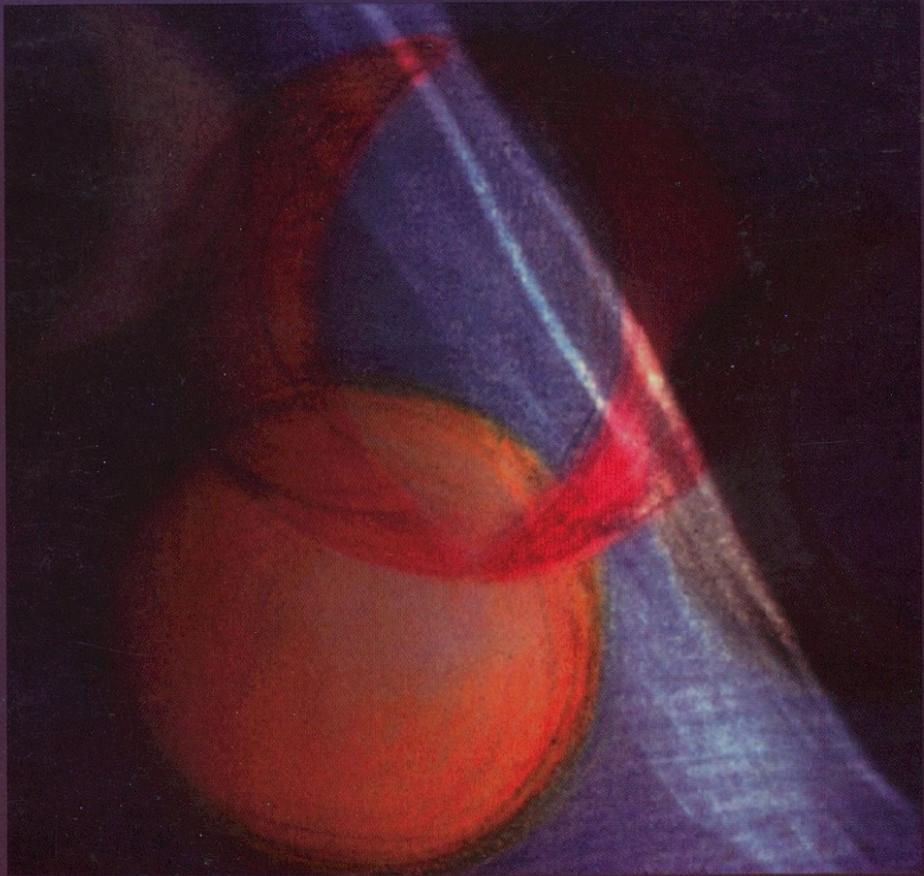


# THE GODDESS AND HER *HEROS*



HEIDE GÖTTNER-ABENDROTH

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HER *HEROS*



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BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN  
BY LILIAN FRIEDBERG

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
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To my daughter Heide

# CONTENTS



<i>Preface to the English Edition</i>	ix
<i>Foreword</i>	xiii
<i>Introduction</i>	xxi

## PART I. THE GODDESS AND HER *HEROS*

The Matriarchal Religions and their Transformations	1
1. Greece (Artemis and Acteon, Aphrodite and Adonis, Athena and Erechtheus)	17
2. Crete (Demeter and Iakchos, Rhea and Zeus, Hera and Zeus, Hera and Heracles)	27
3. Egypt (Nout-Neit and Ra, Hathor and Horus, Isis and Osiris)	43
4. Sumeria/Babylon (Inanna-Ishtar and Dumuzi-Tammuz)	59
5. Asia Minor and Palestine (Kubaba and Teshub, Cybele and Attis, Atargatis and Hadad, Anat and Baal)	67
6. Persia and India (Anahita and Mitra, Prithivi and Dyaus Pitar, Sarasvati and Brahma, Shakti and Shiva, Lakshmi and Vishnu)	81
7. Northwestern and Central Europe	95
7.1 The Celts (Dana and Dagda, Modron-Morrigan and Bran, Erin and Lug)	96
7.2 The Germans (Jörd and Tyr-Heimdall, Freyja and Freyr, Frigga and Od-Baldur)	105
Transformations of the Matriarchal Religions	117

## PART II. THE PRINCESS AND HER BROTHERS

Matriarchal Mythology in the Fairy Tales of Magic	133
1. The Abundance-Giving Woman in the Other World	137
2. The Gift-Giving Woman in a Deathlike State	145
3. Fairy Tales of the Redeemer	157
Transformations of the Fairy Tales	169

PART III. THE MISTRESS AND HER HERO

Matriarchal Mythology in the Epic Poetry of the Middle Ages	177
1. The Arthurian Epic (the Romance of Ywain, the Romance of Erec, Romances of the Grail and Parsifal, the Lancelot Cycle)	183
2. The Tristan Romances	211
3. The Nibelungenlied and Siegfried Legends	219
Transformations of Matriarchal Mythology	227
Endnotes	241
Alphabetical Register of Mythological Names with Explanations	247

## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION



By a series of coincidences a friend happened to give me *The Goddess and Her Heros* as the “best book on that subject,” when I told her I had just read a related book. Years before I had heard several conversations by friends who had read Robert Graves *The White Goddess*, but had not myself read it. Nor was it the right time, apparently, for me to be interested. As so often has happened in my life, the right time comes to discover a particular author, or work. And so the right time came for me to read this landmark book—when I was already a publisher of books.

In a lifetime of reading, only a few books stand out as “monumental,” meaning they changed my life. Here was one of those books. I have always been interested in “why we think the way we do.” This question often came to me as a young girl growing up in the south. I wondered why our family was not prejudiced in the same way that families around me were, particularly in regard to the black race. I never heard disparaging comments about blacks in my home. Years later I happened to find out the reason, that a part of my family were native American. This, and a remark made by Winston Churchill in his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, that the American Civil War was but a continuation of the English Puritan-Cavalier conflict (two basic points of view he said would never be reconciled), spurred my curiosity to look more closely into the views held by various members of my family, and then my particular Virginian southern culture. I went on to look into the history of New England, so that I might better understand the people with whom I came to live, near Boston. Indeed, this interest has proved to me over and over that ideas we think are uniquely ours are only borrowed from others, often without question. Many of these ideas have their roots in religious, political, and cultural views of some other time, often quite remote. The ideals of U.S. southern religious fundamentalism, for instance, have scarcely changed at all from the movement started (or perhaps revived) by Thomas Münzer in Germany in the early 1600s, from which they were derived.

In this marvelous research by Dr. Heide Göttner-Abendroth, I was to learn even more about the customs, thoughts, and cultural practices that

had influenced my attitudes, and therefore my life. Best of all, this research freed me from the garbage of false ideas that surrounded my being a woman, and how I felt about myself. I was able for the first time, to put to rest events and wrongs that occurred in my youth that made me doubt and not value myself.

Personal healing comes when we consciously unite with hidden and repressed parts of ourselves; our culture, likewise, can be healed by an honestly researched account of history. Dr. Heide Göttner-Abendroth's book is full of healing insights, with the greatest benefit being that we can heal ourselves as women and men. This book brings forth all that repressed and forgotten material that is needed to heal our social relationships.

Hardly enough can be said about the imbalance that occurs when the masculine element becomes totally dominant: in today's U.S. society it is said that 1 in 5 women are raped in the marriage bed. Similar statistics occur in Europe. In third world countries violence against women is even greater. A similar tragedy occurs when women are "totally feminine." Masculinity unmoderated by the feminine seems to end in violence, while femininity unmoderated by the masculine seems to collapse inward upon itself. Matriarchal societies, as Dr. Göttner-Abendroth shows us, were societies in balance, where the masculine was moderated by the feminine (the principle of love and social relationship), and the feminine by the masculine. Dr. Göttner-Abendroth further shows, in describing the way these societies were patriarchalized, how the newly idealized patriarchal male became aloof from the love principle, regarding love as weakness, and the woman he formerly loved, as beneath him. From that time on she became only "property" for his sexual and other use, with its being dangerous and damaging to his macho self-image for him to become too close to her. She, degraded in the eyes of existing authorities (the newly dominant males and male-dominated religious institutions) now began to disbelieve in herself.

As Dr. Göttner-Abendroth shows us, these ideas were not the "natural order," but necessary to the politics of empire-building. They were forced upon peoples everywhere by the warring kings and their patriarchal legitimizing religions.

The most debilitating effects of not understanding this history, we soon realize, occur in the area of "knowing oneself." For until we know ourselves, we continue to react blindly to the old patterns that still dominate us. Most disastrously affected are our personal relationships. A part of knowing oneself involves knowing the history of our thoughts. The history contained here makes this an important book.

It became clear to me right away that it was inconceivable that

this book had not yet been translated into English, especially by one of the big university presses. In conversations with publishers in this and other countries, I soon learned, to my astonishment, that as a general rule, U.S. publishers sell many books to the world, but buy few. For example, in 1994, of the U.S. big commercial publishers, only four titles were bought to be translated into English, and these were mostly novels. Interestingly, the big U.S. university presses such as those at Princeton and Harvard University also buy very few. This one-way street of information, especially between the U.S. and the rest of the world, gives Americans the false impression that the U.S. is the leader in all fields of knowledge. Quite the opposite seemed to be true in this case. It seemed to me that without this book, Americans would remain isolated from an important source of knowledge. I therefore decided to try to acquire it. Fortunately, with the author's help, this became possible, and I am here honored indeed, to make it available in English.

Carol K. Anthony



## FOREWORD



### I.

It is a great pleasure for me that *The Goddess and Her Heros* appears here for the first time in the English language, translated from the 10th German Edition.

*The Goddess and Her Heros* was the first work in which I presented to the public a portion of the matriarchal research I had conducted in private. As a twenty-one year old student, I stumbled upon Robert Ranke-Graves's work (*Greek Mythology*), with its radically different historical perspective: namely, its inclusion of the matriarchal cultural epochs and their great goddesses into the Neolithic Age. Although engaged in my official study of philosophy (Theory of Science and Formal Logic), I was unable to put this perspective out of my mind, and so I scoured every available library in search of further information regarding matriarchies. A fundamental change in my world view occurred as a result. I did not, however, share this with anyone, because I felt isolated in my altered state of knowledge. These works, and the insights they contained, were absent from the official academic curriculum, as though they were not sitting there all along on the shelves!

My knowledge of the matriarchal cultural epoch expanded steadily through continued study and extensive travel until finally I decided to record it in a larger work to be entitled *The Matriarchy*. Finally, I was compelled to begin writing. In the meantime, however, matriarchal research had since grown so comprehensive in my mind that I no longer knew where to begin. I decided therefore not to labor away for years on a thick, academic tome, but to begin with one segment—matriarchal mythology—since its symbolic image-systems clearly illuminate matriarchal thoughts and values. It also seemed appropriate to begin with the spirituality of these cultures. This led to the publication in 1980 of *The Goddess and Her Heros*.

These self-imposed restrictions, of course, prevented me from simultaneously describing the economy and social order of these structures, and from presenting the archeological evidence of their existence for (at least) more than eight-thousand years. These were steps I planned to undertake systematically in the years to follow. Thus, I made reference, in a second book entitled *The Dancing Goddess* (1982),\* to the nucleus of a matriarchal esthetics theory, as it was expressed by the ritual practices and cultic dramas that were staged by matriarchal cultures, to bring to life the seasonal cycles. In recent years I have realized my long-term and heartfelt ambition of compiling an all-encompassing work on matriarchy, one which presents the interconnections between its economy, social structure, spirituality, and politics, in *The Matriarchy I* (1988), and *The Matriarchy II* (1991), etc.

Each of these works is necessarily related to the other, even though they vary in terms of presentation and methodology. In *The Goddess and Her Heros*, for example, writing with a general audience of women in mind, I reduced the explicit scientific apparatus to a minimum for the sake of readability, choosing the essay form so as not to burden my audience with excessive academic constructs. Still, the book remains a thoroughly sophisticated methodological study. I assumed that academically-schooled readers would recognize its tacitly implicit methodology. I also employed the essay form for *The Dancing Goddess*, to do justice to the medium of art, its subject. Only in the more comprehensive *The Matriarchy* did I illustrate, step by step, the complex interdisciplinary and ideological-critical methodology that I developed specifically for matriarchal research, which is the foundation of all my work.

I was completely taken aback by the success of *The Goddess and Her Heros* after its publication. It was not a spectacular bestseller, but its success was enduring. It was well-received by a wide array of sympathetic readers, both female and male, from all walks of life, perhaps because it was the first publication on feminist matriarchal research to appear in the German language. In any case, interest continued unabated over the years and I received letters from as far away as the United States, the (former) Soviet Union, and Australia. Both women and men found it intellectually engaging, not only in terms of its general educational value, but also in its significance to the fields of religious studies, psychology, sociology, history, and feminist theology. While it was not written with this in mind, it was even introduced to the university framework by courageous students and unconventional researchers. These experiences have and continue to give me cause for enduring joy and gratitude.

## II.

Since the publication of *The Goddess and Her Heros* in 1980, additional research has changed my perspective on some issues. I have dealt with them more precisely in the studies I have developed since then, but will mention a few important ones here.

No longer would I designate the systems of mythology that reflect the world view of matriarchies as "matriarchal religions." This is because religions as we know them constitute dogmatic tendencies institutionalized by a dominant group, and as such, are patriarchal. Without such institutionalization, which is always characterized by centralization and hierarchy, they would not have been able to expand globally and develop into the major national or world religions they have become today. Moreover, their image of god is masculine and abstract, and is tied to claims of absolute truth that lead to missionary intolerance. Their ritual is rigid repetition of a spiritual event in the past, which is judged to be unique (role of the founder of religion) and recorded in unimpeachable dogma (the "holy books").

The matriarchal attitude toward the Goddess and the world is completely different, based on a universal yet concrete notion of the Goddess. She is the entire Cosmos or the whole Earth, not outside and beyond the world in an abstract Nowhere. Thus, one need not "believe" in her, based on implausible dogmas, because the Cosmos and the Earth are ever-present in land and sea, in the elements, in the planets, in all living creatures, in every human being. Goddess worship is thus a free-form artistic expression which celebrates, individually or collectively, the creative life force itself. Matriarchal mythological systems were repeatedly brought to life on a seasonal-cyclical basis in the great cultic dramas and public celebrations of their cultures, and are thus alien to the construction of institutions with a privileged class of priests high above the degraded class of "believers." Their truth rests in their practice at any given time. These practices, though they shared the fundamental pattern I have outlined in this book, differed from city to city, country to country, culture to culture. Because the matriarchal principle is congruent with the concept of "the Goddess with a thousand faces," or that of the manifold unified in one, it is alien to any kind of missionary proselytizing; matriarchal peoples knew nothing of spiritual-intellectual or political imperialism. Thus, I no longer define their manner of perceiving the world as a "matriarchal religion," but rather as "matriarchal spirituality," in order to distinguish a rigid system from a living process (see Heide Göttner-Abendroth).<sup>1</sup>

A similar critique applies to the use of the term "fertility cult" as a description of the forms of Great Goddess worship. It is a term commonly used in traditional research which I adopted without question. However, I no longer use this term, either. First, the matriarchal mythological systems and their attendant forms of worship are not isolated, stifled "cults," but rather complex, highly intellectual-spiritual patterns for explaining the world, which correspond to later-developed philosophical systems. Theirs is the language of images, not of concepts. That the ritual forms of worship hang together as a whole, the foregoing researchers would not perceive; thus came the uncomprehending fragmentation of them into individual "cults." Second, this perception logically precludes the possibility that these "cults" involve no more than monotonous repetitions which focused on the concept of "fertility." Yet why in the world should people in these small communities, to whom nature had given everything in abundance, in contrast to our own destructive and life-threatening modernity, have been constantly concerned with the fertility of the fields, the flocks, and themselves? On the contrary, behind the worship of women's ability to give birth and of nature's regenerative power was a respect for the mystery of life, death, and rebirth. Women were not revered as mere "mothers," but rather as persons who could transform death into life by virtue of their capacity for re-birthing; they were thus the guarantors of the perpetual regeneration of life on earth. I now use the term "faith of rebirth" as opposed to "fertility cult." Of decisive significance here, too, is the notion that we are not dealing with a "mother cult," whatever form that may assume. The mother cult, with its reduction of woman solely to her reproductive function for procreative purposes, is a typical patriarchal invention. Matriarchal cultures were concerned with worshipping all the regenerative and culture-creating powers of the goddess-woman, ranging from bodily to spiritual/intellectual powers: her diversity and comprehensiveness, in which man was embedded as part of the whole, were revered.

Furthermore, I no longer subscribe to the idea of an earth goddess mythology (chthonic variant) being associated solely with the early matriarchy, or a celestial-sidereal-moon goddess mythology (astral variant) being associated solely with the "advanced," i.e., complex urban matriarchy. While this may be applicable to some cultural regions, it is not an applicable generalization. Instead, both primeval universal goddesses, the Earth and the Cosmos (Heaven), appear to be present from

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\* *The Dancing Goddess, Principles of a Matriarchal Aesthetic*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1991

the very beginning, as is indicated by the Egyptian Nout, representing the eternal night of the cosmos, and the Tibetan Sa-trig-er-sans, representing the "Great Mother of Space," both of whom created, like the primeval Earth Goddess, everything. Various matriarchal peoples throughout the world demonstrate in their myths both Earth Mother and Heaven Mother simultaneously as the two primordial creatresses. The Moon Goddess, known the world over, is either the all-embracing Goddess herself, or her daughter, whereby the moon as *pars pro toto* represents the whole. For almost every Moon Goddess is, at the same time, the Goddess of the Stars, that is, of the Cosmos (e.g., Diana-Artemis), and thus points toward the primordial Heaven Goddess. Sometimes, though certainly less often, there are already Sun Goddesses (the Hittite Arinna, the Japanese Amaterasu), or even the goddesses of individual planets (the Babylonian Ishtar as Goddess of Venus), who are daughters of the primordial Heaven Goddess, or the great Mistress of Heaven herself. In matriarchy, the male principle is never creative in its own right, but remains, rather, eternally derivative-collaborative as it is expressed, for example, by the Heaven Goddess' atmospheric *heros*, or the Earth Goddess' vegetation *heros*, or perhaps the other way around (Heaven Goddess and *heros* of vegetation, like Nout and Geb, or Earth Goddess and *heros* of atmosphere, like Danae and the Cretan Zeus). The actual diversity of notions present in the mythological systems becomes apparent by my analysis of these systems.

Having since deepened my knowledge of its background, I would no longer call the ritual of the *heros*' death a "sacrifice." To the extent that the death of the *heros* or the Sacred King was actually executed, he was not a compulsory, anxiety-ridden victim, as is suggested by the sinister, intentionally gruesome concept of "human sacrifice." The term's meaning was distorted by Christian missionaries and researchers in order to disparage other people's forms of belief and worship.

What in fact constitutes compulsory, anxiety-ridden human sacrifice, are those millions of young men who for thousands of years have been sent to their death by the patriarchal war machinery for various and varying ideologies, having had no choice in the matter. In this case, as in the case of the countless women, men, and children killed daily by poverty and persecution, contamination and traffic, the use of the term "sacrifice" is justified, because these mass killings have been stripped of any spiritual significance. The matriarchal *heros*-kings, on the other hand, were exceptional individuals whose death in some cultures took place once a year at the most. Half a year prior to the event, a complicated process of selection took place which entailed

physical, intellectual, and spiritual competitive contests (Initiation and Marriage rites), in which the victor became the new *heros*-king. The voluntary nature of such contests was carefully ensured, for no one was forced to participate in, or pressured, to win the contests. Even more essential was what occurred after the *heros'* death, namely, the journey into the Goddess' Paradise, or Other World, where the *heros* grew wise, and at the same time, young again, and who was inevitably reborn at the journey's end. This belief in rebirth was not ideology or some nebulous notion of the "migration of souls," but rather was conceived of in very concrete terms: Everyone who ever died, woman or man, was physically reborn as a child, birthed by the women of her or his own clan, in her or his own tribal dwelling. This basic tenet permitted matriarchal peoples to experience death as something more than a cruel, definitive end, or the dark descent into Hades endemic to patriarchal cultures. Death was for them far more a passage, a gateway to another real life in the here and now. Without this background, which admittedly, is difficult for us to comprehend completely, we cannot hope to understand the rituals of selection and death of the *heros*, especially given the emotional state and intellectual posture of our times. In the interest of exercising due caution in regarding an altogether different cultural and spiritual mind-set, I have abandoned the concept of the "*heros'* sacrifice" and now speak only in terms of the "*heros'* death," or his journey into the Other World, which corresponds more accurately to the actual cultural-historical situation.

I have often been asked whether it would be more congruent with matriarchal culture not to speak in terms of "matriarchy," which implies "dominance of the mother," because, after all, we are not dealing with any form of domination here. Substitutes like "matricentral," "matristic," "matrifocal," "gynocratic," etc., have been suggested instead. I do not consider this a good avenue to take, because, contrary to what appears to be the case, the term "matriarchy" is not parallel to that of "patriarchy." The Greek *arché* means both "dominance" and "beginning," whereby the latter is the older of the two. The two meanings cannot be unified, and can only coincide in the mind of someone who believes that domination has existed since the beginning of human history. Patriarchal theoreticians have circulated legends of this sort by the dozen. A more precise translation reveals that, while "patriarchy" indeed does refer to "dominance of the fathers," "matriarchy" (*arché* = beginning), on the other hand, means "in the beginning, the mothers," and that hits upon the heart of the matter.

By contrast, the above mentioned substitute expressions introduce a linguistic habit that dilutes and obscures something that is by no

means new to the history of research surrounding this controversial subject. The term "matriarchy" is deleted from the arena of scholarly and public discourse for obvious reasons: for fear of criticism from experts in the field, and by patriarchal bias inherent in their own ideology. From a scholarly standpoint, all of these substitute expressions are problematic. First, they tend to place thematic focus on individual characteristics within matriarchal societies, never on the social form as a whole. Second, these constrictive concepts are used to deny the existence of societies which were in all parts created and shaped by women, i.e., matriarchies. By way of appeasement, then, they say these societies were perhaps "matristic," "matrifocal" societies, etc., but that there were never any "matriarchies." Nevertheless, they cite precisely the same indicators that characterize matriarchal societies. Such an approach serves to confuse the discussion far more than to clarify it, especially when the catch-phrase, "myth of matriarchy" is introduced, which falsely and intentionally equates "matriarchy" with "dominance of the mothers." That serves only to hide what these researchers themselves believe—the myth of eternal patriarchy.

For the sake of factual clarity and scholarly probity, the term "matriarchy" is thus always the better one, if women-centered societies are to be recognized in the field of research. Furthermore, it is an important step in terms of scholarly politics for women to redefine the concept that describes the contents of their own investigations, so as not to have their own significance reduced.

I have not only theoretically but through my own spiritual practice approximated the principles of matriarchal culture. In 1983 I began to celebrate the "Matriarchal Mysteries" with women. Since 1986 I have celebrated these in the Academy HAGIA on the basis of the matriarchal mythology described in the research related here. In this way the wisdom of the matriarchal symbolism has opened itself to me (see in this context my book, *The Dancing Goddess, Principles of a Matriarchal Aesthetic*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1991).

Weghof, Germany August 1992

H.G.A.

#### MENTIONED LITERATURE

1. H. Göttner-Abendroth: *Matriarchale Religionen früher und heute* (Kalliope), and *Aufgeklärte Mythologie als neue Utopie* (Euterpe) both in: H. Göttner-Abendroth *Für die Musen*, Frankfurt, 1988, S. 36ff. und 21ff.



## INTRODUCTION



The gently colored graphic design on the cover of this book is neither a modern discovery nor an incidence of aesthetic caprice. Nothing about it is accidental, neither the shapes, nor the colors, nor the composition, for it is an ancient magic symbol which expresses figuratively that which is expressed literally in the words of the title: it is the emblem of the matriarchal Goddess and her *Heros*.\*

In this design four interdependent crescents and a circle appear against a blue background. The crescents bear three colors: white, red, and black, and represent the moon in its three phases: the waxing crescent moon, the rounded full moon, and the waning moon as it moves into the new moon. The golden circle, or golden disk, is the symbol of the sun whose form is simple and unchanging.

The threefold moon is the symbol of the Triple Goddess of matriarchy at its most developed stage. The white crescent representing the new, waxing moon is the symbol of the Goddess as Maiden, the Goddess of the emerging year (spring), the youthful huntress with a silver bow. It is located on the left side, the side of life, and occupies the highest position because she dwells in the uppermost region of the world, the Heavens. The crimson double crescent, whose points are turned toward one another to form a ring, is the sign of the full moon as it hovers incandescently on the horizon. As such, it is the symbol of the Goddess as Woman, the Goddess of Love and Fertility, who reigns at the climax of the year (summer). She is the Creatress of the world, for the red full moon represents the egg of creation which the Goddess laid while in her manifestation as a dove. When it cracked open—in the same way as when the moon is divided by the horizon—all of creation sprang forth. Thus, this figure is also divided. It is located at the center because the Goddess of Land and Sea prevails there, in the medial region of the world. The black crescent representing the waning, or

\*The Greek word *heros*, used throughout this book, is not synonymous with the English word "hero," its derivative. *Heros* refers specifically to the consort of the Goddess, the one-year king whose voluntary sacrifice of himself was believed to ensure the renewal of the fertility of the land.

black moon, is the symbol of the Goddess as Crone, the reaper in possession of the sickle of death. She stands to the right and at the lowest point because the right side is the side of death. The Crone Goddess is the mistress of the nethermost region, the Underworld, where she resides. Here, as the wintry Goddess of Death, she takes all life forms with her into the depths, in order to let them return into the light of the new year after their transformation. Thus begins anew the cycle of the lunar year, the mythical year of the Goddess.

Just as the moon, in each of its three phases, constitutes only one entity, so also are the three faces of the Goddess elements of a single divinity. Thus, her three colors or her three shapes are often concentrated into one symbol. The triad of the sacred colors white, red, and black, for example, is a symbol of her, and this is why many a mythical figure is clad in this triad of colors, or becomes enchanted at the sight of them. Even the magnificent columns of the royal palace at Knossos in Crete (Minoan culture) are bathed completely in these colors. The moon crescents, when joined, produce this simple form: ( ). When doubled in this form, (( )), it represents the labrys, the Minoan double-ax (Crete), with simple, or double-edged left and right blades. The double ax is also a symbol of the Triple Goddess. She carried it in her hand like a "lightning bolt," as a sign of her power throughout all regions of the world.

The plain circle representing the sun is situated near the crimson double crescent. The sun very often is the symbol of the *heros*, the mortal consort of the Goddess. Male deities were not present in the matriarchal cosmos. While the *heros* is simultaneously related to all the aspects of the Moon Goddess, his closest relationship is to the Goddess of Love, who celebrates with him the magical Sacred Marriage. In the spring, the Maiden Goddess initiates him by granting him the honored rank of Sacred King. In the summer, the Goddess of Love and Fertility completes with him the primary rite of the Sacred Marriage, which lends fecundity to land and sea. At the onset of winter he is sacrificed by the Crone Goddess; she leads him to the Underworld, from which he is reborn at the beginning of the following year. Symbolically, he has triumphed over the death of the cosmos with his voluntary offer of himself (the concept of the heroic). Thus the sun, which like the *heros*, is in a constant state of rise and fall, is his symbol. In matriarchy, the sun is clearly secondary to the eternal stars and the moon.

Both constellations are embedded in the oceanic blue, the infinite universe which is the universe of the Goddess. It is the blue of *Her* heaven, of *Her* sea, of *Her* cosmos. She is also the Goddess of the Infinite Night of the Universe. It is *Her* power of integration which holds all these constellations together.

We see in the matriarchal imagination the male principle completely embedded in the female universe. An antagonistic contrast between these two principles did not exist. The construction of an antagonistic contrast was contradictory to the integrative capacities of the matriarchal woman, as is illustrated by the most beautiful and significant magic symbols of her epoch, of which our current example is only one of many.

This way of thinking was rapidly destroyed with the advent of the patriarchal social structure. Thus, dichotomies were extracted from that which was never conceived of as being contradictory, and the ruinous logic of thesis and antithesis prevailed. Furthermore, the incongruity between the male and female principles was construed so that the weight of negative qualities inevitably slid to the female end of the scale: man was then superior, light, and good, while woman was inferior, dark, and evil. The pantheons of patriarchy abound with such constructs and thus exhibit a substantial digression from the matriarchal cosmos, which was free of such ideological valuations.

Once this chasm had been split, there was, of course, no room for compromise, for even the noblest of gods could not cohort with evil. The logical consequence was that man was equated with human, while woman actually now no longer belonged to the human race, and was consequently expurgated entirely from religion and cult, and the heavens as well. The result was monotheism, which has since been heralded as the supreme level of intellectual development. In point of fact, though, it constitutes only the supreme level of intolerance, for now there existed only one male principle that tolerated nothing beyond itself. In this thinking the antagonistic opposites are taken to their furthest extreme.

At this extreme the mind-set usually leads itself *ad absurdum*, for the lone god of patriarchy has learned that because of his ceaseless omnipresence and incapacity for cosmic integration, he soon evaporated into the abstract. God-as-abstraction has certainly provided the philosophical speculations with new nourishment, but it lost any semblance of human inclination, and thus any divine beatific vision. In this manner, he has made himself obsolete, this monotheistic god.

We know that the cosmic disintegration into these new forms was followed by a similar collapse on the social and psychic levels. The stages of social denigration, negation, and annihilation of the feminine in history have become increasingly apparent as a result of research being conducted by women. On the one hand we have ourselves experienced the psychic fragmentation and atrophy of the femi-

nine, almost beyond the point of recognition; on the other we have witnessed the hypertrophy of the masculine to the point where its movement is restricted to the parameters of its own vacuous existence. The products of this process are the patriarchally defined masculinity and femininity as we know them today. They stand juxtaposed against each other like two mutilated entities.

The Goddess and her *Herós* belong to a different epoch. In contrast to societies ruled by men, societies modeled by women did not develop this destructive dichotomization. The Goddess and her *Herós* were not only both cosmic forces, but in the figures of the priestess and her king, the predominant social forces; last but not least, both forces resided in the psyche of each individual. The feminine principle was the divine in all dimensions in which the Goddess herself was also present: the integrative power of the entire cosmos, and the creative capacity, in and of itself (integration). The masculine principle was the heroic: the power of devotion to life, and the capacity for perfect selflessness (integrity).<sup>\*</sup> No human being was whole until she or he was in possession of both qualities: integration and integrity. Each woman who freely exercised her feminine powers recognized also in herself the heroic principle of the male; each man who possessed the devotion and selflessness inherent in the heroic, found in himself also the essence of female divinity. The ancient androgynous Goddess, or the Goddess cradling her *herós* as a son in her arms, points the way toward this integration in each individual human being.

These unadulterated images of matriarchal femininity and masculinity have become lost to us today. Integration on the part of the female and integrity on the part of the male are practically unfathomable concepts: who can possibly grasp what they mean? (They certainly have nothing to do with the clouding "anima-animus" construct presented by Jungian psychoanalysis, since as a rule, psychoanalysts lack any concrete social, cultural, or historical awareness of what the matriarchy was, and thus invest only their own patriarchal prejudices regarding femininity and masculinity into their empty formulas.)

Perhaps by way of this historical analysis we can—through digging into the deepest sediments of our tradition, and putting the many pieces together into an intelligible mosaic, rediscover the dimensions of our femininity freed of the distortions of the patriarchal epoch.

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<sup>\*</sup>The integrity of the *herós* meant devotion to life and its powers. The goddess-*herós* model does not represent the entire matriarchal social life, but is its religious-spiritual exception. The world view of the developed matriarchy was ritually portrayed in the cultic dramas by these representative persons.

Neither abstract speculations nor intensive psychic introspection offer much help; such help is to be found in rediscovering the historical forms in which it found unhindered expression. The holistic entirety of our selfhood includes also the rediscovery of what was masculine, before it was subjected to patriarchal perversions. For if we are to avoid falling into the fallacious game of dichotomous constructs so typical of the patriarchal mind-set, we need to consider the male principle of the "heroic" manifest in ourselves. We cannot loosen the knots binding the recovery of our femininity by merely reproducing the antagonistic dichotomies with reversed values, or by rendering the female absolute and negating the male. In so doing we would only serve to further the patriarchal thought patterns which have been foisted upon us and, in so doing, lose ourselves in their dissimulation.

If it is at all possible to achieve the integration of both principles, then it must occur through us. But first we must ourselves be certain how this is to occur. The rediscovered images of matriarchal femininity and masculinity can aid us in this effort. They release in us ancient knowledge of our conception of the cosmos and the sexes, for the matriarchal religions are images which women created as interpretations of the world. With its two-sided Goddess-*Heros* aspect that does not fall prey to the absolutism of either one or the other, they help us to procure a new, dual self-identification. This is a liberating experience, for it breaks through the patriarchal exile created by our excommunication from the world.

In this sense, then, the rediscovered Goddess and her *Heros* can act as a utopian vision for us. How else shall we identify with the Goddess and the *Heros* within us if not on the basis of this reality? How shall we continue today to compose a mythology of the Goddess, if not in accordance with a guiding principle which awakens in us a utopian light? If we bear this in mind we will avoid making this identification process a naive regression into the archaic, for after such an extended patriarchal epoch it is not possible to reconstruct an archaic matriarchy, neither within nor outside ourselves.

This does not mean, however, that we cannot reproduce any kind of matriarchy. The first prerequisite for regaining it is to gain an accurate knowledge of the historical structures in which it became reality. This knowledge cannot be too precise, because without it we continually find ourselves trapped within the concepts, images, and thought patterns of the patriarchy under which we were raised. The second prerequisite is that we analyze the conditions under which we proceed: these are different from those which led to the archaic matriar-

chal societies. Only a cognizant awareness of the historical matriarchy, combined with the analysis of our present conditions, can point us to a feasible path for developing an alternative lifestyle and social structure whose precursors are the Goddess and her *Heros* (in whatever manner we choose to conceive of them). Only then can we make tangible our utopia and translate it into strategies for action.

This book is intended to aid our mutual search for these new paths. I have attempted to reconstruct the individual matriarchal religions with the integrity due each one, while demonstrating the endless interweavings among them and the social structures in which they flourished. This was my work of integration in this field. Despite all efforts, my boundaries have been myself. I am conscious of my insufficiencies and for this I alone am answerable. The clearest boundary was the enormity of material which came to me. To not drown in it, I broke off, in places, the threads of the analysis and reflection, in the hope that others would perhaps take up these threads and continue, for I consider my work here to be only a beginning.

This book has three parts in which I engage in the analysis of mythologies, fairy tales, and the epic poetry. All three parts logically belong together and mutually explain each other.

Inestimable help in forming these three parts into a book was provided by Susanne Kahn Ackermann, who brought to the work her circumspect criticism and rich understanding and experience in this medium. She has my particular thanks. Also, special thanks goes to Carol K. Anthony, who with greatest caring and perception has had this book translated into English and published in the United States. I thank her for her trustworthy and congenial cooperation in this difficult endeavor. I have dedicated this book to my oldest daughter Heide, because recorded here are both the usual supply of fairy tales and all the other stories which provided her such fun while she was growing up.

For the sources of my analyses I refer to the literature cited in the bibliography.

# PART I

## THE MATRIARCHAL RELIGIONS AND THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS





Without hesitation I describe humanity's earliest religions as "matriarchal." I avoid the pallid "pre-patriarchal," a word so unclear it is hard to tell just what it is supposed to mean. I accept from the onset the existence of matriarchies as fact, for I am critical of the narrow historical perspective that has ousted the memory of this social system from consciousness.

This alternative interpretation of history is the subject of my current work in progress on matriarchy. It seeks to rekindle an awareness of those social and cultural forms in which women played a decisive role. Traditional historiography, which since its beginning approximately 3,000 years ago has remained decidedly tendentious, has relegated these forms to obscurity. Matriarchies were later rediscovered in the field of ethnology, although in a very reduced and distorted form. Our reduced perception of this social system stems from the narrowing of our gaze to the categories of the conventional scholarly disciplines, which rarely take note of the whole picture. The source of the distortions can be traced back to certain patriarchal values and prejudices which prevent researchers from depicting this form of social organization in almost any sort of unbiased light. Thus, in order to construct an accurate picture of matriarchal society, we must, on the one hand, overstep the bounds of the conventional disciplines, and on the other, proceed with critical caution in the face of the research results produced thus far (method of "criticism of ideology"). For matriarchy is not the occasion for smug sexual jokes, or dogmatic dissertations on the predetermined destiny of the human female (though literature on the subject is teeming with them!). Nor is matriarchy simply a question of a certain economic system or familial structure (ethnology), or a specific pattern of dwellings and graves, accentuated by a few illustrative sculptures (archeology), or a question of some strange mythology and its attendant cult (religious studies, folklore). As long as the subject is approached from such a fragmented perspective, one can always argue that some prerequisite characteristic—be it the proper distribution of wealth, or the proper social structure, or the proper religion—is missing from the whole matriarchal system. In this manner, it is easy to come to the absurd conclusion that while there were indeed societies demonstrating "matriarchal tendencies," complete matriarchies never existed. Unfortunately, this view is widespread among female researchers, too, who neglect to recognize that they have made the same errors as their male colleagues.

Thus, we need to integrate all the research results of the various disciplines in order to address the following points: (1) to present a picture of matriarchal societies that will include all concomitant social expressions, with the intent of determining their logical relationship to one another; (2) to describe all of the matriarchal societies that existed throughout the course of early and later history, and to outline the transformations this social form has undergone in the period of its probably more than 8,000 year development; (3) to ascertain the effects that the long matriarchal epoch has had on the patriarchal societies that overthrew them, so that we might discover those traditions which—albeit condemned and shunned, concealed and repressed—continue to permeate these more recently developed societies. This is a process that can reestablish for us a connection that has been severed or forgotten, and it can make a substantial contribution to our historical identity, and to our orientation to our present reality.

Achieving these ends is the subject of my comprehensive study of matriarchy.<sup>1</sup> In this book, however, I am concerned with the more limited task of describing matriarchal religions in the later Indo-European regions, and with their ramifications on the patriarchal epoch. No portion of this work, though, is intended to be a mere historical study of ideas or symbols of religion, and I thus make constant reference to the economic and social background. For this reason, the framework surrounding this study must be outlined in greater detail.

