

The Little Mermaid: Development of the Conscious Feminine

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<Abstract>

This study is an analysis of the symbol of the Little Mermaid that appeared in the subject's sandtray. It explores the process for a woman in her early forties of developing her femininity through the Little Mermaid and the archetypes that appear in the fairy tale of the Little Mermaid according to Jungian psychology. The process of the development of femininity that appears in the sandtray is examined through four types of female archetypes and four types of male archetypes. The therianthropic Little Mermaid is not a complete human form but a symbol of chaos and a symbol of the role of a medium between consciousness and unconsciousness. This study examines the reasons why the somatizing syndrome that the woman had experienced from her childhood was perceived through the Little Mermaid, and how the journey of her unconscious femininity toward conscientization through encounters with the symbols of masculinity was expressed in the sandtray.

Keywords : symbol, femininity, masculinity, archetype, unconsciousness, consciousness

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I . Introduction

I was a physically weak child who suffered from frequent illnesses, especially fevers, which necessitated many visits to doctors. Sometimes I stayed in hospital for long periods and at one time I underwent major surgery. My lack of appetite meant that I did not eat properly and thus I was always a skinny child. Running and other physical activities were all beyond my capacity; therefore, I rarely played with friends outside my home.

At home I did not talk much and played alone most of the time. Although I lived with my grandparents, both of them were busy and they were not affectionate types of people. My grandmother was a weak and nervous woman, yet she liked to put on makeup and show herself off. My mother was always too busy with housework to play with me so I read books by myself most of the time, especially fairy tales. My favorite story was "The Little Mermaid" by Hans Christian Andersen, which I read repeatedly. The Little Mermaid, who was half human and half fish, exuded a mystical attraction that affected me in different ways. I envied as well as pitied the Little Mermaid who had lived a happy life under the sea until by chance she saw a prince in the world above the sea and fell in love with him. She tried to become human in order to obtain his love and an immortal soul, and in so doing gave up her beautiful voice. When the Little Mermaid dissolved into bubbles due to her failure to win the prince's love, I felt a sense of loss because I identified with her plight.

The story of the Little Mermaid, who sacrificed an important thing in order to find love, resonated with me because I had always longed for my parents' attention and love. My mother, who was the eldest daughter-in-law in a large family, led a hard married life and thus she had no time to care for me. I was also jealous of my younger brother who received the attention and love of the family owing to the strong cultural value on male preference in Korea at that time. My parents only paid attention to me when I was sick and I only felt loved and cared for by them when I was in a hospital for more than a month or underwent major surgery. On those occasions I could forget my pain while I experienced their love. I realize now that my illnesses were a way of asking my parents to give me their love, had the same symbolic representation as that of the Little Mermaid's act of giving her voice to the witch to win the prince's love and endure pain in order to replace her finned tail with human

legs.

Symbols of self-awareness appear in diverse forms such as in dreams, fantasies and illusions. Symbols may also appear as intuitions or sudden inspirations. Physical or somatizing symptoms also serve the function of transmitting symbolic information to the body (Turner, 2009).

I suffered frequently from somatization until I got married. The symptoms would disappear temporarily when my husband showed me love but would reappear when I felt that he was neglecting me.

When I embarked on the sandplay therapy process, the symbol that appeared first in my sandtray was that of the Little Mermaid. This symbol appeared frequently during my process as did the symbols of the prince, the wizard and the king. Thus I could sense that some important things were beginning to take place inside me. As well as in my own process, the Little Mermaid also appeared in the sandtrays of my adult and child counselees. Therefore in this symbol paper, I will explore the meaning of the story of the Little Mermaid as I perceive it, based on Jungian psychological concepts, and examine the symbolism of the Little Mermaid for the counselees I met and how the symbolism can be applied to their lives.

II. The Little Mermaid

First, I will summarize the story as it was written by Hans Christian Andersen.

