

# A NEW ANATOMY OF SPIRITUALITY: CLINICAL AND POLITICAL DEMANDS THE PSYCHOTHERAPIST CANNOT IGNORE

ANDREW SAMUELS, University of Essex/Society of Analytical Psychology.

*This is a lightly edited version of a lecture given in the series 'Psychotherapy and Spirituality' at the London Centre for Psychotherapy on 26 October 2002.*

**ABSTRACT** *I begin with some general issues and problems of defining the 'S' word. Next, I present a contemporary anatomy of spirituality stressing connections to lived experience in society. The third section is on 'responsibility' and how that links to psychological, spiritual and political concerns. Finally, inevitably, given my Jungian background, I discuss the shadow of spirituality. Throughout I make connections to the clinical encounter and dialogue in psychotherapy.*

**Key words:** politics, psychotherapy, responsibility, society, spirituality

## INTRODUCTION

The bigger and more important the theme, the more personal the author's connection to it is likely to be. So I will begin by sketching my personal development in connection with the themes of this paper. At about the age of eighteen, I was a highly political young man, but trying to realize my political dreams through the arts – specifically, theatre. We were a radical theatre company, in those days at the end of the 1960s when you could get money from the Arts Council for radical theatre companies. Then, after becoming a youth worker

and a counsellor working with young people, I went into analysis and dropped out of the political world for a decade. So, when Thatcherism came in, I was busy writing Jungian books. Gradually, the political side of my personality, and my interest in society, came back in and merged with my analytic concerns, leading to the formation of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility. Then, when I began to have children, as often seems to happen with men, a third strand came in, which we could call 'spiritual'. Psychotherapy, politics, and spirituality – three sides of a coin! After the impact of

having children, and the turning towards both organized religion and private religion that fatherhood induced in me, I began trying to link up the practice of psychotherapy with my emerging spiritual and existing political concerns.

I will begin the paper by discussing some general issues and problems of definition. This is necessary when engaging with what I have heard called the ‘S’ word. Next, I will present an immodestly titled ‘new anatomy of spirituality’. The third section is on responsibility, and how that links to psychological and spiritual concerns. The word ‘responsibility’ is important to my thinking. Finally, inevitably, given my Jungian background, I feel that I must talk on the shadow of spirituality. We Jungians started the psychotherapy world off on what seems like its new line of taking spirituality seriously. But we always knew that, alongside the gold, there’s something potentially wrong with a spiritual approach. So, paradoxically, Jungians are prominent these days in addressing what’s the matter with the spirit, as well as what’s great about it.

### THE ‘S’ WORD

When Captain Cook’s ship *The Endeavour*, anchored in Botany Bay a couple of hundred years plus ago, the aboriginal people did not recognize it as a ship. It was simply so big and so different from what they had in their mind as ‘ship’ that they didn’t recognize it as such. We don’t know what they did think, but we know they didn’t think it was a ship. It was only when the smaller longboats – rowing boats – were lowered into the water that the aboriginal observers of this scene realized that there were boats involved and that there were people in the boats. Spirituality, if we are trying to define it, is something like

that. We don’t really know that we are in that area until something happens to alert us to it. In Bani Shorter’s (1995) memorable phrase, everything is susceptible to the sacred. This is a very good one liner to indicate what happens before you can term something spiritual. Something has to happen that involves you ‘clocking it’, to use the modern argot. For everything can be susceptible to the sacred. It is significant that the lecture upon which this paper is based was not given in a church or synagogue, ashram, mosque or temple. We were in a lecture hall in a psychotherapy training organization. And that setting influenced what we said and what we experienced.

In the new anatomy of spirituality, I seek to advance a vision of spirituality that is regular, ubiquitous and permeates every aspect of existence. It is not intended to be a lofty, exhortative, sermonizing approach. Quite the opposite. My take on spirituality discerns its worm-like nature, not its eagle-like nature. Spirituality as an underneath as well as an over-the-top thing. And because approaches to spirituality so easily go over the top it is often better to stay underneath.

