## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:    Encounters with the Goddess:  An Ethnographic Study of the Emergence of Feminine Forms of Consciousness

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This dissertation examines one aspect of how new cultural meanings have developed among some contemporary American women.  This particular development concerns a shift in their meaning system away from male-centered symbols towards a meaning system that includes and even emphasizes feminine symbolic forms.

From an outsider's point of view, the contemporary "goddess movement" might be seen as a fad, but what does it mean from an insider's perspective?  This dissertation presents an ethnographic exploration in depth from the insider's point of view, into the lives of eight women for whom goddess symbols have become an integral part of their meaning systems, their consciousness, and their social worlds.  This study explores the emergence of goddess forms in the experience of these informants.  It examines what images appear in their consciousness, how they interpret these patterns, and how their interpretations of these patterns affect their daily lives within their social worlds.

The theoretical framework consists of two components.  The first is the field work component based on ethnographic research methods such

as ethnographic interviews, life history research, and self-ethnography from the journals and other writings of informants. The second component is the theoretical framework woven from three distinct disciplines. They are cultural anthropology, the study of myth as it pertains to goddess imagery, and Jungian psychology. Interpretive methods from these three fields assist in describing the process through which these informants have developed new forms of consciousness that derive from goddess mythology and goddess imagery.

This research shows how participation in the study of dreams and goddess mythology helped informants reconstruct key elements in their meaning systems from a woman-centered perspective. It also reveals how informants made lifestyle choices in order to cultivate and pursue their relationships to goddess images and other forms of feminine consciousness, and how they have accomplished an integration of inner images with outer dimensions of their social worlds.

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE GODDESS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC

STUDY OF THE EMERGENCE OF FEMININE FORMS

OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by

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# PREFACE

This dissertation is a cultural exploration of the inner dimension of an important contemporary social development. This phenomenon, termed a cultural movement by some observers, is the re-emergence of goddess images and goddess mythology within the American imagination to such an extent that this is causing a shift in the consciousness and meaning systems of many individuals and bringing about changes on the cultural level.

I am interested in what is happening in the inner lives of women who are incorporating feminine archetypes into their meaning systems. I am looking at how they cultivate, interpret and integrate these forms of consciousness into their meaning systems and into their social worlds. My research for this dissertation, therefore, is based on the experience of eight women who have been working with their dreams and with goddess mythology for nearly a decade.

Before proceeding, here is a brief overview of the contents of each of the chapters contained in this study.

## Chapter I: Introduction: Theory and Method

The first chapter consists of a detailed description of each of the three analytical components of the theoretical framework, key

definitions, and a description of the methodologies used in this study. The three components are cultural anthropology, mythology, especially as it pertains to goddess images, and Jungian psychology. In addition, I have described the methodological issues I encountered during the analysis of the research.

**Chapter II: The Women In the Seminar And the Neglected Goddess Archetype**

This chapter introduces the notion that feminine forms of consciousness like those found in goddess mythology have been undervalued in American culture, but are being rediscovered, reevaluated, and studied by women such as my informants. In addition, this chapter introduces the members of the goddess seminar to the reader through some ethnographic interview materials and a demographic descriptions of the group as a whole.

**Chapter III: Dreaming the Goddess. The Role of Dreams and Myths in the Development of Feminine Consciousness**

In this chapter I describe the place that dreams and myths occupy in the lives of the women in the goddess seminar. I have used extensive ethnographic materials in this chapter to discuss this subject from their insider's point of view. I seek to show how their participation with their dreams and their study of mythology has helped them develop their own consciousness about the Feminine Principle and its effects in their social worlds. In order to show how this development has occurred in depth, I have chosen to focus an the experience of one informant, Lucy, while using some supporting material from the experiences of other seminar members.

**Chapter IV:   Following Jung's Finger:  Background on the Format for the Goddess Seminar**

This chapter takes its title from a quote from one of my informants, Christa, who used it to describe how she came to the understanding of the meaning of her psychological work.  It locates the format of the goddess seminar within the Jungian tradition as an educational group. To explain what is meant by the Jungian tradition, this chapter describes the nature and origins of the Jungian educational model, Jung's interest in mythology and dream interpretation, and something about the culture that grew up around Jung and the Jung Institute in Zurich.  Since several informants have attended seminars at the Zurich Institute, I have included ethnographic materials that describe their experience from their insider's point of view.

**Chapter V:   Resurrecting the Queen of Heaven and Earth:  A Summary of Inanna's Myth and Its Influence on the Women in the Seminar**

Chapter V presents the Inanna myth to the reader from several points of view.  First, it begins and ends with ethnographic material from my informants that describes what Inanna's mythology means to them, how it has informed their consciousness and affected their social worlds.  Second, this chapter contains some general background on the recovery and translation by archaeologists of the tablets on which this myth was inscribed, as well as some background on the Sumerian culture as we understand it today.  The third element in this chapter is a summary of the interpretation of Inanna's mythology used by my informants in the goddess seminar.

iv

**Chapter VI:   Who is Inanna? She is the Feminine Aspect of God That Was Missing**

Chapter VI continues the discussion about the influence that the Inanna mythology has had on the consciousness of informants from their insider's point of view and provides information on various translations and interpretations and their possible meanings.

**Chapter VII:   It Took Me a Long Time to Find Her—The Goddess**

This chapter, and the next, contain ethnographic materials on the lives of two informants, Eleanor and Nora.   The chapters are titled after phrases they used to describe the Goddess in ethnographic interviews with me.   Having discussed the role of dreams and myths in Chapter III using Lucy's story, having described the structure and intent of the seminar in Chapter IV, and having detailed the Inanna mythology, its Sumerian origins, and its impact on my informants, I now wanted to provide in depth detailed examples of how this work with myth and dreams has affected the lives of the informants from the depth of their experience.

Chapter VII is about Eleanor's struggle with chronic depression that had caused her to suffer for many years.   Through her work with dreams and the Inanna myth she was able to find a key to unlock goddess images in her dream world.   These images became available to her through a form of meditation Jung called active imagination. From the contents of her inner world she has begun to discover a source of poetry, and is developing this newly found talent.

## Chapter VIII:   The Eye of Eternity

This chapter focuses on Nora's story.  Nora is one of the more senior members of the goddess seminar.  Her story goes back over sixty years to her childhood in upstate New York where she was a latch key child, working to "invent herself," as she put it.

Nora has been a student of Jungian psychology and mythology for many years.  I was interested particularly in how her consciousness of the Feminine Principle has developed over time, and what part it has played in her life.  Her story is presented now to try to show how these factors can become thoroughly integrated into the life of an individual who is active within a rich outer social world of family, friends, and community associations.

## Chapter IX:   Conclusion:   The Goddess Within

In this final chapter I summarize how participation in the goddess seminar has helped informants reconstruct key cultural factors in their lives from their woman-centered perspective.  I also describe how the research presented in this study helped to reveal an integrative field of women's experience which has at its center archetypal structures that may be explored when interpretive methods from psychology, mythology and anthropology are applied.  My work with informants indicates that this largely unexplored field of experience responds to methods of exploration which puts a woman at the center of her own experience within her social world.

In this final chapter I emphasize how my informants have chosen to maintain a style of life in which they actively pursue and

deliberately cultivate a relationship with imaginary fields of experience that include goddess images and other forms of feminine consciousness. In addition I delineate the variety of ways they have chosen to integrate the inner and outer dimensions of their social worlds, and how they allocate resources to accomplish this task.

Before proceeding, I want to thank my informants for their cooperation in the dissertation process. I am extremely grateful to all eight women for their courage and participation in this enterprise. I also wish to thank The University of Maryland faculty, particularly my dissertation committee and its chairman for their open-minded support for my interest in the work with dreams and mythology from a cultural perspective.

Finally, I wish to thank my family for their patience and the sacrifices they have made in order to help me through the process of my academic work for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

# DEDICATION

To my parents, my husband, my children,
and my informants.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

xi

## CHAPTER I:  INTRODUCTION

## THEORY AND METHOD

**Feminine Consciousness:  An Emerging Cultural Value**

In many cultures throughout the history of humanity, divinity has been symbolized as female, either as supreme creatrix or in partnership with male symbols (Baring, 1991; Bernal, 1987 and 1991; Campbell, 1978b and 1978c; Eisler, 1987; Harrison, 1922; Jung, 1967; Stone, 1976).  Archeological evidence indicates that for at least 30,000 years during late Paleolithic (Ice Age) and early Neolithic times, proto-European people practiced an earth-centered religion and worshipped a female deity.  Magnificent images of the female form, called "Venuses" found on the walls of caves, stand as testimony to this fact (Arguelles, 1977; Gimbutas, 1974 and 1989; Lutsch, 1993). Even in early historical times at the beginning of the patriarchal era, in the Bronze Age (approximately 3000-1000 B.C.) and early Iron Age (approximately 1000 B.C.-100 A.D.) it is well documented that goddesses were worshipped along with gods (Baring, 1991; Campbell, 1978b; Graves, 1948 and 1960; Harrison, 1922; Hawkes, 1968; Kerenyi, 1985).  In some religions today, for example, among the Aborigines in Australia and the Hindus in India, divinity is expressed as a powerful feminine force (Arguelles, 1977; Lawlor, 1991; Seibert, 1987; Spretnak, 1991; Teish, 1985).

1

However, in the tradition of the West, under the force of Hebrew-Christian Eurocentric colonialism, the Goddess has been artificially ignored, forgotten, suppressed, and eclipsed by a symbol system that has been dominated by masculine images and language (von Franz, 1976, p. 25ff.). In the United States during the last half of the twentieth century, in what is now called the "post-modern" era, something interesting is happening. In the post-modern era women are reclaiming as a birth-right, the Mother-Goddess (Aburdene, 1992; Anderson, 1991; Spretnak, 1991). "The collective memory of the Goddess is reawakening as millions of women acknowledge their power, experience freedom from male domination, and channel sweat and creativity into transforming the world" (Aburdene, 1992, p. 244).

This reinterpretation of religious imagery appears to represent a generalized theological and mythological shift in the religious imagination of many Americans. Recent documentation by writers such as Anderson and Hopkins (1991) indicates that this event is a cultural movement originating on a grass-roots level and rising up out of the experience of many American women. To an ethnographer this re-emergence of the Feminine Principle and its forms is of particular interest, especially as it affects the lives of individual women.

From an outsider's perspective this phenomenon might appear to be a fad, but what does it mean from an insider's point of view? This dissertation is an ethnographic exploration of the insider's, or emic, perspective of the lives of some women for whom goddess symbols have become an integral part of their meaning systems, their consciousness, and their social worlds. Their inner worlds, their mythic imagination, and their dreams are richly endowed with

2

archetypal feminine images. However, when they examine their outer
social experience in light of their inner experience, the outer
correlatives have often been underdeveloped or missing altogether.

As we shall see, these women have developed personal meaning systems
that include archetypal feminine forms.  Their meaning systems
reflect their inner experience and support their creativity within
their social worlds.  This emergence in their consciousness of the
inner forms of feminine power has engendered a hunger in these women
to know more about the Goddess, her ancient roots, and those cultures
in which feminine spirituality has meaning.

From my study of these women and their process these questions
emerged. What goddess images appear in their consciousness?  How do
they interpret these patterns?  How do these patterns both affect
their consciousness and reflect within their social worlds, and how
do their interpretations of these patterns affect where they are in
their social worlds?

The material for this dissertation is based on my work over a seven
year period, approximately 1985-1992, with eight women.  They are
members of a seminar that meets monthly to study goddess mythology
and Jungian psychology.

These eight women are engaged in reconstructing key cultural factors
in their lives from a woman centered perspective.  Their efforts at
this reconstruction appear to originate from a deep psychological
response to their social experience as females in a society dominated
by a male driven meaning system.  This response includes several
elements.  The first element of this reconstructive work is their

participation in a seminar on goddess mythology. I created this seminar as an opportunity for women to develop their understanding of their psychology through the study of goddess myths and women's spirituality. The mythopoetic quality of participation has created a rich experience for individual members and the group as a whole. The second aspect in the reconstructive process for these women is their individual psychotherapy with me or other depth psychotherapists. The third aspect is their independent work such as material from their journals, dream work, art work, reading and research, body work, and meditation. The fourth aspect is how they live their lives in community with other people.

There are two structural components to this study. The first component is material from field work with the informants. Throughout this dissertation I will concentrate on the experiences of the eight members of the women's seminar on goddess mythology. When I first told them about this project, they all agreed enthusiastically to participate as informants. Therefore, the field work component for this dissertation is based on ethnographic material from them. More specifically, although I will include material from interviews with all eight members, I will work in depth with three informants from interviews, life histories, and self-ethnography that they had provided mainly from journals. I will also include material from process-recordings, and seminar notes, and from my own experience as a participant-observer. In order to objectify or clarify the contents of the field work, I will occasionally include material from women who are not in this seminar.

The second component of this dissertation is the analysis and interpretation of ethnographic and other field work materials from

4

informants. An important element of American Studies is its interdisciplinary approach to scholarship. Therefore, my theoretical framework is constructed from three interrelated fields of study. The first field of study to be delineated in my analysis is cultural anthropology, especially ethnography and culture theory. The second is the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung, which he called analytical psychology. It is also referred to as Jungian, depth, or archetypal psychology. The third field to be applied in this study is the field of mythology, particularly as it pertains to goddess mythology. Contributions from all three disciplines offer a useful synthesis for interpretation of the emergence of goddess forms in the contemporary American cultural experience.

This study is first and foremost an ethnography, an anthropo-psychological method for discussing and interpreting the cultural component of the lives of informants, their use of language, symbols, and beliefs, their hopes, and their dreams. The craft of ethnography provides techniques to describe, translate and communicate the levels of meaning that exist in the lives of the women of the goddess seminar and within the seminar as a whole from the emic, or insider's, point of view. It is the foundation for interpretation and analysis of the research.

In addition, mythology and Jungian psychology provide theoretical structures for interpretation of the ethnographic material collected from the women in the seminar. Within the academic community it is often difficult to find a commonly accepted language to adequately render or explain the invisible world and its contents in light of everyday experiences (Evans-Wentz, 1990). Cultural anthropology, mythology, and Jungian psychology have struggled with this problem,

each discipline in its own way. When taken together, therefore, they form an interdisciplinary web sufficient for examination and interpretation of individual psycho-spiritual substance. Before proceeding with the contents of the study, here is some background on each of these three domains.

## CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Cultural anthropologists are fascinated with the beliefs, folktales, and wisdom "spun from the plain, strong wool of ordinary human life" (Turner in Myerhoff, 1978, p. xv). They open themselves to listen and ask questions, and they allow themselves to be drawn into the meaning hidden inside the mazeways and meaning systems of informants.

To engage in cultural anthropology is to engage in action-research. As an anthropologist, one has to move out into the world and be with people and their lives. An elementary pattern in cultural anthropology is that of a conversation, a dialogue which will produce an "a-b/b-a" pattern typical of any primary relationship with an "other." Within the dialectic, reflexive process theory does not seek to be authoritative, but is better explained as "theory as a tool-kit" (Deleuze and Foucault in Clifford, 1988). Anthropologists must speak with others, then think and write. By their nature these actions will induce theorizing, sorting and organizing the facts the anthropologist has encountered.

Theory is a set of methods through which an ethnographer can discover the *logos*, or spirit, behind the phenomena they observe and record; strategies are used to reflect on and interpret experience, and then translate it for other anthropologists or interested readers "back

home." Theory is not composed of rhetoric but of technique, in the fullest sense of the Greek word, *techne,* meaning "craft." Technique in culture theory produces a text that includes models, charts, definitions, description, and dialogue, along with discourse and analysis (Myerhoff, 1978; Spradley, 1979).

This approach to culture in which the relationship between theory and method remains open and reflective (Clifford, 1988) permits scholars to explore and discuss the nature of culture, the relationship of individuals to their cultures, and the relationship of anthropologists with informants (Clifford, 1986 and 1988; Goodenough, 1981; Spradley, 1978). At the same time, the theory remains sufficiently stable to constellate consistent, "comprehensive frames of reference" (Berger and Luchman, 1968, p. 94) that distinguish culture studies from other related academic fields, but it is not so fixed as to be impervious to change.

For example, in their theoretical writing Goodenough, Wallace, and Geertz have shown the relationship of theory and method by including descriptions from their experience in the field along with academic knowledge and evidence of their own internal struggle to synthesize and distill their immediate experience with informants. Wallace (1970) showed how he developed his theory of the relationship of the individual's personal meaning system, or "mazeway," and culture during his field work with Native Americans. In his primarily theoretical text, Goodenough (1981) grounded his theory about the relationship of patterns of culture to language in his experience in the field, and cited a number of examples.

7

I have found that the theoretical frames of reference and the vocabulary of cultural anthropology have helped me articulate elements of my research, not only to academic colleagues but to people outside the academic community. This is not as true for psychology, where the language tends to be internal to the field without giving much attention to interpreting to a broader audience. Several interrelated concepts from cultural anthropology were particularly helpful to me as I conducted my research and analysis.

**Culture.** Cultural anthropology defines culture as a shared meaning system which therefore is learned much as language is learned. Culture defined in this way is cognitive, socially constructed, socially expressed, diverse and collective in nature (Caughey, 1982, 1984, and 1986; Goodenough, 1981). The content of culture consists of knowledge-bearing structures or symbols which generate beliefs that inform behaviors and understandings (myths and theories) about the world and produce a wide array of artifacts (Caughey, 1984; Spradley, 1979; Wallace, 1970). Culture is unstable and open to change. It is highly relative and varies in different places and times because people live in different social worlds.

**The Relationship of the Individual to Culture.** Culture has both private and public aspects. The contents of culture are carried by individuals within their subjective inner world, or mazeway/propriospect. Even though culture is a major determinant of forms of consciousness, it relies on individuals to bring new forms into the culture, and to suppress forms as well (Caughey, 1984; Goodenough, 1981; Spradley, 1972; Wallace, 1970). This line of thought is helpful in explaining the threshold nature of recent re-emergence goddess phenomenology.

8

**Ethnographic Methods.** The purpose of ethnographic writing is to produce a holistic, emic description of a way of life, to be able to understand it from the native's point of view, and to translate understanding of one culture's knowledge to another (Spradley, 1979). Ethnography is the "back bone" of cultural anthropology and of culture theory. The coveted objective of an ethnographer is to "pass as a native," that is, to assimilate the culture of informants into his or her own mazeway and to be fluent in it. Ethnographic field work includes interviews with informants, participant-observation, and life-history. In other words, according to Spradley, "Ethnography alone seeks to document the existence of alternative realities and describe these realities in their own terms" (1979, p. 11).

This descriptive approach to culture results from a blending of theory, ethnography and the ethnographer's self into what is referred to as "thick description" (Geertz, 1973; Spradley, 1979). Within this methodology the anthropologist's own experiences and reflections are considered to be important elements in the interpretive process (Caughey, 1984; Estroff, 1981; Myerhoff, 1978; Spradley, 1979). Participant-observation is similar to one aspect of psychotherapy, called "use of self," in which therapists are encouraged to reflect openly on their responses to clients in the processes of diagnosis and treatment (Hollis and Woods, 1981). Since the field worker's use of self as an informant is an aspect of this tradition within cultural anthropology, I have monitored and recorded material derived from my own experience and included it in this document (Caughey, 1984 and 1986; Estroff, 1981; Myerhoff, 1978).

**Bringing Anthropology Home.** Within the field of contemporary culture studies there is a movement to bring anthropology home. Academic anthropology had its historical beginnings far away from home in non-Western societies. In recent decades however, ethnographic concepts and methods developed abroad are being applied by American anthropologists to investigate the development of cultures and sub-cultures within American society (Caughey, 1982, 1984 and 1986). As American anthropology attempts to penetrate cultural domains within American society, methodological issues arise regarding frames of reference that field workers share with informants. Shared involvement has focused on issues of objectivity and influence of field workers with informant groups.

Anthropologists have worked with these methodological issues in the process of writing ethnographies. By example their work encourages greater involvement on the part of researchers not to "hold back," but to seek greater participation within the culture they are studying. Barbara Myerhoff was a pioneer in this arena. Regarding shared frames of reference, she wrote, "In doing fieldwork, an anthropologist 'becomes the phenomenon' being studied, by taking on the reality of observed peoples" (p.284-5). She referred to Mehan and Wood, "'Membership cannot be simulated.'" (Mehan and Wood quoted in Myerhoff, 1978, p. 285). The ethnographies that were especially helpful to me in this regard are Number Our Days by Barbara Myerhoff, Imaginary Social Worlds by John Caughey, Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature by Janice A. Radway, and Making It Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community by Sue E. Estroff.

10

This methodological perspective in cultural anthropology is also present within the Jungian tradition. In the Jungian school, therapists and writers often work from and openly discuss frames of reference they share or partially share with their clients and subjects (Jung, 1976 and 1984). It was helpful for me to learn that cultural anthropology and Jungian psychology had methods to work with the issue of shared frames. This was a concern for me because I have a long-standing relationship with my informants and with the goddess mythology. Many of the patterns I will be discussing in this paper have developed in my own consciousness over the course of my ongoing involvement with Jungian analysis.

The question of shared frames of reference regarding membership roles is a methodological issue within field research. The relationship between researcher and subjects or between ethnographer and informants is an important issue, and is discussed by Adler and Adler in Membership Roles in Field Research (1987). In this book they locate within the tradition of field research three possible membership roles legitimated in field work theory. These three relationships are peripheral membership, active membership, and complete membership. In my case I occupy the third category of membership within the women's seminar, that of complete member.

According to Adler and Adler there are advantages and disadvantages to each of these categories of membership. With respect to peripheral membership, the researcher maintains an outsider's perspective regarding the belief system they are studying. This approach to research provides the researcher with a distance that implies "objectivity" or an ability to see the system from the point of view of a detached outsider. This point of view was referred to

11

by psychologist Heinz Kohut as "experience distant" (Sweder, 1984, p. 124). While it may be useful when applied to cross-cultural understandings and comparisons (Spradley, 1979), this membership category may lead the researcher into misunderstanding of what is actually happening with informants and doesn't allow the researcher to capture the meaning from the insider's point of view.

In the second category of membership roles, that of active membership, there are also advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of active membership is that the researcher is more able to get an insider's perspective while maintaining some distance for extracultural or transcultural comparisons. The disadvantage of this category of membership is that insiders may become confused regarding the intentions and trustworthiness of the researcher, who may be perceived as neither outside their meaning system, as in the case of the peripheral researcher, nor as a full participant in the culture they are studying. This confusion may constellate a subtle level of mistrust between insiders and the researcher, and may create barriers to achieving an interdependence in the relationship between researcher and subjects so vital to an ethnograqhic study of culture.

The third category of membership, that of complete member, allows the researcher to discover through experience the insider's point of view. This category is the most favorable or most productive form of membership for ethnographic research because it gives the researcher full access to the meaning system being studied from an insider's or, to use Kohut's term, "experience near" point of view. The disadvantage to this role is that the researcher may have some difficulty in achieving a distanced perspective on her/his subjects. However, there seems to be some general agreement among ethnographers

12

that for the purpose of studying particular cultural systems, the advantages of complete membership outweigh the disadvantages, and there are interpretive methods in ethnography itself through which academic objectivity may be achieved in the end (Adler, 1987; Myerhoff, 1978; Spradley, 1979; Sweder, 1984).

As a complete member within the women's seminar, I have been involved in dream work, Jungian psychology, and the study of myths for many years, and have participated fully in the seminar along with the other members. However, there are ways in which my frame of reference differs from all the other participants. In addition to my interest in a mythological and psychological meanings, I am also interested in a scholarly, analytical, and ethographic perspective on the life of the seminar and its membership. This element is not shared by my informants, nor do they have any particular interest in this perspective. When I am working inside the seminar, I am a complete member and have an "experience near" perspective with my sister members and with the material. When I put on my anthropologist's hat, so to speak, and try to understand these experiences from a "experience distance" point of view, I am more an outsider to the seminar than are my informants.

In the seminar, the mythic and Jungian frames of reference are entwined within the meaning system of my informants, as well as my own. My informants, however, are not necessarily alert as to how they are using these systems of thought except as they apply to their inner work with dreams and their own spiritual development. Nor would this be appropriate to their purposes to do so. For the purposes of my investigative research, however, I am using the Jungian system of thought and the study of myth as analytical tools.

In addition, I am applying anthropological theory and methods of analysis. Whereas the first two theoretical frames are used both inside the seminar and incorporated into its meaning system as shared frames of reference, the third analytical category, that of cultural anthropology, is totally outside the culture of my informant group.

By incorporating anthropology into to my system of interpretation and by applying it to my work within the women's seminar, I hope to move in the direction of what Victor Turner referred as the experience of the "thrice born." In the forward to Number Our Days, Barbara Myerhoff's ethnographic masterpiece, Victor Turner, the noted anthropologist referred to remarks made by another distinguished anthropologist, M. N. Srinivas. He described what it means for an anthropologist to be once born, twice born, and finally, thrice born. His comments suggest that these three categories are stages in the developmental process of an anthropologist as she or he matures in her or his academic career.

To be first born in this context refers to the fact that the anthropologist is born into their native culture which becomes imprinted forever on their soul. The twice born experience occurs when the anthropologist enters into another culture and learns its language, meanings, and nuances so that they achieve the confidence and comfort of an adopted member of that society, and has "found the clue to grasping many like it." The thrice born aspect derives when the anthropologist turns toward home having gained a new vision of themselves and their native land through being twice born into a different cultural experience. That anthropologist may then be able to reflect to the people back home the cultural essence and wisdom of other meaning systems and bring new vision to their social experience

14

(Myerhoff, 1979, pp. xiii-xiv), Turner indicates that this third stage is most difficult to achieve. None the less, he encourages cultural anthropologists to reach for this goal. I have kept these concepts in mind as I proceeded with my research.

Given my role as complete member in the women's seminar, it has been a continuing struggle for me and my greatest methodological challenge to maintain both an experience-near and an experience-distant perspective on my informants and their material.

It is my hope that my use of the cultural anthropology in combination with Jungian theory and analytical concepts from mythology, has established a framework through which an understanding and appreciation of the meaning systems of my informants may be conveyed to other scholars. Additionally, I hope my study will contributed positively to the idea that ethnographers should pursue research within cultural domains where they occupy the role as full membership.

## MYTHOLOGY: MYTHS AS CULTURAL DOCUMENTS

Myths are those socially informed metaphorical, symbolic, and imaginative frames of reference that originate within the cultural domain of human experience (Campbell, 1978c and 1985; Jung, CW 5, 1956). Students of mythology typically classify myths as cultural documents potentially derived from three primary factors. The first source of myth is human nature or the bioenergetic structure that we all share as a species. The second determining factor is those a *priori* unconscious elementary ideas or archetypal patterns embedded in this bioenergetic foundation. The third factor is the lore or

15

"folk ideas" which spring from the collective imagination within specific local traditions.

Myths are stories constructed of images that depict the symbolic level of cultural meaning systems. A mythology connotes a culture's approach to spirituality and inscribes the social attitude toward its religious life through symbolic contents (Berger and Luchman, 1968, Campbell, 1978c and 1985; Goodenough, 1981; Jung, CW 5, 1956; Jung, 1963 and 1969). The term symbol in this context should not be confused with allegory. Jungian therapist and literary scholar, Helen Luke, expressed the difference in the two concepts: "Whereas a symbol is the meeting point of conscious and unconscious meanings which awaken in us an awareness of something that cannot be expressed in rational terms, an allegory is merely a representation of conscious abstract ideas (Luke, undated, p. 83). In other words, whereas allegory is a linguistic device employed to teach underlying meaning that differs from the surface meaning, symbols are images of unconscious contents (Jung, CW 5, 1956).

Mythic images are powerful metaphors that trigger responses deep within human psychosomatic structures. Joseph Campbell, teacher and scholar of comparative mythology, called this level of human experience "the obscure subliminal abysm out of which dreams arise" (1985; p. 11). Whether expressed in language and image or deep feelings and sentiments, this phenomenon could be termed the "hermeneutic effect" of the symbol. Myths have the power to transport individuals from the everyday world of logic to an imaginative inner world, *a temenos*, or sacred space (Jung CW 5, 1956). The action of mythic images upon the personality may be

16

experienced as a form of play called "deep play" by Clifford Geertz (1973).

Jung believed that without a living relationship to myth, a person was not fully alive (Jung, 1963). In an interview with Bill Moyers for a popular television series called "The Power of Myth," Joseph Campbell used words like "primarily spiritual," "rapture," and "mystery" when he described the function of myth. He said that myths are "clues to the spiritual potentialities of the human life…(that) put you in touch with the experience of being alive" (Campbell, 1988, p. 5-6).

In a paper on women and spirituality written for the Masters of Social Work degree, one of my informants, Katherine, discussed the symbol-making process: "Jung contends that an image 'releases dammed-up energy' and 'turns it into mental forms' (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 749). This released energy can then be turned into a symbol, the best possible expression of something unknown" (1993, p. 19).

Drawing on themes from Campbell, Jung, and Geertz, this process can be characterized in the following way: An image enters consciousness and is taken over by the imagination. As it plays in the inner world of soul it deepens, turns, and spirals through the core of one's being until it reaches something inside that is unconscious, that is unknown. The spirit in the image is joined with instinct in the body and the unknown thing begins to reveal itself. As it is released it begins to flow up and out. This dance or play, which often begins as wordplay, directs consciousness towards an attitude of deepening participation in life—what Jung called the "symbolic life." When one is touched through symbol at the level of the god-image, one

17

experiences release—as from bondage by some unconscious force.  Then
the mystery behind forms is revealed, and finally one is taken up
into a state of grace or rapture transcendent of all forms and
language (Campbell, 1978c and 1985; Jung, CW 8, 1969 and CW 17, 1985;
Woodman, 1982 and 1985).

In her paper Katherine included a discussion about spirituality in
light of the symbolic life.  "Jung considered religion to be an
instinctive attitude particular to the human and considered the
'meaning and purpose of religion (to) lie in the relationship to God'
(Jung, CW 10, 1970, par. 507).  Accordingly, this instinct is
directed in the individual toward satisfying the need for meaning and
spiritual fulfillment.  The process of fulfillment is conducted by
individuals through relationship in a fourfold structure 1) with
other individual human beings, 2) with community, 3) with nature and
cosmos, and 4) with the numinous ontological ground of being" (p. 3-
4).

Campbell also addressed this point.  He wrote, "Every functioning
mythology is an organization of insights of this order made known by
works of visual art or verbal narrative (whether scriptural or oral)
and applied to communal life by way of a calendar of symbolic rites,
festivals and manners, social classifications, pedagogic initiations
and ceremonies of investiture, by virtue of which the community is
itself mythologized, to become metaphorical of transcendence,
participating with its universe in eternity" (1985; p. 20ff.).

Campbell described four functions of a mythology.  The first is to
engender belief.  The second is to create and impart a religious
*Weltanschauung* or world view.  The third function of a mythology is

18

socialization, or "the enforcement of a moral order…shaping the individual to the requirements of his geographically and historically conditioned local group….

"…The fourth and most vital, most critical function of a total mythology is to foster the centering and unfolding of an individual in integrity, in accord with d) himself (microcosm), c) his culture (mesocosm), b) the universe (macrocosm), and a) that awesome, ultimate mystery both beyond and within himself and all things" (1978a, p. 6ff.).

From this theoretical perspective a mythology serves two paths. It is on the one hand a control system and on the other a pathway of initiation into the greater mysteries of the soul. In the first instance mythology is an "Ideological State Apparatus," to borrow a term from British Culture Studies, developed to serve local hegemonic ends (Fiske 1987; Williams 1976). In this case the entire mythology remains locked into local practical aims and ethical ideals "…controlling, socializing and harmonizing in strictly local terms. The social as opposed to the mystical function of a mythology, is not to open the mind, but to enclose it; to bind a local people together in mutual support by offering images that awaken the heart to commonality, without allowing these to escape the monadic (hegemonic) compound" (Campbell, 1985).

Deviance occurs when the locally authorized representations from the dominant culture cease to have meaning for individual members. Members whose individual symbolic lives do not correlate with the mythology within their social sphere will probably experience dissociation from the dominant culture, and may begin a search for

19

new religious metaphors. In other words, a new myth. This level of investment may cause vast changes within a society and in its culture (Campbell, 1978a, p. 5).

In the second instance mythology accompanies a seeker on the pathway to spiritual initiation. The individual is carried to the boundaries of their culturally inscribed experience by the mythological symbols that nurtured them in childhood. The symbols become stepping stones upon which the initiate walks to the edge of what they know. Fearfully, they may step beyond culture bound forms into an experience of the infinite. Then the initiate is at the center where the microcosm, the mesocosm and the macrocosm are experienced as one and the same (Campbell, 1985). The conditions for a revelation through metaphorical identification with the cosmos are constellated and the soul awakens to a state of grace.

Initiations of this order are often called mystical or "peak" experiences. They are often identified aesthetically with the beautiful, the sublime, and the terrible. Individuals who travel on this pathway may encounter levels of reality previously unknown to them. They then become the carrier of new forms of consciousness of those levels, and often contrive their own distinct metaphors through which to share the mystery. In this way old myths are altered and new myths are born.

**CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE ON GODDESS MYTHOLOGY**

In his ground breaking ethnography entitled The Fairy Faith In Celtic Countries, first published in 1911, W. Y. Evans-Wentz wrote, "We believe that a greater age is coming soon, when all the ancient

20

mythologies will be carefully studied and interpreted..." (1966, p. xxxv). Evans-Wentz was a man with foresight, for throughout the twentieth century, and particularly since the mid 1960's, there has been a broadening cultural interest in America in ancient mythologies, and particularly goddess images and myths. The fairy faith is one of those religious traditions now being studied for its emphasis on feminine symbolism.

The revival of goddess symbolism has developed along broad socio-cultural lines. Some observers classify the "reawakening of the Goddess" not only as a movement but a cultural revolution (Aburdene, 1992; Luke, 1985; Perera, 1981; Spretnak, 1971 and 1992; Stone, 1976; Whitmont, 1985; Woodman, 1985). Relevant phenomena are being recorded and interpreted on the personal and private level, and in the public domain as well. For example, Aberdene and Naisbitt (1992) report a generalized theological and mythological shift in the meaning systems of many women away from male-centered symbol systems towards systems of images of devotion that include and even emphasize feminine symbolic forms. Other texts published in the 1990s describe experiences from the lives of individual women and communities of women where new forms of feminine consciousness have emerged (Anderson, 1992; Reis, 1991; Spretnak, 1991; Woodman, 1992).

The Goddess may be defined as the archetype of forms of feminine consciousness. The images that emerge from this archetype have inspired artists, scholars, and theologians to create new forms of spirituality. Several of my informants have participated in a curriculum originated by the Unitarian-Universalist Church. It was written by a scholar named Shirley Rank. According to Aburdene (1992) it has been adopted by groups within the Methodist,

21

Congregational, Episcopal Churches, and by an order of Catholic nuns (p. 246).

The goddess archetype is reborn through life-giving symbols in the works of artists like Judy Chicago. Her "Birth Project" is a tribute to the Great Mother as life-giver and creatrix of the cosmos (Chicago, 1985). Some scientists associate the Goddess with emerging planetary consciousness. This is exemplified in the "Gaia Hypothesis" put forward by James Lovelock in 1972 (Aberdene, 1992; Anderson, 1991; Spretnak, 1992). For some, Earth Day is a tribute to the earth as Earth Mother (Aburdene, 1992). In addition, in at least one interpretation, the physical sciences have confirmed the hypothesis of medieval European alchemists concerning the nature of matter in that physics now acknowledges that matter exhibits qualities of unpredictability and subjectivity the alchemists associated with the feminine symbolism (Capra, 1975; Jung CW 8, 1969; Singer, 1983; von Franz; 1974).

Inspired by popular interest, The Virgin Mary was pictured on the cover of Time Magazine, December 30, 1991 (Vol 138, No. 26). According to this report, there is a widely held belief that in recent years The Virgin Mary has appeared in a number of places.

Scholars of ancient religions like Karl Kerenyi (1959, 1978, 1979, and 1985), Jean Markale (1986), Jane Ellen Harrison (1922 and 1927), Johann Jakob Bachofen (1967), Robert Graves (1948 and 1960), Erich Neumann (1974), Christine Downing (1984 and 1988), and Martin Bernal (1987 and 1991) have shown the extent to which goddess worship was an established cultural force throughout Europe, the Near East and Africa well into the Iron Age, approximately 1000 B.C. Research

22

across a broad field of interdisciplinary scholarship on goddess symbolism indicates that many if not most non-patriarchal and pre-patriarchal cultures have honored many symbolic forms. The evidence seems to indicate that goddess worship was suppressed by the rise of monotheistic patriarchal state religions. This suppression of archetypal feminine forms and values appears to be idiosyncratic to patriarchal societies and representative of a wide-spread cultural prejudice.

For example, archeologists Marija Gimbutas (1974 and 1989) and Jaquetta Hawkes (1968) have examined numerous cultural artifacts depicting feminine archetypes. Their analysis revealed that a supreme goddess with many forms and names existed in the Western experience prior to the Iron Age (Gimbutas, 1974 and 1989; Hawkes, 1968). Sumeriologists Samuel Noah Kramer and Thorkild Jacobsen have published extensively from their translations of cuneiform texts, the earliest form of written language we know of today. They report that by 3500 B.C. the people of Sumer and Akkad, in what is now Iraq, worshipped powerful goddesses as well as gods (Jacobsen, 1976 and 1987; Kramer, 1981; Wolkstein, 1983).

Historian Gerda Lerner (1986) analyzed the social process by which patriarchy developed in the West from its Mesopotamian roots. According to her research into the legal process, during the third millennium B.C., the destiny of women fell into the control of men through systematic seizure of their property and the regulation of their sexual conduct. This suppression of women and feminine symbolic forms became encoded in civil law as the secular state, and the office of king replaced the temple and the high priestess, the avatar of the Goddess, as the primary social authority (Lerner,

23

1986). Other scholars of history who have published on the social implications of goddess symbolism are William Irving Thompson (1981), Eva Keuls (1985), Charlene Spretnak (1984 and 1991), and Martin Bernal (1987 and 1991).

Materials about goddess symbolism, mythology and goddess oriented cultures have captured the interest of many contemporary American including many well educated affluent reader such as my informants. Entire sections of bookstores are devoted to literature on the Goddess. This information is also widely available in journals, magazines, on audio and video tapes, at public lectures, seminars, and conferences. Works by scholars who have interpreted and synthesized this complex body of knowledge are widely read. Included in this group of authors are Joseph Campbell (1968, 1969, 1977, 1978a, 1978b, 1978c, and 1984), Marija Gimbutas (1974 and 1989), Christine Downing (1984 and 1989), Merlin Stone (1976 and 1979), Barbara Walker (1983), Anne Baring and Jules Cashford (1981), Elinor Gadon (1989) and Diane Wolkstein (1983).