At the deepest place in the sea was the castle of the king of the mermaids. The king of the mermaids lost his queen and had been living without her for several years. Therefore, the old mother of the king was taking care of all the family members. The mother of the king was wise but had as many as twelve oysters attached to her tail to boast of her high status. The king of the mermaids had six princesses and all of the princesses were beautiful. Among the princesses, the youngest princess was the loveliest. All the young princesses had their own small flower gardens in the garden. The youngest princess made a flower garden round like the sun and planted only those flowers that were bright red like the sun. The youngest princess was a peculiar young lady who was well-mannered and was always lost in thought. Unlike her elder sisters who decorated their

gardens with novel things brought from sunken ships, the youngest princess treasured only the red flowers like the sun hanging in the high sky and a beautiful statue of a boy made of marble so white as to be transparent. It had been dropped from a wrecked ship.

The princesses were the most pleased when they were hearing the story of the human world through their grandmother. The princesses could go up in the sea when they became 15 years old. The youngest princess yearned for the world above the sea the most but she had to wait for five years. After a long waiting, the princess went up in the sea on her 15th birthday. When the princess stuck her head out of the water, the sun was setting and the sea was placid like a mirror. At the opposite side a ship with three sails floated. When she swam close to the window of the cabin, the Little Mermaid saw a prince. Just at that time, a birthday party for the prince was being held in the ship. After seeing the beautiful prince, the Little Mermaid could not take her eyes off him even for a moment. At that time, the ship began to run fast, with the waves dashing high, large dark clouds crowding the sky and lightning flashing in the sky far away. Huge waves struck the ship to break the ship into two pieces and the prince sank to the deep sea. The Little Mermaid could not leave the prince to die and saved his life. The Little Mermaid swam holding the prince until she could lay him in a warm sunny place on the shore. At that time, a bell rang in a large white building-an abbey-and young ladies spilled into the garden. The Little Mermaid swiftly ran into the sea and hid herself behind a large rock while covering her head and breast with sea bubbles so that nobody could see her. A young lady approached the prince and called other people. Finally, the prince recovered his consciousness and was moved into the large building by the people and then the Little Mermaid came back to the castle in the sea in sorrow. The princess could not forget the prince and went to the place where she parted from the prince and began to yearn for the human world more and more. Becoming curious about the world above the sea more and more, the Little Mermaid heard from her grandmother that mermaids could live for 300 years but would become bubbles in the sea after they died while humans had immortal souls even if their bodies would die. Her grandmother said that the only way for a mermaid to obtain an immortal soul was to have a human who loved and cherished the mermaid more than his parents appear and make an oath that he would love the mermaid forever whether in this world or the next. She also said that it was absolutely impossible. However, the Little Mermaid could not believe that it was impossible and visited the sea witch in order to get the prince and an immortal soul. To meet the sea witch, she had to pass through a whirlpool that breaks everything, and go through a pit where sticky foam was rising, a coal swamp, and a forest of hydras that were half animal and half plant. When she finally reached the witch, the Little Mermaid gave her beautiful voice to the witch and obtained a liquid medicine to make her have

human legs. However, she heard the following warning:

“To have beautiful legs, you should endure pain like being pricked by a sharp knife. All people will say that they never have seen as beautiful a young lady as you. However, you will feel the pain of stepping on a sharp knife and bleeding a lot. Once you have taken the shape of a human, you can never be changed back into a mermaid. Furthermore, if the prince does not love only you and think of only you to the extent that he forgets his parents, you can never obtain a soul. If the prince gets married to another woman, your heart will burst on the next morning and you will become bubbles.”

Before the sun rose, the Little Mermaid arrived at the palace where the prince lived and drank the liquid medicine potent as if it was burning. Then, pain like being pricked by a sharp, double-edged knife overwhelmed her and thus she lost her senses. When the sun began to shine on the sea, the prince found the Little Mermaid and asked her from where and how she had come there but the Little Mermaid could not speak because she had given her voice to the sea witch. The prince took the beautiful Little Mermaid, dressed her in expensive clothes and took the Little Mermaid everywhere he went. The prince and people around him called the Little Mermaid “a lovely young lady picked up on the shore.”

