too is the child's sense of wonder. Therefore the symbolic function falls away as the ego develops and the world becomes de-mythologised. De-mythologised religion simply reflects our modern consciousness that has been narrowed to the ego only. To become as a child and to be led by a child means to reverse the process of ego development, to abandon the ego focus of consciousness.

The difference between consciousness as reflection and consciousness as action is also not just the difference between introversion and extroversion. The action of the ego may be introverted as well as extroverted, for we may indeed be introvertedly ego-active, harrying, worrying, searching our inner life along with curiosity. So, too, extroverted life may be reflective, as the fool wanders through the world. The extension of consciousness to which I refer here is more the deepening of the vertical direction, the inner connection with oneself. The light is playful and wavering. Its starting point may be the world or oneself, but it moves towards no decisions, towards no narrowing of ego-focus. As this inner world of fantasy increases through sacrifice of the animal compulsion of the ego to act, a kind of contained inner space develops, that realm mentioned at the end of Chapter Two. In short, the first phase is the inhibition of ego activity for the sake of fantasy consciousness. One feels regressed, weak, dependent, indecisive and childish.

After having accepted fantasies with their impulses and their regressions and having at the same time refrained from acting them out in the world, the second phase is to give energy back to the fantasies, to activate them, to endow them with enough libido, interest, attention, and love, so that they take on a vivid spontaneous life of their own.

The cultivation of fantasy, even should it be impelled by covetousness and lust, rather than a contradiction of Exodus 20:17 and Matthew 5:28 is perhaps their exegetical amplification. I can indeed look upon an object with desire and cultivate that desire, watching it, feeling it, letting its imag-

inary possibilities run away with my mind, entertaining its delight, without acting it out. A separation may be made between inner and outer, between desire contained in the subject and desire acted out upon the object, between the left-hand of feeling-filled images and needs and the right-hand of desirous demands. Thus it is the right eye and the right hand which offend and are to be sacrificed (Matthew 5:29), for the right side is the side of action. Fantasy leads straight into action only when there is not enough space between idea and impulse, when the inner realm is so cramped that nothing can be contained for long. What I see, I want; what I want, I must get. Every need becomes a demand. If fantasy is to be restrained by reference to its relation to the outer world, to criteria of "reality-testing" about what can be realised in direct action, then it loses the name and nature of fantasy altogether. Fantasy has nothing to do directly with the concrete world. It is neither reducible to it in origin nor aimed towards it in purpose. Fantasy may take its instigations from outer events and then manipulate those events in mind, but its realm is purely imaginary. So, too, the lust and covetousness are imaginary – that is, they are psychic dynamisms, impulses of the soul, which would be ludicrously short-circuited were they directly to enter the world. These impulses appear not so much in order to be sated as appetites by action, but to create the inner realm, to enlighten the soul's insights, to give it play and dimension, to set it free from concrete limitations upon the possible, and thus to deepen and enrich its scope of experience.

As was said above in Chapter Three, the real revolution in the soul is not in itself sexual. The human sexual instinct is widely plastic and provides energy for changes in consciousness all through psychological history. If one may read the trend of collective events through the particular experiences of individuals, the deep change now going on is merely carried by sexual fantasies as psychic dynamisms, the intention of which is ultimately a revivification and expansion of

psychic reality. Through living-in rather than only acting-out immense instinctual energy is given to inner life. The lust and covetousness give the impetus to discover inner space, just as there must be such strong psychic dynamisms as curiosity and competitiveness and science-fiction fantasies to drive us to the moon, Mars and Venus of outer space.

That a person reacts with fear and shame to his own fantasies shows that still not enough separation is made between subjective experience of oneself and objective action. The fear and shame are protective; these emotions keep one from acting out, from venting these fantastic passions upon the world. The fear and shame also give conviction and reality to the inner world. It is not only a "mere fantasy" or "day-dream".

The interest in fantasy is a mark of most spiritual disciplines, whether as psychological method in Jung's "active imagination", or in the techniques described in alchemical mysticism or in Christian, Hindu, Persian, and other texts. But never is passive fantasy enough; for fantasy is endless, spinning a veil, confusing image and action. The phase beyond fantasy is imagination, which is the work of turning day-dreams and fantasies into scenic inscapes wherein one can enter and which are peopled with vivid figures with whom one can converse and feel, and touch their presence. This, then, would be psychological insearch. Such imagination costs great effort. The work of converting fantasy into imagination is the basis of the arts. It is also the basis for the new steps we take in life, since the visions of our personal futures come first as fantasies. Again, there is reason for holding them in at the beginning, imagining them into rich detail and large-scale schemes, before deciding whether they are to be attempted in the world or further followed internally, lived out or lived in.

