



Leaving our fathers' house

Micrologies, archetypes, and barriers to conscious femininity in organizational contexts

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523

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Abstract *What does it mean to leave one's father's house? Archetypally, the father's house represents the dominant content of a culture's collective consciousness, as well as dominance in the form of tyranny and fear. There is little question that contemporary organizations remain edifices constructed in the image of the father's house. This article is about articulating barriers to conscious femininity in organizational contexts, drawing on psychoanalytic theory and personal experience to explore some of the social and psychological structures that contribute to the repression of feminine attributes.*

It is time we considered leaving our fathers' house.

This is a statement that may, at first glance, seem rather out of context in a journal of management change. In the course of writing this article, when I repeated the phrase to management and administration students and asked for their interpretation, they often associated the meaning with growing up, being on one's own, taking on adult responsibilities. Occasionally a student took a more human resource management approach, making a connection with being treated as an adult in the workplace, with a commensurate level of autonomy. This article is about articulating some of the barriers to a conscious femininity; that is, I wish to explore what I see as the social and psychological structures that contribute to the repression of feminine attributes, and the outcomes of such repression, in organizational settings.

What do I mean by the phrase "our fathers' house"? Who is the father? I have borrowed this phrase from the work of Marion Woodman, who suggests that the phrase offers us meaning on multiple levels. As my students suggested, the phrase refers to a coming of age, in which we become recognized for our capacity to make mature and responsible decisions.

Following this motif, the phrase suggests an ability to evaluate information according to our own values, not simply following rote teaching or instruction. This ability requires critical and reflective thinking, and perhaps some courage

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as well. Fathers typically occupy positions of remote awe. Challenging such a person is sure to cause a degree of trepidation. On another level, our fathers' house is the house of patriarchy, with its values of rational thinking, domination, discipline, and control. We are all children of this culture, and all trained as professionals and intellectuals in this culture. Our work emphasizes the work in our heads (logos), and scorns manual, embodied labor. We become trapped in our intellectualized defenses, unable to connect to the dark, erotic, earthy shadows of our bodies (Woodman, 1992).

Archetypally, "father" has still another meaning. Outwardly, the father-king personifies the dominant content of a culture's collective consciousness. Internally, he usually possesses a godlike wholeness, solar brilliance, and spiritual insight (Woodman, 1992, p. 11). The father's house is also the house of tyranny and fear. Hollis (1994) suggests that we, as a culture, live in Saturn's shadow. Saturn was the Roman god of agriculture and as such was associated with generativity (productivity). Astrologically, the influence of Saturn is thought to produce a demanding, judgmental, uncompromising, joyless nature; possibly even making one selfish, narrow-minded, and cruel. According to mythology, Cronus, the earlier Greek incarnation of this entity, was the son of Uranus and Gaia. Uranus was born of Gaia and later became her sexual partner. From this incestuous union came all living things. Uranus feared the potential of his children to destroy him and devoured them at birth as a preventative measure. Gaia, however, persuaded Cronus to attack his father, and he did so, castrating Uranus (from whose severed phallus Aphrodite was later born). But Cronus/Saturn did not overturn his father's tyranny; he simply replaced his father in the position of tyrant. When Cronus and his consort Rhea produced children, Cronus devoured them. Only Zeus survived – to become equally fierce and tyrannical.

There is little question that contemporary organizations remain edifices constructed in the image of the father's house. Rao *et al.* (1999), building on the work of Acker (1990), argue that there is a "gendered substructure" within organizations that buttresses this edifice. In the first place, a "monoculture of instrumentality" prevails in most organizational contexts. This monoculture focuses on narrow, often quantitative targets at the expense of broader needs and goals. The implementation of performance- or results-based management and evaluation systems precludes an appropriate appreciation of the qualitative, relational, "invisible" activities of organizational success.

Second, Rao and co-authors note that in most organizations, power is viewed as a limited resource. Consequently, power – whether derived from one's position, one's agenda-setting capabilities, or a more hidden form[1] – is used for exclusionary purposes.