For some women, like my informants, goddess symbols and goddess images have emerged in their consciousness from an inner field through dreams. Their experience has been affirmed by the awareness of feminine forms of consciousness on a broader cultural scale. Even before this movement became apparent, women like my informants were supported by literature from the Jungian school. Jung was one of the pioneers who called attention to the existence of the neglected Feminine Principle in collective as well as individual life (CW 5, 1912 and 1967). He expressed concern that Western patriarchal societies seriously neglected the feminine aspect of the cultural process, and that this neglect greatly affected the spiritual and

24

cultural development of women in particular (Jung, CW 8, 1969 and 1976; von Franz, 1972 and 1975b; van der Post, 1975, and von Franz in Whitney, 1987). He also believed a thorough understanding of mythology and art of ancient religions would help revive goddess archetypes.

The archetypal perspective is essential to Jungian psychology and has produced an expanding body of literature. This literature records phenomenological evidence of repressed feminine archetypes, the pathologies that result from repression, and approaches to healing. Some texts are based on the amplification and analysis of case materials of clients including dreams. Analysis involves research into the historical, cultural, and mythological background of images in the dreams of clients along with other case materials (Castillejo, 1973; Harding, 1940; Jung, CW 5, 1912 and 1967; Jung, CW 9 part 1, 1968; Jung, CW 10, 1970; Shorter, 1987; Woodman, 1980, 1982, 1985 and 1992).

Jungian authors also have included autobiographical materials that amplify mythic contents of analytical work (Downing, 1984; Estes 1992; Reis, 1991). In addition, some Jungian texts have focused on the analysis of feminine archetypal concepts, abstractions, symbols and myths from a collective or cultural perspective (Bolen, 1984; Jung, E., 1957; Harding, 1990; Perera, 1981; von Franz, 1972; Whitmont, 1982; Wolff, 1934). At least one book is composed almost entirely of materials that could be classified as self ethnography. It was written by clients with minimal contextual contents by the analyst-author with whom they all worked (Woodman, 1992).

25

Placed in the broader context of a cultural movement toward consciousness of feminine symbols and feminine values, it becomes clear that neither the neglect of feminine archetypal forms nor their re-emergence happen in a cultural vacuum. This study will explore the extent to which widespread psychic and social conditions have been at play in the lives of my informants.

**ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY: THEORY AND METHOD**

As I stated earlier, analytical psychology and mythology are used two ways in my study. On one level they are intertwined within the meaning systems of my informants, and on a second level, they are systems that provide theoretical constructions for analysis. What follows next is s detailed description and explanation of Jungian categories of thought as I am using them in my theoretical framework for analysis and interpretations of ethnographic contents.

Psychotherapy is a broadly used term to mean the treatment of the mind by psychological methods. Jung called his approach analytical psychology (Jung, Cw 16, 1966, p. 53). Today it is also called Jungian psychology or depth psychology. Analytical psychologists investigate the nature and contents of the human psyche, the soul, in its conscious and unconscious aspects. Of particular interest is the variety and range of archetypal patterns that manifest in dreams as symbols, in behavior, and in the many ways people create meaning.

Jungian psychology's approach to the psyche, or inner life of individuals, resembles the approach that anthropology has developed regarding the study of culture. In both anthropology and in Jungian psychology the relationship of theory to method is reflective,

26

mutable and open (Jung, CW 16, 1966; Jung, 1968; Reis, 1991). This open, reflexive approach in the two disciplines encourages a relationship to form between the anthropologist/therapist and the informant/client. As a result, the possibility of seeing or revealing previously unseen elements develops through that relationship.

Jung's interest in the development of the individual and his or her *Weltanschauung*, or philosophical view of life, outweighed his concern for theory-building (CW 8, 1966, par. 689ff.; Jung, 1963; Hannah, 1981). Jung noted that "theory" and "theoretical" were derived from the Greek word *theoria* which meant 'looking about one at the world,' on 'contemplation,' hence 'speculation' (CW 16, 1966, 100n and 119). For him, theory as creed or dogma had little value where the treatment of psychic factors was concerned. Knowledge of the individual patient and the details of his or her life were of utmost importance. Theory was useful when it assisted the clinician to relate to the client and those details, but should never take their attention away from intuition, instinct, or listening for what might be dismissed as an "insignificant detail." About theory, Jung wrote, "Theories are not articles of faith, they are either instruments of knowledge and of therapy, or they are no good at all" (CW 17, 1954, par. 198).

In many ways a Jungian psychologist is an "ethnographer of the psyche." Like the anthropologist, the analyst or therapist relies strongly on participant-observation with clients who allow the clinician into their inner worlds by sharing their daily experience, life history, inner thoughts and associations, dreams, and fantasies. Jungian psychology uses a phenomenological approach based almost

27

entirely on empirical research from one individual case study after another. Theory is derived through induction, that is, reasoning from particular facts to general concepts and principles (Jung, CW 16, 1966; Lutsch, 1993).

Careful application of the phenomenological approach and inductive methods is useful in formulating hypotheses about the nature and structure of the human psyche and its contents. In order to work within the boundaries of science, psychology constructs a model or models whose elements reflect empirical observations (Jung, 1968; Jung, CW 8, 1969; Jung, CW 16, 1966). Jung stated, "It is not a question of asserting anything about the psyche, but of constructing a model which opens up a promising and useful field of inquiry. A model does not assert that something is so; it simply illustrates a particular mode of observation" (CW 8, 1969, par. 381).

Jungian psychology has developed an extensive and specialized vocabulary of technical language. These concepts have meaning primarily from within the framework established by analytical psychology, and should be understood as part of its "tool kit." This language is often learned by clients as well as practitioners. Interviews with informants reveal the important degree to which Jungian concepts and terminology have become integrated within their meaning systems. It will be helpful at this point, to begin with a description of the basic Jungian concept of the psyche.

## THE CONCEPT OF THE PSYCHE

The corpus of Jung's work taken as a whole is a record of his investigations into the psychic realm over approximately a sixty year

28

period from roughly 1900 to 1960. Most of Jung's best known writing is contained in The Collected Works of C. G. Jung. This twenty-volume collection is part of the Bollingen Series published by Princeton University Press, but some of his work remains unpublished.

Underlying Jung's understanding of human nature is an objective reality he referred to as the *psyche*. From within Jungian context the psyche is an elemental aspect of all living beings, and therefore of human beings. The psyche is seen as the central life process. It is a whole living being in which body and spirit are an *a priori unity*, and cannot be separated into a system of duality in which body and spirit are separated. It is living matter, living process (CW 8, 1969, par. 601ff.).

Psychologically speaking, each person is his or her own truth (Jung, 1963). The psyche is ultimately objective reality, and at times Jung referred to it as "the objective psyche." Nevertheless, it is carried by individuals and has a personal aspect that manifests symbolically through individual lives. Therefore, the psyche is experienced by individuals as their subjective truth. On the personal level, the psyche is often referred to as the soul (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 797ff.). The soul is defined by Jungians as the inner essence. It is the image making faculty wherein resides the hope for immortality and connection with the divine; the pure, *a priori* possibility in the human being for connection with the eternal and relationship with the infinite. In other words, the psyche is the carrier of the god-image (Jung, 1963).

29

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OBJECTIVE PSYCHE IN ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

In Jung's essay, "On the Nature of the Psyche" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 343ff.), he discussed the history of modern Western psychology and his predecessors. Along with Sigmund Freud, Pierre Janet, and others, Jung respected William James as an authority, even a mentor. He referred to James who discussed the "discovery," or recovery, of the unconscious psyche. James gave the credit for this breakthrough to Frederick W. M. Meyers, one of the founders of the British Society for Psychical Research (Jung, CW 8, 1969, 185n). Jung quoted James from Varieties of Religious Experience (1902). "I cannot but think that the most important step forward that has occurred in psychology since I have been a student of that science is the discovery, first made in 1886, that there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field, with its usual center and margin, but an addition thereto in the shape of memories, thoughts, and feelings, which are extramarginal and outside the primary consciousness altogether, but yet must be classified as a conscious fact of some sort, able to reveal their presence by unmistakable signs. I call this the most important step forward because, unlike the other advances which psychology has made, this discovery has revealed to us an entirely unsuspected peculiarity in the constitution of human nature. No other steps forward which psychology has made proffer any such claim as this" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, 167n).

In Jung's opinion, "The psyche is the greatest of all cosmic wonders and the *sine qua non* of the world as an object" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 357ff.). From his point of view the objective psyche is the immediate object of experience and the subject of all science. Yet, the complete nature of the psyche in itself is not understood

30

directly. Furthermore, it cannot be known entirely. This has to do with the nature of knowledge itself. According to Jung all knowledge is, "the result of imposing some kind of order upon the reactions of the psychic system as they flow into our consciousness—an order which reflects the behavior of a *metaphysic* reality of that which is in itself real" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 362).

What psychology can do is study the psyche empirically by observing its effects. The effects are produced in the form of images and affects or emotions. Models of the psyche are developed from empirical facts observed by practitioners in clinical situations as opposed to those which might be recorded by a research psychologist in a laboratory under controlled conditions or a metaphysician dealing with absolutes (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 285ff.).

## STRUCTURES OF THE CONSCIOUS ASPECT OF THE PSYCHE

To Jung the science of psychology was first a science of consciousness, and second, a science of the "products of what we call the unconscious psyche" (Jung, 1968). From this perspective the psyche is a conscious-unconscious whole (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 397). Therefore, Jungian methods do not focus primarily on illness nor on wellness. They are concerned with completeness and wholeness, or the possibility of wholeness in the personality (Jung, 1968, p. 137).

In this regard, the consciousness making capacity in the psyche is of utmost importance. From a practical standpoint, the goal of Jungian psychotherapy is individuation, the process that Jung called the central concept of his psychology (Jung, 1963, p. 209). Very simply stated, this is the process by which contents of the unconscious

31

psyche become integrated within consciousness. In other words, Jungians say that as an individual develops their capacity for consciousness on many levels that person is able to live a fuller, more complete life on a daily basis.

The contents of consciousness are the datum of immediate experience. These contents are those structures that give individuals the capacity to form a picture of the world which we call reality. Jung identified seven contents of consciousness. For him this group was sufficient for the purpose of describing the components of the conscious psyche, but not exhaustive (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 283ff.). The list includes sensation, thinking, feeling (valuation), intuition, volition, instinct and dreams.

**Sensation Process.** Sensation tells us that something exists. Empirically, nothing is known if it is not given through the senses. The world comes to us through forms of sensibility: sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing; and we are conscious of the world. Patterns of energy in the environment become known to us as objects of experience. In psychology this is called "sensation."

**Thinking Process.** Sensation tells us that something is, but does not tell us what it is. A complex of sensory data enters through the manifold of sensation, and an energetic process is set in motion which sorts through images, comparing and differentiating its particular sensory grouping until the mind establishes with what image group it is associated. This is not perception, but apperception, known as thinking in everyday language. Thinking tells us what something is. It provides recognition.

32

**Feeling Process.** This process involves evaluation, and raises emotional reactions of a pleasant or unpleasant nature. Memory images are usually accompanied by emotional phenomena known as feeling tones such as desirable, beautiful, disgusting, ugly, etc., that associate themselves with the object of experience. Feeling helps us determine its value.

**Intuitive Process.** This process reveals the possibilities inherent in a situation. It is represented in consciousness by an attitude of expectancy, of vision and penetration. It seems to bring the future into the present.

**Volitional Process.** Volitional processes are directed impulses based on apperception at the disposal of free will.

**Instinctual Process.** Instinctual processes are impulses originating in the unconscious or in the body and are characterized by compulsiveness and lack of freedom.

**Dream Process.** Jung wrote, "Apperceptive processes may be either directed or undirected. In the former case we speak of 'attention,' in the latter case of 'fantasy' or 'dreaming.' The directed processes are rational, and undirected are irrational. To these last named processes we must add—as the seventh category of contents of consciousness—dreams. In some respects dreams are like conscious fantasies in that they have an undirected, irrational character. But they differ inasmuch as their cause, course, and aim are, at first, very obscure. I accord them the dignity of coming into the category of conscious contents because they are the most important and most obvious results of unconscious psychic processes obtruding themselves

33

upon consciousness" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 294).  As we shall see in Chapters III, VII, and VIII, new forms of consciousness entered the meaning systems of informants through their dreams.

## THE UNCONSCIOUS PSYCHE AND ITS CONTENT

In dreamtime psychic life continues even though, in sleep, consciousness has withdrawn or is partially restricted.  In addition, most people have experienced situations in everyday life where consciousness is thwarted by unconscious contents.  Examples given by Jung are slips of the tongue, forgetting names and other facts that are well known, locking keys inside the house or car, losing track of time, etc.  Examples of unconscious psychic activities are also found in pathological states such as borderline, obsessive compulsive, and schizophrenic states. These occurrences suggest the existence of an unconscious part of the psyche in which activity occurs.  It is not accessible through direct observation and can only be inferred; otherwise it would not be unconscious.  "Our inferences," wrote Jung, "can never go beyond 'it is as if'" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 297).

Analytical psychology connects science to traditions that acknowledge the possibility of an archetypal reality beyond the sensate world of time—space that is universally human.  The realm of so-called "altered states" so often encountered by anthropologists who live among native peoples is also encountered in the modern and post-modern Western cultures, though it has often been considered a borderline cultural domain of religious mystics, artists, sexual deviants, narcotics addicts and psychotics.  In the twentieth century, however, medical science has encountered this "unseen world" in psychotherapy with individuals who do not suffer from psychotic or even neurotic states.

34

Herein lies another connection between the psychotherapist and
ethnographers who have written extensively about the "unseen world" of
indigenous peoples. Their descriptions of the native view of reality
in its non-rational aspects reflect the reality in the dreams of urban
Americans who, like my informants, have taken the time to attend to
their inner life.

For example, Native American author and culturalist, Jamake
Highwater, described Native American culture as an earth-oriented
tradition emanating from what he calls the "primal mind." In the
primal mind, reality and consciousness are non-linear with many
levels of awareness. These realities are invoked and integrated
through dreams, visions, ritual process, and art work. For people of
the primal mind there is no distinction between dream and reality.
It is all real (Highwater, 1977 and 1981).

Clifford Geertz used the term "deep play" to describe the intense
psychological participation in visionary and initiatic processes that
invoke primal levels of experience. His discussion of Balanese
cockfighting illustrates in detail this principle. Geertz summarized
a Balanese folk tale to illustrate "deep play" in the "Unseen World."
In the story the hero, a man from a low social caste, is out of money
and down to his last fighting cock. He does not despair, however.
He takes courage and declares, "I bet upon the Unseen World," which
is to say the invisible world of the gods. By the time the story
ends he and his wife have become the new king and queen, and his
fighting cock has transformed into the great bird of Hindu mythology,
*Garuda* (Geertz, 1973, p. 442).

Robert Lawlor described the 100,000 year old tradition among
Aboriginal Australians who have maintained a culture in which "every
aspect of daily life" is immersed in a reality not known through the
five senses. This realm is characterized as a "flowing,
interrelating energy realm, a dreaming world that surrounds living
creatures and connects them with the magnetic emanations of the
earth" (Lawlor, 1991, p. 100). The "Dreaming" is a principle aspect
of objective reality that is outside what we call time-space, from
which all forms in the physical world manifest. "The integration of
psychic, imaginistic, and physical forms that is just emerging in our
scientific world view agrees with the Aboriginal world view. The
Aborigines see psychic energies as causatively involved in every
natural process and event from sunlight, wind, and rain to human
fertility. Sacred art and ritual play an important role in the
congruence of the multilayered universe and the cycles of harmonic
transformation from the Dreaming to the physical world" (Lawlor,
1991, p. 293).

In the practice of psychotherapy some phenomena found among
indigenous people as described by Highwater, Geertz and Lawlor are
encountered in the ordinary, everyday dreams and fantasies of people
such as the informants for this study.

## THE PERSONAL UNCONSCIOUS AND THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

Jung's concept of the psyche consisted of three primary components or
levels. They are consciousness, the personal unconscious, and the
collective unconscious (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 321).

36

Jung determined that dreaming belongs to normal rather than pathological contents, and is a sort of borderland between consciousness and unconsciousness. Even though dreams are a content of consciousness they bring forward material that probably had a psychic existence in an unconscious state (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 295 and par. 544). From his extensive investigation of the patterns found in dreams Jung reasoned that psychic processes similar to those that comprise the contents of the conscious psyche occur in the unconscious realm (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 296ff.).

Jung pointed out, "The unconscious is not simply the unknown, it is rather the *unknown psychic*" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 382). By comparison, William James spoke about a "transmarginal field or fringe of consciousness," and compared it with F. W. H. Meyer's "subliminal consciousness" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, p. 185n). Sigmund Freud was given credit, however, for being the first modern scientist to propose the theory that certain dream contents as well as neurotic symptoms result from unconscious contents that were conscious at one time but were rejected and repressed by the conscious ego. These contents appeared to be of a personal, subjective nature quite capable of consciousness, but which had entered a subliminal realm, creating a sort of subliminal appendix of the conscious mind (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 371ff.). In other words, for Freud, the unconscious psyche was a product of consciousness.

Jung disagreed with Freud on both the nature and function of the unconscious. Jung located within the psyche two levels of the unconscious component, a personal and a collective, transpersonal dimension. The personal unconscious consists of "contents that became unconscious because they lost their intensity and were

forgotten or because consciousness was withdrawn from them." This process is known as repression. The personal unconscious also contains contents "including sense-impressions which had never had sufficient intensity to reach consciousness, but have entered the psyche. The collective unconscious, however, as the ancestral heritage of possibilities of representations, is not individual but common to all men, and perhaps even to all animals, and is the true basis of the individual psyche" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 321).

Jung emphasized that science cannot directly observe the part of the psyche where unconscious activity occurs and cannot prove but only infer its existence through observing certain effect. Within his hypothetical framework, Jung located psyche life, the life of the soul, in an intermediate realm of subtle reality. He recognized that this idea was reflected in the traditions of indigenous peoples like those of the Balanese cockfighter and the Australian Aborigines (Jung, 1963; Jung, 1969; Jung, CW 8, 1969; van der Post, 1975).

Jung proposed the existence of an intermediate realm of subtle matter that is neither spirit nor matter, but is the place where these two elements intermingle to create a subtle reality that is the psyche. He further hypothesized that what we call spirit and matter might be two aspects of the same unknown factor (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 418).

He represented this psychic domain as a continuum that is like the continuum of colors in the light spectrum. Light has a range that goes beyond that which the human eye can see without instruments. The lower vibrational range of frequencies goes beyond the infrared into the color red, and the higher range of frequencies takes us beyond violet into ultra-violet. Similarly, Jung described the

38

psyche as a continuum that goes from lower ranges associated with
instinct/body/matter towards higher frequencies associated with
spirit/energy/archetype (see figure 1.).

Infra-red                                    Ultra-violet
Light Spectrum Visible to Human Eye




Instinct/Matter/Body                Archetype/Sprint/Mind

(Somatic Processes)                 (Entergetic Processes)


Psychic Field Available
to Human Experience
Through Symbols

(images and ideas with the
possibility of consciousness)
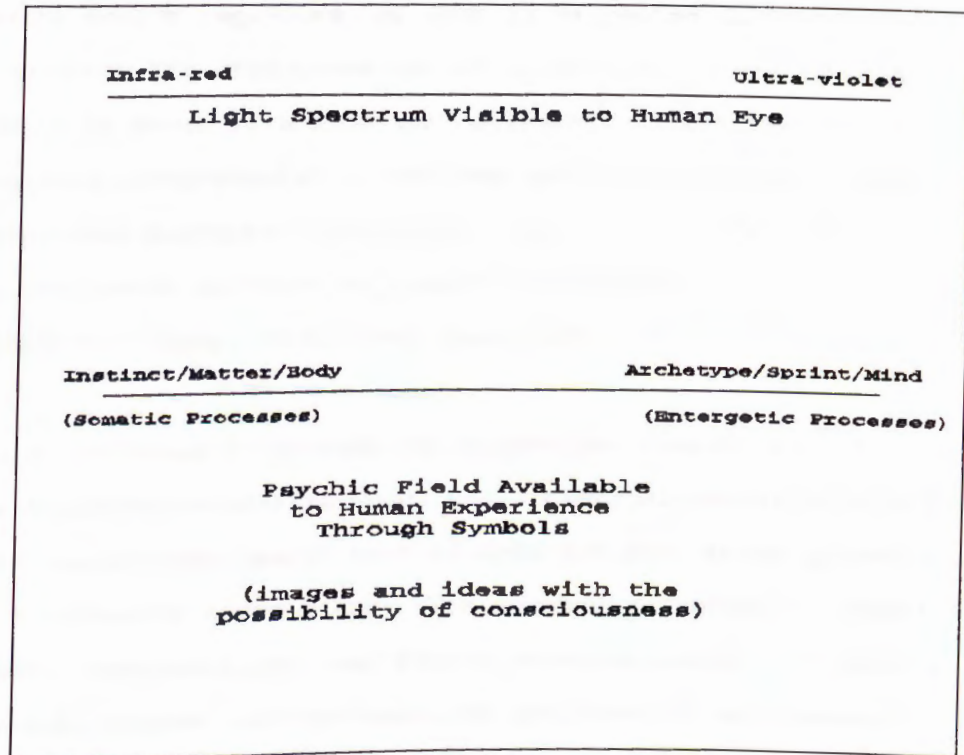
Figure 1.  Psychic Field


The structures that appear along the psychic continuum are images.
More specifically, they are a *priori* archetypal patterns, whose
contents have the capacity to become conscious.  This model reflects
the understanding that there is a bond between instincts and
archetypes.  It suggests that an archetype is the spiritual aspect of
an instinct, and an instinct is the embodiment of an archetype (Jung,
CW 8, 1969, par. 417ff.; von Franz, 1974, p. 3ff.; Woodman, 1980, p.
67).

39

# THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

The collective unconscious is understood as the objective realm of
the psyche.  It is an absolute, non-personal unconscious where
activity occurs regardless of what is happening in consciousness.
Its contents are structures called archetypes.  They are the timeless
patterns of human life from the beginning.  The archetypes are
themselves irrepresentable, but they produce primordial images or
mythological patterns.  "In fact," wrote Jung, "the whole of
mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective
unconscious" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 324).

It is a challenge to discuss the archetypes themselves.  Anyone who
tries to write rationally about the archetypal unconscious and its
mythic images soon learns that it does not want to be pinned down
like a butterfly under glass.  The unconscious seems to prefer a less
rational, more emotional and free-flowing language.  It prefers the
metaphors, tropes, and mythogens of art, poetry, and dreams.

If one wants to interpret archetypal images one will soon discover
that they are carried beyond the boundaries of their particular field
of interest into a vast, interdisciplinary field.  When Jung began to
investigate the archetypes of the collective unconscious, he was led
into a broad range of associations from mythology, art, literature,
history, and religion (Jung, CW 5, 1967).

Jung described the archetypes as the contents of the collective
unconscious (Jung, CW 9, part 1, 1968).  Archetypes are information
bearing structures, or patterns of organic energy.  They carry the
ancestral records of the experience of the human species.  From a

Jungian perspective, archetypes are bonded with the body's instincts. They are living images expressive of instinctual patterns and creative impulses imprinted from the beginning of the species by environmental factors and social conditions (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 270ff.; CW 9 part 1, 1968, par. 92ff.).

A basic function of consciousness is to help an individual adapt daily to his or her environment. In a similar fashion, a basic function of the collective unconscious is to adapt the collective life of the species in its on-going development from its primitive, instinctual origins carried in the psyche-soma (Campbell, 1978c; Jung, CW 5, 1967, and CW 8, 1969).

Instincts are understood as being separate and distinct patterns, but they are also understood as a nexus, an interrelated network of drives and compulsions. The archetypes seem to reflect this same design. Each one has its own integrity, yet they all seem to flow together in a matrix that forms the foundation of psychic life. Instead of images of actual physical processes, these contents remain unconscious as affect laden fantasy images (CW 6, 1971, par. 743). Jung suggested that this process reflects a primal level of experience where there is little distinction between subject and object. The interrelationship creates what is commonly referred to as patterns of behavior (Campbell, 1978c; Pearson, 1991).

For Jung it was incorrect, however, to say that the psyche is derived exclusively from an organic substrate of the instincts. The psyche could not be explained totally in terms of anatomy or physiology. It also derived from an energetic, non-material, or spiritual state. Nonetheless, the psyche depended upon processes in the organic

41

substrate.    Therefore, in practical terms it is often difficult to speak of the "psychological" as being distinct from the "physiological".

Jung studied the work of other scientists regarding the relationship between the instincts and the archetypes.    Their work indicated that instincts have physiological and psychological aspects.    Jung referred to his predecessor, Pierre Janet's terminology; *partie inferieure* which corresponded to the instinctual base of the function, and *partie superieure* which corresponded to the archetypal or psychic component (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 376ff.).

The physiological component seemed to be bound up with the hormones, had a natural compulsive "all-or-nothing" nature and was characterized as "drive."    The psychic component, however, lost its compulsive character and could be subjected to the will and even applied in a manner contrary to the original instinct.    Psychic activity occurred as represented along the continuum pictured in figure 1.    In the process the energy of the instincts became available to volition.    According to Jung's thesis, the relationship between instinctive drives and archetypal activity created the potential ultimately to liberate energy of its compulsive quality and make it available to consciousness in the form of free will (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 375ff.).

## JUNG'S CONCEPT OF EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE SELF

In Jung's analysis, once the existence of an unconscious psychic realm was assumed one's view of the world became provisional.    Both consciousness and unconsciousness became relative.    In Jung's view,

42

consciousness by nature is one-sided, in that one is always conscious

of something. It is concentrated in one direction, then in another.

It cannot, relatively speaking, be conscious of things outside the

field of its concentration. Anything beyond that upon which

consciousness is focused at any given time is by definition

unconscious (Jung, 1984, p. 50).

His hypothesis of a dual focus in the psyche "radically alters" the

subject of perception and cognition, and results in a different world

view. Jung wrote, "This holds true only if the hypothesis of the

unconscious holds true, which in turn can be verified only if

unconscious contents can be changed into conscious ones—if, that is

to say, the disturbances emanating from the unconscious, the effects

of spontaneous manifestations, of dreams, fantasies, and complexes,

can successfully be integrated into consciousness by the

interpretative method" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 370).

As Jung pointed out, "Volition presupposes a choosing subject who

envisages different possibilities" (CW 8, 1969, par. 380). This

choosing subject is represented in consciousness by the ego. The ego

is understood as "a complex of ideas which constitutes the center of

my field of consciousness and appears to possess a high degree of

continuity and identity" (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 706). The only

point of reference in the human personality for experiencing reality

is this reflecting ego (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 387).

Consciousness is hermeneutical. Its capacity for interpretation

transforms instinctive energies and archetypal images into the

material of living experience. On an infantile level ego lacks the

synthetic cohesion and density that comes with maturation. Ego

43

gathers substance and density in one way only. It does this through the assimilation and integration of images. Ego is laboriously built up over a lifetime, most typically through accepting and conscientiously working with the problems that life presents.

The ego is goal-directed. A primary function of the ego is adaptation of the individual to life. In childhood the ego begins its formation through social experience. Throughout the first half of life it accrues knowledge essential for the survival of the individual in society. It looks toward the future, so to speak, toward the outer world formulated in time-space. This energetic process takes a turn at mid-life. At this point life's direction turns inward, towards death. Jung referred to this movement towards death as a natural gradient in the psyche…the goal of individual life and its fulfillment (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 796ff.). Then what was once the future of the individual, its attachments to the world, becomes the past. Until this point in time the ego typically experienced itself as the center of the personality. At this point the ego may discern that it is not the center. Rather, it may begin to turn away from its involvement with outer concerns toward this heretofore unconscious center that Jung called the "self." This is often difficult for consciousness to accept. This is what is known today as the "mid-life crisis." It is a crisis for consciousness and its organizing center, the ego.

As Jung noted, when the ego is able to accept the inevitable truth that death is the natural completion of individual life it may then begin to focus on a different level of concern. That concern is with decline, with death and with eternity. This is not a morbid concern, rather it is a religious concern and an opportunity to encounter "the

44

meaning of existence consummated in its end" (Jung, CW 8, 1969, par. 804). The quest for meaning is fulfilled when the ego surrenders its authority to the self as the transcendental center and the fulfillment of all of life's possibilities (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 789).

## PRINCIPLES OF JUNGIAN DREAM WORK

The interpretation of dreams is a fundamental process in Jungian psychology. In informant interviews and discussions on the development of informants, dreams come up. As dreams are presented within the study, Jungian terms are used by informants or by me to elaborate some of their contents and how their symbolism, like myth, has helped informants bring certain hidden aspects of themselves to consciousness.

As has already been noted, Jungians say the unconscious psyche represents itself empirically in the form of fantasies, dreams, and intense emotional states. Jung wrote that in order to "unearth the treasures" contained in the products of the "play of the imagination," these representations must be developed a stage further. "But this development is not achieved by a simple analysis of fantasy material; a synthesis is needed by means of a constructive method" (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 93).

By method, Jung meant techniques through which unconscious contents could become more available to the consciousness of everyday existence. Jung's method for integrating conscious and unconscious materials was predicated on his philosophical understanding of the Western mind. Jung was a student of both Eastern and Western

45

philosophy. His interest in traditional Chinese and Indian thought focused primarily on the individual path of wholeness (enlightenment) and Eastern methodologies concerned with that path. These methods involved certain yogas and other forms of meditation developed over thousands of years in those cultures.

Jung felt that Eastern methods were one of the great achievements of mankind (Jung, CW 11, 1969, par. 876). From his perspective, these yogas addressed the problem of mental, or psychic, hygiene. (In his writings, Jung used the words "mind and mental" interchangeably with "psyche and psychic.") Therefore, psychic hygiene is the practice of attending to the unification of the psyche, that is, the relationship in the psyche of the conscious and the unconscious, especially the deeper levels of the unconscious which he called the collective unconscious (Jung, CW 11, 1969, par. 866-867).

Eastern philosophy maintains that the human being is the whole cause of her/his higher development. This is exactly what Jung believed. Prior to his encounter with Eastern methods, Jung had come to this conclusion from his own empirical research. Jung called the process by which an individual attains this degree of integration the "individuation process" (Jung, 1963, p. 209; Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 757ff.; Jung, CW 9 part 1, 1968, par. 489ff.).

In Jung's analysis, Eastern methods were not compatible with Western psychological conditions. Eastern yogas developed over a period of four thousand years in a cultural environment which created the necessary spiritual conditions and allowed the unification of mind and body into a psychic whole. Jung said that in the West, Eastern teaching encountered a special and different condition of the mind

46

that it never encountered in the East (Jung, CW 11, 1969, par. 865-867).

In the West a split existed in the psyche that had its origins in European Medieval Scholasticism and fulfilled itself in the philosophy of Rene Descartes during the eighteenth century. This split in the faculty of Reason set up a conflict between knowledge and belief, between religion and science. The Western mind no longer thought in metaphysical terms. Matters concerning the soul, the existence of God, and the possibility for conceiving the cosmos as a whole were matters of faith and not science. Jung maintained that this condition made Eastern methods not only ineffective but dangerous to most Westerners.

Jung felt the necessity for seeking psychological methods for the West, but they had to be in harmony with the conditions in the Western situation. Most importantly, they should address the psychic conditions of individual persons, as do Eastern methods. Jung was critical of the West and its lack of psychological development. Nonetheless, he upheld the importance of two principles of Western intellect. They were Western science and scientific methods (Jung, CW 11, 1969, par. 869), and the necessity for individual moral responsibility (von Franz, 1975a, p. 117).

Using these two principles, Jung developed a method of psychic hygiene that could be taught to others. He called his process the "analytical method" (Jung, Vol. 9 part 1, 1968, par. 489). It has become the foundation for the Jungian school of dream analysis. This method establishes the possibility for understanding "every image of one's psychic inventory."

47

To accomplish this one should follow these steps: 1) apply scientific method of notation to dream work by consistently writing down one's dreams in detail.  2) take the time and trouble to relate to them or understand the figures that appear in them, and 3) drawing ethical conclusions from them (Jung, 1963, p. 192).  By applying these principles, a dream will begin to interpret itself, or reveal its meaning to the dreamer.  Unconscious contents of dreams seem to seek understanding.  As they enter the conscious realm they stimulate the dreamer, and demand attention (Jung, CW 16, 1966, par. 88ff.).

This method encourages individuals to intentionally yield to the energy of the dream instead of repressing or denying their psychological material.  By being open and receptive, individual dreamers would then participate in their own psychological development.  As is the case in Eastern systems, the goal of the individuation process is to establish a conscious connection with the unconscious by following its "circumnambulatory" movement to the center, the self.  This connection or pathway forges an "ego-self axis in the psyche," and thus, brings the individual in relationship with the whole.  The problem given to consciousness is to find the method, the way, the yoga that is compatible with the particular individual in whom that consciousness is embodied (Jung, CW 13, 1967, par. 1ff.).

Jung's method involves two kinds of meditation.  The first is reflection on dreams and the other is called "active imagination."  In dream work, dreamers record their dreams, and then respond by forming personal associations with the dream symbols.  Association technique is the spontaneous flow of interconnecting ideas, thoughts, feelings, and intuitions around a specific image determined by the

48

unconscious, thereby constellating a field of consciousness around the dream content. The dreamer holds an image in consciousness and allows the material to form. Then the dreamer records the associations along with the dream.

The second aspect of this technique is referred to by Jungians as "amplification." Amplification means to elaborate a dream image by researching and recording similar symbolic material from the broad range of human experience. Archetypal symbols of this nature are recorded in mythology, archeology, comparative religion, the arts, and literature. By making associations and amplifications, the dreamer builds a richly constellated field of consciousness around a dream figure that assists consciousness to apprehend its meaning and its psychological significance.

Jungian therapists participate in this reflexive process with their clients when the client brings a dream to a therapy session. Jung wrote, "For this reason it is particularly important to me to know as much as possible about primitive psychology, mythology, archeology, and comparative religion, because these fields offer me invaluable analogies with which I can enrich the associations of my patients. Together we can then find meaning in apparent irrelevancies and thus vastly increase the effectiveness of the dream. For the layman who has done his utmost in the personal and rational sphere of life and yet has found no meaning and no satisfaction there, it is enormously important to be able to enter a sphere of irrational..." (Jung, CW 16, 1966, par. 96).

The other type of meditation, active imagination, takes the ego into the archetypal realm while the meditator maintains a state of

consciousness.  In advanced practitioners, images become objectified, and often anticipate future dreams.  Then the images become more creative than they are in dream (Jung, 1968, p. 192ff.).  Jungians look on active imagination as advanced analytical work.  Jung advised clients not to engage in it until they had completed a considerable amount of analytical work with dreams.  This is necessary to ensure that consciousness is fully contained and prepared for the more difficult task of encountering the contents of deeper levels of the psyche (Jung, 1963).

These practices cultivate the capacity in the conscious mind to yield to fantasy materials in a spirit of non-action and non-control.  This gives the unconscious a chance to express itself.  Most often, the unconscious personifies as visual or auditory images.  Then the meditator will dialogue with the image.

The meditator should be careful not to manipulate or direct the action.  Rather, they become a participant-observer in their own inner world.  For many people it is easiest to write down the resulting dialogue in order to objectify the material.  Sometimes, however, a sort of psychic cramping may occur.  In this case the meditator may need to draw or paint the experience, or even to dance or act it out since the body may be able to do what the mind cannot (Hannah, 1981).  There is an example of active imagination in Chapter VII, "It Took Me a Long Time to Find Her—The Goddess."

In dream analysis Jungians use certain terms to characterize types of contents.  These terms constitute a symbolic language that applies to Jung's model of the psyche in its conscious and unconscious aspects. Along with "conscious," "unconscious," "ego," and "Self," words like

50

"shadow," "anima," "animus," and "complex" have become part of the daily vocabulary of the informants in this study. It is useful, therefore, to briefly define some of these terms.

These words are elements of a "technical" language used within the context of dream analysis (Jung, 1984). They may lose their specific psychological meaning if used in a broader social context. Jung supplied a set of definitions which is published in the <u>Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol 6</u> and there is a glossary of terms included in the appendix of <u>Memories, Dreams, Reflections</u>. Glossaries are located in the appendix of some Jungian texts. One Jungian press, Inner City Books of Toronto, Canada, prints the same glossary in its publications.

Below is a cluster of terms used in Jungian dream analysis to denote specific categories of psychic contents. In addition, some other terms such as "goddess" are included. While they are not specifically Jungian, they are part of the culture of the women in this study and are discussed by Jungians in their writing.

**Ego.** The ego is the "I" in the personality. It is the personal identity, the set of characteristics by which one knows oneself. Therefore, it is sometimes referred to as the "ego complex." As already noted, the ego is the center of the field of consciousness. Consciousness grows by assimilating images through activity of the ego. A well developed ego can relate to other contents from the unconscious without being overwhelmed by them (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 706), or overidentified with them (Woodman, 1980, p. 131). When the ego is identified with the unconscious it is said to be in a state of inflation or possession by those unconscious contents. In dreams the

51

ego is personified by the dreamer.  In chapter 3, "Dreaming the Goddess," I will present a number of dreams from my informant, Lucy. In her dreams the ego is represented as "Lucy."

**Shadow.**  In broad terms, if the ego is the "I," then the shadow is the "not-I." It is unlived or "not-conscious" aspects of the personality, especially those contents of the unconscious which are latent, that is repressed by the ego, or nascent (unborn).  These elements, therefore, remain in an undeveloped state.  The shadow is the habitually unconscious (Jung, 1984, p. 50).  The term "shadow" is meant as "hidden."  In Jungian terms, the shadow is not inherently evil nor morally reprehensible, but also displays a number of good qualities, such as normal instinctive responses, appropriate reactions, realistic insights, creative impulses, etc. (Jung, 1963, p. 387).

The word "inferior" is not a pejorative term.  It simply means undeveloped.  For example, the shadow is characterized as "the inferior part of the personality; the sum of all personal and collective psychic elements which, because of their incompatibility with the chosen conscious attitude, are denied expression in life and therefore coalesce into a relatively autonomous 'splinter personality' with contrary tendencies in the unconscious.  The shadow behaves compensatorily to consciousness; hence, its effects can be positive as well as negative.  In dreams, the shadow always appears as the same sex as the dreamer" (Jung, 1963, p. 386f).  As we shall see, in Lucy's dreams the shadow is personified as the woman in the Victorian style dress who reminds her of Judy Collins.  It also is expressed as the mother of Stephen.

**Persona.** Persona is the "face one gives to the world" (Jung, 1984, p. 51). It is the skin through which the ego adapts and relates to the outer social world. *Persona* is the Latin word for "actor's mask," and is the expression of the roles each person plays in their life. When the persona is inflexible or the ego weak and undeveloped, an individual may become over identified with their social role and further psychological development is impaired. Dreamers often dream of themselves in their social roles, as office worker, parent, student, etc. Lucy often dreamed of herself in her role at her office.