So we can scarcely attempt a factual definition of spirituality. We can only give an aspirational one, and therefore whatever we say will be very vague. But there is huge value in vagueness – so much so that there is a philosophical subdiscipline called ‘vague studies’ and even a *Journal of Vague Studies*. I actually think this is a very important lesson for psychotherapists, especially British psychoanalytic psychotherapists and psychoanalysts. We get terribly hooked on spurious precision when it comes to words, spending much time and energy on the differences between guilt and depression, envy and jealousy, and so on. We speak and write as if we really know, and as if we can really make, hard and fast

distinctions. It is a kind of love affair of a very perverse kind with precision and I believe it is deeply problematic, clinically and intellectually. There is something important about staying in the vague for as long as it takes. There are obviously dangers of vagueness but I think that spirituality may not be as dangerous a topic when it is regarded in a vague way as some others because, after all, spirituality has always been something that deconstructs our lives. Long before postmodernism was invented, the spirit was deconstructing daily reality in culture. Hence it is not a problem for me that I am vague about what I mean, or what anyone means, by spirituality.

I will leave definition there, caught up in vagueness, thinking of Captain Cook, inviting readers to imagine themselves as those aboriginal people. And the longboats are slowly being lowered into the water, and recognition is gradually dawning.

## A NEW ANATOMY OF SPIRITUALITY

There are four aspects to spirituality and the spiritual dimensions of experience that I shall consider: social spirituality, craft spirituality, democratic spirituality, and profane spirituality. In *social spirituality*, people come together to take responsible action in the social sphere, doing this in concert with other people. When this happens, something spiritual comes into being. Being actively engaged in a social, political, cultural or ethical issue, together with others, initiates the spiritual. This is a very different perspective from one that would see social spirituality as being something done in the social domain by spiritual people. To the contrary, there is a kind of spiritual rain that can descend on people who get involved in politics and social

issues with others – hence ‘social’ spirituality – in a certain kind of way. I call this rain ‘responsibility’. The difference should be clear: this is by no means an élitist perspective. Social spirituality embraces people who get involved with other people in political and social action – for example, the whole post-Seattle protest against global capitalism that our young people are getting into. What they’re doing when they get involved in the anti-capitalist movements and the environmental and ecological movements is to participate in a general resacralization of culture. To play on the word ‘politicized’, they are becoming ‘spiritualized’. When one gets involved in idealistic politics, sometimes – not always, one gets spiritualized. And so the anti-capitalist movement is creating its own spirituality and, in turn, being informed by the spirituality that it creates in a feedback loop. Political action leads to spirituality of some kind and spirituality informs political action. Of course, eventually it all falls to pieces. Either the police wreck it or people grow up. But there is a basic resacralizing (Samuels, 1993) tendency worth recognizing. The boundary between external and internal is once again challenged.

In analysis and psychotherapy, there are aspects of this social spirituality that we need to consider. Surely we no longer indulge in the typical therapeutic manoeuvre, when faced with a client who wants to go on a protest demonstration, of interpreting the anti-parental nature of that move, or understand political participation as defensive, resistant, avoidance, splitting, and so on. If there are people in our profession who still make knee-jerk interpretations of that kind then what I would say to them is that they are caught up in yesterday’s good practice. But the old clinical perspective is today’s bad practice and ignores the

individuating thrust in the client's political and social commitments and actions. What this means, for example, is that, when you take an initial history or when you meet a client for the first time or when you're interviewing a potential trainee, you don't ask: 'Well, why were you so involved in politics when you were eighteen?' Do ask: 'Why were you not?' And why have you apparently got no social commitments at all? Do you read the newspaper? Do you watch *Newsnight*? I realize this reverses the way that most therapists have been trained to proceed.