One of the purposes to which this power is put is in perpetuating the split between work and family (i.e. between the public and private spheres). The socialization in organizational settings supports and reinforces the assumption that work is separate from the rest of life, and that work has the primary claim on the worker. From these expectations, the image of the "ideal" employee is

formed – and that employee is not encumbered by family obligations. Needless to say, women, who continue to be responsible for home and family needs even when they are employed full-time outside the home, tend not to be these ideal workers (Rao *et al.*, 1999).

Finally, the identity of this “ideal” employee is fueled by the myth of the heroic individual. Consider the images of traveling “road warriors,” of traders with “killer instincts,” and of salesmen who “penetrate” markets. Much of business and organizational “folklore” abounds with stories of the crusader who battles against tremendous odds to resolve a crisis – while the worker who manages her work smoothly, thereby avoiding crises, is relatively invisible and taken for granted (Rao *et al.*, 1999).

Furthermore, the “hero’s quest” is a journey that is an integral aspect of a male’s psychological journey. Men must “undertake the heroic task of leaving the mother and becoming masters of their own destiny” (Hollis, 1994, p. 105). I want to emphasize, however, that masculinity is not synonymous with patriarchy. Nor is a patriarchal ontology the sole province of men; women are quite capable of being equally patriarchal, and this article is not about overturning the hierarchy (women on top) or extolling feminine ways of knowing at the expense of the masculine.

Micrologies: the interplay between the analytic and the subjective-personal

My interest in pursuing this line of inquiry is unapologetically personal. I wanted to understand how and why my way of being and interacting in organizational contexts seemed at times to trigger certain types of hostile emotional outbursts from male colleagues. Echoing Wolff’s (1995, 2000) admiration of the work of Walter Benjamin, I note that the interplay between autobiography and critique is a particularly powerful form of analysis. Contra statisticians and social scientists who dismiss “small N” studies (a fixation on size, perhaps?), there is an explicit acknowledgement in multiple discourses of the need for a counterbalance to abstracted, aggregated, generalized data. In this regard, Wolff (1995) cites Barthes’ punctum, Bakhtin’s chronotope, Derrida’s concept of the trace, and Adorno’s focus on the concrete particular as examples of this concern (Wolff, 1995, p. 51). Self-reflexivity in this manner is part of the feminist critique against objectivity and distance.

Furthermore, feminist theory has made a case for the importance of detail, historically associated with the “feminine” (Miller, 1991; Caws, 1990; Schor, 1987; Bryson, 1990, cited in Wolff, 1995, pp. 49-51). In this regard, choosing certain texts, details, or situations is a political act in that it declares not only that these elements are worth studying, but openly declares one’s commitment to them. Such a declaration of solidarity is part of the ethic of critical theory as well, to which I also subscribe (Carr and Zanetti, 1999; Zanetti, 2001).

So, what are these micrologies? There are several that figure most prominently in my mind, two that occurred when I was a young woman, still in

my 20s, and one that occurred over a decade later. In the first episode (chronologically speaking), I was working in a position somewhat misleadingly labeled “executive director” of a small trade association in Washington, DC. I say “misleadingly” because, although I assumed I had the authority that one might read into such a position (“executive” implying a certain level of autonomy and discretion, and “director” suggesting some degree of leadership responsibility), it became increasingly clear during my tenure that in the mind of the immediate past chairman (sic) of the board of directors, “executive director” was simply a more politically-correct title for the traditional type of subordinate position in which intelligent and resourceful women are employed to make their male bosses look good.

The past chairman, who had founded the association some dozen or so years earlier, was clearly accustomed to having things done in a certain eccentric manner. The current chairman, who had hired me (and who signed my paychecks), had specified that he had wanted the association to move in a different and more independent direction. Unfortunately for me, the past chairman was resident in Washington, DC while the current chairman was based in Chicago. This meant that the opportunities for the past chairman to participate in the day-to-day activities of the association were much greater. In many instances his guidance, perspective, and willingness to call on his personal network were quite helpful.

Inevitably, however, the agendas of the past and current chairmen clashed. Drawing on my perceived authority, I made “executive” decisions that ran counter to the wishes of the former chairman. At one point, his wrath at having been “undermined” was enormous: he leaned across my desk, clearly intending his considerable physical stature to appear intimidating, while he screamed at me about my insubordination, his face cartoonishly red, veins standing rigid on his neck, and spittle flying from his mouth. His rage was overwhelming, clearly out of proportion to my “crime”. Although I stood up to him at the time, the sheer force of his hostility was traumatizing.