**Anima and Animus.** These terms represent the contra-sexual side of the dreamer. In a man his unconscious feminine nature is personified in dreams as female and is referred to as "the anima." The unconscious masculine side of a woman's personality is represented in dreams as male and is referred to as "the animus." From a Jungian point of view, every human being contains an archetypal pattern for wholeness. Therefore, every personality is by nature androgynous on the psychological level. Whatever sexual identity is manifested biologically, the contra-sexual is latent and therefore unconscious.

Jung compared the function of the anima and animus to that of the persona. They function psychologically to assist consciousness and the ego to adapt to the unconscious world of the dreamer. In one place Jung wrote, "Now, if I have a skin of adaptation to the conscious world (the persona), I must have one for the unconscious world too. The anima (animus) is the completion of the man's (woman's) whole adaptation to unknown or partly unknown things…the anima (animus) is the counterpart of the persona" (Jung, 1984, p. 52). In Lucy's dreams the farm boy-man is an animus figure.

53

**Projection.** "An unconscious, that is, unperceived and unintentional, transfer of subjective psychic elements onto an outer object. One sees in the object something which is not there, or, if there, only to a small degree. Seldom, if ever, is nothing of what is projected present in the object. Jung speaks, therefore, of a 'hook' in the object on which one hangs a projection as one hangs a coat on a coat hook" (von Franz, 1985). For example, therapists often receive parental projections from clients.

Projection is an instinctive human tendency and not in itself a moral failure. It is one way that people become conscious of certain unrealized qualities in their personality. Therefore, an important aspect of psychological development is to exercise the capacity to withdraw projections and take responsibility for psychic contents which were previously unconscious. Lucy, as we shall learn, had the tendency to project her spiritual maturity onto her friend who died and also onto her therapist. When she began to become conscious of the depth of her own spirituality she no longer needed to give it away to others. This change in consciousness was signaled by the "Stephen" dream recorded in Chapter III.

**Complex.** A complex is an unconscious or partially conscious feeling-toned psychic system which has split off from its relationship to a larger archetypal field in the psyche due to traumatic events. Complexes function autonomously and may cause disturbances in consciousness, in speech patterns and in behaviors. In the center of a complex is an archetype around which has formed a constellation of related images. Complexes may be said to be the structure that forms when psychological levels become entangled. Complexes may personify in dreams as stereotypical figures.

54

Psychologists talk about a "mother complex" or "school complex." For example, a money complex appeared in one of Lucy's dreams as an excessively greedy old man who reminded her of Scrooge from Charles Dickens's <u>A Christmas Carol</u>.

**Self.** The self is the archetype of wholeness and cosmic order. Just as the ego is said to be the center of consciousness, the self is the center of the entire personality in its conscious-unconscious whole. At the same time, it encompasses the totality of the personality. Symbolically, it carries the promise of wholeness, order, and completion. The self is represented symbolically by images that imply original wholeness such as a circle, a square, a quaternity, a mandala, or a child. The archetype of the self permeates Lucy's dream of Stephen. It is expressed in the image of the developing embryo, in the cross, and in the dream as a whole.

**The Principles of Femininity, Masculinity and Androgyny in the Psyche.** Jungian psychology is concerned with the androgynization of the personality on the psychological level. The principles of the masculine and the feminine represent the field of opposites in which the personality develops. An important psychological task in the individuation process is to access both the masculine and feminine principles and their related properties (Hill, 1992; Jung, 1966; Singer, 1976).

**Feminine Principle.** Sometimes referred to in Jungian literature as the *Eros* principle, the Feminine Principle is the principle of relatedness and receptivity. The term "principle" refers to "essence" (Harding, 1971). The feminine is operative in the realm of human relationship. It is not exclusively a property of women, and

55

is present in both men and women. It primarily manifests in women through the ego, and in men through the anima. Archetypally it is represented in two categories. The first is the elementary or static feminine. This quality of the Feminine Principle is represented as primal unity and undifferentiated wholeness, being, nurturance, process, moistness, darkness, unconsciousness, the womb and tomb. The other form for the feminine is called the transformative or the dynamic feminine and is represented as imagination and playfulness, liminality, luminosity, or so-called altered states (Harding, 1979; Hill, 1992; Neumann, 1963).

**Masculine Principle.** Sometimes referred to in Jungian literature as the *Logos* principle, the Masculine Principle is the principle of separateness. It is associated with focus, differentiation, understanding, and discrimination. It is operative in the field of organization and systems. It is not exclusively a property in men but is present in both men and women. In men it manifests primarily through the ego and in women through the animus. Archetypally it is represented in two categories. The first category is the elementary of static masculine. This quality is represented as order, rules, systems of meaning, will power, imitation, and hierarchy. The second form for the masculine is the dynamic masculine, and is characterized as initiative, goal-directedness, linearity, and heroic (Hill, 1992; Hillman, 1979; Neumann, 1970).

**Goddesses/Gods.** They are personifications of metaphorical frames of reference for deity, the manifestation of or vehicle for sacred energy of the ultimate mystery of the universe. Jung referred to the self as the carrier of the "god-image" in the human psyche. One way the self may manifest in consciousness is through images representing

56

divine energy. The Goddess is the archetype which determines the forms of feminine consciousness. The God is the archetype for the forms of masculine consciousness (Jung, CW 11, 1969, par. 620ff.; Woodman, 1980; Whitmont, 1982).

This chapter has been a detailed description of the three analytical components of the theoretical framework used in this study: cultural anthropology, mythology, and analytical psychology. I will be using concepts and methods from each of them to detail key cultural elements in the meaning systems of my informants. Although these factors are not limited to feminine forms of consciousness, I will highlight how feminine factors are represented in experience of the women in this study.

By using the interdisciplinary approach outlined in Chapter I, I will describe what goddess images appear in the consciousness of my informants, how they interpret these patterns, and how their interpretations of these patterns affect where they are in their social worlds.

# CHAPTER II: THE WOMEN IN THE INANNA SEMINAR
## AND THE NEGLECTED GODDESS ARCHETYPE

When I began my own research into goddess symbols about twelve years ago, the broad based re-emergence of interest in feminine forms of consciousness was but a whisper in the ears of a few individuals. Some of those who heard the whisper were accomplished writers and artists who represented emerging goddess archetypes in the cultural domain; and bodies of knowledge concerning goddess mythology and goddess oriented cultures were beginning to trickle into collective consciousness though the work of scholars from many disciplines. Furthermore, some individuals like my informants, were also dreaming images of feminine archetypes. Some of them were looking for frames of reference through which to interpret their dreams in culturally meaningful ways.

Gradually, the dreamers, the artists, and the scholars began to talk to each other about what these goddess symbols might mean individually and collectively, but this level of conversation is just beginning to be recognized in the larger society as a cultural movement. This is the background out of which my informants came together in a seminar on goddess mythology. The following chapter gives a general introduction to the women in the seminar, their social background, their participation in the goddess seminar, and their interest in dream work and in goddess mythology.

In 1983, the year before the seminar began to meet, a woman presented the following dream to me. "I am in my church (Episcopal). We now have a woman priest—not too many churches do, yet, you know. We are running a meeting together in the basement of the church. Everyone is playful and having a good time. The rector, a priest in his mid-fifties, comes in. His presence changes the mood. Everyone gets very quiet. He is actually a very nice man, really—well respected…but in the dream he comes over and secretly begins to fondle me. I am really angry, and I leave without making a fuss.

"Outside, near the doorway of the church, I see two women. They are dressed in long black dresses and their heads are covered with black scarves. One is young and the other is old. I think they are mother and daughter. The older one is sweeping the streets with a tattered broom and the younger woman is holding her arm to help support her. I feel drawn to these women. I don't like it that they have to sweep up outside the church."

This dreamer had been very active in the church most of her life. The dream gave her the feeling that, spiritually speaking, the feminine way was not valued by her church, even though it had begun to ordain women priests. "More importantly," she said, "I feel the dream is telling me that I have neglected my own deep feminine life on the spiritual level."

She felt the dream was signaling a change in what Jung referred to as the "god-image" in her psyche (Jung, 1963, p.382ff.). She felt that the two women outside the church were representations of the neglected goddess archetype. She associated them with the mother-daughter form of the ancient Greek goddesses, Demeter and Persephone.

59

She said, "the Goddess has become the 'bag woman' in the psyche, and abandoned."

The dreamer said the dream was telling her to pay attention to these goddess figures within herself and to direct her efforts toward conscious integration of the Feminine Principle. She felt that she was "dreaming the Goddess into her life," but she had no institutional or shared frame of reference within her daily social world through which she could ritualize this dream. This was not a unique situation. It was for this reason I decided to offer a seminar of goddess mythology which began to meet in the fall of 1984.

Most of the participants had little or no background in goddess mythology. Except for Katherine, who was reared in the Catholic faith, the other women in the Inanna seminar have had no formal religious connection with the archetype which has recently been called "the feminine face of God" (Anderson, 1991).

Sometimes they have asked Katherine about the Virgin Mary and about the position of Mary in the Catholic Church. Lucy once exclaimed to Katherine, "You are so lucky to have been brought up in a church that honors the feminine! At least you have Mary. And she is a frame of reference for this other goddess mythology. Those of us who are not Catholic have to start from scratch."

"Yes, I suppose so," Katherine, who no longer participates in the institutional Church, replied. "You can leave the Church, but you can never leave Mary. But it is hard to tolerate the Church's position on women." She explained that even with Mary, the Church still tries to dictate what a woman can and cannot do where her own

body is concerned. Many Catholics revere Mary as Queen of Heaven. Nonetheless, the Catholic Church hierarchy, though respectful of Mary's sanctity, has been reluctant to acknowledge any female representation of God or the god-image (Aberdeen, 1992; Anderson, 1991; Lutsch, 1993; Weber, 1987).

In 1987 I conducted some ethnographic research on Catholic women and the Catholic Church. One of my informants was a woman who, like Katherine, was put off by the Catholic Church's official stand on the place of women and feminine spirituality. "My images of God tend to be feminine, and I am an interior person," she said. "At about age 18 I began to realize that the structure of the theology of the Church did not correspond to my inner sense of my own relationship to God.... My experience is that God is revealed in creation, that God is a moving force in life, in the person, and that nothing can keep me from God's love.

"So, when I was 18, I silently left the Church in any personal way. At age 30 I had a deep and profound experience of God, and have felt since that time God incarnates in creation.... I want to be with a community, but in a way that serves my needs to find symbols to talk to other people in."

The phrase, "to find symbols to talk to other people in" is reflected in the attitudes of members of the goddess seminar. In addition to the goddess mythology and Jungian psychology, informants are connecting with some other interesting theoretical and practice models.

Katherine and Lucy are interested in the "self-in-relation" model developed by the psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller and a group of researchers at the Stone Center in Wellesley, Massachusetts. In the fall of 1992, Katherine and Lucy attended a talk given by Dr. Miller sponsored by the Washington, D.C. Society for Clinical Social Work. Lucy had followed Miller's work since the mid 1970's when she was working in the field of human sexuality, and Katherine had known about Miller and the Stone Center research for many years as well.

I spoke with Katherine after the conference. "It is so important, what she (Miller) and the others (Stone Center women) are doing. For years they met in each other's houses and they talked—well, like, 'what do you mean by empathy?' And in time they worked it out, this model of women's development that fit their experience of how women are—interactive, concerned with self-disclosure, relationship oriented, with a concern for quality friendships…. Women have always been like this. They are the ones who did the salons and the quilting bees."

One informant, Caroline, discussed the issue of finding people in her daily social world with whom to share the deeper levels of feminine spirituality, her dream images and "the power of it all."

"The Goddess is a process. I have to talk about it through symbols. And so—Inanna, Isis—those symbols—they conjure up for me—when I see the replicas of the Goddess—not like God used to be, you know. This old man—my theology of God the Father was an old man like every old man. I don't think it is easy to get rid of all that. I miss what I had in the spiritual realm from my (Christian-Episcopalian) mythology. As I have studied and gone further it is clear to me that

62

I will never go back. It is clear that the ritual is not a ritual that has any meaning to me any more, and that is scary."

At one time Caroline was active in her church. She had been a chalice bearer, the lay server who carries the cup at Holy Communion. She had also been a member of a task force to revise the ritual forms to include feminine spirituality in the theological language. In the end, the work of the task force was discounted by male clergy.

I recalled the phrase, "to find symbols to talk to people in," from the informant interview with the Catholic woman several years before. I thought about a friend who had converted from her Protestant Christian tradition to Judaism because she loved the feeling of community that had been missing for her which she found in her new faith.

Caroline responded, "I keep thinking I will get to the place where I'll put something in its place; it isn't going to happen, so that one big impact is the vast emptiness—and on the other hand, you know that catalogue I got from Eleanor…." Eleanor is another seminar participant. She had given Caroline a catalogue from a company called *Gaia* (*Gaia* is the name given to the Earth goddess by the ancient Greeks). I dialed the telephone number, and a voice answered, '*Gaia*.' I went, 'ok—I love it!' You know, it is just those sorts of things that are happening. There is some place in the world where some people answer the telephone, '*Gaia*.'

"I ordered (a replica of) the snake goddess from Crete. It is the figure of a woman, but she is not like any woman you have seen. Each image calls forward a slightly different energetic motion or

direction. The images, although they all belong to one broad field, as they come up in their own embodiments, they call forth a slightly different kind of pattern—like in the dreams, each being brings up a whole little world of its own. They are not a person. They each are very definitely speaking to us from the spirit. But, as Joseph Campbell says, with all the divisions we have, you know it's a human being when you see one. With these images and symbols, you know it is the Goddess, but in some recognizable form, even if it is a big, round blob with a head on it, it is part of the human image."

Joseph Campbell's work in mythology is known to all members of the seminar. Nora commented, "I once took as my summer reading project the four volumes of The Masks of God." They appreciate his ability to integrate vast amounts of information into an intelligible form.

Like all the members of the goddess seminar, Caroline is a voracious reader. She is always bringing some interesting book to the seminar to share. Her current research includes literature on the goddess archetype, feminine spirituality, and the holy grail.

As we continued our interview Caroline remarked, "It's not often you get a chance to talk about it (goddess spirituality). I live in a world of people who have no notion of what my grounding is. I am sure if I asked them to participate in any part of it they would, but it's not theirs."

"It is not shared ground," I remarked.

"No. Not with the people I work with, not with my family, not with anyone. For better or for worse that is how it is. And as things

64

are in my life right now that is not going to change. I am not ever going to live in another community where it is…Every now and then you meet someone that you can sort of touch base with, and try to insert the thought process where I have a chance for whatever good it does.

"I hear it in talking, especially to William (her son who was in college at the time of the interview). I hear some of the same thoughts and ideas coming up in him. He is basically a philosophy major. I am beginning to recognize that he has some of that feminine knowledge—and probably he has been saying that to me all along; but it is not until I bring my consciousness up on some level that it begins to mean something (between them).

"I can't imagine having a conversation like this with people I am with all the time. It is strong stuff, and it's strong to begin with, but when you don't have a chance to take it out and look at it—well—it's more powerful then (when you do have a chance to discuss goddess mythology with others)."

"Yes," I said. "It does get more powerful. Someone recently asked me if dreaming the symbol wasn't enough to bring the energy alive. That was a really good question, I thought. Why do you need a cultural form? My response was just what you said, it gets more powerful as it is shared. When my dream image meets your dream image—whomp! That's powerful."

Caroline continued, "It is hard to wrap my head around it. That particular group (the goddess seminar) was my first experience at an in-depth look at mythology. I had read it, sort of like I had read fairy stories. I had never read the Inanna myth and I had read

mythology, and my most vivid memory was my second grade teacher who was—um—now that I have the language for it, I think she was probably a shaman.  She had a crippled foot, and it was sort of stumpy and she never married.  And this was in a tiny little town.  And we all thought she was the best teacher in the world.  And one thing she would do for us was to tell us the story of how the days of the week got their names from the ancient gods—and she spun them out—she didn't read them.  They weren't told unless we behaved.'

"She was a shaman," I remarked with a laugh.  By "shaman" Caroline meant a wise woman with magic powers and folk wisdom.

"I didn't have a language for that," Caroline replied.  "And so I think that taking a look at the mythology of Inanna opened up and made a piece of all the other mythological things I had done.  I don't know when it slipped from being—when my consciousness slipped from it being an intellectual look at a myth to something less concrete—and I became aware of the whole feminine issue—the Feminine Principle…."

While rearing three children Caroline had returned for graduate work at The George Washington University.  "In 1977 is when I graduated from G.W. in Counseling Psychology in Women's Studies.  And that was the first ever to be done as a graduate studies program in Women's Studies; so we built it…and at the time I knew I had to go back to school to be trained, and I thought it was going to be in education.  But I didn't really want to go back to teaching, and so I did the women's studies thing as opposed to a masters degree in social work.  I got all caught up in the whole thing.  At that time it was very political.  Everything that was being written was political except

66

for a few Catholic women—Rosemary Reuther and Mary Daily—those women were beginning to write.

"So that was a crest of a wave for me, and I have been sort of out of just a totally feminine context because I started working with women and realized I wasn't getting anywhere and I didn't realize there was such a thing as systems theory then.  I just kept trying to figure out what was missing for me in the counseling of women.  I kept feeling like I was seeing only a piece of what was going on, and I started looking around and got into family work.  I didn't go back to the feminist perspective until I started with you and the group, and working with the Inanna material.

"The impact that the myth had (the Inanna myth) I came at it at a different level and it was more of a process, and I could see, regarding the women's movement, just a vast amount of work that had been done in the spiritual realm I mean there is more available now to read than you can ever read.  And there are more interpretations and so the impact of that was a sort of broadening and turning around of something that was important to me all my life.

"And the power of it…."

In addition to their shared interest in the study of goddess symbols and Jungian dream work, there are other characteristics my informants share in common such as gender, social position, race, level of education, and career orientation that orient them toward participation in the level of cultural development represented by the goddess seminar.

They have achieved and have maintained a style of life that allows them time to develop and explore their inner lives, and money to invest in therapy and education that supports the quest for spiritual meaning. In addition, there are other factors besides interest in feminine spirituality and affluence that move them towards participation in this work with a psychotherapist like myself. They represent a class of women whose emotional pain is deeply embedded in their inner experience.

Many women who enter therapy are, generally speaking, well adapted to the outer world of social success. This has been my experience and the experience of other therapists with whom I consult. These clients are gainfully employed, and are committed to their families and communities. They are well educated, caring, thoughtful human beings. Their lifestyles make them vulnerable to being overextended regarding outer demands, and they have little contact, therefore, with their inner life. Consequently, they feel drained and unfulfilled spiritually, and find this hard to articulate or explain to outsiders or have their subjective experience be acceptable even to close friends and family members. They may suffer, often in secret, because they have "been given so much." They may fight against depression, anxiety, and fatigue. Some suffer from more severe psychopathologies such as major depression, panic disorder, eating disorders, alcoholism, and other forms of addiction.

In addition, a surprising number of these women have been battered, sexually molested or abused, and/or emotionally abandoned or abused as children. Some forms of abuse and neglect are more subtle than others, and even socially condoned under the rubric of "that is just how it is." For example, several clients reported severe and

continuous beatings of themselves and their siblings by one parent while the other parent never responded to their cries nor ever gave any indication that the beating occurred. Women who were sexually abused by family members and who sought help from teachers or clergy were told they must be mistaken about their abuser, and were punished for saying such things. After a while, therefore, these victims of abuse stopped speaking about it and, in many cases were able to block it from consciousness altogether.

Emotional states that develop from these conditions can be seen as a type of post traumatic stress disorder resulting from the violence done to a female body and a feminine soul. As a result of some subtle and not so subtle repression in women, expression of feminine forms of consciousness has been kept underground in the unconscious psyche (Anderson, 1991; Castillejo, 1974; Estes, 1992; Jung, 1963; Perera, 1981). Some women have found it very difficult to justify their need for help. Difficult, but not impossible as women have in the latter part of the twentieth century begun to support one another in the healing and recovery of deeper layers of the neglected feminine soul and female body (Aburdene, 1992; Bruch, 1978; Reis, 1991; Spretnak, 1984; Woodman, 1980, 1982, 1985, and 1992; Woolf, 1957).

My informants, who are all members of the goddess seminar, come from this cultural tradition. As we shall soon see, most of them were reared in dysfunctional families which encouraged women to "suffer in silence." This type of suffering manifested psychologically in most of my informants clinically as an affective disorder, such as depression or manic depression.

As figure 2, page 73 indicates, they are all white middle class urban women. In 1993 they range in age from the early seventies to the mid-thirties. When the seminar began in 1984, the age range was, of course the early sixties to the mid-twenties. Of the eight informant/members, six are currently married, one woman has never married, and one is divorced. Six women have children and two have no children.

All eight informants enjoy reading on many levels. All eight have bachelor's degrees. Of the four with master's degrees, three women hold two, two women have post-graduate certificates in editing, and one a post graduate certificate in pastoral counseling. Of the eight, three are in the mental health field, one is a librarian, two are writer-editors, and two are master craftswomen.

All informants have been or currently are in Jungian therapy. In 1984 at the start of the goddess seminar, six were working with me, one was working with a Jungian analyst, and one other had been that analyst's client prior to 1984. As of 1993, everyone was working in an independent fashion, or consulting with me or another therapist on an occasional basis to review dreams and seek support on a particular issue while continuing to participate in the seminar.

Two of the eight have never been my clients, but worked analytically with the same Jungian analyst with whom I had worked. These two women had excellent grounding of mythology on the symbolic, psychological level, but had not studied goddess mythology prior to becoming part of the seminar. A third woman who has been my client had previously done work with another Jungian therapist. Four of the eight had experienced other forms of counseling or therapy. These

70

forms included adaptations of Freudian, Gestalt, Rogerian methods, family and couples counseling. There is a chart of this information at figure 2, page 73.

The parents of one informant were divorced. One informant has suffered from manic depressive illness, but has achieved a good recovery. Another suffered from bouts with major depression. At least three informants were sexually molested in their childhood. At least four are children of alcoholic parents.

All but one informant were reared in a Christian Protestant church. The other woman was reared in the Catholic faith. At this point, three of the eight are active in their churches. All eight are deeply spiritual whether or not they attend formal church activities. They each spend periods of time on a regular basis with their inner life in reflective practices include journaling, reading, and meditation.

Each women has come to discover her interest in feminine archetypes and goddess symbols in her own way through her dream work, reading in myths and fairy tales, studying history and archeology, directly encountering inner figures through active imagination, or though her relationships with other women. My informants do not classify their experience with The Goddess as a religion, a system of worship or a belief in certain divinities. They see goddess images as representations of psychological factors that inform their experience, influence behavior, heal psychic wounds, and may function as metaphors for transcending ordinary states of consciousness.

In Chapter III, "Dreaming the Goddess: The Roles of Dreams and Myths in the Development of Feminine Consciousness," we will deepen our knowledge about these women and the meaning that goddess imagery holds for them. This chapter is centered on the dreams of one informant, Lucy. Information from other informants is used to support and amplify Lucy's experiences.

| Name | Age | Race | Marital Status/ Years | Children/ Grand Children | Vocation | Education | Recreation | Religion |
|------|-----|------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Katherine | 50 | Caucasian | M/25+ | 1/0 | Clinical Social Worker | M.L.S. and M.S.W. | Puppets, Books, Movies | Non-prac. Catholic |
| Nora | 67 | Caucasian | D/17 | 6/7 | Pastoral Counselor | B.A. and Certif. | Arts, Books, Travel | Non-prac. Methodist |
| Eleanor | 44 | Caucasian | M/20+ | 0/0 | Librarian | M.L.S. | Travel, Garden, Books, Arts | Non-prac. Methodist |
| Christa | 72 | Caucasian | M/40+ | 2/3 | Craftswoman | B.A. | Swims, Garden, Books, Travel | Unitarian |
| Theresa | 39 | Caucasian | M/10 | 2/0 | Mother/ Editor | B.A. And Certif. | Walking, Books, Family Outings | Non-prac. Methodist |
| Anna | 37 | Caucasian | Single | 0/0 | Editor | B.A. And Certif. | Dolls, Books, Community Volunteer | Episcopalian |
| Caroline | 60 | Caucasian | M/30+ | 3/1 | Craftswoman | M.Ed. | Books, Travel, Walks | Non-prac. Episcopalian |
| Lucy | 50 | Caucasian | M/25+ | 2/0 | Clinical Social Worker | M.S. and M.S.W. | Books, Walks, Garden | Episcopalian |

Fig. 2.  Informant Demographic

## CHAPTER III:    DREAMING THE GODDESS

## THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND MYTHS IN THE DEVELOPMENT
## OF FEMININE CONSCIOUSNESS

As I began my independent psychotherapy practice I was astonished to discover that most clients had only a vague understanding of mythology and literature in general, not withstanding the fact that most of them had baccalaureate degrees and even master's degrees in their chosen fields.    As I learned from my informants, mythology had not been incorporated into their basic education on any level, even their religious training.  Most of them had grown up in a church with some introduction to Bible stories, and most had some familiarity with specific European fairy tales.  Nonetheless, the notion of a mythology was not part of the pedagogy.  They were unaware of the impact that metaphor has on the soul as well as the mind.  Given this socialization, it was as though they were asleep on the symbolic level.

On one occasion during a meeting of the seminar, Lucy raised this point.  Lucy said that work with symbols did not come easily for her. She assumed her lack of education in myth and symbolism was because she was from the Mid-West, and she assumed that people from the East had the "upper hand" in this area over people like herself who grew up in the Mid-West.  "People who have a liberal arts background are

way ahead of the rest of us where this material is concerned. You people from the East Coast have the upper hand—we who grew up in the Mid-West just didn't have mythology in our schooling. I grew up on a farm. At the dinner table we talked about the new piece of farm equipment—how beautiful it was—how it worked and how it would help us bring in the crops better.

"Now I come along, and at forty-five I discover a whole area of life that has been neglected! It's so frustrating—and wonderful that at this stage of life I am starting all over again—with my dreams I have to learn this stuff (meaning the myths)."

Other members of the seminar tried to reassure Lucy. They said that people from the East Coast had the same problem. One East-coaster remarked, "I loved to read as a child. I used to retreat into my room—maybe to get away from the others (family members), I don't know. I liked to be alone, and reading was one way to do that…but I never thought about myths or dreams or anything like that…. It never occurred to me that they meant anything."

Theresa, also a member of the seminar, is from the East. Like Lucy, she had little understanding of the psychological significance of symbols as they appear in dreams and in art. And like Lucy, since she began to work with her dreams and with mythology she has developed an intense interest in the field of psychology, and has decided to do graduate work in that field. When we met in 1984, she was having panic attacks. She was working at a high-pressure consulting firm as a technical writer.

Her early dreams were filled with fears of being drowned. They reflected her anxious moods. In the dreams she was being pushed into turbulent seas by dream figures. She started to keep a journal of her dreams and record her responses to them. After a short time, she had a dream in which she was seated by a pool of water. It was contained and safe. I was seated next to her. Together we looked at our reflections in the water. After that dream, Theresa felt much better within herself—more settled. Dreams like this help a client and therapist to understand that the therapy is on track, and that the unconscious is happy with the way the therapy is going, so to speak. The psyche is always a partner in the therapy. During the early phases of her therapy Theresa decided to leave the high-pressure work, establish herself as a free-lance editor and concentrate on starting a family.

In an informant interview we talked about her experience of her analytical work within the goddess seminar. "Inanna has helped me to do my work at various stages. This is very different than before when I was working full time—being a Mom—and before I was just being "me." It has been interesting how the work (meaning inner dream and myth work) still comes about. It affects your perspective, basically…I remember when I first started coming here (to the seminar) and we read Till We Have Faces, and you called the seminar "The Totally Torn Woman." It was not until the second year of the goddess seminar that I introduced the Sumerian myth of the Goddess Inanna. After that, we called it the "Inanna Seminar."

In that first year, 1984, we studied a Greek fairy tale called "Eros and Psyche." Eros is also known, of course, as Cupid or Amor. It was a Greek myth recorded by Lucius Apuleius in his novel, The

76

<u>Transformation of Lucius, or The Golden Ass</u>, a Latin text from the
second century, A.D.

The translation we referred to is by Robert Graves (The Noonday
Press, 1951). Several well known Jungian analysts and writers have
written commentaries on "Amor and Psyche." The best known are <u>She:</u>
<u>Understanding Feminine Psychology</u>, by Robert A. Johnson (Harper &
Row, 1976), <u>Amor and Psyche: The Psychic Development of the Feminine</u>
<u>and Commentary on the Tale by Apuleius</u> by Erich Neumann (Princeton
University Press, 1956), and <u>An Interpretation of Apuleius' Golden</u>
<u>Ass with the Tale of Eros and Psyche</u>, by Marie Louise von Franz
(1980).

We used a contemporary interpretation of this classic story by C. S.
Lewis, <u>Till We Have Faces</u>, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1956) as the
primary text. I chose this version for two reasons. First, I felt
it best to start with a story based in Greek tradition because it was
closer to our time and cultural tradition. I thought that the
participants would be somewhat familiar with the ancient Greeks and
Romans, and therefore would be less intimidated by the contents.
Second, I chose Lewis's book because it is beautifully written and in
language familiar to the seminar members.

Theresa continued, "You explained how working with them (myths) was
like using them as a vessel in which you put all your suffering, and
everything. And I think that that is true. It has done that over
the years. It has allowed me to put my real life things that are
going on into this vessel, and it comes out in a different way,
and—um—it's just a different way of being conscious of something.
I am sure I still do a lot of things that are very unconscious. It's

77

interesting, because I think by doing this kind of work you sort of catch yourself when you fall back into the norm, or what you have done for years that just hasn't worked."

Theresa had said, "Working with myths is like using them as vessels in which you put your suffering." Myths can now be understood as containers for the play of imagination. A function of the faculty of the imagination is to render a synthetic unity of affects (emotions) and images. It allows representations to be held in thought and to be brought forward in time as memory or as fantasy. The invitation to play with myths was an invitation to enjoy fantasies, the products of the imagination. The play with images, of the imagination, creates animation-vivification, the source of beauty, awe, and wonder. Jung quoted Schiller, "Man is completely human only when he plays" (Jung, CW 16, 1966, par. 98).

Jung said, "Every good idea and all creative works are the offspring of imagination..." (Jung, CW 6, 1971, par. 93). It is important to imagine new possibilities. Most of the time when people enter therapy they are in too much emotional pain to be playful. Too often the faculty of imagination has been suppressed. Somehow, if they can begin to play with their symptoms, they often begin to feel relief. This is "deep play" to which Geertz referred (1973). Returning to Lucy, the myths and her dreams helped her reconnect with her own creative imagination.

As we shall see, Lucy learned how to do the inner work very well. Over the first three years of her five years of therapy with me a whole new set of feminine images developed in her dream life. These images eventually helped her integrate her outer reality with her

78

emotional life as symbolized in her dreams by the farm and the inner boy-man whom she had referred to as "the spirit of the farm."

Lucy has a passion for beauty, an intensity for life, and a connection with the Spirit that she traces back to her childhood. She grew up on an Iowa farm in the middle of a large family. She has three sisters and a brother. Her mother left the social work profession to marry Lucy's father and become a farm wife. "From as early as I can remember," Lucy said, "my sisters and I spent summers on the farm helping Mother plant and harvest the garden. As we podded peas and canned tomatoes, my mother spun stories of her year in Chicago as a student of social work at Jane Addams' Hull House. With her we mentally walked through the warehouse district of Chicago to teach Sunday School. We stood in the soup lines and ate from tin cups, we told stories to the elementary students after school in the Hull House lounge. These were thrilling, urban, sophisticated tales to her farm daughters."

The family attended the local Episcopal Church, but Dad often went fishing on Sunday. And sometimes Lucy got to go with him. He gave her the nick name "Ted." "I was a real tomboy," Lucy said.

She has wonderful memories of those days. But those memories had shadows to them which she could not define for many years. Those shadows appeared in her dreams as the figure of a youth—a sandy-haired farm boy with a sadness about him that troubled Lucy. It was a poetic sadness, a nostalgia, a wistfulness that permeated him and from which he could not free himself. "In the dreams he would come and stand at the foot of my bed and just watch me. He is dressed in a wheat-colored hopsacking shirt—loose-fitting with the sleeves

79

rolled up, and faded jeans. He says to me, 'You're not going to make it—it's too late. It's 7:30.'

"In one dream he was standing out by the corn crib, just staring out over the farm…" That dream was in February, 1986. "I had this dream twice…." In the dream the boy has become a young man. "He is in darkness. He stands in the shadows. He is from top to bottom a whole person. He is standing at the corn crib. He is not my father. He is more like my brother at age 25. He is the spirit of the farm, my roots. He is at the heart of my manic depression. He was full of sadness—I didn't understand it…." She was troubled.

There was an invisible boundary that separated them, and could not be crossed. He was there beside her, and yet she could not reach him. As she worked with these dreams Lucy became aware of intense feminine feelings she associated with the longing a woman feels when she desire to unite with another from the very depth of her being. These intense feelings were associated with those of a mother nursing her children, a woman making love, or the longing for God.

Lucy began to relate to her dreams through personal association, and in this way to apprehend what their meaning or message was for her. This boy-man brought back memories and emotions associated with her life on the farm. "When I was growing up I used to love to get away from everybody, and go to my tree-house. I could be alone—with nature and with my feelings. There was this wonderful tree. It had a 'crown of thorns' like Jesus. It was Jesus—I wish I could show you that tree."

80

In her childhood Lucy had a mythic connection to life. She could see into the meaning behind forms in the natural world. She could extract the spirit from those hours in the tree house to develop her imaginary world.

Looking back on her childhood, Lucy began to feel that the energy from her psychic life had been suppressed. There were no sacred forms through which Lucy could express her budding spiritual passion. Given the practical demands of farm life, her attempts to express her inner life were dismissed as childish games.

As she grew up, her fantasies and dreams fell away into hidden places within her soul. Years later they began to surface, first as a mental illness and then as dream symbols.

"The years between 35 and 42 were particularly turbulent ones for me, spent in a variety of consciousness-raising and self-help groups. The climax of this unrest came during the summer of 1983, while we were spending a year in London. My husband had taken a twelve month sabbatical from his job as professor (at a well known private university in Washington, D.C.). News of my father's death after a long illness with cancer triggered an episode of mania. Having experienced depression during the gray months of London's winter, I was diagnosed as having bipolar mood disorder, was placed under the care of a psychiatrist, and began lithium treatment. This came at the end of the year in London. When I returned to the United States, I continued drug therapy and began psychotherapy on an outpatient basis."

Lucy's illness, called bipolar disorder is a clinical diagnosis classified as an affective disorder. It is also called manic-depressive disorder. People with manic-depressive illness suffer from radical mood swings. When they are in a manic phase, they feel euphoric, exceptionally cheerful, and expansive. They are often hyperactive, have flights of ideas, inflated self-esteem, decreased need for sleep, and often get involved in activities with serious consequences they do not recognize.

During a depressive phase, they feel hopeless, sad, and despairing. They often have difficulty sleeping and eating normally. They lack energy, have low self-esteem, difficulty in concentrating, and sometimes they may become suicidal (APA, 1987, p. 225-226). People with bipolar disorder are usually given lithium, which has been proven to help the mood swings.

Lucy and I started our work in therapy in 1985 following the sudden death of her closest friend, a woman whom she had known for many years. Along with Lucy's husband, this friend had been her mainstay through the darkest part of her bout with manic-depressive illness. The death was sudden. A blood clot passed through her brain. For Lucy this was the second tragic death in three years.

By the time we met, Lucy had accepted her illness and adjusted to the idea that she would always have to monitor her lithium level closely. During 1983 and 1984, she had worked with therapy to change her behavior patterns and understand bipolar disorder. Treatment included family and couples therapy as well. She referred to this process as "learning to live with and manage my disease." The death

82

of her close friend following the loss of her father was overwhelming.

She bravely entered the crisis. It was at this time that we began our work together. It was obvious that she had come to terms with her symptoms on the intellectual and behavioral levels. Our task was to discover the meaning symbolically and psychologically. From the beginning it was obvious to me that Lucy was a deeply spiritual woman. Her faith had been tested significantly in recent years. She had a rich dream life as evidenced by the dreams cited above. She began to keep a journal that included her dreams, and she spent time with them outside the therapy hours thinking them over and recording her associations.

In an informant interview in 1993 we reviewed a number of Lucy's dreams. "I always have the desire to go back through my (dream) material and read all my dreams. It's like a scrap book. It's wonderful to see them (again), but it isn't the same impact as when you were inside the dream—when you have the dream. And then somebody calls you to do something, and you go do it rather than stay with the review!"

Lucy has been writing down her dreams since she began therapy with me in 1985. This process was not easy for her, even though she had been in treatment for several years for manic-depression. She was already in the seminar, and working with mythology along with the dream work began to pay off, but in the beginning the process was difficult for Lucy because it was new and strange.

83

It took all of 1986 and much of 1987 for Lucy to come to terms with the death of her friend. During that time the friend appeared in a number of dreams. Lucy also dreamed of beautiful unknown women dressed in what Lucy referred to as "country style Victoria dresses." They were dresses of soft, flowing chambray, gingham, cotton prints with cabbage roses in soft colors. She associated these psychological images of women with her friend.

For example, a dream from December, 1986 began, "I am with a woman who looks like Judy Collins (the singer). She is dressed in a long, homespun cotton skirt, work shirt, sash, shawl, long dark hair that is graying—about fifty years old…. This woman has (exudes) such strength of character and such wisdom and depth. I like her immediately. She is perplexed at the moment about where her belongings are, so we search for them together in the basement (of Lucy's house). She tells me she has a Ph.D. in anthropology and religion and is a therapist. She is very gentle, warm…I fall in love with her."

This dream image engendered considerable emotion in Lucy, and vivified her imagination. Here are some of her associations with the dream. "This is a 'goddess dream,'" she said. "Out of this dream I could tell 1000 stories! Like Shaharazad. This dream is about (my friend)—the treasure she gave me. It is about doing therapy out of a well state and not a sick state. Somehow she is me (this dream woman), but I don't think it or feel it yet."

Several months before she had this dream I had received a letter from Lucy. During those first few years in therapy she would send me letters between our sessions. I liked getting her letters. I appreciated her commitment to her own process and to our relationship. Sometimes the

84

letters included dreams she wanted to discuss next time, but more often her letters were her attempt to put difficult feelings into words and images. This particular letter came after we had taken a brief break in the therapy of about six weeks. Lucy had been on vacation in England with her husband, and I had undergone major surgery. During this time she had continued on her own with her dream work and her reading in mythology. Even though it was not life-threatening, my surgery had caused her some anxiety.

The letter came just after I resumed my practice. "I am glad you are well enough to be working again on a weekly basis with me. Because I am ready also…. How incredible it is, in the autumn of the year, that we should find ourselves recovering and daily becoming increasingly stronger—as all the trees around us give signs of going bare and preparing for the 'deadening' of winter.

"This is especially heartening to me since I now cautiously defend myself from moving into the deadness of depression at this time of year. To see you up and vital and (nearly) fully functioning again—seeing you sparkle like the Bonnie we all know was a real boost, a psychological high and a resurrection of sorts…."