Examining existing research on matriarchy from a standpoint that is both *interdisciplinary* and *critical of ideology* has enabled me to formulate the following definition of matriarchal societies: Economically they are characterized by an agriculture that encompassed everything from simple gardening to a technically sophisticated cultivation which employed irrigation systems.<sup>2</sup> From the social point of view, matriliney (lineage and inheritance reckoned along female lines), and matrilocality (residence with the mother), are the primary factors in defining the family structure. The family unit is the clan. The “nuclear family,” as we understand it today (father/mother/child), is nonexistent, because biological fatherhood was unknown, or if known, fatherhood was unimportant and of no interest to them. The clan mother is representative and head of the clan, and the tribe’s mother head of the tribe. Titles and status are inherited from the mother by the daughter, whereby the principle of ultimogeniture (the youngest daughter is heiress), is prevalent. Property is not subject to individual inheritance, since lands and houses are collectively owned by the clan, especially by the women of the clan. If men possess any sort of status, it has been bestowed upon the son by the mother, upon the brother by the sister, or upon the nephew

by the uncle (mother's brother). There exists no lasting right of inheritance for men. Relationships between sister and brother rank much higher in priority than conjugal bonds in defining emotional role distribution. Because he is of a different clan, the husband, who rarely stays long, remains a guest in the clan house. Thus polygamy on the part of both women and men prevails over monogamy, which is virtually unheard of. These marital relations are associated with a great degree of sexual tolerance.<sup>3</sup> If matriarchies, in their most advanced stages in history, formed any type of formal states, they were organized according to theocratic principles into city-states, or federations of city-states that were represented by a priestess's assembly. The High Priestess was generally the oldest clan's clan mother; she was assisted in this position by the Sacred King, who was selected from her own clan (a son or brother). Apart from his ceremonial obligations he performed only administrative duties. The High Priestess personified the Mother Goddess, who was considered to be ruler of Heaven, Earth, and the Underworld. The religious life of matriarchal societies focused on systems of myths of the Mother Goddess which, at the earliest stages of development, were the mythologies of the chthonic Earth Goddess; in subsequent stages they focused on astral mythologies whose central figure was the Triple Moon Goddess. The concept of time was cyclical, as opposed to linear, and seasonal cycles of Growth, Death, and Rebirth influenced thought.<sup>4</sup> As a ritualistic religion it was characterized by celebration of seasonal festivities administered by the High Priestess, or Sacred Queen and the Sacred King (*heros*),\* by which the seasonal cycles of vegetation were magically influenced. These were: Initiation in spring, the Sacred Marriage (*hieros gamos*) in summer, and

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\*The Greek word *heros* has a matriarchal root. It refers to the Sacred King of matriarchy, who lives and works within the cosmic ordering of life, and represents, through the Goddess, masculine creativity. "Heroic" refers to the *heros'* cyclical journey into the Underworld (Death), from which he is born again into life. He makes this Underworld journey as a voluntary sacrifice on behalf of land and people, so that in following the laws of the cosmos, new life is made possible (the original meaning of the "heroic"). "Hero" refers to the patriarchal hero, which is the opposite of the matriarchal *heros*. This "hero" has been wrenched from his close connection with the Goddess and with nature. To achieve his meaningless heroic deeds he now destroys nature and other human beings (compare Gilgamesh as the first hero of this sort). In militarism, which is the foundation of all patriarchal world governments, millions of young men are forcefully driven, for the sake of their "fatherlands," to their deaths as "heroes." The sacrifice of the *heros*, on the other hand, is made out of love for the Goddess and nature, and he goes into the Underworld in order to be born again through her. His sacrifice, therefore, is not superfluous, as is that made by these young men of patriarchy in their wholesale slaughter on the battlefield.

Death and Rebirth of the *heros* in fall and winter.<sup>5</sup> To provide a better overview, I have brought these defining characteristics of matriarchy into the following schematic outline:

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SCHEMATIC OUTLINE OF MATRIARCHY:

1. Religion	Earth Goddess mythology, Moon Goddess Mythology
2. Ceremonies (rituals)	Celebration of seasonal cycles of Initiation, Love, Death and Renewal
3. Family structure/political organization	Clan system organized according to "mother right" (matriliny; matrilocality); city-states rep- resented by priestesses
4. Economy	Gardening and agriculture (in most cases); land and agricul- tural products owned collec- tively by the clan, controlled by women

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One cannot speak in terms of "matriarchy" if only one or another of these characteristics is evidenced. Thus, when referring to matriarchal societies or matriarchies, I mean only those societies demonstrating all of the above characteristics simultaneously.

Under these circumstances, one might think it difficult to find any matriarchies at all. However, the question of their existence and tradition cannot be answered this naively, because, as I have already stated, all of the existing research on the subject has been conducted from a biased position. Thus, before I could reconstruct the kernel of truth I had to compile a list of scholars' prejudices. The verdict for matriarchies as a social form is not as grim as most scholars today believe (or would like us to believe). In brief, the typical research biases can be summarized as follows: The first group would deny the very existence of matriarchies and thus strangle in logical contradictions. The second group recognizes their existence, but immediately devalues them by denying their historical significance, or else evaluates them in negative terms: Thus, we might read that matriarchies were "unnatural," "immoral," or "limited in intellectual scope," etc. Such assessments reveal quite clearly for us the spectrum of patriarchal prejudices.<sup>6</sup> The third group is prepared to acknowledge not only the

existence of matriarchies, but also their historical relevance. They are, moreover, willing to adopt a more positive attitude toward them, but, as a result of the extraordinary divergence of opinions among researchers, this group succumbs to resignation: "no conclusive statements can be made about matriarchies." What they fail to see is that the controversy stems more from their divergent prejudices, than from any factual or methodological divergencies.

Not until I had seen through the affective, biased background behind this research was I able to disregard these opinions, ferret out the facts from the available research, and reconstruct the matriarchies by comparison. A rather impressive picture of matriarchies in history then began to unfold before my eyes. It is a picture that I can only define, but not describe in detail here (as mentioned above, that is the task of my major work in progress). According to this picture matriarchies encompassed, during their evolution from simple rural cultures to sophisticated urban centers, a far greater time span than patriarchal societies have occupied thus far (at least 8,000 years as opposed to 4,000 years of patriarchal development). The period of time commonly designated as the Neolithic Age is what I term the "Matriarchal Epoch" (10,000 to 2,000 B.C.), although some researchers see the Matriarchal Epoch as having a much longer time span, beginning even in the early Stone Age. During the Neolithic period matriarchal civilizations covered the entire subtropical and temperate climatic zones of the earth: Southeast Asia, India, Southern China, Tibet, Indonesia, Oceania, the Near East, Africa, the Mediterranean, Central and Northern Europe, and North and South America. They reached the apex of their development, however, in the Near East and the Mediterranean, where the advanced civilizations of Anatolia, Sumeria, Palestine, Ancient Egypt, and Crete flourished. These civilizations were at the root of the European nations of antiquity, and formed the basis for the development of "western civilization."

It is obvious why the matriarchal epoch, which represents such a long and utterly fertile period of human history, has been obliterated from our historical consciousness: our historiography begins with the classical states of antiquity—Hellenistic Greece, and the Roman Empire—exactly coincidental with the emergence of patriarchy in Europe. The ideological and normative bias in this rendering of history is clear: it excludes enormous stretches of time, and the products thereof, in order to exemplify the ingenuity of the classical states of antiquity as the "beginning of civilization." This leaves the impression that they sprang up from nothing. The classical patriarchal states are thus presented to us as models because the preceding immensely long period of human cultural development con-

tradicts the norm of male economic, social, and intellectual dominance.

Such a historical account precludes the possibility of recognizing the profound impact that the epoch of matriarchal social development had on subsequent patriarchal societies which usurped and destroyed them. If we reintegrate the knowledge of this epoch into our own historical perspective, thus making it universal in a way that it never was before, then we can easily discern remnants of those matriarchal economic forms, social patterns, mythical symbols, and ideals. They become tangible as a sort of "matriarchal opposition" at work within the social and geographical fringe groups, in counter-cultural movements, and in the forms of resistance evident in political movements.

This, then, is the framework surrounding my study of matriarchal religions. However, such a wide-ranging historical spectrum, containing such a wealth of material, can prove fruitful only if it is supported by a solid methodology. I would like to discuss that methodology just briefly here, and demonstrate later in my discussion of matriarchal religions, how it works.

The schematic outline of a matriarchal society provided above is far too general for analyzing specific matriarchal civilizations, or residual traces thereof, which are apparent in patriarchal cultures. As a consequence, I have employed in my research a much more differentiated outline which provides a detailed breakdown of the four points indicated in the outline presented above: The economic structure is considered from within the framework of a matriarchal economy, the social structure from one of matriarchal kinship and group-patterns, and the cultic and religious structures from one of matriarchal mythology. Finally, these particular structures are considered in relation to one another.

For my present purposes, I use only the schematic outline of matriarchal mythology. Since, as I have already stated, my intent is not to present the history of religious ideas, I will not confine myself to a discussion of mythology alone. My inclusion here of economic and social background does not occur on a systematic basis; that is, I do not refer to the particular structures of economic and social organization, because even a general consideration of economic and social structures provides sufficient illustration of my interpretation of mythology. I understand mythology from a socio-historical point of view that rejects romanticized, esoteric, aesthetic, formalistic, and psychoanalytic interpretations, such as the (unsubstantiated) theory of Jungian archetypes. I take mythology seriously as an expression of complex social practices, and as a substantial source of information concerning the structure and mentality of early societies. In the matriarchal context, then, mythology is not ideology (in the Marxian sense) which functions as a guise for dominance of the ruling classes

(patriarchies). Because there are no ruling classes, the mythological images function in matriarchies as a reflection of what is typical in those societies (contrary to Lévi-Strauss's contention), therefore we can use them as a direct source of information.

The schematic structure of matriarchal mythology as indicated here provides the cornerstone of my further research. As I will outline briefly, it encompasses a great deal of information. First, it includes the whole of a very complex world view that prevailed in advanced matriarchies, as well as the world view of the early matriarchy, as it is embedded within that framework. Second, it is the paradigm basic to all analogous perceptions of reality around the world. Third, because of its socio-historical point of view, it contains enormous potential in terms of cultural and social history. The structure of matriarchal mythology, in its developed stages, does not conform to the pattern of binary oppositions, as Lévi-Strauss presumes to have seen in the mythology of tribal societies.<sup>7</sup> It adheres, at least for the Indo-European regions I have researched, to a triangular structure in which all details are embedded.<sup>8</sup> This triangular structure is twofold: on the one hand it applies to the personages, functions, and attributes of the Goddess in advanced matriarchy, i.e., to the Triple Moon Goddess. On the other, it applies to the personages, functions, and attributes of her attendant *heros*. Male gods as eternal beings did not exist. The following outline indicates the personages whose names vary in the concrete myths.<sup>9</sup> The function ascribed to any given personage, however, remains constant. While the attributes encompass a given stereotypical range, they are variable within that range.

An explanation of the outline is as follows:

### 1. WORLD VIEW OF THE ADVANCED MATRIARCHY

An examination of the "Goddess-Structure" reveals the three-tiered perspective of antiquity: Heaven is the highest, most luminous region where the divine constellations are situated; Land and Sea comprise the middle region inhabited by humans; the Underworld is the region below the earth, beneath the seas and other bodies of water, from which the mysterious powers of Death and Rebirth emerge. This three-tiered cosmos is perceived to be thoroughly permeated by female wholeness and capability: Heaven is home to the light, youthful, atmospheric Goddess, personified by the hunting Maiden. In the middle, on Land and Sea, the Woman Goddess resides. She fertilizes the earth and the waters, animals, and humans with her erotic powers and thus continues life. The Crone Goddess lives in the Underworld. She is the Goddess of Death, responsible for allowing all life to disintegrate into the

## A) GODDESS-STRUCTURE: (TRIAD)

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<i>Personage:</i>	Maiden	Woman	Crone
<i>Functions:</i>	Hunting and fighting; Mistress of Heaven	Love, fertility; Mistress of Earth	Death and Rebirth, magic, oracle, art, and science; Mistress of the Underworld/ Other World
<i>Attributes:</i>			
a) Lunar phases:	Crescent moon	Full Moon	New Black Moon
b) Symbolic lunar colors:	White	Red	Black
c) Seasons:	Spring	Summer	Fall and Winter
d) Cosmic regions:	Heaven	Land and Sea	Underworld as subterranean and suboceanic realms of the Hereafter
e) Symbolic animals:	Wild animals: lion, panther, cats; white deer, falcon	Suckling animals: cow, goat, sheep, hind; love and fertility symbols: doves, bees	Underworld animals: snake, dragon; black or nocturnal animals: owl, raven, crow, black and white hounds, or horses
f) Symbolic objects:	Bow and arrow, chariot drawn by lions, cats, or deer	Magical belts and rings; the world egg (full moon), the apple of love, the fruit Garden of Paradise	Apple of death, the scales of fate, the thread of fate, or the spindle; the Garden of Paradise as Other World

## B) *HEROS* STRUCTURE: (Relative to the Goddess Triad)

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*Personage:* just one

*Functions:* *Initiation*  
(in spring);

Initiation as the fulfillment of tasks of wooing the Maiden Goddess.

a) Peaceful variant: a contest to acquire magical objects or wisdom.

b) Competitive variant: a race on foot or in chariots, or a fight. The most common is the initiatory fight which takes the following forms:

1. Fight against mythical animals: lion, hind, snake, whereby the slaying of the snake or dragon, thought to be a monster of death, prevails.

2. Fight against the predecessor in office, who is either an outsider (subsequent connection of "widow" and "murderer") or related; in the second case, the following variants apply:

2.1. The king in office is the "father" of the young king, and a "father-son" battle ensues (subsequent connection of "mother" and "son," e.g., Oedipus).

2.2. The king in office is a usurping uncle who murdered the first king ("father") and must thus be murdered by the son (e.g., Orestes); (subsequent connection of "mother" and "son").

*Sacred Marriage*  
(in summer)

The Sacred Marriage is the primary festivity, consummated with the Woman Goddess in the presence of all the symbols of fertility.

Site: a wonderful place outside in nature, originally on a mountain peak.

*Death and Rebirth*  
(in fall/winter)

Death is always a sacrificial one in which the ideal sacrifice is the *heros*-king himself; later variants include: sacrifice of a double, a male child, or male animals.

The sacrifice of the *heros*-king, too, has many variants:

1. Death at the hand of the Goddess in her third personage (Crone); Rebirth or Reawakening through the Goddess in her first personage (Maiden).

2. Death at the hand of one of the Goddess' mythical animals, esp. the dragon or snake; death can also be a death-like state: apparent death, unconsciousness, severe wounding. Reawakening through the Maiden Goddess, usually in the form of healing the wound.

3. Death at the hand of the successor. Return (reawakening) as the next successor.

*Attributes:* Symbol of the *heros* is the sun in its bright colors, gold and red

abyss and to rise again. She is the enigmatic deity of eternal descent and eternal renewal. She reigns over astronomical cycles (the rise and fall of stars), and thus also over the cycles of vegetation and human life; she is, therefore, the Mistress of Cosmic Order and is eternal Wisdom personified. All three figures combined form one single deity, and can thus never be completely severed from one another. This single deity is the matriarchal Great Goddess, the first trinity. Her symbol is the moon, one entity with three phases: the white crescent moon is symbolic of the Maiden Goddess and her ceremonial hunting bow; the red full moon on the horizon is symbolic of the crimson world egg, which is an attribute of the Woman Goddess. The invisible black moon, seemingly transparent, but nonetheless present, is symbolic of the paradoxical Crone, the Goddess of the Transition from light to dark, and from dark to light.

The "*Heros-Structure*" is less differentiated because the powers of the human male do not represent the cosmos. His dimensions are more limited; he has only one personage and each of his phases is relative to the Goddess. It is through her that he is first granted access to goods and status (Initiation); he is integrated as an element of her all-encompassing fertility (Sacred Marriage); it is through her that he is able to experience for himself the passages of Death and Rebirth inherent in the cycle of life. During these cyclical ceremonies of the seasons, the Goddess is represented by her priestess, or Sacred Queen; she is the active deciding partner. The *heros*, or Sacred King, is, on the other hand, the human delegate with whom the Goddess, personified by the priestess, bonds, in order to bestow new life upon her people. These ritual actions are not merely symbolic enactments, but rather are actually carried out: Royal titles are conferred upon the king in the Initiation; the cosmic regions are fertilized in the public ceremony of the Sacred Marriage; the king's blood is actually spilled in performing his passage into the Underworld, the blood ensuring the fertility of the earth for the coming year. His return is fulfilled in the personage of his successor, who is his actual physical reincarnation (Rebirth not only as an idea, but as an actual process). "Death," according to this world view, is nothing final, but rather another state of existence entered into and from which one emerges according to the cosmic law. Thus seen from the male perspective, "death" is a voluntary sacrifice made in the interest of land and people, resulting ultimately in apotheosis and new life (original meaning of the "heroic"). The most striking expression of female wholeness and capability here is evident in the fact that the male symbol is an aspect of the female: The sun is considered to be

dependent on the moon and the stars, and as exerting only a secondary influence on fertility. Whereas the moon governs the ebb and flow of waters, plant growth, and female fertility cycles, the sun can even act as a destructive force (in warmer climates). Although the moon also comes up and goes down, it resides in the eternity of celestial constellations, and therefore is a symbol of the eternal night, while the day with the sun is transient and always coming and going. Thus, crimson and gold, the colors displayed by sunset, are the *heros'* colors.

## 2. WORLD VIEW OF THE EARLY MATRIARCHY

The following world view of the early matriarchy is embodied in the advanced matriarchy: the Goddess of the early matriarchy is the chthonic goddess who personifies Earth herself. She inhabits ravines, caves, volcanoes, or simply the entire subterranean regions of the earth. She brings forth life from the depths, and takes it with her upon her return. The *heros* is her partner of fertility, and he tarries with her in the Underworld most of the time. Neither of these figures has astral elements.

The Earth Goddess is considered "mother" of all life; all women are her "daughters," all men her "sons." The *heros*, with his seasonal Death and Return, is her "son," too, but this does not describe actual kinship. A predecessor in office is thought of as the "father" of his successor because he is his elder, not because he is his biological father; paternity was unknown in matriarchy. In the same vein all women are the "daughters" of the tribal mother and all men are her "sons," but, in this case, the relationship bears more semblance with real kinship. It follows, then, that the women and men of any given generation would be considered "siblings." Not until the advent of the advanced matriarchies, with their pronounced system of sacred priestesses and sacred kings, were the successors in office actually the uterine daughters of the priestess-mothers, and their royal partners blood-brothers, sharing a common mother.

There is an even more ancient form of matriarchal mythology in which not a single male personage appears: Here, the Earth Goddess dances in the solitude of chaos, embraced by the primordial snake, the ocean, representing the fertility-rendering water. Elsewhere, the primordial snake is the wind, which impregnates the Goddess, who then creates the cosmos. The male in this case is present merely in principle, not as a bodily figure. As will soon become apparent, the primordial snake that later became the black serpent of the Underworld, is another ancient matriarchal symbol. It is almost as old as the crimson world egg (the red full moon), from which all things emanate when it cracks open. It was laid by the

omnipresent Goddess of Love while she was in the shape of a dove. This image emerged as a symbol when the astral Moon Goddess was separated from the chthonic Earth Mother. The time-honored matriarchal symbol of the crimson apple of love, similar to the red full moon, is a tangible symbol of the intangible world egg. The apple of love, particularly potent as it appears in Paradise, possesses extraordinary powers: it incites eroticism, and when conceived of as the poison apple of death, initiates death. Furthermore, the apple can revive the *heros* and grant him eternal youth. The warlike symbols of the Maiden Goddess, especially the silver bow as weapon, and lions as warrior-mascots, are much more recent developments. Presumably, this symbolism was first introduced with the establishment of the Amazon territories toward the end of the long matriarchal epoch.

### 3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF MATRIARCHY

The social and cultural history of matriarchy are precisely the focus of this study: Using the schematic outline of matriarchal mythology as my guide, I will provide a key for understanding concrete matriarchal religions. While they existed throughout the world, matriarchal religions reached the height of their development in the Indo-European regions. Therefore, my work will focus on these regions (Mediterranean, Near East, India) and their corresponding socio-historical cultural background.

After this analysis I will demonstrate the manner in which the patriarchal mind-set and social organization distorted the structure of matriarchal religions. These changes followed a distinct set of rules; that is, they were a systematic transformation of structures, as I will outline in detail. These rules of transformation prove the way distortion functions: Patriarchal social domination (hierarchical societies) needs a variety of ideologies in order to manipulate the ruled. Accordingly, patriarchy first unifies itself with the dominated by "absorbing" their world-view. It then adapts those views to accommodate the patriarchal mind-set. Then it changes the adapted views by following certain rules which involve a distortion of history and the production of a lie about society. Through this distortion it then creates the new ideology—the patriarchal religion. Thus distorted, the old world view steps out in new clothing. At the same time, though, an element subsists within patriarchal religion that is critical of the new society. On occasion, this intensifies into utopian hope. I will also demonstrate this double-aspect in the symbolic systems considered.

I hope, by using two exemplary elements of the patriarchal cultural tradition—fairy tales and the medieval epic poetry to subsequently

illustrate precisely how the pattern of matriarchal religions was sustained, even in patriarchal times. Although they represent but two parts of a broad spectrum of matriarchal remnants evident in patriarchal culture, they provide substantiation of my theory that "matriarchal opposition" endured throughout this epoch. The structure of matriarchal mythology is recognizable in the conscious struggle against it. In the case of the fairy tales, this occurred as distortions born of a specific set of rules of transformation. The same process took place with the myths. In the case of the epic poetry, the distortions occurred as semantic alterations which reveal the intent to adapt the ancient matriarchal values present in the material to fit the newly formed Christian-patriarchal world-view. Even so, the utopian element was not lost. In spite of the later interpreters' intentions, the sparks of matriarchal dissent and hope still shimmer through the chronological layers.



GREECE<sup>10</sup>

This analysis begins with the goddesses of Greek mythology whose matriarchal origins are not common knowledge. While these figures are already quite deformed, the fact of their relative familiarity will enhance the reader's understanding.

## 1.1 ARTEMIS AND ACTEON

**Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)**

*When Artemis was a young girl, she sat on her father Zeus's knees and asked him to grant her a realm for her divine activities. Her first wish was that she remain forever a maiden (eternal virginity). Her second wish was for a bow and arrow and all the hills of the world for the wild animals she could hunt. This was where she wanted to live forever. Zeus granted her wishes with a smile, and even made her patroness of women in childbirth and of children. In addition, she was given thirty cities in which her name would be revered.*

*Artemis sprang from Zeus's knees and went to the Cyclopes, whom she ordered to forge for her a silver bow. Then she had Pan send her hunting dogs. Finally, she trapped two pairs of female deer, harnessed them to a golden chariot, and rode thus across the mountain tops, hunting. She shot wild animals without err. Whenever she arrived in a city full of unjust people, she shot them dead with her arrows.*

*When prince Acteon accidentally stumbled upon the place where Artemis and her maiden consorts bathed, he hid so that he could observe them. When Artemis realized that Acteon had seen her naked, she transformed him into a stag and killed him with one arrow shot from her bow.\**

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\* Here we are confronted with matriarchal feelings about life and death which are different and seem strange to us, in view of our patriarchal conditioning. Yet just here lies the challenge to us to try to understand matriarchal culture from its own perspective, and not from the patriarchal point of view that has already been

A glimmer of the Maiden aspect of the pre-Olympian Triple Goddess shines through in the figure of the Olympian Artemis. She is depicted as a very young huntress, usually clad in a short *chiton*, armed with a silver bow and arrows. In classical Greece she is still considered to be a moon goddess. In later portrayals she is adorned with a crescent moon in her hair. Her attitude was one of inexorable Amazonian chastity, but only toward men. Her hunting grounds were the forests and mountains where she reigned supreme over the wild animals (Ill. 1). She was escorted by white hounds and often was seen in a golden chariot drawn over the mountain tops by white, horned does. She was always accompanied by maiden consorts with whom she raced through the air on the Wild Chase (winter storm). Named Artemis-Alpheia, she is the pre-Olympian White Goddess of very ancient origin.

Of course, though, Artemis-Alpheia is not the childish and naive virginal relic she has been reduced to in the Olympian figure of Artemis. Her most important cult site is Ephesus, where she was the High Goddess of the Amazons. In this role she shows all three aspects of the Goddess trinity. Here, the warrior aspect is most prominent, but she is also the orgiastic Woman Goddess of Love and Fertility, as well as the Goddess of Death and Renewal.

Allusions to the second aspect of the Great Goddess can be found in the union of the Ephesian Artemis with a male consort, in the rite of the Sacred Marriage, together with the symbolic date palm, the quail, and the bee. All are symbols of fertility. The bee is also symbolic of the founding of the female states.

The fatal arrows (plague) she used to target entire cities are indicators of the third aspect. Her function as midwife and Patroness of Birth and Children further associates her with this aspect, for it is in this manner that she takes charge of the renewal of life. Furthermore, her red-eared white hounds were considered Underworld creatures. Thus, her triadic figure embodies not only the three phases of the Moon Goddess, but also of all the stars. As Mistress of the Heavens she possesses a cosmic dimension.

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engraved into our consciousness. When it is said that the Goddess kills the *heros*, it never means that she murders, or slaughters, or sacrifices him. That is the patriarchal imagination of our culture, where those patriarchal peoples presently in power murder, or slaughter, or sacrifice thousands of men in war. In the matriarchal concept the Goddess led the *heros* gently to death as only another form of life. Or she sent him on the Underworld Journey, or took him into her Underworld Paradise, where he became wise, and where his reincarnation was prepared. Reincarnation is real to matriarchal people, to whom death is not horrible. Each expression, therefore, of "the Goddess killing the *heros*" is to be understood in this matriarchal sense.



*III. 1: Artemis as Mistress of Wild Animals*



*III. 2: Artemis killing Acteon*

Typically, her *heros* is portrayed as Acteon, the enchanted stag. The reason she killed him, however, was not at all because he witnessed her nudity while bathing, for the orgiastic nymph is always naked. Nor did she kill him out of fear for her virginity, because "virgin" did not, in its original sense, mean "chaste maiden," but rather "warlike, invincibly strong young woman," or "Amazon." She killed him in a ritual act following the consummation of the Sacred Marriage which joined Artemis the "doe" and Acteon the "stag" (presumably totem masks worn by the priestess of Artemis and the Sacred King). His death, while in the shape of a stag, by her arrow, was the classic rite of sacrifice of the king in the Artemis cult (Ill. 2). The following spring, his successor returned as the new Acteon, who remained in the company of the Amazonian tribal nymph until his death in the fall. Thus the cycle of fertility was completed anew. (The ancient European game in folklore, "Hunting the Stag," follows the same pattern.)<sup>11</sup>

## 1.2 APHRODITE AND ADONIS

### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Aphrodite emerged naked from the foaming sea and rode a conch shell to Cyprus, where she erected her shrines. Wherever she walked upon the earth, grass and flowers blossomed. She wore a magic belt which inspired everyone who saw it, to love her.*

*This was the fate of most gods: Even though she was married to Hephaistos, she had a series of lovers which included Ares, Hermes, Poseidon, and Dionysus. Even Zeus was seduced by the belt's magic. She had affairs with humans, too, appearing before princes and kings in a glittering red robe. Her chosen favorite, however, was Adonis, son of the loveliest princess on earth, and himself of extraordinary beauty. She rescued him as a small child by harboring him in the Underworld. But Persephone, Goddess of the Underworld, fell in love with Adonis herself, and wanted to keep him by her side. Thus, the two enamored goddesses got into a fight that was terminated only by the court of the gods, which mandated that Adonis spend the summer with Aphrodite and the winter with Persephone.*

*Ares, however, grew jealous, disguised himself as a wild boar and threw himself upon Adonis while he was hunting in the hills, impaling and killing him before Aphrodite's eyes. Anemones grew from his blood, and his soul descended into the Underworld. Aphrodite's grief prompted Zeus to permit Adonis to ascend from the Underworld the*

*next summer, so that Adonis could stay with Aphrodite for the summer.*

The Olympian Aphrodite, too, is a patriarchal permutation, degraded to a colorless concubine of various lascivious gods, yet she, like Artemis, is of the most ancient origin and displays an even more pronounced cosmic function.

Even in the Olympian version the erotic power and fertility of land, animals, and humans depended upon her alone. In summer she appeared clad in the royal crimson robe, or naked before the gods and humans, enchanting them with the belt that made her irresistible. The belt's effect is so strong that Hera borrowed it on one occasion in order to charm Zeus to love her. Athena and Hera begged Aphrodite not to wear it to the judgment of Paris, so as not to influence his decision in her favor. As we know, however, Paris chose Aphrodite anyway, even without the belt. This constitutes a perversion of the myth, however, because Aphrodite is the one who did the choosing. She presented the king with the red apple of love, which, one seasonal cycle later, became his apple of death (Ill. 3).

The pre-Olympian Aphrodite Urania was the primordial Creatress-Goddess. As the Great Goddess of the Mediterranean she reigned over land and sea. At the beginning of time she emerged naked from the foaming seas (chaos), and danced or floated on the waves on her conch shell. Transforming herself into a dove she soared above the chaos and laid the world egg, the full moon, from which all things sprang when it cracked open. Even in epochs after it was said that she could disappear into thin air, surrounded by doves.

This was the parthenogenetic act of creation and it explains why Aphrodite is attributed with virginity. Furthermore, after each erotic union, she immersed herself in water, thus restoring her virginity, which was a transformation back into her first aspect. Her child, Eros, androgynous and gold-winged, was the creative principle par excellence who brought forth and supported the entire cosmos. Eros was not degenerated into a foolish, fickle cherub until patriarchal times.

These mythical images of Aphrodite refer far back to the early matriarchy, where the Goddess created without a male partner. In the developed matriarchy on Cyprus and the Aegean Islands, she also practiced the rite of the Sacred Marriage. Here, Adonis was her heros. However, Ares, the God of War, was not the one who as a wild boar tore Adonis to pieces in a jealous rage; it was Aphrodite herself who dismembered him after transforming him first into a boar in the same way that Artemis turned Acteon into a stag. Red anemones emerged

from Adonis's blood, which lent fertility to the earth. Aphrodite grieved for half a year, searching for him all over the world, going even into the Underworld, where she finally found him. There, under the name of Persephone, Aphrodite spent the winter with him (an indicator of her third aspect as Goddess of Death). In the following spring he returned, only to suffer again the same fate. Thus, Adonis, like the annual cycle of sunlight, traversed the spheres.

### 1.3. ATHENA AND ERECHTHEUS

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*According to the pre-Hellenic version, Athena was born in Libya on the shores of Lake Triton. From there she came by way of Crete to Greece. According to the Olympian version, Athena sprang from the head of Zeus after he had devoured Metis, the Goddess of Wisdom, while she was pregnant with Athena. He was strolling along the shores of Lake Triton when he was overcome by a headache so excruciating that a split had to be forged in his head. Athena, fully grown and armored, sprang from the split with a piercing scream.*

*Athena is a War Goddess, but she is not a lover of battle. She prefers, instead, to settle long-standing disputes peacefully. She let clemency reign and impressed upon humans all the peaceful arts: cultivation, the domestication of animals, the arts of cooking and weaving, knowledge of wheels and wagons, shipbuilding, and furthermore, the science of numbers (mathematics). She also invented musical instruments. When forced to fight she was ever victorious because she was tactically more intelligent than all her opponents. Like Artemis, Athena preferred eternal virginity. Once, Hephaistos, God of Smithery, tried to rape her, but she extricated herself. As his sperm spurted out onto the earth it initiated the birth of Erechtheus, an unwanted child with snakes for feet. Athena decided out of sympathy to raise the child. She hid him beneath her armor and was so kind to him that she was taken for his mother. Erechtheus later became the first king of Athens.*

The Olympian Athena became an obedient daughter of Zeus, born of his head because, in patriarchy, wisdom had to spring from masculine origins. Athena is first and foremost the Goddess of Wisdom, an attribute which reflects most distinctly the third aspect of the Triple Goddess.

The pre-Olympian Athena was the parthenogenetic daughter of wisdom (Metis), or, having brought herself into the world, was



*Ill. 3: Aphrodite with pomegranate*



*Ill. 4: Athena the Snake Goddess*

wisdom personified. This authentic matriarchal act of creation resulted in her being subsequently re-cast into the Parthenos, or "virgin," something she never was in the strict sense of the word. She was, however, the strong young woman-at-arms, invincible even to Ares, God of War. This is evidence of the Amazonian character she brought with her from her North African home (Libya).

What is more pronounced than this first aspect of the goddess-triad is the third aspect, discernible from her titles of wisdom: She is considered Goddess of Art and Science, which is congruent with her relationship to nocturnal and Underworld animals, because owls, crows (Athena Koronis), and horses (Athena Polias) were sacred to Athena; furthermore, she always carried the black snake beneath her breast plate, or behind her shield. It is also seen entwined about her on older illustrations, or represented by a robe with snakelike fringes on later illustrations. Athena is unmistakably recognizable based on the ever-present snake who is her constant companion, because she is just that: Athena the Snake Goddess (Ill. 4).

The snake symbol signifies the science of medicine typically associated with Athena. Athena Hygieia was regarded as an outstanding medical practitioner, because she could cause the serpent's venom to kill or to heal, even to return from death. This identifies her as the Goddess with power over the Underworld, because she held Death and Renewal in her hand. Near Athens she had her own medicinal cult sites, where, naturally, not only medicine was practiced. They were also places for magic, oracles, and meditation on the laws of the eternal cycle called "cosmos" and "fate." Thus, Athena is also the Goddess of Destiny who held scales in her hand, i.e., the Goddess of Death-in-Life. She is also the Goddess of Astronomy/Astrology, of the measurement and interpretation of the stars. She is therefore said to have invented the systems of measurement and of numbers, and of music (flute and lyre), which sounds like the harmony of the constellations.

At the same time, she is depicted as Goddess of the "Arts," which in matriarchy does not mean abstract aesthetics, but rather the capacity for practical handicrafts. She was indeed gifted in this area, having invented the art of cultivating and breeding plants. She brought the domestic olive tree to Greece, for which she was awarded the city of Athens. She was considered to be the inventor of garden tools, the hoe and the rake, as well as of agricultural equipment such as the plow. She invented the yoke for oxen, and the reins for horses, which she used to tame these animals. Gardening and agriculture, the basic pillars of matriarchal economy, coupled with the keeping of domestic animals, were practiced by matriarchal women under the protection of Athena.

She is also said to have invented pottery and cooking, whereby "cooking" was a complex affair carried out along a spectrum of nutritive and magical arts that included the preparation of medicines and "magic potions." Spinning and weaving were thought to be Athena's original domain. "Spinning" hints at her function as the Goddess of Fate, and "weaving" at her function as creatress, whereby she weaves the "veil of life." Athena's tapestries were, in fact, regarded as unsurpassable masterpieces. This reflects the domestic facet of matriarchal culture. Nevertheless, she was also well-versed in the art of smithery, particularly of precious metals such as silver and gold, which were used to create cult objects.

Athena's most amazing inventions were associated with cultic activities: the wheel, the carriage, and the ship. We will see later how these were employed in the cultic context; suffice it to say here that the fundamental inventions of human civilization were Athena's. This is not based on mythology but on fact: these inventions were created by matriarchal women. Everything ascribed to Athena is a precise indicator of matriarchal economics and culture in their most advanced stages. It is no wonder, then, that Athena was regarded as a paragon of wisdom, and no wonder that the patriarchal Zeus was so quick and so thorough in usurping her. Later, in the Athens of the classical period (patriarchy), women were forbidden to pursue arts and crafts, and to practice sciences; arts and crafts and philosophy were reserved for men only.

In addition to this extraordinary wealth of accomplishment, the Goddess Athena also possessed the second aspect of the Triple Goddess, though this is absent in the Olympian version. The pre-Olympian Athena, a snake goddess indigenous to Crete and Cretan Greece (Pelagian and Mycenaean periods), always carried her *heros*, Erechtheus, in the shape of a snake, protectively under her *aegis*, or behind her shield, because he had not yet matured from his primordial snake stage as a phallic symbol into a human personage.

In her orgiastic phases, Athena danced with the snake in the cosmos. Out of this connection the world was and is created (myth of Eurynome). This notion was popular from the time of the early matriarchy.

It was not until he set foot on Greek ground, in the pre-Hellenic Pelagian Age, that Erechtheus took on human shape and became the first Sacred King of Athens, although he was said to have retained his snake-like feet. According to a Cretan rite he was killed annually by a "lightning bolt" shot from the hand of the Goddess. This bolt is synonymous with the labrys, the Cretan double-ax. The Olympian Zeus later stole the Goddess' "bolt" and used it to strike dead the *heros* of

medicine, who had the shape of a snake (Erechtheus acting under the name of Asclepios), because he had defied Zeus's will and healed some human, preventing his death: This is a dramatic parody of the matriarchal Death and Return myth.

We can see in the Greek goddesses that each originally represented the matriarchal Triple Goddess, who was, in the early stages, even independent of the male principle, but in the later developed stages, acted with a male consort who was a mortal *heros*, not a god. The deformations of the Triple Goddess found in the patriarchal Olympian religion are typical: Emphasis is always placed on one of her aspects, while the other aspects are severed, to rob her of her universality. These remaining aspects are then subjected to devaluation. Thus, Artemis became the chaste, cuddly lap-daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite the grand whore (*hetaira*), and Athena the divine housewife who relinquished her Crone-Wisdom to Zeus. These transformations of the goddess image ran parallel to changes in the social status of women in patriarchal Hellenic Greece: Like the goddesses, their lives were now restricted to the male definitions of "virgin," "prostitute," and "housewife." This was classical Greece.

## CRETE

The island of Crete in the eastern Mediterranean lies at the intersection of travel routes between Asia, Africa, and Europe. This is why the influences of the ancient Sumerian culture of Asia converged with the ancient Egyptian culture from Africa to form a highly original and ingenious creation: the Minoan culture. This culture was to have the profoundest impact, not only on the Aegean Islands and Asia Minor, but also on the Peloponnesus and the Greek mainland, and even further into the entire Mediterranean region, and beyond it onto the shores of central and northwestern Europe. The influence that Cretan culture had on the development of all early European civilizations has thus far been neither recognized nor accurately assessed, because everyone's view is fixated on the aspect most flattering to patriarchal history: patriarchal Greece as the beginning of the "western civilization."

This study, however, is the quest for a different beginning. When we trace their history in reverse, the goddesses show us the way. Not only does Athena direct us back to Crete, so do the other goddesses, and even more the Great Mother deities, Demeter, Rhea, and Hera. Though they bear Greek names, they are utterly non-Greek. Before they were deformed and oppressed, their festive ceremonies dominated the religious life of Crete, the State of the Goddess, the Theocracy.