While I can easily attribute the episode to my obvious youth, inexperience, and naivete regarding organizational politics, I do believe there were other, more subtle (and not so subtle) gender psychodynamics taking place. These psychodynamics reappeared several years later, after I had left the trade association and was working for a federal agency as an international trade analyst/investigator. One case I led was particularly contentious. These preliminary analyses were always exhausting because they were conducted on a very short timeline; in this instance the intensity was exacerbated by the advanced state of my first pregnancy. As we neared the statutory deadline for submitting our preliminary findings (a deadline that preceded my due date by only a few weeks), a senior male attorney for one of the respondents became increasingly confrontational and hostile. In addition to the “normal” tension of a preliminary investigation, this individual was clearly discomforted by my visibly reproductive personal status and was unsure how to handle his discomfort. He alternately addressed me as Miss (presumably a reference to my

youth), “Ms” (my preference), and “Mrs” (clearly unsuitable, since I had retained my birth name after marriage). He tried avoiding me by communicating with other members of the team, who, to his frustration, consistently referred him back to me. He lectured me on how to interpret the law. He insisted that I run the investigation differently. As in the previous situation, I held my ground (and my authority); finally, he retaliated by seeking to have me removed from the investigation altogether, citing an alleged release of confidential information on my part.

A third episode occurred nearly a decade later. I was a newly-minted PhD in my first academic appointment, participating in a symposium hosted by my department. The topic of the symposium was the psychodynamics of organizations; I was challenging the presentation of a senior academician who had argued against women in the military on the grounds that men find women’s auto-eroticism threatening. In response to my challenge, this individual became highly agitated, raising his voice and shaking his finger at me as he defended his argument. Others around the table were stunned into silence at the intensity of his response; it was clearly out of proportion to my intellectual challenge, not to mention laden with Freudian overtones in the finger-wagging. At the same symposium the following year, this individual refused to let me finish my presentation, jumping in with hostile criticism before I had barely introduced the first paragraph, and continuing to behave disrespectfully for the remainder of the symposium.

All three of these interchanges had strong patterns in common. In each, I was a junior colleague. In each, the individual with whom I disagreed was a male considerably older than myself. In each situation, dynamics of authority, power, resistance, and gender were present. I suggest that each of these encounters was so incendiary because of the archetypal representations playing out beneath the surface, a claim I explicate further in the following section.

Archetypes

Jung contended that life is enacted on three levels simultaneously:

- (1) consciousness;
- (2) the personal unconscious; and
- (3) the archetypal or collective unconscious.

The ego, our center of consciousness, is like a thin wafer floating on an immense ocean. Beneath that fragile consciousness swirls the personal unconscious, which is also the realm of personal complexes. Complexes are emotionally charged experiences whose intensity derives from the intensity of the original encounter (Hollis, 1994).

Archetypes are universal although our individual responses to them are entirely unique. We unconsciously introject (internalize) the power of these archetypal figures. In the absence of individuation (discussed below), these

patterns and images remain intact at an infantile level (Woodman, 1990, p. 18). When archetypes are activated, they manifest themselves in behaviors and emotions (Samuels, 1997). Four archetypes play significant roles in every individual's psychological development. These are the *persona*, the *self*, the *anima/animus*, and the *shadow*.

The word *persona* originally referred to the mask worn by an actor in a play to portray a particular role. In analytical psychology, the persona fills a similar function, representing the mask or façade that we present to the public (this might also be called the *conformity* archetype). The persona is necessary for humans to function in social and community life. An individual may have more than one mask, wearing different masks for different situations – in this case, all the masks collectively constitute the persona (Hall and Nordby, 1973).

When an individual begins to identify too closely with the role being played, the ego may begin to identify solely with this role and other aspects of the personality will be pushed aside. This phenomenon is known as *inflation*. Often a person derives so much satisfaction from the role that s/he tries to project this role onto others, demanding that they assume the same mask. The longer an inflated persona exists, the harder it becomes to deflate that persona and allow other sides of the individual to receive more balanced attention (Hall and Nordby, 1973).