Imagination and its development is perhaps a religious problem, because imagination becomes real only through belief. As theology tells us, belief is an act of faith, or it is

faith itself as a primary investment of energy in something which makes that something "real". Inner life is pale and ephemeral (just as is the outer world in depressed states) when the ego does not turn to it, believe in it, and endow it with reality. This investment, this commitment to inner life, increases its importance and gives it substance. The interest one pays soon pays interest. The frightening forces become gentler and more manageable, the inner woman more human and reliable. She no longer only seduces and demands; she begins to reveal the world into which she draws one and even gives an account of herself, her function and purpose. As this "she" becomes more human, the moods one is subject to become less difficult and personal and are replaced by a steadier emotional undertone, a feeling-tone, a chord. No longer in conflict with her, more energy is now disposable to consciousness, which shows that the energy spent in this discipline comes back in a new form. However, as in a physical system, no more can come out than is put in. Only devotedly faithful attention can turn fantasy into imagination.

This faithful attention to the imaginal world, this love which transforms mere images into presences, gives them living being, or rather reveals the living being which they do naturally contain, is nothing other than the "re-mythologising" of which we spoke at the end of Chapter Two. Psychic contents become "powers", "spirits", "gods". One senses their presence as did all earlier peoples who still had soul. These presences and powers are our modern counterparts of former pantheons of living beings, of animated soul parts, protective household gods and ominous demons. These beings were "mythical" in that they were part of a "tale" or psychic drama. The same archetypal dramas are played in us and by us, and through us for our behalf, once the imaginal aspect of our lives and of life itself is given attention. Attention is the cardinal psychological virtue. On it depends perhaps the other cardinal virtues, for there can hardly be faith nor hope nor love for anything unless it first receives attention.

There is a further consequent of the credit one pays to the images of the soul. A new feeling of self-forgiveness and self-acceptance begins to spread and circulate. It is as if the heart and the left side were extending their dominion. Shadow aspects of the personality continue to play their burdensome roles but now within a larger "tale", the myth of oneself, just what one is which begins to feel as if that is how one is meant to be. My myth becomes my truth; my life symbolic and allegorical. Self-forgiveness, self-acceptance, self-love; more, one finds oneself sinful but not guilty, grateful for the sins one has and not another's, loving one's lot even to the point of desire to have and to be always in this vivid inner connection with one's own individual portion. Such strong experiences of religious emotion seem to be the gift again of the anima. This time she has a special quality that might best be called Christian and which only begins to reveal itself – this *anima naturaliter christiana* – after long attentive care has been given to much of the psyche that might not be Christian.

The third step is gratuitous. It refers to the free and creative appearance of imagination, as if the inner world now come to life begins to act spontaneously, by itself, undirected and even unattended by ego-consciousness. The inner world not only begins more and more to take care of itself, producing crises and resolving them within its own transformations, but it also takes care of you, your ego-worries and ego-claims. This is the feminine Shakti of India at a higher state; it is also the nine Muses responsible for culture and creativity. One feels lived by imagination.

Another clue as to how inner femininity can be cultivated is given by the mythologems. Hercules serves the feminine principle. This implies that one lets oneself be ruled at times by the moon, the night, reflection, reaction, the owl and the pussycat – rather than by the sun and its straight, direct, honestly clear consciousness and naïve action. Moon-consciousness fluctuates, at times bright and white, at times dark.

It is periodic, reactive and, in men, it shows itself in variations of mood and emotion.

Orpheus refused this world when he refused the body. It was but a trap or cage for the soul. Yet it was through the body that his emotional femininity tore him apart. This means, in part, that the life of the body also belongs to the feminine principle. The vegetative, nature-like anima figure seems – in analytical experience – to be intimately connected with the vegetative involuntary nervous system, its moods and fluctuations and reactions, its inaccessibility to direct control by the will, by the voluntary nervous system.

The development of the body does not mean muscle-building. It does not mean tanning and treating it as if it were an object, or perfecting it as a trained animal in techniques of judo or karate or sexual expertise. We may recall a distinction often forgotten between flesh and body. The flesh is the ego's opposite and secret companion. Mental attitudes of the flesh produce mental-sex, ego-sex and pornography, and the image of ourselves as well-trained, vitamin-enriched meat. The ego and the mind look down on the flesh figuratively, just as we look down literally over ourselves externally with our eyes.