She also wrote about the seminar. We had finished the myth of Psyche and Eros, and were well into the stories about the Sumarian goddess, Inanna. "Thank you for the richness of the Wednesday night session. I am connected with this work of Inanna in a new way. The words on the pages are coming alive with new meaning. I am at that 'point of readiness' to bear this work at last….

85

"I have more than an hour's worth of material to share with you next time…I have spent this last weekend 'in therapy'—grieving for my soul-sister, and connecting with Orual and Psyche in a renewed way. I spent time reading through a file of letters I got from (her friend) over the years. I am now fully aware that the Psyche that is (her friend) guided me to you and this work—a superb validation for our work on the resolution of her death—the enrichment of my relationship with (Lucy's husband) and my ongoing work toward individuation." In her letter to me she enclosed several dreams and copies of one or two letters from her now departed friend.

Orual and Psyche are characters in C. S. Lewis's novel, Till We have Faces based on the Psyche myth. Orual is Psyche's older sister. She sees herself as incredibly ugly and awkward as compared with her younger sister who is so beautiful that the people worshiped her as an incarnation of the goddess, Aphrodite. Orual both adores Psyche and at the same time she envies Psyche's charm and grace. In the course of Lewis's version of the story, the sisters become tragically separated. Psyche is destined to go in search of her lost husband, Eros, the god of love. This search takes her into the land of no return, the 'other world' of the Immortal Ones. Orual is destined to stay on this side of the veil and succeed her cruel father as monarch of the City of Glome. The separation is excruciating for both sisters, but each must follow the individual fate dealt her by the gods. Lucy found Lewis's artful rendering of this story enormously helpful as she dealt with her grief.

In January of 1987, Lucy dreamed of her friend. "(My friend) calls me (by phone) and tells me she is having a wonderful time these days, and has never known such contentment, such happiness. She tells me about her new life, her new friends…then she asks how I am. I remain quiet

86

for a long time (a technique I have developed in therapy) and then I say, 'I have changed a lot since I have seen you, I feel like we are very different people now than when we were together. I miss you deeply—when can you come over—when can we talk together side-by-side?' (My friend) seems distant—joyful—unconnected to my sadness, with my loneliness for her. I feel shocked at her reaction. This is so unlike her. Then I awaken and realize—She is dead."

The meaning of this dream was clear for Lucy. Finally, after a year and a half, she had accepted the tragic and untimely death of her friend and companion on the psychological and spiritual levels. Her friend had come to her in the dream to let her know she was doing well, and that she had gone on with her life. Now Lucy would have to go on with hers as well.

There was one more dream a few months later in which her friend and she took a walk together. They reaffirmed their friendship, but realized things between them were changed forever. Lucy felt relief finally.

In addition to the grief work she had done, Lucy was trying to make a decision about her career. "What am I going to be doing at age 50…at age 60?" All the inner work that Lucy had done had made her realize that she was giving too much to what she referred to as a "male-driven value system." Since 1984 she had worked in banking as a management training specialist. In 1987 her dreams were filled with images that showed deep concern about this career path. In addition, she was often tired. "I am low on energy" she'd say.

In December of 1987, Lucy came into my office for a session. She has the ability to be very serious and also very playful at the same

time. She brought a piece of newsprint and some marking pens with her. On the paper she had started a drawing depicting where she felt she was in the course of therapy. She used the story of Psyche as her central symbol.

There is a point in the story of Psyche and Eros, where Psyche makes a terrible mistake and causes Eros to fly away. From that point on, the story is about Psyche's attempt to find Eros and make amends. In C. S. Lewis's version of the story the symbol for that rift is a river that cannot be crossed. Lucy's drawing had a river that meandered across the page from the lower left-hand corner toward the upper right hand corner. On the right bank of the river Lucy depicted the outer world with its enticements and difficulties. This is where she thought she was.

On the left bank she depicted beautiful Psyche in a garden with a tree in the center. Psyche, at this point symbolized Lucy's soul. Lucy said that Psyche stood for feminine values and feelings, for inner beauty, psychological health, containment—feelings that were not available as long as Lucy remained enthralled to the outer life. Psyche offered Lucy "baptism" in the waters of the soul and spiritual healing.

During an informant interview given in the Spring of 1993, Lucy brought that picture out for us to see. "This was my 'most favorite' session ever. It was a pivotal moment in the therapy," she recalled.

"I think you were deciding whether to stop the process," I said.

"Yes, I think that is right," replied Lucy. "It was quite a transition time for me. I think I was trying to talk about where I was in my work, and I was standing at the river trying to figure out where I was going. And I came in with this picture part way done. I remember that I had drawn the river, and this butterfly, and this is a circle that can be penetrated, and this is a crowd of people—all on the right bank of the river…and we drew in some other images from my dreams."

During the session in 1987 we drew in a haystack for her childhood, and a lioness that had accompanied her friend in a dream, a monkey, and a dove.

Now, as we tried to remember what happened in 1987, Lucy said, "So, here is Psyche at the river—and there is the monkey. Was it all my intellectual stuff? No, it was that dream where I went to the library at the University of Chicago, and the librarian gave me a monkey in a cage instead of the books that were on reserve for me! My thinking was like a monkey in a cage."

Pointing to an image of a dove, Lucy continued, "But look, the 'bird of paradise' has come. The dove, the Holy Spirit. That had to do with something that I had finally been able to think. We put the dove there because of that—something to celebrate."

'Yes—I remember," I said. It was the final outcome of the picture. You put the dove in the picture because you 'crossed over the river' and you got to the place in that session where you knew you accepted the mythological point of view—."

"Yes, that is something to celebrate," exclaimed Lucy. "And I think I understood what the feminine point of view was—or the Goddess—the concept of—this is not a male image. I couldn't put it into words. This was a very important session."

"I think you were trying to decide whether to stay in the work with mythology and dreams—and you brought this drawing, this image of Psyche as a way to try to find an image to help you stay."

"How clever," said Lucy with a laugh.

"You are clever, and very intuitive," I replied.

Pointing to the haystack, she recalled the dreams I mentioned earlier. "This is when I was having the dreams of the boy who stood by my bed and called to me…He came out of the 'father-world.' And then I made this picture. Wow! It sure says a lot about the power of art, doesn't it?"

In January 1988, Lucy had the following dream. I have heard a lot of dreams in my ten years as a therapist. I have to say that this dream is one of the most beautiful dreams I have had the privilege of receiving from a client.

Lucy wrote, "A woman is pregnant with an illegitimate child. Since she does not want it she places it (the embryo) in a statue in the Cathedral gardens. (She drew a picture of the Celtic Cross in the garden of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.) I walk into the gardens to admire the beautiful summertime boxwood, shrubs, and flowers in bloom. Someone, perhaps the mother, beside me calls out

90

'Stephen' in a melodious voice. And a well-formed embryo, perhaps
five months old, emerges from the top of the statue like a genie. He
comes towards us with an embryonic smile on his face. His head and
shoulders are larger than the rest of his long body. His eyes are
open, his teeth not fully formed. His navel is jagged but healed,
his legs and feet not fully formed. He floats toward us, approaches
me, and curls into a fetal position, then nestles against me. I lift
my arms to support him. As I hold and admire him, he develops into a
beautiful baby boy. I realize that this lovely baby is mine...I awake
believing this is a fairy tale dream."

Lucy was amazed at this dream. She called it a "crossroads dream."
On the day we discussed the dream she was not feeling well. "The
'real world' has moved into my life and made it very difficult to be
with the dreams." By this she meant that her job and family
commitments were demanding all her time, and this made it difficult
to have time for contemplation and journaling, or even remembering
dreams. But this dream was unforgettable.

"How can this be?" she asked in our session—this embryo. And what is
this 'illegitimate' child? Maybe his mother cannot take care of it so
she hopes to find a new mother to carry it.

I asked her if she had any associations with the name "Stephen." She
did not have any either personal nor mythological. The only
association that came to me was the story of the stoning of Stephen
in the biblical Book of Acts. I told her the story of how Stephen
had been stoned. Stephen was known by Christians as the first
martyr. He was one of the early deacons in the church in Jerusalem,
having been chosen by the apostles of Christ to care for the secular

needs of the Hellenic Jewish Christian community. He was accused of blasphemy by a rabbinical group and was stoned to death (Delaney, 1983, p.463). Saul of Tarsus, who became St. Paul after his conversion to Christianity, had been among the accusers.

Lucy continued, "It (St. Stephen's story) is a reflection of me in the mirror. I am intoxicated with the idea of social work—since I walked with my mother in the garden on the farm. Why did I yearn to be a camp counselor? Was I born to do this? Is this my 'cross'—my destiny?

"From September until now (January) I have conducted an intensive search. I have been so pregnant with this baby." During these months Lucy has been wrestling with the idea of going back to school to study for the Masters of Social Work degree. She had decided that this was the way to integrate her spiritual values, her sense of herself as a woman and a career idea that had been in the back of her mind since childhood, but that she had been unable to act on it. "But," she asked, "is the dream premature?"

During 1988 she applied and was accepted to several excellent schools of social work. She began her training at one of them in the fall of that year.

When we revisited this dream during an informant interview Lucy said, "I'd like to say something about the 'Stephen dream.' There are some associations I have now with Stephen that didn't sink in when I had the dream—I was so full of the emotion of it at the time. In 1975 I attended the first ordination of a woman priest (Episcopal) at St. Stephen's Church. That was a real breakthrough and a celebration for

92

all of us women—it meant the freedom to celebrate and participate in the 'Holy of Holy's.'"

Lucy is a practicing Episcopalian and attends services regularly at her parish church. In the 1970s when women were first ordained as priests it was being done by local priests in local settings, on the diocesan level. It was still considered blasphemous by the Episcopal hierarchy. By the mid-1980s this changed, and today women enter the priesthood in growing numbers.

She continued, "And I recently went to church with (a friend). There I saw that St. Stephen was the martyr who had given so much to the poor, to community service, and to me he was in fact, a spiritual guide."

The dream of Stephen was the seed for the next phase of her spiritual development and laid the groundwork for what Lucy came to realize was her final phase of intense psychotherapy. Over the next two years, she was able to go more deeply into her unconscious through the dreams and uncover the material that had set up the conditions for manic depression.

During her therapy, Lucy continued to be visited by the threat of manic depression. She had learned to monitor her lithium level in the early stages of her recovery, before she began working with me. But all too often there had been sudden drops that manifested in hypermanic states.

We noticed the dreams reflected this condition on the psychological level, and allowed Lucy to intervene before symptoms concretized in

the body. There seemed to be a relationship between Lucy's lithium level and the patterns in certain dreams. By recording and observing the movement of images in her dreams and by relating them to subtle shifts in her moods, Lucy suspected that certain dreams anticipated the drop in the lithium level. These dreams indicated to her that she was not paying close attention to her inner life. They indicated that she was losing her capacity for containment of psychic energy. Lucy learned that she could change the course of the illness by meditating with her dreams.

Here is an example of this sort of dream. Lucy dreamed that she was dragging a small child through a briar patch. The child was hurt and bleeding. In the middle of the dream Lucy became conscious of what she was doing. In another dream Lucy and her family are walking along a country road. They are nearly killed by a woman driving an enormous green Packard automobile. The woman was dangerous. She was aware of what she was doing, yet she was hell-bent on getting wherever she was going and did not care who or what she ran over in the process.

Lucy connected these dreams with another category of dreams that gradually revealed a condition that Lucy referred to as "the root of the manic depression." As early as 1986 the dreams began to image a split in the spiritual aspect of the animus, the masculine energy in Lucy's psyche. For example, there was a dream in which Lucy attended a service at a cathedral. To her surprise, the bishop was lying in state on the altar as if he were dead. Another man was giving the sermon. He was dressed in a brown plaid suit. He was perhaps a lay-minister. But he was acting more like a barker at a carnival.

And, furthermore, he had a large erect penis that he let protrude from his open trousers. Lucy was the only one who seemed to notice.

At the time Lucy had the dream we talked about the possibility of incest, but she was not ready to open herself to those memories. In retrospect she now realizes that she had to make quite an effort to keep them blocked.

In the summer of 1989, just prior to the start of the second and final year of her social work training, Lucy had what she called a "breakthrough" dream. "I am walking on a beach enjoying a beautiful summer day by the ocean. I notice a slender man about fifty years old. He is ramming a two-toned pink umbrella into the mouth of a girl who is about seven or eight years old. A woman about my age and body-type is objecting. The young woman is flailing about on the ground. I am helpless to do anything."

Lucy was horrified by the dream. She was "gripped by the violence of the animus," she said. "It scares me that I have no control or power to stop this from happening. My response is to step back in astonishment and disbelief that it is really happening."

My response was to move her gently toward understanding what the dream contained. During the next few days after we looked at the dream together, Lucy's denial gave way and she became conscious of the fact that she had been sexually molested when she was a girl living on the farm. The perpetrator was a neighbor, a man the family knew. She told her parents. They told her to stay away from him and they did not let him come on the farm any more. They did not

confront him openly. After all, she "wasn't hurt" by him, and they didn't want to make trouble in the community.

Over the next few weeks I received several letters from Lucy about the memories which were returning to her. "Bonnie, I stand in awe. Thirty six years in hiding, seven years in therapy, and one major mental illness diagnosed. It took all of that to uproot the truth. The work on the psyche is truly wondrous. What a job we've done, you and I. I feel sometimes like a chess figure, God's hands reaching down and moving me to that position where I will next grow, struggle, develop, prosper, fall and rise again…this work took years and years—and, finally, two women conquered—the Gentle One and the Joyous One. I embrace us both and give thanks to God….

"…Thanks for pushing and pulling and prodding me with such tender care through the tunnel to this incredible reality that incest and child abuse is at the root of my manic depression. Horrible as it may seem, and could be, it really is not nearly so horrible as the life of a mentally ill patient. I have lived so intimately with these dynamics, even knowing I am on a new journey to the darkest side of the soul.

"The dream (of the pink umbrella) presents itself at such a crucial moment—the 'young girl' is going off to school with her lunch box , and cannot be knocked down and abused, but must have the strength of her convictions, the courage, to look at what is on the other side of the gate. Psyche will not let the process stop now that we have reached the cross-roads.

"I remember how it was when I started to work with my mental illness. I did not want people to know I was mentally ill. I wanted the world to know I was happy—a happy-go-lucky person. Easy, fun, connecting with people—everything to everybody (manic). My myth of the perfect person uncovered. The myth of a perfect childhood uncovered (depression). What a blessing! What a cross to bear...I have a lot of work ahead."

From that point on the stigma of mental illness began to lift along with her depression. Even though what Lucy called "heavy filter of child abuse" was difficult to confront, it gave meaning to the experience of mental illness.

After this dream and the work that followed, the quality of her dreams again changed. The women in Victorian-styled dresses transformed into women of healing. In another "breakthrough" dream, Lucy visits the Washington Cathedral. She is going to visit her therapist, a woman who looks a lot like Lucy. The therapist's office is in a cottage in the gardens. The therapist is wearing a string of lapis lazuli beads interspersed with tiny silver bells. She and Lucy embrace. "It is a wonderful dream about the therapist and the client," Lucy remarked.

"I am telling her how much I love her and how much I love working with her." They share a quiet peacefulness and easiness between them. "Then her brother comes in and interrupts us. He is about forty years old. He is aware he has interrupted us, and begins to talk about the therapy after acknowledging me. While we all talk, I think, 'this is a good time to leave for the Cathedral.' Admiring her lapis beads, I suggest to my therapist that we go outside so we can

finish our session in private.  We leave for the Cathedral
arm-in-arm."

Lucy and I spent some time in an informant interview going over this
dream and the dreams about the incest.  "Isn't that beautiful!" Lucy
remarked.  In this dream the women are not going to be interrupted
for long by the man, and he is not an abuser—just a little clumsy,
maybe—and we can all be friends."

This was a dream about integration within Lucy's psyche.  In Jungian
terms, this dream reflects a harmonious coming together of three
major components of consciousness, the ego (Lucy), the shadow (the
therapist) and the animus (the brother).

"And what a beautiful transformation of you, the therapist," Lucy
said to me.  There were several dreams before this one in which
Bonnie appears as the therapist and friend.  These dreams had been a
reflection of the outer facts, and also strong indicators that Lucy
had within herself an inner healer which she projected onto me.
Lucy's decision to become a clinical social worker was part of
claiming that energy for herself, and this dream affirms the process
by which the therapist in Lucy was coming to consciousness.  "The
good news in the dream is from the beginning the therapist isn't
Bonnie.  She is a woman _my_ size—."

In addition, Lucy noticed that the dream takes place in the same
setting as the Stephen dream.  "Here is the client with her beautiful
therapist where Stephen was born from the cross in the garden.  And
the client is admiring her therapist's beautiful lapis beads.  These

98

beads reminded Lucy of one of the attributes of the Sumerian goddess Inanna who will be discussed thoroughly in Chapter IV.

"This dream connected me with Inanna, too. I think it is an oozing out of Inanna. Here in the therapist is the Goddess. In fact, there are two goddesses, the therapist and the client, but the therapist is Inanna. She has Inanna's lapis beads on—it is the therapist who is Inanna! Beautiful!" exclaimed Lucy.

As we shall see a little further on in this study, the Sumerian goddess, Inanna, wears a strand of lapis beads as an emblem of her holy office of priestess. This is the dream that really connected Lucy with the sacred aspect of the feminine principle as it is embodied in women. "This is a very intimate dream," Lucy reflected. And then she said with laughter, "You used to always say about certain dreams 'this is a transformation dream.' And I'd wonder, 'what is a transformation dream?' Well, I guess I know that this dream is a dream of transformation. Our talking about it is helpful in terms of the shadow—to see how the shadow has worked in my life to—hold the resistance. To hold the part I could not take in—to hold the part I denied. She held the therapist and she held the Goddess….

"That is really a love story between the therapist and the client! What a beautiful picture in the dream. To <u>feel</u> it gives it life. And the dream makes it possible for me to contain it and use the energy of it every day in my work."

Shortly after completing her undergraduate degree in home economics, Lucy earned a Master's of Science degree in human sexuality and she worked in that field for a number of years. "It was a natural

99

extension of home economics," she declared. "And now, not only am I starting a new education, but I have to start a new career!" In the course of her therapy and participation in the Inanna seminar, she discovered she had the potential and the wish to be a psychotherapist. Therefore, in the mid-1980's Lucy returned once more to school, this time for a Master's in Social Work degree.

When one thinks of goddess myths operating in the consciousness of a woman, one might be tempted to imagine that woman worshipping a particular goddess, for example, Inanna from Sumer or Athena from ancient Greece. From a psychological perspective, however, such images may act metaphorically to stimulate and release energy from a deep, repressed femininity.

In Lucy's case, her capacity to become a therapist had been carried in her unconscious psyche and was projected onto her friend who died, and later onto me as her therapist. When she began to work with goddess myths, like the story of Psyche and later of Inanna, they acted in conjunction with the female shadow figures in her dreams to stimulate Lucy's imagination. There was a gradual development of dream women from beautiful nameless women to a woman therapist very much like Lucy herself.

Lucy saw the development of these dream figures as representations of goddesses, carriers of divine healing, or spiritual feminine energy. Lucy dialogued with these figures through her work in therapy and her study of goddess mythology. She believed that the combination of the dreams themselves, the myths and her creative action healed her grief and released the energy she needed to return to school to study clinical social work.

100

As we move into Chapter IV, "Following Jung's Finger: Background on the Format of the Inanna Seminar" we will be shifting emphasis to another dimension of the study, that of the culture of the Inanna Seminar, its prototype, and where it fits into a Jungian educational framework. As in this chapter, ethnography is employed to show how the Jungian seminar work fits into the meaning system my informants from their point of view. Later in Chapters VII and VIII we will again encounter in depth investigations into the inner lives of two more informants, Eleanor and Nora.

## CHAPTER IV:   FOLLOWING JUNG'S FINGER:

## BACKGROUND ON THE FORMAT FOR THE INANNA SEMINAR

"I have always liked to travel to new and interesting places," remarked Christa during an informant interview.   Christa calls herself a "seeker." She only recently came to understand herself in these terms.   "I look for something mostly by traveling—going places and by reading."   Since the beginning of our work together eight years ago her dreams were full of images of travel and questing.   In addition she has been to many interesting places—Alaska, the Northwest United States, New Mexico, Greece, England, France.   "I love France.   France feels like a place I belong, and I am not sure what that has to do with the Seeker, though," she said.

Christa is a member of the Inanna seminar, as the goddess seminar was called after 1985, but she also has participated in several other study groups over the years.   This self-imposed curriculum may sound overwhelming.   However, most of these study groups meet monthly or even less frequently so that it is possible to be involved with several at one time.

Christa also attends a Unitarian-Universalist Church.   In fact, that is how we met.   I was giving a seminar at her church based on Euripides' play, "The Trojan Women" and she was among the participants.   Around the time the Inanna seminar was organized,

Christa was also in a study course at her Unitarian Church called "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven" which she described as "a history of the Goddess and the Feminine in the cosmos—in the creation stories primarily. And there were not so many feminist books then. Of course now there are quite a few. The whole concept was totally new to me—another world."

"Cakes for the Queen of Heaven" inspired some of the Unitarian women to continue with a reading group they refer to as "Women and Spirituality." Christa continued, " Gradually, we have read a lot of those books."

Another study group Christa attends is led by Nora, who is also in the Inanna seminar. One of the books they studied is Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to Help us find Ourselves and Transform Our World by Carol Pearson (1991). Christa remarked, "That's where I learned about the Seeker. I'm sort of a slow learner when it comes to these sorts of things. It helps to see how other people react to some of these concepts."

One archetype described in the Pearson book is called the "Seeker." Pearson describes twelve archetypes in cultural terms. She lists some characteristics of each archetype according to how they affect peoples' behaviors and attitudes. According to Pearson's research, the Seeker provides the yearning to go on a journey, especially a spiritual quest. The Seeker's gift is autonomy. Its goal is the search for a better life or better way of life. Its fear is the fear of conformity and becoming entrapped. Its typical response to a problem, or "dragon," as Pearson calls it, is to escape or take

leave.  Finally, the task of the Seeker is to "be true to a deeper or higher truth" (Pearson, p. 123).

Continuing our interview, I said, "People don't spend seven or eight years studying this material without it affecting them in some deep way——."  That is how long she has been working with dreams and myths using Jungian techniques.

Christa responded,  "That's right.  I know it has had a lot of effect on me.  Um.  I have been doing many different things, but they are all going in the same direction.  The fact that they are different things with different people—you asked about Inanna the other evening.  I can't possibly separate the Inanna seminar from the other things."

I said, "You have many currents in your life."

"Lots of tributaries," she laughed.  I just finished a series yesterday called "The Education of God."  It was based on videotapes the leader took at some larger Unitarian meeting.  Christa continued, "They were tapes of a Unitarian minister telling of the development of God—as to why 'he' became human.  Therefore, there is a god in all of us.  That was really extraordinarily interesting.  It really was—very powerful.  I think he had read Jung's 'Answer to Job' (Jung, CW 11, 1969).  It seemed to be related.  I had read it in anticipation of some of these things."

The fact that she had read this very difficult essay by Jung impressed me, and I replied, "You did?  Good for you, Christa.  What did you think of it?"

"I found it hardgoing, but I sort of felt as if I was reading what you could call—the 'evolution of God.' This man called his talk 'The Education of God.' I think it is the same trend. He did not base his talk on 'Answer to Job,' really. But I think he had read it—I felt he had." After a long pause for reflection, Christa continued, "I guess it (the years of inner work) has helped. I think I am getting to the point of really knowing what I am looking for.

"When we did the Carol Pearson book, I felt so strongly when I read about the Wanderer—in the first book (<u>The Heroes Within. Six Archetypes We Live By</u>). That was the thing that really grabbed me. And this one has, too. But it is hard to say what I was seeking…. Um—" she mused. "I think it <u>is</u> spirituality. And a <u>feeling</u> that primarily comes from Jung—Jung's finger. That—um—looking in the right direction to see what makes things—what makes the world, the universe go."

Her words touched me deeply, "Please excuse me, but I am really moved by that. I guess it is because I know what you've been struggling with," I said.

I was quite taken by Christa's image. In a way, that is what I had been doing as well, following Jung's finger. In fact, the Inanna seminar was inspired by a format Jung established at the Institute in Zurich. From a Jungian perspective, knowledge of symbols and how they function psychologically is important in understanding the meaning of dreams and the life of the soul in general. Therefore, the curriculum at the Jung Institute in Zurich or any of the Jungian training institutes includes courses in the fundamentals of analytical psychology such as comparative theory of neurosis, human

105

development, and psychopathology. In addition, however, one will find seminars on dreams, comparative mythology, and the interpretation of myths and fairy tales.

As part of the tradition at the Jung Institute in Zurich, individuals who are not analysts-in-training may take courses along with candidates, and some seminars are structured for interested lay persons only. In addition to myself, Nora and Katherine from the Inanna seminar have attended these courses. I asked them to share some of their memories of Zurich and the Institute with me.

"In retrospect," Nora said, "it put me in touch with the culture that grew up around Jung—with the people—it was well-balanced. Not too cultish. When you and I went it was really a nice, strange, wonderful mix of people—lay persons and the professionals, the clergy and the teachers, the medical people and the business people. Anyone could go if they had the interest to get there—for example, M.J.W., the 65 year old housewife. You know, I thought it was absolutely great! I understand it is more restrictive now…."

From an anthropologist's point of view, Nora was my first informant and guide into the Jungian world. Nora is a pastoral counselor who applies Jungian methods in her work. In the mid-1970s she was my therapist. She introduced me to dream work and to the writings of Carl Jung, Marie Louise von Franz, Laurens van der Post, Esther Harding, Barbara Hannah, June Singer, and other Jungian writers. Now Nora is a member of the Inanna seminar and one of the informants for this dissertation.

106

Nora lives in an apartment cooperative located near the Kennedy
Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.  She moved there
in 1977, the year of her first trip to the Jung Institute in Zurich.
In an informant interview, I asked Nora about that experience.

"My tour was called 'In the Steps of C. G. Jung.' The emphasis was to
be there where he was formed—the places that molded his life—the
substance he came from—the cities, the countryside, those mountains.
And water.  Jung had to have the water.  And to be there where he was
formed gave me a strong realization of the formative place in my
life, and that I can keep putting myself in it.  I realized that I
could keep putting myself in places that spoke to me."

Nora opened the journal she kept during the seminar in Zurich.  I
have found that Jungians tend to write down their experiences and
keep their journals as part of their library.  She read from some
notes she had made in a class.  "One thing that I wrote down in the
notebook is," she said, "'Something isn't real until you realize it.'
And I don't know who said that.  One of the teachers, but I really
liked that.  That these realizations are making real for yourself
what you've read about or what you've had an inkling of.

"And being in Switzerland, being so moved by the visual beauty of it
and the antiqueness of it.  The very old races—that connection.
That always gets to me—and—oh my!  We have this antique person
inside ourselves.  The 'ancient one' that resonates to these ancient
places.  So, there was a lot of resonance there for me.

"Before I went I had read Jung's memoirs and looked at the pictures
of Bollingen in its four stages of development.  It was very

medieval, Bollingen." Bollingen is the retreat home Jung built in the country on the Lake of Zurich. He wrote about the life of that house in <u>Memories, Dreams, Reflections</u> (1963). "And I had no idea I would ever go there! But I would look at those pictures—and then, the brochure came about the tour. 'In the Steps of—' It was through the D.C. Jung group." The group to which Nora referred is now called the Washington, D.C. Society for Jungian Psychology.

"I don't think I wasted two minutes. It was just one of those things that you know has got to be for you. It was in 1977. I had just moved to this place. And I had the money, which isn't always the case, as you know! It was a great health-giving thing to have happened. I responded. And to have it be the way it was, with Dr. von Franz and Miss Hannah."

I asked, "Who was on the faculty in Zurich? Did you meet Barbara Hannah?" I enjoyed hearing her talk about those teachers very much.

Nora began to talk about the analysts who spoke during the seminar. "I loved being there in the classroom where Jung taught—all that commemoration to me, the presence, well, yes—of Jung's ghost," she chuckled. "Barbara Hannah was there, and Marie Louise von Franz, Carl Meyer, Tony Fry…." These are all analysts trained by Jung and who are loved and respected throughout the Jungian community.

Nora continued, "I read back through these notebooks, and I realize what wonderful messages I got for myself, and my clients, and my work. Dr. von Franz talked about numbers. She had just published <u>Number and Time</u>. Frau Baumann (one of Jung's daughters who is a well-known astrologer) lectured at Bollingen. I didn't take notes.

108

I was feeling very privileged to be there.  Privileged in a soul way, to be there at Bollingen in the kitchen around the table—with the pots and the pans.  I remember feeling the womb-like feeling of Bollingen.  After we talked with her we just walked around outside. It was a gray day, and I took some stones from the lake—they are over there in that box," and she pointed to a little box on a table.

"Miss Hannah's talk was on active imagination.  Her hearing wasn't very good."  Barbara Hannah was in her late eighties at that time. Photographs of her give her the appearance of a wise old farm woman. Dr. von Franz and Miss Hannah had lived together and been good friends for many years.  "Dr. von Franz came—as you know Dr. von Franz has a voice like a trombone; so if Miss Hannah couldn't hear a student, Dr. von Franz would repeat the question.

"She (von Franz) is so charismatic, but she was totally respectful of Miss Hannah, and didn't try to get into the act.  She just listened. I think they taught each other—no jockeying for attention."

Nora read again from her class notes, "As the ego grows, we return to problems on a different level.  We pick up things left behind.  They come up because things are good—being handled well—respect the psyche and don't over interpret.  Symptoms are trying to teach us something.  It is necessary to be able to hide behind the persona. But don't identify with the persona—anything you have to have you can't have."  This last one made Nora laugh, "Good stuff!"

I said, "Oh, you mean we sometimes need to hide behind our persona!"

And she replied, "Yes.  That's right."

I also spoke with Katherine about her trip to Switzerland. "I found my journal," she began. "I left for Switzerland on December 29, 1977. I was 35 years old. This tour was with Andover Newton College. It was two weeks of lectures and I stayed three weeks to visit with Bea. The lectures began on the third of January."

Bea is Katherine's close friend who retired from her profession as a librarian at age 50 to go to Zurich to become a Jungian analyst. Bea had been Katherine's manager at the county library, and they had become close at that time. In a way Bea was Katherine's first "informant" and guide into the world of Jungian psychology, just as Nora had been mine.

"It was my first time out of this country. Most of my jottings—well, 97 per cent of them—were about what I saw. I only made one note about the lectures, 'Guggenbuhl-Craig'—the lecture on criminality and marriage-the best lecture so far.'" Guggenbuhl-Craig is a senior analyst who has published several books on Jungian Psychology. "There were still a few lectures to come, however. Probably Mario Jacobi who did a fairy tale."

"You stayed with Bea?" I asked.

"In Kusnacht. Yes. I rode the train four stops into Zurich. It was very close. The actual lectures were at a church near the Institute. We went to visit the Institute. Mario took us. He was so gentle. He was so distinguished looking—I guess he was in his fifties then." Mario Jacobi is also a senior Jungian analyst and friend of Bea's.

Bea lived at Kusnacht, a small town near Zurich on the Lake of Zurich. It is where Jung and his family lived. Katherine noticed in her notebook that she had "made a nice little list for myself of things I liked, new ideas…Pepsi with lemon slices. I had never seen that before. Four young girls were having lunch. I had never seen that, a lemon slice in Pepsi. And the toilet paper holder where you just slip the roller in and the top comes down and tears off the paper," she laughed with delight at her own responses.

"And tubes of mayonnaise and catsup and tomato paste—in tubes. A window arrangement I liked, and church bells…I was there on New Year's Eve, and the church bells just rang and rang and rang. And the hundreds of birds on the lake, and the beautiful white swans—and the beautifully attended graves. In Kusnacht Bea and I had gone down to the church yard where Jung was buried, and we walked down around his house and out to the pier. And the sky was orange—apricot. I had brought (a mutual friend) with me to Bea's for supper, and it was the three of us walking down those steps to see Jung's house. That was very special.

"And I visited the museum, and the church with the Chagal windows. And we went to an ancient church on New Year's Day and then we went for coffee and dessert. That was the first time I had eaten Swiss pastry. We also went to Eisiendeln to see the Black Madonna. I remember her. She was very special, very beautiful. We heard Vespers, and brought back honey and almond cakes." The Black Madonna of Eisiendeln is a statue of the Virgin Mary. This statue is known for her healing powers.

"The lectures ended on January 13. I went to Basel. I was very fond of that city. We went to the cathedral. It was made of red sandstone, and was built between the 9th and the 15th centuries. Behind it is the Rhine River. I loved it so much! And Erasmus is buried there. It was cool, but we went to the zoo. I fell in love with a shoe-billed stork, a soft blue-gray bird standing with beautifully ruffled feathers, and peach colored inside its mouth.

"And we went to Mount Regi. It was windy, but not too cold. We almost didn't go because it was foggy in Zurich. We caught the cog train up. It was exceptional. The sun came out 7000 feet up. We ate looking out at the mountain.

"Throughout the trip my senses were totally overwhelmed. That is very characteristic of me. I drink everything in and then my senses are on absolute overload, and I can't stop because I have to see everything!"

I asked Katherine, "What kind of impact did it have on you? I mean, was this trip a touchstone for you in your life?"

"It didn't make me feel like I was going to want to change my life. I was on a vacation, being with my friend and talking ideas. Seeing Jung's grave was very important to me and being in that town (Kusnacht)."

I asked, "Had you been in analysis?"

Katherine replied, "No. It would be four years before I started analysis. To me, it was a beginning. Bea and I had talked about

112

Jung.  I had known her for several years, and we had talked psychological ideas.  The excitement for me was of finding ideas that are on that 'a-ha!' level—the 'oh, I knew this, and I knew this,' and being affirmed like that."

In 1990 Katherine returned to graduate school to become a psychotherapist.  That work is complete now, and she is beginning to establish her practice.  I said, "It sounds as though, in retrospect, that the experience laid the groundwork for, or made conscious the foundations for the changes you made."

"That had already started when I met Bea—our talks at work were conducted on breaks and in between work.  That's what I wanted to talk all the time, but she was my boss at the library, and there was work to be done.  The time in Zurich was the beginning of my real understanding of that, and I didn't quite know it then; but it was the beginning of what my work would be in my analysis, which was to find the psychological underpinning of my religious education."

I understood on a personal level what Katherine meant about the time in Zurich being the beginning of the change she has made.  In 1979 my husband and I were living in Kuala Lunpur, Malaysia.  I was feeling lost where my career was concerned.  Nora was returning for a second trip to Zurich, and suggested that I join her.  During my stay in Zurich we were part of a group of about twenty five Americans sponsored by the San Francisco Jung Institute and the University of California at Santa Barbara in conjunction with the Zurich Institute. The purpose of the program was to introduce us to life at the Jungian Institute and the culture that grew up around Jung and his psychology.

I was moved by my experience in Switzerland to such an extent that I was determined to do what was necessary to become a psychotherapist. It seemed as though Jung's spirit still lived within the Institute itself, and I had a feeling that I had come home in some deep and unexpected way. An important factor in this was the realization that a school of psychology actually existed which took dreams, myths and fairy tales seriously enough to include them as part of the required curriculum for certification.

Since my childhood, myths and fairy tales have been an important part of my inner life. My parents and grandparents weaned me on them, so to speak. Their pedagogic efforts took root in my imagination as a guiding factor, but as I matured, I found little appreciation for them in adult society. As a result, I was lonely in a particular way. When I met Nora this lonely place within me felt befriended again. The feeling of companionship on the soul level expanded as a result of the experience in Zurich. As Nora has said many times regarding her own experience of Jungian psychology, "In Jung I found a brother, a companion for my soul."

Nora's statement mirrored the thoughts of Laurens van der Post, author of twenty-three books, linguist, anthropologist, statesman and Jung's friend. Van der Post, now eighty six years old, is a descendent of the first Dutch settlers in South Africa. When he was a child he was very close to his Bushman nurse, and he spoke Xhosa and Swahili and spent much of his childhood with her and her culture. His work has taken him all over the world, including three-and-a-half years in a Japanese prisoner of war camp during World War II (Washington Post, 6/26/93). Van der Post and Jung did not meet until after the war. Before he met Jung, van der Post felt unaccompanied

114

spiritually and spent time in the wilderness of South Africa gathering food and foraging in solitude, recovering his African soul.

In 1925 Jung had traveled in Kenya and Uganda, and spent time among the Elgonyis near Mount Elgon, East Africa. Jung was deeply affected by his African experience. In preparation for this journey he learned Swahili and was therefore able to immerse himself in the experience (Jung, 1963). In his biography of Jung, van der Post wrote about an early encounter he had with Jung in which they sat and talked for hours about Africa and its meaning in both their lives. "What was of overwhelming consequence to me was that as we sat there talking, something was communicated to me more out of what Jung was in himself than out of his ideas, and in the process this feeling of isolation and loneliness in a vital area of myself which had haunted me all those years vanished. I was no longer alone; I had company and company of a noble order. I was having my first elementary lesson that men, women, ideas and the causes which are singularly our own are often those we reject, even to the point of a kind of mental persecution….

"He was a born, great, and inspired neighbour. He had a genius for propinquity. He was a neighbor to all sorts and conditions of men and women…I find that just as he gave me the feeling that there could be a valid meaning to this loneliness about Africa and this other dreaming area of myself which I had carried about with me for forty years—that my life, however apparently single, was in processions—he performed precisely the same service for countless others" (van der Post, 1975, p. 54f.).

115

What people like Nora and Laurens van der Post found so compelling about Jung was his commitment to the life of the soul and the images produced by the soul in every individual; in their dreams, intuitions, and fantasy life. Generally speaking, to live a symbolic life means to live in relationship to one's psyche as the ground of one's creative being (Jung, 1963; CW 18, 1976; Luke, 1985). Since myths and fairy tales are understood as symbolic expressions of the collective unconscious psyche shared by all human beings, Jungians are expected to be well informed in this arena.

Throughout the writings of Jung and other Jungian psychologists one will find amplifications of mythic symbols. Examples include Jung's Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self, first published in 1951; Erich Neumann's The Great Mother: The Analysis of the Archetype, first published in 1955; and the currently popular Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype by Clarissa Pinkola Estes. Women Who Run With the Wolves, published in 1992 is a national best seller. As of June 1993 it had been on the Washington Post's best seller list for over 40 weeks.

A thorough grounding in myths and fairy tales fulfills what Jung referred to as a "practical need for a deeper understanding of the products of the unconscious" (CW 16, 1966, p. 123). The images, or mythologems, they contain constitute an elementary aspect of the natural history of mankind and form the bridge between the conscious ego and the deeper level of the collective psyche. Therefore, a student or practitioner of Jungian psychology is expected to acquire a foundation in myths and fairy tales. This is important, not only because they are expressions of the archetypal contents of the collective unconscious upon which consciousness is predicated, but

116

also because the material contained therein is needed to amplify the archetypal contents of dreams.