The anima and animus represent Jung's conception of our relationships with the opposite sex. If the persona represents the outward face, the anima and animus represent the inward face. The anima represents the feminine side of males, and the animus is the masculine side of females. A fully developed personality allows these complementary aspects to be expressed in consciousness and behavior. When these complementary aspects are repressed into the unconscious, they often surface unexpectedly as part of one's shadow (discussed momentarily) (Hall and Nordby, 1973).

Because one's anima or animus colors one's relationships with the opposite sex, in choosing partners we tend to be attracted to someone who portrays (or accepts our projections of) the characteristics of our inner face. An important point to remember is that in western culture, the anima and animus are often repressed or underdeveloped. Males in particular are not encouraged to reveal their feminine aspects. In the workplace, as was noted in the previous section, feminine attributes in women are often not valued; therefore, women who wish to be successful professionals tend to allow their animus (their masculine attributes) to dominate. As a consequence, both interpersonal and societal relationships are skewed.

While the anima or animus represents the opposite sex to us, the shadow often represents our own gender and relationships with persons of our own sex. The shadow also contains our baser, uglier instincts. Individuals often seek to repress the shadow, but it is persistent and often emerges unexpectedly and destructively in stressful or emotional situations. However, a harmonious relationship between ego and shadow creates a full-bodied, three-dimensional quality in persons, conveying vitality, creativity, and vigor in one's personality.

Rejection of the shadow tends to distort and flatten personality, as well as render an individual susceptible to “irrational” emotional reactions (Hall and Nordby, 1973).

The *self* is the organizing principle of personality, the central archetype in the collective unconscious. It is quite different from the outer conscious ego. Jung used the word “self” to indicate several distinct phenomena: the totality of the psyche; the tendency of the psyche to function in an orderly and patterned manner; and the tendency of the psyche to create images “beyond” the ego; and the psychological unity of human infants at birth (Samuels, 1997). A person who is not aware of his unconscious self will project the repressed elements onto others, accusing them of his own unrecognized faults.

For Jung, the primary task of life was to learn to recognize, and come to terms with, those aspects of ourselves that contaminate our perceptions of others. Recognizing our weak or dark traits (those we often try to project onto others) helps us develop a fuller understanding of our interpersonal relations. This cyclical process, called *synchronic individuation*, requires us continually to mediate between our conscious and unconscious, appreciating the paradox and, especially, appreciating the discomfort it produces. Most people are not ready to begin the individuation process until some time in midlife. Until then, we are usually too enmeshed in our parental complexes, and our psyches are too influenced by the dominant culture around us (Young-Eisendrath, 1995).

An essential component of individuation is the process of coming to terms with one’s contrasexuality – that is, our unconscious opposite-sexed personality. The contrasexual other both constrains and defines the self. As Young-Eisendrath says: “The way I act and imagine myself as a woman carries with it a tandem meaning of what I imagine to be male and masculine, what I see as human but ‘not-woman’ . . . The same is true for the feminine other in the male psyche” (Young-Eisendrath, 1995, p. 24). Each sex carries envy, jealousy, idealization and fear of the other sex, emotions that form intrapsychic barriers, especially when the two sexes interact.

The Cronus-Saturn story, recounted earlier, reverberates with power, jealousy, and insecurity. While all humans have endured this scenario for millennia, Hollis argues, men in particular have grown up in the shadow of this legacy, suffering from the corruption of empowerment, driven by fear (particularly fear of the feminine), and wounding themselves and others (Hollis, 1994, p. 11). Hollis (1994, p. 25) writes:

The power complex is the central force in the lives of men. It drives them and wounds them. Out of their rage they wound others, and out of their sorrow and shame they grow more and more distant from each other. The cost of this mutual wounding is enormous, repetitive, and cyclic. Whatever is unconscious is internalized in debilitating ways or projected onto others and acted out destructively.

In the following sections, I address the consequences of these intrapsychic barriers, particularly with regard to repression, by both men and women, of the feminine in an organizational context.

Repressing the feminine: survival of the fittest?

Considering that we must live and function in the cultural context of patriarchy, it may seem surprising that the archetype that causes most anxiety and fear is that of the mother, not the father. Biologically, we all experience our primal relationship with a woman. When this relationship is warm and nurturing, we are more comfortable with life.