### 2.1. DEMETER AND IAKCHOS

#### **Summary of the Myths** (as written in the sources)

*Demeter is a very gentle goddess who has a daughter, Kore. Hades, God of the Underworld, fell in love with Kore, abducted her, and took her to his realm. This brought deep sorrow to Demeter, who wandered throughout the world in search of her daughter, to no avail. As much as her friends tried to help, nothing cheered her up. Finally, she forbade the plants to grow, the trees to bear fruit, and the animals to reproduce, until all the people were dead. She refused to retract her curse until Kore was returned from the Underworld. The gods were then smitten with fear of their own demise and so forced Hades to*

*release Kore. Demeter was so happy to see Kore again in Eleusis that she made the earth fertile again. But, while in the Underworld Kore had tasted the pomegranate, the fruit of death, and for that reason had to return there. However, she was permitted to remain with her mother in the upper world for nine months of the year (summer). For the other three months (winter) she had to return to Hades, where she reigned as Persephone, Queen of the Underworld. The Crone Goddess Hecate made sure the agreement was adhered to.*

*Demeter's son by her brother Zeus was Iakchos (or Dionysus). A horned child with a serpentine crown, he was torn apart at jealous Hera's command. In her pity, though, his grandmother Rhea pieced him back together and hid him in a cave, disguised as a goat calf, or a ram.*

*When Dionysus was grown, he discovered wine and integrated its consumption as a cultural element in Asia, North Africa, and Europe. Similarly, other princes whom Demeter initiated into her mysteries learned agriculture and the hybridization of trees, and spread, at her bidding, the agrarian culture throughout the world.*

Demeter, whose triadic character has remained completely intact, is a very ancient goddess who originated in the earliest age of the Mother Goddess. She is, at the same time, Kore (the Maiden), Persephone (the Woman), and Hecate (the Crone). Kore signifies the green grain, Persephone their ripened spicules, and Hecate the harvested kernels, for Demeter was a grain goddess who, as "Mother Earth," personified the fields, and was patroness of agriculture and fertility in general.

Incarnated as Kore, Demeter was the Spring Goddess: beneath her feet, flowers blossomed and fresh grass grew (Ill. 5). Indeed, it was while picking flowers that she was abducted. Manifested as Persephone, the Woman Goddess, she consummated the Sacred Marriage with her king in the fields of grain in order to ensure the year's fertility. She killed him in the fall with her thunderbolt (double ax) in order to secure fertility for the coming year. After much lamentation she descended, still in the form of Persephone, to the Underworld to seek him there. (The portrayal of Persephone as the wife of Hades stems from a later version). She took all life with her into the depths, where she tarried as the Goddess of Death for a quarter of a year. She had thus become the wintry Hecate whose horrific magical powers became the prototype of all subsequent "hags" (witches). In the following spring, she returned once again in the vibrant personage of Kore.

Demeter was the matriarchal Goddess of Vegetation par excellence, and manifested, in the sum of her incarnations, the seasonal cycle of



III. 5: *Demeter and Kore*

the year. Wherever she went Demeter blessed people with her teachings on agricultural grain production and the use of the plow. She was thought to be gentle and loving, and filled with an inexhaustible abundance of gifts, like the ever-endowing Earth itself.

As Mother Earth she was the mother of all living beings; thus her sacred kings, known by different names (Triptolemos, Iakchos), were her sons. The name "Iakchos" indicates that Dionysus ("Bacchus") was typically her *heros*. Triptolemos and Dionysus were both children, or at the very least, extremely young *heros* (before Dionysus was idolized). Dionysus was taken for the son of Semele, or Selene, or Io, the Moon Goddess, who was yet another variant of Kore in the shape of

the White Moon Goddess. Occasionally, though, Demeter is named directly as his mother. He was dismembered in infancy but put back together by the grace of his grandmother, Rhea. After that, Persephone was said to have raised him secretly in the Underworld.

This myth involves the *heros*-structure: The young *heros*, after celebrating the orgiastic festival of the Sacred Marriage with the Woman Goddess, was, in the form of a he-goat, torn to pieces by the Goddess' wild consorts, the Maenads. The pomegranate tree, which bore the classical fruits of love and death, was created by his blood. After his death he tarried with Persephone in the Underworld where he was "put back together." This is to say that he was prepared for his rebirth. He was born again by Demeter, who, in the personage of Kore, the "Spirit of Spring," brought him with her when she emerged from the Underworld.

The Eleusian mysteries that were to subsequently exert great influence on the Hellenistic world, and on into Roman times, were symbolic representations of precisely these rituals: the Sacred Marriage of Demeter, the Death and Rebirth of Iakchos as a child, who was greeted and received enthusiastically by shepherds. The priestess group (the Maenads) that later developed into an all-male clergy, performed these rites in drunken ecstasy, having at hand, of course, plenty of wine and bread, the symbolic offerings of Demeter and Iakchos-Dionysus. In the years prior to the cultivation of vines, narcotic plants, leaves, mushrooms, or beer were used as drugs. They were said to impart magical properties: They were "magic potions," which is to say, drinks of divine "enthusiasm" that overwhelmed those participating in the rituals. It is even reflected in the name "Eleusis," which in its Cretan usage is "Eilythuies," meaning the "delirious deity."

This was Demeter as she is grounded in Greek civilization. She is often assumed to be an indigenous Greek goddess, but this is incorrect, because her connections to Crete are numerous and conspicuous. Whereas in Greece she was the Fertility Goddess of plants, animals, and humans, who resided in the realms of Heaven, Earth, and Underworld, in Crete she was the primeval Mother Goddess, called "Eileithyia." Her cult sites were huge caves symbolizing the womb of Mother Earth: the Ida Cavern, the Dicta Cavern, the Eileithyia Cavern. She was an ecstatic deity, the Earth Mother, and Goddess of Birth, like Demeter (compare: Eilythuies, Eleusis). In her manifestation as Maiden she was the Cretan goddess with a crown of poppies in her hair (poppies are narcotic plants picked by Kore). In her manifestation as the Underworld Goddess, Hecate, she assumed the figure of the Cretan Snake Goddess. The Cretan Ariadne is Demeter as Moon

Goddess, the light and maidenly Goddess of the moon and the stars (Korona Borealis).

Her lover and *heros* was Dionysus-Zagreus, a Cretan child god incarnated as a youthful priest-king. His male reproductive potency was represented symbolically not only by the billy goat, but also by the ram and the bull, and he always wore these animals' horns. Even in Greece, Dionysus is described as "a child with horns and a serpentine crown." His rites in Knossos were very similar to those of Eleusis. Here, too, the *heros* in the shape of a goat calf, a ram, or a bull, died at the hand of the Goddess' "thunderbolt," the Labrys or double ax, which is, at the same time, a symbol of the moon in its three phases: ☽ = waxing moon, ☾ = waning moon, ☾ = full moon. Every spring, the fertility of the earth was renewed by his blood: pomegranate trees, hyacinths, and narcissus emerged. "Hyakinthos" and "Narkissos" were nothing more than different names for the Cretan *heros*, much like "Antheus" (Blossom) was a surname for Dionysus. The narcissus, or lily (originally a lotus blossom), was used for making Demeter's crowns; as a symbol of Rebirth it was the emblem of the priest-king of Knossos, the so-called "Prince of Lilies" (Ill. 6). After his death he tarried in the Underworld, which is to say, in the huge sacred caverns that represented the womb of the Earth. There, he was put back together by the Earth Goddess and pampered by her female consorts. They fed him lavishly with milk and honey, according to the myth of Dionysus, and spoiled him in every way possible. That is why he later became so extravagant in his behavior.

## 2.2 RHEA AND ZEUS

### **Summary of the Myths** (as written in the sources)

*Rhea was the daughter of Gaia, the Earth Mother. She married her brother, Cronus, and gave birth to Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon, and Zeus. Because Cronus devoured his children, she hid her youngest son, Zeus, in the Dicta Cavern at Crete, in the womb of the Earth, her mother. Rhea gave Cronus a stone, instead of the child, to swallow.*

*Together with his foster brother, Pan, Zeus grew up in the cave on milk and honey. His golden cradle hung high in a tree so that Cronus could find him neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor in the ocean. When Zeus had matured into an adult man on Mount Ida, where he lived with the shepherds, he outwitted Cronus by giving him an evil potion. Cronus promptly regurgitated the siblings unharmed. They then*

*selected Zeus as their leader and finally killed Cronus at the end of a ten-year war.*

*Zeus's first lover was his mother Rhea. As she was instructing him in the ways of marriage he made an attempt to rape her. When she quickly transformed herself into a snake, he turned himself into a male snake and wrapped himself around her in an inextricable knot. This was the first in a long series of Zeus's romantic adventures.*

*The Olympian Zeus retains his immortality and is depicted as the heavenly father who reins in his rebellious family with the lightning bolt he carries in his hand. In Crete, however, Zeus was a mortal god who was buried annually in order to be reborn again and again by Rhea in the same cavern, in flashes of fire and a stream of blood.*

Rhea's name is a variation on the ancient Greek word "Era" (the Earth), and like Demeter, she is the Earth Mother. Gaia ("Mother Earth") is the name of her own mother, and her most famous daughter is Hera (the Earth). Demeter, too, is thought to be her daughter, which is an indicator how closely these goddesses resembled each other. In the final analysis, it is always the same goddess who appears from generation to generation in progressively younger incarnations: Gaia (Era)-Rhea-Hera/Demeter are all one and the same, the Great Earth Mother of Crete and the Near East.

Accordingly, their myths are very similar: Each of these goddesses married her brother and gave birth to a son, each of whom was her *heros* in a different manifestation. Gaia, the primeval Earth Goddess, married Uranus, the sky, and bore her son, Cronus, who, in a struggle for succession, castrated Uranus, thus precipitating his death. After that he himself ruled. Rhea was Cronus's sister and wife, and her son Zeus also castrated his father in order to usurp his power. Hera was Zeus's sister and became his wife; her son Heracles (later assigned to Alkmene) managed to ascend into Heaven, but was unable to overthrow Zeus. The patriarchalization of religion interrupted this succession. Demeter, too, was Zeus's sister and conceived with him her son, Iakchos.

A true father-son relationship in these cases did not exist, because in matriarchal religion and society paternity was either unknown or indeterminable. "Father," in this case, signifies "predecessor in office" (of Sacred King) and "son" means "successor in office." It is precisely this spirit in which Uranus became for Gaia the royal predecessor with whom she celebrated the Sacred Marriage, just as Cronus in turn became his royal successor and she did the same thing with him. For Rhea, Cronus was the predecessor she married, and Zeus his successor,



*Ill. 6: The Priest King of Crete*



*Ill. 7: The Cretan Earth Goddess (Rhea)*

each her *heros*. The same is true of the pre-Olympian Hera and Demeter. This sheds a revealing light, then, on the peculiar tales of sons killing their fathers and marrying their mothers that have persisted well into the myth of Oedipus. These occurrences are not gruesome incidences of patricide and incest, but rather simply the cyclical progression of matriarchal rituals.

Rhea was the Great Triple Goddess of Crete: Amaltheia the Maiden Goddess, Io the Woman Goddess, and Adrasteia the oracular Autumn Crone. As the primeval Earth and Oracle Goddess she did not in the beginning have a male consort, but rather merely possessed the phallic symbol of the snake (Ill. 7). The snake manifests both the water (ocean) and the wind because, according to the world view of the early matriarchy, little more than the wind was needed to impregnate a woman. Therefore, her *heros* would later appear in the form of an enormous serpent and mate with her after she, too, had turned herself into a snake. Thus it is even more recognizably Rhea who was the ancient Cretan Snake Goddess.

Rhea's shrines in Crete also were the vast caverns, the Dicta Cavern in particular. Her Cretan name was "Diktyanna," a name with a long etymological history, as we will see. Here, amid a roaring fire and a stream of blood, she birthed and rebirthed every year her *heros*, the Cretan Zeus. He, too, was in constant peril as a child, threatened by his father Cronus, who wanted to devour (dismember) him. But Rhea fooled Cronus with a stone, and rescued Zeus. Thus, he was subsequently able to kill Cronus and celebrate marriage with Rhea, but after the ritual, she killed him (annually) with the double ax. Here he either took on the shape of a billy goat, like his foster brother Pan, his own double, or the guise of a ram (Zeus Ammon), or manifested himself as the bull which was particularly sacred in Crete. Rhea loved to ride the "bull" (later incorrectly portrayed as Europa on the bull), and her priestesses loved to play with him. After the sacrifice he retreated to the Dicta Cavern and was pampered with milk and honey by Rhea, manifested as Amaltheia, the sacred goat, and Io, the sacred cow (who could change her colors from white to crimson to black), and as Adrasteia-Melissa, the bee queen. Because, like Dionysus, Zeus was a child in the Underworld, he lay in a golden cradle until Rhea let him rise again. Later, the shepherds roaming the adjacent fields rejoiced at the sight of him, and it was with them that he matured into manhood.

Here we can see the close relationship between Rhea and the Cretan Zeus, and Demeter and Dionysus-Zagreus. In Crete Dionysus-Zagreus was even addressed with the name "Zeus" as a title.

### 2.3. HERA AND ZEUS

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Hera was the daughter of Rhea and Cronus. She was born either at Samos or in Argos. She was parented by the seasons themselves. After her twin brother Zeus had conquered his father Cronus, he wooed Hera at Knossos (Crete) and Argos, but to no avail. He therefore helped himself to success in this matter by raping her so that she was forced to marry him, in order to avoid shame.*

*All the gods brought gifts as offerings to Hera's wedding. Mother Earth presented her with a tree bearing golden apples, which Hera planted on the far west side of her Garden of Paradise, where the sun sets. She had Ladon, the dragon, wrap himself around the tree to guard it.*

*Hera gave birth to several deities by way of parthenogenesis (Eris, Ares, Hebe, and Hephaistos). Zeus did not want to believe this, though, so he sat her in a torture seat and forced her to swear that she had not told the truth.*

*On Mount Olympus Zeus and Hera fought incessantly. She was irritated by his infidelity and resorted to using deception and intrigue against him. He, for his part, distrusted her and used his power against her. Once, his arrogance and capriciousness grew so intolerable that all the Olympians under Hera's direction rose in revolt against him. Unfortunately, the outcome was not favorable for them. Zeus was able to subdue them and punished Hera by binding her to the highest point in heaven, while he sent his rebellious brothers and sons to perform menial tasks on earth.*

As Rhea's daughter, Hera is herself Rhea in a younger incarnation. In Crete and in Greek Argos (Mycenean culture), she was worshipped as Maiden, Woman, and Widow (Crone), the pre-Hellenic Great Goddess.

In Crete, Hera's first aspect is Goddess of the Hills and Mistress of Wild Animals. She lived on mountain tops near sacred stones or trees (tree cult). She was escorted by wild animals and mythical creatures (griffins, sphinxes, and winged genies), but most often by the lion: he followed her, protected her, and she pet him. On a seal from Knossos she is portrayed in this role wearing a short skirt with lance and shield in hand. As Mistress of Animals she was necessarily a huntress, manifesting this aspect under the name of Britomartis. In this aspect, she was the antecedent of the later Greek Artemis.

In her second aspect as Woman Goddess, Hera celebrated the Sacred Marriage with Cretan Zeus on Mount Ida, where he matured into adulthood with the shepherds. She stood radiant on a mountain peak wearing a magic belt that made her irresistible: Zeus rushed immediately to her side. During their union she enveloped the mountains in a golden cloud, the earth beneath them grew green with fresh herbs and dew-dampened blossoms of crocus and hyacinth.

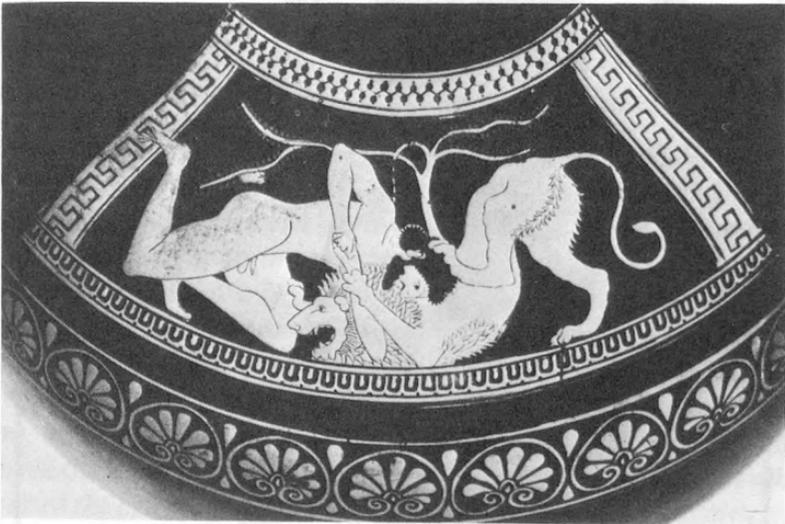
Presumably, Zeus suffered his death shortly thereafter at the hand of the Goddess wielding the Minoan double ax (Ill. 8a). He subsequently vanished inside the Ida Cavern, the local Underworld, to await his rebirth. Undoubtedly Hera pampered him here, too, with her immortality-rendering milk, for Hera (like Rhea) is also the Cow Goddess Io, with the ever-changing colors. Her splendid white horns adorn the rooftops at Knossos. All of the columns at every level of this palace are painted in her emblematic white-crimson-black. As recently as the period of Mycenaean Greece (Argos) she was called "cow-eyed Hera," and her *heros* appeared invariably in the manifestation of the magnificent Cretan bull.

The Death and Rebirth of her *heros* are enough to indicate Hera's third aspect as the Death and Oracle Goddess. As such, all the oracles of Crete and pre-Hellenic Greece were dedicated to her, even the most renowned of Dodona and Delphi. Here, she was always shown with a huge snake as her emblem and partner, called Ophion, Python, or Typhon, who was supposedly the wind. Another huge snake, the dragon Ladon, watched over Hera's garden in the far West, with its golden apples. There, to her orchard Paradise and Elysium, she sent her dead *heros*. All these mythical snakes were later killed by the patriarchal Zeus and his colleagues when they overthrew the Earth Goddess and subordinated her ancient oracles to themselves.

In this third aspect and under the name Hestia, Hera is also the Cretan Goddess of House and Hearth, Protectress of Home and Family (Ill. 9). She was venerated in every household in the form of a live snake which was kept in a holy shrine and fed with great care from small cups. The snake was a protective and healing spirit through its connection with benevolent subterranean forces. She was also the patroness of all domestic and public civilizing arts and crafts in the highly advanced Cretan culture. These included not only agriculture, olive-growing, and the cultivation of vines, like her sister Demeter, but also pottery, which, in Crete, took on enormous dimensions; weaving, which produced women's splendidly colorful, magnificent layered skirts; the art of smithing the lunar metal, silver; the culinary arts; the preparation of medicines; and the science of weights, measures, and



*III. 8a: Hera of Knossos as the Triple Goddess with the double labrys*



*III. 8b: Heracles killing the lion*



*Ill. 9: The Mycenaean Hera as Hestia, Guardian of the Hearth Fire, which she keeps in a small box*

numbers, which, for a sea-faring trade nation like Crete, was an absolute necessity. We see Hera, in this role, as the antecedent of the Greek Athena.

With this wealth of functions Hera migrated from Crete to the Peloponessus. In Argos she became the Great Goddess of Mycenaean culture and from there her cities and cults gradually proliferated throughout Greece. Even Athens is a Mycenaean establishment. Hera was thus the most significant Goddess of pre-Hellenic Greece, and patriarchal Zeus had every reason to envy her power when he finally arrived.

Zeus saw no other recourse than to make her his wife, and he was brutal in achieving that end: After courting her in vain near Knossos and all around the plain of Argos, he turned himself into a cuckoo. While in this shape he was drenched by a rainstorm. Hera discovered the bird and as she gently warmed it at her breasts, he resumed his true character and raped her. Ever since, he has maintained his domination over all the gods and people by wielding the double ax, the "thunderbolt," which, in the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures, no man was allowed to touch.

## 2.4 HERA AND HERACLES\*

### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Heracles was the son of the queen Alkmene and Zeus, who had won Alkmene through deception. The romance inspired Hera's jealousy so that by postponing Heracles' birth she prevented his becoming king. He was forced to serve another king instead, and to execute twelve nearly impossible feats: He killed an invincible lion; he slaughtered a nine-headed poisonous water dragon (Hydra); he caught a holy hind of Artemis; he bound an enormous boar in shackles; he cleaned the sheepfolds of a king in just one day by furrowing a canal through them; he slew a group of marsh waders with iron beaks and talons; he trapped the famous wild bull of Crete; he tamed man-eating mares; he acquired the belt of an Amazon queen; he stole the Sun God's cattle; he retrieved the golden apples from Hera's garden; he led the hell-hound out of the Underworld on a leash.*

*These feats brought Heracles so much fame that his father Zeus fetched him up to Mount Olympus after his death, and allowed him to*

---

\*also known as Hercules

*live for eternity with the gods. There, Hera is said to have adopted him as her son in a "simulated birth," after she had "mistakenly" nursed him as an infant with her milk. Because of his great respect for her, she loved him like a son from the onset, and let him marry her heavenly daughter Hebe.*

The word *heros* is a direct derivative of "Hera," the omnipotent matriarchal Goddess. The name "Heracles," too, is clearly associated with "Hera," because it means "Hera's Glory." The matriarchal *heros* was, in fact, just that: He was the glory of his Goddess, whom he extolled with his heroic deeds. Heracles expressed a similar sentiment when he arrived on Mount Olympus and faced his supposed enemy, Hera.

The portrayal of Hera as his enemy is obviously the Olympian version, because originally Heracles was in fact Hera's son, and was in Argos her classical *heros*. As the Cretan Zeus's "son" he was his direct successor in office; he had no similarity to the patriarchal Olympian Zeus.

Heracles' famous twelve deeds are, finally, the tasks of wooing mandated by the Goddess as a prerequisite to kingly status and the celebration of the Sacred Marriage. On a ritualistic level, the symbolic struggles are components of the crowning ritual fulfilled by the Sacred King in order to win the Goddess, represented by the priestess, or queen, or princess, for one mythical year. "Heracles," in this sense, like the word "Minos," or "Zeus, is a Cretan title, not an individual person.

Heracles' twelve tasks of wooing are very old and are present in the myths, folklore, and fairy tales of the entire Indo-European region. Thus, the classical heroic struggle is against an enormous snake or dragon, the animal figure of the Underworld Goddess (Heracles versus the Hydra). Equally typical is the heroic struggle against the lion, the animal figure of the wild Maiden Goddess (Heracles versus the Nemeic lion) (Ill. 8b). Even more typical, however, is the heroic act of capturing the hind with the golden antlers, the animal figure of the Woman Goddess. Heracles prevailed in the fight against the lion, or hind, or snake, and thus against the Triple Goddess herself. He succeeded, however, only because she supported him herself in the figure of Athena.

The animal triad of the lion, hind, and snake symbolizes also the three seasons of the mythical year, which was the time span in which Heracles' victory assured him the kingly status. All three of these animals, when combined in the mythical sphinx, represent the calendar-symbol of the Goddess' Sacred Year, as it is divided into three phases. Reflecting this, two sphinxes consisting of a bird's head, a lion's body, and the tail of a snake, flank the king's throne at Knossos in Crete—a constant reminder of the length of his period of office!

Heracles' battle with the wild mares is yet another struggle against the Goddess, who appears this time in the guise of a horse. The Erymantic wild boar and the Cretan bull, on the other hand, are royal predecessor-opponents, masked as animals, which Heracles must conquer in order to be crowned as successor. Heracles' fights with diverse giants function also as predecessor-successor struggles. Here, the predecessor always suffers the usual fate of the Sacred King, death, but he immediately returns in the form of his successor. Inevitably, though, Heracles himself becomes the cyclical predecessor who suffers death, as is evidenced by his various trips to the Underworld. One example is his journey to the gruesome Realm of Shades where he again engaged in battle with the Goddess in the form of the hell-hound. Yet another can be seen in his journey to Hera's orchard paradise situated in the far West, where the Other World is located. He returned jubilantly and became his own successor. Thus, we find in the combination of the Cretan Zeus and Heracles all the stages of the *heros*-structure, the first and oldest being Death and Rebirth through the Goddess (as in the case of Zeus); the second being the struggle against mythical animals and extrication from danger with the aid of the Goddess (as in the case of Heracles); the third being the predecessor-successor-struggle, with Return of the predecessor in the form of the successor (as in the case of Heracles).

Some of Heracles' works, though, reflect the male role in the matriarchal economy. Very often he is seen engaged in the furrowing of ditches, the digging of canals, or the building of tunnels for draining sheepfolds and marshes, or for the irrigation of arid land. The organization of geo-hydro construction sites required a high degree of collective cooperation and were the practical function of the office of Sacred King. They were essential to agricultural survival in the subtropical zones and soon developed into innovative irrigation systems which included the construction of dams and locks, dikes and aqueducts. Monumental edifices gradually arose from the ingeniously constructed boulders which became the astonishing creations of megalithic culture. We still admire them in individual monoliths, standing stones (menhirs), and obelisks which later were stacked to form megalithic graves and sacred shrines, and still later the colossal pyramids as burial castles. The ziggurats (step pyramids) of Sumeria and the burial pyramids of Egypt bear the most magnificent evidence of this elaborate architecture.

It was primarily these constructions that endured throughout the millennia. Thus, the archaeologists' findings were necessarily one-sided: Enamored of these heroic monuments and oblivious of the female

realm of arts so essential to the development of civilization, they developed the unilateral image of early advanced cultures that remains the basis for our understanding of history today.

The Minoan culture of Crete can safely be seen as the paradigmatic example of an advanced matriarchy. The basis for this knowledge was the catastrophic volcanic eruption of Thera (Santorin) around 1400 B.C. The Minoan culture on Crete was thoroughly destroyed by the eruption of this neighboring island, half of which sank as a result. The enormous tidal waves that followed delivered sudden death to the inhabitants of Crete at the hand of the Earth Goddess they revered so much. This terrible demise, however, was fortunate inasmuch as it spared the Minoan culture from the continued forays of the patriarchal conquerors, who foisted their deformations on any and all cultures within their vicinity, distorting them beyond recognition. The Minoan culture lay dormant and protected beneath the earth, to be discovered in an unaltered state by archeologists thousands of years later. Only with the help of these discoveries can we describe a general pattern of what was involved in the culture of an advanced matriarchy, based on the combined consideration of buildings, paintings, handicrafts, and mythology. This marvelous rediscovery is yet another gift of the Earth Goddess to the splendid culture of Minoan Crete.

EGYPT<sup>12</sup>

A certain distinct constellation is already clearly discernible in the kinship relationships surrounding the goddesses of Crete: a dominant mother-daughter relationship, a mother-son relationship, and a sister-brother relationship. Juxtaposed against this is a father-son relationship which ultimately expresses not a kinship bond, but rather political succession. This combination of relationships is typical of the matriarchy (compare ethnological studies), and it is by no means restricted to the realm of mythology, as will become apparent based on our examination of Egypt's example.

We saw, in the fundamental mother-daughter relationship, how the daughter goddess continually assumed all her mother's functions and powers (Gaia-Rhea, Rhea-Hera). Similarly, the priestess-queen consigned her cultic, scientific, and governing obligations to her daughter, who was heiress to the throne according to the principle of ultimogeniture, whereby the youngest daughter is heiress. Presumably, the transfer of familial, domestic, and agricultural duties was equally direct from mother to daughter amid the common women, although this was true only where the daughter remained at the mother's residence (matrilocality). Thus, Ariadne, the hereditary princess of Knossos, did not, in the end, depart from Crete with Greek Theseus after the incident with the thread that caused the death of the Minotaur. Rather, she retreated to an island off the coast of Crete, where she contemplated her fate and repudiated her new lover, not the other way around, as patriarchal myths would have us believe. Meanwhile Dionysus-Zagreus, her traditional *heros-king*, arrived to exercise his rightful claim. In the end she married him and they returned to Knossos where she succeeded to her mother's throne. Theseus retreated to Athens in mourning, setting the black sail.

The mother-son and sister-brother relationship was equally affectionate because, in matriarchy, man's sense of relatedness was gleaned solely from his mother and maternal siblings (matriliny). If he married into a different clan, he was but a guest of his wife's family, because the children traced their descent through the maternal line. His sisters' children were the only ones with whom he shared the kinship relation, and in which he took pride. If he owned any personal

property it was bequeathed to him (uncle-nephew relationship). Thus, the ideal way for a man to guarantee inheritance and have children who were directly related to him was to marry his own biological sister (see Gaia-Uranus, Rhea-Cronus, Hera-Zeus). In the royal dynasties of the Near East and the Mediterranean, sibling marriage was the ideal solution for keeping the throne within the family.

The close mother-son relationship stems from the fact that the mother, as a human representative of the Goddess, is Protectress of the royal son, who is powerless without her (see Gaia-Cronus, Rhea-Zeus, Hera-Heracles). Manifested in the person of her young daughter she also becomes his lover.

In the later stages of matriarchy, after marriage to outsiders replaced sibling marriage, the uncle's relationship to his sister's children took on added significance. The uncle-nephew bond is a forerunner to the father-son relationship, but retained its matriarchal character because it was based on the matrilineal principles (inheritance exclusively along the female line, here, through the sister).

Our consideration of Egyptian mythology will include focusing our attention on the royal family as well, in order to examine the influence of matriarchal kinship patterns present, not only in the mythology, but also in society.

### 3.1 NOUT-NEIT AND RA

#### **Summary of the Myths** (as written in the sources)

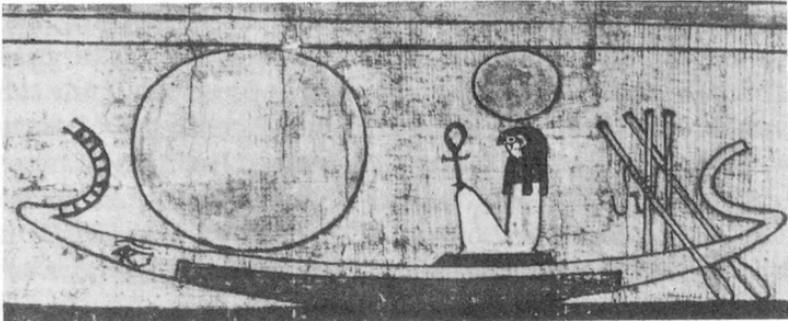
*Nout is the Goddess of Heaven. With fingertips and toes supported by mountain peaks, her body, like the sky, is arched to form a vault around the earth, and is studded with stars. In the beginning she and her husband, the Earth God Geb, were not separated. Later, her son Schu severed her from the earth and she has shone ever since.*

*Nout was the great Mother of all, with countless children; Isis, Nephthys, Osiris, Horus, and Seth are foremost among them. In addition, she was the mother of Ra, the Sun God, whom she gave birth each morning and devoured each evening. Another of Nout's manifestations was that of the star-spangled celestial cow who calved Ra, the sun, every morning. By midday, when he had matured into a bull, he coupled with his mother and died in the evening, only to be reborn in the morning as his own son.*

*Another story describes how Ra traversed the sky by day in the solar skiff. By night he sailed home, following the same path along the sub-*



*Ill. 10: Nout's outstretched body spans the earth, swallows the sun each night and gives birth to him again in the morning*



*Ill. 11: Ra sails across the heavens in a sun skiff. His emblem, the disk, appears twice here*

*terranean waters of the night seas. On his way he was intercepted and threatened by his enemy Apophis, who posed as a huge serpent, and was intent on devouring the solar skiff once and for all. Each time Ra was forced to battle him, but is always victorious. Apophis had only temporary success during bad weather, or an eclipse.*

Even the Egyptians regarded Nout (or Neit) to be a very ancient goddess, older and wiser than all the other deities. In fact, she possessed certain characteristics that clearly identify her as an early matriarchal goddess: She was equated with heaven and therefore stretched her body in an arc over the earth, and her body was covered with stars. She was the sky as the eternal cosmic night; the stars symbolize her cosmic character (a personification of the cosmos and its laws, as these were discovered by the female Egyptian astronomers). Thus, she was exalted in hymns for being eternal and self-created, for bringing forth everything from nothingness, all according to her thoughts and her word: In the beginning was the word—Nout.

Nout is the feminine principle as the origin of all creation. The masculine principle, Ra, the sun, is but a fleeting ray of light compared with her cosmic night; he is not a participant in her eternity. This clarifies, then, why the moon that lights up the cosmic night would be considered as eternal as the stars in the universe, and whose significance would far surpass that of the perpetually disappearing and reappearing sun: The sun was considered dependent on the moon, but the sun-centered patriarchy changed that (heliocentrism).

Ra, the sun, was also son of Nout, the cosmic night. She gave birth to him each morning, then let him sail across the skies, only to swallow him up again in the evening. His emblem was a simple disk: O (Ill. 10 and 11).

This early astral myth was later given an anthropomorphic interpretation, but not before it went through a "totemic" phase: Nout became the beautiful white celestial cow whose body, too, was sprinkled with stars (compare the moon cow, Io-Hera). Every morning she gave birth to the sun in the manifestation of a calf. By midday he grew into a golden bull who mated with his mother. In the evening, the sun bull died, only to be born again as his own son. The notion of eternal rebirth permeating all matriarchal religions can hardly find more tangible expression than this. Still another facet of the matriarchal mother-son relationship becomes apparent: The son, by coupling with his mother, seeks to secure his own rebirth through her; he wants to be at the same time his own predecessor and successor.

Seen from a mythological point of view, however, the Sun God, Ra, has a different predecessor: Apophis, the phallic primeval snake, is

Ra's eternal enemy, for Apophis existed long before Ra. He lay upon the chaotic earth like the water, long before the celestial heavens had been severed, and gave birth to the sun. This is, as we know, the creation story of the early matriarchy. The snake represents the primeval ocean enveloping the female Earth. Later on, Nout, the Goddess of Heaven, no longer faced the female Earth Goddess, but rather Geb, who was not an Earth God, but rather a God of Vegetation. The primeval Apophis, though, remained Ra's perpetual enemy. Apophis constantly sought to devour Ra because Ra had come later and ousted him (as in the case of Cronus and Zeus). When Ra was anthropomorphized, he somehow no longer swam across the skies, but traversed them in the more fashionable sun skiff from east to west (Ill. 11). As mentioned before, every time he returned with his ship through the current of the primeval ocean in the Underworld, he had to engage in rigorous battle with Apophis, who was the current itself.

Nout, as mother of all gods, was the mother of the five most important Egyptian deities: Isis, Nephthys, Seth, Osiris, and Horus. Similarly, Rhea gave birth to the five major Greek deities: Hera, Demeter, Hades, Zeus, and Poseidon.

Another of Nout's early manifestations is as the Goddess Neit, who lived in the city of Saïs on the Nile Delta. Neit was revered even in pre-dynastic times and is considered to be a very old goddess. She was even the Goddess of the chaotic Primeval Waters who created herself by way of parthenogenesis. She was wiser than all the gods, so she was solicited to settle their endless legal disputes. It is also said that she was the celestial cow who gave birth to Ra, and after him to Isis, Osiris, Horus, and Sobek (Seth). She is thus identical with the "Mother of All Gods," Nout.

Neit, though, in contrast to the earlier Nout, reflects the concept of the goddess triad of the developed matriarchy: she resided in Heaven, Earth, and Underworld. Her cultic symbols were the shield, and the bow and arrows joined to form a cross, which are indicators of her identification as Goddess of the Hunt, and of War (first aspect). Thus, she was the Goddess of the Libyan Amazon culture. Like Nout, she emanates the second aspect of the triad in her role as celestial cow and as Universal Mother. At the same time, like Nout, she was the Goddess of Death (third aspect). Nout was seen as protectress of the dead, who rested on her star-spangled breast. In this role she possessed wings which she spread out over them, while Neit similarly guarded the coffin. She accompanied the dead to the great court of the Underworld. There she helped them not only with her vote, but was even able to

return them to life, because she was considered to be wisdom personified, and the judge, even of the gods.

Because of her infinite wisdom, Neit was also thought to be inventor and mistress-patroness of all the matriarchal "arts": culinary art, medicine, and weaving. The weaving shuttle became her attribute, and the mysterious shroud of Saïs, a magnificent tapestry, veiled her sacred face. Most likely it was she who invented the skiff in which her son Ra traversed the sky, because this is exactly as it was ascribed to Athena, who is a mythological successor of Nout-Neit. This reveals the great historical age of the Goddess Athena. Nout-Neit, the artistically gifted and inventive Hearth Goddess who was worshipped in her manifestation as a snake, made her way to Crete, and from there to Mycenaean Greece, and finally, as the Goddess Athena, to Athens. Here she introduced the hybrid Libyan olive tree. The demise of this ancient Goddess into wisdom born of Zeus's head, and consigned to serve as his ideological messenger, appears all the more ignominious against this background.

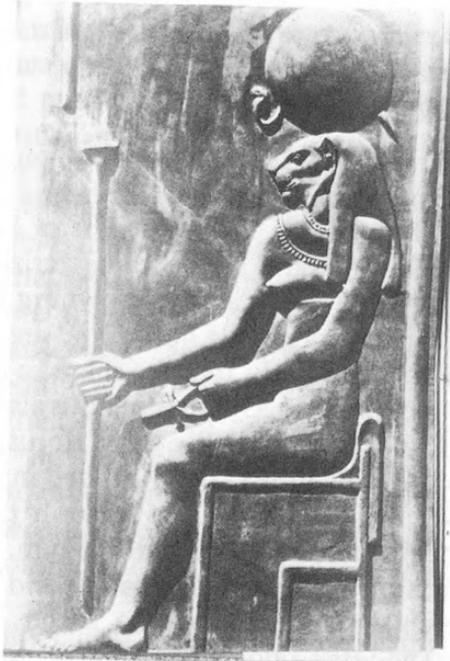
### 3.2 HATHOR AND HORUS

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

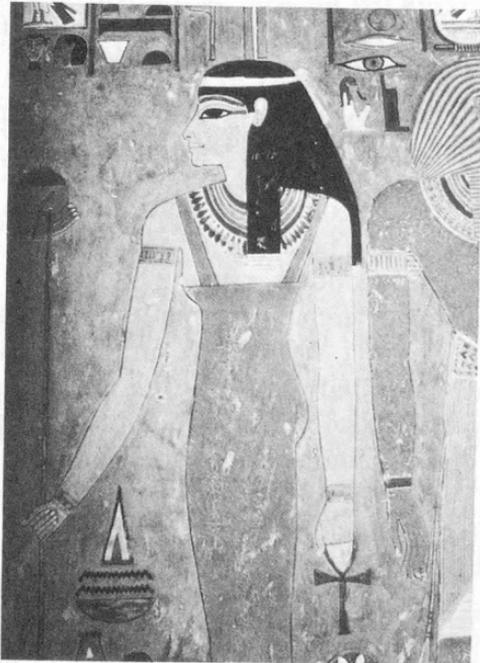
*Hathor was the daughter of Nout and Ra, and also the Great Goddess of Heaven, revered in her manifestation as a splendid cow. Like Nout, she was Ra's lover and wife; her son was the elder Horus. Horus, however, was not only her son, but also her lover.*

*Hathor was mother and patroness of all the pharaohs identified with Horus, who were thus her sons. She nourished them with her divine milk during their lives, and used it to secure their immortality in death.*

*Hathor is sometimes called the eye of Ra, because this God's eye (the sun) took on the shape of Hathor when Ra cast his eye on his rebellious subordinates on earth, thus subjugating them. Hathor transformed herself into the lion-headed Goddess Sachmet, who raged among the humans with the incendiary and destructive force of the sun, gripping them in horror and fear. Not only did she foist her will upon them, she flew into a rage after she had her first taste of blood. She was about to devour the entire human race in a frenzy of blood when Ra subdued her with a trick: he ordered large amounts of beer to be brewed and colored with red berries. The concoction was poured over the earth at night. In the morning, when Hathor-Sachmet set out on*



*Ill. 12: Hathor-Sachmet (First Aspect)*



*Ill. 13: Hathor as Goddess of Death (Third Aspect)*

*her path of human destruction, she stood still, marveled at the "blood," and drank it. She quickly became intoxicated and docile, abandoned her plan, and assumed once again her friendly character as Goddess of Beauty, of Joy, of Music, and of Love.*

Before she was superseded by Isis, Hathor was considered to be the daughter of Nout. Consequently, all Nout's functions were transferred directly to Hathor: She was the Great Goddess of Heaven, and, like Nout, the star-sprinkled cow, and is thus characterized as the Universal Mother. The impressive horns always crowning her head are the prototypes of the Cretan Hera's cattle horns, and are indicators of her role as Universal Mother. Similarly, too, she shared a relationship with Ra: She was considered his beloved daughter, thus also his wife, and by giving birth to him in the form of the elder Horus, she became his mother. Horus is actually Ra in his falcon-headed manifestation.