Jung thought it was part of the spirit of our historical time, or Zeitgeist, for most people to ignore or disavow the existence of an objective psyche or collective unconscious. The split between ego consciousness and the archetypal background from which it arose seemed to Jung to be a major cause of many neuroses (von Franz, 1975). Since ancient myths and fairy tales contain symbols and images that express collective unconscious processes, it was logical to include courses and seminars on them as part of the regular curriculum at the training institute. (Jung, 1963; Jung, CW 5, 1976; CW 9 part i, 1980; CW 9 part ii, 1979; CW 16, 1985; von Franz, 1975; von Franz, 1970)

The course work that includes myths and fairy tales grew out of Jung's method of dream analysis. In the beginning these seminars were a function of the Zurich Psychological Club, which Jung formed early in the 1920s. The C. G. Jung Institute itself was not formally opened until 1948 (Wehr, 1989). Before that time training was carried out through a mentor-protegé relationship. The purpose of the Psychological Club was to establish a shared frame of reference for individuals interested in Jung's work. It provided a context in which practicing analysts, analysts-in-training, and selected analysands could meet for fellowship and mutual learning. Jung encouraged participants to present their research, and he also developed seminars for the Club (Jung, 1988).

The contents of several of Jung's seminars have been published (<u>The Vision Seminars</u>, 1976; <u>Dream Analysis</u>, 1984; <u>Nietzsche's Zarathustra</u>,

1988). It is interesting to read these works not only for the understanding of the contents but for their ethnographic value as well. They are *ver batim* accounts of the proceedings within the seminar taken from exacting notes made by committed participants, and they helped me to understand in detail how this model worked. These texts give the reader a feeling for Jung's style and his methods. In addition they provide a sense of the various interests of the participants as well as the structure within the seminars.

Many of Jung's students such as Barbara Hannah, Esther Harding and Linda Feirz-David, who were represented in these published seminars, became well known as analysts and published in the field. In addition, Marie Louise von Franz's books on fairy tales are also taken from *ver batim* accounts of lectures she gave at the Jung Institute in Zurich (Patterns of Creativity Mirrored in Creation-Myths, 1972; Problems of the Feminine in Fairytales, 1972; Interpretation of Fairytales, 1975; Individuation In Fairytales, 1977; Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, 1980; The Psychological Meaning of Redemption Motifs in Fairytales, 1980).

Traditionally, Jungian practitioners offer seminars on dreams and other related topics, such as fairy tales and mythology, to clients and other interested members of the local community. In the United States Jungian psychology is still relatively unknown, and this is one way for therapists and analysts to inform the community about Jungian ideas. For people in Jungian-based therapy, this educational model helps them become more deeply involved in understanding the archetypal contents of their own dreams.

Jungian thought is becoming more widely known and accepted. Today there are a number of training programs for Jungian analysts world wide. These programs offer certification programs and come into being through the auspices of groups of Jungian analysts in conjunction with community based support. In the United States alone there are a number of Jungian Institutes, including those in New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Houston, and Los Angeles. There are also training institutes located throughout the world. For example, there are training programs in Canada, England, Germany, and New Zealand. Their curricula and requirements reflect those established in Zurich. In addition there is an International Association for Analytical Psychology, and there are a number of lay organized grassroots organizations that promote interest in Jungian psychology.

In Washington, D.C., there is an organization called the Washington, D.C. Society for Jungian Psychology (WSJP). The Society is a community based membership organization with a quarterly newsletter and regularly scheduled events. It sponsors lectures by Jungian analysts and seminars in Jungian psychology, and it supports the development of Jungian thought in the metropolitan area. It has established as an objective the development of a formal training program for Jungian analysts. Several of my informants participate in the activities of the WSJP. In addition, there are what is known as Jung working groups in Baltimore, Maryland and Richmond, Virginia.

## THE INANNA SEMINAR AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY

It is useful to place the Inanna seminar in a general context of groups as a whole. There are several kinds of group structure within the field of psychology. Psychologically oriented groups usually

119

fall into three categories: (a) group psychotherapy, (b) counseling groups, and (c) educational groups. The purpose of group psychotherapy is primarily to heal neuroses and develop the ego. The purpose of counseling groups is primarily group support for strategic change involving a specific problem or issue. Finally, the generic term educational group essentially refers to any group whose purpose is to engender new knowledge. The purpose of educational groups in psychological settings is to acquire and integrate new knowledge in the field of psychology.

Jungian seminars typically fall into the third category, educational groups. This does not mean that the seminars are without psychological content or that people do not change as a result of their participation. Whereas in group psychotherapy people work for changes in their individual personalities, in Jungian based seminars dream material, mythology, fairy tales, or other culturally produced materials provide the subject matter.

Myths and fairy tales have dimensions that are both personal and universal, individual and cultural. Jung followed a tradition in Western thought that understands myths to be the language of the collective unconscious of humanity. The motifs found in dreams are the same archetypal images as those found in mythology (Campbell, 1979; Jung, CW 5, 1967, and CW 8, 1969). Therefore, Jungians believe mythmaking is to culture as dreaming is to the individual psyche or mazeway.

By amplifying the contents of the subject of an educational seminar, a heremeutic or interpretive process occurs. This tends to generate psychological material for individual participants, which they then

120

work with on their own or in their individual therapy, or they may chose to discuss some of their insights within the seminar.

Furthermore, study groups like the Inanna seminar in which basically the same people convene over a long period of time to study a subject together may be classified as "learning communities." This term comes from adult learning theory and organizational theory, and refers to a specific sort of educational group (Jun, 1973; Kolb, 1974). A learning community may develop its own cultural component, a shared meaning system with values, symbols, and beliefs held in common. In a learning community people come together in the spirit of mutuality and collaboration because they have a shared learning agenda, and perhaps shared emotional needs because they have an interest in developing a common bond. The structure of the Analytical Psychology Club of Zurich, described above, seems to fit this model. This is also the case with the members of the Inanna seminar.

Before my training as a psychotherapist I worked in the field of organization development where I specialized in the development of learning communities within organizations. In addition to my experience in organization development, my training in clinical social work, and my knowledge of Jungian psychology, I have participated in seminars held in the Washington, D.C. area that were inspired by Jung's teaching model and were based on Jung's teaching concepts. These seminars were offered by Nora, my informant who is trained as a pastoral counselor, and by a Zurich trained analyst with whom I analyzed and trained for ten years from 1979 to 1989. Their seminars, like mine, were offered as a function of their individual

psychotherapy practices and were not associated with any umbrella organization.

Nora's seminars tend to focus on a particular Jungian text. For example, one year we studied June Singer's book, <u>Androgyny: Toward a New Theory of Sexuality</u> (Anchor/Doubleday, 1976). In this text Singer discussed the mythology of the *hierosgamos*, the sacred marriage, as an unfolding of the image of the union of opposites within the personality of the individual. Another time each member of Nora's seminar took a chapter in Christine Downing's book, <u>Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine</u> (Crossroads, 1984). In this book Downing presents her interpretation of the goddess myths from classical Greece.

My analyst's seminar focused on a text based in Native American mythology entitled <u>Anpao: An American Indian Odyssey</u> by Jamake Highwater (Lippencott, 1977). Because this text is so rich in symbolism it took ten years to work through it by amplifying the images in depth.

What makes these seminars primarily educational is that they teach mythology and interpretation to participants who are involved in dream work either as clients or as therapists. To amplify and interpret dreams and fantasies it is useful to have a working knowledge of cultural and mythological material. Not only is this knowledge considered by Jungians to be necessary for practitioners, it is also felt to be valuable for clients, who are encouraged to conduct their own research and not depend on the therapist to spoon-feed them with this information where their dream symbols are concerned.

From the beginning, the Inanna Seminar was more than a study group. It had as its purpose to raise the awareness in its members of specific frames of reference; here these frames of reference were mythology, especially goddess mythology, and Jungian psychological concepts. Participants were expected not only to read mythology, but to use it for the purpose of exploring their dreams.

They were not expected to speak about their dreams or personal lives at seminar meetings unless they wanted to. Rather, discussions most often centered on the contents of the myths themselves and any general interpretations. In order to help members make connections to the material, I would often relate a dream from an anonymous case that connected with specific mythic images or I would expand on the myth with material from other myths or fairy tales. Over time seminar members have developed a full repertoire of mythology from which to amplify their dreams.

In Chapter V, "Resurrecting the Queen of Heaven and Earth: A Summary of Inanna's Myth and Its Influence on the Women in the Seminar," some of these methods are exemplified, and information about the Inanna mythology is discussed.

# CHAPTER V:    RESURRECTING THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

## A SUMMARY OF INANNA'S MYTH AND ITS INFLUENCE ON
## THE WOMEN IN THE SEMINAR.

In 1987 Nora made a trip to England.  While she was in London she went to the British Museum, where she visited the Sumerian exhibit. She chose that exhibit especially because of her involvement in the goddess seminar.  In October, 1985 we had begun to study the Sumerian goddess Inanna and her mythology.  Our primary text was a book entitled Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer (Harper & Row, 1983).  It was authored by the storyteller Diane Wolkstein and the Sumeriologist Samuel Noah Kramer, Professor Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania.  It included hymns and stories about Inanna, some background on the Sumerian culture and history, illustrations from the art, and some commentary by both Wolkstein and Kramer.

In a meeting of the seminar Nora told us about her visit to the British Museum.  "It was wonderful to see those things.  I was taken by a feeling about those people—to realize that real human beings had made those beautiful objects and had used them…They made intricate, beautifully crafted designs…a lot of ornamentation in lapis lazuli and other stones.  There was a harp with a bull's head made of gold and lapis.  He had a wonderful expression on his face. And there was one exquisitely beautiful lady's headdress—a sort of

crown for a lady…so delicate.  It had gold leaves and flowers all around.  I felt somehow I was in touch with the woman who wore it—a woman like us who lived and loved…I felt like we had touched each other somehow across the centuries….

"…I am so grateful to those people who have devoted their lives to making these myths available."  Nora remarked.  "To think of the incredible commitment and work that it must take to organize and decipher those tablets…."  She was speaking specifically of the work of Kramer and the small body of scholars who are devoted to deciphering cuneiform texts from ancient Iraq (Kramer, 1981).

"Why haven't we heard about Inanna before now?" someone asked.

"Most people haven't because her name was forgotten for thousands of years along with her people and its culture.  Unless you have been reading archeological journals or journals on myth…" I replied.

"I read about her in Joseph Campbell…The Masks of God," said Nora.

"Yes." I said.  "He also included the story of Inanna's descent in The Hero with A Thousand Faces.  According to Campbell 'The Descent of Inanna' is the oldest known mythology of a journey into the underworld—sort of the prototype of the myth of the hero" (Campbell, 1968, p. 105).

The Inanna myth contains symbols that have carried psychological and spiritual meaning for the women in the seminar.  Furthermore, the meaning was intensified because it was shared in the context of the seminar experience.  From an anthropological perspective, culture is

125

derived from meaning that is shared.  Therefore, the shared aspect of symbolism brings the experience from the personal domain into the domain of culture.

The Inanna myth is presented as a group of stories depicting the events in the life of a goddess-woman, or a goddess-as-woman.  The stories correspond to significant initiatory events in the life of any woman.  In traditional societies female initiations often occur with changing cycles in the physical body and corresponding patterns in the Earth, the tides and the moon (Hall, 1980; Harding, 1990; Luke, 1985; Reis, 1991; Shuttle, 1986).  These traditions have been pushed far into the background of American culture on the whole (Spretnak, 1984 and 1991).

This cultural tendency toward the suppression of women's rituals seems to be changing.  Research indicates a grassroots movement among American women to create rituals for initiation and containment of female spirituality (Anderson, 1991; Auberdene, 1992; Chicago, 1985; Lutsch, 1993; Spretnak, 1991).  For example, in the summer of 1993 I spoke with a woman who is an Elder, an elected lay leader, in her church.  It is a large traditional Christian church.  Through her church she also is a member of a women's group formally called the "mid-life issues" group, but they call themselves the "pre-crones." At their annual weekend retreat they brought drums and other musical instruments.  They made music, sang, and danced as part of the ritual celebration of their feminine spirituality.

Jungian analysis of dreams has shown that an archetypal pattern for initiation is carried in the psyche.  When initiation dreams are compared with ritual forms present today in native cultures, the

126

rituals reflect the initiation patterns in contemporary American dreamers who, generally speaking, have no access to initiation rituals in the outer culture. Therefore, it seems that when ritual forms are lacking in the outer culture the psyche provides compensatory initiating images in dreams (Jung, CW 8, 1969; Henderson, 1967; Shorter, 1987; Turner, 1977).

Mythology is another vehicle for initiation and integration. Eleanor shared her sense of wholeness as it is reflected in the Inanna mythology. "The patterns of change in my life have been mirrored through Inanna—what was cause and what was effect? It (her first encounter with this mythology) came after a really hard period of my life of depression, and it really helped me focus on the (inner) work. The pattern of whole feminine identity that I think was central to the struggle that I was going through, but I didn't know it at the time, was there in the myth.

"A part of Inanna that I especially loved was the central part of the poem where she became aware of her own mature femininity. That's been a difficult thing for me. Becoming a woman was secretive, shameful—there, there, poor thing. Here is that *thing*, meaning my period, in my household full of brothers.

"There is such exultation in Inanna—'Here I am, and I've got it all! Some years ago I did some work with an (Jungian) analyst on claiming my sexuality. Now, sitting down (to breakfast) one morning after years of resenting my body—you know—'oh, my hips are too big, my thighs are too large—' Now (I say) this is a hip'" she emphasized gently touching herself on her hip.

Women like Eleanor and the "pre-crones," who are involved with the work of spiritual development, say that they cannot split their physical bodies from their spiritual selves. They experience psyche and body as an integrated whole. For them the distinction between body and soul is false in reality. It is appropriate, therefore, that the cycle of female development be symbolized by feminine archetypal forms that reflect this *a priori* elemental feminine principle. (Hall, 1980 and 1988; Harding, 1990; Lawlor, 1991; Reis, 1991; Shorter, 1987; Shuttle, 1986; Spretnak, 1984 and 1991; Woodman, 1982, 1985 and 1992).

The Inanna stories tell of the Goddess incarnate. Inanna is depicted throughout the myth as a developing woman. She is a playing child whose imaginary world is penetrated and pierced by the coming of puberty and the self-consciousness that accompanies it. She is a young woman who comes into sexual maturity and claims her regency from the God of Wisdom, Father Enki. She is a woman who is courted by and then wed to Dumuzi, the shepherd-king. And Inanna is also a woman experiencing loss as she encounters menopause and widowhood.

These stories approximate the stages described in current psychosocial theory on human life-cycle development: childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle life, and old age (Erikson, 1963). It has been shown, however, that the standards and images traditionally applied to developmental theory have been based on a male model and therefore biased against female forms of experience (Belenky, 1986; Gilligan, 1986). Inanna's stories have provided several informants with a set of images that redress this imbalance.

128

Caroline commented on this thought, "Taking a look at the myth—It opened up and made a piece of what I had done." Caroline is a knitter and fiber artist. The term "made a piece of it" fits well within her approach to her creativity. "I don't know when it slipped from being just an intellectual look to something less concrete, and (I) became aware of the whole Feminine Principle."

Theresa, who spoke about how myths are vessels, saw the Inanna myth as a method to recontextualize old patterns. "Over the years (the Inanna myth) has allowed me to put my real life things that are going on into this vessel, and it comes out in a different way. And—um—it's just a different way of being conscious of something. I am sure I still do a lot of things that are very unconscious. It's interesting, because I think by doing this kind of work you sort of catch yourself when you fall back into the norm, or what you have done for years that just hasn't worked."

"Can you think of a specific example?" I inquired.

"Well—being a parent, I can look at it that way. I think we do just a lot of reacting to children—to what they do. And I have always read, and I have always thought that you have to look past what they are doing to what is going on. But sometimes you find yourself being busy and you just—I see Edward (her preschool aged son) doing something, and I say, 'Will you stop that!' Or, 'Will you leave me alone. You are driving me crazy!' And I realize that this is the kind of thing that does absolutely no good for either of us.

"I don't know if this is from Inanna or from just trying to be a better parent. But you realize that you are doing the norm—you are

doing what your parents did and doing what our relatives do and what your friends do and what the people on the street do.  And you say, 'This is wrong.  Step back.  Take a breath, and look at this in a different way'."

My introduction to Inanna was Sylvia Brenton Perera's book, <u>Descent to the Goddess</u> (Inner City Books, 1981).  This book and many of the texts included in the bibliography of this dissertation are known to the seminar members.  I had read Perera's book in 1983 when I was searching for myths in which the central divinity was female.  I was attempting to amplify a number of dreams that clients had presented in which a woman was undergoing a crucifixion-like experience, and I wondered if there was a goddess myth that paralleled the Christian story of the crucifixion of Jesus.  Although many of my clients were moved by the traditional Easter story, it did not affect them on the psychological level and therefore did not satisfy the meaning of their dreams.

Here are some examples of crucifixion dreams presented to me by clients.  A woman is giving confession to a priest.  As she speaks to him the dream changes and she is fixed to a cross.  She feels hopeless about her life.  In a second case a man dreams that his pregnant wife is hanging from a cross.  In a third dream the dreamer finds herself hung from a hook an a castle wall, suspended between heaven and earth.

In one final example, a woman dreams she is walking through the streets of a medieval European city.  As she watches, a group of citizens are overcome with the need to kill someone.  They become a mob.  Then they grab a man off the street, strip him of his

130

belongings and his clothes, and tie him to a cross which they drop
into a hole in the gutter.  He is innocent, has committed no crime,
has offended no one.  As he hangs there, the dreamer becomes the man.
Hanging there above the mob, her struggling ceases and with it her
pain.  She becomes remarkably still.  As she looks down upon the mob
she is overcome by sadness for them.  In the dream. she suddenly
realizes that individuation can never happen in the mob, the
collective.  It comes to individuals who are willing to suffer with
their lives—"take up their own cross," as the dreamer put it.

At that same time a friend of mine described her life as being that
of a "totally torn woman."  She said in her life she was torn apart
by all her commitments to people she loved and tasks she valued, and
she had no meaningful way to symbolize her experience.  She said she
felt stuck in her life, torn by its goodness.  She could not
visualize it on a spiritual level.  Something was missing.  She was a
deeply religious woman and longed to be accompanied in that
experience by a god who truly understood.  The male image of the
crucified Christ was not helpful.  I told her I was looking for a
myth about a goddess who was "totally torn."  I found this symbol in
the mythology of the Sumerian goddess, Inanna.

The source that Perera used for her book is <u>Inanna Queen of Heaven
and Earth</u>, the book we used in the Inanna seminar.  It is a
translation and poetic reconstruction of cuneiform tablets recovered
in excavations around the turn of this century.

A hundred years ago the world did not know the Sumerians ever
existed.  Their rediscovery was an accident.  Archeologists who were
excavating in the Near East were looking for Assyrian and Babylonian

artifacts.  They began to unearth objects that signified an older and unknown civilization had once existed.  These objects included tens of thousands of clay tablets that proved to be records of the commercial and legal transactions, legal codes, and literary documents.  Among the last category, only a few have been found from the earliest stages of cultural development.  Many of these texts were part of a massive library in the city of Nippur, now in modern Baghdad, Iraq.  It was excavated by archeologists from the University of Pennsylvania between 1889 and 1900.  It took almost fifty years to reassemble the broken pieces of clay, decipher the texts, and publish the findings in academic journals.  For example, Kramer's book, History Begins At Sumer (1981) was not published until 1956 under the title of From the Tablets of Sumer by Falcon's Wing Press.

One particular poem was in the library at Nippur.  It is called "The Descent of Inanna," and is considered the keystone of Inanna's sacred literature.  It consists of about four hundred lines of poetry, and was recorded on thirty tablets of clay around 1750 B.C.  Scholars believe, however, that the story itself dates from approximately 3500 B.C. (Wolkstein, 1983).  This poem has excited the imagination of archeologists, archetypal psychologists, artists, theologians, historians, and women in general (Downing, 1988; Jacobsen, 1987; Perera, 1981; Thompson, 1981; Weber, 1987; Wolkstein, 1983).

When we began to work with Inanna's mythology, members of the seminar did some background reading about the Sumerians.  They thought they should have some understanding of the context out of which the Inanna mythology grew.  Here is a brief summary of some of that research.

132

Sumer was located in the territory known today as Iraq. Research by archeologists indicates that Sumer was the earliest civilization to create a written language. The Sumerians kept records on clay tablets in a style called cuneiform. Many of these tablets date from approximately 3500 B.C. According to their theological writings the Sumerians worshipped a number of goddesses along with male divinities (Jacobsen, 1987; Kramer, 1981; Wolkstein, 1983). It appears, however, that "Inanna played a greater role in myth, epic, and hymn than any other deity, male or female...(and) outweighed, overshadowed, and outlasted them all..." (Wolkstein, 1983, p. xi). In Sumer her name meant "Queen of Heaven." She was the First Daughter of the Moon, and she was the Morning and Evening Star (known today as the planet Venus). She was sister to Utu the sun god, and granddaughter to Enki the god of water and wisdom. As goddess of love, fertility, civilization, and war, the whole field of *Eros* was her domain (Wolkstein, 1983).

Archeologists have unearthed several temples to Inanna that were built from 4000-3500 B.C. One of them, located north of modern Baghdad, was in a city called Khafjah (Campbell, 1977 p. 37). The city of Uruk, modern Warka, is named in her poetry as her holy city. A vase, excavated at Uruk and dated c. 3100-2900 B.C. depicts a naked male figure, probably a priest, presenting Inanna with gifts of fruits of the harvest (Wolkstein, 1983, p. 197).

Three events that changed the shape of history transpired during the 4th millennium B.C. These events laid the foundation for the social system known today as patriarchy. The first major transformation happened about 3500 B.C. The Sumerians discovered it was possible to calculate the orbits of the planets. This cosmic discovery caused a

133

religious and sexual revolution. Shamanism, once grounded in the power and mystery of the female body, the relationship of the earth with the moon, and planting and harvesting cycles, was overshadowed by a new elite, male-dominated priesthood based on a science of mathematics and astrology.

The second shift occurred in farming technology that changed the economic structure of Sumer. This change had major implications for women. The older economy, founded on planting and hunting, was revolutionized by the invention of irrigation methods and animal domestication. Under the old ways, women had directed the horticultural interests of the society, but under the new technological order this function was subsumed by men (Campbell, 1977, p. 46; Thompson, p. 118ff.).

The third cataclysmic event occurred when semi-nomadic tribes from the steppes to the north and the desert to the south invaded this farm-village society. Upheavals of this magnitude also occurred throughout the Mediterranean and proto-Europe at approximately the same period (Gimbutas, 1989). War disrupted the entire social structure of Sumer. Political and military strategies were developed and controlled by men, and they gradually removed women from positions of power and communal authority. Kingship replaced village councils. The palace replaced the temple as the center of culture, and the king became identified with the Goddess as her consort (Campbell, 1977; Lerner, 1986; Kramer, 1981; Perry, 1991).

Female forms of divinity continued to be an important feature. Under the new patriarchal order, however, the emphasis changed. According to the new myth, the Cosmic Mother was dismembered. Different gods

134

carried her parts away to create their various domains. Those parts of the Great Mother that were not wanted by any of her sons became the underworld (Wolkstein, 1983). The ever-fertile Earth Mother was replaced by a life-giving Goddess of Love. She was young, erotic, playful, and appealing to the new man, the phallic male. She was a woman-goddess, and her name was Inanna. Although greatly altered in shape, this goddess continued to express her numinous powers through her vulva nature.

Inanna's lifecycle follows the patterns of moon goddesses, but a broader reading of available literature indicates that she carried the seeds of both lunar and solar consciousness into the new age of the warrior hero (Campbell, 1977, p. 37; Wolkstein, p. xvii).

As Goddess of Heaven and Earth, Inanna's image formed a bridge from the older pre-patriarchal religion to the patriarchal state religion that was still evolving during Sumarian times. The poetry links her with the sky gods, yet some of her attributes connect her to paleolithic goddess forms. These attributes include the double-bladed axe, the starflower, the sheath of grain, the serpent, and the world-tree (Campbell, 1978b; Perera, 1981; Wolkstein, 1983).

The temple was the center of religious and social life in Inanna's cities. Some ritual elements of the earlier goddess-centered religion may have continued through her cult. For example, Inanna was keeper of the *me*. These were the cosmic laws that "kept the universe operating as planned" (Kramer, 1981, p. 363). Through them mankind established and maintained the newly ordered civilization (Wolkstein, 1983). Holy women served in the temple as religious leaders, and they wrote hymns and poetry to Inanna (Lerner, 1986).

Sexuality and fertility were sanctified and celebrated through the *hierosgamos*, the union of the Goddess with her son-lover. The marriage rite was celebrated annually. Inanna, who incarnated through the high priestess had holy intercourse with her consort, Dumuzi, who was embodied in the king of the city (Campbell, 1977; Lerner, 1986; Thompson, 1981, Wolkstein, 1993).

Inanna was connected with another powerful Sumarian goddess. Her name was Ereshkigal, Queen of the Netherworld. Although they were represented as two distinct mythic images, Inanna and Ereshkigal together were one goddess with two aspects (Perera, 1981). This doubled-natured goddess, Inanna-Ereshkigal contained the totality of the original archetypal Great Goddess. Whereas Inanna represented aspects of the feminine that were expressed and encouraged in the new patriarchal system, Ereshkigal represented those aspect of the Goddess that were disallowed and cast out. The cuneiform tablet entitled "The Descent of Inanna" describes the dual nature of this goddess. In the poem Inanna goes to the Great Below to be initiated into the mysteries of Ereshkigal, her opposite. These mysteries include a marriage with death in which Ereshkigal kills Inanna and has her corpse hung from a hook. Inanna then undergoes transformation, redemption, and resurrection (Campbell, 1968; Perera, 1981; Wolkstein, 1983).

## SYNOPSIS OF INANNA'S MYTHOLOGY

**Inanna and the Huluppu Tree:**

136

The heart of Inanna's mythology as it is presented by Wolkstein and Kramer (1983), is the story of her descent into the underworld and her return. Wolkstein, a storyteller, presents her rendition of Inanna's mythology in <u>Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth</u>. This rendition is her synthesis and adaptation of images found on hundreds of clay tablets unearthed in 1889-1900 and laboriously translated by Kramer, who is the coauthor of this book, with Jacobsen, Chiera, and other Sumeriologists. In addition to "The Descent of Inanna," Wolkstein includes five other stories about Inanna. They are "The Huluppu Tree," "Inanna and the God of Wisdom," "The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi," "The Dream of Dumuzi," and "The Return."

**The Huluppu Tree** (Wolkstein and Kramer, p, 4ff.)

Before Inanna is introduced by the storyteller, listeners hear the story of the birth of a new cosmology with three distinct domains: the heavens, the earth, and the underworld.

This cosmology was born when a new generation of sky gods murdered the primordial Great Mother Goddess and created a new world order from her dismembered body. The sky god, An, carried off the heaven and the air god, Enlil, carried off the earth. In this new world order time came into being along with mankind, beer, and freshly baked bread.

The rejected remains of the Great Goddess became the Great Below also called the *Kur*. Here is chaos, the realm of the dead, the birth pangs of women in labor, lust, envy, greed, and iscolation. The storyteller sings of how Ereshkigal, once a goddess of heaven, is "given" the Great Below for her domain. She was once abducted, taken

137

against her will into the Kur.  Enki, Sumerian god of the waters and of wisdom, sailed for the abyss but is defeated and driven back by its dark dragon-like powers (Kramer, 1981).

Then the storyteller sings of a young tree, a huluppu tree (date palm), that grew by the banks of the Euphrates.  But the raging waters ripped the sapling from the banks and carried it away.

In the midst of this drama the storyteller introduces the young goddess, Inanna.  At that time she was a young girl who lived in a beautiful garden like the Garden of Eden.  Inanna rescued the huluppu tree from the Euphrates and planted it in her holy garden with her own hands.  She then tended the tree.  For ten years she watched it grow, and she imagined that one day it would be cut down and used to make her royal throne and marriage bed.

Then one day an alien goddess named Lilith invaded Inanna's peaceful garden.  Lilith was a wild, uncultivated woman who traveled with two companions, the serpent of immortality "who could not be charmed," and the Annzu (thunder) bird.  They made their home in the huluppu tree.   Inanna, now a maiden, was beside herself with rage and grief. She asked her brother Utu the sun god, to help her rid her garden of these invaders.  Utu refused.  Then Inanna asked the great warrior Gilgamesh for help.  Gilgamesh brought his army and they chased Lilith, the snake, and the giant bird away.  Then Gilgamesh cut down the tree and had it carved into a queens's throne and marriage bed for Inanna.  Inanna formed an alliance with her "brother" Gilgamesh.

**Inanna and the God of Wisdom** (p, 12ff.)

In the story of Inanna and the God of Wisdom, Inanna blossoms into womanhood and receives her powers as Goddess of Heaven and Earth.

As Inanna prepared to leave her garden, she was filled with her own power. She joyfully celebrated her womanhood, her "wondrous vulva." Inanna no longer walked in fear of the sky gods as she had when she was a child. She then went to visit Father Enki who received her "as an equal." Inanna and Enki dined together and toasted each other with beer, and Enki celebrated Inanna's beauty.

Enki was keeper of the *me*, the universal laws for cosmic order and human culture. Each time Enki toasted Inanna he gave her some of the *me*. Each time Inanna accepted his gifts. The drinking continued into the night, and finally Enki succumbed. Before he was able to recover himself Inanna took the *me* and left in the Boat of Heaven.

When Enki realized what he had done he sent his servant, Isimud, after Inanna, but she refused to give back the *me*. Then a great battle ensued. Enki sent out all sorts of sea monsters to attack Inanna, but her servant and defender, Ninshubur, won the battle for Inanna. Then Inanna and Ninshubur brought the *me* to Inanna's temple in her holy city of Uruk. The people celebrated Inanna's victory and her return. In the end, Enki made peace with Inanna and decreed that the *me* should remain with Inanna in Uruk.

## The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi (p, 30ff.)

In this story Inanna is courted by and marries Dumuzi the shepherd-king. Utu, Inanna's brother, convinced Inanna that it was time for her to marry. She was in love with the farmer, but Utu and their mother, Ningal the moon goddess, wanted her to marry Dumuzi the shepherd. At first Inanna refused to even meet him, but finally she was persuaded by Utu to accept Dumuzi.

Dumuzi was lavish in his courting of Inanna, who finally responded with great passion. Eagerly they spoke to one another about their erotic desire. They wed and made love. The story tellers enjoyed elaborating every detail of their lovemaking, "He laid down on the fragrant honeybed,/ My sweet love, lying by my heart,/ Tongue-playing, one by one,/ My fair Dumuzi did so fifty times."

Finally Dumuzi was satisfied, and took leave to begin his rulership as king. Inanna, however, was not complete when Dumuzi took leave of their bed. This poem ends with Inanna's words, "How sweet was your allure…."

## From the Great Above to the Great Below (p. 52ff.)

This story begins, "From the Great Above Inanna opened her ear to the Great Below."

Inanna was moved by an intuition in her own heart that drew her attention to the Kur, the land of death from which no one returns. Gugalanna the Great Bull, Ereshkigal's consort, was dead. Inanna, who called Ereshkigal "my older sister," prepared for a journey into the netherworld for the funeral of the god.

Realizing that she may not be able to get back without help, she enlisted the aid of the goddess, Ninshubur, her *sukkal*, her adviser, whom she addressed as "my constant support." Inanna requested that Ninshubur remain vigilant at the entrance to the Kur. If Inanna did not return in three days time, Ninshubur was instructed to mourn for Inanna at the temples of Enlil the air god, and Nanna the moon god, who was Inanna's father. Ninshubur was to ask them to intercede for Inanna. If they refused to help, then Ninshubur was to request help from Grandfather Enki. Ninshubur agreed to carry out Inanna's instructions.

Inanna prepared herself for her journey by adorning herself with the seven *me*. They were the symbols of the office of Holy Queenship and Goddesshood of the Upperworld, such as the crown of the steppe and her lapis beads. Then, solemnly, she approached the first of the seven gates of the Kur. She was greeted there by Ereshkigal's gatekeeper, Neti. Neti asked Inanna to state why she had come to the place from which none return. Inanna replied that she had come for the funeral of her sister's husband. Neti asked Inanna to wait while he announced her presence to Ereshkigal. Ereshkigal responded gleefully, greedily when Neti told her that Inanna was dressed in the *me*, the riches of her office. Ereshkigal instructed Neti to allow Inanna to enter the Kur one gate at a time. At each gate, Neti was to remove one of the *me*.

Neti returned to the first gate. He invited Inanna to enter. At each gate he required that she remove one of her symbols of power. When she protested, Neti said, "Quiet, Inanna. The ways of the Underworld are perfect. They may not be questioned." Each time, Inanna obeyed until, at the last gate all her possessions have been

141

surrendered.  And she entered into the presence of Ereshkigal "naked and bowed low."

The *Annuna*, the judges of the Kur, condemned Inanna.  Ereshkigal cast the "eye of death" on her, and Inanna became a corpse, a "piece of rotting meat hung from a hook on the wall."

When Inanna did not return after three days, Ninshubur carried out her orders.  She set up a lament at the temples of Father Enlil and Father Nanna, but they refused to help their daughter, Inanna.  They said she had "craved the Great Below and craved the Great Above."  They said to let her rot in the Underworld.

When Ninshubur went to Grandfather Enki, however, she was received with an entirely different attitude.  Grandfather Enki said he could not let his daughter Inanna die in the Underworld.  From under his fingernails he took some earth and fashioned two little creatures "neither male nor female."  They were called the *kurgarra* and the *galatur*.  Enki gave the food of life to the *kurgarra* and he gave the water of life to the *galatur*. Then he instructed them to pass under the gates of the Kur "like flies." When they got to the throne of Ereshkigal they would find her in a state of great deprivation and suffering.  They were to stand before her and comfort her with empathy.  When she cried out they were to reflect her by crying along with her.

They did exactly as they were told.  When they arrived in the Kur it was exactly as Enki had said.  Ereshkigal was moaning "with the cries of a woman about to give birth."  When she cried out, "oh, my inside—oh, my outside," these two creatures cried out, "oh, your

142

inside—oh, your outside." Finally, after much suffering, Ereshkigal stopped as Enki had said she would. She felt better. She asked the *kurgarra* and the *galatur* what they wanted. No one else had been able to relieve her suffering, and she wanted to thank them. They replied they wanted only the corpse that hung from the hook on the wall. Ereshkigal granted them their wish. They then sprinkled the water of life and the food of life on Inanna's corpse, and "Inanna arose...."

Inanna prepared to ascend to the upperworld, but the *Annuna*, the judges from the Kur, surrounded her. One of the *me* Inanna received from Enki was the gift of descending into and ascending from the Kur. Nonetheless, she was told that no one left the underworld unmarked. She would have to send someone of her choosing in her place. Inanna returned to the upperworld surrounded by the demons of the Kur, the *galla*. They clung to Inanna. They would take the one she named. The first one they met on the return was Ninshubur. Ninshubur sat in the dust in sack cloth and ashes awaiting Inanna's return. Inanna refused to let them take her true friend and faithful servant. Next they encountered Inanna's two sons, Shara and Lulal. Like Ninshubur, they, too were dressed in sack cloth lamenting their mother's disappearance. Inanna refused to send them in her place.

Finally Inanna arrived at Uruk, her royal city. The demons still clung to her body. There, sitting upon his throne and dressed in his finest robes of office was Dumuzi. He did not mourn Inanna's disappearance. When Inanna walked into the palace Dumuzi did not move to greet her. Inanna unleashed all the fury of the underworld upon Dumuzi. She fixed the eye of death on him. She cried out, "Take him! Take Dumuzi away!"

Dumuzi realized what trouble he was in. He called on Inanna's brother, the sun god Utu, for protection. Utu heard Dumuzi's cries, and he turned Dumuzi into a snake. Dumuzi was then able to escape from the *galla*. He fled into the wilderness.

## The Dream of Dumuzi (p, 74ff.)

When he reached the steppes, Dumuzi was filled with sadness and regret. Dumuzi cried out to his mother, Situr the sheep goddess, to pity him. He lay down to rest. As he slept he had a dream. The dream told of his cruel fate. Dumuzi then called for his sister Geshtinanna, the goddess of wine, a wise woman and interpreter of dreams. Geshtinanna wept for Dumuzi. She was loath to tell him the meaning of his dream. She saw their mother mourning for Dumuzi. She saw Dumuzi's own demons in pursuit of him along with the *galla*. She saw Dumuzi shattered in the sheepfold.

Dumuzi cried out to a friend to help. He cried out to Utu. He cried out to Geshtinanna. They tried to help him run and hide, but the demons of the underworld found him, humiliated him, and took him to an unknown place where he awaited his descent into the Kur.

## The Return (p, 87ff.)

Geshtinanna went to Inanna. She pleaded with Inanna for Dumuzi's life. Geshtinanna requested that she be allowed to share the fate of her brother. Inanna was moved to grief. She could not change Dumuzi's destiny, not even for Geshtinanna. She did not even know where Dumuzi had been taken. Then a fly appeared, a "holy fly," who said he knew where Dumuzi was. He wanted to know, "What will you

give me?" Inanna replied, "If you tell me,/ I will let you frequent the beer-houses and taverns,/ I will let you dwell among the talk of the wise ones,/ I will let you dwell among the songs of the minstrels."

The fly was pleased. It told Inanna that she and Geshtinanna could find Dumuzi at the edge of the steppe. They went to Dumuzi and found him weeping. Inanna was moved still further by Dumuzi and Geshtinanna. She could not reverse what had been decreed by fate. She had the power to soften it, however. Perhaps this is because she had the *me* of ascent and descent.

Inanna decreed that for half the year Dumuzi would dwell in the underworld. Then he could return to the upperworld during which time Geshtinanna would take his place in the underworld. Then Inanna "placed Dumuzi in the hands of the eternal" with these words, "Holy Ereshkigal! Great is your renown,/ Holy Ereshkigal! I sing your praises!"

Having developed some understanding about the goddess Inanna, her myth and its cultural dimensions, Chapter VI, "Who is Inanna? She is the Feminine Face of God that was Missing," presented ethnographic material from informants on what the Inanna myth has meant from their perspective and adds additional information on the culture at this point in time.

# CHAPTER VI: WHO IS INANNA?

## SHE IS THE FEMININE ASPECT OF GOD THAT WAS MISSING

In her book, <u>Woman's Mysteries: Ancient and Modern</u>, first published in 1972, Esther Harding, a pioneer in the Jungian approach to the psychology of women, wrote, "…the feminine principle or essence cannot be understood through an intellectual or academic study. For the inner essence of the feminine principle will not yield itself to such an attack, the real meaning of femininity always evades the direct interrogator" (Harding, 1990, p. 17).