Wounding in the primal relationship can, of course, affect women and men alike. But because men also face the need to separate from the mother and transcend the mother complex, additional wounding is both necessary and inevitable. Hollis confirms: "The power of the feminine is immense in the psychic economy of men" (Hollis, 1994, p. 30). Yet throughout their lives, a man must continue to confront the feminine on three levels (Hollis, 1994):

- (1) with an outer woman (or the feminine side of a gay partner);
- (2) in his relationship to his own anima; and
- (3) in his relationship to the archetypal world.

Contemporaneous with the evolution of the modern organization was a notion of social Darwinism. Many of us are at least passingly familiar with the invocation of social Darwinism, or the idea of survival of the fittest, to justify market forces and a capitalist society. A less familiar aspect of social Darwinist thought, however, addressed the roles of the sexes. The invocations of social Darwinism went beyond the well-explored idea of public and private spheres, specifying the functions of both sex and abstinence in the perpetuation of the social order. Such a sociological view of the world colored organizational evolution in ways that have gone largely unrecognized[2].

Of particular relevance here is the fascination of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century scientists (and social scientists) with anthropomorphizing the mating rituals of the animal and insect kingdoms, and the correlations these scientists drew between sexual abstinence and economic success. It was believed that every individual entered life with a certain store of "vital essence." In men, this vital essence was contained in the semen, having been distilled from the blood. Men of a certain class were counseled to refrain from frequent emissions, since each ejaculation drained a bit more of a man's vital essence – essence that would otherwise be retained as an internal secretion and used to build a stronger mind and body. The brain in particular was viewed as the repository of such concentrated essence (Dijkstra, 1996).

The man who did not "waste" his vital essence in frequent and/or indiscriminate ejaculations (either through "self-abuse" or with a partner), therefore, could expect greater intellectual acumen, which would contribute to financial success, which would ensure his place in the ruling plutocracy. "The man who held on to his semen could expect to see his capital grow – and capital, as [William] Sumner[3] never tired of pointing out, was the lifeblood of the evolutionary elite" (Dijkstra, 1996, p. 59). Loss of semen, by contrast, led to loss of money, loss of manhood, and loss of self.

Bearing these beliefs in mind, it is little surprise that, around this time, women began to be portrayed in both scholarly and popular culture as deadly: capable, through the means of seduction and wile, of draining a man of his vital essence and leaving him a mere dry husk of his former self. Women, of course, also contained vital essence, which was distilled in the womb rather than in the testes. But women did not have the same ability to retain concentrated essence in the brain, because so much was unavoidably lost in the monthly menstrual flow.

Drawing on examples observed in the insect world, these seminal (sic) philosophers and scientists perpetuated the belief that sexual women preyed upon men in the same manner as mantises and spiders. Graphic descriptions of sexual cannibalism revealed a deep-seated gynephobia:

Like the cephalopoda, his contemporaries, he [the white-fronted dectic, a type of grasshopper] has recourse to the spermatophore; yet there is mating, there is embracing; there are even play and caresses. Here are the couple face to face, they caress each other with long antennae. . . . The male disentangles himself and escapes, but a new assault masters him, he lies flat on his back. This time the female, lifted on her high legs, holds him belly to belly; she bends back the extremity of her abdomen; the victim does likewise; there is junction, and soon one sees something enormous issue from the convulsive flanks of the male, as if the animal were pushing out its entrails. . . .

The female receives this leather bottle, or spermatophore, and carries it off glued to her belly . . . She breaks off little pieces, chews them carefully, and swallows them . . . The male has begun to sing again, during this meal, but it is not a love-song, he is about to die; he dies. Passing near him at this moment, the female looks at him, smells him, and takes a bite of his thigh (Gourmont, in Dijkstra, 1996, p. 67).