The prince came to like the Little Mermaid more and more over time but did not want to marry her. The prince’s mind was on another young lady thought to have saved the prince’s life. However, the Little Mermaid had to become the prince’s bride anyhow.

One day, the prince went on a trip to meet a princess of a neighboring country as instructed by his parents. The Little Mermaid accompanied him. The princess of that neighboring country was the very young lady thought by the prince to have saved his life when he was laid on the shore. The two had a wedding. In the evening of the day, the groom and the bride got on a ship. The Little Mermaid would become bubbles after the night. Before the daylight came, her elder sisters appeared carrying a dagger, gave it to her and said, “Before the sun rises, you should prick the prince’s heart with this dagger. If your legs are smeared with the warm blood of the prince, your legs will be united into one to become a fin of fish and you will become a mermaid again to come back to us. Now, hurry up! Before the sun rises, either the prince or you cannot but die!” The Little Mermaid went into the tent where the prince was sleeping, carrying the dagger in her hand. In the tent was sleeping the beautiful bride in the arms of the prince. The Little Mermaid

gently looked at the sharp dagger and then stared at the face of prince. The Little Mermaid's hand holding the dagger trembled. At that moment, the Little Mermaid threw the dagger into the sea far away and threw herself into the sea. She could feel that her body was dissolving to become bubbles. At that time, the sun rose above the sea and the sunlight cozily and warmly shone on the sea bubbles cold as death. The Little Mermaid never felt that she had died. The Little Mermaid felt that her body was becoming lighter and lighter to come out of the bubbles and continuously go up.

The Little Mermaid asked, "Where am I going?" The daughters of air answered. "Where there are the daughters of air! You, young mermaid lady, do not have any immortal soul. You can never get a soul without getting a human's love. Therefore, to get eternal life force, you should rely on another power. You can get it by doing good things. If we steadily do good things for 300 years, we can also get immortal souls as with humans to enjoy eternal happiness." The Little Mermaid kissed the bride unnoticed by humans and made a smile to the prince. Then, she went up together with the daughters of air to the rose-colored cloud flowing in the high sky. (Andersen, 2010)

1. Analytic psychological interpretation of the Little Mermaid

With regard to the fairy tale, Marie-Louise von Franz (1999) said, "This is the collective unconscious psychic processes that show the most simple, concise and core form of archetypes." I will examine the archetypes of the symbols possessed by the individual figures that appear in the story of the Little Mermaid.

The Little Mermaid is an animal that has the upper body of a woman and the tailfin of a fish as its lower body. It is an example of "therianthropic" (i.e., part human, part animal) forms that appear frequently in myths. It is said that the therianthropes appearing in the myths of Greece and Rome were born due to unfaithful unions of gods and humans in most cases. An important characteristic of the therianthropes appearing in the myths of Greece and Rome is that the function of the animal elements possessed by the therianthropes is not to determine their features but rather to imply states of disorders and chaos that have not been unified by a certain single and consistent order (Lee, 2005). As a symbol, the Little Mermaid can be regarded as a medium where consciousness and the unconscious meet each other. This

medium is instinctive energy that has not yet undergone the process of becoming conscious. When this process does take place it enables previously unconscious contents to rise to consciousness, where the ego can consider and make decisions regarding them. This requires that the ego and the Self are related to each other. Through this process of individuation the human spirit can mature (Lee, 1978).

We must consider what the Little Mermaid symbolism means psychologically. She lives deep in the sea, a symbol of the unconscious which includes the personal unconscious and, at a deeper level, the collective unconscious. The Little Mermaid can move freely in the sea and above the sea, and it is therefore a symbol of the ability to cross the boundary between the world of unconsciousness and the world of consciousness. However, the Little Mermaid as she is cannot step onto the land or participate in everyday life. Although she possesses the form of a beautiful woman, she does not have human legs. Therefore, she can be considered to be in a state where the process of becoming conscious has not taken place. Initially, the Little Mermaid as a symbol of conscious femininity has not yet matured when she meets the prince who represents a masculine archetype in the form of the lover. Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette (1990) subdivided the main adult masculine archetypes into four types: kings, lovers, magicians and warriors. (The explanation of these four types of archetypes will be mentioned later.)