I have written extensively about what happens when political themes enter the psychotherapy dialogue (most recently, 2003). Succinctly, within certain limits, the engagement of therapist and client in relation to something political can be mutually transformative. This is truly another example of social spirituality. In the therapeutic setting, as the therapist and client engage on 9/11 or the Hutton Report or Princess Diana, or the decline of the Labour Party, they can find – if they are open to it – a deeply transformative experience that may have a spiritual feel to it, in spite of the fact that the raw material was social, political, controversial, and difficult to deal with for all the technical reasons about suggestion that we know about. For we don't want to foist our politics on our clients. The difficulties involved are highlighted by the fact that there are very few texts that help therapists to work in this area.

Before moving on to discuss craft spirituality, I want to touch on the pressing contemporary political problematic of martyrdom in general and suicide bombing in particular. This is a testing topic when thinking about social spirituality. Clearly, for those involved in it, the act of suicide bombing leads to the most profound spiri-

tual transformation on the part of the bomber, no matter how wrong the act is from the point of view of victims of outrages committed by suicide bombers, or of people in the West who simply cannot comprehend how such a thing can come about. Actually, we need to be very careful here, because suicide bombing is not an integral part of any culture that I know of. It is a situational response to a complex sociopolitical situation. But our Western culture cannot comprehend how that came about in other cultures. Martyrdom nudges us up against some of the shadow aspects of spirituality, encouraging us to remember, in any rush to embrace the spiritual and bring it into our work and lives, that martyrdom and acts like suicide bombing are the most extreme, overliteralized form of social spirituality imaginable. We need to bear this in mind before rushing blindly into political and social action: that there is a place where it can go that is really quite horrific.

Now for *craft spirituality*. My thesis here is a bit startling: holiness is artificial. It is not something that we merely discover or find in our lives, or notice in God or nature, or in the psyche. We make holiness. We make it traditionally by building tabernacles, churches and by performing rituals – lighting candles, holding each other and so on.

To illustrate this point I want to reflect on the biblical figure of Bezaleel. Many people have never heard of Bezaleel, though there is a Bezaleel Design Institute in Tel Aviv. Bezaleel was the man who actually *made* the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. He made them to God's precise instructions. When we consider these instructions, we may come to two quite different conclusions. One is that God is the most unbelievable obsessional neurotic! The other is that it really matters to God what is made by us in pursuit of

holiness: what materials we use, what dimensions we go for, what bevels, joints, and other technical devices we employ.

And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim wood, two cubits and a half was the length of it and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it. And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about. As he cast for it four rings of gold to be set by the four corners of it, even two rings upon the one side of it and two rings upon the other side of it. And he made staves of shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold. And he put the staves into the rings by the side of the ark to bear the ark. (Exodus 37: 1–5)

Such work – maybe, potentially, all work – is a spiritual discipline. In our societies in the West, much work is meaningless and alienating. Nevertheless, even within the meaninglessness and alienation of contemporary work situations, people often develop and deploy a Bezaleel consciousness. They fashion portable tabernacles and sanctuaries for themselves, usually by ritual, often obsessional seeming: how you line up your pens, what colour pen you prefer to write in, how you close down your computer, which people you greet, and in what way. None of this does away with the appalling barbarism of capitalist work organization, but all of it shows people trying to enter the domain of craft spirituality. Craft spirituality also spills over into aesthetics. Craft spirituality informs the artistic and creative impulse as well.

A great deal of this is very relevant to modern psychotherapy but, again, there do not seem to be very many books or papers about it. In fact, there is a lack of psychotherapy literature in connection with work and employment issues. This is somewhat surprising in that clients regularly talk about problems at work. I have hardly ever worked with a client who has unambiva-

lently admired their boss! Rather, those clients that have admired their boss without ambivalence have usually been hopelessly in love with him or her, which isn't much use either.

There are special issues for women in connection with work: the glass ceiling, the appalling continuing differentiation of wage rates, the enormous difficulty in getting the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Inland Revenue to engage with the issue of tax relief for child care, which, although it should not be a 'woman's issue', impacts more on the social and work lives of women than of men. A psychotherapist who does not engage with a woman client in those areas is not only guilty of a social omission, they are guilty of a spiritual omission as well. Because work – craft spirituality – cannot be split off from spirituality as such.