Prominent sociologist Lester Ward also took the view that, in the lower orders of nature, the primary function of the male was sperm-bearer, a “mere afterthought of nature” (Ward, in Dijkstra, 1996, p. 68). Evolutionarily speaking, human males had been able to overcome the accessory roles played by their insect counterparts, but Ward’s description of mantis love left little doubt about how slippery the slope toward reabsorption was:

A few days since I brought a male of *mantis carolina* to a friend who had been keeping a solitary female as a pet. Placing them in the same jar, the male, in alarm, endeavored to escape. In a few minutes the female succeeded in grasping him. She first bit off his left front tarsus, and consumed the tibia and femur. Next she gnawed out his left eye. At this the male seemed to realize his proximity to one of the opposite sex, and began vain endeavors to mate. The female next ate up his right front leg, and then entirely decapitated him, devouring his head and gnawing into his thorax. Not until she had eaten all of his thorax except about three millimeters did she stop to rest. All this while the male had continued his vain attempts to obtain entrance at the valvules, and he now succeeded, as she voluntarily spread the parts open, and union took place. She remained quiet for four hours, and the remnant of the male gave occasional signs of life by a movement of one of his remaining tarsi for three hours. The next morning she had entirely rid herself of her spouse, and nothing but his wings remained (Ward, in Dijkstra, 1996, p. 69).

The primary drive of females was reproduction, pure and simple; after survival of the species was ensured, males were superfluous. Thus feminine principles came to be viewed as fatal (the “*vagina dentata* of primal instinct” (Dijkstra,

1996, p. 71)); masculinity was regarded as the triumph of cunning and intellect over nature.

This ontological belief was reflected in much of the art, literature, film, and popular culture of the era. Women were often portrayed as frighteningly seductive vampires, spiders, ferocious bears, and skeletons – death personified, in other words. The work of Alfred Kubin (1877-1959) was particularly graphic in this regard. The early films of Theda Bara and Louise Brooks capitalized on the vampire/vamp theme, with great success. Misogynist and gynophobic themes were also reflected in the work of many of the surrealists as they dismembered the female body or turned it into an object. The self-consciously sexual woman was dangerous – a threat not only to an individual male, but to the survival of the species, as well.

Writing as a contemporary of Sumner and Ward, the feminist theorist Charlotte Perkins Gilman observed that the effect of patriarchal authority was to remove women from most of the energizing (i.e. public sphere) effects of natural selection, reinforcing only their sexual attractiveness. This sets up a vicious cycle. “[W]oman’s economic profit comes through the power of sex-attraction” (Gilman, in Hollinger and Capper, 1989, p. 44); in a situation of perverse irony, women must be sexually attractive in order to survive economically, yet this sexual “success” is experienced as predatory by the men who control the economic resources.

This perversity is mirrored in the organizational context. If women were considered dangerous in the relatively narrow confines of the home, imagine the thought of such women moving into the workforce. Now men faced a double threat: women who sought to drain their vital essence in the bedroom, and women who wanted to drain their lifeblood in the board room as well. Archetypally speaking, the image being constellated was terrible and frightening – picture the cannibal witch of the *Hansel and Gretel* fairy tale, or the awesome dark destructive power of the Hindu goddess Shiva. As Hollis (1994, p. 35) points out: “one oppresses what one fears” (assuming, of course, that one has the power to oppress in the first place). A deeply-rooted misogyny thus persists in our culture (Woodman, 1990, p. 9). The feminine, representing the forces of darkness and matter, stands in opposition to the masculine forces of light, reason, and spirit. Patriarchy is, at its essence, a cultural contrivance designed to compensate for the fear and perceived powerlessness of men (Hollis, 1994, p. 48).

Organizational effects of repressing the feminine

The battle of the sexes and the effects of gender bias in the workplace are well documented in numerous sources, from academic journals and textbooks to the popular press, movies, television, and cartoons. The point of this article is not that the battle/bias exists, but that for many men and women, it arises from the same source: repression of the feminine. While both oppression and repression can easily co-exist, the repression to which I refer is quite distinct from oppression of women, as I will discuss below[4].

First, we must again consider the conjunction of the social climate that prevailed as current organizational forms, as we know and experienced them, first began to evolve. Carolyn Heilbrun, reviewing a biography of Virginia Woolf, observes that women were (are) trained to be silent. "[T]he unlovable woman was always the woman who used words to [great] effect. She was caricatured as a tattle, a scold, a shrew, a witch . . . [there was] pressure to relinquish language, and 'nice' women [were quiet]" (quoted in Woodman, 1985, p. 9).