In this, her second aspect, Hathor was not only the divine mother of Horus, and all the pharaohs who personified him, she was also Protectress of the common women in pregnancy and birth. Thus, she enjoyed great reverence among the people, and as is appropriate to her kind character, she was Goddess of Love, Joy, Music, and Dance, and of all the feminine charms, including that of luxurious wardrobe and jewelry. She is portrayed in pictures wearing the magnificent Egyptian collar, and carrying her musical instrument, the sistrum.

Then again, though, Hathor has her darker sides, for she was also the lion-headed Warrior Goddess Hathor-Sachmet (first aspect) (Ill. 12), and the Death Goddess in the Underworld (third aspect) (Ill. 13). Sachmet is depicted as the fear-inspiring, bloodthirsty Lion Goddess. In this form, Hathor was the Goddess of War and is said to have foisted her sense of order on all people. The myth of how she would have destroyed the entire human race in a blood bath if Ra had not intoxicated the ferocious Lion Goddess, causing her to fall into an innocuous sleep, is already a patriarchal deformation. It emerged during the period in which the sun, Ra, was deified, and made into the supreme Father God. In this deformed variant of the myth he appears on the scene as the tricky, crafty savior. Hathor-Sachmet's drunkenness more likely hints at the orgiastic and libationary celebrations associated with her *heros'* death. The death of the *heros* was later interpreted, in the eyes of the patriarchal pharaohs, to be a dramatic act of genocide inflicted on the entire human race (equated with man, i.e., men). And the sense of order that Hathor-Sachmet was said to have foisted on humanity was the cosmic law of Death and Return. Hathor-Sachmet's depiction as the Lion Goddess is evidence of this: She holds in her

right hand the scepter, symbol of eternal order, and in the left the ankh, symbol of eternal life, not of destruction. On her head she bears a combination of male symbols, the snake and the sun, which symbolize descent and return from the depths. Hathor-Sachmet is the Goddess of the Sacrifice of the *heros*-king, perhaps also of the mythical battle associated with it, for she is designated the Death-in-Life Goddess, who upholds the laws of the seasonal cycle.

Sachmet resembles the third aspect of Hathor, who, as Death Goddess, also carried the scepter and ankh, symbols of the divine world order and eternal life. In this role, however, she was not terrifying, as was Sachmet, but rather lovely and gentle. Juxtaposed against the gruesome, she presented the tender face of death as she received the dead on their arrival in the Underworld, nourishing them and giving them the water of life. In the shape of a woman or a cow, she fed the souls of the dead, and nursed the sacrificed king, as Rhea-Hera did to the Cretan Zeus. In this manner she harbored them in the Underworld until they were reincarnated, and could again ascend into the light of the living world.

Hathor's genuine consort was Horus. He belonged to her, not to Isis, as linguistics attests: The words "Horus" and "*Heros*" are one and the same, and the root syllable of variants on Horus's name is "Har/Hor" (Horus, Haroëris, Harmachis, Harsiesis). The name "Hathor" means "House of Horus," and she dealt with him as she would her genuine *heros*: Not only did she give birth to him, she married him annually, too. Statues of Hathor of Dendera and Horus of Edfu were brought together each year in a great procession of ships that took place on the Nile; afterwards, they were taken to a temple to celebrate marriage. Shortly after the event, the Horus-Sun figure died, and Hathor stood on top of a hill in the West to welcome him into her arms. The son that she bore in the following year was the younger Horus, and the whole process thus began again. Logically, then, Hathor wore the sun disk, her lover's emblem, between her cattle horns.

The holy king of Egypt, the pharaoh, was seen as the personification of Horus, while the priestess-queen of Egypt was seen as the personification of Hathor. The Hathor-Horus constellation was just the same as the priestess-queen and pharaoh constellation. She was, on the one hand, "Hathor," his mother, and on the other, as the queen's daughter, she was "Hathor," his sister-bride. The land of Egypt was always controlled by the priestess-queen (it was a "queendom"), whether she was a mother or a sister, because all land, be it a large territory or an insignificant district, was inherited along the female line. The only way for a pharaoh to achieve his title was to marry his



*Ill. 14: Hathor with the infant pharaoh (Second Aspect)*



*Ill. 15: Hathor with the adult pharaoh*

biological sister, and have her place him in office. His sister-bride protected him in all of his official endeavors until, at the end of his official term, the sacrifice of the king (sometimes using an animal as a substitute) was made.

Because the Goddess is identified with the queen, and the *heros* with the king, Hathor is sometimes depicted as the queen mother nursing the little pharaoh (Ill. 14). Her milk immortalized him much in the same way Hera's did Heracles. Elsewhere, we see her portrayed as the sister-bride, posed protectively behind Horus's throne (Ill. 15). Her wings are stretched around him in a protective gesture, and these are the same wings with which Nout embraced the dead, for they are vulture's wings. Here again, Hathor carries in her left hand the ankh, the symbol of life, of perpetually recurring life, and of eternal life, that is shaped like the symbol of femininity, because the female principle is that of life. The left side, the side of the heart, is preferred. This is unequivocally expressed in the Egyptian iconography! In her right hand she bears the emblem of her order and power, the scepter. Temporarily, she bestowed her powers on her brother-husband, the pharaoh, as is evidenced by the fact that he, too, carries the ankh and scepter, but in the opposite hand. Thus, he became the intermediary between his Goddess and the people. The Egyptian pharaohs were proud to describe themselves as "Hathor's chosen ones."

### 3.3 ISIS AND OSIRIS

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*In the beginning, Isis was a powerful, independent goddess whose husband was Osiris, her brother, whom she had loved even in the mother's womb. She was thought to be the "Great Magician" because she taught Osiris agriculture and viniculture, urban architecture, and the construction of irrigation canals and aqueducts. At her behest, Osiris shared this knowledge with the human population and ruled the Nile territory. During his many absences (on cultural missions or in the Underworld), Isis ruled Egypt and taught women the art of weaving and medicine. However, her scheming brother, Seth, pressed her with his intrigues, because he wanted her and the throne, and sought to disrupt the established order.*

*Seth succeeded in killing Osiris by tricking him at a banquet, where he lured him into a sarcophagus and subsequently tossed it into the Nile. When Isis found out about it, she departed in tears and walked*

*until she found Osiris's corpse in Byblos, in Phoenicia. Isis conceived a child from the deceased Osiris—her son, Horus. She hid the corpse in the marshes along the Nile Delta, but Seth discovered her treasure and tore Osiris into little pieces, which he scattered across the land. Isis patiently collected the pieces with the help of her sister Nephthys, Seth's estranged wife. Finally, she reconstructed Osiris's body, and Nephthys took him with her into the Underworld. Afterwards, he governed as King of the Underworld, and was considered a wise and clement judge of the dead.*

*Isis brought Horus into the world in a lotus thicket and hid him from Seth. Seth, however, slithered in the form of a venomous snake to the child and bit him. Isis shed bitter tears because she did not know the incantation that might have saved the child from poisoning. Horus threatened to die and take with him the innocence of the world, whereupon Isis turned to the highest god, Ra, seeking help. The sun skiff stopped above her, blocking the source of light for the rest of the world, threatening to throw it into eternal darkness if Horus did not recover. The Sun God performed an incantation on Horus and he recuperated. (Later, though, Isis had Ra bitten by a snake, and he was unable to heal himself. She was the only one who knew the remedy, but refused to administer it until Ra had relinquished his position of power to her son, Horus.)*

*When Horus grew up he fought against Seth to avenge the death of his father, Osiris. Horus castrated Seth in a wild battle, but Seth tore out Horus's weak eye, the moon. Horus's eyesight, however, was restored, and the court of gods determined him to be the legitimate heir to the Nile territory.*

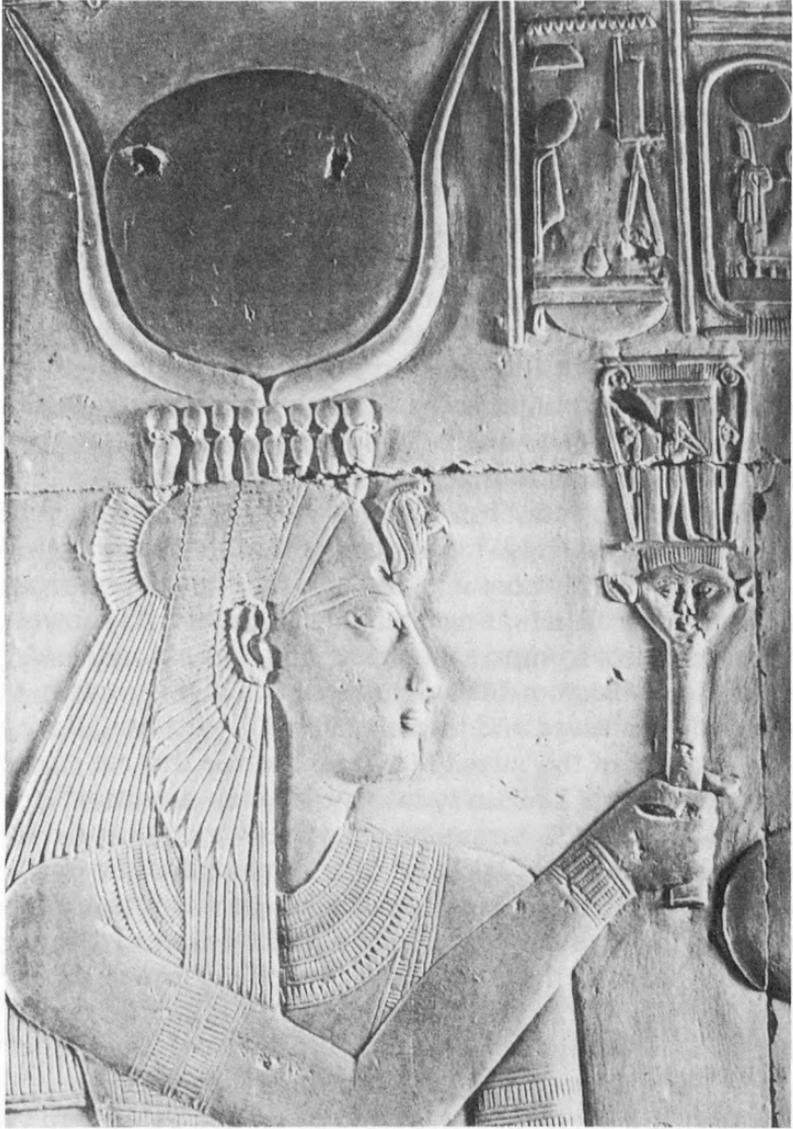
Isis is the best known of the Egyptian goddesses, even though, in the final phase, she is depicted largely as a fusion with Hathor, and is consequently often confused with her. She shows her unique traits in connection with the oldest layers of the Osiris religion, where she is the Universal Earth Mother whose origin is the Nile Delta. Demeter is her Cretan-Greek variant. The Isis-Osiris religion is clearly distinguishable from the astral mythology of Hathor-Horus by its chthonic characteristics.

As Earth Mother, Isis personified the land of Egypt itself, and was thus the Goddess of perpetual and recurring fertility. In the beginning, Osiris personified the Nile, the fertilizing water, and is therefore often depicted with green skin, while Isis, on the other hand, appears in a green robe. Because he was her brother, he was predestined to become the Goddess' heros-king. She instructed him in the cultivation of the

land (as Demeter did for Triptolemos), and he propagated it in his gentle reign throughout many lands. During this period, Isis was considered to be the "Great Magician" because of her magical powers. Osiris, functioning as *heros*-king, coupled with Isis annually when the Nile flooded the land. In the dry season, the subtropical "winter," he was torn to pieces by his adversary Seth, who personified infertility and death. Seth brought the drought, the torrid wind of death, with him from the desert and destroyed all vegetation.

After Osiris's death, Isis mourned him bitterly and searched everywhere for him. She scoured the entire region in a boat until she finally found his corpse, later its pieces. In preparation for his rebirth, she pieced them back together (compare Rhea and Dionysus-Zagreus, or the Cretan Zeus), but was unable to find the most important part, his phallus. There are numerous variants describing the manner in which the problem was solved. The oldest of them apparently stems from Southeast Asia, in which Isis found "the jewel at the center of the lotus blossom." The lotus blossom is a symbol for the female sex organ, the vulva, from which all life springs eternally. Therefore, this flower came to symbolize rebirth (compare the Cretan lily). By finding Osiris's phallus in the "lotus blossom," Isis not only made him complete, she simultaneously conceived and re-birthed him. Those ideas all are fused with the concept of the Sacred Marriage, because this act guarantees for Osiris that he will be born to become his own successor.

Osiris's Death and Return symbolizes the dwindling and reappearance of vegetation. Thus, Osiris was later promoted to the position of a God of Vegetation, and because he spent so many seasons in the Underworld, he gradually became the judicial God of Death, who weighed the hearts of the deceased on the scale of justice. As such, he possessed great power in the realm of the dead. In this image, too, Isis and her sister Nephthys stood behind Osiris's throne and spread their arms about him protectively, as Hathor does for the pharaoh. Osiris was clothed like a pharaoh, with a crown, a crozier, a shepherd's whip, and a scepter borrowed from Isis. This signified that his power to judge the dead is exercised under the auspices of his divine sister-bride. He governed in the Underworld in the same way the pharaoh did the world of the living. As a deified *heros*-king, he had an intermediate position between the *heros*, who was not divine in the beginning, and the male god who later became absolute. Ra followed this religious career to its ultimate end: He emancipated himself from the *heros* he was in the beginning to become the Sun God at Nout-Hathor's side and, finally, worked himself up to the position of absolute Father God, a process typical of patriarchalization. (For Ra, however, this was a



*Ill. 16: Hathor-Isis with the steer horn crown, the vulture beak, and snake, carrying the sistrum; located at the upper right is the Isis-hieroglyph, the throne*

short-lived glory.) Even though in the final stage of his religion Osiris managed to become the God of Resurrection, and the hope of everyone who died, he never reached the stage of an Absolute God. Goddess and god remained a matriarchal couple.

The figure of Isis, too, developed further, but in spite of the ever-increasing spectrum of her facets, she never lost her uniquely chthonic

character: As Mother Goddess, Isis appears later most often as the mother of the reborn and rejuvenated Osiris, Har-Siesis, or "Horus, the Son of Isis." Horus, the son of Isis, is a child god (compare Iakchos-Dionysus, the Cretan Zeus). He is always referred to as "Horus, the Child," and because of his childlike traits, is not taken completely seriously by the other gods, particularly by his adversary, Seth. Isis appears in pictures mostly as the mother who is nursing Horus the child, after she gave birth to him in a lotus thicket along the Nile. As the child of her "lotus blossom," he is, of course, Osiris reincarnated. This process of rejuvenating the god is repeated again in the four "sons" of Horus, who, too, are born of Isis's "lotus blossom." Most representations show them emerging from this flower as tiny beings. This, too, is a tangible expression of the cyclical rebirth we encountered previously in the mythology of Nout-Hathor and Ra. Osiris, Har-Siesis (Horus), and the four "sons" of Horus, are always Osiris reincarnated to become his own successor, and represent the vegetation of Egypt. Accordingly, their mother Isis is crowned, even in most recent periods, with corn cobs and lotus blossoms, as was her mythological successor, Demeter.

Isis, however, was rapidly associated with the sun cult of the pharaohs as the personification of the land of Egypt, even though she was not innately tied to it. Originally, she was the land of Egypt, and a symbol for the king's throne, which he ultimately received from her. In this role she bore the hieroglyph for the "throne," the sign of a seat, on her head. This suggested a close identification with Hathor, whom indeed she became, for from then on Isis bore Hathor's crown on her head: the cattle horns with the solar disk, sometimes topped with the seat of the throne. Her son, Har-Siesis, was identified with Hathor's falcon-headed Horus, the sun, even though Horus, as son of Isis, was originally the moon, not the sun. This Horus now escorted the dead to Osiris. She adopted then for herself the solar disk and snake, his masculine symbols. Some depictions show her carrying the scepter and the ankh of Hathor in her hands; moreover, she wears a robe or crested cap made of vulture feathers, and bears a vulture's head on her forehead; in other representations she, like Hathor, spreads her protective vulture wings about a dead pharaoh (an identification of the pharaoh with Osiris). In this image, she has taken on the role of Nout-Hathor as Death Goddess and Protectress of Souls. In another portrayal she even carries Hathor's musical instrument, the sistrum, in her hand, and has cattle horns on her head; on her forehead are a snake and a vulture, and vulture wings frame her hair, and she wears Hathor's splendid collar. One could mistake her for Hathor if her hieroglyph did not identify her as Isis (Ill. 16).

In spite of the identification of Har-Siesis (with the lunar eye) with Horus, the sun, and the adaptation of Isis to the astral religion of Hathor, her relationship to the sun remains ambiguous. This is evident in the competition between Isis and Ra over the magical power of healing. The fact that Isis, who was originally the "Great Magician," endowed with the power to awaken Osiris from the dead, cannot so much as cure her child's snake bite, already constitutes a patriarchal deformation of this Goddess. That it should be Ra who must come to her assistance gives evidence of an attempt to subordinate the ancient, powerful Goddess to the patriarchal Sun God during the epoch of Heliopolis. Isis, however, quickly revenged herself against Ra by exchanging the roles of helplessness and healing (which was consistent with her most ancient role). In this manner the now "aging" Ra was forced to relinquish his power to the young Horus, which means that the Isis cult predominated over the Ra cult in the most recent Egyptian times.

As the Isis cult spread from Egypt to the entire Mediterranean region, and all the way to Rome during the Hellenistic period, further patriarchal distortions were unavoidable. The religion of Isis became syncretistic, a mass religion in which the Goddess' independent, powerful character was transformed into a sentimental housewife and lachrymose widow of Osiris. Now a mother to Horus, she was as anxious as she was helpless. Thus, to her enemies she seemed, on the one hand, to be naive and defenseless. On the other, she seemed calculating and supercilious, proving the inconsistencies inherent in her most recent myths, which were patriarchally deformed. She became a touching maternal-figure nursing Har-Siesis, while Osiris became the God of Resurrection, not only of the pharaoh, but of all humanity, and the omnipotent judge in the "Last Judgment." Early Christianity developed on the basis of this religious tradition.

## SUMERIA/BABYLON<sup>13</sup>

The broad cultural current we have seen coming from Egypt was not the only one to spread to Crete, and from there to Europe: Sumeria exerted at least as much cultural influence. Sumeria is, compared with Egypt, the older culture: Egyptian culture drew from the Sumerians and developed characteristically from there. As will soon become apparent, cultural currents from North Africa and from the Sumerians in the Near East converged simultaneously to influence Crete.

The Sumerian culture presents us with an even more pronounced observation of how closely myth, cult, and social structure are enmeshed in this highly developed matriarchal culture.

### INANNA-ISHTAR AND DUMUZI-TAMMUZ

#### **Summary of the Myths** (as written in the sources)

*As a young goddess, Inanna followed her mother's advice and chose the divine shepherd Dumuzi for her mate, preferring him to the divine farmer. In the spring they celebrated the Sacred Marriage and Inanna thus made Dumuzi king.*

*Even though she is Mistress of Heaven, Inanna later decided to descend into the Underworld. Adorned with all her royal insignia, she embarked on her dangerous journey, but first instructed her messenger, Ninshubur, to sound the alarm with the Assembly of Gods if she hadn't returned within three days. She was recognized at the entrance to the Underworld and led through the seven gates of hell, where she was forced to relinquish a piece of clothing and jewelry at each gate. When finally Inanna reached the temple of the deep, where Erishkigal, the Goddess of the Underworld, sat enthroned, she approached and stood naked before her, but as soon as the gaze of death was cast upon her, she turned into a corpse. When three days had passed, Ninshubur alarmed the gods who sent the food and the water of life beneath the earth, and in this manner, called Inanna back to life. Inanna then ascended back to the world of the living, accompanied by shadows,*

*ghosts, and harpies. She wandered from city to city throughout Sumeria, delivering the earth from its infertility. She put Dumuzi, though, in the hands of underworld demons, because he had adopted an arrogant attitude of total indifference to the suffering she had endured. He died, then, the heros' death and was permitted to see the light of day only at his sister's bidding for half a year, in spring and summer.*

The myths surrounding the Sumerian Great Goddess Inanna and her *heros* Dumuzi, or her Babylonian counterpart Ishtar, with her *heros* Tammuz, are strikingly similar to the Egyptian Isis-Osiris tale. In both instances the Goddess selects her partner: in Egypt, it was her divine brother Osiris (or, as in the case of Hathor, her divine son Horus); in Sumeria, it was the divine shepherd Dumuzi-Tammuz, the "good shepherd" of the land. The festival of their Sacred Marriage was celebrated in spring, when the land between the Euphrates and the Tigris was covered with fresh green. Here, Inanna-Ishtar was the seductive Goddess of Love; Venus was her planet. The Sacred Marriage had the effect of restoring fertility to the entire land. In this process, the Goddess played the role of the Earth Mother, personifying the land of Sumeria (as Isis personified the land of Egypt). She gave the gifts of flora and fauna and was simultaneously mother to all the gods and peoples. At the end of the vegetative cycle, when the murderous drought set in and tormented the fertility *heros* in the form of the demons of death, Dumuzi-Tammuz suffered, died, and arrived, like Osiris, in the Underworld. Dumuzi's sister wept and mourned in Inanna's place for the *heros* Dumuzi, then set herself to the task of rescuing him from the Underworld for half a year.

Inanna, on the other hand, embarked on her own "descent into hell." At the seven gates of hell she had to relinquish, piece by piece, her divine jewelry and garments, until she finally stood naked and turned into a corpse when struck by the gaze of Erishkigal, the Goddess of Death. Erishkigal was thought to be Inanna's "sister," but was, in fact, the Goddess herself in her third aspect. Representing the principle of death, she actually killed herself in her personification of the principle of life: thus, the figure of Inanna was eclipsed by the figure of Erishkigal. Taking both aspects together she was an authentic Life-in-Death-Goddess. Still, when personifying the principle of life, she was stronger, which is why she was re-awakened with the food and the water of life. Once resurrected, she departed from the Underworld, and wandered from city to city throughout Sumeria, delivering the land from drought and despair.



*Ill. 17: Inanna, clad in a tiered dress, with wings and a horned crown, helping her heroes out of his mountain grave*



*Ill. 18: Dumuzi feeding the animals from the Tree of Life (eight-petal rosette)*

In other versions of the myth she was perched at the peak of the mountains, and helped to extricate Dumuzi from his mountain grave, a cave which functioned as a kind of "Underworld" (Ill. 17). As soon as he emerged, the sun appeared and vegetation began to sprout. In Sumeria, the first blossoms appeared in the moderate climatic zone of the mountains. Once more a cosmic battle ensued between the *heros* and the Underworld demons, but in this instance the *heros* remained the victor. Thus, the Sacred Marriage could once again be celebrated beneath magnificent cedar trees on the freshly blooming hilltops; Inanna's symbol, the eight-pointed star or eight-petal rosette, which is perhaps her "lotus blossom," was now in bloom.

Similarly, the Sacred Marriage between Hera and Zeus was celebrated on top of Mount Ida in Crete, where Zeus lived in a cave (Underworld) with friendly shepherds until the time for the Sacred Marriage arrived. It was, at the same time, his re-awakening, for in Crete, as in Sumeria, grass grew green in the mountains at the time of the marriage, and spring flowers blossomed, and everything was blanketed in a golden cloud (the rays of the sun). Presumably, too, the Hera of Crete and Argos, like Inanna, bore a crown of cattle horns while consummating the act. The Cretan name for Rhea-Hera makes it even clearer: she was called Dictyanna, or "Inanna from the Dicta Mountains."

Dumuzi-Tammuz was the divine shepherd, master of animals. Thus, depictions show him feeding or watering animals (especially sheep and goats). He watered them with the water of life, or fed them from the tree of life, with its eight-petal rosette (Ill. 18). As in Crete, the notion of the tree of life is here associated with the tree cult. Occasionally, Dumuzi-Tammuz himself appeared in the form of a herd animal, especially as a ram propped up against the tree of life (compare Zeus-Ammon). Functioning as the Good Shepherd, he also battled monstrous beings, especially lions, that threatened the animal herds. He conquered lions, wild bulls, and under the name of Tammuz-Marduk, the dragon, or the primal serpent Tiamat, just as Heracles did. As in the case of Heracles, these mythical animals represent the three seasons of the mythical year of the Goddess, the duration of his time in office as Sacred King.

We encounter, within the context of the heroic epic (Gilgamesh Epic), analogous constellations similar to those present in the mythology: At the end of his time in office, the *heros*, Gilgamesh, a legendary *heros*-king from Uruk, hastened inevitably to his death, in spite of his attempts to circumvent it. Like Dumuzi-Tammuz, he battled three mythical seasonal beings: a lion, whose coat he wore, as did Heracles; a wild bull of heaven, which he conquered only with great effort; and

a wild man (Enkidu), who later became his friend. (The man-bull-lion combination is also a sphinx.) In another instance the opponent was a giant with a lion's body, vulture's talons, wild bull horns, and a serpentine tail (Chumbaba), which also is a calendar symbol (Ill. 19). Like Heracles, Gilgamesh, too, journeyed to the Underworld in search of the herb of life. However, no herbs could help against the inevitable cyclical close of his time in office. Therefore the Goddess of the Underworld, in the form of a snake, stole back the herbs he found. Gilgamesh met his inevitable death in despair. This, however, represents a patriarchal deformation of the myth similar to the deformations that occurred when Sumeria was overtaken by the Babylonian conquerors: Gilgamesh rejected Ishtar's love (Sacred Marriage), thus forfeiting the chance for resurrection and ensuring his destiny of death. His revolt against his self-created fate is, then, by no means heroic, but rather foolhardy. The hopelessness of the patriarchal notion of death is already apparent here.

Ishtar and Gilgamesh are clearly the forerunners of Hera and Heracles of Argos. The more recent Dorian Heracles, too, demonstrated patriarchal characteristics, for example, in that he considered Hera his "enemy," but because he ultimately reconciled himself with her, he came out of it more unscathed than Gilgamesh of Sumeria.<sup>14</sup>

It is common knowledge that in Sumeria, as in Egypt, the mythological-heroic level corresponded precisely to the ritualistic one. (We can assume the same of Crete and pre-Hellenic Greece.) Thus, Inanna-Ishtar's high priestess married the king of Sumeria (or the kings of individual Sumerian cities) annually. They were considered to be earthly representatives of the Goddess and the *heros*; the king bore the title of "Shepherd of the Land," and was Dumuzi incarnate. He was further thought to be the Goddess' son, and, indeed was, because he was the son of an Ishtar-priestess produced by her union with a previous king (compare the Gilgamesh Epic). The Goddess-high priestess bestowed upon the king his throne and office, for she was, like Isis in Egypt, the land itself. In addition, she offered him protection for the duration of his governing reign (compare Hathor-Isis and the pharaoh). Sumeria, then, was also a "theocracy," a sacred state governed by a divine goddess.

The king arrived at the temple of the Goddess for the celebration of the Sacred Marriage. It stood on top of the magnificent terraced pyramids, the ziggurats erected by Sumerians. The ziggurat symbolizes the mountain summit where the Goddess resided. In the myths, Ishtar's temple, too, was situated on top of a high mountain covered with

splendid cedar trees. At its peak, her towering temple radiated in blinding white (Gilgamesh Epic).

The Goddess received the king in the temple at the top of the ziggurat, and feasted with him at a great banquet of sacred bread and wine from the altar of the Goddess; this was the food of life. Because abundance and excess were part of the festivals of the gift-giving Goddess, there was want of nothing on this occasion, and music and dancing provided cause for great joy (compare the Egyptian Hathor). Afterward, the two representatives retreated to the highest chamber of the temple, constructed of cedar, decorated with foliage, and lined with magnificent carpets inside. There she embraced him and he accepted her graciousness: thus, the fertility of the land was ensured for one year.

Originally, here as elsewhere, kings were actually sacrificed at the festival of Death and Return. However, the following version is known to have come from Sumeria: The king was trapped in a cave in the mountains, and like Dumuzi, was forced to remain in this "Underworld" until the Goddess-high priestess returned to free him. This was considered to be an act of birth (as in Crete). What followed was a triumphant procession and theatrical rendering of a cosmic fight depicting the battle between Tammuz-Marduk and Tiamat. Here we encounter, without doubt, the origin of the theater.

The king, then, in the cyclical celebration of the seasons, experiences precisely those three phases we are familiar with from the paradigm of the classical *heros*-structure: Initiation by the Goddess, Sacred Marriage to the Goddess, Death and Return through the Goddess.

As far as the social structure is concerned, we see how its configurations, at least in the class of the nobility, correspond exactly to the mythical patterns (compare also Egypt). The king is, first and foremost, the son of a goddess (high priestess and/or Queen Mother). From the Queen Mother he receives his sister, heiress to the throne, as his bride, and governs vicariously on her behalf. This is expressed quite clearly, both in the mythology, and in pictorial representations. Thus, nothing could be further from the truth than when historians deduce, based on the existence of kingship, a strictly male-dominated rule. Such simplistic conclusions may well accommodate their patriarchal imaginations, but they completely ignore the complex interweaving of relationships and power in theocratic states. History cannot be traced accurately in this manner.

The entire population participated in the joys of the marriage of goddess and king. Weddings of the people were celebrated at the same



*Ill. 19: A sphinx-like mythical being symbolizing the mythical calendar year of the Goddess*

mythical time of the year; it was considered a bad omen to celebrate them later (compare the fact that May is still seen as the month of marriage, even in our culture). The acquisition of the throne, together with the subsequent *heros'* death, was restricted to the king himself: It was a unique, elevated act, performed before the higher echelons of the state's representatives, which lent the king an aura of heroism.



# ASIA MINOR AND PALESTINE<sup>15</sup>

Sumeria's trade routes, spanning land and water, branched far and wide. Not only did they stretch deep into the territories of Asia Minor, where the Anatolian cultures flourished, they also led to Syria and Palestine, and southward to the Red Sea and the Nile, where Egypt, in its earliest stages, developed under Sumerian influence. By boat the Sumerians and their successors reached Cyprus, Crete, and the entire eastern region of the Aegean Sea. At the same time, they turned to West India through the Persian Gulf, along the Persian coast, and followed the great Indus River upstream. Their trade routes even cut across the Persian empire that lay in between.

We will deal with Persia and India later; what is of primary interest here are Asia Minor and Palestine, both of which are regions with the most ancient matriarchal urban cultures, such as Çhatal Hüyük, Chayönü, Muraibit, and Jericho (7000-9000 B.C.).

## 5.1 KUBABA AND TESHUB (HITTITES)

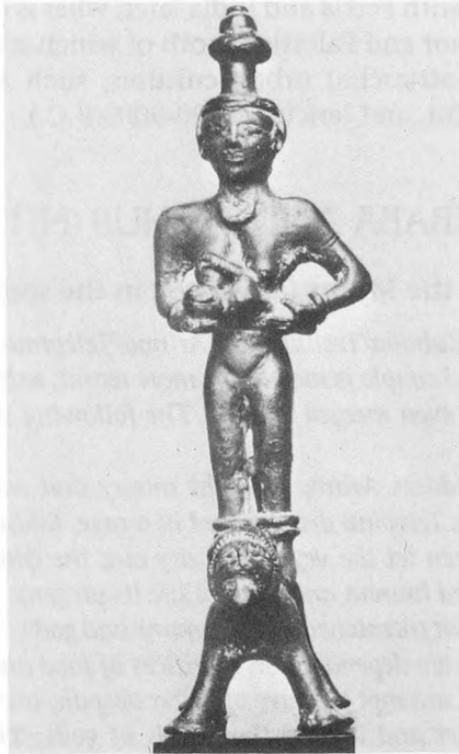
### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*The myths of Kubaba/Teshub and Arinna/Telepinu are parallel, because the second couple is merely the more recent, astral variant of the first, and later even merged with it. The following is said of Arinna and Telepinu:*

*The Sun Goddess Arinna brought misery and want to the world when her heros Telepinu disappeared in a rage, taking all grains with him. Arinna then let the vegetation dry out, the fruits wither on the trees, and denied human and animal life its progeny, thus initiating a great famine that threatened both humans and gods, because the gods' lives, in turn, were dependent on sacrifices of food and drink made by humans. In an attempt to stave off utter despair, one of the gods prepared a banquet and invited thousands of gods. They feasted endlessly, but were not satiated; they drank in great measure, but could not quench their thirst. Then Teshub, the God of Atmosphere, remem-*

*bered that the misfortune began when his "son," Telepinu, retreated to a distant mountain. The gods then searched the highest mountains, the deepest valleys, and the depths of the ocean for Telepinu, but did not find him, so Teshub asked the Goddess Hannahanna (the Great Mother Kubaba) for advice. She suggested that Teshub seek Telepinu in his own city, but even this proved futile. Hannahanna then sent forth a bee who found Telepinu sleeping and stung him on his hands and feet. This only fueled Telepinu's rage and made him more determined to destroy everything on earth. However, the Goddess of Medicine exorcised his bad temper with her healing powers and sent him home on the wings of an eagle. At that very moment, the earth's fertility was renewed, the mother nursed her child, the sheep its lamb, the cow its calf.*

The Hittites were one of the predominant peoples influencing Asia Minor. Their empire emerged in the Middle Bronze Age and later spread to Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia. Hittite city-states were subordi-



III. 20: Kubaba on the lion

nate to a great king who was not only commander-in-chief, but also priest-king, the earthly representative of the God of Atmosphere, Teshub.

Heading the army was, however, his secondary function; governing the people was paramount. Directing the government was the task of the Queen Mother, and after her death, it was the queen who also gave birth to the new king. She was also the high priestess of the Mother Goddess. The king's only link to the Goddess was by way of his wife's graces, through uniting with her in the Sacred Marriage (compare Sumeria).

The Hittite Mother Goddess, whose *heros* was Teshub, was called Kubaba or Hebatu; she is the forerunner of Cybele in Asia Minor, who, in the Hellenistic period, even had a cult in Rome. Just as the king was called "Teshub," so, too, would the Queen Mother probably have been called "Kubaba" or "Hebatu." "Hecuba," the name of the legendary Queen Mother of Troy, in Asia Minor, was derived from the name of this old Goddess.

Kubaba-Hebatu appears on a relief found in the sacred cliff dwellings at Yazilikaja (Anatolia/Turkey)(Ill. 20). She is clad in a long, pleated robe and wears a high crown on top of her braided hair; she carries a long scepter in her left hand. She stands in an extraordinary place, on top of a lion, the symbol of her power and divine order (compare Hathor-Sachmet). She is thus identified as the Mistress of Universal Law to which the God of Atmosphere Teshub, being her partner and assistant, is subordinate. She reaches her right hand toward him as he approaches her, bearing sacrificial offerings in his hands: On a vase relief, Dumuzi-Tammuz can be seen approaching Inanna-Ishtar in precisely the same manner, his hands overflowing with sacrificial fruits as she stands before him in a jacketed skirt, and bearing a high crown of cattle horns on her head.

The fact that Teshub is the God of Atmosphere is evident in the way he strides, like the changing weather as it whisks across the hilltops, lightly over the peaks of mountains that bend in deference (the hilltops depicted as men in caps). Originally, he, too, was a fertility *heros*; he is at times seen standing on a bull, carrying in his hand a bolt of lightning, which he has borrowed from the Goddess' sphere of powers (fertility symbol). That we more and more often find the fertility *heros* promoted to the position of a Weather God, is easy to understand: The male principle, even as it was represented in the form of the phallic primeval serpent, was associated with wind and water. In the astral mythology the solar symbol was introduced, which was subordinate to the sidereal law. Furthermore, the sacred kings provided

water not only by constructing irrigation systems; they were often considered “water bringers,” thus entitled to practice the art of rainmaking. Swinging their shields so as to sound like the wind, they conjured rain by imitating the sound of thunder with a big club in a hollow oak tree, and by “making lightning” with the double-ax borrowed from the priestess (compare the eldest Heracles). They thus became “rain-makers” and were later deified into Weather Gods or Gods of Atmosphere, possessing the attributes of the sun, lightning (ax), thunder, storm, rain, fog, etc. These advanced fertility *heros*, whose contribution to vegetative cycles was once contingent upon their descent into the Underworld, were now able to effect the same from the heavens. The Goddess probably never suspected they would, in this manner, soon use their borrowed attributes to work their way to the position of Absolute Gods in Heaven, and go so far as to employ her “lightning bolt” as a weapon against her.

Teshub, as the God of Atmosphere, appears as the Goddess’ conjugal partner. Her son (the *heros*) is situated behind her on a lion, clad like Dumuzi in a short tunic and a dome-shaped cap. He, too, carries in his hand a “lightning bolt,” or double ax, as a sign of his dignity and his death. This symbol identifies the son of the Goddess and her husband, Teshub, as one and the same. Based on what we know of Egypt and Sumeria, the gulf between these two figures’ identities is not substantial. Until the later Roman era, the pair of lions, which function here as pedestals for the Goddess and her *heros*, remained the retinue of Cybele, who, however, harnessed them to a chariot upon which she sat.