At the beginning of the story, the Little Mermaid lives in primal unity with the Mother in the form of her grandmother. The animus of the Little Mermaid remains undifferentiated in the unconsciousness. Her desire to have the form of a human and develop consciousness is stimulated by her encounter with the prince. Part of the process involves a sacrifice to the witch, a powerful feminine archetype. The rugged journey to go to see the witch is the initiation, in this case a process during which the young girl becomes a mature woman who has left the state of primal unity with the mother.

The king of the mermaids has been living alone with his mother, instead of the queen. That is, his anima or feminine energy is locked into the relationship with his mother, rather than with a lover. Toni Woolf (1981) introduces four aspects in her model of the development of adult femininity, or, as she terms it, the “structural form of female spirit”: the archetypal or imaginal forms of the Mother, the Lover or Heitaira (a high-class hostess in ancient Greece), the Medial woman (an intermediary or those that have the power of a

medium), and the Amazon (an aggressive female warrior appearing in Greek mythology). These aspects are elaborated on by Lee (2001), as follows:

The maternal instinct possessed by the Mother involves defending, caring for, helping and giving. The Mother instinctively provides shelter to those who are in danger and those who are in the process of growth without having matured and still in need of protection; she helps their growth. A negative aspect of the Mother is the fact that cares, worries and affection provided when no longer necessary may prevent the other's sense of independence.

The Heitaira (companion) instinctively pays attention to men's personal interests, propensities or various problems and stimulates and promotes those aspects. This energy arouses men to assume their social responsibility and realize their holistic personality. However, if married women fail to perceive their nature as a Heitaira or suppress it, they will unwittingly turn their son into their lover and make their daughter into their girlfriend.

A positive aspect of the Amazon is her role as a competitor for stimulating men's desire for honor and as a sacred female comrade for men. Negative aspects are never recognizing their patriarchal values or superiority, fighting only with masculine weapons, not being able to abandon the honor of fighting for suffragism, and becoming a wicked woman at home.

The Medial Woman, or Medium, perceives unconscious backgrounds which are the source of all cultural values. This energy is affected by those aspects of unconsciousness that are ready to become conscious. While the attitude of a mature ego is necessary to distinguish between the collective unconsciousness and individual unconsciousness, if the ego blindly assimilates with activated archetypal contents, the ego will fall under the control of the archetype and become unable to distinguish between what belongs to the individual and what is part of the collective(Lee, 2001).

The old mother of the king of the mermaids is experienced and wise but will not leave the sea world where she lives. She tells the Little Mermaid that attempting to become a human is a reckless act and emphasizes that only the sea world is a safe space. The king's mother serves the role of a mother to the Little Mermaid who has not yet matured but she prevents the Little Mermaid from developing consciousness by means of unnecessary worries and cares.

The witch whom the Little Mermaid met in order to become human is a mediumistic woman, that is, a Medial Woman that helped to develop the consciousness of the Little Mermaid who had previously been unconscious. However, since the witch did not have a mature ego, she expressed her negative energy. In other words, she held the values of the collective and was under the influence of the archetype. Her destructive action was “taking the Little Mermaid's voice,” which is an expression of her true authority as a woman.

The princess of the neighboring country who married the prince is a Heitaira (companion) who would serve the masculine rather than the feminine. Although the prince is an archetype of the lover to the Little Mermaid, that is, masculine energy for the Little Mermaid to develop consciousness and become a mature woman, the prince also needed to realize his holistic personality as a king instead of only serving the function of a lover. What he needed was union with the feminine, in this case, the Heitaira.

The garden round like the sun and decorated with red flowers made by the Little Mermaid is also noticeable. Since the sun is the source of light and heat, it is the energy that we need to live, both Logos and Eros energy. The sun's shining during the daytime permits all objects to be perceived and thus it a symbol of brightening, perception and consciousness (Ammann, 2009). The flowers are a symbol of wholeness. They are also an expression of love and are associated with femininity (Lee, 2001). They indicate that the Little Mermaid has always been preparing for developing consciousness while living in the sea of the unconscious. The femininity of the Little Mermaid encountered fantastic masculinity through the statue of a boy laid in the garden, and the femininity in the unconsciousness of the Little Mermaid faced the masculinity in her consciousness only when she met the real prince.