"Successful" women in organizational settings are often those who have embraced and/or absorbed the masculine way of doing things. They may often be "daddy's girls" who mirrored their fathers and sought their father's approval. They are often called "anima women" because they take on their father's anima projection. She has learned how to "perform" in order to win a man's approval – professionally and personally (Woodman, 1985, 1990).

When women stand up for themselves, however, they often constellate their male colleagues' devouring mother complexes. Men unconsciously apply the mathematical rule of transitivity in a rather crude fashion: you have breasts – you are a woman; my mother was a woman – my mother had breasts; therefore, you are like my mother (Hollis, 1994). Men trapped in a mother complex are captive to powers of archetypal images. Anima women in particular are good hooks for men's unconscious projections. These women have become proficient in becoming whatever the male is projecting onto them. At first, this arrangement seems highly satisfactory to both partners, because she, of course, is also projecting her ideal onto him (Woodman, 1985). But when the image he projects onto her becomes disrupted or threatened by her expression of her own needs, he may fly into a rage and go off to look for someone who is as unconscious as his own inner feminine (Woodman, 1992).

The irony is that while these women appear to be some kind of solitary tower of strength ("iron women"), they may feel utterly abandoned when the male partner/colleague/mentor withdraws. Yet, because they are so strongly identified with the animus (that is, so adept at operating out of a male psychology), they may persist in looking at the situation with rational understanding: "It was my own fault; I must not have been good enough/ worked hard enough/been deserving enough"). They ignore their feelings and instead seek to "take it like a man," playing the role of "perfect gentleman" (Woodman, 1985, p. 44). As Woodman (1985, p. 51) writes: "A woman who has devoted her life to examinations and scholarship, or politics or the business world, knows how to organize her mind in obedience to the laws of unity, coherence, and emphasis".

When we try to overcome this mythic constellation, we often rocket too far in the other direction, resulting in explosive "battles of the sexes". In terms of analytical psychology, there is little difference between the ego of an unconscious woman and the anima of an unconscious man. Likewise, there is a similar analogy between an unconscious man and the animus of a woman. In any intimate relationship, including work relationships, the positive and

negative dynamics among these four “identities” are going to interact. While the positive aspects may constellate first, resulting in the initial good feelings of an effective working relationship, eventually the shadow projections make their way to the fore. The feminine feels it is being violated, while the masculine struggles against being sucked dry. Enormous hostility built up in the unconscious (of both sexes, and toward both sexes) eventually erupts (Woodman, 1985).

Masculine consciousness analyzes, discriminates, defines, cuts and clarifies. Feminine consciousness – not women, but feminine consciousness – is concerned with process and being. The goal is the journey itself. So, then, the question remains: how do we leave our father’s house?

Leaving our fathers’ house

As I stated earlier, the point of my argument in this article is not to invert the balance of power in the extant patriarchy. Militant/separatist feminists, I would argue, are ironically being patriarchal in their emphasis on rage and hostility. Instead, I would hold, with Woodman (1992), that projecting women’s rage onto men does little to resolve the victim/tyrant constellation. Leaving our father’s house involves an acceptance of consciously feminine principles in order to bring human interactions into some sort of balance, and to bring to the fore the masculine energy that is creative rather than destructive and punitive.

Individuation is an important process of psychological development for both women and men. But it is also the process of recognizing and understanding one’s own contradictory nature, identifying and balancing the conscious and unconscious impulses. An individual must first learn to develop meta-cognitive abilities – the ability to think about one’s thoughts, feelings, and states of being, looking at oneself from a third person perspective, and engaging in a dialectical relationship with one’s self. The personal awareness that comes through individuation permits disidentification with childhood complexes and a withdrawal of projections (Young-Eisendrath, 1995).

Leaving our father’s house will require us, collectively and as individuals, to learn to think dialectically and, furthermore, withstand the temptation to side with one aspect of the dialectic or the other. Holding that tension is not an easy task, western logic has been dominated by the principle of non-contradiction. Though not a depth psychologist, Adorno (1998) reflected on the relationship between self and other (subject and object) in a manner that is useful for the argument here. In Adorno’s view, the separation of subject and object was both real and semblance. This separation was the result of a coercive historical process in which the contradiction between subject and object, once postulated, became transformed into an invariant “truth”. Unmediated (unchallenged), such an assumption then becomes fixed into an ideology in which mind (self) arrogates to itself the status of absolute independence (Carr and Zanetti, 1999).