From the beginning the goddess seminar was structured to support and encourage individual work and foster an atmosphere of receptivity in which the participants could "take in" the images of the mythology. Members were expected to read and think about how myths applied to their own dreams and meaning system. The primary approach to study the myths was the same as Jungians apply to dream work. We discussed each image as it comes up in the story, formed associations, and conducted research into other mythologies that contained similar archetypal contents. As a result, the atmosphere in the seminar modeled the "Feminine Principle." Analysis and explanation were applied after reflection to support this process (Spignesi, 1990).

I asked my informants to describe their experience as members of the seminar. For Nora, Katherine, and Caroline, the approach was

comfortable and familiar. Nora remarked, "The model (of the seminar)? It models 'quiet.' It models a 'scholarly presence.' It models 'being willing to go down into yourself and find what is there." For the others, for Lucy, Anna, Eleanor, Theresa, and Christa this approach was a new experience. In addition, the mythology was also new to everyone.

Anna is a single woman in her mid-thirties. She and Theresa are good friends. They met some years ago through their work as professional editors. When I asked her what drew her to the Inanna seminar she said, "Theresa. She didn't tell me too much about it. I guess I'd been coming to see you (for therapy) and I felt kind'a like it was an honor to be asked. But I guess I went out of a sense of adventure. I mean, I had no idea what I was really getting into. It just sounded interesting.

"I have made some new friends and I feel it is a really supportive kind of environment—not a 'support group,' but it is a place where I will always be accepted and heard," she emphasized. The words of Caroline, "the power of it all" echoed, and the words of my Catholic informant,"…to find symbols to talk to each other in" also reverberated in Anna's observations.

Anna continued, "I had some problems in the beginning with the material. I didn't feel like I was catching on. I had to go through a lot of churning around." When Anna began therapy she had just ended a significant love relationship. She was feeling sad, depressed, and anxious. Psychotherapy was a new experience, especially dream work.

147

When she enrolled in the seminar, the mythological and psychological concepts were also new and strange. "I went (to the seminar) for a little while, and then I got sick and dropped out for a bit." Her life was complicated by the fact that she developed bone cancer. She went through surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy with excellent results. Since then the cancer has remained in remission.

"I think I have been speaking up more. I think I was—oh—in a real fog for a while. I felt like I didn't know what was going on because I think I was in a process of thinking in a new way. And I think that was a normal response." When she talked, Anna had just changed companies. "I think I feel that way at other times, like in my new job. And there the stakes are different. You are there every day—and this myth is much different, much deeper than learning how to use a computer. In the past year I have started to know what is going on—that's not the right words—feel more in tune with it."

Like Anna, other informants reported that they felt "stupid" during the first few years of the seminar. They seemed to be going through a psychological reorientation and a restructuring of conscious frames of reference. It took time for them to comprehend the effects that myth has on one's way of seeing the world. Joseph Campbell called it "thinking mythologically." Anna said, "It (working with myth) changes your perspective."

Joseph Campbell suggested that thinking mythologically not only changes one's perspective, but it changes the observing subject—what one looks at life *with*. Ordinary logic of the everyday world does not always apply in the symbolic realm. In an interview with Bill Moyers for public television, Campbell said, "Read myths. They teach

you that you can turn inward.   And you begin to get the message of the symbols.   Read other people's myths, not your own religion, because you tend to interpret your own religion in terms of facts——but if you read the other ones you begin to get the message. Myths help you put your mind in touch with the experience of being alive.   It tells you what experience is" (Campbell, 1988, p. 5f.).

Caroline was very clear about the seminar.   The Inanna mythology was particularly meaningful for her from the beginning.   Whereas others had trouble adapting to the reflective mode of the seminar meetings, she did not.   Caroline met the myth on the symbolic level from the start.

She and Lucy have been friends for many years and attended the same church.   "I don't think that it was any accident that I paid attention to the letter from Lucy that this group was starting and knowing without any hesitation that was where I wanted to go…It's similar to the impact that the myth has had on me——it was at a process level——the tremendous amount of work——."   The work she spoke about was her years of training as a counselor, her commitment to her own spiritual development, and participation in the feminist movement that preceded the Inanna seminar.

I asked her if things had changed in her life as a result of the study of the myth.   I asked, "Who is Inanna and what does she symbolize for you?"

The Inanna mythology was deeply important work for Caroline.   "Part of it is being exposed to that sort of way of dealing with the material.

149

It's just having another look at the whole feminine thing.  Part of it is being in touch with people who are interested in the same thing.

"What does Inanna symbolize for me?  She is a symbol of nonlinear time, cyclical movement, the fabric of the Universe.  It touches like a butterfly wing of the Universe…the movement (in my consciousness) has been from God to Goddess, from Father to Mother…my world view from world to universe.  I have become stronger and more selfish, and I have a clearer view of my life -accomplishments, failures…."

These changes were not without cost, however.  "Over the years I have become disenchanted with all institutional religion.  I can never go back, but I don't have anything to replace it and maybe I never will."

Eleanor responded to the same question.  "It has helped me understand depression on the symbolic level, helped me cope and deal with it. The pattern of whole feminine identity that I think was central to the struggle that I was going through, but I didn't know it, was there in the myth—and in some other things for me in terms of the process—that the group went through—the whole thing of slowing down…."

Members of the seminar were not used to the slow pace of the work. Like many Americans, they had been socialized in an education system that encouraged verbal communication, argumentation, logic and even competition.  They had become accustomed to a particular academic style in which "we felt pressure to perform," as Lucy put it.  In the Inanna seminar, we moved very slowly through the material, image by

150

image, amplifying as we went along.  It took over five years to go through just under one hundred pages of poetry.

In addition, there were protracted periods of silence during the meetings.  Katherine recently referred to this lightheartedly as the "heresy of silence:" heretical because antithetical to the traditional or orthodox approach to education in which discussion and debate are normative.  During the first few years of the seminar, some informants were uncomfortable with the silence.  "You said that when there is silence—like when we all got quiet—something was happening inside that was unspeakable—but I felt mostly ignorance.  Embarrassed, sort of, because I just didn't know anything about mythology.  I used to get really angry with you.  I didn't understand for a long time—that is hard for an extrovert like me!" said Lucy.

Eleanor continued, "…the whole thing of slowing down, and maybe once a month going to a setting and a situation that was very slow and that was quiet, set aside and was really different from the rest of my life, which seems to go really fast.  And my own pace, which is impatient, in a hurry, get it done—which is really one part of me. And then being able to spend time on that slow part that is there, too."  As a child, Eleanor was considered the "slow one" in her family, and had continually been urged to hurry up.  But the pace of the seminar encouraged her to tell herself, "…hey! slow down—take your time."  And she laughed, "It felt really good!  Now I carry the introversion to other settings—l can listen and ponder there, too.

"Who is Inanna?"  Eleanor continues, "She is the feminine aspect of God which was always missing for me as I grew up.  Also, my 'rejected mother'—my Aphrodite aspect which had been lost."  As we shall see

151

later, the bond between Eleanor and her mother was difficult throughout Eleanor's childhood, and this affected the way she experienced the whole field of relationship, her "Aphrodite aspect."

Eleanor said that over the years in the seminar she has developed the ability to be silent and go inside herself not just when she is alone, but within the group as well. "And," she says, "to wait." The group of women is "like a family of silent warmth. An orbit I fit into, a golden thread. Delicate, unbreakable, love-linked."

Lucy commented, "This way of being together—well, it was really different. I learned you have to be patient—when you start the story, you have to be patient to get to the end of it, because that is where the fruit is. You have to go down into the depths of the story and that takes patience—to really listen—it is in the listening to the story and what it is saying—let the images come out and speak to you.

"It is so complicated, maybe that's why it sounds so simplistic. First, the adult has to discipline herself to get back into the story and read it. And since it (a myth or fairy tale) is for children—since it is a "children's story,"—and there is "so much more of importance to be read," Lucy chuckled, "Well, it seemed so simplistic, but it is so complex in the transformation—you really have to listen to what the story is saying *to you*. I mean, Bonnie, how often have I talked with you about this—again and again. And yet, such wonderful new insights for me to ponder, even today."

Nora came into the Inanna seminar as a seasoned student of Jungian methods. "I really like the acceptance and feeling, the 'letting

152

be.' As an introvert I don't have to work at extroversion. I can just let things—images come. And I can reach out instinctively. I always feel like I come to an oasis. The atmosphere is friendly.

"We have a bond through working with the Inanna material, but we are not pompous about it. I like the way you (Bonnie) give the time and space so that we don't have to rush. This model was not such a shock for me because of my own work—and yet, we are not too 'diaphanous.' We are in touch with each other—kids, jobs—I know it is not everyone's 'cup of tea,' and it doesn't have to be.

"I need groups to build my 'loyalty muscles.' Otherwise, I could get too reclusive. It (the seminar) fits into my social world. It works well for my temperament—it is quiet and social, and that's rare. Part of my self-expression and my community."

**THE YOUNG WOMAN, INANNA, APPLAUDED HERSELF**

Caroline commented, "I think the whole of Inanna is a framework…."

Nora said, "The whole work that we have done has been a balancing and a refreshment. It is so celebratory of the Feminine Principle and all the different aspects: the Queen; her relationship with the male figures; with Geshtinanna, Dumuzi's sister, and with the dark sister, Ereshkigal—all those forces at work in my life are in the story. I have not thought about them in quite that way before…sacrificing the ego for the self. I don't want to be glib about that. It is one of the biggest things—being in the work (of one's own psychology) and the work with Inanna."

I wondered what images from the Inanna stories had special meaning for my informants, and so I asked them. Of all the images in the myth, two stood out. "The Holy Vulva, when Inanna claimed her power as woman and as goddess." said Nora. This image, found in the poem, "Inanna and the God of Wisdom,' had a special appeal for everybody. The second image was Inanna's descent and return from the Kur.

Eleanor voiced her enthusiasm for "Inanna and the God of Wisdom. A part of Inanna that I especially loved was the central part of the poem when she became aware of her own mature femininity."

As we learned earlier, Eleanor, who had grown up with brothers, had some difficulty coming to terms with her femininity. "This poetry is a celebration of our beautiful bodies as well as our feminine spirit!" she exclaimed.

The poetic image to which Nora and Eleanor referred begins…

> Inanna placed the *shugurra*, the crown of the steppe,
>> on her head.
> She went to the sheepfold, to the shepherd.
> She leaned back against the apple tree.
> When she leaned back against the apple tree, her vulva was
>> wondrous to behold.
> Rejoicing in her wondrous vulva, the young woman Inanna
>> applauded herself (Wolkstein, 1983, p. 12).

An outsider would be surprised that Eleanor would ever suffer from a lack of confidence in her femininity. She is a lovely woman with a gracefully proportioned, lean body. She is a woman in her early

forties, a librarian by profession, is married and has no children. She often appears at the seminar with fresh Moonflowers or some other interesting plant from her garden which she affectionately refers to as "the sylvan glen." She has an ongoing love affair with the Earth—with Gaia.

Eleanor's words illustrate the damage perpetuated by a meaning system that separates body image from the whole human being (Highwater, 1990; Shuttle; 1986; Woodman, 1980). During a meeting of the seminar, Eleanor pointed out that Inanna's poetry provides images that are totally compensatory to our damaged view of womanhood, and are, therefore, images that heal the souls of women.

She continued her thoughts about confidence grounded in body—consciousness, "About a year ago, at a party, a male friend said of menstruating, 'It must be so disgusting going through all that every month.' And I said, 'You just *wish* you could be so in tune with the moon and the cycles of the earth, don't you!' I really surprised myself. It just came out. It seemed like such a natural thing—and he was just totally surprised because it was really just right.

"Has the study of Inanna and other mythologies changed my relationship with friends and co-workers? In some ways I can relate to the 'blatant masculine' in men in a relaxed, natural, self-accepting way. I don't feel like I need to prove myself or redefine myself in a male accomplishment defined way. Knowing myself as feminine and accepting that gives me strength and confidence."

## SHE TURNED HER EAR TO THE GREAT BELOW

By far the symbolism that had the most impact on the consciousness of
my informants is the poem, "From the Great Above to the Great Below."
The impact was so great, in fact, that informants spent two years
studying this symbolism of the underworld and its goddess,
Ereshkigal, sometimes called "the dark side of the goddess" (Perera,
1981).

In this poem Inanna journeyed to the *Kur*, the netherworld of Sumerian
mythology.  The Sumerians used a variety of images to describe this
place "from which no traveler returns" (Wolkstein, p. 55).  These
images did not necessarily correspond to each other.  According to
Sumerologist Thorkild Jacobsen, "The obvious inconsistencies of these
different concepts with one another did not, apparently, disturb the
ancients in any way, the less so since the Sumerian verb for "to go
up," also meant "to go down" (Jacobsen, 1987, p, 206).

One image seems consistent throughout, however.  From the beginning
of mankind, Ereshkigal was its queen.  In "The Huluppu Tree" the
storyteller said that "in the beginning," when the world of mankind
was created, Ereshkigal did not choose the Great Below.  Rather, it
was "given" to Ereshkigal as her domain (Wolkstein, p. 4 and p.
157f.).

According to Jacobsen, *ki-gal* meant 'greater earth", the earth
beneath the earth, and was considered the land of the dead as was
Hades for the early Greeks where Persephone ruled as queen (Jacobsen,
1987, p. 206).  "Inanna" meant literally "Queen of Heaven" (Kramer,
1981, p. 362).  Ereshkigal belonged to an older generation of deities

(Downing, 1988, p. 99).  For this reason Inanna addressed Ereshkigal as "my older sister," although they were not literally sisters. In Sumer, familial terms such as brother and sister were used in a much broader fashion than in our culture.

The netherworld was called the *Kur*.  Originally, "Kur" may have been the name of the ferocious, gigantic dragon who held the waters of the underworld in check (Kramer, 1981, p. 167).  According to one source, the word cervix is derived from *Kur* (Arguelles, 1977, p. 29). Ereshkigal, like the Hindu Kali and the Stone Age Great Goddess, was the Womb of Creation and Destruction symbolized by the water and blood of birth and sacrifice (Neumann, 1963; Shuttle, 1986).

In the mythology of the underworld, Ereshkigal was once an upperworld goddess, probably a grain goddess who was abducted into the underworld by the dragon, Kur, and forced to be his queen (Downing, 1988, p. 99; Gadon, 1989, p. 140).  This motif is also reflected in the Greek myth of the rape of Persephone by Hades (Hesiod, 1974).  In "The Huluppu Tree" Enki attempted to rescue Ereshkigal, but failed (Wolkstein, p.4).

A second meaning for "kur" is "mountain."  It also meant "foreign land" and "enemy land," because Sumer was constantly invaded by peoples from the surrounding mountainous countries.  One image associated with the land of the dead, therefore, was a distant, shining, snow-covered mountain palace (Jacobsen, 1987, p. 206 and 210; Kramer, 1981, p. 154).

Another image for the Sumerian netherworld was an empty space between the earth's crust and a primeval sea.  To reach it one had to cross a

"man-devouring river" on a boat rowed by a special boatman. They are
analogous to the boatman Charon and the River Styx of Greek mythology
(Kramer. 1981, p. 154).

A fourth image described the netherworld as "the Great Below." The
Kur was a dreary place. Inhabitants, including Queen Ereshkigal
lived in desolation and separation from loved ones. They ate dust
and clay, and drank dirty water (Wolkstein, p.158). Ereshkigal's
palace was imagined as a lapis lazuli city ringed by seven walls with
seven gates. A supplicant entered through the seven gates one at a
time, "naked and bowed low (Wolkstein, p. 60). This is the image of
The Great Below found in the poem, "From the Great Above to the Great
Below."

In the literature on Sumerian mythology several interpretations of
Inanna's journey to the Kur are rendered. In his book, The Harps
that Once...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation, published in 1987,
Jacobsen interpreted Inanna's descent as a failed attempt by a
warrior-queen to conquer her sister, Ereshkigal, and seize control of
the Kur. When she did not win the battle, Inanna was stripped and
hung on a hook to rot, and had to be rescued.

Jacobsen discussed this image in relation to a society that depended
on herds of sheep and goats for food and clothing. Inanna's fate was
like that of a sheep at the end of the grazing season when it is
shorn, slaughtered and the carcass hung in storage deep in the
ground. Jacobsen said, "Since Inanna in her relationship to Dumuzi
is closely associated with the flocks, she probably stands for them
in the myth. Her revival, effected by the water of life and the
grass—or pasture—of life, may then represent the reappearance of

158

the live flocks in the pastures in the spring when the waters of spring rains call vegetation to life in the desert" (Jacobsen, 1987, p. 205).

An interpretation of Inanna's descent depends on how the second line of the poem is translated. According to Jacobsen this line means literally, "had her ear stand." He renders this phrase, "had her heart set on." So that he offers this translation:

> From the upper heaven
> she had her heart set
> on the netherworld, (Jacobsen, 1987, p. 206)

Samuel Kramer, Professor Emeritus in Sumerian studies also interpreted Inanna's interest in the Kur as "a woman's overwhelming ambition." In a discussion of Dumuzi the shepherd-king and his marriage to Inanna, Kramer wrote, "Little did Dumuzi dream, however, that the marriage which he so passionately desired would end in his own perdition and that he would be dragged down to hell. He failed to reckon with a woman's overwhelming ambition." Kramer said that Inanna and Ereshkigal were "bitter enemies." He then explains that Inanna, who is already queen of heaven, "longs for still greater power and sets her goal to rule in the infernal regions, the 'Great Below'" (Kramer, 1981, p. 156).

Kramer translates those first few lines as:
> From the "great above" she set her mind toward the "great below" (Kramer, 1981, p. 158).

The Sumerians developed a system of writing on clay tablets using wedge shaped symbols. This method is called "cuneiform" writing (Kramer, 1981). Both Kramer and Jacobsen are considered experts in the language and culture of Sumer. They are among a small group of scholars who have worked with the actual cuneiform tablets from excavations in Iraq. These men interpret Inanna's descent as an attempt to extend her power and control. Their interpretations of their translations seem to hinge on their understanding of the Sumerian phrase, "had her ear stand."

Interestingly, Jacobsen gave another interpretation of these few lines in an earlier work entitled, The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion, published in 1976. In this earlier work Jacobsen had a different analysis. In a discussion of some poetry about Dumuzi as a dying god of fertility, he placed the entire episode in relationship to Dumuzi's function and role as a fertility god. He wrote, "Here the young wife, Inanna, instead of lamenting Dumuzi's death, is the instrument of it; she delivers him to the powers of the netherworld to escape herself…The story begins with a whim, a sudden desire in Inanna for the netherworld, a desire that comes to rule her to the exclusion of everything else."

In that text he renders those first few lines as follows:

She set her heart from the highest heaven
on earth's deepest grounds (Jacobsen, 1976, p. 55).

In 1983 the storyteller Diane Wolkstein published Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth with Samuel Kramer as co-author. This book is a rendition and interpretation of Inanna's mythology. The poetry in

the text is the work of Wolkstein in consultation with Kramer.
Kramer and Wolkstein contributed separately to the commentary that
follows the poetry.  In the commentary Kramer concentrated on the
culture and literature of Sumer and on the discovery and work with
the cuneiform tablets themselves.  Wolkstein's commentary was focused
on the symbolism of the poetry itself.

In her discussion of the Sumerian tablet, "The Descent of Inanna,"
Wolkstein suggested a very different approach.  She associated
Inanna's descent with the initiatory rites into the mysteries of
death and rebirth contained in the underworld experience.  Wolkstein
suggested, "Inanna is Queen of Heaven and Earth, but she does not
know the underworld.  Until her *ear opens* (my italics) to the Great
Below her understanding is necessarily limited.  In Sumerian the word
for ear and wisdom is the same" (p. 156).

In the introduction to <u>Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth</u>, the
following conversation between Wolkstein and Kramer was recorded:

> Wolkstein asked Kramer, "In the first line of 'The Descent of
> Inanna,' 'From the Great Above she set her mind to the Great
> Below,' what exactly does 'mind' mean?"
>
> "Ear," Kramer said.
>
> "Ear?" (asked Wolkstein).
>
> "Yes, the word for ear and wisdom in Sumerian are the same.  But
> mind is what is meant." (Kramer answered),

"But—could I say 'ear'?" (asked Wolkstein).

"Well, you could." (Kramer replied).

"Is it *opened* her ear or set her ear?" (asked Wolkstein).

"Set.  Set her ear, like a donkey that sets its ear at a particular sound." (replied Kramer).

This comment by Wolkstein followed the recorded conversation. "As Kramer spoke, a shiver ran through me.  When taken literally, the text itself announces the story's direction: From the Great Above the goddess opened (set) her ear, her receptor for wisdom, to the Great Below (p. xvif).  Therefore, Wolkstein rendered those beginning lines as follows:

From the Great Above she opened her ear to the Great Below.
From the Great Above the goddess opened her ear to the Great Below.
From the Great Above Inanna opened her ear to the Great Below
(p. 52).

Wolkstein admitted that there is no way that we can know what these "ambiguous" words or any of the cuneiform texts meant to the Sumerians themselves since we have no factual information to go on. She also recognized that these sacred writings, "continue to have a compelling hold on us…I, too, have felt the strange opening-up quality of these stories, as if I were falling out of the storyteller-audience framework into a deeper, more eternal soul-place" (Wolkstein, p. 136).  By allowing herself to step outside this framework, Wolkstein applied her artistic imagination, her

162

storyteller's instincts, and perhaps her feminine consciousness to render this new translation. She envisioned Inanna not as a selfish, power-hungry warrior-queen but as an initiate into the greater mysteries of the underworld.

Jungian analyst Sylvia Brinton Perera wrote a psychological interpretation of "The Descent of Inanna" that corresponds with Wolkstein's perspective. Perera's book, Decent to the Goddess: A Way of Initiation, was published in 1981, a few years before Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth which was published in 1983. Even though Perera's book was published before Wolkstein and Kramer's work, their presentation of the myth in its context was available to Perera and greatly influenced her interpretation. In the bibliography Perera referred to Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth as a "forthcoming" text. Perera also referred to Jacobsen's 1976 interpretation which indicated Inanna's desire to enter the Great Below originated as a sudden desire or feeling (Perera, p. 9).

Perera's book is a Jungian interpretation of the meaning of Inanna's encounter with Ereshkigal and her subsequent return to the upperworld. Perera said that the two goddesses, Inanna and Ereshkigal, were actually one goddess, Inanna-Ereshkegal, with two aspects. She used the concept of "the shadow" to describe the relationship between Inanna and Ereshkigal. Jungians use "shadow" to signify qualities in the personality that have rejected or never been realized by the ego. According to this view, Inanna entered the underworld to encounter her "other half," so to speak. Perera and Wolkstein interpret this encounter psychologically to be symbolic of a crisis of meaning that may occur in mid-life when a woman (or man) has fulfilled the collective expectations as a citizen of her

163

society.   In Inanna's case, she had successfully fulfilled her roles
as queen, as wife, and as mother.

It was stated in the introduction to this study that Jung was
concerned with the psychology of mid-life.  He characterized the
crisis at mid-life as a pivotal moment in the process of
individuation which occurs when the ego has reached its zenith
regarding adaptation to the goals of the outer world and is called to
prepare for death.  This change in direction originates from the
self, the archetype of wholeness and divinity, and demands that the
ego turn inward to deeper levels of the psyche in order to come to
terms with what it has left undone (Jung, 1969, par. 796ff.).

From this perspective, a woman in mid-life may begin to realize that
elements of her deeper feminine self may have been cast out in order
to maintain success in the collective domain.  Erikson characterized
the dynamics of this psychological crisis as "generativity versus
stagnation" (Erikson, p. 166ff.).  According to Perera, Inanna's
descent is a mirror of this crisis.  When she "turns her ear to the
Great Below", Inanna was responding to a longing for elements in her
own unconscious.  She responded by giving up her powers and going to
the Kur where she is reborn through her encounter with Ereshkigal,
her "other half," who represents the cast-out shadow side of the
goddess of the upper world (Downing, 1988; Gadon, 1985; Perera, 1981;
Wolkstein, 1983).

Perera wrote her book for the "daughters of the patriarchy".  She
identified this term with women who "are badly wounded in our
relationship to the feminine," who usually "have a fairly successful
persona, a good public image," and who "strive to uphold the virtues

164

and aesthetics of the patriarchal superego…but are filled with self-loathing and a deep sense of personal ugliness and failure when we can neither meet nor mitigate the superego's standards of perfection" (Perera, 1981, p. 11). Reflecting upon what was said earlier about the profile of the women represented by my informants, it is not difficult to understand why the Inanna mythology would appeal to them.

When I asked Caroline what particular image in Inanna was important to her, she said, 'Oh, the descent—that is where I am in my life—that part of me is just—from Inanna's side and Ereshkigal's side—the incredible sadness of it—the pathos—of waking up one day and realizing what it is you have to do and doing it." She had developed an understanding from her own spiritual work and psychological research that "…everything in my life has been the only way it could have happened."

From her point of view, the story of Inanna's descent evokes the *pathos* inherent in the crisis at mid-life. Like Greek tragedy or the story of Jesus's crucifixion, it calls the individual to suffer with the Goddess. There is a close relationship between the words pathology, *pathos* and empathy, which is vital in psychology. *Pathos* is Greek for emotion, suffering, and disease. Empathy means the quality or process of entering fully, through imagination—psychic images—into another's feelings or emotions, into the meaning of the experience of an "other."

From a psychological point of view, the Divinity enters creation through the ego's capacity to consciously relate to and integrate god—images and their spiritual energy. On the other side, human

beings enter the realm of the gods when they are taken up into the Deity as it empties itself of images. The Divinity suffers because it must diminish itself in this process, and the human being suffers because it must expand to contain divine energy. The Greek term for this process is *kenosis*, which means "emptying out" (von Franz, 1980, p. 71ff.). The power, potential, and promise of this level of erotic experience is that the pain of the suffering may transform into ecstasy and joy. Consciousness expands and becomes more substantial as the Deity incarnates in creation. When the suffering is not met with empathy it may become disease or pathology, as we commonly use the term (Jung, CW 13, 1967, par. 54).

Caroline continued, "The incredible sadness of that—waking up one day and realizing what it is you had to do and doing it. It (Inanna's encounter with Ereshkigal) is such a different story from, say, The Divine Comedy, where you keep going until you get to the good part. You don't get to the 'good part' in the Inanna myth...that was the corpse of Inanna that ascended."

What Caroline said is valid. The ending of Inanna's story remains open-ended and incomplete. The final outcome of the myth is incomplete because the cuneiform tablets are broken, and we do not have what we would consider to be a final resolution. It could be that we lack a complete understanding of the images as they are presented; or it may be that in the imagination of the Sumerian myth-makers the story was incomplete because the imagining stopped before a lysis was achieved. Whatever the reason, the symbolism has opened the souls of my informants to imagine possibilities.

Caroline continued, "I can identify with the young girl and the 'in the beginning.' I can identify with the Queen and all that, but not the way I can identify with the descent and the whole ordeal. It goes on between the two of them—the two parts of the world (Inanna and Ereshkigal). Somehow the masculine point of view—the Crucifixion flashes into my mind. That is something that was 'done to.' I certainly know that the metaphor, that sacrifice, is now in the consciousness of the world and that it was done willingly—it was the force of 'a thing done to'—whereas this (Inanna's descent) has the force of 'being taken on'—even though I know the words of the other says that that was 'taken on' too. It is different, real different, than going to the gates (to the underworld) and taking it on yourself."

"Yes," I said, "With Inanna there was no discussion. She 'turned her ear to the Great Below,' and then she went."

In an interview with Eleanor she said, "Something was said at the last session (March 1990 meeting). We were talking about why did she go—to make the journey? I said, 'Why—why *did* she do that? And I just came to the feeling that—there was a feeling that led her to that—and it was like a thunderbolt to me that *that* is the reason to do things and it is the most important reason to do things—wow! To give it that name (a feeling).

"The aspect that led me to Inanna was my own terminal depression-wanting to go and explore this avenue, and then, at the last session (seven years into my work)—She (Inanna) wanted to go and share the grief, or explore her own. I'm not sure what the feeling was, but it was a feeling."

167

I asked Eleanor, "We use that word (feeling) in several ways.  So, was it like an emotion or a sensation, or an intuition, or a value—?"

Eleanor replied, "Yes—like an emotion—putting value on that—and then a personal way for me to recognize that logical reasons are not the only reasons for doing things.  In fact, discoveries come a different way from logic.

"As I was thinking about other things that this (mythology) has done for me, well, it has made my own depressions easier to deal with.  It has given me a tool—a recognition that they are not the end of the world.  It (depression) is a real thing, something to get through, but I didn't have that feeling before, and I don't have to go through days and days and weeks and weeks of being depressed," she said with a musical laugh.

As discussed earlier, mythology can work on people differently given their social and cultural background.  It becomes evident here that the image of Inanna's descent meets people on different levels in the soul at different stages of life.  At age 32, Anna had surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy for bone cancer.  During that time her self-image underwent major transformation.  She commented on Inanna's descent, "The idea of descent—that you have to hit bottom and then go on from there and deal with the darker side.  It is something I have to constantly remind myself of.  I have to remind myself that it is 'okay' to feel bad about whatever the situation I find myself in; and that helps me to realize that it's a heavy situation, this 'journey' I'm on.  And I'm always learning, and that's affirming to

think about.  There are things I have been able to relate to every day, this darker side."

I asked her, "What do you associate with the darker side?"

"You know, the 'shadow'.  All those things I am not supposed to think about—bad things I'm not supposed to do or think about that, of course, everybody does and thinks about," she laughed.

"I was brought up to believe in this sort of 'perfect little girl' type, like lots of people are.  My darker side can be a helper.  Something will happen, I'll feel angry or feel bad and that's a signal to look at why this is happening.  I do try to avoid it a lot.  I mean sit around and analyze it all day.  Especially at work—but at times it is good to help you see what is really going on.  It's a real helper to me.

"Anxiety, even though it is really unpleasant, when I get—really anxious it is because almost always I am trying to do something I really do not want to do.  And then I don't feel right about it, and I am trying to push myself into it.  It can keep me from making a bad mistake—like with B" (a romantic interest of hers).

For Lucy, the most powerful symbolism in the poetry about Inanna's descent was the seven gates to the underworld.  In Akkadian, a culture akin to the Sumerians, seven meant "wholeness" (Wolkstein, p. 158).  Lucy said, "Whenever I had resistance to knowing something (psychologically speaking), it would have helped me so much to have known that myth, and to have studied it with the group like we did at the time I had manic depression.  I learned about the phenomenal

169

changes in my life—I would suffer every time a high or a low would happen.

"The image that has been particularly helpful to me in my life is the image of the gates—the letting go. The losing of valuable possessions so that you can gain something on the other side. That's a really important piece (symbol). It sustains the work of saying 'I am going to let go. I am going to take a chance. I am going to walk through the door.'

"It seems to me that I was inside the university (studying for her Masters of Social Work degree) when we read that part. There were so many gates at the university—you couldn't have imagined. One of the things that I liked about the way the myth is, about Inanna going through the gates, is that the pain is so evident—her pain."

After completing her M.S.W., Lucy went to work on the social work staff at a major hospital. "When we are therapists," she said, "or working in a hospital, then we know the pain of people. But, in the world we tend to not know people's pain, so we do this journey on our own! And she (Inanna) did too. She made that journey on her own.

"The timing must have been right for me with the Goddess, because it seems that I was going through a lot of gates at that time. When we were talking about the gates; that is a story about transformation, so she moved down, and coming up she was a different person than when she went down."

I asked. "What were the gates for you? What gates were you going through at that time?"

"Making a career transition, but doing it by leaving my career in banking and then 'hanging out there' while deciding what to do—whether to go into social work. Shedding my professional identity and trying to re-imagine myself as I always thought I would be when I was younger—knowing that you are following your passions."

I said, "It seems that you had gone away from it (your earliest vision of what you would become) and then you had to go back through a number of gates to get to your original nakedness."

Lucy replied, "To find my passion. It was caught in the manic depression. More of my identity was in the illness. Now I hardly identify with it at all. That is a little frightening—and coming to the realization of the incest. Boy, was that a gate!" Here Lucy means the sexual abuse discussed on page 95.

I responded, "That was the key, wasn't it, to a lot of the problems."

Lucy hesitated, "I think I have resistance to really embracing that still…We did embrace it, though. I know that."

Here is one final comment from Caroline regarding Inanna's experience in the Great Below and her return to the Great Above, "I am not surprised that that's the part that is grabbing me. It is in times of deepest distress that I get a sense of the fabric of the universe—and I feel you can't—I can't—live there. It is beyond my human processes to live there (in the underworld). It is good to know that what you do is to get up and go back to work every day. She (Inanna) takes the corpse and she goes back. I think I just don't have the energy to do that. But it is in the throes of the

absolute rock-bottom grief that I can begin to get the synchronicity of things. I call it 'the fabric of the universe.' It is in those times of rock-bottom grief that I feel like I can touch it—that I have got it in my grasp—what it is all about. Not that I can put it into words, it is such a wonderful thing, you know. This is what it is all about—whatever this is. But I can't be there. I have to go back."

Looking back on this study from an anthropologic perspective, the technique known as thick description has been used throughout to build an understanding of the cultural dimension in which feminine forms of consciousness such as goddess images have developed in the awareness of my informants. In this process I have used ethnography along with other concepts from cultural anthropology such as participant-observation and self-ethnography from informants' journals, concepts from mythology such as goddess imagery and goddess lore, and concepts from Jungian psychology such as dream work and interpretation.

In Chapter III, I described the role that dreams and myths occupy in the development of feminine consciousness as exemplified by Lucy's experience. This was followed in Chapter IV by a discussion of the structure and intent of the Inanna seminar and how it evolved from its Jungian roots to develop into a learning community in which members cultivate shared frames of reference.

Chapters V and VI contain general background information of the Inanna mythology concerning its origins, recovery and translation; a summary of the myth itself; and ethnographic materials from informants on what this myth has meant to them.

Now turning to Chapters VII and VIII, I will provide two detailed examples from my informants' lives to deepen our understanding of how the work with feminine archetypes through dreams and myths has influenced the meaning system of informants, how they interpret these patterns, and how these patterns have impacted on their consciousness and their social worlds.

# CHAPTER VII: IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO FIND HER—THE GODDESS

One March day Eleanor came to paint in my painting room. It is available for people to use to paint their dreams. She came in looking vibrant in a red knit sweater and gold print pants, all wind-blown.

"I hate my job! I need a hug. It's been a very difficult day." We hugged. "Inanna has been so helpful. There is something in those images. I am thinking now how she came up from the underworld. She is surrounded by all those demons," she said, full of energy—making broad, sweeping gestures and swirling her arms above her head. But I could see the strain in her eyes.

"Yes!" I said. "The demons of the Kur—and the negative animus, too!"

"That's how it feels at work," she said as she began painting vigorously.

I thought to myself, "This does not look like a depressed woman—way to go, Eleanor!"

Eleanor suffered with bouts of depression for years. The symbolism in Inanna helped her work with this condition so that it did not totally overwhelm her. As she said, "Inanna's mythology has given me another way—tools, I guess you could say—to understand depression and an ability to cope and deal with it. I could look at my depression through the mythology, and see meaning on another level. I could see that the patterns would change, that the depression was a pattern I go through."

"Also, there is Ninshubur. I call upon her when I am depressed. I depend on her and love her (me) for her efficiency." Eleanor discovered Ninshubur's meaning one evening during a meeting of the Inanna seminar. It was one of those insights that just hits a person all of a sudden. In the myth, Ninshubur was Inanna's *sukkal*, or adviser. Inanna calls her "my constant support," the one "who gives me wise advice, my warrior who fights by my side (Wolkstein, p. 53). When Inanna did not return from the underworld after three days, Ninshubur saw to it that Inanna was rescued.

During the seminar we were discussing Ninshubur's role in the story. It dawned on Eleanor that psychologically speaking, Ninshubur represents the quality in the personality that carries out the daily tasks while the Inanna quality descends into the underworld. "Ninshubur" is the efficient, goal-directed persona who keeps things organized and running in the upper world, so to speak. Eleanor exclaimed, "When you are down there—in the underworld with Ereshkegal, Ninshubur kind of takes over and does the laundry. Differentiating these two psychological functions enables you to descend and to go ahead at the same time!"

Not long thereafter, Eleanor began to write poetry. "The poems just seem to come," she said.

"Yes," I said. "Like the time you missed your dance class—tell me that story."

Eleanor laughed. "I couldn't believe it. That day I was so careful to get all this stuff done at home so I'd be ready on time. So I'd be there at a quarter of twelve. I was on my way there, and I realized, 'wait a minute, I am an hour late!' That kind of situation in the past would have really upset me, but I just turned the car around and went home and began to write.

"It is the poem about Ariadne. I think it was just waiting for a chance to come out—I mean, I sat down and it came to me. I was really in a different place. When I write I am in a different state. I'm not really thinking about other people. The imagery awakens—like the return (of Inanna to the upperworld), like Penelope. But when I discovered Ariadne, that was more meaningful to me."

Penelope, queen of Ithaca, from The Odyssey of Homer and Ariadne, the Lady of the Labyrinth from Minoan Crete are two Bronze Age goddesses who have come forward in Eleanor's writing. "Now I talk to the gods and goddesses like they are real, and of course, they are."

I asked her, "Do you ever get the feeling that when you look over your shoulder there is one of the goddesses there?"

Eleanor had a vision of the gods and goddesses when she was a child. "I feel more and more the return of them—you know when I was about five or six years old I looked out the front door. And there they were all out there looking down at me and I have been feeling that more—that presence."

I asked, "Is this religion for you? These feelings and images? Is it spiritual?"

"My own early spiritual education, and the turning away from it because I had an unconscious sense—feeling of not being myself…. It—this work—gives me a feeling of vastness, of endless connection to (something spiritual). I know when my father was dying I had some thoughts about that. Death is like birth. It is a process that happens like birth, a process that goes into the body and into the consciousness. Like birth, we say 'you are born'—the way the verb is constructed. I think it is the same with death—'you are deathed', maybe."

I asked, "Being carried?"

Eleanor replied, "Um-hum. That it is something that happens to you. You die. When you say it that way it sounds like you made it happen. But you don't. You are 'deathed'.

"I am working on a poem about raspberries. There was a day in August when my father called and said, 'Oh, I got my diagnosis today. And I am terminal.' And he said it just like that—really brutal. And we (Eleanor and her husband) were going raspberry picking. And so we picked the raspberries and we got soft ice cream. And we ate them.

177

The death of the raspberries.  The crushing them, and they became—which is the death.  Or if we left then on the bush to over ripen, they also die."

We were silent for a moment, and then she continued, "The mysteries, the greater mysteries—I think I don't have to know.  I don't have to have an opinion about that.  I don't have to make up my mind about that."

A primary issue in Eleanor's life for many years was her relationship with her mother.  "After my father died I hoped that there would be changes.  I have felt a void all my life of a personal mother-love. And I have tried to work on my poor relationship with her."