There certainly are craft spirituality issues for men as well. Most private practice psychotherapists don't see many manual labourers. But we do see the children of manual labourers. That's the harsh social fact about it, in private practice anyway. Have you noticed how difficult it can be for the more successful son to come to terms with what that means in relation to the apparently less successful father, who may be by now part of a long-term unemployed rust-belt declining industry in the North?

For both men and women, there is a very overt spiritual theme that has to do with work, which has been given the unprepossessing tag of work-life balance. (I must declare an interest here as a Trustee of the Work-Life Balance Trust.) There is a sense in which work-life balance may be *the* issue of our time. This includes more than having an annual go-home-on-time day! It's much more than just addressing the chronic

workaholism of the population – something that most psychotherapists know about as well, because it's a problem a lot of us have. Getting your work and your personal life into some kind of balance is a *spiritual* matter and not only a social matter. Without decent work-life balance, can anyone really flower as a spiritual being, as a person with a soul? Yet work-life balance is not really discussed by psychotherapists. It is discussed by occupational psychologists, of course, and it's increasingly interesting to economists and accountants. For companies that have effective policies on work-life balance do very well financially. Profit is by no means the right reason to go in for work-life balance but there is a bottom-line aspect that makes it more likely that this movement could have some social and political success. My main point here, when discussing craft spirituality, is to suggest that work-life balance be understood more and more as a spiritual and psychological matter.

I hope it is becoming clearer what I am aiming at in the paper. This is a contemporary take on spirituality, so that it can become 'useful', if you like, in apparently non-spiritual places: in the therapy room, in society, and in people's work lives.

Third in the anatomy is *democratic spirituality*. This involves the bringing back on to all kinds of agendas – personal, political and clinical – of the idea of *absolute equality*. In all the discussions about equality of outcome and equality of opportunity, something has got lost. And that is this notion of absolute equality, which used to be called traditionally 'equality in the eyes of the Lord'. We are all equal in the eyes of the Lord. This is a powerful idea, because it underpins any protest about economic inequality and the situation in the wider world in which women and children die

because of economic policies undertaken by their governments at the behest of the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. Democratic spirituality puts the notion of absolute equality, in all its glorious impracticability, back onto the agenda. In particular, democratic spirituality is an attempt from the spiritual end of the spectrum to engage with poverty, economic injustice and economic inequality. From the standpoint of psychotherapy, there's a great deal that should be said but usually is not. With some notable exceptions in humanistic and integrative psychotherapy, and of people working in transcultural psychotherapy, psychotherapists in Britain, especially psychoanalytical therapists and psychoanalysts, are not adept at working with power issues in therapy. We still tend to prefer to put the client's challenge to us down to their trouble with a powerful mother, omnipotent breast, phallic mother, great mother, terrible mother, or a castrating, law-giving father who says 'no'. But there are power issues in the therapy relationship itself which, if overlooked, prevent a certain kind of spiritual communication between therapist and client from taking place. The idea of absolute equality, impractical as I admit, is an ethical penetration of the psychotherapy relationship that leads to an enhancement of the spiritual experience that it can generate.

A couple of final points in relation to democratic spirituality. The first reflects the influence of psychoanalytic thinking on spiritual thinking. In relational psychoanalysis, which is the promising new variant of psychoanalysis that is coming into this country from the United States associated with the name of Stephen Mitchell, the tools exist to describe a particular kind of democratic psychological relationship with God. If you like, this is a

relational spirituality in which one might surrender to the divine but without masochistically submitting to it. Surrender, but not submission. This relational spirituality, coupled with what I have been saying about democracy and spirituality, is very suggestive and important for therapists. We discern a non-submissive, non-masochistic sense of veneration in ourselves and our clients to use the evocative language of Rosemary Gordon's (1987) very important paper on this topic. Being able to worship without having to submit to authority masochistically is a part of contemporary spirituality (see Ghent, 1990).