Although she dissolved into bubbles after deciding not to kill the prince, who had married a princess instead of her, the Little Mermaid emerged from the bubbles and ascended into the sky together with the daughters of the air in order to obtain eternal vitality. Around two centuries before Christ, Stoic philosophers associated air with spirits. Air symbolized freedom, purity, and mental life (Tresidder, 2000). The Little Mermaid chose death by herself. It can be regarded as a free will act by the Little Mermaid's self-consciousness to find her archetype through her unconsciousness, that is, self-realization and the beginning of the development of femininity toward conscientization.

2. The symbol of the Little Mermaid in the sandtray

In this section I will present my personal sandplay photos in which the Little Mermaid, the prince, king and witch appear together. I will explore them through the theory of mature masculinity that was proposed by Moore and Gillette (1990).

1) The Little Mermaid meets the prince

Figure 1 is a photo of what appeared in the first sandtray. In the center of the tray, the formation is a large circle with the blue bottom of the tray revealed. In the left rear of the tray are pillars in a line. They appear to be ruins that could not support a structure, such as a square. The Little Mermaid is sitting under the pillars. On the left side of the Little Mermaid are a small jar and a pearl that look as though they came out of the jar. In the right rear section of the tray are scattered jewels of various colors. A sailboat appears to be heading from the right rear to the left rear sections. The prince is on this boat.



Figure 1. Sandpicture showing the Little Mermaid and the Prince

I wrote: "I am the Little Mermaid. I have lived in a place unknown to anybody for a long time from the immemorial past. I am waiting for someone. Though I don't know who he is, I believe that he will come to me some day. There is precious treasure that I should guard. Nobody has found the treasure yet. There, far away from here, someone is coming to

me. The man that is coming on a nice ship is my lover whom I have longed for so much. He will take me with him. He will lead me to a world where I have never been to.”

I always wanted to be loved. My young feminine waited passively for my parents to pay attention to me and love me. It is said that the journey of a heroine begins when a woman experiences “femininity as being passive, operational or non-productive and refusing it” (Murdock, 1990). At the time I was making this sandpicture, in my life I had just begun to take charge of a counseling center, started working enthusiastically, and absorbed in this new experience called Sandplay Therapy. I was also experiencing tensions between my roles as a mother, wife, daughter and daughter-in-law at home and a desire to succeed in my work.

My internal conflict between not wanting to give up any of my roles and thoughts about giving up work and study in order to dedicate myself to child rearing and housework was too hard for me to bear. I wanted to find out who I was and the way that I should go. I continually asked questions about this to myself.

Moore and Gillette (1990) suggest that the Lover represents symbolically the archetypal energy in the beginning called liveliness, namely being alive or passionate. It has continued in our creative adaptation to sex, food, well-being, reproduction and the exhaustion of life and in humans’ basic longing for meaning to their existence. Lovers are idealists and dreamers. If a man is captured by a shadow lover, he will be poisoned and the energy of the lover will destroy him and people around him. Lovers make other male energies more humane and more affectionate and direct these energies into the actual lives of people that strive in the difficult world. Although I was manifesting passive femininity by waiting for a prince to approach me, I was ready to become more conscious and autonomous. Lovers could energize me so that I could connect with passion and passionate living attitudes. However, Lovers also require other masculine energies. Lovers that have no boundary lines need the King’s energy to determine limits, organize and establish order in their chaos. To act decisively, warriors are necessary. Moore and Gillette say that for Lovers not to fall prey to their emotions, it is necessary to step back and obtain more objective views. For this, a witch is needed. The symbols of a king and a witch appearing in the next photo will be linked with the lover that appeared first so that they will serve these roles.