The body, on the other hand, may be considered the physical parallel to the psyche, just as flesh is to mind. The mysteries of the immaculate conception, incarnation, miraculous acts, crucifixion and resurrection all turn on the enigmatic relationship of flesh and body. So, too, do the problems of psycho-somatic medicine. Our contemporary symptoms force us to enter the flesh in a new way, through the psyche, inwardly, symbolically. Thereby we transform what is merely organic into a meaningful system of body living within the flesh. The body as a place of fantasy can far exceed the capacity of the flesh and can drive it to breakdown, for the body's range of appetitive possibility is immense. In body fantasies we can be gargantuan. On the other hand, discrepancy between body and flesh also shows, for instance, in young inhibited people with neurasthenic complaints. Flesh

is in order, sound and strong, but the fantasy of the body is cramped. They are unable to go out and solve their problems in the streets; attempts to accomplish this directly in the flesh often results in painful failure. But the body can be kindled and educated into life through its awakening to and by inner moods, fantasies, and female images.

In psycho-somatic disturbances the flesh seems directed not by its own physiological laws, but by something yet subtler which is accessible to consciousness through inner psychological understanding rather than through outer observation. Psycho-somatic medicine is a happy re-appearance of the ancient religious doctrine of the "subtle body" and the "animal spirits". This doctrine was the basis of Eastern, Arabic, and Western psychology and medicine until the nineteenth century. It held that the organs and functions of the flesh are at the service of the spirits of the soul (animal spirits), a principle which was a union of incommensurables, a "subtle body". As both an immaterial spirit and a physical reality, it is a conception similar to the paradoxes we find today in the half-psychic, half-physical explanations of psycho-somatic medicine which refer to "unconscious dynamisms", "emotional stress", or the language I have used here, "the imagination of the body".

As consciousness moves away from identification with the mind and ego, becoming broader and more feminine in its receptivity and self-intimacy, the flesh as well transforms into body consciousness. (We find ourselves more difficult to treat only medically, more sensitive to pharmacological agents.) Body consciousness begins with the inner experience of the flesh, the actual incarnation of our humanity in warmth and joy and ease and rhythm and being present here and now, physically close to ourselves, to our symptoms and sensations, and to the physical reality of others. Out of the stable of one's own hunted and exhausted flesh, one's own rejected physical self, asinine and dumb as an ox, the new body is born and then come the kings bringing gifts.

This descent to the flesh and its transformation into body, this movement inward towards a mystery, sacred and connected to the feminine, we find described poetically in D. H. Lawrence or pictorially in Rubens, where fascination by the flesh is for the sake of body. Another image is Paul's: "your body is a temple . . . So glorify God in your body."

This way to the body is through the unconscious rather than through the conscious mind, which too often tends to stand apart from it, regarding it as an object, albeit a precious one – yes, even "mine", but unfortunately not the real "me", somehow still an "it". Then the flesh and its life become more compelling, so that the more we are cut off from it, the more it fascinates us, autoerotically to draw our attention back into it. The natural anima, that tawny-skinned swimmer, the playful and cat-like one, and the moods and fantasies she construes, lead one downward into animal warmth, physical moods and sensations. The cramped symptoms, the worry over the flesh as object and what can go wrong with "it", at last have a chance to fall away.

The longing to become whole again, healed in flesh and resurrected into body, does not have to be achieved through an outer forbidden sexual union, even though this is frequently the way a man feels he can be redeemed, his body given back to him again. In fact, the deepest intimacy with his own physical feelings is expressed in the psyche of a man by the image of the "sister" with whom an outer sexual union is forbidden. Yet as accompaniment to these crucial emotions the psyche insists upon the sister-image. Behind the attraction to the forbidden woman is the fascination of the "sister". To take her only reductively as infantile incestuous desires distorts her deepest meaning. Again, what is prohibited in the outer world may be a compelling necessity for the inner. Jung says: "Whenever this instinct for wholeness appears, it begins by disguising itself under the symbolism of incest . . ."* My sister has my father and my mother, and my upbringing. We

* *The Psychology of Transference*, London and New York, 1954, p. 262.

share the same secrets. She is of my blood and bone. My sister is me – but feminine. To unite with her is to enter myself, fertilise myself, for “incest is union of like with like . . .”^{*} She evokes in me familiarity and union with my own blood. Just as distance increases sexual polarity constellating my masculinity as sexual maleness, so fusion with her gives me my feminine identity. She awakens the original image of wholeness before the early wounds of childhood split good from bad, ego from Self, body from flesh, male from female. Through her I can be reconciled in love to my own physical nature. The sister is primordial love, no longer regressive towards the mother, but within my own generation. My sister is my equal who feels the same towards me, her brother. “How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride!” “O that you were like a brother to me . . .” “Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one . . .”