In addition to the chthonic variant of the Earth Mother and God of Weather or Atmosphere (*heros*), the Hittites introduced the astral variant seen in the Sun Goddess Arinna and her *heros*, Telepinu. Both constitute replications of Kubaba and Teshub. While Arinna later became the primary Goddess of the Hittite empire, her future was by no means as grandiose as was that of Kubaba-Cybele, who made it as far as Rome. Arinna’s husband, too, was a God of Atmosphere whom she not only loved, but for whom she also fought (first and second aspects). After her fusion with Kubaba she also became the Great Mother who plunged the land into despair and famine after her *heros*, Telepinu, disappeared, taking all the grains with him (second and third aspects). All of the gods participated in the ensuing intensive search for him, but because he is in the Underworld he was not found. The puzzle was solved, though, by the very actor who originally played the leading role in the drama: the ancient Mother Goddess Hannahanna (Kubaba). She sent forth a bee, which only fueled Telepinu’s rage. The motivation

for his “rage” was not clear; it appeared, though, that it was little more than a helpless attempt to impose a psychological interpretation on Telepinu’s annual disappearance. Without further ado his infantile rage was exorcised (third aspect: medicine) and he was sent home. Thus, fertility was returned to the land, because in the position of a God of Atmosphere, Telepinu was capable of making rain. Full power was thus restored to both queen and king; budding tree branches were placed in the temples, and sacrificial offerings of wine, wheat, and animals were made. Furthermore, the God of Atmosphere, with the help of the Goddess, slew the dragon, who here, as in Sumeria, was the personification of evil. There is a festival that commemorates the event.

## 5.2 CYBELE AND ATTIS (PHRYGIA)

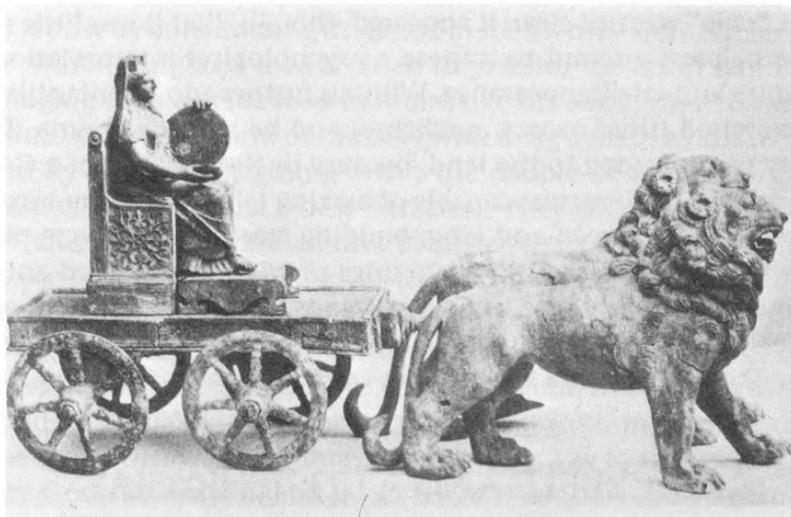
### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Cybele was an androgynous goddess. When her male organs were severed, a tree was formed from them. The virgin Nana ate the fruit of this tree, became pregnant and gave birth to Attis.*

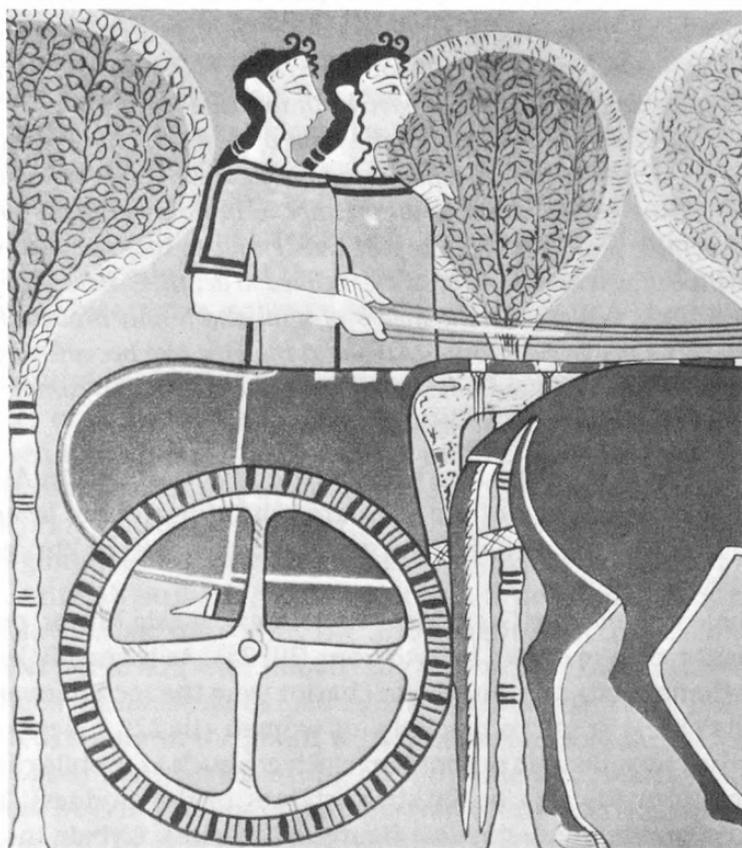
*Cybele, however, appearing in the form of Agdistus, the hermaphrodite, fell in love with Attis and drove him mad with love for her. Out of love for the Goddess and in an attempt to imitate her, Attis sacrificed his male organs beneath a pine tree. Perhaps, too, she castrated him with her own hands. At any rate, he bled to death. Cybele wrapped the dead Attis in wool and moaned over him, and finally brought him and the pine tree to her grotto. (Attis and the pine tree became identical.) The body of Attis remained in the grotto (Underworld) completely intact and untouched until he was resurrected the next year.*

Cybele and Attis were the best known Goddess-heros pair in Asia Minor and were prototypes of the Cyprian Aphrodite and her heros Adonis. They became the deities of the subsequent empires of Phrygia and Lydia in Asia Minor.

Cybele was also the Great Mother Goddess of Asia Minor, perched on a chariot-throne drawn by two lions (Ill. 21). As is already implicit in the Athena myth, the wheel and chariot were the sacred inventions of matriarchies, or, more precisely, of women (Ill.22). Like so many things, they served cultic purposes exclusively, such as mobile carriages for processions to carry heavy stone statues of the Goddess. This is evidenced by the many goddess figures in chariots: Cybele in a lion-drawn chariot, Artemis in a deer-drawn chariot, Frigga in a goat-drawn chariot, the Irish deer-drawn Goddess Liban, the Goddess Nerthus in



*Ill. 21: Cybele in the lion-drawn chariot*



*Ill. 22: Women in a chariot (Mycenia/Argos)*

her cow chariot, Medea (the Corinthian Demeter) on a winged serpentine chariot. The use of the wheel and chariot for profane purposes, particularly as strategic combat-chariot-weapons for military purposes, was a later invention, an idea quite typical for early patriarchal peoples.

Like Kubaba, Cybele had all the characteristics of the Great Goddess. Like her, too, Cybele was more of an Earth Goddess than an astral one, being associated with a fertility cult and a well-defined tree cult. Cybele was often revered in the form of a pine tree (like the Goddess Daphne in Crete in the form of a laurel tree). Attis, her *heros*, is said to have been created from the fruits of the tree. Attis was a youthful Shepherd God and Cybele's lover. As has already been described, he suffered death when he sacrificed his masculinity beneath the pine tree and bled to death. In an early Cybele cult, it was customary for the shepherds to sacrifice a sheep in the same manner; in an even later Cybele cult, her priests emasculated themselves. They hoped that this self-sacrifice would secure for them, as it did for Attis, immortality through resurrection.

Death by castration for the god-*heros* is not as rare in the proximity of the Earth Goddess as it appears to be here. Gaia's husband Uranus was a castrated god, as was his predecessor, Chronus, Rhea's husband. It would not be erroneous, therefore, to assume the same to be true of Hera and the Cretan Zeus, because Hera is the direct successor of Rhea, especially considering that the Cretan Zeus is identical with Dionysus-Zagreus, who was said to have been torn to pieces. This "tearing to pieces" is a euphemism for castration, something both Dionysus and Attis experienced in a delirious trance. In the most ancient Demeter rituals, a grand procession of women provided the severed phallus with a ceremonial burial (Thesmophoria); it was equivalent to the burial of the god. The *heros* Adonis suffered the same fate as Attis because Aphrodite was herself the ancient Oriental Love and Earth Goddess. Anemones sprang from Adonis's blood, violets from Attis's.

The Egyptian Osiris, too, was "torn to pieces," originally by the Goddess Isis, later by his opponent Seth. This sheds more light, then, on the fact that the one thing Isis could not find after Osiris had been put back together was his phallus: he was, in fact, a castrated god. It was not known, though, whether Dumuzi-Tammuz and Teshub-Telepinu were "torn to pieces"; at any rate, a desperate search for each of them ensued. Furthermore, Dumuzi Tammuz, like Attis, was the divine shepherd (similarly, the Cretan Zeus and Iakchos-Dionysus are said to be surrounded by shepherds) and Teshub-Telepinu was, after all, the immediate predecessor of Attis.



Ill. 23: *Atargatis: (Dea Syria)*

The cults of Cybele-Attis and Demeter-Dionysus demonstrate many similarities: Both had a wild character, for, regardless of whether their ecstatic orgies represented the Sacred Marriage or Attis's self-sacrifice, they were accompanied by arousing flute music and frenetic dancing. Furthermore, in each of the cults there was a sacramental dinner in which participants recuperated and escaped death for a brief period: bread was eaten to the sound of drums, wine was drunk to the chime of cymbals. Both Coribans and Satyrs followed Cybele, Attis, and Dionysus. Similarly, just as Dionysus was escorted by the frenetic Maenads, there were raucous, ecstatic processions of Cybelene priests dressed in women's clothes. (From the perspective of antiquity, Phrygia was considered a colony of Crete, a fact that strengthened even more the already present Neolithic similarities between the cults.)

Later, in Rome, a pine or fir tree from the sacred forest of Cybele was employed to symbolize Attis's Death and Return. An image of the god was placed beneath the tree, and the tree was then felled to represent the castration and death of Attis. The tree, once a symbol of the Goddess, was thus transformed into a phallic symbol. Bedecked with garlands of wool threads and violets, the Attis-flower, the tree was mourned and buried in a great procession of grief. Three days later, it was exhumed in a ritual reenactment of the resurrection. The believers' grief was transformed into jubilation by Attis's victory over death. It was followed by excessive and ecstatic indulgence, with banquets of food and drink, capped by the Sacred Marriage. The Attis-tree was kept until the end of the year, then burned.

Even today, there are comparable popular customs such as erecting ornamented May-poles in the spring. In the final analysis, it is a phallic symbol often associated with the May Queen and the May wedding.\* Similarly, the Christmas tree decorated with garlands is set up as a sign of hope at precisely the time of the winter solstice, when the Mother Goddess' child comes to the world, the child being the spirit of the new year (such children include Attis, Iakchos-Dionysus and Isis's child, Har-Sieseis). These concepts, inasmuch as they were not absorbed by early Christianity, were later christianized.

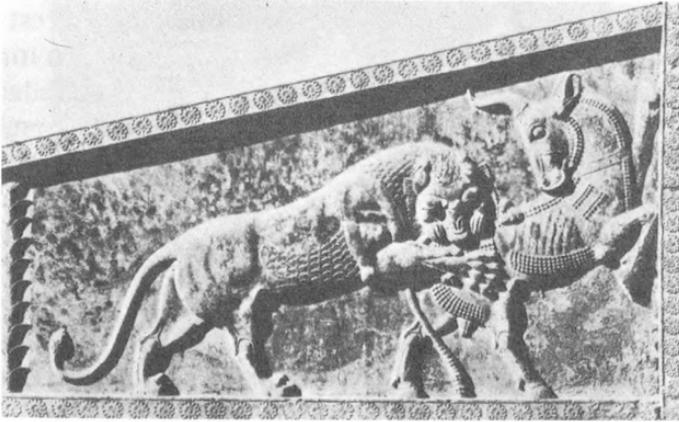
### 5.3 ATARGATIS AND HADAD (SYRIA)

In Syria, the Great Goddess was called Atargatis and originated in Euphrates (Ill. 23). Her *heros'* and lover's name was Hadad, who is a double of the God of Atmosphere of Asia Minor. "Atargatis" means "earth" and "Hadad" means "sun." Depictions show the Goddess sitting on a lion, or a throne supported by a lion. Hadad stands, or sits, on a bull in the descending rays of the sun. The solar rays surrounding Atargatis, on the other hand, are ascending, and symbolize the new life emanating from the earth. The male partner, like Attis, is often personified by a bull seen in the clutches of the lion's claws, to symbolize the triumph of the Goddess. This ancient motif dates as far back as Sumeria (Ill. 24).

The cult is completely similar to the Cybele-Attis cult: Here, too, there were ecstatic orgies in which priests whipped and emasculated themselves accompanied by the music of Syrian flutes. Afterwards, they

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\*Especially in Bavaria, the Maypole and the May wedding are pronounced customs.



Ill. 24: *The lion (Goddess) biting the steer (heros); (from Persia)*

dressed in women's clothes like the *Cybeloi* (Cybele priests) in imitation of the Goddess. Atargatis, wearing a towering crown on her head and carrying a tambourine in her hand, also rode a chariot pulled by lions, and escorted by boisterous priests.

## 5.4 ANAT AND BAAL (PALESTINE)

### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Baal was the brother-husband of Anat. She was the Goddess upon whom Baal, as God of Atmosphere, was dependent. He brought the rain, the wind, the storm, and fostered the harvest. His enemies were the dragon Yam, and the Death God Mot. Baal built a palace without windows to protect himself from his enemies. He later relented and had Venetian blinds installed so that the rain could reach the earth when they were raised.*

*Mot, however, persuaded Baal to leave his palace in Heaven, then seized and killed him. Anat searched desperately for Baal and found him dead in the pasture. She wailed loudly and all the gods mourned with her. Then she took Baal's corpse with her to her home and buried him (Underworld). While Baal tarried in the Underworld, Anat went to seek Mot. She gripped him, tore off his robe, and demanded that he return her lover. Mot confessed to having killed Baal by pulverizing him between his jaws, as the sheep do with the ripe grains. Anat then slashed Mot open with her ceremonial sickle, shook him up, tore off his skin, put him in a grinder, and spread his flesh over the fields. Mot*

*survived the treatment because he is the God of Death, who never dies. He released Baal from the Underworld, but when Baal emerged, he remained so paralyzed by terror that he fled straight to Anat. Since she was also a War Goddess, she encouraged him to go to battle. Baal and Mot then engaged in a fierce fight, biting like snakes, and ramming each other like a pair of wild bulls. Anat finally intervened and sent Mot back to the Underworld, because his time had run out. Baal was the victor who restored life on earth. Suddenly "oil rained from the Heavens and the arid furrows of the desert filled with honey."*

In Palestine, the Goddess was called Anat, Asherat, Ashtaroth or Astarte: she was always the same goddess under many names, each determined by the local cult. Baal or Bel, the God of Atmosphere, was her partner.

Anat means "Mistress of Mountains" and she was Baal's sister-bride. Baal is the God of Rain, Wind, and Storm, who stimulates the harvest. His annual descent into the Underworld had the same consequences as the disappearance of Dumuzi and other fertility *heros*. He, too, fought with several dragons: with Yam, the Master of the Ocean, and with Mot, Master of the Underworld.

It was Mot who continually dragged Baal into the Underworld to kill him, Mot being the drought or the death of vegetation. With the support of the Sun Goddess, Anat, his sister-bride, desperately sought him. Like Isis, she mourned him with a heart-wrenching wail, like "a cow desiring her calf." Baal was found dead (presumably "torn in pieces") in the pasture, and all the gods joined in Anat's lament. "Baal is dead," they cried out into the world. Its ring was reminiscent of the cry, "Pan is dead," that shook the pre-Hellenistic world. It was all to no avail, however, until Anat confronted her archenemy Mot, and turned into quite the aggressive goddess. She forced Mot to confess, and when he gave her a cynical answer, she treated him like the ripe grains mentioned before: She slit him open with her ceremonial sickle (reaping), shook him up (threshing), tore off his skin (sifting the chaff from the wheat), put him in the mill (grinding), and spread his flesh over the fields (sowing). Mot, who was a God of Death, could not die in the process, but he set Baal free from the Underworld (the new seedling) after the ordeal.

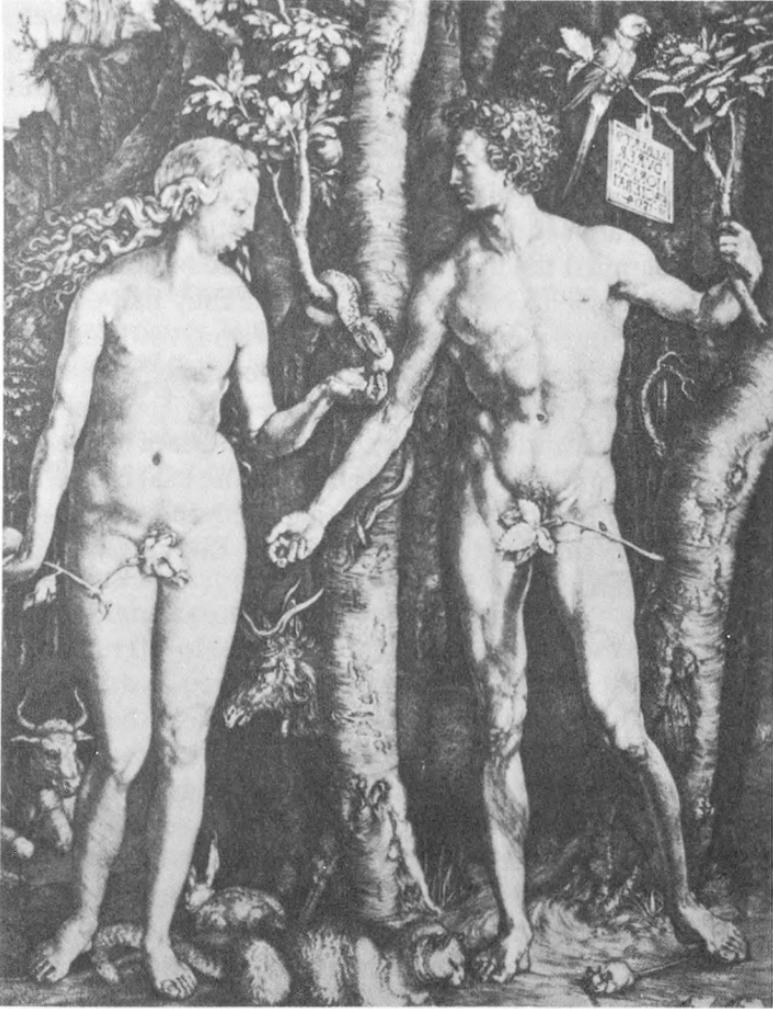
It is presumably Baal, though, in the form of a dying god, that Anat so grossly mangled like the ripened grain, because he embodied the spirit of the grain. It is the same whether Baal was called "Mot" in the form of the grain that dies and is sowed anew, or whether he was called "Baal" in the form of the returning green grain in the spring. In any case, Anat represents the high point of the active goddesses like

Inanna, Isis, and others, for as we see in her myths, she does all the field work herself. Similarly, the female farmers, her earthly daughters, created the grain cultivation themselves.

Furthermore, Anat was sensual and eternally fertile (second aspect), without ever having to sacrifice her virginity (first aspect); she renewed it annually in a bath just as easily as did the other Mother Goddesses. She was, above all else, an extraordinarily adept warrior (first aspect), as was evidenced by her battle with the God of Death himself: he was, by no means, a match for her because she was more than he was. Under the name of "Asherat," she was the omnipotent Creatrix and Devouress, the Death-in-Life-Goddess personified (third aspect).

In Israel she was called Ashtaroth or Astarte. Her *heros*, too, was called Baal. The Judaic God Yahweh met with great difficulties in asserting himself against her because he himself had once been a goddess: the Great Goddess of the Orient who traversed the Heavens in the form of the moon. Her Sumerian name was Iahu, "the Dove," symbol of the universal Goddess of Love (Inanna-Ishtar, Aphrodite, and others). The increasingly patriarchalized tribes of Israel, advancing into Palestine, usurped not only her names, but also the figure of the dove for their own god: Iahu became Yahweh, and the dove, the primeval symbol of matriarchal Eros, became the ascetic misogynist Holy Spirit of this religion.

Another adaptation was the name Jehovah and the Story of Paradise. Hawwa or Heba or Hebe, later called Eva or Eve, was the "Mother of all Living," the Earth Goddess of Jerusalem. She resided in her Paradise of fruit trees, which was, like Hera's orchard, a typically Eleusian Other World. Like the primeval goddesses of the early matriarchy, she brought forth all life simply and exclusively by mating with the phallic serpent. Later, she, too, had a *heros* whose name, Abdiheba (Adam), was clearly derived from her own. He was prince and protective *heros* of pre-Israelite Jerusalem. She married him annually after having served (and killed) him with the classical love and death apple, so that she could bestow upon him immortality and eternal youth in her garden Paradise (Ill. 25). The Jewish God Jehovah (Jehva = Eva) appropriated her name for himself, and, along with the name, her Paradise was lost. In this process, the nude Love Goddess Eva became the sinful woman who wanted to know too much about life and death, symbolized by the apple. She wanted to learn too much about that most ancient wisdom which had been hers for dim and distant ages! She was subsequently punished for what had been her own most ancient ritual, passing on the apple. From then on she was destined to remain man's



*Ill. 25: The Goddess Jehwa-Eva in her Paradise*

"miniature," subordinated to her own *heros* as his hired assistant, and made from his rib as an afterthought. The snake-phallus that had originally been a symbol of her own creative desire became the principle of evil itself, in which she was a perpetual participant by virtue of her "seductive nature."

In spite of these patriarchal perversions of the ancient world view, Yahweh had to conform to the surrounding matriarchal cultures for a long time: Thus, he adopted the characteristic traits of the ancient oriental God of Atmosphere and appeared in thunderstorms, torrential rains, and pillars of fire. Like the oriental *heros*, he was quick to battle a dragon, or a sea serpent like Tiamat. In the Bible, the sea serpent

was called Rahab and was beaten to a pulp by Yahweh. Yahweh took on the traits of Baal, the Fertility God, too, and was worshipped in the form of a golden calf. In this guise he was called Jerrubbaal and performed the Sacred Marriage with Astarte; while in the guise of Yahweh, he performed it with Iahu (Anat). Their temples in Jerusalem and Mizpeh abided peacefully alongside each other.

In the period after the Jews' exile from Palestine, the prophets vehemently condemned the matriarchal cults as "sodomous," and initiated a fanatic struggle to curtail any influence they had on Yahweh. He was "purified" into an abstract concept of god, while at the same time, everything related to matriarchal religion, and women in particular, was declared "impure." Before this ideology could be put into practice, however, centuries of bitter combat took place between tribes in Palestine, whose followers adhered either to the Baal or the Yahweh cult. Even though Biblical scribes have falsified and distorted these events from a one-sided patriarchal ideology, they are nevertheless described in the Bible.

## PERSIA AND INDIA<sup>15</sup>

Persia was situated between two matriarchal urban cultures: Sumeria and the Indus culture. Sumerian trade routes crossed the Persian mainland and Sumerian ships sailed along its coast. Thus, the fringes of ancient Persian society were shaped by the cults and social structures of bordering urban cultures. Later, a *melange* of matriarchal religions developed at Persia's center and continued well into the epoch of antiquity.

Dating the ancient culture of the Indus (with its renowned cities of Harappa and Mohenjo Dara) is difficult. Researchers assume it to be a more recent outcrop of Sumerian culture. This is contradicted, though, by the fact that the oldest matriarchal social forms developed in Southeast Asia, which is perhaps, then, one of the areas in which matriarchies originated. Along the routes of the large rivers of Southeast Asia this culture spread to Tibet and China, to the great Indonesian islands, and across the Pacific Ocean. It further spread in a westerly direction to the subcontinent of India, and so, for example, there was a matriarchal culture in the Ganges Delta in East India, the nearest bordering culture to Southeast Asia. Thus, it is utterly conceivable that the West Indian Harappa culture would have received its foundation from East India rather than from the Sumerians to the west.

As we know, matriarchal cultures spread from Anatolia and Sumeria ever further into the West: to Egypt, to the Aegean Sea (Crete, Greece), the entire Mediterranean region, and from there to Central and Northwestern Europe. On the other hand, matriarchal cultures advanced in an easterly direction from Southeast Asia to Oceania, until they finally took root on the Pacific coasts of Central and South America, where, again, the most ancient cultures are of matriarchal character (see my work in several volumes, *The Matriarchy*).

### 6.1 ANAHITA AND MITRA (PERSIA)

Of the many syncretistic Persian deities that demonstrate Sumerian, Indian, and Greek origins, I would like to mention only one, because



*Ill. 26: Anahita with the water of life and the dove*



*Ill. 27: Mitra killing the steer with a sword. We see a snake and a lion in the lower margin.*

she played a more prominent role in uniquely shaping Persian thought. She is Anahita, and her *heros* is Mitra.

The oldest goddess of Susa was Nanaia, a primeval goddess we see posed for birth, supporting one breast in her hands. She later became Anahita, the Goddess of Fertility and Water, who personified the mystical current of life. She is depicted as a towering, beautiful young woman who descends from the Heavens to fertilize the earth, multiply the herds, and bring children and milk to the women (Ill. 26). She appears in statues with protruding breasts, a golden crown, draped in a gold-laced coat, and ornamented with earrings, necklaces, and a belt.

Anahita drove, like the others, a chariot drawn by four white horses that represent wind, rain, clouds, and hail. In Persia the Goddess, then, was herself the Mistress of the Atmosphere. She also possessed a lance and shield, an indicator of her warrior function. In this combination she was clearly the matriarchal triad: the Goddess of Love and Battle, the Great Mother, and the Mistress of the Three Regions. Accordingly, she was named as a triad on Archemedian inscriptions: Ahura-Mazda-Anahita.

Her *heros* Mitra is often portrayed in the company of a bull, which characterizes him as a fertility *heros*. He made an annual sacrificial offering of a bull, and thus renewed the life force (Ill. 27). Originally, he had himself been the "bull," and therefore also the sacrifice itself. Anahita's cult had an orgiastic character similar to that of other Near Eastern cults.

Like the Goddess in Sumeria and Egypt, Anahita too was the Patron Goddess of the Persian kings she enthroned.

She was later identified with the Babylonian Ishtar, the Palestinian Anat, and the Phrygian Cybele. In Hellenistic times, her three aspects were simply equated with Artemis, Aphrodite, and Athena, and she was called by these names in Persian temples. Her *heros*, Mitra, was later changed to Mithras, Master of Heavenly Light, who can himself bestow life and fertility. As such, he outshone the old Goddess. Finally, the Indo-European conquerors masculinized her into Ahura-Mazda, "Master of all Wisdom." We are already familiar, in the case of Palestine, with the masculinization of goddesses and the simultaneous perversion of their functions.

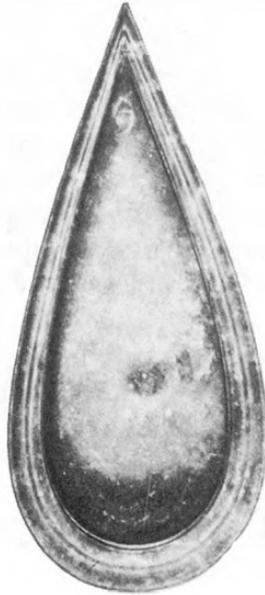
## 6.2 PRITHIVI AND DYAUS PITAR (INDIA)

Prithivi was the early Indian Earth Mother, comparable to Gaia-Rhea or, inasmuch as she is the personification of the land of India, with Isis

and Inanna, who are also the goddesses of their lands. In the beginning, she was the mother of deities and people, independent of any male partner (Ill. 28). In addition, it is said that the dead returned to her. To them she was like soft wool, or a young maiden. She was the transmitter and healer of all illnesses, the destructress and restorer in one, the Death-in-Life Goddess.

After the Aryan invasion of Northern India that barbarously destroyed the flourishing Indus culture without putting anything comparable in its place, Prithivi was superseded, step by step, by male partners, until she finally faded into the shadowy wife of Dyaus Pitar, the universal Father in Heaven. However, there are areas in Southern India that the Indo-European invaders never reached, where Prithivi is worshipped even today in some regional cults, primarily in the primeval form of a stone or a tree (as were all very ancient Earth Goddesses); she is thought to appear in the form of fertile waters as well.

The most ancient depictions in the north show Prithivi mating with Dyaus Pitar, manifested as a bull. Here he is yet to demonstrate any cosmic function, but was rather the classical prototype of the fertility *heros*, sacrificed in the form of a bull. Her strength was still so overpowering that Prithivi and Dyaus Pitar are often called "the two mothers" in ancient hymns.



Ill. 28: Prithivi (*Yoni-symbol*)

Her two daughters were the night and the red of the rising sun, her son was the sun. This solar son was called Indra. He separated Heaven from Earth, thereby forging a path for the sun to cross the cosmic ocean. Indra, being the young successor of Dyaus Pitar, i.e., his reborn incarnation, assimilated all Dyaus Pitar's characteristics and became himself the solar bull, who fructified the earth (compare Egypt).

Under the Aryan influence, however, Dyaus Pitar, as the highest God, the Heavenly Father, was made absolute, replacing Privithi, a fate suffered by all the Indian goddesses. Here, classically abbreviated, we witness the process of transformation of the matriarchal Goddess: The independence she enjoyed in early matriarchy is developed to a dominant role in relation to the male partner in advanced matriarchy; her dominance is then perverted, in patriarchy, into dependence on an absolute god. This process of change is typical not only for India, but for all the other cultures and regions considered thus far.

### 6.3 SARASVATI AND BRAHMA (INDIA)

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Sarasvati is a Goddess of Rivers and Water, the Goddess of Wisdom, and of Eloquence; she mastered all the arts and was called upon like a muse (Ill. 29). Her husband was Brahma.*

*On one occasion Sarasvati refused to assist Brahma in a rain ceremony, but he could not do it alone because her presence was necessary. In rage and desperation Brahma ordered that he be given another wife. Indra, the solar son, fulfilled the order by finding a beautiful young milkmaid named Gayatri who carried a butter churn on her head. He brought her before the Assembly of Gods, where she was lavishly ornamented and placed on the seat of the divine bride. Sarasvati arrived, protesting the travesty. She vehemently condemned all who had participated in the betrayal: Brahma would be banished from all the temples and could only be worshipped on one day a year. Indra would be bound in chains and dragged off to a foreign country. Vishnu, who had given Brahma Gayatri as his wife, would be resurrected as a lowly shepherd. Rudra would be robbed of his masculinity, and Agni, the God of Fire, would be forced to devour everything on earth.*

*Gayatri intervened to mitigate the curses. Vishnu and Lakshmi bade Sarasvati to recant. Sarasvati finally relented, and, at her behest, both she and Gayatri became the wives of Brahma.*

Sarasvati and Brahma are further developed variants of Prithivi and



Ill. 29: Sarasvati

Dyaus Pitar. Their origin is in Eastern India, in the river deltas of the Ganges and Brahmaputra, as is evidenced by the fact that Sarasvati was also called Ma-Ganga, the Mother of the Ganges, one of the tangible forms of the Earth Mother. Brahma was the God of Brahmaputra; both deities combined were "the two mothers," who, for the Bengalese at any rate, brought forth all life. Brahma later became the dominating husband of Sarasvati, who was degraded and suppressed until he himself became a mere abstract principle, thereby escaping into a neutrality that transcends gender, obviously the *non-plus-ultra*, in the context of patriarchal philosophy.

Before he could achieve this end, however, Brahma had to overcome a number of difficulties with Sarasvati, who was not the type to be cast in his shadow, but rather a willful wife, much like Hera in relation to the Olympian Zeus. She was originally not only the source of life and of light, independent of Brahma, but also the Goddess of Wisdom and Mistress of Knowledge and Literature—an Indian Athena. Each of these principles is present in her symbols: She is seated on a "lotus blossom" (Universal Mother) and her forehead is graced with a

moon sickle (light and wisdom). She purifies everything around her and bestows immortality. For this reason, the people of India still immerse themselves in the River Ganges to become pure and immortal.

Brahma, then, was quite eager to marry Sarasvati and assume her functions (compare Zeus and Athena). She was, however, of little assistance to him in the matter. For example, she refused to help him make rain, and she let neither earthly nor spiritual waters flow. Brahma, who could accomplish nothing without her, finally found a surrogate wife in the figure of the young milk cow (young maiden), Gayatri. Because he was a variant of Dyaus Pitar, Brahma was, of course, the bull who mated with the young milk cow, to make "rain." The results of his action, however, were disastrous, because Sarasvati, in retaliation, put a curse on all the gods: Indra would be chained and exiled to a foreign country, which meant that she would banish the sun to the Underworld. Vishnu, who had, after all, been the Heavenly Father, would be reincarnated into a lowly shepherd, and Rudra would be castrated—truly a catastrophe for a Fertility God. Agni would be forced to devour everything, because he was fire. These sentences were indeed quite typical of those meted out by an Earth Goddess: the castration of the *heros*, the degradation of the God of Heaven to a shepherd-*heros*, the displacement of the sun to the Other World, and the unleashing of the incendiary drought, are precisely characteristic of her realm of powers. Her power extended even beyond that, for she was also the Goddess of Eloquence. Thus, Brahma would be accorded the worst punishment: From now on, he would be worshipped in the temples only one day a year, and his priests would be deprived of eloquence and left to stammer! In this manner, she instilled fear and terror in the gods.

Unfortunately, though, her curses went unfulfilled, much to her detriment. In the patriarchal deformation of the myth she finally begs Brahma to forgive her and again becomes his wife. Moreover, she is forced to tolerate the presence of Gayatri beside her, "just in case." Her power was thus destroyed, and the Brahmans, the priests of Brahma, later became wise men at her expense.

## 6.4 SHAKTI AND SHIVA (INDIA)

The goddess-*heros* pattern typical of India is evident in the Goddess Shakti (who had many names) (Ill. 30), and her *heros*, Shiva (Ill. 31). Known by the name of the early goddess, Uma, Shakti personified the Earth Mother herself. She was said to have brought forth all the fruits of the earth, and to have made women fertile. Her home was a

mountain summit, and the moon and the sun traveled above her in her chariots. As the Mountain Goddess she was also called Parvati, and, like Britomartis-Artemis, demonstrated a wildness characteristic of her role as Mistress of the Forest and Animals. Portrayed as Shakti, framed by a flaming halo of hair, she was the Great Fertility Goddess, Creatrix, and Preserver of the World; in this form she celebrated the Sacred Marriage with Shiva and was thus similar to all subsequent Aphrodite figures. She was at the same time Kali, the Goddess of Death, and the terrifying Goddess of Battle, who destroyed all her enemies and hung their skulls around her neck; in this role she became the omnipotent Destroyer of the World, the iron-clad Law, and Fate, an Indian Hecate or Sachmet. Kali, however, was not only a gruesome goddess, she was also one who renewed life by prevailing in the struggle against demons (sickness and death), whose blood dripped from her mouth. Once she had conquered them, the people came back to life.

Shakti is the collective name for the manifold forms of this goddess. She embodies not only the ancient Mother Goddess (Uma), but also all aspects of the younger, threefold Goddess (Parvati-Shakti-Kali), and is thus the most universal goddess of all. She generally has three heads and five to eight arms, indicators of her many functions; obviously, then, she is an insuperable opponent.

Shakti-Kali is one of the most ancient goddesses in existence; she may even be older than the Sumerian Inanna. Her home in Southeast Asia is, after all, one of the lands in which matriarchies originated as a form of social organization, before it spread from there to the East and West. Presumably, the Shakti-Kali cult was once prevalent throughout India. It has been retained up until today in the region of Bengali closest to Southeast Asia, where the Aryan conquerors had difficulties asserting themselves. While they succeeded in making the gentle Shakti into an insignificant wife, or daughter of male deities like Shiva, Agni, Vishnu, and Brahma, who in earlier times had worshipped her, the Aryans failed with Kali: she remained an independent and powerful goddess. Even today she lives on as the ancient Great Goddess in Calcutta, "the city of Kali." Still, many sinister and false accusations have been made against her. In spite of their universality, the individual forms of Shakti-Kali are clear and distinct. They were probably the prototypes for all subsequent goddesses in the Indo-European region.

Shiva was originally strictly a fertility *heros* (Ill. 31). His symbol was the "Linga," or phallus, which his adherents held in as high esteem as the "Yoni," or vulva, as a symbol for the Goddess (Ill. 28). As Bhairava, he was an Orgiastic God (*heros*), and the attendant popular cult was characterized by sexual lenience. Shiva was androgynous, like



*Ill. 30: Shakti (Kali) with snake, trident, and flaming halo*



*Ill. 31: Dancing Shiva with trident*

the priests of Cybele. Like most of the *heros* in the Near East, he appeared in the form of a God of Atmosphere: as Rudra, he was God of Storm, as Agni, he was God of Fire. The Sacred Marriage between Shiva and Shakti was considered to be the source of all life. We can assume, too, that he suffered the *heros'* death, like Attis, because this is implied not only by the orgiastic character of the cult, and the androgynous character of the god, but also by Sarasvati's threats against Rudra (Shiva as a Storm God) to castrate him. Shiva's escort was the bull, Nandi; white bulls were sacred to him, as were white cows to the Earth Mother. Even today, white cows saunter freely through the streets of India. As "sacred cows" symbolizing the Mother Goddess, they are not harassed, but revered.

Shiva never became a patriarchal god like Dyaus Pitar, or Brahma, who, in the final analysis, were the patriarchal gods of the conquerors, propped up against the ancient *heros*. Neither was the Goddess degraded into his mere appendage, as in the case of Kali, who has remained, even today, an imposing figure in terms of her independent power. Shiva, however, was not entirely spared the patriarchalization process: Though he never became a brutal invader, he became a bodiless ascetic. Now purely spiritual in nature, he assumed a physical body only when he wanted to make himself visible. His symbol, the "Linga," lost all realistic meaning and became a symbol of purely spiritual energy. Still, his origin cannot be denied, because even as a universal creative principle, he remained tied to the process of Birth, and Death and Rebirth, the concept central to Indian philosophy.

## 6.5 LAKSHMI AND VISHNU (INDIA)

### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Lakshmi is the Goddess of Beauty, Joy, and Love. She emerged from the milk of the cosmic ocean, or was born of the lotus blossom on Vishnu's forehead.*

*When Lakshmi rose, radiant from the milky ocean that the gods and demons had thrashed into a foam, she was received by a heavenly choir. Nymphs danced around her, the Ganges and other rivers followed her, and elephants sprinkled her with water. The sea of milk blessed her with half-opened flowers, and the gods showered her with jewels. She climbed out of the waves, adorned with these gifts, and leaned on Vishnu's chest to rest; she noticed the gods admiring her*



*Ill. 32: Lakshmi seated on a lotus blossom, adorned with jewels, and holding a lotus blossom*

*beauty. She became Vishnu's lover and removed a curse that had been put on Indra: the sun shone, then, with renewed luminosity.*

While the previous goddesses (Prithivi in the South India, Sarasvati and Kali in Bengalia/East India) have remained effective in individual cults in spite of their patriarchal deformations, this is not the case with Lakshmi. The male principle is dominant in Lakshmi's cult, and she is the epitome of the loving, passive wife, who obediently participates in all her husband's transformations: She is always at Vishnu's side.