From Eleanor's perspective, it is very difficult to live in disharmony with her mother.  Psychologists know from the study of infants that if a child is unmothered, that is, has its basic needs tended to but otherwise is left untouched and on its own in a crib, that it will die.  No one would suggest that people should stay forever in a childish state of dependence on mother, for to be daughter (or son, for that matter) is not to remain forever a child, but forever a daughter.  Rather, it is more that one's pattern of relationship with other human beings and the world is derived in terms of one's relationship to Mother.  This pattern is instinctive and therefore, archetypal or mythic; and human beings need myths about the mother in order to move from a literal dependency toward a spiritual fulfillment in a god-image.

In her efforts to find the Mother pattern in her own psyche, Eleanor has turned to several goddess images from ancient Greek mythology. They are the myths of Demeter and Persephone, and the image of Gaia.

The Greek myth of Demeter and Persephone is about the separation and reuniting of Mother and Daughter. In the myth of Demeter and Persephone, separation for the Mother-Demeter creates perpetual winter and for Daughter-Persephone, it precipitates a descent into the underworld. Both these states translate psychologically into states of depression. When the two are reunited, Spring arrives, fertility returns, and life is renewed on the Earth (Hesiod, 1974). In the Greek religion, the mother-daughter goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, presided over the ancient mysteries at Eleusis (Kerenyi, 1967). These Mother-Daughter mysteries were not associated with the Olympians. Goddesses who lived on Olympus have been described as "unmothered-daughters." And yet, in the religious imagination of the ancient Greeks, there did exist an eternal Mother, a mother of infancy, and her name was Gaia (Downing, 1984, p. 131ff.).

Western civilization has produced a meaning system that has become ever more separated from the Mother as an active pattern in the mythic imagination. However, a reversal of this situation seems to be occurring in the psyches of some women and some men at this point in time. Women like Eleanor are reading myths that help them reconnect to the Feminine Principle. In so doing, women say they have discovered that the Goddess is not as far away, but they have to look beyond their personal mother to find her.

Returning to Eleanor, her relationship with her mother was always strained. Several years ago her father died. In late summer of

179

1990, Eleanor returned to therapy to try to work on her response to her mother. "It never felt safe at home. My mother always had a violent temper. When I was a child growing up, it seems like she was always angry. She used to throw glasses…how afraid I was of her. Dad would start drinking on Friday and drink all weekend. I didn't have much relationship with him until I was in my twenties and thirties. He had a heart attack at age 56. And then he changed. He stopped drinking."

Growing up in a dysfunctional family has consequences. Children spend their creative energy building defenses against psychological assaults, loneliness and lack of caring. From a Jungian point of view, they develop a particular kind of "shadow." Because they often cannot afford to express themselves creatively, certain gifts remain in the unconscious in undeveloped states. By the time we met, Eleanor already understood the consequences that resulted from the dynamics in her family of origin and had developed good coping strategies.

In February 1990 we talked about her therapy and her mother. "Its not been easy with my mother…the lack I felt in my life of the personal mothering, of trying to work out my poor relationship with my mother and what it meant to me. How when in my twenties I did not want to be a mother—even now (at forty)—its always been a difficult image. Letting myself go and learn the lesson there. I have a lot of resistance to the Mother-image, to being able to accept it. Our sessions were helpful in that I tried to see my mother from her point of view—in terms of her needs instead of my own—see her needs and what needs were not fulfilled that made her who she is. I still have

a lot of anger with her for how she was with me that left me with needs—but not that much."

A year after her father's death, Eleanor was ready for a new level of Jungian dream work. "It feels like I am encountering the shadow. I have fears of being close to death—darkness. The question that is coming up for me is how am I like my mother? What do I project onto my mother and deny in myself?"

From an analytical point of view, this is a very large psychological task to undertake, but the years of inner work had prepared her, and her dreams were presenting powerful feminine archetypal images. Through dream work and mythology, Eleanor's therapy took her into deeper levels within her psyche, and she began to experience an unblocking of creativity.

In the winter of 1993 we met to review her work. Eleanor said, "The Feminine has been very present. And I feel it more…there was one dream I had last week. I was at a 'second hand' sale. It was organized, run, and attended by women—all women. One table was jumbled with clothing for sale. I found this sweater, and it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen. It was like a patchwork with all kinds of textiles and all kinds of fabrics, in all kinds of colors. Like a real nubby gold mixed with sky-blue run through with gold threads.

"I pick it up to look at it and another woman comes over to look at it, too. She said, 'Are you going to buy that?' And I said, 'I'm going to try it on.' I hold it up and it looks like it has bat wings—bat wing sleeves! I love it!

"I loved that image when I wrote it down. And I knew it would fit me. I looked at the price tag. It was handmade in France. It was $78.00 or $88.00, but I didn't care. I looked at the back, and it had this beautiful green gauzy fabric gathered at the back making this little skirt. It was just beautiful! And then I looked at the price tag again. It had changed to say $25.00—and so I bought it."

After we talked about the dream, Eleanor thought it was time for her to begin to "wear her own colors—try on her own style. "My sweater is always there, under whatever I have on."

"I wonder if all the goddesses got together to make it for you?" I asked lightheartedly.

"I never thought of that—all that patchwork—all those aspects. Bat wings, Aphrodite's 'tail.' It is so sexy—that green gauze, a little peplum skirt—maybe." She laughed. Clearly Eleanor enjoys her dreams.

There was another dream that gave way in Eleanor to what Jung called "active imagination."

"Do you remember the dream I had about the granite cave?" Eleanor asked me. This was a particularly powerful dream for her. In this dream she descended into a cave deep in the Earth.

Since ancient times the cave has been associated with the worship of the Great Goddess and associated with the body of woman, with fertility, and with the cycle of life from birth through death. The interior space within sacred cave-temples was associated especially

with the interior of the body of the female as Goddess, she being the womb-tomb (Hall, 1980).

Archeologists have determined that throughout Europe, from roughly 30,000-10,000 B.C., Stone Age people often used caves for sacred purposes. Artifacts surviving from that period reveal a mythology of a naked goddess identified with temple caves (Campbell, 1978c; Gimbutas, 1989). Evidence indicates that these people deliberately constructed images within caves that invoked sacred space and created sacred theater. In the British Isles, mounds were built to emulate the body of woman, the interior chambers being womb-tomb structures (Campbell, 1978c, pp. 398ff.). This tradition continued in some places into the Bronze Age. For example, on the island of Crete in Minoan times, approximately 3500-1500 B.C., a Great Goddess was worshipped in caves (Hawkes, 1968).

In her dream of the granite cave Eleanor is on a bus tour with other people. "We turned into a parking lot and stopped. We all got out of the bus…went into a house, and to an exit which went underground and under a lake.

"It was a steep descent. I went down with the rest—on hands and feet and bottom, along rocks and narrow stairs. It was dark and damp. I was almost paralyzed with fear, but the other people, mostly men, encouraged me. I got to the bottom. The old woman in gray was already there, having gone down another path." An old woman dressed in gray had appeared in other dreams. Eleanor thought she was always a kind and helpful spirit.

"We got into boats to cross the river at the bottom of this cave. At

the other side, children awaited us at the dock.

"We had carried eggs over in our shoes, which were off our feet. Some were cracked and we could see golden yolks gleaming. We were supposed to see the golden yolks, and then we threw the rest of the eggs to break them open." This dream would not leave Eleanor alone, so she reentered the dream in a conscious state and did some active imagination. The product of this creative process was a poem.

"The eggs are hatching," she said, "I wrote a poem. I would like to read it to you. I called it 'Gaia.' It is a retelling of the dream. Perhaps Gaia's cave was what Ereshkigal's palace was like before the patriarchy separated women from their bodies."

With deep feeling, a single tear falls as she says quietly, "I really love this poem. It took me so long to find Her—the Goddess—the Mother. And when I dreamed of Her, and walked down there, and found Her at the very bottom—the Goddess waiting—here is the poem."

*Gaia*

Summer 1992


I am the granite cave you dwell in
I hold you firm within the world
I will always be down here
Waiting to enfold you.

I am waiting at the bottom of the stairs.

184

I stand waiting for you.

I'm longing to hold your hand,

to steady your step,

to look into your eyes

so that you know we are one.


Come down the stairs.

Climb down the rocky steps

Clamber down the slippery rocks to me

and be born again.

I will catch you.

I will hold you.


Stop cleaning the living room.

Stop doing the dishes.

Stop sweeping the floor.


There's nothing you can carry.

There's nothing you need to bring.

There's nothing down here with me,

only everything you need.


Stop scrubbing the bathtub

Stop scouring the sink,

Stop cleaning the toilet

of someone else's shit.


I will hold your feet steady

in the moist and shifting sand.

I will guide you to the boat
and row you across the river.
I will tie us to the dock
when we reach the other side,
and when you reach into your pockets
My golden eggs you will find.

Inside the cave where silence reigns
Noise is barely known.
A slow motion drip from moistened walls
may hit the water with a muffled, faint plop.
But what you will hear will come from within.
The sounds are only yours.

The inner rhythm of your heart,
Like the first
Like the last,
The only real sounds of your life.

The air will surround you,
It's never been out
Or warmed or lifted by the sun.
It's heavy and will hold us.
It is damp from the river.
Holds moisture from the walls
Is cool
With the fragrance of bats.
Of moss,
Of mud,
And the earth.

And in this darkness, in this full and tactile air

In this presence

You will feel your body

In this state between water and air,

Between being held and holding.

Everything of yours will open and expand

Fingers spread apart to feel the rocks,

Eyelids open wide,

Pupils dilate to see through the gloom

Hairs stand up and out and away

From neck and arms and legs,

Like a cat's whiskers

To feel the walls.


A new sense of balance will soon overtake you,

A feeling of belonging

In my cave,

In your home.


I remembered a comment Lucy had made concerning mythic images in dreams. "It is important to learn as much as we can about the myth's earliest forms. Otherwise, we cannot possibly give a complete interpretation to dreams. I mean, the dreams are there to help us understand and experience our deepest feminine nature. As women we cannot do that unless we know the most ancient forms of the myths."

The literature on women's psychology discusses the image of the cave as the Primal Great Mother. The cave is the deep, pre-patriarchal region in the woman's psyche and is associated with the pelvic area of the body of woman (Downing, 1984, p. 3 and 137ff.; Hall, 1988, p.

187

36ff.; Woodman, 1980, p. 63f. and p. 114f.). Dreams of underground caverns are considered significant by dreamers as well as analysts. They are classified as initiation dreams, announcing a major change in the life of the woman. These dreams usually come after years of inner work and sacrifice (Woodman, 1982, p. 164).

Christine Downing, a professor of religious studies and a Jungian scholar, writes about the dream that began her "quest for the goddess." She describes how in the dream she finds herself "…in a state of confusion and despair. I decide to drive into the desert alone, hoping to rediscover the still center I have lost." As the dream develops, she loses her car, and eventually sets off "…in search of Her." Now she has a sense of the right direction to take, and finds herself "at the foot of some steeply rising stone cliffs. I make my way up the cliffs, heading straight for a small cave just large enough for me to lie down. Still seeming to know what I must do, I prepare myself to sleep there, as though to fall asleep were part of my way toward Her."

Now Downing has a dream within the dream. "While in the cave I dream that within the cave I find a narrow hole leading into an underground passage. I make my way through the channel deep, deep into another cave well beneath the earth's surface. I sit down on the rough uneven floor, knowing myself to be in her presence. Yet, though She is palpably there, I cannot discern her shape. Though I wait and wait, expecting to be able to see Her once my eyes grow accustomed to the darkness, that does not happen" (p. 3).

Other informants in the seminar have had dreams of descending into caves. For example, Caroline dreamed a similar dream about five

years ago. In that dream she is taking a group of children on a field trip. They stop in a wooded area and walk to a place in the woods where they descend down a hill into a cave. It is a moist, cool place. In the dream, Caroline knows the cave is a sacred place—that the Goddess is present here. The others are not aware of this fact.

Shortly after the "Gaia's Cave" poem, Eleanor dreamed of carrying golden branches. In no time that image appeared in one of her poems. One day I was reading in Robert Graves's book, The White Goddess, and I came across a reference to golden branches. After I read it I called Eleanor immediately. Graves wrote that golden branches, like golden eggs and caves, were symbols of the ancient pre-patriarchal goddess. In ancient Ireland the *ollave*, or master poet, carried a golden branch with tinkling bells when he traveled. This was to signify that he was an initiate into the greater mysteries of the Triple Goddess, Bridget, the High One (Graves, 1948).

It would appear that in her dreams and in her poems Eleanor has come home to her Mother.

As has been noted, in Eleanor's situation, in addition to the Inanna myth, representations of particular goddesses from ancient and classical Greece have appeared in her mythic imagination. Of particular influence are Gaia the ancient Earth goddess, Aphrodite goddess of love, Persephone the goddess of the underworld and the return of spring, and Ariadne goddess of the labyrinth.

Now, turning to Nora's story, we note her interest in Jungian psychology and mythology goes back many years. For Nora at this

189

stage in her life, the feminine archetypes that are active in her consciousness seem more abstract, less anthropomorphized, such as The Eye of Eternity.

## CHAPTER VIII:  THE EYE OF ETERNITY

In 1987, Nora was visiting with old friends in Wales.  On the night of June 12th while Nora was away, I had the following dream.

I was in an ancient stone church.  During the service, Nora stepped forward out of the choir and began to sing a solo in her deep, mellow,  yet almost croaking voice.  It was beautiful, and she was beautiful.  Whereas we in the congregation had also been singing with the choir, we stopped to listen to her, and all were amazed as she revealed through her song and her solid stance the deep, feminine ground she had attained through many years of sincere and committed psychological work and honest human suffering.

When she returned from that trip, I told her my dream.  She confirmed from her journal that on that day she and her friends had been visiting St. David's Cathedral which resembled the church that I described from the dream.  The material she had about the church itself told how the oldest part of the building came from the 11th century, and that it had not been destroyed by Henry XIII, as had so many pre-Anglican churches and monasteries.

On their way home from St. David's, Nora spotted a small handmade sign that said, "this way to shrine."  "We decided to go and investigate," Nora said.  "It was one of those glorious days—crystal

blue skies, white puffy clouds, gorgeous air. We followed along a
rough pathway through a woods, which finally opened up onto a wide,
green valley. Where we stood were the ruins of an ancient shrine, a
tomb with three megaliths and a lintel, dated 2500 B.C. It
overlooked a wide valley and was surrounded by a field of blue
wildflowers."

Nora and I were amazed at the sychronicity, as Jung called this kind
of meaningful coincidence. Over time and distance we had been
connected *sub specie aeternitatis*, under the eye of eternity.

"What goddess images have meaning to you?" I asked Nora during one
of our informant interviews. We were sitting in the living room of
her apartment cooperative that overlooks the Kennedy Center for the
Performing Arts, and beyond that, the Potomac River.

"The Eye of Eternity," she replied. "It came to me just a few days
ago—when I really needed some help." At the time Nora was going
through an extremely difficult experience. She and her lover of many
years had ended their relationship, and at the time she was overcome
by grief and disappointment. "Several nights ago, I was sitting here
in my living room observing the night sky, wrestling with my feeling
of loss, and I recalled something I read in Jung, "*Sub specie
aeternitatis*, under the eye of eternity, how do I want to be?"

"The Eye of the Goddess is one of the oldest images in Sumer and also
in Egypt…." I responded (de Vris, p. 17; Gimbutas, 1989, p. 50ff.;
Perera, p. 30ff.; Salant, p. 15ff.; Wolkstein, pp. 60 and 71). In the
myth of Inanna the All-Seeing Eye belongs to the Goddess Ereshkigal,
goddess of birth and death. In the religion of Egypt in the third

192

millennium, B.C., the goddess Maat, symbol of cosmic order, was called 'The Eye' as was the pre-dynastic Cobra Goddess, Au Zit or Wadjet (Campbell, 1977, p. 55ff.; Stone, 1979 p. 263).

In the spiritual tradition of India this cosmic principle is called *purusa* (pronounced *purusha*). It means "that which sees." T. K. V. Desikachar, yoga master, teacher, and Managing Trustee at the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram in Madras, India, clarified this interpretation. "Actually the term used in the <u>Yoga Sutras</u> is a *drastr*. *Drastr* is the seer, that which sees" (Desikachar, 1980, p. 77ff.).

Marie Louise von Franz, senior Jungian analyst, discussed the significance of the Eye of Eternity as it pertains to consciousness and inner wholeness. "The divine eye, which, so to speak, looks at us from within and in whose seeing lies the only nonsubjectively colored source of self knowledge, is a very widely distributed archetypal motif. It is described as an ancient, noncorporeal eye, surrounded by light, which itself is also light. Plato and many Christian mystics call it the eye of the soul, others the eye of knowledge, of faith, of intuition. Jacob Bohme even says: 'The Soul is an Eye in the Eternal Abyss, a similitude of Eternity.' Or 'The Soul is a ball of fire in a fiery Eye.' Only through this eye can a human being really see himself and partake of the nature of God, who is himself all eye. Synesius even calls upon God as 'Eye of thy self.' When this eye opens up in a mortal being, that being has a share in the light of God." Bohme and Synesius are medieval European alchemists whose works are known to Dr. von Franz through her work with Jung (von Franz, 1985, p. 165ff.).

From a psychological perspective, the eye of the god or goddess is the objective "inner eye of self recognition," and a representation of the self, Jung's term for the archetype of wholeness (von Franz, 1985, p. 165ff.). From a Jungian point of view, when this image appears in the consciousness of an individual it signifies that they are reflecting on a deep spiritual level.

Nora continued, "Yes, I know that a lot of it (meaning mythology) is working on me in ways that are not conscious. You can't work on this material, I mean, if you let it in—you see there is some transformation going on. You're not sure until something happens that recalls your needing it."

Nora is not the only member in the seminar to have this reaction to mythology. Christa expressed her point of view, "It all just seems to turn to mush—and then months or even years later, you have a dream, and there it is!"

The Eye of Eternity is an image used by Jung throughout his writing. For example, in the prologue to <u>Memories, Dreams, Reflections</u>, he wrote, "What we are to our inward vision, and what man appears to be sub specie aeternitatis, can only be expressed by way of myth. Myth is more individual and expresses life more precisely than does science. Science works with concepts of averages which are far too general to do justice to the subjective variety of an individual life…Whether or not the stories are 'true' is not the problem. The only question is whether what I tell is *my* fable, *my* truth" (Jung, 1963, p. 3).

Nora continued, "And as I sat there looking out into the night, I remembered an incident that I had forgotten. When I was a child my mother took me to stay at a boarding school. The night before she left me there, we stayed in a hotel. I don't know. Maybe she was upset, too—anyway, she slapped me for crying. I know she didn't mean to be cruel. It was a very tense time, but I got the message that I was not allowed to cry when I was hurting emotionally; so the other night I felt that child hurting in me, and was able to comfort her, and at the same time, detach from that old pattern (of not allowing herself to cry during times of deep emotional loss and suffering). I could look out the window and say, 'Under the Eye of Eternity, how do I want to be?'—and turn my disappointment into hope. And that is grace-like."

Nora, now in her mid-sixties, is the grandmother in an ever-growing extended family. Five of her six children, four daughters and a son, live within an easy drive. Her other son teaches at a Texas university. At last count Nora has seven grandchildren. Since she and her husband divorced about seventeen years ago, she has chosen to remain single.

"Do you remember when the Goddess first touched your awareness?" I asked.

"What I think of is reading in Memories, Dreams, Reflections, about Jung's anima figure, Salome; probably not before that, but I know that the Goddess has been touching me, healing me."

A chapter in Jung's memoirs is entitled "Confrontation with the Unconscious." In that chapter he wrote about several inner figures

195

that he encountered in active imagination.  They became Jung's guides to deeper levels of the unconscious.  One of them was named Salome. She appeared with a man whose name was Elijah.  Salome was "a beautiful young girl…She was blind."  Jung said that Salome was an anima figure, an aspect of his feminine side who was "…blind because she does not see the meaning of things" (Jung, 1963, p. 181).

He continued, "What a strange couple: Salome and Elijah.  But Elijah assured me that he and Salome had belonged together from all eternity, which completely astounded me…One might say that the two figures are personifications of *Logos* and *Eros*."  These are terms used by Jung to describe two distinct psychological qualities.  In this case he felt that Elijah was a personification of *Logos*, or active "Masculine Principle" in the psyche, and Salome was a personification of Eros, the receptive "Feminine Principle" (Jung, 1963, p. 181ff.).

Returning to my interview with Nora, she continued to explore her experience of the Feminine Principle, the goddess archetype.  "During my analysis with T. (her Jungian analyst), there were lots of dreams about the shadow—of little children—girls."

As background to every social form or life stage there are archetypal patterns.  From a Jungian perspective these patterns, originating in the collective unconscious or objective psyche, may manifest in dreams and myths through symbolic forms (Jung, 1985, p. 45ff.).  Nora once had a dream in which she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named George.  This child had a certain numinous, divine quality about her.  The dream said this was the child of her lover.  Nora

honored the dream by buying an exquisite doll, which she named George, after her dream-child.

Returning to Nora's comments, she spoke about her mother. "During my time (in Jungian analysis) I transformed my experience of my mother from a monster to someone I loved and liked to see—I became more understanding….

"She and my father never finalized the divorce. I don't think she had the money. (After she died) I found the papers. They were never executed. It never occurred to me to think that she 'raised' me—I just became her 'little buddy.' I raised myself. She supported me and was very interested in me. I was not a rejected child by intent, but so far as having anyone available—an adult around caring for me and giving me precepts and examples, there really was no one."

Nora grew up in a city in upstate New York. Her maternal grandmother came from Ireland and her father's family was of German ancestry. She had one sibling, a brother, who was eight and a half years older than she. When Nora was two and a half years old, her mother and father separated permanently. Her brother and, interestingly, her father lived with her maternal grandmother after that. Nora went to live with her mother.

With a sigh, Nora shared some facts about her childhood, "As you speak of childhood what pops into my head—well, it was not a typical childhood. I was alone so much and so I 'made myself up.'"

"Made yourself up—what an amazing idea," I said.

"Yes," she continued. "Starting at age two I was in foster homes or in boarding schools. But at age seven we (her mother and she) were living together. She was working all the time, so I had to just wander around all the time by myself. I did go to my Irish grandmother's (mother's mother) when she was available, but I was a 'latch-key child' so my mother warned me not to have kids in or to go to kids' houses. I went to the movies and I went to the library, and she gave me dancing lessons—so, it was a great life!" Nora laughed.

"It is a good thing you knew how to relate." I have known Nora for many years, but I had never sat down with her to hear about the progression of events in her childhood. I had known bits and pieces, but not a total picture.

Nora continued, "I guess—I didn't think about relations. Here and there I had girlfriends, but I was also happy to be alone. And I needed that. I was never harassed as a child—I had so much time alone and I did what I wanted. I didn't have anyone at home, which was too bad in a way. But I also didn't have any arguing or sibling rivalry, or things that give kids fits. I just developed this certain kind of calm—that kind of personality.

"There were things earlier that had been traumatic. I am sure that I was forgetting them, though I never entirely forgot. But things were so much better being back with my mother, and having this kind of freedom." Between the ages of two and four, Nora lived with several families around the city. "Do you remember that first foster home?" I asked.

198

"Yes, I do.  I was with Mrs. H.  She was a good gal.  A good friend of my mother's, and a real mover.  She came to my wedding.  But she couldn't take care of me all the time.  So, there were other people at first.  I am sure that the breakup of my parents' marriage had some effects on me, but I don't remember being unhappy until the fourth year."

At that time Nora was sent to live with a family that mistreated her.  "My mother didn't know them well.  They were friends of friends."  There she received beatings and at least once was sexually molested by a man in the house.  "As soon as I told my mother—particularly about the abuse—she took me back to Mrs. H.  And I never had to go back there again.  This was so important to me—that she really listened to me and understood!  Sometime later I went off to a convent school and there I learned to read.  Then I went to a boarding school in a little town nearby.  I skipped a half a grade there.

"When I was seven I came back home and started in school near my mother and just stayed with her from then on—it was pretty choppy, really —wasn't it?

"I remember I also had a showgirl in my earlier dreams.  Then she became less flamboyant, less of a 'floozy.'  That racy side could be redeemed.

"What about the 'showgirl'?" I wondered.

"There were the dancing lessons and the drama lessons…and the beautiful costumes, you know.  My mother thought that was great.  I

199

swear, she saw to it that I'd have the costume whether or not she ate! At least that was her attitude. I took it for granted—I was pretty healthy—I just expected to be accomplished and pretty, and I knew I had talent. In high school I was the 'star' of the drama club. I wasn't egotistical about it because it was so natural. As you know, that is how I got into college." Nora was able to obtain a scholarship to study drama and speech at a major New York state university.

'So, you made yourself up then. How are you 'making yourself up' today?" I asked. Nora gave me a cognitive map of her world that she had drawn. (See figure 3, "Nora's Social World.")



Figure 3. Nora's Social World

"You see how it looks—It is making choices—um, I have a sense of
who and what it is that is nourishing.  Being in England makes me
happy.  No matter what I am doing there, I am happy.  So, I am seeing
to it that while I can I'm getting back there as I can.

"It's being in touch with you and the Inanna group, and being in
touch with my ladies (her reading group), and with my kids; having
some apportionment—making sure I get some music and staying in touch
with friends; staying in touch with the group I was a part of when I
visited the sacred sites in England in 1990….  "So—making myself up
as a wise woman, a magician, and a fool—those kinds of nice elder
archetypes—I am still at it!"

Just before we talked, Nora had studied with Carol Pearson, author of
the book, Awakening the Heroes Within.  In this book Pearson
presented a system for understanding the Jungian use of archetypal
concepts to a readership unfamiliar with the language of archetypal
psychology.  The Sage, the Magician and the Fool are three archetypal
images discussed in this book.

"Tell me about Nora, the 'wise woman.'"

"I think I am getting some of those projections from people, and that
is not—well, I don't feel 'aw, shucks' about it because in a way
there are some things I have of wisdom out of having to take my lumps
and make something work for me.  I think I am special to people in
that way.  I haven't experienced everything, but I have experienced
plenty of disappointments and what felt like abandonment at times."

"I know that is true," I said remembering a conversation with Katherine in which she had said, "I like Nora so much. She is such a beautiful person. I really admire the way she lives her life—with such grace." Katherine and Nora know one another through the Inanna seminar. Katherine is aware of some of the long suffering situations of Nora's life, and she knows the artful manner with which she had attended to practical as well as psychological difficulties.

Nora continued. "I know if you really come from love—and whatever is your version of that—come from your own center—you can transform it and have something going with your life. The 'magician' is the archetype who pays attention to synchronicity and instinct and intuition. It sees how to align you with who and what you need to be gathering towards you—and all that kind of stuff—so that things are not always so hard. And the 'fool' knows how to laugh, have fun, and have a good time, and who really knows how to appreciate how silly it all is," she said with an infectious chuckle.

"Are there women that you consider to be 'wise women' for you?" I asked Nora.

"Yes. The one I am thinking of was a woman in the Methodist Church—A.J. I was one of the younger officers and she was President of the District Women. She was always a 'demonstration' of a really competent, organized woman with all her femininity and all her smarts. I liked that, I imbibed that model of who to be."

By "demonstration" Nora meant an examplar, a role model. Being a demonstration of what you want to represent of yourself to others is a concept that is worked with by the people at Landmark, originally

202

started by Werner Erhart in the 1970s.  Nora's informal conversations her close friends and family are laced with language from Landmark, from her work with Carol Pearson's book on the archetypes, and with Jungian terms.

"She (A.J.) was somewhat older than I and she was a female 'Bill Clinton.'  She just had this wonderful winning way; and being warm, she could put people at ease and make them laugh.  Both men and women loved her.  She thought I was fine, too.

"When I was young I had a crush on my dance teacher who seemed like a wise woman to me then…One of the great relational things was the marriage of my (high school) drama coach and his wife.  They loved me a lot and they thought I was wonderful, and let me know it.  It was great acknowledgement…but since A.J., there really haven't been any.

"Well, I say 'no wise woman' but, you know, Dr. von Franz.  She has been an ethical guide.  She taught me that there is an ethical stance toward the unconscious——that there is an ethical way of being with our sexuality; that there is an ethical way to deal with men that does not have to do with scheming.  I and my clients have done a lot of useful work with those things.

"The thing that she wrote about way back——thirty years ago——about the demands of the Goddess——that the Goddess wants tribute, and she will give totally, but you have to keep an eye on that inner goddess because she is global, she is total.  And that was so helpful!"

I asked, "Do you remember in which book or books you read that?"

"Probably in <u>The Feminine in Fairytales</u>. I bought it from T. (her analyst). We looked up one of those references in <u>The Feminine in Fairytales</u> (von Franz, 1976, pp 23ff.). According to Dr. von Franz:

> "...we have to find out where it is in our civilization, where some aspect of the mother-goddess, i.e.; of feminine nature, has been artificially ignored in Christianity. The most obvious fact, which has become a problem in modern times, is sexuality. Under the law of social order, it is said to be dangerous and causes much trouble. It should be brought under control by law...but you cannot just decide by sitting at a round table how a god has to be ruled, which is a tremendous error in the Christian system, resulting in the god starting to develop autonomous activities. This ruling of sexual behavior has never been observed. Either people have kept to the law and become neurotic, or they live a double life, or fallen into sin and regretted it afterwards...nobody takes any notice of the natural fact which has to be faced, and the goddess is ignored. One pretends not to see some natural and vital organic archetypal need which is right there and wants to function; rather, laws are laid down and enforced with bad effect...Not only the god of sexuality—if one can use such a term——has been ignored, but some other needs of feminine life" (von Franz, 1972, p. 28).

Laughing, Nora mused, "I thought, 'What an opinionated old bird this girl is!'. It is interesting to think back on these things from time

to time, I'd say, 'How does she know <u>that</u>?' And then I realized, when I had hung out with her long enough, how she knew."

"And how do you think she knew?" I inquired.

"By having been with so many people for so long, and by having been with Jung for so long." Nora replied.

"Doing the work as an analyst and by working with the unconscious?" I asked for clarification.

"Yes. Right. When you just read her first book on fairy tales (<u>Interpretation of Fairytales</u>) you don't realize how many she has looked at. Thousands, really. I have often quoted her on how she said she would think she'd get the answer—um, you know—to the mystery of life (from the fairy tales). But, all she got was contradictions, because one story would say' jump in with all fours!' and then another would say 'hide in the horse's tooth!' (We laughed). Then she says, so much depends on your situation and your <u>instinct</u> about it.

"But she said there is one thing that never changes; never varies all over the world in legends and fairy tales. That one thing is to never ignore the advice of the helpful animal. If you do, you will get in trouble. That is universal."

Some years ago Nora dreamed about a pair of foxes. "My beautiful foxes. They were special foxes—numinous. They came running out of the woods together and through my dream." For her they symbolized the spiritual and instinctive qualities of her relationship with her

lover.  That was some years ago now, and the relationship has changed, but the foxes still are special.  "I still respond to the foxes," she said, as she pointed to several fox figurines she has in her living room.  "My little pagan altar," she laughed.  Those foxes within Nora's dream possessed a numinous quality and represented to her a sort of divine essence, on the instinctive level, of the inner marriage.

Nora finds deep nourishment for her soul when she is in Britain.  When she visits England she does not go as a tourist.  She lives with a family as a native.  Over the years she has established a number of friendships in England and Wales, and those places have become a second home for her.  At the time when Nora knew the relationship with her long term companion was over, she had planned a six-month sojourn in England.  During this time she began the healing process and the hard work of recovering, of sorting through, and of inner resolution.

"What myths are particularly helpful to you now? I asked.

"Now it is almost always, I would think, the 'inner marriage.'  What is my love, my Beloved?…I learned about the inner marriage in my (Jungian) analysis.  Jung wrote extensively on that myth."

In order to understand the depth of Nora's interest in the myth of the inner marriage, it will be helpful to offer some background.  In an essay entitled "The Psychology of the Transference," he wrote, "The *coniunctio* is an *a priori* image that occupies a prominent place in the history of man's mental development."  In the Christian doctrine, it is expressed as Christ's marriage with the Church in

which Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride (Jung, Vol 16, p. 169ff.). In the Catholic Dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin, it is expressed in the marriage of Christ as the Lamb with Mary as Queen of Heaven (Jung, CW 9, part 1, 1968, pp. 107-110; Jung, CW 11, 1969, pp. 367-470).

The Proclamation of the Dogma of the Assumption was declared in 1950 by Pope Pius XII. Jung's research on this archetype precedes this proclamation. An example is found in The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious, in the chapter called "Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype," first published in 1937 (p. 75ff). The Proclamation has profound cultural implications. It has legitimated the myth of *coniunctio* as a religious symbol. It opened up the possibility for a reinterpretation of the god-image to include the feminine archetype. Finally, by acknowledging the Feminine Principle, the dogma has admitted a fourth element, thereby transforming the traditional image of a Trinity into a Quaternity.

In the essay "Answer to Job," Jung included extensive footnotes on the Proclamation of the Dogma of the Assumption. This kind of information is often unavailable to individual dreamers, and yet their dreams may be filled with powerful archetypal images to which they have no conscious connection. When people have archetypal images in dreams and fantasies, historical research can help them recover the significance of the images within a variety of cultural contexts. This activity applied to dream analysis creates the possibility for meaning on the symbolic level.

Amplification of images is a basic element in Jungian analysis. In his footnotes, Jung demonstrates the principle of amplification concerning the Proclamation of the Dogma of the Assumption of 1950.

4. *Apostolic Constitution ("Munificentissimus Deus")
of... Pius XII, §22*: "Oportebat sponsam, quam
Pater desponsaverat, in thalamis caelestibus
habitare" (The place of the bride whom the Father
has espoused was in the heavenly courts).—St. John
Damascene, *Encomium in Dormitionem*, etc., Homily
II, 14 (cf, Migne, P. G., vol 96, col 742). §30:
Comparison with the Bride in the Song of Solomon.
§33:…ita pariter surrexit et Arca santificationis
suae, cum in hac die Virgo Mater ad aetherenum
thalamum est assumpta" (…so in like manner arose
the Ark which he had sanctified, when on this day
the Virgin Mother was taken up to her heavenly
bridal-chamber).—St Anthony of Padua, *Sermones
Dominicales*, etc. (ed. Locatelli, III, p. 730).

5. *Apostolic Constitution, §31*: "Ac praeterea
scholastici doctores non modo in variis Veteris
Testamenti figuris, sed in illa etiam Muliere
amicta sole, quam Joannes Apostolus in insula Patmo
[Rev. 12:1ff.], contemplatus est. Assumptionem
Deiparae Virginis significatam viderunt" (Moreover,
the Scholastic doctors saw the Assumption of the
Virgin Mother of God signified not only in the
various figures of the Old Testament, but also in

the Woman closed with the sun, whom the Apostle
John contemplated on the island of Patmos).

6.      The marriage of the Lamb repeats the Annunciation
        and the Overshadowing of Mary. (Vol 11: 1969, pp.
        458-9).

The mythic image of the *hierosgamos*, sacred marriage, is a "symbol
without origin" (Arguelles, 1977, p. 29ff.).  It seems to play a
prominent role throughout the development of the human species.  It
is implicit in the images of the Neolithic "self-seeding" goddess who
seems to contain both the masculine principle and the feminine
principle united within herself.  In Asia it is expressed in the
Chinese symbol of the Tao, as Yin and Yang contained within a unified
whole.  The sacred marriage is the marriage of the opposites, of the
sun and the moon, of the brother and the sister.  As a symbol that
incorporates the image of intercourse between the human male and
female, the *hierosgamos* appears to have originated in Sumer as the
sacred marriage rite.  (Kramer, 1981, p. 303ff.; Thompson, 1981, p.
165ff.).

In ancient Sumer, a religious rite was celebrated at the New Year as
the sacred marriage of the Goddess Inanna and the Shepherd King
Dumuzi.  It was ritually enacted by the high priestess, who was the
incarnation, or avatar, of Inanna, and the ruling king, who was the
embodiment of Dumuzi.  This ritual was performed to ensure the
fertility of the land and the well-being of the community (Lerner, p.
126ff.; Kramer, 1981, p. 305; Wolkstein and Kramer, 1983, pp. 30-49,
pp. 125-6, pp. 150-155).  The mythology of the courtship and marriage

of Inanna and Dumuzi produced a rich body of erotic poetry, which we studied during the fourth year of the Inanna seminar.

In Jungian psychology the inner marriage is one of the more difficult and complex archetypes to explain, and is more likely to be understood by way of life experience than by explanation. From the point of view of depth psychology, the inner marriage, *unio mystica*, or *coniunctio*, is the archetype of the union of opposites within the individual. It is expressed in terms of the ego's quest for union with the self, the pattern of wholeness at the center of the personality.

The *unio mystica* is the central image in mythology of medieval European alchemy. Jung became involved with extensive research into the symbols of medieval European alchemy because he found that it helped to explain and objectify his empirical finding concerning the symbolic life of the collective unconscious and to raise his hypothesis to the level of theory. From his research, Jung wrote three volumes which are part of The Collected Works. They are Psychology and Alchemy, Volume 12; Alchemical Studies, Volume 13; and Mysterium Coniunctionis, Volume 14. The full title of Volume 14 is Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy. It is an amplification of the archetype of the inner marriage and the "child" of this union. The child is a symbolic prefiguration of psychic totality (Jung, CW 14, 1970, p. vi).

Nora has been a student of Jungian psychology for thirty years. She has studied the mythology and its implications.

"I have known you for a long time," I said. "And I have the feeling that you're now at a place in your life where you're in relationship with the whole planet—that puts 'relationship' in a much larger context."

"It's true," Nora replied, "And that is what I feel I am called to be—called to that work now."

"So that individual relationship becomes an expression of that larger thing, or am I making up words for you now?" I asked.

"No. I think that is right and I think that's quite appropriate. This is also what has helped me hold and carry my losses about (her former husband) and (her partner for many years). You have heard me say this before, but it is much more apparent to me now—that he (the former partner) is much more a symbol that stands for something in me. And that is good. I can have his picture out because of that; like I have Jung's picture out. They are my brothers. Whatever is or is not going to be going on in actuality is—um—the way that is. But there is something going on in here all the time," she said as she placed her hand on her heart center. "And that is another thing."

"I could have said those same words a few years ago, and maybe I did," she continued with a gentle laugh. "But I didn't have something I have now and I am still groping and working on it; and if my Beloved is the world, then I have to see about that marriage, and I am open to seeing what I acted out with (her former partner)—what that gave me of myself—my generosity and my willingness—and how that would be without getting grandiose. And, you know, I am still 'winging it.'

211

I do not have that all wrapped up. But that myth or metaphor does not sound like the worst way to go. It feels pretty good."

I ask, "What particular stories mirror that myth for you?"