The boat appearing in this sandtray connects the Little Mermaid to the prince. Boats

are feminine vessels that function as connectors with each other and between people. They sail on the sea of the unconscious, preventing people from being drowned in unconsciousness (Von Franz, 1999).

2) The Little Mermaid meets the magician

In Figure 2, the sandtray is divided into a rear part and a front part as land and water, respectively. In the rear part of the sandtray are crudely formed waves and pillars of fire. A line of red beads is extended from the inside of the clam on the right rear of the tray to the king laid in the left rear of the tray. Red beads are laid in a row beginning from the inside of the shellfish at the right top (rear) and extending to the king laid in the left bottom (front). The shellfish symbolizes femininity. The king is standing in the left bottom (front) of the sandtray looking at a far place. Next to the shellfish is a witch with a cat in her arms symbolizing femininity. In the center is a wizard holding a flaming torch, facing the king. On the left is another witch holding a mirror and on the right is another wizard holding a bead. The Little Mermaid is heading toward the king along the road laid in red with a red bead in her hand.

Again, I wrote: "I (the Little Mermaid) go on a trip from deep in the sea to a new world. I go out to the world outside the sea carrying the treasure precious to me. The red beads are a way on which I should gradually go and is my central axis. The magician having



Figure 2. Sandpicture with the Little Mermaid

a cat in her arms is my mother who has been guarding and protecting me. She is sad for my leaving. However, since she knows that she cannot keep me at her side, she supports me at my rear. Since I have to go to the new world, the wizard lights the torch and leads me in the way I should go. The magician holding a bead in her hand utters an incantation to give wisdom to me. The witch holding a mirror in her hand is predicting the future reflected on the mirror. I have met the king. I am afraid because I cannot know what will happen to me but this situation where I must leave is my destiny.”

The Little Mermaid who had waited for her lover to come in Fig. 1 brought about a change in her femininity through the meeting with the prince from passive femininity to active femininity in Fig. 2. The shellfish symbolizes erotic femininity and birth. The red beads in the shellfish represent the energy of life that enables the Little Mermaid to be conscientized, as symbolized by the red flowers grown by the Little Mermaid in the garden in the sea. The red beads symbolize the birth of feminine energy which heads toward the king by itself. For self-realization, masculine personalities should be united with feminine personalities or consciousness which is feminine should be united with an unconsciousness which is masculine (Lee, 2001). To meet the masculine unconsciousness, the Little Mermaid goes on a journey by herself instead of waiting for the king. The king is authoritative, solemn, and plays the role of restoring order in chaotic states. In my life, the king is a symbol that helps me to make decisions in states where I am indecisive over studies and my life as a housewife. My father was a tyrant sometimes and a king of negative images who was infinitely lethargic at other times. I always searched for the masculinity of a king who was authoritative, solemn, and benevolent. Here, the king is the symbol that I should meet for the conscientization of my femininity. In the sand box in Fig. 2 appear three magicians and a medium. The magicians are one witch and two wizards. They mean the opposite poles of anima and animus.

The wizards as archetypal energy are wise ones and masters of skills. They are in harmony with the observing ego and are archetypes that isolate us from the force of other archetypes and make us considerate and prudent. The shadowy aspects of the wizards are fabricators and negating ‘naive ones’ (Moore & Gillette, 1990).

The four figures in the sand box are holding a white cat, a torch, a bead, and a mirror, respectively. The white cat is a healer and a nurse. It destroys evil, relieves nervousness,

and reinforces people's recuperative power (Von Franz, 1999). The witch with a white cat in her arms is the symbol of a mother among the four femininity development models suggested by Wolff (1981). The wizard holding a torch is standing facing the king. The torch symbolizes life and plays the role of a guide who lights the way so that the Little Mermaid can go safely to the king. The mirror means self-awareness, wisdom, and mind (Cooper, 1978). The witch holding a mirror plays the role of a medium. Mature ego is necessary for femininity to conscientize unconsciousness. The pillar of fire means closeness to conscientization. This is the very fire of life (Moore & Gillette, 1990).