At the same time she demonstrates many pre-Aryan traits, and there is this beautiful myth about her; one must simply know how to read it: According to popular belief, Vishnu was not always the unshakable and superior god portrayed by the (Aryan) Vedics. As Vishnu goes into hibernation (death) for four months of the year, all the demons immediately break loose to unleash drought and infertility throughout the land. At the end of this time he has to be awakened by the songs of his followers, who bring sacrificial offerings of fruit and animals: He should finally rise, because the full moon is about to appear in its full brilliance! In anticipation of this great event, Vishnu does then wake up.

Who is this "full moon?" It is Lakshmi, the Goddess of Love, Beauty, Joy, and Wealth ("wealth" being grain, gold, and jewels, because all were treasures from the womb of the earth). Like her descendent, Aphrodite, she emerged from the ocean of milk, tensely anticipated by the gods. Lakshmi, then, is the Indian Aphrodite. The sea was an "ocean of milk" radiating beneath the ascending full moon. Furthermore, the gods whipped the sea into a foam so that she, like Aphrodite, rose "from the sea-foam." They did this in an attempt to scare off demons, by scattering them like clouds before the moon. The gods, then, fought on Lakshmi's side. This is an allusion to an early myth of nature which is background to the story's origin: the battle against demons represents the struggle against infertility (compare Sumeria). The ocean of milk surrounds Lakshmi with blooming lotus flowers, because she is herself the "lotus blossom" (compare the "clam shell" ridden by Aphrodite in the myth of her birth). Here, lotus blossoms also symbolize the vulva, the female principle of fertility and rebirth (compare Southeast Asia, Egypt) (Ill. 32).

Like Aphrodite, the new-born Lakshmi was surrounded by dancing nymphs. The Ganges and all rivers followed her, and elephants sprinkled her with water, because she was the principle of fertility. The gods serenaded her, adorned, and adored her. However, the first thing she sought upon emerging from the waves was Vishnu's breast, and

she nestled against it. Astonished and quiet, she perused the gods gathered around her and saw that Indra, the sun, had been darkened by a curse. This was Sarasvati's curse, one which, contrary to distorted versions of the myth, she did in fact put into effect. Lakshmi quickly retracted the curse and thereby immediately cleansed Indra. The sun radiated its full brightness once again.

At the end of the story Lakshmi became Vishnu's lover (Sacred Marriage), and Vishnu descended to the earth in the form of Rama (rain) to end the drought. At the same time Lakshmi emerged in the form of Sita from the earth's furrows, like the spring grain.

Lakshmi possesses the traits of the chthonic, as well as the astral goddess, though the latter predominates. Previously, before she became the submissive wife of the highest god in heaven, Vishnu, she had been an independent Love Goddess. In the Vedic version, this wonderful birth of Venus story, classical even in European regions, is supplanted by an absurd notion: Lakshmi is born as a lotus blossom on Vishnu's forehead. The female principle, then, is clearly proclaimed dependent upon the male. Suddenly, not only wisdom, but even female fertility must spring from the spirit or intellect of the male. Indubitably, this represents a bizarre pinnacle in the process of patriarchalizing the Goddess: the male mind as a reproductive organ!



## NORTHWESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

In very early times immigrants from the Mediterranean cultural region descended on Central and Northwestern Europe and settled the land. They belonged to the pre-Indo-European races of the Mediterranean region, and brought their advanced matriarchal culture with them. Here, as in India along the Ganges and the Indus, as in Mesopotamia along the Euphrates and Tigris, and in Egypt along the Nile, they followed the great waterways in their skiffs. Their settlements thus originated in the Danube region (Eastern Europe, Austria, Southern Germany), on the banks of the Rhone (Southern France), and along the Rhine (Lower Rhine, Germany). They arrived at the mouths of the great waterways by following the sea coast, as had others elsewhere. Consequently, their settlements and towns in Europe were situated along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea (Greece, Italy, Spain). When they left the Mediterranean, they lined the Atlantic coasts (Spain, France as the ancient Gaul, Great Britain as the ancient Albion, and Ireland as the ancient Eire) and the Scandinavian and Baltic coasts (Southern Sweden, Western Norway, Northern Germany, the Baltics, Finland, and Denmark as the "land of the Danaans" [Dänemark]). These peoples, being experienced at sea, were lithely mobile also on the rivers and seas, which explains how they spread over such wide expanses of Eurasia (and the rest of the world). In addition, they knew how to preserve grains and tubercles to be used as provisions for their long journeys. We must free ourselves from the erroneous notion of people in the matriarchal epoch as plodding on foot from place to place, like the early hunters who followed the herds of game animals. Unlike their hunting and gathering Paleolithic counterparts, the Neolithic agricultural cultures enjoyed a wide range of mobility by boat along rivers and coastlines.<sup>16</sup>

All of Europe, then, presumably went through a matriarchal phase of not insignificant duration in the pre-Indo-European period. This is reflected in the European mythology that includes the Greek myths

already discussed. The following analysis of the Celtic and Germanic traditions will serve as further examples. Here, too, no single myth is composed of a clear-cut, homogenous construct, but rather is a multi-layered structure whose oldest layers we shall attempt to discover and reconstruct.

## 7.1 THE CELTS<sup>17</sup>

### 7.1.1 DANA AND DAGDA

The Goddess Dana (later masculinized into Don) is the primeval Earth Goddess of pre-Indo-European peoples who called themselves "Tuatha de Danaan," the people of Dana. Later, she was adopted by the Indo-European Celts and remained, particularly in Ireland, what she had been in the beginning: Earth Goddess and Mother of Gods and People.

Dana's origin in the Mediterranean region can be localized. She is Danae, the Goddess of Agriculture in Crete and Argos. Her myth can be traced back to that of Hathor-Isis in Egypt. Because she is the Cretan Great Goddess represented by another name, she is ultimately the Great Mother Goddess of the Orient and the Mediterranean. The sea-faring peoples brought her with them from this region into Northwestern Europe. Even today, the Danube (Dana-Aue) and Denmark (Danae-Mark) are named after her.

Dana possesses all the characteristics of the Great Goddess: She is like Danae of Crete (Io of Corinth/Hera of Argos) the Mistress of Heaven, of Earth, and the Underworld—the matriarchal trinity. She is the Moon Goddess and the great Heavenly Cow. She lets rain descend upon the earth like gold. Symbolized by two hills representing her breasts, she is the land of Ireland itself. Originally, her partner had been a *heros*-king, but as a result of his recurring voyages to the Underworld, he, like Osiris, became King of the Underworld, associated with the only hope for rebirth. Later, he became the concept of the Father God in general; his name is Dagda.

He was burdened with an enormous oaken club—the club had to be carried by several men—indicating that he was originally a *heros*-king obligated to make rain, and was thus something of a Fertility or Atmosphere God. When this club was swung about in a hollow oak tree to sound like thunder, as we know, he became a magical maker of rain and thunder (compare Heracles and his club). Above and beyond that, the club was of course a phallic symbol designed to "make rain"

in the metaphorical sense (compare Brahma and Sarasvati), because Dagda was not only able to kill men with it, he could also bring them back to life (beget).

Because he is *heros*-king, he possessed the "cauldron of abundance" or miracle receptacle such as the Horn of Plenty in the Roman tales, or the Grail (magic vessel, magic chalice) in the medieval legends of Celtic origin. This vessel was never empty. When filled with meat, the animal sprang to life from its bottom, after it was eaten. When full of drink, like mead or wine, it was not emptied until everyone had been taken by its "inspiration" (drunken ecstasy); thus, it has often been called the "Cauldron of Inspiration" that inspires singers and poets. If it contained an herbal brew, the concoction could bring even the dead back to life. By its characteristics we can recognize the magic cauldron as one of Dana's original possessions. She was also called Cerridwen, and the cauldron symbolizes the powers of her inexhaustible fertility, healing, re-awakening, and "enthusiasm," or creative ecstasy. In the beginning she kept close guard over it, refusing to allow any man to sample so much as a drop of its contents (compare the Celtic legends of Taliesin). Dagda "possessed" it, then, on loan, as a sign of the kingly status bestowed upon him by her for the duration of precisely one mythical year.

Dagda acquired the magic vessel by participating in the Sacred Marriage. This indicates yet another implication: The inexhaustible, life-rendering "vessel" was the Goddess' vulva, from which all life springs (compare the "Pandora's box" in an already perverted Greek myth). Dagda possessed the "vessel" only inasmuch as he possessed the Goddess herself; that is, she graced him with her "vessel" for one mythical year. When the year passed, he died the customary death: He was struck by a "lightning bolt," representing the Cretan double-ax held in the hand of the Goddess. Only then did he have the chance of becoming God of the Underworld, with the promise of reincarnation through his successor ("son" Oengus, Dagda restored to youth).

Even though he is the God of Death, Dagda's name means "good god." (A variant of the word "Dagda" is "Daddy.") Because death is not death in the world of the Goddess, but merely a gateway to rebirth, it is not laden with notions of cruelty. The horror of death is a patriarchal concept. Once the principle of life's victory, and the notion of eternal rebirth embodied by the Goddess had been lynched in the human mind, death could mean only irrevocable destruction, in the face of which patriarchal mankind was left helplessly standing by. By way of contrast, the "good god" Dagda put people to sleep (death) by the wonderful lilt of his harp. Death was no harsher than that. Then again,

by playing his harp he could also inspire in people, both living and dead, laughter and tears. With his access to Dana's "Cauldron of Inspiration," he was the God of Music and Poetry, as was his "daughter," the Goddess Brighde-Brigid, a younger version of Dana-Cerridwen. These traits are reminiscent of Orpheus, whose mysteries, in turn, were like the Dionysian Mysteries, closely connected with the Mysteries of Demeter, the Mediterranean Great Mother.

## 7.1.2. MODRON-MORRIGAIN AND BRAN

### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Modron and Bran are the oldest pair in Wales; their younger counterparts were called Branwen and Bendigeidfran. Since "Branwen" means "sister of Bran," we can consider Bendigeidfran to be a younger Bran. The following is said of them:*

*Branwen was the daughter of Mananaan Mac Lir, the God of Sea (the elder Bran). Her brother was Bendigeidfran (the younger Bran). He was the king of Wales while she was one of the three matriarchs of the land. One day, the king of Ireland came to court Branwen. However, he could not take his bride home aboard his ship until Bendigeidfran gave him the magic cauldron in which dead warriors were returned to life. This is how Branwen and her cauldron got to Ireland, where she was soon degraded and forced to perform menial labor. She sent a raven with a message to her brother, Bendigeidfran, who was indignant about her degradation. He prepared a fleet and departed for Ireland, but he was tall like a giant, so that he did not fit in any of the ships. He waded instead through the sea. From a distance, the fleet looked like a forest, with Bendigeidfran jutting before it like a cliff with eyes that shone like two lakes on it.*

*Terrified, the Irish king retreated beyond an unbridged river, but Bendigeidfran, when he arrived, made a bridge of his own body. In spite of all attempts at appeasement, a struggle ensued in which both parties were nearly destroyed. Bendigeidfran returned to Wales with Branwen and seven men. Because his "foot" was wounded by a poisoned spear, he was no longer capable of fulfilling his royal obligations. He therefore commanded his people to chop off his head, bury his body, and keep the head, which would continue to offer them guidance and prophecy. That is how Bendigeidfran's head happened to become an oracle. Branwen, dismayed by the fact that the two countries, Ireland and Wales, were devastated on her account, preferred to depart the world of the living.*

*As God of the Underworld, Bran was also called Arawn, and, as his younger incarnation, Pwyll. The following myth surrounds Arawn and Pwyll:*

*As Pwyll, the Prince of Wales, one day went hunting, he found a dead white stag encircled by a pack of hounds. All the hounds were bright white with red ears (Underworld animals). Pwyll chased them away, and while he was attempting to take the booty for himself, King Arawn, "Head of the Underworld" (compare Bran's head), appeared in a rage, for the prey was his by right. The only way for Pwyll to placate him was to promise to live in Arawn's palace for a year and to kill his enemy Havgan (Havgan was the light summer king in the form of a white stag). Arawn brought Pwyll to his subterranean empire, where he lived very well, and slept beside Arawn's beautiful wife (Rhiannon). After the year passed, Pwyll, manifested as Arawn, killed King Havgan and thus was himself granted the title "Head of the Underworld." Pwyll then returned to the world of the living where he married a beautiful fairy-like woman who raced unsurpassed through the countryside on a horse: she is the Horse Goddess, Rhiannon.*

Modron-Morrigan is the immediate descendant of Dana, just as Bran is that of Dagda. She was called Modron in the British Isles, especially in Wales, and was the oldest Mother Goddess. In Ireland she was called Morrighu, or Morrigan, and was the prototype of Morgan the Fairy, who, even in the legends of King Arthur, headed a magical dominion.<sup>18</sup>

Modron-Morrigan, like the others, is the Goddess of all three regions, Heaven, Earth, and Underworld. She is, at the same time, the triple Moon Goddess. With her black hair and her face flushed white-red (the three sacred colors), she was stunningly beautiful. Her dwelling was clearly the Other World, imagined not in the form of a sinister subterranean world, but rather as a magical realm, or a place under water. Her fairy realm was sometimes located in the floor of lakes, sometimes on distant islands in the ocean, or in raging currents, but was always in the West where the sun sets. Anyone hoping to arrive there had to make a peculiar sea voyage (like the dead who traveled by ship to Osiris's realm of the Hereafter in the western sea). The Fairy Realm, though, always was a Paradise described as being a fertile land laden with grain, or as an orchard full of golden apples. Modron-Morrigan fetched the dead *heros*-king and brought him there, where she gave him golden apples to eat; he was revived and granted eternal youth and happiness (compare Morgan's fairy island of Avalon). Under normal circumstances no one could reach this Paradise. It was hedged by

a wall of transparent but impenetrable air, conjured by Morrigan to encircle the Other World. Much later, analogous phenomena came to be known as "fata morgana."

Modron-Morrigan's transparent wall not only prevented the living from penetrating the Other World, it also held the tarrying *heros* captive, so that he could not return to the earthly world all too hastily. It was her habit to celebrate an endless Sacred Marriage with him in this transparent prison ("glass islands," "glass mountain," "glass castle"). To the heroes, it seemed to last but a few days, but it actually continued for years. This is the typical "time warp" that confused heroes anytime they came near fairies. Once they departed from the Other World, they often lost themselves to insanity. The insanity was called a "frenzy of love" that the heroes "caught" in the realm of the fairies.

Appearing here to be an inexhaustible Celtic Venus, the Goddess clearly demonstrates her second aspect. The accompanying symbol of the Horn of Plenty, the vessel of never-ending fertility and representative of the vulva (compare Dana and Branwen's "cauldron"), is also indicative of the second aspect, and alludes to her divine maternal function. Each of her fairy islands contains such a cornucopia.

The scenery and function of the Other World distinctly reflect her third aspect: Originally, while in the form of a snake or dragon, she killed her own *heros* and revived him with her apples. She was thus considered a lady-doctor wise enough to cure any illness, even death. In the final analysis, she is destiny itself (Fairy, Fay, Fate, Fata). Later, the predecessor-successor struggle between the old and the new king, in which the old king inevitably paid with his life, came to dominate her environment.

In this example the first aspect, too, is well preserved, for Morrigan displayed, on occasion, an Amazonian character: She lived with her sisters on the Maiden Island, or in Maiden Land. Altogether, they were nine virgins who opened themselves to no man. Once in a while they rode out fully armed and captured their heroes themselves. They rode black or white fairy horses that had red ears; sometimes they had three colors: white, red, and black. These horses always had a surreal swing in their stride, making them every rider's dream. They were escorted by hounds that, like themselves, were white with red ears, or tri-colored: both horses and hounds were Underworld animals. Once a knight had been caught, he was imprisoned in the "transparent prison" (or Other World) where all nine of the fairies instructed him in the art of love and of knightly etiquette. Afterward, they were very gracious to him: They granted him a fairy horse and fairy weapons to make him

the undefeated champion of his time.<sup>19</sup> In her Amazonian manifestation, Morrigan was also inclined to intervene and determine the outcome of battles by fluttering protectively about the king with her vulture or raven wings (compare Hathor-Isis).

The Welsh Modron has lost this first aspect and thus appears to be merely a mild-mannered Mother Goddess and Death Goddess with a cauldron or Horn of Plenty. Her first aspect has been severed to form an independent personality that appears in the figure of Rhiannon, the Horse Goddess. She has the same characteristics as the Irish Morrigan in her first aspect: She raced her horse unmatched into battle, or through the royal vestibules, delivering war-like declarations. Her magical birds could put the living to sleep (death) and reawaken the dead. She was escorted by hounds and armed with a silver bow (crescent moon). Her castle was in the Underworld.

This goddess' *heros*-king, Bran, as Dagda, became King of the Underworld. He is the typical matriarchal god who perpetually dies and is reborn. It is said that he was killed or mortally wounded in the genital area (castration). Through his infertility, in turn, the whole land became infertile ("wasted land"). In reality, though, he was living it up in the Underworld, celebrating unending banquets from the magical vessel, the Horn of Plenty, which was never empty. He possessed this horn in the same way Dagda possessed his cauldron, as a temporary loan granted as a sign of his royal dignity. Because in Modron's paradisaical Other World no one got old, his followers there were very young people or children, and he lived in peace and happiness with them, partaking of feasts, dance, and wonderful music. Meanwhile, his followers in this world mourned his dismembered mortal body, or his head, which continued to prophesize even after being severed (compare the head of Orpheus that continued to sing after his death). Bran prophesized like an oracle from the depths because, as in the case of Dagda, wisdom resides in the Underworld. The people awaited his return in the form of a reborn god.

As husband to Rhiannon and Morrigan (first aspect), Bran was called Arawn, and as his younger incarnation, Pwyll. He, too, bore the title "Head of the Underworld," and like the Goddess, joined the hunt with the hounds of the Underworld, stalking most often the white stag. This "stag" was the youthful *heros*-partner that Morrigan, in the form of the Irish Goddess driving a chariot drawn by deer, killed, or has killed, annually. In this role, then, she is the Celtic Artemis, and the white "stag" is her Acteon. Arawn-Pwyll assumed the function of the Wild Hunter of the winter in the predecessor-successor struggle;

he killed the light-colored “stag” of the summer, which remained dead until he returned in the spring (compare the age-old ritual of “Hunting the Stag,” once widespread throughout Europe).

### 7.1.3 ERIN AND LUG

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*Conn rode through the fog covering the Irish hills. He came upon a man on horseback who invited him to his home, then turned his horse and vanished. Rounding the next bend in the path Conn suddenly saw a palace before him: it was Lug's castle. When Conn arrived, Lug (the horseman) was already there, seated on a throne in the hall. A young woman of indescribable beauty wearing a crown entered: She was Sovranty of Erin, (meaning the Sovereignty of Ireland), Lug's bride.\* She brought Conn plenty of food, then returned with a chalice in her hand and asked Lug to whom she should give the chalice. “Conn!” Lug responded. The young woman served Conn the chalice, and the chalice was then passed around and filled for each of Conn's descendants. The question was repeated each time and the descendants were called by name in sequence. Finally, the castle disappeared and Conn again found himself alone in the open air with the chalice.*

*From then on, Conn was King of Ireland and became a great magician who could make so much snow fall in one day that his enemies got stuck in it.*

*Lug reappeared once again when the people of Ireland, the Tuatha de Danaan, were threatened by their most mortal enemies, the Fomore.*

*The Irish king Nuada lost his right “arm” in battle and could no longer fulfill his royal obligations to Erin. Thus, Bress was elected king, but he was half-Fomore (his father was Balor, King of the Fomore) and betrayed the Tuatha de Danaan. Lug appeared in the midst of this bitter situation to rescue his people: He appeared in the distance, his face aglow with a light, bright as a summer day, and encircled by a luminous ring like the setting sun. He inherited his armament from his foster father, Mananaan Mac Lir, the Sea God. He galloped over land and sea astride a horse that was faster than the wind. He wore a coat of armor protecting him from all injury. He bore a magical collar about his neck that no weapon could pierce. His helmet was made of jewels*

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\*“Sovranty of Erin” refers to Ireland's independence or sovereignty represented as a queen; she is not an actual person, but an allegorical figure embodying the “sovereignty of Ireland.”

*and the sword of Mananaan, which weakened his enemies on sight, hung at his left side. Moreover, he was familiar with the sum of knowledge surrounding magical things. Thus, of course, no enemy could resist him and he scattered the evil Fomore like a whirlwind.*

Erin, or Eire, is the Earth Mother of Ireland who personifies the land itself. At the most sacred site at the island's center, she is called Tailtiu, or she appears under the three-fold name of Bamba/Eire/Folla, which is congruent with her triadic manifestation in the form of a Warrior, Mother, and Augur Goddess. Accordingly, Erin is able to transform her outer appearance: In winter, the time of barrenness, she appears as a disgustingly ugly hag with blackened skin and scraggly hair (the ugliness of Ireland in winter). In spring, on the other hand, the time of the Sacred Marriage with her *heros*, the king of Ireland, she blossoms into a radiant young woman (the beauty of Ireland in spring). As warrior, she appears in the manifestation of Irish and Britonian queens who defended their lands at the head of their armies (for example, the Queen Mebd, Queen Boadicea, Queen Cartismandua). Here we witness most clearly the connection between mythology and cult in the Celtic regions: As in Egypt and the Orient, the queen and king embodied the Goddess and her *heros*.

This embodiment is expressed most distinctly in the myth and rite of the Sacred Marriage: Once a year, at the onset of the fertile season, "Lugnasad" or "Lug's Wedding" is celebrated on top of a hill. In the myth, Erin was seated upon a crystal throne wearing a golden crown. She ladled a red liquid from a cauldron with a golden chalice. The liquid was probably wine symbolizing the rejuvenating blood of the earth. Originally, she passed the filled chalice, the Grail of the Irish sagas, to her *heros*, Lug, who always wore her sacred colors: white, red, and black. Once he was deified into a god, she passed the Grail on to her sons, i.e., the new kings of Ireland, one after another, while Lug looked on. The transfer of this chalice implied the Goddess' coronation of the king, for in accepting the Grail, the king received the Goddess herself as an invitation for the Sacred Marriage, because Erin's "chalice" signifies the same thing as Morrigan's "cornucopia," or Dana's "cauldron." After the Sacred Marriage, the king governed the land for a mythical year, during which time he was protected by the Goddess Erin. We see here, then, the same paradigm evident in the rest of the matriarchal world.

Lug, as prototype of these kings, was a very gifted god whose characteristic talents were bestowed upon him by the Goddess: He learned from her many magical means to draw upon in battle; by vir-

tue of the intoxicating chalice he became the God of Poets; the Goddess' magical birds (ravens) served him as well; furthermore, he was God of all Handicrafts. His best weapon was a spear of enormous dimension which made him victorious in all heavenly battles, and in the form of the king (i.e., King Loth) victorious in all earthly battles; he was simply invincible. However, in this lightning-like spear, or glistening lance, which is the symbol of his masculinity, laid his weakness, because this weapon, like Dagda's "club," was laden with meaning. We can recognize this by considering the rarely understood mysterious composite symbol appearing in the myths: a bloody spear stuck into a silver chalice. The silver chalice is Erin's "Grail," or vulva, the spear Lug's phallus. Together, they form a symbol of the mystic Sacred Marriage that delivers the barren land from infertility. In other myths, too, Lug's spear does not throw lightning sparks, but rather blood, and these drops of blood kill on the spot any man carrying the spear. Clearly then, before Lug was promoted from *heros* to god, he died the same way they did in the Mediterranean and Oriental regions: by castration.

Later, when this pre-Indo-European mythology merged with Celtic elements, the chthonic character gave way to a more pronounced astral one: The goddesses now became associated with Sun Gods who functioned as their "sons" and with whom they united. As "son" of the Goddess Modron, the God Mabon was of lenient character and posed beside her with the lyre of poetry. In depictions of her, Modron's head is adorned with a moon crescent, a serpent entwines one of her arms, and she carries a shaft of wheat beneath the other. He served, as did she, the purpose of fertility, and was, as Diancecht, God of Healing, who healed with the help of hot springs. His astral character is particularly prominent under the name of Beli, where he became nothing more than the sun, God of Light. (These three attributes, the sun, the art of poetry, and that of healing, make him comparable to the Greek Apollo, who, in turn, demonstrates substantial ties to the pre-Hellenic Orpheus.)

Curoi was an even more powerful God of Atmosphere and was also the luminous God of the Sun. He bore one solitary, enormous eye on his forehead: the sun. Storms, rain, and thunder rose at his command. Occasionally he was manifested as a shepherd, like the oriental Gods of Atmosphere, as a giant figure surrounded by the calendar symbols of the Goddess' mythical year: lions, wild bulls, and fire-breathing serpents, whom he watched over. He was partner to Morrigan in her astral form, in which she was called Arianrhod, or "Silver Wheel." She was, therefore, Goddess of the ever-rotating Night Sky, and of the

Moon at the same time. Sometimes "Blathnat," the Goddess of Flowers, was said to be the partner of Curoi. In the form of the Maiden Goddess of Spring she was Morrigan.

Bran never adopted any astral traits. Lug, on the other hand, was said to have used only one eye in executing his most important magic deeds (he closed the other one): As we have seen, however, one big eye is a symbol of the sun.

The primary objects of reverence in the cult of the Celtic Earth Mother were, as in Crete and elsewhere, gigantic boulders and trees. The matriarchal culture developed in Northwestern and Central Europe as the culture of colossal stones (Megaliths) and "giant graves." The standing stones (menhirs) and megalithic graves (cairns, dolmen) extant throughout the entire European region that I have described, were from the onset matriarchal. The most splendid forms are expressed in the stone constructions of Brittany (Carnac) and England (Avebury and Stonehenge), where megalithic boulders were brought together to form stellar observatories. This is an indicator that the cult of the pre-Indo-European people was by no means "primitive" as is so often assumed from the Indo-European patriarchal perspective. In addition to such stone observatories, these peoples possessed elaborate temples; unfortunately, because they were generally constructed of wood, they perished. In some cases, the foundations have been found, as for example at the Lug Temple near Lyon (France), and the Freyr Temple near Uppsala (Southern Sweden). Therefore, we can still reconstruct an image of the architecture used in these temples.

This brings us then to the oldest level of Germanic mythology.

## 7.2 THE GERMANS<sup>20</sup>

The matriarchal megalithic cultures existed not only in the regions inhabited by the Indo-European Celts (France, Great Britain, Ireland) whose world view was influenced by matriarchal religion until recently, they were also widespread in the lands overrun and conquered by the Indo-European Germanic tribes (Germany, Denmark, Scandinavia, and Anglo-Saxon England). As in the Celtic regions, here, too, a mythology predicated upon matriarchal constellations emerged, together with a cult that retained its matriarchal characteristics until quite late. In later times, because they were neighboring peoples, diverse connections between the Celts and the Germanic tribes strengthened this matriarchal element in Germanic mythology: Along the Lower Rhine

a composite Celtic-Germanic culture formed called the La Tène-Culture, and the seafaring Irish provided the seafaring Vikings with an immense cultural impetus, as is evidenced in the most comprehensive collection of Germanic myths found in the "Edda." Also evident is the patriarchal shift brought by the Germanic warrior kings and their hordes to this preceding composite-culture made up of matriarchal and Celtic elements. This shift shows itself in the brutal behavior of the Germanic-patriarchal gods, the Aesir, when compared with all the other deities of the so-called "Germanic" mythology, which are much older, pre-Germanic, and clearly matriarchal. We are concerned here with precisely these pre-Germanic patterns.

### 7.2.1 JÖRD AND TYR-HEIMDALL

Since most specific myths surrounding Jörd and Tyr-Heimdall have been destroyed, I have summarized here the myths which reflect the so-called "Germanic Pantheon."

#### Summary of the Myths (as written in the sources)

*In primeval times, the giants built the world, placing Mittgart, the human realm, at its center. The gods named the stellar constellations and constructed their castle, where they lived in peace, abundance, and joy in the board game they played.*

*Everything was fine until the three Goddesses of Fate appeared and began preparing the demise of the gods. Their rage had been inspired by the burning of a "witch," a wise woman named Heid, by the Aesir. Because of her, the deities split into two camps, the Aesir and the Vanir. Then the Vanir pressed an advance against the holy castle of the Aesir and destroyed it. Giants rebuilt the castle of the gods, but rather than reward them for their efforts, the Aesir Thor struck them with his hammer (Vanir: pre-Germanic; Aesir: Germanic-patriarchal).*

*In the midst of this confusion among the Aesir, Loki, the God of Fire and Underworld, who tarried as a servant with the Aesir, took action: He encouraged the gods to shoot in jest at the light Baldur, Odin's son, for he was, after all, supposed to be invincible. However, the blind Hödur hit Baldur with mistletoe, the one bough to which he was vulnerable, and killed him. Frigga, Baldur's mother, wept bitterly while Loki laughed. As a consequence, Loki was gagged and chained beneath the earth, where venom from a snake, hanging above his head, ate away at his face. Loki's wife Sigyn stayed with him to soothe his*

*pain. She gave birth to the Underworld animals, the dragon and the werewolf.*

*At the castle of the gods a golden rooster crowed, then near the giants' castle, a crimson one, then in the Underworld a brown one: the battle had begun. Heimdall blew his horn heartily, but his warning was not heeded, because the fire giant had set the Yggdrasil, the world tree, ablaze. The mountains trembled, the sky collapsed. Loki came free and emerged from the Underworld; he advanced toward the gods aboard the ship of death, which was laden with monsters and demons. The werewolf devoured Tyr, meaning the sun was extinguished; then he killed Odin, the leader of the Aesir. Thor battled the dragon, the primal serpent, who emerged from the ocean. He succumbed and the ocean flooded the earth. Stars fell from the sky and the world was destroyed in a fiery inferno.*

*Once the Aesir gods were destroyed, the Golden Age and its laws returned: Land rose green from the flood, waterfalls gushed from the cliffs, osprey flew, the fields bore fruit without having been sown. Baldur returned to life, a new human couple emerged, evil disappeared.*

*(The visionary who prophesies all this is the Earth Mother herself. The three Goddesses of Fate are her daughters. The only reason she speaks is that Odin awakened her from her death-like sleep and forced her to talk. In the end, she banishes him with a curse: He shall not come near her again until Loki has been freed and fate has shattered the gods.)*

Jörd is just as ancient a figure as the pre-Celtic Dana. She is the pre-Germanic Earth Mother who later paled into insignificance. "Jörd" is a north-Germanic word meaning "Earth." Just as Dana was masculinized into Don, so, too, was Jörd later masculinized into Njörd.

In Rome's historical accounts of Germania, she is called "Nerthus." We know from components of her religion that were reported by Tacitus that she was worshipped throughout Germania, and lived in a holy grove on an island in the far westerly regions of the ocean (the Other World). From there she came to the people, originally, on a ship in which she brought the sun (light and fertility) with her; she traveled from coast to coast in the solar ship (compare the solar skiffs of Egyptian mythology). Cultic Germanic rock paintings are thus replete with images of ships, or of solar ships (Ill.33). Once she landed on shore she rode from place to place in a sacred chariot drawn by cows. Perhaps she herself bore a crown of cattle horns on her head. She was welcomed with enthusiasm everywhere she went, for her arrival signified the beginning of the pleasant season of the year. Weapons and everything made of iron were locked away, because peace reigned in the

presence of the Goddess. Flowers were placed everywhere and the people were full of joy and love for each other until the Goddess again departed. When she returned to the sea, the chariot was washed clean in a lake (compare the Cybele cult); then she embarked again upon the ship. The men who had drawn her chariot were swallowed by the sea. Presumably, they accompanied the Goddess to the Other World, so the solar ship was at the same time a ship of death (compare Osiris's sea voyage to the West). For this reason, the Goddess was enshrouded in an aura of sinister mystery, and her image on the chariot, often represented by a megalithic stone, or a meteorite like that of the Cybele cult, remained always covered.

Jörd was Mistress of Wind and Weather, of Fire (light) and of Fertility. She is the oldest of the goddesses in the Vanir group, which includes also her daughter Freyja and her son Freyr, both being younger incarnations of Jörd and her partner. The Sacred Marriage was always consummated between sister and brother, just as it was throughout the Mediterranean region and the Orient. According to the legend, the peaceful Vanir gods were defeated by the Germanic-patriarchal Aesir gods when a horrific war ensued between them. Afterward, Jörd (as a masculine Njörd) was forced to live as a hostage with the Aesir. There was a prophecy, however, that at the end of time, after the twilight of the Aesir gods, she would reestablish her world ("Vanir war").

It is not clear who her partner was: Later, after the myth had already been distorted, it was said that Njörd was the male partner and the giantess Gerd (Jörd) the female. We can disregard this construction, however, because there were other very old Gods of Heaven in the Germanic Pantheon whose significance has been diminished, and whose written myths have been destroyed: Tyr (Tiw, Ziu) and Heimdall, both of them Gods of Heaven, Light, and Sun. Tyr is depicted as being a light, radiant god who is also wise because he is God of Runes and of Decision. He borrowed the runes, symbols of magic, wisdom, and oracle (early alphabetical letters), from his Goddess. His most typical solar characteristic was his battle with the werewolf, Fenrir, or Hound of Hell, which personified darkness in demonic form. As long as he kept the werewolf chained, the season was light, and he was the only god daring enough to feed it. However, one time the wolf bit his hand off; that was a fatal occurrence because Tyr, now a deformed god, could no longer be a fertility *heros*. Later, in the Battle of Demons, when all of the gods joined in the battle against them ("Twilight of the Gods"), the werewolf finally devoured him, and the dark season of the year began. Presumably, he returned in spring on Jörd's ship.

Heimdall is said to have been radiant, too, and to have lived in the

hills of Heaven. He, who had originally been the *heros* of Heaven and progenitor of the human race, was degraded into a sentry at the Aesir fortress. He was perhaps an ancient God of Atmosphere, for he was said to have stood in the rain without getting wet. He was also God of Runes, because he saw and heard everything, and could predict the future. He rode a horse with a golden mane across the sky, which identifies him as an ancient Solar God, as we know from portrayals of the sun being drawn across the sky by horses. He had a magical horn that he blew: It was the Horn of Plenty of the Goddess Nerthus, from which he originally drank in honor of his kingly dignity.

Loki, God of the Underworld, is Heimdall's opponent in the cyclical-cosmic Battle of Demons, because Loki, too, personifies the principle of darkness. Loki arrived from the Other World aboard the ship of death, "Nagelfar," accompanied by the werewolf, Fenrir, and by demons and a dragon. This primal serpent, then, is his own symbol, because he was older than all the other gods put together. He was sinister but wise, artistically gifted, and a master of magic, able to transform himself; and he was dangerously strong in the depths of the earth. He is the primeval principle of darkness like the Egyptian Seth, or the oriental Mot. He engaged in a cyclical predecessor-successor struggle with Heimdall, the principle of light (compare Seth, Osiris). Thus we see in Germanic mythology a repetition of the early constellation we encountered both in the Orient, and in Egypt (e.g., Isis, Osiris, Seth): the Goddess of Earth (Jörd), the *Heros* of Light (Tyr/Heimdall), the opponent God of Darkness (Loki).

In addition, we witness here the typical form of each pattern; the Battle of Demons and the Battle of Gods, side by side, as it is with the Celts. The Battle of Demons, representing a cyclical myth of nature, was particularly prevalent in the Mediterranean and the Orient (Egypt: Ra versus Apophis, Osiris versus Seth; Babylonia: Marduk versus Tiamat; Palestine: Anat versus Mot, Jehovah versus Rahab; India: Lakshmi and the gods versus the demons). Each of the battle patterns has a different meaning: The Battle of Demons has a matriarchal origin and is the myth of cyclical transition between fertility and infertility, or lightness and darkness (Germanic mythology: "Twilight of the Gods"). The Battle of Gods, however, represents a confrontational clash between a matriarchal and patriarchal pantheon (and their respective cults and social forms), in which the matriarchal deities are conquered, one way or another (Germanic mythology: "Vanir war").

Nevertheless, Jörd's prophecy lends Loki added significance, for while Loki, as the dark principle, initiated the cyclical demise of the matriarchal *heros* of Heaven, he remained a clandestine rebel against



*Ill. 33: The solar skiff (Germanic cave painting)*



*Ill. 34: Freya and the cat-drawn chariot*



*Ill. 35: Freyr on his boar*

the Aesir gods, by whom he was humiliated, like Heimdall, into servitude. He was constantly pestering them, and initiating quarrels and murders. In the end he became serious about the "twilight" of the Aesir gods by leading an open rebellion that caused the demise of all the gods. He acted here in accordance with the oldest goddess, Jörd, his subterranean partner, who, after the death of the gods, rebuilt her own Paradise.

## 7.2.2 FREYJA AND FREYR

The pre-Germanic deities, Freyja and Freyr, demonstrate most beautifully the characteristics of the mythology of the advanced matriarchy: Freyja is the Goddess of Love, Beauty, and Fertility, and is sister-bridge to the Vegetation God Freyr; her name means "Mistress, Princess." She is the Germanic Aphrodite, and, like her, Freyja owned a magical belt or necklace, the "Brisingamen," which expressed her magical prowess and wealth. Like Aphrodite, she enjoyed widespread worship.

All three aspects of the triple Great Goddess are visible in Freyja, for even though the second aspect predominates, she also demonstrates the others: As Maiden Goddess, she drove a cat-drawn chariot (compare Cybele) (Ill. 34) and went into battle perched on vulture's wings (first aspect). There she officiated over life and death and took the war dead under her wings to the Other World (third aspect: Death Goddess). Not only did she have wings, she also possessed a stunning cloak of feathers that she even loaned out on one occasion (to the Death God, Loki, her assistant). Her hall in the Other World, called "Folkwang," was not a tragic site, but rather a place of music and art. Dance, love, and happiness prevailed there, for as the Goddess of Magic, Oracle, and the Arts, she possessed the magic cauldron, which was filled with the potion of inspiration (Mead). Supposedly, Thor later stole this cauldron from the "giants," but he in fact stole it from her, or kidnapped her with the "cauldron": This is how Freyja came to the Aesir gods.

Her brother-husband Freyr (Fro) was originally the *heros*-king and later became the God of Fertility. He rode a wild boar with golden bristles, or he is perhaps himself a "boar" who could be slaughtered and cooked in the cauldron again and again, but never be eaten completely. He always returned refreshed and healthy (Ill. 35). Presumably, Freyr was sacrificed annually in the form of a boar, just as Adonis was sacrificed to Aphrodite. Also, he was as handsome as Adonis, light and friendly and peaceful, an amiable god with long, blond hair. In

the North (Iceland), horses with golden manes were sacred to Freyr (compare Heimdall); in the South (Germany), he appeared as the *heros* in the form of the white stag, hunted by a dark, wintry hunter. His typical manifestation was, however, the golden-bristled boar (Norway, Sweden, Denmark). As the younger incarnation of Tyr he was the sun, for he always returned from across the sea in a ship. His footprints on land were considered signs of fertility.