"Well, the story I have been the most taken with lately is not an ancient one. It is Possession, A. S. Byatt's novel, because it has a quaternity. It has the old love affair of the 19th century and the young love affair of the two scholars of today. I like how the two weave together—how finding out about the old story brings them (the young scholars) into the realization that they love each other in the here and now. All the other characters are kind of mythic, too. And then, there is the great *coniunctio* at the end, and everything resolves. Life goes on. But there is a little *coda*, where you realize that something wonderful could have happened, and it did not. It fell through the cracks. And that is life, too. And like The Ring of the Nibelung, it starts all over!"

In alchemy, the *coniunctio* is based on the number four, the number which represents wholeness and completeness (de Vris, 1984, p. 201; Jung, CW 14, 1970, p 420ff.; von Franz, 1974, p.113ff.).

Psychologically, not only from a Jungian point of view, but from the mythological point of view expressed by the alchemists, every person carries a contrasexual component deep in the unconscious psyche. This means that when two persons are in a relationship, four psychic components are present (Jung, CW 16, 1966, p. 220ff.). Many years ago, when I was in therapy with her, Nora showed a diagram that helps explain this concept. (See figure 4, "Patterns in Relationships Involving Conscious and Unconscious Dimensions," p. 186).

212

"What a revelation it was to me," she said, when her Jungian analyst showed her this picture. "Then I knew the importance of carrying the whole relationship—I have never forgotten that.

"T. (her analyst), bless his heart, he really articulated that for me when I was working on (the transition between her marriage and the man from whom she recently separated); although those two separations were very right and very awkward. He asked, 'What and who are they to you as inner forces?'—and invited me to work on that question. I never have had to be without them ever since.

"A. S. Byatt had a vision of life and love, and the thrilling, eternal life-giving aspect of all that; that if you sacrifice, you get a piece of yourself. If you don't, you get static. She (Byatt) said that her life had come together when she wrote that book, and you really do feel that wherever it goes now, she had that kind of a moment. And that is kind of mythic, too. So that would be my affirmation myth; and my affirmative gratitude to the author who believes in what can happen from necessity; letting your ego go when you love someone like that. So few people write about that."

I inquired, "Do you remember the dream you shared with me about the meeting on the covered bridge? I asked if you had any goddess dreams lately."

"Yes, very well." she replied.
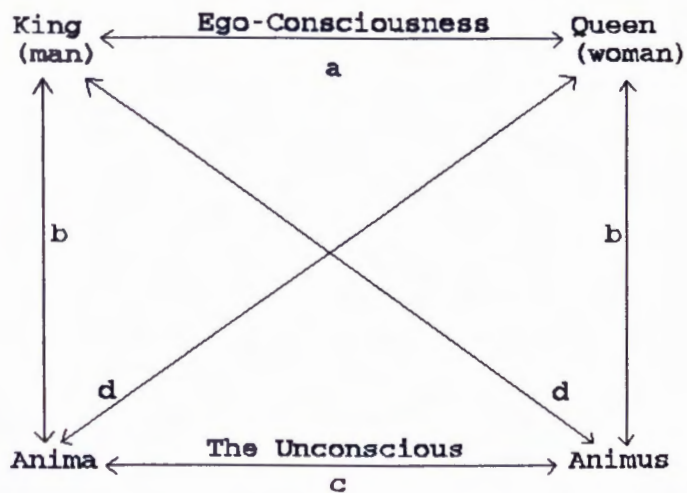
The direction of the arrows indicates the pull from masculine to feminine and *vice versa*, and from the unconscious of one person to the conscious of the other, thus denoting a positive transference relationship. The following relationships have therefore to be distinguished, although in certain cases they can all merge into each other, and this naturally leads to the greatest possible confusion:

(a) An uncomplicated personal relationship.

(b) A relationship of the man to his anima and of the woman to her animus.

(c) A relationship of anima to animus and *vice versa*.

(d) A relationship of the woman's animus to the man (which happens when the woman is identical with her animus), and of the man's anima to the woman (which happens when the man is identical with his anima) (Jung, CW 16, 1954, par. 422-423).

Figure 4.  Patterns in Relationships Involving
Conscious and Unconscious Dimensions

214

This was the dream. It was a warm, sunny day. Nora was walking along a road and came to a covered bridge that went across a river. "I could see sunlight on both sides. As I entered the cool, dark shadows of the bridge I saw a figure approach from the other direction. As my vision adjusted to the darkness, I was that it was Mikhael—Mikhael Baryshnikov. I opened my arms wide up and he walked right into them. I'm saying, 'I am going to accept this. I am going to take this.' It is entering the darkness—crossing over—a completion with my inner man."

In her youth Nora was trained in theater and dance. Today she is a devotee and is knowledgeable in the fields of music, literature and dance. As a dancer, Baryshnikov is the epitome of an embodied, mature masculinity that embraces and contains the inner Feminine Principle. He is an exquisite and expressive dancer, pure in his form and gifted in his ability to convey emotion. He is a 'king,' an expression of the whole man in the psyche of woman. To her this dream signified that the inner marriage was being anticipated in her life by the psyche. As Jung said to Marie Louise von Franz when she was eighteen years old, what happens in the psyche is the *real* reality (Whitney, 1987).

## CHAPTER IX:   CONCLUSION

## THE GODDESS WITHIN

This study has explored the development of feminine forms of
consciousness in eight individual women who, since 1984, have
participated in a seminar on goddess mythology and Jungian
psychology.  I have used ethnographic interviews, dreams, fantasies,
and self-ethnography along with participant-observation methods to
explore how the archetypal patterns delineated here have impacted on
the personal realities of these women, their consciousness, their
meaning systems, and their social worlds.  Although I have used
material from all eight informants, I have concentrated on three,
Lucy, Nora and Eleanor.  Material from Anna, Caroline, Christa,
Katherine, and Theresa were used to substantiate my findings.

For the purposes of this study the terms "the Goddess" and "Feminine
Principle" have been used synonymously to mean the archetype that
determines feminine forms of consciousness.  I wanted to ascertain
what goddess images appear in the consciousness of my informants, how
they interpret these patterns, how these patterns affect and reflect
in their consciousness and in their social worlds; and finally, how
their interpretations of these patterns affect where they are in
their social worlds.  The material has detailed a number of feminine
forms reflective of feminine archetypal factors.

As we approach the end of this study, it will be useful to review some of the effects experienced by my informants as a result of their years of participation in the goddess seminar. As I stated in the introduction to this study, these women are engaged in reconstructing key cultural factors in their lives from a woman-centered perspective. On the whole, their point of view toward their femininity shifted from the feeling of being "totally torn" towards a feeling of "acceptance and exaltation of my woman-ness," as one informant expressed it. Their conscious attitude, or *Weltanschauung*, modified as a result of their work with both myth and analytical psychology, and terminology from these systems of thought has been incorporated into their everyday vocabulary with which they make sense of themselves and their experiences.

Psychologically, informants moved away from the disease model in which symptoms were interpreted as illnesses towards an archetypal model in which symptoms such as depression and anxiety were seen as information-bearing structures or patterns of organic energy expressed symbolically. By applying Jungian methods, informants were empowered to take an active role in the therapeutic process, find meaning in their symptoms, and express it creatively.

Mythological shifts included a change in cosmology from a God-centered religious point of view in which the Divinity is experienced as totally "Other" towards a spirituality that includes Goddess symbolism in which Divinity is embodied, carried, and incarnated in everyday life. One difficult consequence for some informants resulting from this shift is that traditional religious ritual forms no longer fit with their meaning systems, yet there is nothing to replace them.

Throughout the years my informants have been together in the goddess seminar, they have worked on developing a conscious attitude in which the Feminine Principle can be carried and embodied creatively. In a discussion on the development of ritual process, Katherine declared it is "our birthright as women" to participate in a feminine spirituality derived from feminine archetypal factors expressed in mythic forms, informing the culture as a whole and inviting women to be symbolmakers in their own lives. "We need to keep pushing back the ether on this question so that more women can claim their birthright," she said.

It is possible that the shifts in consciousness in my informants reflect a continuing movement in American society. The results of my study suggest the existence of an integrative field of women's experience and women's culture. This cultural domain is still largely unexplored, therefore unconscious or unavailable to many women and the culture as a whole. It has at it's center archetypal structures that may be expressed when interpretive methods from psychology, mythology and anthropology are applied. My study indicates that this largely unexplored field of experience responds to methods of exploration which put a woman at the center of her own experience within her social world. By this I mean woman-centered psychology, woman-centered mythology and woman-centered anthropology which are still in their infancy.

## A WOMAN-CENTERED PSYCHOLOGY

For my informants, the Goddess became a metaphor expressing an inborn pattern for feminine development. By applying a woman-centered model with several informants and extrapolating through induction, similar

218

patterns of maturation seemed to occur in each of them, even though the images themselves reflected the situations of the individuals involved. A feminine archetypal pattern that influenced the creativity of each woman according to her needs ripened in the consciousness of informants. This pattern had its own meaning to the individual women involved.

For example, Lucy's material showed how she was able to integrate information carried in her unconscious regarding the source of her manic depressive illness. As she persisted in the Jungian therapeutic process, the dreams revealed emotion-laden images of an archetypal femininity cut off from consciousness as a result of childhood molestation and a lack of social forms through which she might have achieved some integration. In the process of analysis she brought images into consciousness which expressed the Feminine Principle as the therapist and healer. Once these shadow aspects of her unconscious were made available to consciousness, Lucy was able to heal from the effects of her bipolar mood disorder, successfully change careers, and become a clinical social worker. Thus, she fulfilled a dream from her youth.

Ethnographic interviews with Eleanor revealed a psychological pattern in which conflicts with her mother had affected her consciousness. Eleanor discussed how she used her imagination, mythology and dream work to differentiate the effects her personal mother had on her development from the workings of the archetypal Mother Goddess and other goddess forms in her psychology. Through her work with dreams, mythology and psychology she discovered what Jungians call the "mother complex" in her unconscious. Once she began to see how this unconscious pattern affected her, she was able to make some conscious

distinctions regarding her patterns of self-expression and create a method to liberate her depressed femininity and her creativity. In the process, Eleanor discovered her gift for poetry through which she could express her ongoing dialogue with the Goddess archetype.

Turning to Nora, the ethnography depicted a woman developing her consciousness through her loving devotion to her symbolic life. For Nora, Jungian psychology has been a thirty year process through which she has nurtured her awareness of the archetypes as they function in her psyche. As she said, living under the Eye of Eternity has given her the energy and power to "keep on making myself up."

"The Goddess wants tribute,' Nora remarked. 'Dr. von Franz helped me to see the Goddess as an archetypal pattern which may have negative effects. As long as it remains unconscious, a woman may become over identified with it or inflated by its power. You have to carry Her (the Goddess) in your experience, and this demands ethics. Otherwise that power is like an addiction. You have got to have it: people paying tribute to you all the time or you don't feel like anybody. And so, to restrain and make good ethical use of the power without sacrificing the best of your sexuality, your nature as woman, really takes some work. Our best humanity, I think."

**WOMAN-CENTERED ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE INANNA SEMINAR**

Since "woman-centered anthropology" is an oxymoron, I shall define that concept as the social science that addresses the origins and development of culture from the point of view of feminine consciousness, especially as it is embodied in the lives of actual women. What happens when a woman-centered point of view on culture

220

is applied to the interpretation of historical data? Drawing on contemporary writing from a cultural feminist approach, I will sketch how members interpreted this historical narrative (Gimbutas, 1974 and 1985; Hall, 1988; Lerner, 1986; Spretnak, 1984 and 1991; Stacey, 1988; Wolkstein, 1983).

Within the context of the seminar, my informants studied current archeological findings of ancient goddess artifacts in the light of their own dream images, their reading of goddess mythology, and their experience as women. As my informants became more involved with feminine forms of consciousness, certain cultural events began to take on a new face for them. The new face was that of a powerful Goddess rising from the center of Earth itself. This emerging archetype is changing the shape of history and culture. I shall try to summarize the new pattern as it was discussed in the goddess seminar.

Certain synchronistic events occurred at the start of the twentieth century which indicated to the seminar members that the Feminine Principle had become active in the many arenas of Western culture. At the same time the women's movement gathered power in Europe and America, the collective unconscious was being recovered by psychologists and women patients were the chief informants in this process. Jung's investigations into the nature of the collective unconscious revealed it had a decidedly feminine character which he said compensated for the over-masculinization of consciousness in the West. In his essay, "Answer to Job," he discussed the "Dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin" of 1950 in light of the newly emerging feminine consciousness (Jung, 1963; Jung, CW 11, 1969; von Franz, 1972; Whitney, 1987).

221

In addition, from 1889-1900, archeologists from the University of Pennsylvania unearthed a number of clay tablets at the first excavations of Nippur, a major cultural center in Sumer (Wolkstein, 1983). A long process occurred whereby the tablets were sorted out, reassembled, translated and reported on by Sumerologists. Finally, in the 1950's, the contents were available to a broader field of scholarship (Kramer, 1981). Examination of archeological records indicated that the system we know today as patriarchy began in Sumer (Campbell, 1978b; Lerner, 1986; Perera 1981; Thompson 1981; Wolkstein 1983). Among the artifacts excavated were tablets depicting the "Descent of Inanna."

Looking back on the history of civilization through the image of Inanna, Ereshkigal, and other goddesses being recovered by archeologists, the following concepts took shape in the goddess seminar. Starting in Sumer in the 4th millennium B.C., a civilization developed in which the Masculine Principle overshadowed the Feminine Principle. This turn of events brought with it an emphasis on the logos principle, the written word, science, technology, phallic power and warfare. Kings defeated queens and high priestesses in the names of new gods. In the patriarchy, the Goddess was gradually reduced in stature to become the lover of kings, and then to the human mother of its god-warrior heroes and their avatars.

Along with the ruins of the goddess-centered culture, the Goddess herself went underground, descending not only into the Earth but also into the psychological substratum of the archetypal world in the human psyche (Baring, 1991; Campbell, 1978b; Gadon, 1985; Gimbutas, 1974 and 1989; Graves, 1948; Hawkes, 1968; Spretnak, 1984 and 1991;

222

Wolkstein, 1983).  The dual natured goddess, Inanna-Ereshkigal, appeared as a transitional figuration of the Goddess, the archetype of femininity, in Sumer at the beginning of the patriarchal era. This was the face on the Goddess who went underground, and this is the face that presented itself as the Feminine Principle re-emerges in our cultural era.  Her appearance at this time, it is believed, may symbolizes a transition into a new age.

In our era the Earth now groans with the force of apocalypse.  The Goddess is emerging from the underground surrounded by demonic powers.  The twentieth century is marked by major cultural shape-shifting events reminiscent of the 4th millennium B.C. Upheaval and threat of annihilation of our planet has demanded that humankind seek a transformed relationship with the Earth.  New forms of consciousness are emerging just as they did during the 4th millennium B.C.  These new forms signal the possibility of the fulfillment of the patriarchal myth and the birth of a new mythology which honors and respects the Feminine Principle (Whitmont, 1982).

This interpretation is reflected in an emerging body of knowledge on the Feminine Principle and its corresponding literature discussed in the introduction to this study.  This emerging field has been influenced by Inanna and other goddesses who went underground, so to speak, but who are being unearthed at this time.

**THE BODY OF WOMAN AS A VEHICLE FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Given the re-emergence of goddess forms through archeology, anthropology, psychology and mythology, it is hard to deny their impact on the consciousness of Western culture as a whole.  As a

223

result of their appearance, a question arises. This question is, why is the Goddess returning at this time? When I discussed it with Katherine, I learned that she has given it much thought.

"Why is She returning now?" I asked Katherine.

She answered, "Because we need Her. It is a part of our historical time. We are part of our time, experiencing our own eruption of the collective unconscious—our group—the space age. We are totally about the human journey."

"Do you think that there is a 'Goddess movement'?" I asked.

"Yes, definitely. The Goddess is a symbol of women's spirituality." Katherine replied.

"Is The Goddess enough? I mean, is the movement a religious movement?" I wondered.

Katherine responded, "We have to do the psychological work first. Religion comes later. Jung said religion is an instinct. It (the Goddess movement) is about the religious instinct. And instinct is an element in the body. A woman experiences the world in her body—there is a woman's viewpoint on everything."

At the time we talked, Katherine was writing a paper on women and spirituality for social work school, and this conversation was about that paper. I asked, "What do religious values have to do with social work?"

224

She continued, "Well, it has to relate to something—the values of today. The parallel, of course, is how women see their spiritual lives. How women see their spiritual lives has not been uncovered—paid enough attention to. What and how is women's spirituality different from the institutional variety? Why are so many people hungry for meaning in their life? Does it always have to come back to meaning? That is what the religious instinct is—meaning."

"One would say that men need meaning, too. So why are women different? Why so much work on women and by women now?" I inquired.

Katherine elaborated, "Like with the Creation Spirituality of Hildegard. Her idea of *viriditas*, 'greening power.' This spirituality reflects women's sensibility."

While she was in undergraduate school in the 1960's, Katherine discovered the works of medieval Christian mystics. Since then she has been a devoted student of the writings of Eckhart, Teresa of Avilla, Hildegard and other religious contempletives. Hildegard of Bingen (Germany) was a 12th century Catholic nun and leader of a community of Benedictine sisters. In her early forties she received a series of visions through which she experienced a spiritual awakening. From this powerful religious experience she developed a feminine Christian spirituality which she called *Scivias*, or "Know the Ways." *Viriditas* was a word Hildegard created. It was the activity of the Holy Spirit in motion bringing life into being through the Earth, through mankind, and in all creation (Fox, 1985, pp. 30-32).

225

Katherine continued, "Hildegard, like Jung and Einstein, was an exemplar—one who lived the true spirit of her age.  They dealt with the 'here and now', and were committed to their unconscious psychic worlds—lived out their authentic worlds.  It is hard to live it—live like that unless you have a strong psychic life.  Unless you can find symbols to express your inner, psychic life.  Symbols are how we create new meaning.  Women's spirituality is looking for symbols—the Goddess, Wicca."

"What symbols are emerging?"  I asked.

"The body.  Woman's body.  Woman's body is not an impediment to spiritual growth as the Church has always asserted.  Rather it is the vehicle," she replied with some hesitation.  This profound insight seemed to spring forth at that moment.

"The body of woman—vehicle for spiritual growth.  That is a paradigm shift!  That is taking a leap."  I exclaimed.

"Yes, I believe it is."  Katherine nodded in agreement.

In the introduction to the paper on women's spirituality written for her M.S.W., Katherine wrote: "The underlying motivation to write this paper on women's spirituality was to offer myself an opportunity to read more widely and delve more deeply into a subject for which I have a long-standing and deep interest….

"The reading was rich and discussions with two like-minded friends were stimulating…The process of writing began well, my ideas became clear; but then, all of a sudden, I found

226

there was no shape to the material.  What happened, I asked
myself?  Why was all this great material laying flat in my
mind?  Asking this question proved helpful because the
answer startled me.

"I feel as though this topic, women and spirituality, was
the hidden reason I enrolled in the M.S.W. program.  I've
been working on this topic in various ways during these last
several years.  In a way, I feel like I'm working on two
papers, one arising from an inner place in me; the outer
paper being part of the theory class assignment.  Too late
into the term to regroup my efforts, I realized that I was
loading too many personal weights onto this assignment.
This was the reason why I could not shape all the material
which I had so happily gathered.

"One morning, as the new year and the new term began, I
remembered a dream image I had in the fall of 1989, the same
fall I began the M.S.W. program in earnest.  My dream ego
asked the question, 'What is it like to be the Mother of
God?'  The dream image was a replica of the Miraculous Medal
given to me by an aunt as a gift on my Confirmation Day.

"I searched through the storage trunks in my attic and found
this same medal in a small cedarwood keepsake box.  For some
unknown reason, I believed that I was supposed to
incorporate into this paper the answer to this four year old
dream question.  There is no doubt in my mind that this
dream question has been subtly driving me in recent years.
But, why now, I asked, had the psyche recalled so vividly to

227

my consciousness this particular dream image?  I believe
that I'm to ask the dream question at important junctions as
I travel down the long paths and short nooks and crannies of
the rest of my life.  The dream sense is one of an unfolding
question.  I know now that the dream question is to be with
me the rest of my life.  A situation of massive imbalance
had been created by me and it was a great relief when I
could withdraw this weighty projection and readjust my
sights to a more manageable assignment."

## WOMAN AS MYTHMAKER

Images of the order given in Katherine's dream have been present in
the psyches of human beings from our infancy as a species, as
archeology and anthropology have demonstrated.  Artists and
mythmakers are said to create a culture's symbols and metaphors
because they have the visionary gifts and crafts to fabricate images
in art and language (Campbell, 1983), but these same images are given
to ordinary people in their dreams and fantasies in forms derived
from their everyday social worlds (Caughey, 1984).

In the West perhaps ordinary individuals have abdicated some of their
powers of imagination to a small group of symbolmakers.  It is as
though there is a culturally instilled fear of the imagination, and
particularly of its mythic elements.  It is as though Western peoples
have lost the capacity for deep play described by one writer as "the
courage of a charismatically inspired, creative imagination" (Brewi,
1985, p. 127).

228

In the <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u>, in the "Transcendental Deduction
(A)", Kant discussed the imagination as a faculty in human beings
which has transcendental, *a priori*, and empirical modes of
expression.  Kant described the role of imagination at length.
Simply stated, the condition for the possibility for a unified
consciousness, knowledge and experience rests upon the faculty of the
*a priori* productive imagination (Kant, 1965, pp. 120-128).  In other
words, if one is not connected with their powers of imagination they
may be locked into the present tense, and into one level of reality.

My informants generously discussed their relationships with inner
figures in dreams and fantasies.  Like people in the outer social
world, inner beings seem to respond best when approached through an
attitude of receptivity, imagination, reflection, and empathy.
However, they seem to disappear altogether when approached through
rational methods of examination, dissecting and probing.

Imagination, like empathy and receptivity are qualities associated
with feminine forms of consciousness.  In their discussion of
imagination Brewi and Brennan (1985, p. 128-9) quote a passage from
George Bernard Shaw's <u>St. Joan</u>.  In this sequence the English are
questioning Joan of Arc about her inner voices.

English:   What did you mean when you said that St. Catherine and
           St. Margaret talked to you everyday?
Joan:      They do.
English:   What are they like?
Joan:      I will tell you nothing about that: they have not given me
           leave.

229

| English: | But you actually see them: and they talk to you just as I am talking to you. |
|---|---|
| Joan: | No: it is quite different. I cannot tell you: you must not talk to me about my voices. |
| English: | How do you mean? Voices? |
| Joan: | I hear voices telling me what to do. They come from God. |
| English: | They come from your imagination. |
| Joan: | Of course. That is how the message of God comes to us. |

It seems that imagination in combination with dream and fantasy material may have profound effects on an individual's spiritual metaphors, and may alter the mythic imagination of an entire culture. Women like St. Joan and Hildegard of Bingen, who nurtured their spiritual life through imagination projected a divine essence that challenged hegemonic claims of popes and kings.

Dreams like the one described by Katherine have occurred for other women in the goddess seminar. The images they contain challenge some of the dominant religious symbols of Western society, and the power of an elite priesthood that tries to control the mythmaking function in the culture. Furthermore, the challenge seems to come from the Feminine Principle in the psyches of informants.

For example, Katherine's dream emphasized the Mother Goddess archetype when it asked, "What is it like to be the Mother of God?" *Theotakos* is a term used in mythology and theology, and means "god-bearer." In Christianity, Mary is *Theotakos*. However, from a Jungian perspective, the psyche of every individual is imprinted with the *imago-Dei*, or the god-image (Jung, CW 11, par. 281). Therefore,

every human being is potentially a *theotakos*, as we shall see in the following dream told to me by Anna.

"In my dream," said Anna, "I give birth to three little boys. They are named 'The Father,' 'The Son,' and 'The Holy Spirit'. I have become the mother of God—of the Christian image of God. It is hard to believe. There is a young woman in the background. I wonder if she is Mary. Maybe she reflects the Mother archetype—like in 'Mary as Mother of God or Christ—I don't know. Perhaps she is representing the Feminine (Principle) becoming more conscious in me. I am not sure I know what this dream means, but I am sure it is big. I don't have dreams like this everyday."

In her dream, the Trinity has become a quaternity, the fourth element being the dreamer and her consciousness that gave birth to these babies. In number symbolism, four signifies a completion, a coming to wholeness (de Vris, 1984; von Franz, 1974). Anna felt this dream was a response to a problem she had been working on regarding how to incorporate her spirituality in her everyday life. She wondered if it meant that living her spirituality as a woman is a natural event, like giving birth. One gives birth to god, is "the mother of the god-image," so to speak.

From a woman-centered point of view, conceiving and giving birth is an innate pattern reflected in these dreams in symbolic form. Within the seminar, participants' dreams are respected as part of the instinctive life of women as givers of life. This attitude is reflected in Katherine's insight, "Woman's body is not an impediment for spiritual development, as the Church has always asserted. Rather, it is a vehicle."

I have wondered why I have picked the symbol of the goddess around which to center my work as a therapist and as an ethnographer. For example, I could have written an entirely different paper on the rich array of masculine images contained in the dreams of my informants.

From my early childhood I had inklings of the presence of powerful feminine archetypal forms. Where did they come from? Was it from my grandmothers who were larger than life to a small child, or from the feelings and intuitions that passed between my mother and me, or from some unnameable source in the gardens and walks of my childhood?

I have a memory from my fourth year of life in which my father was telling me Bible stories. He used a metaphor to describe an image to me. He said something like, "I am your daddy, and I love you very much. I have a special job to do in our family. I go to work and bring home the money we need to buy food, clothes, and take care of the family. These things are called 'earthly needs.' But you have other kinds of needs called 'heavenly needs' that money can't help with. And you have a Heavenly Father who also loves you and can provide for those needs."

We were sitting in the living room of our house in Charlotte, North Carolina. Both of us were in his easy chair. I remember seeing my mother at work in the kitchen. I turned to my father and asked, "What about my Heavenly Mother?" I think I wanted to learn about her job, too. I imagine my father was puzzled by the question, and I think he said he didn't know of a Heavenly Mother. I remember thinking to myself, "My mother sure has a big job if she has to take care of my earthly needs and my heavenly need, too!" Perhaps since

232

that time I have been looking for a Heavenly Mother, and I have found that I am not alone.

My informants have shared childhood memories of an imaginary world inhabited by imaginary beings. Memories of this order always were accompanied by a deep feeling of emotional satisfaction. As a child, Nora was empowered from her own imagination to "make herself up." For Lucy, her tree-house was an imaginary being providing a point of view on the world that was deeply satisfying for Lucy. She could climb into this "mother's" branches and be safely inside that world. Eleanor remembers looking into the sky and seeing magical beings smiling down on her. When her mother was in a rage, she could turn to those beings for reassurance. In the process of socialization, informants lost or partially lost touch with this level of consciousness.

At some point in their adulthood, these women experienced a loss in the outer world of identity, either through illness, the loss of a love, or the death of a friend or family member. These are the kinds of loss that everyone experiences as they grow older. These losses precipitated painful symptoms, but sometimes symptoms appeared with no apparent outer reason. They manifested from unconscious levels, and my informants felt lost inside. It was through those symptoms that my informants received intonations from an invisible psychic world reminiscent of imaginary experiences of childhood.

I am amazed, as I reflect back on my years of work with the women who participated in this study, at the depth, intensity, commitment, and level of involvement they have with their dreams and with goddess mythology. It is rare to find Americans who will bother to make this

kind of effort with the psyche. It is remarkable to me that for over eight years now, these women have convened monthly to study mythology in light of their dreams and inner worlds.

According to John Caughey, "Intense imaginary experiences—fantasies, dreams, anticipations—seem to be characteristic of all societies" (p. 247). However, societies receive and interpret the general significance of these phenomena in many different ways. Western societies, for example, have tended to see them as interesting but insignificant on the whole (Jung, 1964 and 1984; Lawlor, 1991).

Robert Lawlor's book, <u>Voices of the First Day: Awakening in the Aboriginal Dreamtime</u> (1991), describes in detail the sociocultural system of the Australian Aborigines. According to Lawlor, they have a totally different response to their dream life. For them, their ontological ground of being originated in what they call the "Dreamtime." They believe that physical reality originates from this invisible spiritual realm and they maintain a social system that cultivates their experience of the Dreamtime.

The women in the goddess seminar have developed a receptive attitude toward the inner world which moves them away from the normative American cultural attitude that devalues consciousness of non-visible realities toward the attitude held by shamanic cultures like the Aborigines of Australia described above.

They have chosen to maintain a style of life in which they actively make room for and deliberately cultivate a relationship with imaginary fields of experience that includes a rich and varied dream life. In addition, they not only allow for such experiences, but

they actively seek after, invite and participate with the image making process. They see these fields as representative of an order of reality that is non-physical yet substantial in that they contain hidden or partially hidden psychic contents which are life-giving when made conscious.

Like the Aborigines, they are open to forms of consciousness and types of knowledge that exist on other levels of reality. The Aborigines participate in the balance of natural forces on the metaphysical plane. As Lawlor explained, "To act on that which has entered the physical world is already too late; once spirit energy has materialized a chain of reactions change the entire pattern of nature" (p. 180).

Referring to Lucy's life once more to illustrate this phenomenon, she acted in a manner similar to the Aboriginal cultural pattern. After some years of merely managing her manic depression through medication and behavioral modification, Lucy met and interacted with her symptoms on a metaphysical or dream level. Once she learned that her dreams anticipated a mood swing, she was able to intervene in the symptom formation process on the symbolic level before they concretized or materialized in the body as illness. A release of energy then followed this deep meditative process as though she had been liberated from some demonic force. That energy was then available for Lucy to live more freely within her social world.

On the whole my informants live ordinary American lives, but inside that structure they have cultivated a consciousness of these other levels of experience. Looking back on what I have I found in my research, it seems extraordinary that these women have been able to

weave new attitudes and practices into the fiber of their everyday
existence so as to expand the meaning of their lives as Americans
without becoming social deviants or destroying the fabric of
relationships and values that shape their social worlds.

For my informants, the phenomenoiogical world includes inner as well
as the outer elements.  Symbols and images from the dream world are
treated as phenomena along with people and events in their outer
life.  Both sides are included in their social worlds.  From within
the multi-leveled dream world they carefully cultivate relationships
with the figures and events as they present themselves.  Within their
outer social worlds my informants lovingly care for and devote
themselves to their relationships with family, friends, and social
institutions within the community.

Each woman has found her own way to foster and maintain a flow
between inner and outer elements.  They have actively attempted to
circumscribe the symbolic forms from the archetypal realm along with
social and institutional forms from traditional American society
within their network of relationships.  They have done this by
looking for structures within their cultural frames of reference to
advance new levels of integration.  In order to enrich their
experience, they talk with other people who are doing likewise, and
seek counseling on these matters.  They read for knowledge on how to
contain and communicate about the inner world.  They journal and
write creatively on their experience, attend seminars, listen to
tapes, and generally seek to create symbols that include both aspects
of their phenomenological world.  In so doing they are cooperating
with cultural forces, creating social movement, and participating in
the culture making process.

My informants are using types of knowledge already available in mainstream culture to understand and interpret their experience. They read Jung and other psychological schools of thought, mythology, archeology, history, poetry, attend museum exhibits, and make use of all manner of cultural material available at this time and in this society in ways that are traditionally seen as cultural.

Upon several occasions the entire seminar has attended museum exhibits together at the Smithsonian Museum or the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C. In 1992, for example, the members of the Inanna seminar met at the Sackler Gallery to view an exhibit entitled "When Kingship Descended from Heaven: Masterpieces of Mesopotamian Art from the Louvre". Afterwards everyone went into the museum shop to purchase books and replicas of artifacts from Mesopotamia the shop had stocked in support of the exhibit. When informants talked to the sales staff in the shop, they shared that they had been studying the Inanna mythology for some years. The staff reacted favorably, and said that attendance at this exhibit had far exceeded expectations of the curator. In fact, they classified it as "extremely popular." The members of the seminar were pleased to hear this, and glad they were on the "cutting edge" of what seemed to be a growing interest in Sumerian and other Mesopotamian cultures.

The women I studied devote considerable resources including time and money to bring the energy of the archetypal world to bear on their social experience, and to bring their inner source of meaning into a domain where the meaning is shared. To achieve this purpose, each woman has devoted many hours of time to meet regularly with a Jungian psychotherapist in order to cultivate their consciousness regarding the dream world, its contents, and how to bring those contents to

237

bear on their social experience. Some have taken time away to retreat, concentrate and meditate on the integrative process,

As we read in Chapter VIII, Nora spent six months in England, living in London in a room she rented from a local family. She felt she needed to remove herself entirely from her American connections and be in England, her second cultural home, in order to work through a major life crisis. Jungians believe that no analysis is complete until energy is brought into creative action. To her way of thinking and acting, Nora's task was to bring her depressed love energy from a state of stagnation and despair into a state of joy and hope through which she could give more completely of herself to the *Anima Mundi*, the soul of the world.

Another example was described earlier in this chapter. When Anna was struggling to understand the meaning of inner work with goddess forms in light of the outer symbolic forms given by her traditional Christian meaning system, she used a week of her vacation to retreat and meditate on this issue. While she participated in this process she was presented with the dream discussed earlier in this chapter in which she gave birth to the Christian Trinity. This dream and the interpretive work that followed helped her to continue to carry both sides within her meaning system. Through participation on the level of her dream she was able to resolve the problem for now, continue to participate in the life of her Episcopal parish, and to further integrate her inner and outer symbolic forms within her social world.

The recovery of meaning of feminine forms of consciousness that includes goddess images and myths has changed the way my informants experience reality to such an extent that they deliberately think,

speak, act, make judgements, and work in terms of these categories; and, in general, allow them to take shape in their social worlds. I have been present when informants have used categories of feminine forms of consciousness to argue and debate political issues. For example, one informant has argued valiantly for a woman's right to choose abortion as a means of birth control based on her knowledge of cultures in which the Feminine Principle is valued and honored. She, along with other seminar members speak freely to their children, both their daughters and their sons, in terms that reflect goddess images and symbols as legitimate mythological constructs that have meaning and inform experience.

Upon one occasion Katherine's daughter came home from school quite upset. She told her mother that the priest had advised the young women at school against methods of birth control. After hearing her daughter's concerns Katherine spoke out saying, "Don't you ever let any man, even a priest, tell you what you can and cannot do with your own body!" This statement reflected her deeply held position that a woman's body is a vehicle for spiritual development and not an impediment, and eased her daughter's anxiety concerning the locus of authority in such matters.

Some informants have reoriented their careers in the process of the conscious integration of inner and outer experiences by returning to the university for graduate work. Eleanor is taking courses in poetry writing, and hopes to publish some day. Lucy and Katherine became full time graduate students and completed the Masters of Social Work degree during the course of my research. Again, I would reiterate that, while these women enjoy a comfortable lifestyle, life altering decisions of this nature require considerable forethought,

239

planning and sacrifice both financially and in terms of time and involvement with family and friends.

Katherine and Lucy felt compelled to do so by inner psychic factors, not because they needed to be resocialized into new professions or because they had failed in their career. These decisions were made because, from their points of view, they wished to marry their knowledge of psychological healing gained through years of inner work and study with an established system of knowledge, clinical social work, already functioning in the larger society and accepted within the culture.

This kind of change is part of a broader social movement within the larger culture. Many individuals at mid-life or later in life are using their personal resources to return to the university. The median age of my Masters of Social Work class was thirty eight, and Lucy told me that her's was even older. Perhaps they, like Lucy and Katherine, wish to find ways to integrate their hard won life experience with systems of knowledge that will allow them to make a contribution in the broader American society.

Once informants were opened to other levels of consciousness and symbolic forms not normally prescribed in the dominant culture, such as feminine forms of the god-image described throughout this work, they have not returned to former meaning systems, so strong were these new symbolic forms. When attempts at integration between inner forms and outer institutions were not fulfilled, my informants grieved this as a deep emotional loss.

This was the situation for both Caroline and Katherine who felt compelled to stop participating in their traditional churches when the Feminine Principle was not received or openly rejected. In both cases, however, they have actively pursued other ways to foster outer social relationships within the recognized cultural domain. I have just described Katherine's response to this issue earlier in this chapter. Regarding Caroline, as I write these pages, she is exploring her ancestral roots by traveling in Wales and Scotland to the sacred sites of early Celtic peoples. Travel of this kind requires considerable sacrifice and planning on her part and on the part of her family. When she returns she will share her experience with the other women in the goddess seminar, and it will continue to enrich her life for some time.

Other informants have taken trips to sacred sites of ancient cultures. Like Caroline, they have been inspired by goddess mythology to go to these places and experience them for themselves. Katherine traveled to the Isle of Man; Nora and Caroline to Britain ; Christa to Britain, France, the American Southwest, and Greece; and Eleanor to Greece and to Central and South America.

My informants understand that ordinary consciousness will be altered by these other ways of knowing, and that these other forms of knowledge may not be received openly by individuals who have not experienced them. In no way do these women proselytize or attempt to convert others to their way of knowing. They understand that their way is "not everybody's cup of tea," as Nora put it.

Sometimes my informants have expressed their frustration with others with whom they share a close bond for not being more open to a wider

consciousness. Of course, they wish their loved ones would share in their reality more fully. This frustration is often focused on the men in their lives. If the dream world is part of nature, why wouldn't their men be open to it, too?

Lawlor discussed the Feminine Principle as it is carried in the consciousness of Aboriginal women. He wrote, "The Aborigines believe that women more naturally possess the psychic and intuitional powers men strive for through initiation. Aboriginal doctors often consult older 'wise women'" (p. 370-371). From this point of view, women have a natural ability to bring human life into the physical world from the realm of the unborn, can more easily enter the realms of consciousness beyond the daytime world and bring new symbolic forms into being.

According to Lawlor, "The goal of Aboriginal culture is to conduct life so that the two lotus flowers, the Dreaming and the natural world, exist simultaneously, each the image of the other. The adaptability of nature exists for the purpose of maintaining the dream in creative ways" (p. 391).

Having taken important steps towards cultivating their "dream seeds" from the nighttime world, the women in my informant group have largely recovered the innate ability as females to exist and create in both the daytime world and the dream world. They are on the leading edge of a confluence of social and psychological forces that has been called the Goddess Movement by mainstream observers.

This study reflects this shift in cultural values on the symbolic level now being observed in the collective consciousness of American

society.  This shift has been characterized as a "rich, unstructured, multidisciplinary wave of artistic, intellectual and spiritual activity" (Aburdene, 1992, p. 244).  As we have observed throughout this dissertation, these dynamics have a deeply personal inner dimension which has been neglected or given cursory treatment in previous scholarship on this movement.

Throughout my presentation I have sought to document the inner dimension of this important cultural development.  While my dissertation is an in depth study of the lives of only eight women, it has wider implications.  It documents a process which seems to be taking place in an ever-widening social context.  For, clearly, there are many women outside the Inanna seminar who are also developing their capacities for consciousness of the Feminine Principle on inner as well as outer planes of experience.  As we have seen from these eight women, once knowledge of The Goddess as an archetype of feminine forms of consciousness has been obtained, it becomes inscribed inside their meaning systems and significantly influences how they think and act within their social worlds.

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