Jung called resolving these conflicts transcendence. Furthermore, he acknowledged that collective dynamics can mimic interpersonal ones. He writes:

Western civilization has for some time been developing its extraverted thinking and sensation one-sidedly in its technology and its introverted thinking and sensation one-sidedly in its theoretical research. Intuition has not been entirely suppressed, because it has been used for the discovery of new creative ideas. Feeling, however, and the whole world of Eros, love, is in a truly pitiable state.

This pitiable state is a direct result of repressing the feminine.

When individuals are able to access and honor their feminine characteristics, remarkable transformations can occur. A man's anima, viewed positively, is the source of empathy, sensitivity, eros, artistic tendencies, and appreciation of natural beauty. But, when repressed, the anima surfaces through moodiness, hypochondria, or subjective judgment. Similarly, a woman who has a balanced relationship with her animus finds she possesses initiative, depth of thought, consistency, and courage. A woman whose animus controls her will exhibit rigid opinionatedness, brutality, and combative behavior. She maintains her pseudo-masculinity through willpower. Often at this point she breaks down, both emotionally and physically (Woodman, 1992).

What might be the effects in organizational settings of honoring the feminine? Regretfully, I cannot speak from personal experience since I am still building a positive, balanced relationship with my own animus and am sure I am not always able to escape the negative characteristics of animus control. However, I believe that some useful observations can be drawn from feminist organizational literature.

First, it is important that we resist imagining an idealized utopia. Male or female, masculine or feminine, we are all flawed individuals, and, unfortunately, we carry our flaws into our organizational settings. Second, I believe we must also avoid simply replacing one elitist, hierarchical system with another. The articulation and acceptance of multiple perspectives is critical. "Invisible work" – work traditionally associated with "the feminine" – must be recognized and honored. In order to do this, we may have to "hold up the mirror" (Rao *et al.*, 1999, p. 18) – reflect actual conditions back onto an organization as a way of breaking through collective denial.

To return to the first paragraphs of this article, leaving our father's house will require a collective act of courage. This postmodern epoch is destabilizing on a multitude of levels, giving the appearance of anarchy and chaos. Many people find this situation profoundly alienating and anxiety-laden, and seek to counter their vertigo by exerting ever more pressure for control. Enormous archetypal energies are being released, and they terrify us at our most primal levels. We demonstrate courage not through flamboyant demonstrations of vanquishing scapegoats, but far more quietly and humbly: by facing and embracing the dark places we fear most.

When we learn to do that, we will have left our father's house.

Notes

1. Hidden power in this context corresponds with Lukes' (1974) "third dimension of power" in which subjects are unaware that their wants and desires are being manipulated. Power is exercised to ensure that only certain ideas are accepted as "normal", these ideas become entrenched in the form of self-evident truths and therefore are seldom, if ever, questioned. Those who do question these "truths" are often labeled deviant and anti-social, among other things (Rao *et al.*, 1999; Lukes, 1974; Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999).
2. Unrecognized, that is, in US organizational literature. Scholarship from the UK and Australia tends to acknowledge a much stronger interaction between the social milieu and the evolution of organizational structures and expectations.
3. William Graham Sumner (1840-1910), an economist, political and social scientist, and minister, held the first established chair of political and social science at Yale. He took a distinctly conservative view of the political implications of Darwinian science, arguing that only hard work and self denial would bring about human progress, and that one's chief mission in life was to accumulate capital. Opposite Sumner on the political spectrum was Lester Frank Ward (1841-1913), who stressed the role of intelligence and education in human progress, and argued that cooperation and systematic planning, not raw competition, would enhance the human condition. For additional reading on the intellectual debates of the era, see Hollinger and Capper (1989); Bannister (1979); Bellomy (1984).
4. Of course, rejection of the feminine and rejection of a particular woman are often confused, as well.
5. Adorno particularly faulted the empiricist philosophers for this reification (Adorno, 1963, 1969/1998).

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