The last in the four was *profane spirituality*. Profane spirituality is about drugs, sex and rock and roll. In 1961 Jung replied to a query from Bill W, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, with a critically important letter in which he advanced the idea that alcoholism was a spiritual quest that had gone off the rails. This insight can be applied to so many other addictions, up to and including shopping and workaholicism. For the avoidance of doubt, perhaps I should make it plain that I am not saying that shopping is a spiritual activity. What I am saying is that there is a strand of energy in the act of shopping that connects to all the searching and questing that spirituality is commonly associated with.

Regarding rock and roll, I mean to propose in a shorthand way that we can locate the spiritual drive in popular culture; not only music but also movies, and sport as well. There is a spiritual component here, not really different from that which the intellectual authorities of the world locate in Rembrandt or Wagner or art from the Orient. There is something in what the kids do, and what we did when we were kids (and, I hope, we still do) that should not be put down by reference to 'the

canon', as they call it in the big debate about what you should study in literary studies. The canon is Shakespeare and Dickens. The anti-canon is Danielle Steele. Though you can get MAs in America in Danielle Steele, I am not going down that track. What I want to say is that, if one talks about profane spirituality, popular culture plays a central part.

Profane spirituality involves sex and sexuality. There is usually a spiritual level in deeply intimate relationships. Psychotherapists need to say more about what it does to the human spirit to enter the domains of alterity, to really confront the other in her or his ethical otherness. And how this leads to self-discovery, and how God-discovery weaves its way through all of it. But I am not only referring to relationships, I am thinking about sex itself – orgasmic, orgiastic, rapturous, to the point of mysticism. That is important because so many mystics write about their mystical experiences in the most frank sexual imagery. There is something about the sex act – just sex as a drive, not sex as part of a relationship – that people who engage with the spiritual would often like to overlook. Here one must (still, regrettably) assert that homosexual sex acts bring a spiritual element with them just as often, or just as seldom, as heterosexual sex acts. Profane spirituality is decidedly not something that goes on only within the sanctity of heterosexual marriage.

The implications of profane spirituality for psychotherapy are enormous. Psychotherapists are becoming fascinated with the body, with neurobiology, neuroanatomy and cognitive neuroscience. Some even refer to neuropsychanalysis. It is argued that the structure of the brain can be affected by what happens to an individual as a client in therapy. It is also argued

that something happens to the structure of the brain in those early months and years of life. Our psychology has become absolutely obsessed with the body. And yet body therapy hardly gets a look in. There is something very problematic here. We need to go back to those old debates about touch and movement in therapy. The body is the grounding for spirit. But just because it is such a grounding should not mean that we then put it on one side as something noticed but not taken up. We know about the body and countertransference, and how the somatic states in the therapist are really useful in understanding the psychological states in the client. We know about psychosomatic medicine. In fact, we often say indecent things in our clinical papers that offend the sufferers of various illnesses by proclaiming them to be little more than depression in disguise.

So we are correctly body obsessed. Yet how many of us have regularly – not just occasionally – noticed the breathing of our clients? How many therapists reading this have observed the breathing of the client in therapy? How many of you have actually said anything about it? Or explored your own? Some time ago, I decided to systematically observe the breathing of my clients and my own and I noted that, if I do this, the therapy dialogue alters whether I do anything with what I've noticed or not. Sometimes, I do speak about it. It seems to me absurd to have all these developments that take the whole field in a bodily direction, except in relation to practice! William Blake said: 'Man has no body distinct from his soul.' So can there really be any psychotherapy worth its salt that isn't in some sense a body psychotherapy?