After meeting the magicians, the Little Mermaid finally comes out from her world of unconsciousness and moves toward consciousness. In the world of consciousness is the king. For her to enter the world of consciousness, the three magicians and a medium help the Little Mermaid.

3) The Little Mermaid meets the king

Fig. 3 shows violet beads and a violet gemstone in the center of the sandtray and a witch with a cat in her arms, the Little Mermaid that has become human, a witch holding a torch and the king standing in a circle surrounding the beads. On the left, right and bottom of the box are three hills made of some sand forming a triangle.

I wrote: "I finally completed the tough journey and became human. I have come to have a figure as a beautiful woman. In the center are myself not yet refined and another myself refined through the process to become human. Both are myself which is so precious to me. The magician facing me should be one that keeps me from losing my maternal aspect. It should be the figure of my matured femininity. The magician holding a torch protected me so that I could finish the long journey safely. She gave me wisdom and insight every time I was experiencing difficulties. I finally met the king. The king that has the solemnity not to lose dignity and fairness enables me to maintain the balance of my mind."

The Little Mermaid became human through a process of developing her consciousness. Surrounding two kinds of violet treasure in the center, there are a magician holding a torch which is a symbol of life, a medium having a white cat which is a symbol of healing, and the king.



Figure 3. The Little Mermaid has become human

Moore and Gillette (1990) suggest that the king has wide experience, is composite, wise and unselfish. The king is the most important among the four male archetype energies and perfectly balances the other remaining archetypes. The king's energy serves two functions: first, keeping order and second, giving riches and blessings. The king's shadowy aspects are a tyrant and a weakling.

In this sandtray, the king enables the Little Mermaid to maintain a balance in her conscious life and allows blessings to fall upon her. Here, the opposition between masculinity and femininity occurs too.

The unprocessed violet gemstone may be an aspect of Self that I have not yet found and the round beads may be Self that has undergone the development of consciousness process or the result of self-realization. These two are myself that I cannot disregard or abandon and something that should be kept by a union of a healthy masculinity and femininity.

Initially, before encountering the Lover, the Little Mermaid appeared in the sandtray as described above as one with passive femininity and an unconscious ego. After encountering the Prince, an archetype of men, the previously unconscious ego was activated to become conscious. In this process, the wisdom of the magician helps the Little Mermaid develop an observing ego and harmonize her energies. It can be seen that after engaging in the development of consciousness process, the Little Mermaid meets the king to become human and enter the way of self-individuation that is not yet perfect.

4) Symbol of the Little Mermaid seen in cases of counselees

(1) Case 1

The following photo (Fig. 4) is from session 10 of a 37-year-old woman. This woman's child had been getting continuous counseling due to ADHD and the mother had a problem in her attitudes about child rearing. She could not admit explicitly that her child had a problem although she sometimes perceived it. She had inconsistent attitudes that changed depending on her mood. The counselee's self could not be separated from her mother and she reported that she could not well organize her house, could not concentrate on anything and was experiencing depression, lethargy, irritation and anger, and so on.



Figure 4. Sandpicture of Counselee #1

She made the form of a circle in the center of the sandtray with her palms and laid green/blue crystal beads in the circle. On the left and right sides, she laid vines and large trees and in the center, she placed the Little Mermaid. Four fairies were positioned around the circle, with a clam placed left of the circle. On the right side are a sand timer and a prince.

The counselee's: "This gives a comfortable feeling like a fairy tale. The witches try to change the Little Mermaid within the time limit. It seems that there is a time limit for changing the Little Mermaid. The Little Mermaid is not a complete human yet. She can become a complete human only if she is loved. Since the prince can wait, it seems that she

will become human. Of course, she may also become a fish but it seems like that she will become human in this case. It seems that although the witches may help her become human, they seem to also suppress her to make her feel confined and prevent her from running away. They look like mothers.”

