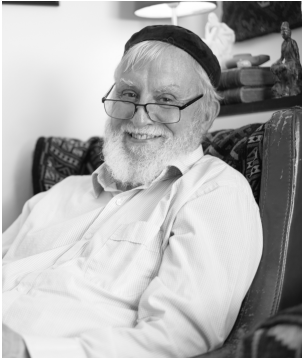


"Differentiation: A Jungian Reconsideration of the Oedipal Task".

Chris Milton



This paper reframes the Oedipal situation as the challenge of differentiation. Drawing on Matte Blanco's (1975) concept of *symmetrisation*, it shows how the unconscious tends to collapse distinctions — mother, nurturer, and beloved may all belong to the same undifferentiated set. Differentiation is the work of *de-symmetrisation*, establishing asymmetry so that the psyche can say: "this is mother, that is lover; this was then, this is now." The process of differentiation leads to resolution of the Oedipus complex. Two clinical vignettes illustrate how undifferentiation plays a role in the unresolved Oedipus complex in adult life. The Oedipus complex thus becomes a crucible for psychic re-mapping, allowing love and creativity to emerge once maternal, paternal, and erotic elements are disentangled.