The approach to the body is similar to the approach to the dream. Both provide ways of developing the inner connection and expanding psychic reality. I can befriend the body as well as the dream, giving value, trust, and charity to its impulses and needs. As only an expert can interpret a dream, so only a physician can diagnose the flesh; but both dream and body can be befriended. Befriending the dream affirms psychic reality by giving it feeling. Befriending the body is the fundamental yea-saying to physical life as a temple or vessel of something trans-physical. And this intimacy and familiarity with the body by creeping down into it and listening to it from within is the necessary counter-pole to activation of the unconscious in fantasy and dream. Without the two together, and together always, we easily slide into the old Kantian mistake of overvaluing mental contents, taking them as the only expression of the psyche which in idealist philosophy cannot be touched. Whenever the physical is devalued, something is being done against the feminine side. Incarnation, psychologically witnessed, is the feeling of life

^{*} *Idem.*, p. 218.

in the flesh. Resurrection of this flesh, from a psychological view, refers to the transformation of flesh into body, parallel to the transformation of egotistic will and rationality into psychic consciousness. This transformation refers also to the maturing of the body within the ageing flesh. Even while submitting to the irreversible process of ageing, one moves forward with the changes of maturing. Despite the ugliness of ageing one feels more grateful and becomes more graceful, that is, "full of grace", which also means that the body is the place of grace. Again, grace is a feminine virtue and again the descent of this grace depends upon the prior descent into the femininity of flesh and its redemption as body.

In serving the feminine, in letting the feminine rule, there is one essential caution. Hercules serves Omphale only after the twelve labours are done, and Ulysses only after the ten years in battle are passed. A certain masculine position must evidently have already been won. Could this mean that first there must be an ego that has accomplished something? If so, it implies that one is best to be past mid-life, otherwise one has too little awareness, too little strength, and the ego abandons its position too easily. Then it is no sacrifice, no real re-orientation. Then it is merely a regressive serving of the Mother, separation from whom was the aim of all the labours and the battles.

I do not believe that the religious moment is something altogether different from what we have been unfolding in this chapter, or from what we have been going about in all these pages. Wherever we shift God's position, whether He be the God within, or the God absolutely outside and above, or the God below as the ground of being, or the God among wherever two or three are gathered, or whether we are all in God and can never despite our frenzied exercises be lost to Him — wherever we would assign Him His place, the religious moment is an experience and that experience takes place in the psyche. Our task is perhaps less to search for and locate

God, and more to prepare the ground so that He may descend from the heights as the dove plummets, or arise from the depths, or be revealed through personal love.

The ground is prepared by insearch, by courageously reclaiming the lost areas of the soul, where it has fallen into disuse and disease. It is further prepared by separating the strands of the shadow and containing in consciousness the tensions of moral perplexities, so that our actions are less like actings-out and more like acts. The personality that cannot contain itself, that falls into bits should the ego be abandoned, that has no other light but that held together by the will, is hardly the ground for a religious moment. Even if God be love, that love can shatter us if our wounds from early human loves are fragilely stitched together. Can the personality that has not taken into account in one way or another the unconscious, the shadow and the anima, be a vessel to hold a divine force? Does it not succumb too readily to the demonic inhumanity of the collective outer world or the collective unconscious?

The religious moment as described in traditional accounts is a vivid intense realisation, transcending ego and revealing truth. Just this is also at what analysis aims. The truth which can be experienced there goes beyond the causal truth of one-self: the banalities of how I got this way and who is to blame and what must I do now. Analysis moves towards the larger truth of coherence, towards intimations of immortality, how my person fits into the larger scheme of fate. These revelations, by opening one door to my emotional centre, illumine one corner of the darkness. This truth is also love since it gives the sense of belonging and attachment to one's own ground.

If the main shadow of counselling is love and if counselling lies in its shadow, then our work will depend on love's "perfection". Love, as *agape*, means "to receive", "to welcome", "to embrace". Perhaps the perfection of love begins through faith in and work on the feminine within us, man or woman,

since the feminine ground is the embracing container, receiving, holding and carrying. It gives birth and nourishes and it encourages us to believe. This ground welcomes us home to ourselves just as we are. I do not know how better or how else we can prepare for the religious moment than by cultivating, giving inner culture to, our own unconscious femininity. For the religious moment to touch us at least the ground can be worked and opened, within the range of our individual human limits.

Zurich and Moscia

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