His older name was "Ing," or "Ingwi." Particularly in Sweden he was worshipped as "Ingunar-Freyr." The extent to which his cult was rooted in the people is evidenced by the many proper names and place names in Sweden, Denmark, and Germany bearing the "ing" syllable of his name. (The names of other Vanir gods are also widespread.) One of the German tribes named itself after him: the Ingwäonen. The Swedish kings were called Ynglinge and were considered to be his direct descendants or earthly representatives. They were Sacred Kings, and were subordinate to their sisters, the Priestesses.

In Sweden it was said that peace and prosperity flourished under Freyr's reign. That was held to be contingent on the yearly sacrifice of the kings, although this custom was later practiced only after a bad harvest. In addition to the ritual deaths, the practices of the Freyr cult included annual processions in which an image of the god was drawn on a chariot, escorted by the Priestess representing Freyja. (We see that he borrowed the chariot and the ship from his mother, Jörd.) The Sacred Marriage was then celebrated in Freyr's temple. During this time sexual license prevailed among the people. The Sacred Marriage and Death of the *heros* were accompanied by music, dance, and the ringing of small bells (jingles) that made fairy music, and symbolized little golden apples. The famed Freyr temple was located near Uppsala, and was said to have been splendid and radiant. Its architecture was subdivided into several chambers and there was a courtyard to host processions around the temple. Because it was made of wood, it no longer exists; all that remains are its supports in the soil that have been found by archeologists.

When the cult of the Earth Mother, Jörd, and the Vanir-couple, Freyja and Freyr, did not hold their practices in the temple, they held them in holy groves, or under sacred trees, or near megalithic stones and cairns, much as they were held by matriarchal religions in other regions. The arbor cult is marvelously illustrated by the mythical image of the ash tree, Yggdrasil, the Germanic world tree. Its roots are said to reach deep into the Underworld as far as the fountain of the Norns, who were a triple Goddess of Fate spinning the thread of destiny, a manifestation of the Earth Goddess Jörd (compare the Greek

*Moiren*). The tree's crown spread all the way to Heaven, where the stars, the moon, and the sun wandered between its boughs. Mythical animals, the stag and the boar (Freyr), grazed on its foliage. Fertility emanated from the tree, because the dew flowed from it into all valleys, while from its roots sprang the primeval fountain. The tree itself was an "evergreen," and Heimdall's horn was hidden there, which is the Horn of Plenty, as we know (i.e., the Goddess in the manifestation of Jörd, the Mother, or Freyja, the daughter). When, in the Battle of Demons during the "Twilight of the Gods" the tree Yggdrasil was burned, the cosmos it supported with its massive trunk collapsed. The Celts, too, envisioned the outbreak of the end of the world (Armageddon) to be initiated by the collapse of the Heavens, whose main support column had crumbled.

It remains to be said that on conquering the land with their god Odin, the Germanic warrior kings found the Freyja cult to be "effeminate," "womanish," and "indecent." They were particularly disturbed by the "incestuous" Sacred Marriage. They rejected the idea of fertility-magic until their own patriarchal god Odin himself took over the runes: Once he had stolen them, he was considered Father of all Wisdom.

### 7.2.3 FRIGGA AND OD-BALDUR

Odin was not always what he became under the influence of patriarchal warrior tribes: an unpredictable, unscrupulous, power-hungry god—the Germanic Zeus. In pre-Germanic times he was Od, partner to the Great Goddess Frigga, an eponym variant of Freyja. Frigga later became the Germanic Hera, a wife coerced into loyalty, who stood in constant conflict with her husband, Odin.

As an independent goddess Frigga traveled across the earth's summits in a chariot drawn by billy goats. Her *heros*, Od, manifested perhaps in the form of a billy goat, was a very ancient Vegetation God (compare Greek Pan and the many popular folklore customs involving billy goats). All that is known about him is that he was identified by his long periods of absence. During each absence his wife Frigga sought him everywhere, shedding golden tears that became the stars (compare the oriental Mourning Goddess and the Vegetation God who disappears into the Underworld). The later Odin bears little resemblance to him except for his affinity for abandoning the castle of the gods for long periods, while he wandered like a vagabond over the earth.

Od's function becomes clearer as it stands in relation to the figure of Baldur, son of Frigga (and Odin) and presumably a younger Od, whose loss Frigga mourned with golden tears, too. Baldur is similar to the "sunny" Freyr in many ways: His name means "lord," or "prince," as does Freyr's. He was endearing, gentle, and beautiful, a perfect reflection of the sun's radiance, like Freyr. However, the only apparent purpose for his existence is that he was to be murdered. His antagonist was, of course, Loki, who was always opponent to the "sun," regardless of whether it was personified by Tyr, Heimdall, Freyr, or Baldur. Through an act of trickery Loki discovered Baldur's sole vulnerable spot and persuaded the gods to shoot him, just for the fun of it. An otherwise perfectly innocuous twig of mistletoe, shot from the hand of the blind Hödur, Baldur's twin brother (the spirit of winter), hit Baldur like an arrow, or a spear, and he fell dead to the ground. Baldur's corpse was interred on a ship which brought him into the Other World. Frigga cried tears of gold, and all the gods cried with her. Loki, the only one who laughed in the face of their grief, was later punished for it.

The myth of Baldur provides an indicator of what the death of the *heros* Od may have been like: It was a ritual death by shooting, either by bow and arrow, or by spear. The spear is already present as one of Odin's attributes, and is, as we saw in the case of the Celtic Lug, a phallic symbol. There did actually exist a custom of sacrificing kings in the cult of Odin (Od). In it, the king was hung by a rope from a tree and impaled by a spear. As is the case with Baldur, the king was shot, at his behest, only in jest, until he was finally hit by the telltale shot (compare King Vikar). Furthermore, there is a curious myth about Odin hanging himself from the tree, wounded by the spear in honor of Odin, that is, in honor of himself. Here we can be certain that he is Od as the sacrificed *heros*. After his death he suddenly understood the runes and was wise. He could only have received this instruction during a stay in the Underworld, because that is where all wisdom resides. In order to enhance the educational process, he occasionally took a drink from the cauldron of mead that was present here, too, as the Cauldron of Inspiration. In another myth he consequently fell into a drunken stupor, but noticed, at the same time, how he began to grow as a result of the mead and the runes, until finally, he even grew into divinity. It is this knowledge, then, that he acquired as the *heros* Od, that the later Odin, the patriarchal Warrior God, incessantly flaunts before giants, gods, and even before Frigga herself.

Just as the Celtic mythology lives on today in the legends of King Arthur, so the myths of Freyr and Baldur continued to influence the

Germanic epic poetry, particularly where they were combined with Celtic sagas (Vikings-Irish; La Tène-Culture). This is demonstrated in my discussion of the Siegfried sagas.<sup>21</sup> Here, too, we find the stag metaphor: death at the hand of the sinister wintry hunter (Hagen) and his spear, as well as the burial on a ship of death.

The custom of burying the dead kings on special ships was marvelously proven by archeological findings: the discovery of the Oseberg ship (as well as other burial ships), for example, in the Oslo Fjord. Not only did they find a wooden burial chamber on the Oseberg ship, but also a wonderfully carved sacred chariot. We can better understand this custom when we consider the fact that the kings were identified with Freyr, or Ing, or Baldur: After their death or sacrifice, they were put on a ship, as were Freyr/Baldur, on which they set off for their voyage to the Other World. They traveled to their Great Goddess, with whom they hoped to return the following year, like the reborn sun. In Freyr's chariot they wanted to again traverse the land, like the god himself.

This is a custom that proceeds not only from a profound belief in the victory over death, and the eternally luminous return, so characteristic of the ideas of matriarchal religions, but it also clearly demonstrates what I have already mentioned: that these people, being seafarers, reached lands and continents throughout the world. The ship was so central to their way of thinking that it not only conveyed them across the waters of the earth, it even took them to the waters of the Hereafter. The Indo-European patriarchal conquerors, on the other hand, trotted upon the scene on horseback, or, especially in the Orient, in noisy hordes of armored chariots.



## TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE MATRIARCHAL RELIGIONS



Now that this comparative study has revealed the structure of matriarchal mythology in the Indo-European regions, I would like to consider and compare the various transformations of that structure. The transformations follow certain rules that become recognizable as systematic distortions of the original myths. These, in turn, inform us of the social motivations or political functions behind these deformations. I have already made several references to this process by which the matriarchal religions were patriarchalized; now I would like to explain it, based on the annotated tabular summary included here. (See above.)

1. We are already familiar with the first structure present in this tabular summary; it is the goddess-*heros* structure of the matriarchal religions as we have analyzed them in the peoples of the Indo-European region. (1a) indicates the concrete deities present in this structure at the level of the early matriarchy; (1b) indicates the concrete deities present at the advanced level; (1c) presents a supplement rather than a new level. It shows the myth of the Battle of the Demons, in comparison, as a classical myth of nature.

2. The second structure depicts the level of the early patriarchal Indo-European religions that stem from a fusion of patriarchal gods with the matriarchal cults of the conquered peoples. (2 a-e) shows various types of rules for transformation which are the basic rules of absorption and deformation. By "absorption" I mean the usurpation of feminine symbolic patterns without their being changed by the masculine side. By "deformation" I mean the changing of those symbolic patterns by the usurpers. In both cases, a characteristic shift in meaning occurs.

2a. A typical trick employed in the transformation of a matriarchal mythical system to a patriarchal one is to change the gender of the primordial deity. Thus, the Great Primordial Mother becomes suddenly a primordial Father who now maintains that he is the father of all gods and humans. For this purpose he emulates all her capacities, especially that of giving birth.<sup>22</sup> However, because he lacks the necessary organs, he gives birth from his head (Zeus-Athena) or from his forehead (Vishnu-Lakshmi), or from his thigh (Zeus-Dionysus). This highly effective method transfers the primacy of the female principle to that of the male.

Transformations	Lancelot Cycle	Arthurian Epics	Parsifal Legends	Tristan Legends	Siegfried Legends
<b>1. Structure</b>	<b>Mother Goddess/Fertility Heros (God)</b>				
Pre-Indo-European cultic level	<b>Ireland:</b> Erin and Lug (subject of the Grail represented by transfer of the chalice to the successor "son"); analogous: Morcades and King Loth	Morrigan-Morgane and King Loth (subject of the orchard Paradise)	<b>Wales:</b> Modron and Bran/Bron (subject of the Grail represented by transfer of the bowl or Horn of Plenty to the successor "son" Parsifal)	<b>Cornwall:</b> Isolt and the dragon/Morholt (subject of the magic vessel: "love potion")	The virgin and the dragon; the virgin-hund and the <i>heros</i> -stag with the Wild Hunter (cult game "Hunting the Stag")
<b>2. Structure:</b>	<b>The Solar Heros and the battle for the Goddess-Queen</b>				
Celtic-cultic level	Chuchulainn, the golden-haired, wins Blathnat, competing against Curoi/Lug	Gwri-Gawain, the golden-haired, wins Guinevere, the golden-haired (Clan of the Red Knights); Morgane-Mabonagrinn; Ywain wins Laudine competing against the Storm Knight/Curoi	Parsifal's battle against the Clan of the Red Knights who murdered/wounded his predecessor, or "father"	Tristan wins Isolt, the golden-haired, competing against the dragon/Morholt	Siegfried, the golden-haired (like Freyr and Baldur), wins Brunhild competing against the dragon
<b>3. Structure:</b>	<b>Fusion with historical figures:</b>				
a) historical overlays (non-mythical)	Arthur's battle against King Loth	Many historical hero figures added to Arthur's Round Table: Loth-Lancelot, Gwri-Gawain with Guinevere, Ywain, Erec and Enite	Combination with Arthur's Round Table	Combination with King Mark of Cornwall	Triple overlay: 1. Combination with the historical Arminius (Höfller). 2. Combination with the royal house of Merowingier (Kuhn). 3. Combination with the demise of the Burgundians in Hungary

b) patriarchalization

**Patriarchalization:** Arthur takes possession of Loth's land. Morgane is added as Arthur's "sister"

Queen Guinevere becomes Arthur's "property," the *heros* become his vassals

Parsifal is vassal to Arthur, women become insignificant

Queen Isolt becomes Mark's "property," Tristan becomes his vassal (compare *Aithedia*)

Queen Brunhild becomes Gunther's "property," Siegfried becomes his vassal

#### 4. Structure:

Medieval overlay

a) epic composition

Founding of the Round Table; Lancelot supplants Gawain in the role of the queen's "liberator" and lover (fusion of *Aithedia* and the Round Table); Lancelot's "son," Galahad, figures as finder of the Grail; battle between Arthur and Lancelot and the demise of the kingdom; Arthur's youth and death: interjection of the myth of Morgane

The story of Mark-Isolt-Tristan is extended to include the second part (that includes the second Isolt)

Combination of the Siegfried legends with the demise of the Burgundians (Nibelungenlied)

c) Christianization

**Christianization:** The Grail becomes a Christian vessel, Galahad becomes a crusader, Lancelot becomes a sinner and penitent

The Grail becomes a Christian vessel, Parsifal becomes a Crusader-like Grail King, his love becomes a chaste marriage; the recluse uncle becomes a monk, his teachings a Christian catechism

(minimal)

(minimal)

c) adaptation to courtly tastes

**Adaptation to courtly tastes**

Gawain figures as the ideal courtly knight; Courtly Love enters as a theme in the story of Lancelot and Guinevere; Yvain atones for neglecting his Courtly Love obligations to Laudine; Erec atones for neglecting his knightly duties

Gawain as a prototype of a courtly knight is inserted as a contrast to Parsifal (double romance of Parsifal and Gawain)

(minimal, with the exception of the subject of "love" and "loyalty," i.e., Courtly Love between Siegfried and Kriemhild)

(minimal, with the exception of "love" and "loyalty," i.e., Courtly Love between Tristan and Isolt)

2b: In case the gender-transformation of the primordial Mother was not accepted as believable, a second method was employed: The Great Goddess and Creatress is betrothed to the Father God, without whom she now is helpless. The spectrum of those wives ranges from the obstinate Hera (Sarasvati and Frigga), who remains daring enough to make independent decisions, though she rarely has her way; to the endearing Isis (Lakshmi), who clings to her husband because she feels helpless without him; to the shadowy Uma (Prithivi, Iahu), who remains present in name alone. From a patriarchal point of view the latter stage is particularly desirable. The first stage involves a variety of pitfalls (as Brahma had to know); as a coercive measure, an absurd obligation was imposed upon the obstinate goddesses that they must become the guardians of monogamous marriage, therefore, they suddenly become jealous monitors of the romantic adventures of their husbands and of humans. This represents a complete perversion of their original character as matriarchal Love and Mother Goddesses, for monogamy was unheard of in matriarchy. Monogamy (for the woman) is a patriarchal institution.

The Indo-European Father God imitates the Goddess further in being constructed as a triad. Like the Goddess in the triple form of Maiden/Woman/Crone, he now rules Heaven, Earth, and Underworld, too. In order to achieve this, he takes each time a triple goddess as his wife (compare Zeus/Poseidon/Hades with Hera/Demeter/Persephone, and Brian/Juchar/Jucharba with Bamba/Eire/Folla). Thus begins the process of separating the three unified manifestations of the Goddess: The original trinity is severed to form three individuals with a reduced range of functions (compare Artemis, Aphrodite, Athena). Because the goddesses refused to marry the patriarchal gods of their own volition, abduction and rape were the customary means employed (certainly not only on a mythical level). The usurping of her symbols and attributes, her capacities and functions, went hand in hand with the transformation from primeval Mother to primeval Father, or the forcible betrothal of the Mother Goddess to Father God. The first thing the Father God appropriated was her widespread symbol of power, the "lightning bolt" (double ax), with which she killed, or castrated. Every God of Atmosphere we encounter carries a lightning bolt in his hand, and as they rise to the position of absolute Father Gods, the lightning bolt is employed as a punitive weapon against rebellious opponents (compare Zeus and Yahweh; in the Germanic mythology, the "lightning bolt" becomes Thor's "thunderbolt," a hammer). Once this instrument of power is stolen, these gods prove themselves to be utterly helpless (Zeus, Thor). In a further typical expropriation, we find

Aphrodite's dove, the spirit of her world-creating Eros, in Yahweh's possession; however, it is now made into his own decidedly anti-erotic spirit. There is also the patriarchal Ra's usurpation of the ankh, the female symbol of all life; and there is the usurpation of the Underworld Goddess' scales of fate by the Death God (Osiris), or even by the patriarchal God of Heaven (Zeus). When the Goddess lost to the God her symbols, she also lost to him her functions: He now became the giver of life, possessor of power, and ruler of fate. Furthermore, he appropriated the Goddess' skiff that sailed over earthly and otherworldly waters (compare Freyr and the patriarchal Ra). Inasmuch as it was not depredated later into the profane and used as a combat vehicle, the God also took the Goddess' sacred chariot (thus Thor enters the scene on Frigga's goat-drawn chariot, which he drives so recklessly that the animals break their legs). In the same way her possession of the "cauldron," the magic vessel, is terminated, and with it all of the functions previously resident in the Goddess: fertility, magic, oracle, inspiration, poetry, medicine, wisdom (see Dagda, Bran, Lug, Heimdall, Freyr, Thor). While the matriarchal gods at least waited until the Goddess presented them with the wondrous vessel herself, as a sign of their coronation as *heros*-kings, the patriarchal gods brutally robbed or stole it (see Thor). Concomitant with the loss of her oracular arts was the loss of her oracular animals (snake, birds): They are either killed (compare Apollo and the Python snake), or ownership is transferred to the patriarchal gods (Lug and Odin's oracular raven). She has not even the permission to pass on her own apple of love. Absurd as it may seem, in one instance it is the *heros*-king (Paris) who gives to the Goddess (Aphrodite) the apple; in another, she is simply forbidden to pass the apple (Yahweh-Eve). As a consequence, the sun triumphed increasingly as an astral symbol, while the moon's significance waned. Ever since, gold and red have been the colors of kings, not the sacred white-red-black colors worn by matriarchal kings.

In addition to the blatant usurpation of symbols and functions (absorption), there were deformations, as we can observe in the classical case of Yahweh's usurpation of Eve's paradisaical apple orchard: The original functions (snake symbolizing phallic Eros, Eve as the Goddess of Love, the apple as a symbol of love and of death, Adam as the *heros*) are perverted into the very opposite (snake as the devil, Eve as a sinful wench, the apple symbolizing seduction, Adam as her man and master).

2c. The dependency and weakening of the Great Goddess increases when she is now made daughter, as opposed to wife, of the omnipotent Father God. All her remaining functions are thus presented to be

capacities inherited from her father. This method is always most apparent when the old Goddess of Wisdom (Sciences and Arts) is explicitly born of the spirit of the patriarchal god (compare Zeus and Athena, Ra and Hathor, Brahma and Sarasvati, Odin and the Valkyrie, who is Freyja in the form of his daughter). Even the old Love Goddess becomes his own begotten daughter (Zeus and Aphrodite, Vishnu and Lakshmi). It is a ludicrous notion: the matriarchal Eros emanating from a patriarchal god!

These daughters are generally obedient tools of the paternal will. Thus, as the daughter of Zeus, Athena becomes a staunch defender of patriarchal principles: she exempts people from punishment for matricide, brings about the loss of voting rights for Athenian women, and mandates against women practicing commercial "arts." Or, their functions are totally patriarchalized, as with Artemis, who was originally presented as an independent, strong young woman; she now becomes a virgin in the patriarchal sense, meaning, her strength is associated with her childish chastity.\* She is merely permitted to sit on Zeus's lap, like a child, and tug at his beard. Aphrodite, being less malleable, was degraded into a divine concubine, and later into the Goddess of male homosexual Love.

The assimilation of the *heros* into the "son" of the patriarchal God brought with it the following alterations: The man, who previously stood in relation to the Goddess, was now strictly related to the Father God, to whom he remains loyal to his "heroic" (tragic) death. The devoted servant of his father, he is later glorified and deified (Zeus and Heracles, Yahweh and Jesus). The Mother Goddess is subjected to brutal attacks on her cult at the hands of these new "sons" (the Dorian Heracles, the Dorian Apollo, the Babylonian Gilgamesh, and many others). Animosity toward the mother and obedience to the father is the basis of the new social system: patriarchy. Against the backdrop of these central changes, the obedient daughters faded gradually into obscurity.

The incremental rise of the male partner in religion is outlined by the following progressions: phallic primordial serpent personifying water or wind (early matriarchy); chthonic fertility *heros* (in most cases advanced matriarchy); astral fertility *heros* personified by the sun (advanced matriarchy); deified *heros*: Fertility God, God of Atmosphere, Sun God, God of Death, all as dying, ever-reborn gods (advanced ma-

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\* Here the author makes a play on the German words "junge Frau," meaning "young woman," and "Jungfrau," meaning "virgin," clarifying the transformation that took place in a way not readily expressed in English.

triarchy); Immortal Gods, as God of Heaven (sun/atmosphere), Fertility God (land and sea), and God of Death (Underworld): the early patriarchal triad; omnipotent Father God with son (patriarchal); absolute Father God representing the solitary divine principle (patriarchal); abstract principles with no human personification (patriarchal). It is only logical, then, that this can only open into an empty Nirvana.

2d: The foregoing developments did not transpire without resistance from the side of the matriarchy. This is evidenced by the many Battle of Gods mythologies which regularly revolve around the political attempts to suppress antecedent cults, and to deprive their followers of rights, or to squelch uprisings on the part of the original deities (and the aboriginal populations). The older gods (and their followers) were often in a state of turmoil; thus, for example, the Olympian gods fought repeatedly against the Giants ("gigantomachy"), Cyclopes, and the Centaurs, who could not be categorized as demons, but rather were primeval deities. The Germanic and Celtic gods are likewise in constant quarrel with the Giants and the Dwarves (who were also primeval gods). Occasionally, they battle each other, which means that a patriarchal group of deities (as the Vanir led by Jörd) fights against a patriarchal group of deities (as the Aesir led by Odin). This is a reflection of centuries of bloody battles between the two forms of social organization, at a time when there was no moral code to secure minimal human rights.

The classical Myth of Revolt can again be found in the figures of Hera and Zeus. Unlike Erin or Jörd, Hera never managed to maintain a resisting matriarchal faction, which, in spite of disparagement, could at least weaken the patriarchal phalanx. Her story is as follows:

*After the arbitrary power of the Olympian Zeus had grown intolerable, Hera led all the gods in an attempt to oust him. Even Zeus's brother, Poseidon, and his son, Apollo, supported the revolt as best they could. The gods attacked Zeus and chained him to his bed. They hid his "lightning bolt" (or Hera took it back). Zeus was thus helpless. Nevertheless, the rebellion failed because one of Zeus's lovers fetched a hundred-armed giant who was able to free him from his chains in a flash. Zeus punished Hera, who had initiated the revolt, by hanging her in the sky with golden handcuffs on her wrists and an anvil on each foot. She screamed pitifully, but not a single god dared come to her aid. Only after he coerced all of them to swear future obedience to him did Zeus finally release Hera from her torture. Poseidon and Apollo were punished by being enslaved and forced to build the city of Troy.*

I think the myth makes clear *what* is at issue here: the possession of the "lightning bolt," the power in Heaven. It illustrates, too, *who* was involved: it is a struggle between Hera and Zeus. It also tells us *how* it happened: with violence and torture, and it shows that the opposition was a *matriarchal* one, not merely one of giants, gods, farmers, slaves, trades people, matrons, singers, etc. It does not depict the century-long opposition of varying groups within society, but the conflict between different forms of social organization. Because both women and men participated on the side of the matriarchy this is perhaps difficult to discern. However, the language of the myth is clear: It provides us with an authentic portrait of patriarchal life and customs.

Another variant of the revolt is depicted by the Palestinian mythology concerning Yahweh, which, together with its traditions, were suppressed by the Judaic Bible. Here, the antagonist is not a goddess, but rather an opposing god.

*Together with many angels, the opposing god Lucifer, followed by the matriarchal symbolic animals, the so-called "demons," led a revolt against the patriarchal god Yahweh. As heros of the feminine deity, "Hagia Sofia," who was Holy Wisdom herself, and who stood leagues above Yahweh, holding the entire universe together, Lucifer felt bound to her. After his defeat, he was banished to hell as an "anti-angel" or "fallen angel" (the meaning of "devil"). This "Hell," though, is the Underworld (Germanic: Hel), where he belongs, so the fall meant nothing to him. Lucifer threatened Yahweh to return at the End of Time and restore the old order of the world that Yahweh had distorted and deceptively presented as his own eternal order. Lucifer's threat is portrayed by the Bible as the horrific apocalypse.*

This "apocalyptic" threat is not the only one of its kind, for Jörd, the primordial pre-Germanic Earth Goddess, makes perfectly clear to the patriarchal Father God Odin, that she intends to return at the End of Time and re-establish the proper order of the world. Presumably, she would then no longer let herself be masculinized into "Njörd," nor would she continue to tolerate her status as a dependent hostage of the Aesir. Her *heros* is Loki, the demonic God of the Underworld, who brings on the "Twilight of the Gods" to Odin and the Aesir, just as Lucifer does in the case of Yahweh. Here in the rebellion we can notice matriarchal ideas of Utopia that shine brightly through the deformations and ruins.

2e. These utopian ideas, such as hope for the return of the Goddess, with her gentle, lenient reign, have, throughout the entire patri-

archal epoch, always been associated with the matriarchal subcultures in the lower classes of the population. One need only be reminded that the classical myth of the "Golden Age" refers to the matriarchal era.

Vestiges of the matriarchies survived as esoteric cults or subcultures. They are mostly associated with "folklore" and "customs" (which cannot be discussed at length here). Occasionally, the figures of the Great Goddess and her *heros* were still manifest in the Cult of Demeter in patriarchal Greece, the Cult of Isis in patriarchal Egypt and Rome, the Cult of Cybele in patriarchal Asia Minor and Rome, and the Orphean-Dionysian Mysteries in the Hellenistic world. The Cult of Baal is still practiced under Judaism, as well the Cult of Kali and Shiva even today in India. The participation of people in these cults was high, and they enjoyed widespread distribution. Reluctantly, the patriarchal rulers were compelled to tolerate them (compare the Cult of Cybele in Rome). In the Celtic and Germanic regions, this religion of the people survived the christianization process in many forms (e.g., "folklore," "sagas," "fairy tales"), while Christianity remained for hundreds of years only a superficial overlay. Following fierce struggles medieval Christianity began the process of absorption (and distortion) of the "heathen" symbols, which was its only chance to gain a footing. A similar situation occurred in the early beginning of Christianity, when it developed in the middle of matriarchal religions of redemption, which were mostly celebrated in secret. We will see the effect this was to have.

3. The third structure of religious transformations is characterized by the replacement of the early patriarchal pantheon (second structure) by the patriarchal world religions. They all tend toward monotheism. Monotheism, lauded and esteemed to be the ultimate fruit of male spiritual/intellectual labor, takes as its basic premise the absolutism of the (early patriarchal) Father God, who no longer tolerates any gods near him. All the other gods, from whom the Father God originally developed, become eradicated as "heathens." Monotheistic systems are thus always characterized by centralism and fanaticism: Individual religious beliefs are no longer tolerated, and what is to be believed is dictated from above. Adherence to religious dogmas is enforced by a crusading caste of priests who establish inquisitorial institutions as needed.

This spiritual imperialism of the patriarchal world religions goes hand in hand with the political imperialism of the patriarchal worldwide empires. Monotheistic religions are typically always religions of the state. On the one hand, the priestly caste acquires its power always

in liaison with political power-holders ("throne and altar"); on the other, the monarchical political rulers find in the monotheistic religion an ever welcome legitimacy for their power; that is why they advance to become religions of the state. Therefore, all the monotheistic world religions are ideologies for the purpose to legitimize patriarchal centralism and imperialism, arriving under the motto: "One God! One Empire! One King!" They procure, then, from their notion of an Absolute God, their right to polish off nonconformist thinkers and doers, as we can see until today.

The scale of notions in monotheistic world religions reaches from the Father God and his son on earth (Yahweh and Jesus, Ra and the Pharaoh as Son of God, the Sun God and the Inca as Son of God, in South America) to the Absolute Father God as a solitary principle in itself (Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam), up to a set of abstract religious principles void of human personification (Brahmanism, Hinduism, Buddhism). The theological speculation on abstract principles then transforms without rupture into the beginning of patriarchal philosophy (compare the first philosophical systems in India, Greece, and China, as well). As monotheistic religion ceased to serve as a legitimizing force for political imperialism, philosophy supplanted it in this role. The patriarchal theory of science, in turn, originates from that philosophy, as do the various patriarchal sciences and technologies (compare modern Europe). What is characteristic of this intellectual development is that the feminine always represents the negative principle: Within the parameters of the patriarchal world religions, the woman is the principle of what is impure, wicked, vicious, bad, and evil. From the viewpoint of patriarchal philosophy and science, she is the principle of irrationality, illogic, narrowness, stupidity, and insufficiency. The amount of misogynist literature produced since the emergence of the patriarchal world religions and the philosophical-scientific systems is legion. It has not stopped yet.

My task here, though, is not to analyze the structure and transformations of the patriarchal world religions. However, by way of concluding this mythological study, I would like to refer to one of these religions, Christianity, because we are so familiar with it, to characterize the matriarchal mythical sources from which it has stolen, and the typical deformations which it has imposed on the original symbolic systems.

The Christian trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is an imitation of the matriarchal trinity of the Goddess. Father God rules in Heaven, the Son of God lives on earth, and the Holy Ghost joins the

spheres of the Now and Hereafter (the Other World). The Goddess that this triadic pattern probably replicates is Iahu, the cosmic dove of the Near East. In the creation story, Yahweh appears under her name, in her form, and in possession of her creative functions.

The Son of God is identified as "king," and is the representative of the Father God on earth (much like his priests). Solar attributes are ascribed to him in many hymns. He is always portrayed as the light that overcomes the darkness of death. Here we encounter, in the Christian religion, the pattern of Death and Return common to matriarchal religions: The Son of God dies the sacrificial death and rises again. This event is assigned the same significance as the sacrificial death of the matriarchal *heros*: to ensure the continuity of the human race. The continuation of life in this case, however, occurs not in the Here and Now, but in the Hereafter, the classical orchard Garden of Paradise. The resurrection of the individual there is eternal, as in the Hellenistic Osiris religion, and, as in the Osiris religion, Christianity knows that this resurrection is preceded by a "Last Judgment," over which a clement and fair judge presides.

Thus, the son of Yahweh imitates the matriarchal *heros*-pattern even though he is *not* a *heros*. This comes as no surprise when one considers the fact that early Christianity developed in the Hellenistic world, where every popular religion was saturated with the cult of the Great Goddesses Isis, Cybele, and Demeter. The only way for Christianity to gain widespread acceptance as a popular religion was to assimilate, in a syncretistic manner, the notions of other cults, and to then pervert them. Thus, Mary, the Mother of God, bears a striking resemblance to the Hellenistic Mother Goddess, though now transposed into the *Mother of God* with scholastic sophistry. With the same hairsplitting acuity she was again transformed into the "Virgin Mother," in the patriarchal-sexist context. Independent of naturalistic contortions, every matriarchal goddess was a virgin mother (i.e., Anat, Aphrodite, Ishtar) because, after ritual actions like the Sacred Marriage, the Birth, and the Sacrifice of the *heros*, they subjected themselves to a bath from which they re-emerged as virgins. These changes imply the cyclical occurrence of the triad, for every goddess was all of these at the same time: Virgin, Mother, and Wise Crone.

It is, then, self-evident and by no means mysterious that Mary also bears the title of "Virgin" (even though it has been misinterpreted from the patriarchal perspective). Neither is it surprising to see Mary often represented as perched on a lunar crescent with a halo of stars around her head (Ill. 36). In this representation she resembles the God-



*Ill. 36: Madonna standing on the moon crescent (Marianplatz in Munich)*



*Ill. 37: Jesus as the "good shepherd"*

ness of the Universe, the Palestinian feminine triad. This identification corresponds to Mary's other official titles: "Queen of Heaven," "Mistress of Angels." The birth of her divine son is a very significant event: She delivers her child at the time of the winter solstice, as did Demeter Iakchos, or Isis Har-Siesis, because they represent the spirit of the new year, and the return of the sunlight. Like Iakchos, Attis, and the Cretan Zeus, the child is welcomed enthusiastically by shepherds. At the same time, the child demonstrates the traits of a child god, and as a young man, those of a divine shepherd (Sumeria, Egypt, Palestine). Jesus, whose name is very similar to Isis's son, Har-Siesis, appears on the scene in the form of a gentle "good shepherd" (Ill. 37), and his bishops carry the long, curved Sumerian shepherd's staff. Naturally, with the birth of this child, the world that had been out of joint is brought back in order. The same was true in the case of other re-born child gods, because the world order was threatened, the vegetation destroyed, and human life endangered ever since the sacrificial death of the *heros* (God) in the last autumn.

The Palestinian female descendent of the Sumerian Mother Goddess Iahu, too, celebrated the Sacred Marriage with her Yahweh, who flew in the form of a dove (the "Annunciation"). The mythology is rich with gods who approach the Goddess in the form of a bird, usually one which has been usurped: thus, Zeus appears in the form of a swan, a cuckoo, or an eagle. The claim that this dove is "pure spirit" is merely an expression of sexual anxiety on the part of Yahweh-priests, who felt compelled to take abstractions to the brink of incomprehensibility.

In the end, Iahu/Mary endures the death of her son, who, in accordance with the *heros*-pattern, dies, and resurrects within a short period. In the meantime, he, like all *heros*, embarks on an Underworld journey and returns after three days in the form of his own successor. For the duration of his disappearance, Iahu/Mary does what all Mother Goddesses do in this situation: she bursts into a flood of tears and grief, and becomes the epitome of the *Mater Dolorosa* familiar to us around the entire Indo-European region (i.e., Anat, Isis, Demeter, Frigga, and others). By the time her son returns, she has, of course, kicked in the head of "the devil, the old snake," because, ultimately, in the cyclical Battle of Demons, all Mother Goddesses prevail against the dragon/snake, which personifies the principle of darkness (compare Anat and Mot), by again giving birth to her sons, or sending them to the world of the living. Unlike Mary, though, who remains a passive and silent sufferer, the goddesses are the active and independent driving force behind the cosmic process. In addition to the snake, another manifes-

tation of the antagonist is the so-called "devil." He had originally been a horned god, like Dionysus, or the Cretan Zeus, or his foster brother Pan, all of whom wore a serpent crown. Because the goat-horned, goat-tailed, and goat-hoofed *heros*-god played such an important role in the Hellenistic world, and was not as malleable as the mild-mannered Har-Siesis, he retained his original divinity and fertility functions. He was severed from the portrait of the *heros*, and forged into an opposing force, "the devil." Because he retained his original divinity and fertility functions in the secret matriarchal subcultures that the Christians so desperately tried to suppress, Christians made him the "devil of the devils." His votaries, who in an underground manner maintained their status as priestesses of the ancient matriarchal religion, met with defamation as "witches" and were burned at the stake.

In this example we encounter severances and deformations of the goddess-*heros* pattern by Christianity, which parasitically appropriated it. Christianity, however, is not at all a matriarchal religion, but a strictly patriarchal Father God religion. This example also shows very clearly the source from which these world religions have "created" themselves. Christianity demonstrates all the transformations present in the process of patriarchalization as we have analyzed them: We have already noted the masculinization of the Goddess "Iahu" into "Yahweh," which occurred in the Judaic religion. The making of the Goddess into a wife, the state of early patriarchy, was not included in the patriarchal world religions, and thus does not appear here (except as a remnant in the "Annunciation"); instead, we have the male trinity. Once the Father God becomes the primordial Creator, the *heros*, or divine son, is no longer indebted to any feminine principle, but rather to a masculine one, to whom he is loyal until death. With that, he ceases to be a matriarchal *heros*, in spite of his stolen identity. Mary exudes the character of the subservient daughter, an instrument of her Father God's will, and represents in herself patriarchal principles (such as "chastity"). As a mother, she is, like the deformed Isis, as lachrymose as she is ignorant; in emergencies she does not even know how to help herself. She represents the pinnacle of patriarchal passivity in women, and thus she has no influence whatsoever in the decisive process of death and resurrection for her son; the Omnipotent Father God does everything. Moreover, the son is explicitly not hers, but is the son of the "Father." She is as powerless as he is powerful, for he is the Almighty God himself. The whole process is further distorted by the "unrolling" of the matriarchal cycle of the year, now replaced with a linear concept of time, which has become the basis of the Christian notion of history, i.e., the story of the Expulsion from Paradise, and the Salva-

tion by Jesus Christ. All these events are thought to be singular; every idea of a cyclical process is omitted.

In spite of that and contradictory to it, the early cyclical concept of time is preserved in the Christian "Ecclesiastical Year," with its most important festivities, which still follow the matriarchal cycle of the seasons: the Birth of Christ as the child god at winter solstice, his sacrificial death, with his resurrection at the onset of spring, the festivities surrounding Mary ("Lady's Day," "Annunciation Day," and others) in the blooming May and beautiful summer, and the rebirth of the sun at midwinter, again. Thus, we can observe that all these stolen elements, prominent in the Christian cult, were borrowed from matriarchal sources. This is valid not only concerning the matriarchal cosmic drama, which is enacted annually by the birth, death, and resurrection of the "heros" Christ, but also concerning the matriarchal symbols that are used in the Catholic Masses, and the Protestant services up to today. They are celebrated with offerings of bread and wine, as in the Demeter cult, where the piety of the followers is occasionally raised to ecstatic outbursts. Golden bells ring while bread is eaten, and wine is drunk, as was the case in the Cybele cult in Rome. The priests are dressed like the priests of the Cybele ("Cybeloi"): They wear long women's robes and female accessories such as embroidered cloaks and stoles. The highest ones in their hierarchy (bishops, etc.) bear on their heads the mitre, which is the crested hood or crown of all the Mother Goddesses, especially of Kubaba-Cybele. In early times the priests of Cybele chose this clothing in an attempt to imitate their Goddess as closely as possible; they castrated themselves for the same reason. They strove to achieve mythical unity with her. The Christian priests are eunuch priests, too, though not by virtue of actual castration, but rather celibacy, a form of psychic castration. When they decide to do this ("Ordination"), they lie on the ground pleading for help from their Great Mother Mary. However, they no longer seek mythical union with the feminine principle, but rather with the masculine, personified by their Father God. Thus, the Christian doctrine of celibacy is necessarily an expression of derision for and rejection of the feminine (as the "principle of evil"). The Virgin, Mary, is all that remains recognizable of the feminine, but only because she is so much devitalized as to be nothing more than an abstraction of "mother." Thus, femininity became translated into an artificial construct, and only in this way could it be tolerated in the Christian religion without fear. Real women, on the other hand, have no place in it, no voice, and no sanctioned rights. They are excluded from any and all active participation in the cult, as is the case with the other patriarchal world religions.