I want to end this section on sex and sexuality with a few transcultural points in connection with the body – because one of

the interesting things about the body is that there is no such thing as a body. There is only my body or your body in this particular society in this particular year. We should listen to colleagues who do transcultural or intercultural work. Here in the West, we talk about people somaticizing their depression: they are depressed and they produce a whole variety of physical symptoms that are really their depression in disguise. At a famous conference of psychoanalysts in India in the late 1950s one of the Indian participants got up and said: actually the trouble is not that people somaticize depression but that you in the West psychologize it. For us (he said), depression is always already a bodily state. The Western approach to depression, before and after *Mourning and Melancholia*, is the odd thing in the situation here. Once, in Brazil, I met with indigenous people, and one person said to me as he had said to others: 'We always had spirit, it was you Westerners, the Portuguese, who brought the body.' And everybody knows about how mind, spirit and body have got separated in Western culture. There is much to learn from non-Western sources about this kind of thing (see Samuels, 2002).

## RESPONSIBILITY

The words 'responsible' and 'responsibility' come from the Latin root *spondere* – to pledge. The dictionary refers to being held to account, being morally responsible for one's actions and, interestingly, answerable to a criminal charge. If you are responsible for something, then there's a perpetual sense that you are answering a charge, that something is 'wrong'. These etymological roots mean that responsibility can only ever be a dialectical business. One cannot really



be responsible if there isn't another with whom or towards whom one is responsible.

People give themselves much too hard a task when it comes to responsibility. They lose sight of the very important psychological, spiritual and political notion of good-enoughness. My preference is not to use Winnicott's notion of good-enoughness developmentally. To me, there is a whole possibility of refreshing the spiritual and political vocabulary bound up with the notion of good-enoughness. For example, the good-enough leader, who admits that she or he will fail and sees as the primary task the management of failure, who will try – to play with Winnicott's words – to fail the country in the country's own way. Or the good-enough citizen, who recognizes that alone one can do so little but with other people one can achieve much more. I suggest 'responsible-enough' should be 'good-enough' for most of us. This idea brings with it a change that makes notions of responsibility more viable, more achievable. Good-enoughness in relation to one's sense of responsibility involves self-forgiveness and atonement. And these things are what lie behind the Hebrew word *Tikkun*, meaning the restoration and repair of the world. But we cannot rehabilitate the world if we are so hard on ourselves that we see ourselves only as permanently fractured. We can only move to restore and repair the world on the basis of self-forgiveness and atonement. As Samuel Becket put it: 'no matter, try again, fail again, fail better.' We have to try to fail better, recalling Rumi's words: 'Failure is the key to the kingdom.'

### THE SHADOW OF SPIRITUALITY

There is something not only all right about spirituality. It is not just that there's a good

'mature spirituality', to use the unfortunate title of a recent book, for that would imply there was an immature spirituality. I think there's *something* not right about spirituality *per se*, locked in there with all the beauty and holiness. Look at the evidence. Spirituality is deployed by mass movements of particularly nasty kinds. It is there in every fascistic movement as well as in less dramatic mass movements. One can see why, because the spirit is part of 'the mass'. But, because it's part of the mass, spirit is easily assimilable to mindless, destructive, collective political and social actions. I wouldn't say this is due to humanity's defects, that the spirit is all right, but we poor inadequates misuse it. It is more fundamental, this shadow of spirit, and there is something in spirit that is permanently not grounded and hence can cause damage. When spirit is not grounded (and, on this thesis, it *never* is wholly grounded), it gets you into states where you will do things that are horrible before you can catch yourself and stop yourself from doing it.

'Spiritual people' often display indifference to suffering. I believe this is also true in the psychotherapy world, where you have people who are very compassionate to their clients, but extremely uncompassionate to any individuals beyond that, including colleagues. Because a person's mind is on higher or deeper things, that person is not going to be terribly concerned with other people. Then we need to recall the way in which spiritual leaders seem so often to go on power trips. This is the problem of the guru, about which there's a considerable literature now, and the root literature for many studies of the psychological kind of guru-ism are those researches of violent gangs that were done in the 1950s. Everything that was discovered about violent gangs and their leaders in New York

City in the 1950s is directly relevant to the study of guru-led cults that went completely off the rails in the past 50 years.