There is the form of a circle together with a cross made by the four witches facing each other. In this case, it seems that the Little Mermaid is sitting without being able to move at all. It seems that there is nothing the Little Mermaid can do. Although there is the prince, he is far away and the Little Mermaid and the prince are not looking at each other. The Little Mermaid is the counselee who is still remaining in the form of a girl and has not yet been separated from the world of the mothers. The four witches appearing here serve only the role of mediums in the development steps of adult women as suggested by Toni Woolf. Although she is married and has a child, she has always been in a conflicting and unstable relationship with her mother due to housework issues and problems in child rearing. This sandpicture cast new light on the relationship with her mother through counseling. I could see why the counselee told me that the witches placing temporal limits on the Little Mermaid were like her mother who had always placed temporal limits on her. It seems that the counselee had to develop her self-consciousness through separation from her mother in the process of treatment. For the Little Mermaid to become human, she should experience her own voice inside her saying what she wants in her deep unconsciousness as the witches will not change her.

(2) Case 2

Figure 5 shows a sandpicture made by a five-year-old boy in his sixth session. According to his mother’s report, the child was hit by his senior while he was attending a kindergarten and in the process of the counselee’s parents’ protest against the kindergarten regarding the issue, a conflict developed between the teacher and the parents. Eventually, the child quit the kindergarten and the child began to receive counseling after his parents complained to the relevant education office. The child has two elder sisters and his mother tries to control all situations and is highly anxious in rearing the child. At the beginning of the counseling, the child mainly played with primitive animals like dinosaurs, having the

animals attack and fight with each other in the sandtray. This is the first time that he made a sandtray.

He revealed the bottom of the tray on the left side of the sandtray and placed furniture and other objects on the right side Fig. 5. He divided the house from the rest of the sandtray with a fence. There are combat planes, fighting equipment, airplanes and small mice. Two Little Mermaids were placed on the bed and one Little Mermaid was lying on the sofa.



Figure 5. Sandpicture of Counselee #2

He said: “I must clean up the floor! Nobody should come here, I should guard here. The teacher came (the Little Mermaid on the sofa). Elder sisters... (after laying the two Little Mermaids on the bed). If the enemy invades, we should escape in this airplane.”

The child uses the expressions *Eonni* or *Oppa* (Korean words for older sister and older brother used by girls) rather than *Nuna* or *Hyaeng* (Korean words for older sister and older brother used by boys). This is probably because of the influence of his older sisters. The child is quite interested in the Little Mermaid. The Little Mermaid may symbolize his older sisters and mother. It seems that since the child has more relations with females than with males, he has difficulties in entering into relations with peers of the same sex as him, in a sense to learn from “older brothers.” Currently, since the counselee does not attend any kindergarten, his time of playing alone has become longer than his time of playing with his peers, and although he spends long periods of time with his mother, she found it difficult in playing with the child.

Since the form of the Little Mermaid is a figure of a young Little Mermaid, he may be a counselee that has not yet been separated from his mother who herself is still immature.

III. Conclusion

Thus far, thanks to the symbolism of femininity in the Little Mermaid and the symbols of the male archetype encountered by the Little Mermaid, I feel that I have developed. My ego that was to a great extent unconscious became related to the Self through the process of the development of consciousness. To find the Self, I also had to undergo an initiation process that involved the “ego’s going toward the ‘Self,’” that is, becoming as whole as possible if the ego actively serves the development of consciousness. Jung called this self-realization or individuation. The unconsciousness is an infinite world. No matter how much consciousness develops, there is always a vast amount that remains unconscious to us (Lee, 2001). In my process that involves images, I have not yet met a warrior among the masculine archetypes. However, I realize that I have experienced the aggressiveness possessed by warriors as they fight for their cause as I reflect on my attitudes toward living, and experience boosts my energy and motivation. Warriors think clearly and practically understand their limits and abilities in any situations (Moore & Gillette, 1990). I feel that if I continuously undergo my individuation processes, I will meet a warrior who is the male archetype necessary to me some day. The time when self-realization, that is, an individuation process is undergone in earnest is from middle age. At that point, ideally we are able to sustain our courage to endure pain and find meaning in it (Lee, 2002).

For me, the meeting between feminine and masculine energies for self-discovery is an important process required to change our attitudes in life. I know that in me that union has not yet matured even after my middle age began.

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