Another element in the shadow of spirituality is élitism. The spiritual one feels better than other people. That's part of the appeal of fundamentalism. Why have vows of obedience and humility and poverty to be made if not to control their opposites? All taboos imply the impulses that need to be taboo-ed. Spiritual people who take vows of humility are acknowledging in the act of taking the vow of humility that, if allowed to get away with it, they will be anything but humble. Such is the élitism that is the ineluctable shadow of spirituality.

To illustrate spiritual élitism I will mention something from my own experience. After my father died, papers arrived including a buff file that had on the outside the legend 'Andrew Samuels – writings'. In this file were letters and so forth dating from long before I became a writer. In this file was a letter that I wrote when I was on what we now call my gap year in Swaziland, Southern Africa. I went out there, lied about my age and got a job in the colonial civil service as an Assistant District Commissioner. I went off into the bush to do what we called a 'human resources survey' in connection with rural community development. There, I wrote a letter to my parents slagging off the Western family in general, and ours in particular, saying how I had discovered, living in the *ad hoc* extended family that one finds when you go into an African village, and they are very pleased to see you and take you into their homes, that here, in Africa, are families where people do get on! I wrote about the impact this was having on me. And I used the word spirituality in that connection. I remember being

terribly terribly pleased with this letter. It is long, elaborate, and adeptly (if destructively) put together. But when I read it again in my father's file, I thought: you little shit! What nasty, élitist side swipes. What grandiosity. What an abuse of the spiritual dimension of life.

Continuing to explore the personal aspect of the shadow of spirituality, I would like to share a dream of mine that, as I understand it, is about the body and about my struggle to keep spirit and body in some kind of related linkage. It is my initial dream from my analysis, dating from September 1971. I dreamt this on the exact date the Germans invaded Poland in 1939 – and my family comes from Poland.

*Dream: 'I am on the deck of a Soviet-style (but not Russian) ice-breaker. We are in a northern sea, the ice-covered Baltic, or the Skaggerak, or somewhere up there. The sea is flat, ice, and the ice-breaker is breaking the ice. I am on the bridge of it. I look out and I see shooting up through the ice great gushing spouts of volcanic-type flame, but there's no volcano, mostly golden-coloured flame. I am awestruck by the concatenation, the combination of the natural landscape, of the flat ice, and the unreal (from the literal point of view) thrusting upwards of the golden spouts of flame. Something makes me look down at my body. I am naked. I look at my genitals and there I see a rather crude leather pouch covering them and compressing them. I reach down and, very gently remove it, and put it on one side.*

I return to this dream over and over again, not only in connection with these writings on spirituality but in connection with many aspects of my life. I share it because the note on which I want to end the chapter is about the central significance and challenge of facilitating the body side of things

and the spirit side of things into a dialogical relationship.

## REFERENCES

Ghent E. Masochism, submission, surrender. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 1990; 26: 108–36.

Gordon R. Masochism: the shadow side of the archetypal need to venerate and worship. In Samuels A (ed) *Psychopathology: Contemporary Jungian Perspectives*. London: Karnac, 1989; 237–54.

Jung CG. Letter to Bill W. In Adler G (ed.) *CG Jung Letters*. Vol. 2. London: Routledge, 1973.

Samuels A. *The Political Psyche*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993.

Samuels A. The hidden politics of healing: foreign dimensions of domestic practice. *American Imago* 2002; 59(4): 459–82.

Samuels A. Working directly with political, social and cultural material in the therapy session. In Withers R (ed.) *Controversies in Analytical Psychology*. Hove: Brunner-Routledge, 2003; 112–36.

Shorter B. *Susceptible to the Sacred*. London: Routledge, 1995.

*Correspondence: Andrew Samuels, 148 Mercers Rd, London N19 4PX*

*Email: andrew.samuels@virgin.net.*