As we know, the patriarchal world religions, and the intellectual systems that proceeded from them—philosophy and modern sciences—did not restore the cosmic order as they claim to do. Quite the opposite: considering the present condition of our planet earth and the exploitation of its human and non-human resources, we see that those patriarchal systems have brought everything out of balance. The basic cycles of nature that the matriarchal religions respected and sanctified have been disregarded and destroyed.

What will help us to counter this? Perhaps the rebellion of Hera, or the return of Jörd, will help restore the order on earth so that life may continue in the universe. Perhaps, providing we still have time.

## PART II

# THE PRINCESS AND HER BROTHERS





## MATRIARCHAL MYTHOLOGY IN FAIRY TALES OF MAGIC

Fairy tales, like myths, are neither romanticized expressions of sublimated "souls of the people," nor simple reproductions of inexplicable natural phenomena. Neither are they "primordial human notions" such as "love," and "death," nor does their interpretation necessitate that we wrestle with incomprehensible psycho-spiritual "archetypes" or their attendant images in the form of neurotic "complexes." They are, as myths, reflections of the complex practices of early societies, which are, as we have observed, primarily matriarchal. In my view, a cultural-historical interpretation of fairy tales is the only interpretation with a scientific foundation, and the only one capable of providing us with enduring insights.<sup>1</sup>

During the Romantic period, fairy tales were considered to be degenerated myths. This interpretation was later rejected when the hair-splitting differences between myths and fairy tales were subjected to formalistic analysis.<sup>2</sup> At the time, it was argued that fairy tales were "simpler" than myths because they retained neither their complicated structure, nor their difficult names; from that also came the reasoning that fairy tales, being the simpler of the two, were created earlier than the myths. Today, the trend is again toward the first stance, which I support wholeheartedly, because the differences between myths and fairy tales are easily explained by the process of social decline. These differences emerged not because the "common people" were incapable of remembering the complex framework of the myths, or their names, and so simplified them and typified their figures, but rather because the matriarchal myths, when repeated explicitly and by name, were antagonistic to patriarchal societies, and regarded as "hostile" and "heathen" in the eyes of their dogmatic world religions. By way of illustration we need only recall the European Middle Ages and the slow and painful process by which the Christian church infiltrated the older, matriarchal-based religions. Forced to conceal themselves from non-initiates, the old matriarchal world view thrived uninterrupted in the lower social classes and geographical fringe groups. However, they no longer referred to the Mother Goddess, but spoke of the "mother"; no longer calling the daughter Goddess, high priestess, or crown princess by name, they spoke simply of "the princess." Similarly, they did not call the *heros* by name, but referred to him only as "the hero." To enable their forbidden cult to remain clandestine, individual divine fig-

ures became nameless prototypes. Nevertheless, the old mythical structure within which these figures move is unaltered. Thus, the fairy tale, being a veiled myth, conveys the same religious message as the myth, and is equally complex. The discovery of this structure is credited to the abstract intuition of Wladimir Propp.<sup>3</sup> Colleagues who preceded him had been blind to the structure and therefore had accepted the legend of the simplicity of fairy tales. Propp, though, did not understand the meaning that lay in the astonishing regularity of the sequences of the fairy tales; consequently, his discovery ossified into meaningless formulas. The unwavering precision of the fairy tale sequences demonstrates nothing other than our matriarchal goddess-*heros*-structure, which, in turn, puts us in a position to understand the content behind the fairy tale forms.

Because of the tremendous volume of material collected by researchers in the field of folklore, I was forced to limit myself to only a few examples. Thus, rather than follow the international motif-index developed by Aarne-Thompson,<sup>4</sup> I turn to the *Children's and Household Tales* which are most familiar to us from the collection of the brothers Grimm.<sup>5</sup> This does not mean that I concern myself exclusively with German fairy tales, for "German" fairy tales as such do not exist. They are only fairy tales collected in Germany, each of which belongs to an international treasury of stories, as their many variants demonstrate. I employ all of the variants to show, on the one hand, the whole spectrum of symbols, and on the other, to reconstruct the full length of the sequence, which frequently has been cut in half. Typically, these variants encompass a territory that expands beyond Europe into the Mediterranean region, from there to the Near East, and further on as far as India—precisely the same regions in which highly advanced matriarchal religions flourished.<sup>6</sup>

I have ordered these examples from the brothers Grimm into three exemplary groups and arranged each according to the part of the matriarchal schematic structure in which it belongs. Of these groups, the first two ("the Abundance-Giving Woman in the Other World," and "the Gift-Giving Woman in a Deathlike State") contain the symbolism of the goddess-structure. The third group ("Fairy Tales of the Redeemer") demonstrates the *heros*-structure.<sup>7</sup> In each case, I analyze one fairy tale in detail, then relate it to the others by comparison. These necessary restrictions illustrate the wealth and beauty of the research options that remain open to us.<sup>8</sup>

# FIRST GROUP: THE ABUNDANCE-GIVING WOMAN IN THE OTHER WORLD

In this group I consider and analyze the following fairy tales: *Mother Holle* (KHM 24), *Hansel and Gretel* (KHM 15), *Cinderella* (KHM 21), and *One Eye, Two Eyes, and Three Eyes* (KHM 130).\*

## ***Mother Holle, the first example of the first group***

*A mother has two daughters, one ugly and lazy, and one beautiful and hard-working, who is her stepdaughter. The stepdaughter must do all the housework and sit at the well every day spinning flax, until her fingers bleed. One day her spindle falls into the well; gripped with fear of reprimand, she jumps in after it. She loses consciousness but then regains it, finding herself in the middle of a blossoming meadow. There, she encounters a cow whose udders are bursting with milk, an oven filled with fresh bread, and an apple tree whose boughs bend under the weight of its fruit. She milks the cow, takes the bread from the oven, and shakes the apples from the tree. She then enters a house that appears to be suspended in the clouds. A friendly old woman peers out and invites the girl to work as her servant for a year. The girl agrees and works diligently for one year. Whenever she shakes out Mother Holle's feather bed, it snows on Earth. After a year she goes home, leaving Mother Holle's house through an arched gateway where gold rains down and clings to her. Thereafter, she is known as "Gold Marie" and is wealthy.*

*The jealous stepmother now sends her ugly daughter to the well so that she, too, might become wealthy. The ugly daughter, though, does everything just the opposite of her sister and is lazy at Mother Holle's.*

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\* *Translator's Note:* KHM refers to the German title of the collected Grimms' fairy tales, *Kinder und Hausmärchen*.

*As she leaves the house one year later, tar showers down on her and sticks to her. Thereafter, she is known as "Pitch Marie."*

The central figure in this fairy tale has not yet lost her mythical name. Mother Holle is the (pre)Germanic Underworld Goddess "Hel," or "Hella," who, in the Christianized word "hell" [German "Hölle"] came to epitomize the sinister, the demonic, and the negative. The person of Mother Holle vanished. In the old cult, though, she was the Earth and Underworld Goddess, Hel-Hella-Holle, who manifested the ultimate good, fertility, justice, and maternity, much as the fairy tale Mother Holle still does.

It is not exactly clear where Mother Holle dwells: in Heaven, or in a house in the clouds, from which she lets snow or rain fall. She is, therefore, in control of the weather. Yet she also lives in the Underworld. The name Holle, being akin to "Höhle" [cave], is in itself an allusion to "hell." The tormented Gold Marie finds her beneath the well, which is an entry shaft into the depths. Mother Holle is both the Goddess of Heaven and the Underworld Goddess who determines all events on Earth both from above (weather) and below (fertility); therefore she is truly a universal figure. Moreover, her Underworld has paradisaical-Eleusian traits, for Gold Marie falls into a beautiful blossoming meadow where an apple tree in the field is so overburdened with apples that it cries out for help. Apples, we can recall, are Aphrodite's fruit of love and death. They are also associated with all the other related goddesses. Furthermore, Gold Marie meets a cow on the verdant landscape whose udders are bursting with milk. The cow is the sacred animal of the Mother Goddess. The oven, filled with the products of an agricultural society, is not absent, either. In it, the bread seems to reproduce itself so quickly that Gold Marie has to pull it from the oven with haste.

A heavenly abode, aphroditian and maternal fertility, and a paradisaical Other World are the insignia of the Great Goddess in her three personifications—Maiden, Woman, and Crone. Through these triple manifestations she steers the seasons and the world. While she is here depicted solely in the manifestation of the loving and just Crone, there are versions in which she appears as a threefold, white, supernatural being.

Mother Holle is truly an "abundance-giving woman in the Other World," because her Underworld is the Other World, whether it is situated in the depths or in the heights. From there she literally showers wealth in abundance upon Gold Marie: Gold rains down on her from the arched gateway (just as tar rained on Pitch Marie). In mythology

the symbolic value of gold has nothing to do with economics. It refers instead to the wealth deep in the womb of the Earth: fertility, in every sense the richness of life. Gold Marie is the one who manages to retrieve this abundance from the Other World and bring it to the world of the living. Thus, she is a true *heroine*.

But how does she do it? She embarks on a journey into the Underworld or the Other World. She patiently suffers torture and death (the dive into the well) and experiences, therefore, her own Return. It is the most ancient form of matriarchal Initiation. She is initiated during her stay in the Other World, for it is here that she learns the matriarchal arts. These, however, encompassed more than the completion of routine household chores (as the bourgeois version of the "diligent" Gold Marie would have us believe). They included the art of agriculture (bread), horticulture, (the apple tree), the domestication of animals (cow) and the art of magic (determining the weather by "shaking the featherbed"). It is no wonder, then, that the heroine, after she had learned all this from the Goddess, was herself blessed with an abundance of fertility, because she knew how to make everything bear fruit. She thus becomes the earthly representative of the Goddess, her priestess, or her "crown princess." From a mythological perspective the Goddess is her mother and Gold Marie is the human, but elevated, daughter. Thus the basic matriarchal relationship—the mother-daughter relationship—set in its practical, social, cultic, and mythic environs, becomes apparent. The stepmother and Pitch Marie represent merely a duplicate, but negative transparency superimposed on this relationship. Held thus in comparison, the legitimate crown princess seems to soar even higher in the face of demands made by the impostor heroine. The fairy tale involves only these four figures; not a single man is needed.

How did it happen, then, from a socio-historical point of view, that there was a rivalry between a legitimate and an impostor crown princess? It did not arise because of the principle of ultimogeniture (the matriarchal law of sole inheritance by the youngest daughter), because the older daughters were equally provided for by the clan. Nevertheless, we witness in the fairy tales an increased frequency of incidences in which the elder, presumably jealous and uglier daughters, seek to humiliate and repress the youngest, most amicable, and beautiful daughter. What we have here, is, in fact, a pattern that has already been patriarchalized: the sisters are pitted against each other in a battle for the only honor, or the only man. In patriarchy, there can be no solidarity among women. In a better preserved version of the *Mother Holle* tale there are three sisters who undertake the Underworld

journey, but the youngest is the only one who succeeds. Three daughters or sisters are, in any case, more authentic because they represent an earthly copy of the sacred triad of their mother, the Goddess.

### **Hansel and Gretel, *the second example of the first group***

*A father and mother are no longer able to nourish their two children and so send them into the deep forest where they are lost. After a while they arrive at a clearing in which stands a gingerbread house. While the children are nibbling on the house an old witch emerges and lures them inside with promises. She locks Hansel in a stall to fatten him up because she intends to devour him, and she forces Gretel to do all the household chores. While the witch heats up the oven, preparing to roast Hansel, Gretel shoves her into the flames. Screaming, the witch perishes. The children return home to their parents, loaded with edibles and other treasures from the witch's house.*

Here, the Underworld journey is reduced to a trip to a misanthropic region, the enchanted forest. It carries the same symbolic significance, however, because it is where the witch lives. The witch is the Underworld Goddess but here she has been ascribed only negative values. Nevertheless, she does possess all the right attributes: she is a crone with the terrifying face of the Death Goddess, and she is escorted by black birds and a hell hound (wolf). In other variants of this fairy tale she is not only terrifying, she is also kind, and called "the little red mother in the gingerbread house," with the gingerbread house symbolizing her inexhaustible nourishing abundance, reminiscent of the magical bread reproducing itself in the tale of Mother Holle. Gretel, as in the case of Gold Marie, returns from her visit with an immeasurable horde of treasures and a "bottomless" cake, and with magical things: a mirror, a magical scarf, the water of life. Gold and cake are indicators of the supernatural fertility and powers of abundance of the so-called witch; the magical objects demonstrate that Gretel learned more from the witch than just housecleaning. The magical scarf refers to the art of weaving, the mirror to cultic knowledge; the water of life refers to the art of healing. We can thus conclude that Gretel, too, went through a matriarchal Initiation on her journey to the Other World. Further indications of this can be found in a different variant in which three sisters, as opposed to a boy and a girl, make the journey to the distant witch/Goddess. The youngest of them is Gretel's prototype, for she is the smartest and can, in the end, perform her own magic: she is the typical crown princess who receives everything from the "little mother."

A comparison of *Mother Holle* and *Hansel and Gretel* reveals quite

clearly the patriarchal deformation processes. Most conspicuous is the demonization of the former Great Goddess, who is now presumed to eat children rather than give birth to them, who now resides in an inhumane and dangerous region (even as deep beneath the earth as the "devil's lodge" in the Serbo-Croatian version) instead of in Paradise. She is not only demonized, which by itself would be an indicator of her strength, she is also ridiculed: this former Great Goddess, whose vision once reached so far that she could tell the future, is now so blind that she cannot distinguish Hansel's dried out twig from his finger. Gretel, moreover, shoves her into her own oven, an oven which, in the case of Mother Holle, was still a symbol of bread that reproduced itself. Particularly grotesque is the fact that she burns in her own magical fire, which formerly was an expression of her purifying power and sanctity. The fire was also a symbol of the Moon Goddess.

With the devaluation of the Goddess, the Underworld journey lost much of its sinister significance. This devaluation went hand in hand with a trivialization of symbols: Gretel no longer suffered death as a gateway to Initiation, as did the correlative heroine, Gold Marie. The only thing she supposedly learned from the witch was filthy housework. Gold Marie's activities with Mother Holle, too, were reduced to this level. The Paradise of nourishing abundance is cheapened into a sugary gingerbread house. Another not insignificant deformation includes the replacement of female figures with males. Thus, Gretel's sisters, who had at least been reflections of the Triple Goddess, are replaced by a boy who plays an insignificant and trivial supporting role to the active heroine.

### ***Cinderella, the third example of the first group***

*A father has a second wife who has two daughters. She treats his daughter from his first marriage poorly. Her stepdaughter is responsible for dirty housework and is ridiculed with the name "Cinderella." Each day, Cinderella goes to her mother's grave, where she has planted a hazel branch, and weeps.*

*When the prince gives a ball in order to find the most beautiful daughter in the land for his wife, the stepmother and the two stepdaughters attend. Cinderella is forced to stay home and pick lentils from the ashes. However, a flock of doves helps her finish the job quickly and she returns to her mother's grave. A golden dress falls from the hazel bush. Cinderella, clad in the dress, proceeds to the ball and is the most beautiful young woman there. The prince falls in love with her, but, at the end of the ball, she flees in order to get home before her*

*stepmother arrives. The prince then organizes two more balls. Each time, Cinderella attends and afterward runs home. The third time, one of her little golden shoes gets stuck in the tar-covered steps to the castle. The prince finds it and seeks the beautiful young woman whose foot the shoe fits. The stepsisters, one after another, manage to make the shoe fit through a deceptive maneuver, but the talking doves expose them. The prince finally puts the shoe on Cinderella's foot and finds his true bride.*

In this fairy tale the Underworld journey that initiates the crown princess is minimized even further; still, other characteristics are better preserved. The constellation of three sisters, with the youngest and prettiest being the legitimate crown princess, is classical. However, the principle of ultimogeniture is overshadowed by the patriarchal legal situation, which is already instituted. Cinderella's right of inheritance is called into question because the father has a second wife with daughters. He is therefore the one who bequeaths. By the matriarchal principle of ultimogeniture, however, it is the mother alone who bequeaths, and it is she who acts from the Other World to assist Cinderella in asserting her right to the crown and estate. Cinderella, however, is no longer a sovereign princess; she becomes a princess only by marrying a prince. Thus she is defined, both as a daughter and as a wife, by her relationship to the male. In matriarchy, a prince with a crown and an estate was an impossibility.

The episodes that reflect Cinderella's relationship to her natural mother run contrary to the patriarchalization of the fairy tale; they are filled with beauty and magic and make the entire story possible. Cinderella's mother is "dead," which means that she lives in a grave, a house in the Other World. From there she actively supports her daughter, which makes her appear to be more the abundance-giving woman in the Other World than a dead mortal mother. She lets the magical tree that Cinderella planted as a twig grow out of her grave. Magical birds as talking doves are perched in its boughs. Gold and silver rain down on Cinderella from the twigs of the tree in the same way that they came from the arched gateway for Gold Marie in the Mother Holle story. Here, too, the gold clung to her like a dress. Thus, Cinderella goes to the ball radiating the symbolic value of life's abundance and is therefore magically irresistible to the prince. The golden dress is a graceful symbolism of abundance and the art of weaving, an authentic matriarchal art form. (Even Gold Marie sprang into the well for a lost spindle and received it from the hand of Mother Holle). At the close of the fairy tale, the talking birds ensure justice, a development that fig-

ured prominently in the Mother Holle story. The fact that Cinderella's mother dwells in the Other World, sending the doves and the tree as magical symbols of love, gives evidence that Cinderella's mother is the Great Goddess, even though she does not appear in person as she does in the other two fairy tales. In one version, she at least reaches out from the grave to personally give the magical objects to her daughter. This is a relic of her personal active involvement, just as Cinderella's daily tarrying and mourning at her mother's grave is a relic of what had once been the Underworld journey. Planting the magic sapling, too, is a relic of matriarchal arts which the crown princess had to learn, because here, as in the other two fairy tales, Cinderella's real task is not to clean house.

In the end Cinderella is the triumphant, rejuvenated image of the Goddess herself: she is red as a rose and white as snow, because this was how her mother had wished she would be born (in one variation); she has golden hair and is posed in golden garb; she is encircled by fluttering doves, Aphrodite's birds, which, in turn, are themselves a reflection of the fallen Goddess of Love.

### **One Eye, Two Eyes, and Three Eyes, *the last example of the first group***

*Two Eyes is a beautiful maiden with an evil stepmother. She has to do all the work for the stepmother and her two daughters. The step daughters are ugly: one of them has but one eye and the other has three. The stepmother and stepsisters refuse to feed or clothe Two Eyes and ridicule her the day long. Two Eyes is finally banished to a deep forest where she lands in the middle of a meadow with an amicable animal, either a goat or a cow, who nourishes and clothes her. She discovers jewels between its horns. The animal sometimes appears in the shape of a white woman who comforts the maiden. The stepmother learns of Two Eyes' animal, hunts it down and has it slaughtered. Two Eyes buries the animal's tail, horn, and its "little shoe" in the meadow as it had advised her to do before it died. A tree with golden apples grows on the spot. One day, a prince passes by the tree and wants an apple. The stepsisters try, but cannot pluck any. The branches, however, bow down to Two Eyes and she gives the prince what he wishes. He is astonished by the miracle, considers Two Eyes to be a sacred woman, and takes her with him to his castle to make her his wife.*

The fairy tale's plot is similar to that of *Cinderella*, but is, in many respects, even earlier. Here we encounter the presumably "dead" mother in person: it is the white woman in the other-worldly meadow, who

loves to appear frequently in the shape of sacred animals. Whether she is woman or animal, she adopts a very maternal attitude toward the daughter: she feeds, clothes, and comforts her. In addition, she gives her wonderful treasures, which means she initiates her daughter.

This inspires, as in the case of *Mother Holle*, jealousy on the part of the malformed stepsisters. Here we see those who caused the death of Cinderella's and Two Eyes' mother: the evil sisters and the stepmother. They simply slaughter her. Two Eyes, like Cinderella, has no choice but to tend the grave and weep. Here, too, a magical tree springs from the grave. Even the mysterious "little shoe" that came to be a standard component of *Cinderella*, plays a role here. In the end, it is gold from the magical tree that provides a solution: the golden dress in *Cinderella*, and the golden apple in *One Eye*, *Two Eyes*, and *Three Eyes* that guarantees eternal youth and joy. Finally, Two Eyes is left holding the apple, which she gives the prince—yet another reflection of Aphrodite. The prince's reverent perception of the transfer of the apple of love from such a hand, and of the woman giving it, is justified, for she is none other than the crown princess, the sacred daughter of a divine mother.

## SECOND GROUP: THE GIFT-GIVING WOMAN IN A DEATHLIKE STATE

The following fairy tales are included in this group: *Sleeping Beauty* (KHM 50); *Snow White* (KHM 53); the group of fairy tales, *The Twelve Brothers*, *The Seven Ravens*, *The Six Swans* (KHM 9/25/49); *Little Brother and Little Sister* (KHM 11), and *Maid Maleen* (KHM 198).

In each of these fairy tales the abundance-giving woman is no longer a superhuman power from the Other World, but rather the heroine herself, who is temporarily put into an otherworldly, goddess-like state. The mother-daughter relationship recedes into the background in order to demonstrate the complete development of the heroine, for she is now both daughter and mother. Only in this combined role does the full breadth of riches acquired in the Initiation become apparent.

The fairy tales of this second group demonstrate exactly this narrative pattern if we also refer to their second sequences (the second sequences are often contained only in the variants): the heroines are, at first, imperiled daughters who later become crown princesses and queens (like the heroines of the first group). As queens they find themselves in dangerous states of absence, such as sleep, muteness, or "death," in which they become the mothers who give abundance and deliver the undelivered. Now they are elevated to the rank of Goddess.

### *Sleeping Beauty* the first example of the second group\*

*Sleeping Beauty* is a princess who was given twelve magical gifts at birth by twelve good fairies. An evil thirteenth fairy prophesied that she would prick her finger on a spindle in her youth and die.

The young maiden *Sleeping Beauty*, while curiously wandering through her father's castle, climbs into the highest turret, an abandoned tower, where she finds an old woman—the evil fairy—with a spinning wheel. While trying to spin, the maiden pricks her finger and falls into a deathlike sleep. All living things in the castle fall asleep with her.

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\* *Sleeping Beauty* is also known as "Briar Rose"

*While she is sleeping, a rose hedge gradually grows around the castle and covers it completely. No one can penetrate it, and the princes who try, die in the sharp thorns. After Sleeping Beauty has slept for a hundred years, yet another prince arrives, intent on rescuing her. As he approaches the castle the rose hedge opens. He makes it to the turret where he finds the beautiful princess and wakens her with a kiss. Now all in the castle wake up and Sleeping Beauty's marriage is celebrated.*

Sleeping Beauty has the traits both of a Maiden and Love Goddess: she is young, has golden hair and is encircled by the crimson flower of love, the rose. She is a true fairy tale Venus. She experiences her journey into the Other World as a one-hundred year sleep, caused by the Underworld Goddess. The Goddess appears this time in the shape of a black fairy who is less bound to her location, but manifests the attribute of destiny, symbolized by the spindle (or spinning wheel). Spinning and weaving are ancient matriarchal arts and, at the same time, symbols of women's power over fate, for they spin and weave not only threads, but, mysteriously, also life itself. The idea of the three Fates, goddesses who spin the thread of life, pass it on and then sever it, emerged from this concept. The most well known of them are the three Greek Moiren (or Parzen) and the Germanic Norns. The spinning Goddess of Fate is equally prevalent in the fairy tales of magic; nearly every figure we can identify as a Mother Goddess is associated with the spinning or weaving motif. Thus, Gold Marie had to drop her spindle in the well and spring in after it, to get to Mother Holle: it was the thread of fate which showed her the way. In the end, it was returned to her in one piece by Mother Holle. Cinderella is wrapped in the woven fabric of the Other World, the golden clothes that shape her fate magically and wondrously. In the fairy tales we observe from the second group, spinning and weaving become increasingly significant.

Just as it was for Gold Marie, the spindle is the catalyst for Sleeping Beauty's Underworld journey: she slumps into an otherworldly state. We know from Celtic mythology that sleep, accompanied by a leap in time—any long period of time that passes, leaving no mark upon the involved person—always signifies death in the sense of a journey through the Other World. This Other World is the paradisaical world of the fairies or the goddesses. Whoever returns from there has access to their miraculous powers. That is what happened to Sleeping Beauty. While sleeping, she transforms herself into a mother of goddess-like fertility. Not only does she surround herself with succulent and prolific flower hedges, she furthermore gives birth to children in her sleep.

In no way does the prince awaken her with a simple kiss (as the sentimental version of the brothers Grimm wants us to believe). There are older variants that include the second sequence of the fairy tale: Here, Sleeping Beauty does not awaken until much later, after the birth of her twins, "Moon" and "Sun," a girl and a boy. Sleeping Beauty now has the traits of the mythical Creatress-Goddess, who even creates the primary heavenly bodies. Not until she has created her daughter and her own descendant in "Moon" can she awaken, because it is the children who wake her by sucking out the deadly spindle (poison thorn, flax thread, needle, etc.) from her finger. In this version the roses refuse to bloom, logically, until Sleeping Beauty is awake.

Here we have a direct correlation to the concept of the hibernating Fertility Goddess that is widespread from India to Europe. She awakens in spring, and with her awakening, all of life bursts into bloom. This reminds us that while Kore/Persephone was in the Underworld, all the vegetation died and returned to life in spring, and also that Inanna/Ishtar's Underworld journey, like that of many oriental goddesses, had a similar result. Modron/Morrigan, of the Celtic mythology, demonstrates striking similarities with Sleeping Beauty. She, too, sleeps in paradisaical gardens, or on otherworldly islands which are often surrounded by red flames rather than red roses; in one instance she sleeps as Morgane the Fairy in the middle of Mt. Etna's fires (compare also the tale of the mountain of Venus, see *Tannhauser*). The volcanic mountain and its subterranean fire, or the island surrounded by a wall of fire, or the paradisaical garden full of lush flowers which cannot be entered by any normal means, all of these are places that signify the Underworld or the Other World. When she is asleep in her rose covered castle, Sleeping Beauty actually sleeps in the Other World; here she resembles the Underworld Goddess, or the "abundance-giving woman in the Other World," which was most clearly expressed in the person of Mother Holle, in the first group. Mother Holle, too, lives underground and controls rain and snow. (In the tale of *Regenrude*, the protagonist sleeps beneath the earth, herself a Gray Goddess, while the vegetation burns. Not until she is wakened by two children does it rain, and the vegetation returns.)

Sleeping Beauty thus embodies both roles: that of the imperiled daughter (crown princess) and that of the abundance-giving Mother Goddess. The previous generation of goddesses is present at the beginning of the fairy tale in the figures of the white and the black fairies, who bless her with gifts (Initiation). At the end of the story, the future generation of goddesses is present in her daughter, "Moon," who will again undergo the same process of transformation. Sleeping Beauty's

destiny is in itself illustrative of the completed cycle of Initiation, Sacred Marriage, and Death and Return, which guaranteed every matriarchal woman who went through it the same magical powers possessed by her mother before her. In this constellation, the kissing prince plays a subordinate role: he is nothing more than a necessary collaborator in the Sacred Marriage. In the same sense, the brother, "Sun," will later become partner of the sister, "Moon." The idea that the prince may save the sleeping Goddess is patriarchal blasphemy; rather, she saves him.

### *Snow White, as the second example of the second group*

*A queen wishes for a girl child as "white as snow, red as blood, and black as ebony." The mother names her new born daughter "Snow White," and then dies. The child is given a stepmother who is beautiful and proud and jealous of Snow White's superior beauty. She tries to have the princess killed, but Snow White escapes deep into the forest where, after traveling a great distance, she is welcomed to the house of seven dwarves. The stepmother locates Snow White through the magic mirror. She disguises herself and goes to the house of the seven dwarves and attempts to kill Snow White with a stay lace, a poison comb, and a poison apple. Not until the third attempt does she succeed: Snow White falls to the ground dead with the piece of the apple in her throat. Upon returning home, the dwarves are unable to awaken her, but, because she is so beautiful, they place her body in a glass coffin. They mourn her death and bring the coffin to the summit of a mountain. A passing prince falls in love with her and wishes to take her and her coffin home to his castle. On the way there, someone lets the coffin fall. As it shatters, the piece of poison apple is dislodged from Snow White's throat. She awakens, rides with the prince to his castle, and celebrates their marriage.*

The matriarchal symbols are even more pronounced in this fairy tale: According to the wishes of her mother, who disappears into the Other World as soon as she is born, Snow White appears in the three sacred colors, which are her mother's gifts to her daughter. She is white, red, and black, like the Triple Goddess herself, and is thus closer to perfection than all the queens (closer than even Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella). No wonder, then, that she surpasses all beauty. Furthermore, she is more closely entwined with the magic life and death apple than any of the other heroines. In the Indian variant, she is born of the apple. In another version she is not called Snow White, but rather "Little Pomegranate." The pomegranate is the classical fruit with which

the Goddess induced her *heros* into a trance-like passion, or death. She is herself killed with a white-red apple at the hands of her female adversaries, who were originally her two older sisters (variation). Before she reawakens, she proceeds through a chain of transformations which encompass the most splendid forms of vegetation: a sunflower, a mango tree, and several fruits (India). She is also the imperiled crown princess, as well as the Fertility Goddess, withdrawn from the world and ever-resurrecting.

In order to recognize this pattern in the plot, we need, as we did for Sleeping Beauty, the second sequence of the fairy tale. Snow White receives the prince's love in her sleep, too, and gives birth to two children, who awaken her by sucking the ring of sleep from her finger. Her transformations from one plant to another that accompany her awakening demonstrate what she has brought with her from the Underworld of her sleep. She slept in a place no less mysterious than where Sleeping Beauty slept, which was a glass coffin. That is, however, merely a miniaturized version of the true location: She sleeps in the Glass Mountain or the Glass Castle (Austrian version). The Glass Mountain, guarded by elf-like beings, is a place of the Other World in Celtic mythology. Morrigan/Morgane had the habit of surrounding her resting places with an impenetrable wall of air, supplying the illusion that she was resting in a castle of glass. A stranger could observe her, but in no way reach her. This was usually fatal because he would fall in love with her and lose himself in a trance, or in a lover's frenzy. This was evoked by her beauty, which lay in the fact that she wore the three colors, white, red, and black (skin, lips, hair). This sacred triad of color had such an irresistible effect on the *heros* that they grew mad with love, even at the sight of drops of blood in the snow, as when they shot a raven in winter, for example, or at the sight of a hunted, bleeding magpie on the marble (Italian version). These three colors were a magical symbol of the Triple Goddess herself. The same thing happens to the prince at the sight of Snow White.

The elf-like beings escorting Snow White are the dwarves who themselves reside in the subterranean region and retrieve "treasures" (fertility) from the womb of the Earth. Dwarves and giants are both "Alben" or "elves" and are relics of ancient fertility *heros*. In Celtic mythology they are the fairy kings, graced with charm and magical powers, who are the constant companions, guardians, and defenders of the divine fairies. In this mythology, they never are cute or silly figures, but rather are formidable opponents to the intruding knights. In *Snow White* they have been shrunk to wretched Lilliputians which provide the backdrop for the prince to enter the scene in a leading role. But, as is the

case in *Sleeping Beauty*, the dormant maternal Goddess is not awakened by the prince, but rather by her two children. Perhaps these were called "Moon" and "Sun," too, because these mythical constellations appear in the Oriental version of the fairy tale. Here, though, they do not represent the children's names, but rather the mysterious heavenly bodies Snow White calls upon to learn of her fate. The evil sisters and the stepmother consult them to find out where Snow White is hiding. The talking stars are the prototype for the talking mirror appearing in the German version, and are, as the mirror later became, determinants of fate. This is not far removed from what Snow White's children do in the second sequence: they awaken the mother from her deathlike sleep, reviving her and all of nature, thereby exerting a positive influence on fate.

**The Twelve Brothers, The Seven Ravens, The Six Swans,  
*the third example of the second group***

*A beautiful maiden has several brothers who have been transformed into animals (horses, bears, ravens, swans, etc.) by a witch or an evil stepmother. The sister, though, is in a position to deliver them from their plight by weaving human shirts for them from grass or nettles (or other materials that are difficult to work with). She must complete the task within one year without saying a word, or laughing, or crying. She retreats to the wilderness and commences her work.*

*A young king out hunting stumbles upon her by chance and falls in love. He takes her home to his castle where she becomes his queen and bears a child. She remains silent for the duration and continues with her work.*

*On account of the queen's silence the king's mother (or the stepmother, or the evil stepsisters) accuses her of practicing witchcraft. The king denies the claims. Then the evil mother kills the child before the queen's eyes, but not a tear falls from them. The queen is blamed for the infanticide and the king condemns her to be burned to death at the stake. She is burning just as the period of a year draws to a close, and the animal-brothers happen by. The sister throws them the human shirts, they are freed from the charm, and extinguish the flames. The sister, then, explains everything, the king accepts her back, and he punishes the evil mother.*

The second sequence is apparent in these three fairy tales and is a precise pattern of action that leads from the marriage to the return of the heroine. Together with the first sequence, they show the same precise pattern of action we see in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*, and

their variations: the imperiled daughter becomes crown princess/queen (first sequence), then ascends, after suffering a dangerous journey in a deathlike state, to the role of savior and giver of life (second sequence). They therefore assist us in answering the question in the fairy tales: who saves whom?

The wealth of relationships enjoyed by the heroines in these three tales encompasses not only that of daughter and mother. They are, furthermore, sisters to the brothers. This, in fact, is their primary role, as is evidenced by their undying commitment to their brothers throughout their travail. They are prepared to sacrifice wealth, crown, reputation, the love of their mates, even their children and their own lives, in the effort to rescue their brothers. The sister-brother relationship is so profound here as to far outweigh conjugal bonds. The reason for this lies in the fact that the relationship between the sisters and brothers in these fairy tales is matriarchal, while the relationship between the heroine and her mate, the king, is patriarchal. In matriarchal society, the sister, as crown princess/queen, plays a central and active role, for she owns everything: the land, the crown, fertility, the matriarchal arts, and the sacred knowledge. All this she has won during her Initiation. The brothers, on the contrary, own nothing and are nothing; they stray through the forests hunting prey and are not even truly human, for they appear in skins or feathers, while the sister wears self-made clothing. These brothers lack even a shirt on their backs!

Being children of the same mother and belonging together, as are "Moon" and "Sun," the sisters apparently took pity on their brothers in their wretched state. Thus, they started caring for them, because the brothers were totally dependent on them. The sisters transformed them from the wild state to a more human one by giving them clothes and making them cultivated residents of their homes. The brothers received from the hands of their sisters their first civilized way of life.

There were, however, more conservative mothers who shunned the amelioration of some men's situations. Without ado they quickly took away their sons' clothes and draped them again in animal skins and feathers, and banished them to the wilderness. The sons, now burdened by the curse of their mother ("witch"), were enchanted and had not a clue as to how to escape their animal figure and to again become human. This is both the setting of our three fairy tales and their cultural-historical background.

The sisters in the tales are the third generation goddesses (Mother Holle was the prototypical first generation goddess and Sleeping Beauty the prototypical second), and they did not leave things as they were. Like the adult twins born to the Sleeping Goddess, they took care of

their brothers because from birth onward they were destined to become their partners. Like Sleeping Beauty's daughter, they bore an astral symbol on their foreheads—a golden star indicating their supernatural powers. They employed a counter-magic that they had learned from their mothers, in their brothers' interests. If the mothers had woven for them animal caps, the sisters now wove human shirts for them. If the mothers plunged them to their death—being enchanted into animal form was a symbolic representation of human death—the sisters voluntarily participated in their brothers' departure from the human realm by entering the deathlike state themselves. They remained silent and void of any expression of human emotion, as did their animal brothers. Thus, they appeared to be mentally and emotionally dead, but through this process they won the power of redemption, to reawaken life. This demonstrates that they possess not only those traits ascribed to the reawakening Fertility Goddess (child), but also those of the enchanting Goddess of Fate. Like the Goddess of Fate, the sisters cast spells, revoke them, and deliver from death through their art of weaving.

This behavior and indeed this entire constellation is held suspect by the patriarchal king. Therefore, he seeks to put himself in the foreground as partner because, according to his way of thinking, that which is not supposed to be, cannot actually be: that the crown princess' own brothers are actually her legitimate mates. Because the sister will not abandon her matriarchal rules, she is found guilty of the most mortal sin: infanticide, a word preferable to uttering the word "incest." In the eyes of the patriarchal king, they are one and the same thing. She is, then, immediately transported to the place where all "witches" belong: the burning stake. What is brutal about this is that it concerns nothing more than mere physical death or pure destruction, whereas all the forms of death we have until now encountered in matriarchal thinking were always transformations into a higher life. The orchestration of these processes rested in the hands and magic of the woman. That is to say, it is she who saves the man from death, not the other way around. She delivers him first of all in the form of her brother.

### **Little Brother and Little Sister, *the fourth example of the second group***

*An evil stepmother casts a spell transforming the little brother into a deer. As a result the little sister mourns and leads the deer around with a golden leash. A king encounters the beautiful maiden with the deer,*

takes her home and makes her his wife. After a year, the young queen has a child.

The evil stepmother is jealous of her good fortune. She comes with her ugly daughter into the castle and kills the young queen as she is bathing, then she foists her daughter upon the king as a substitute bride. But the dead queen returns three times during three nights to tend to her small child and the deer, until finally, the king discovers her and speaks to her. She suddenly comes back to life and tells him the whole story. Both the evil stepmother and her daughter are punished, but not before they remove the curse that turned the little brother into a deer. He again assumes his human form and the witch is sentenced to death.

Here again we see the adult twins, descendants of the Sleeping Goddess. As in earlier scenarios, the maiden is by far the older and more intelligent (compare Artemis and Apollo in the Greek mythology); thus, the tale would more appropriately be titled, *Little Sister and Little Brother*. She progresses through the same developments as the imperiled crown princess who, in the end, does become queen (first sequence). Afterward, she appears in a deathlike state as the mother, and finally saves the passive little brother (second sequence). But the fairy tale is, compared with the previous group, somewhat misrepresentative, because the decisive motives, the deathlike state and the removal of the brother's curse, have been severed from one another.

And yet, the little sister is stronger than the witch because she can even feed her child in the state of death (her stay in the Underworld), like Sleeping Beauty and Snow White. She cares for her little brother the way the other sisters care for their animal brothers. This is how the brother is finally delivered from his plight, and the way the heroine returns. What is particularly clear here is the rivalry motif, which already plays a significant role in *Snow White* and the sister-brother tales: the little sister is pursued by the evil mother ("witch"), in order to foist onto the king an impostor bride (evil sister, her daughter); the two of them then orchestrate the death of the heroine. In the sister-brother tales and in *Snow White*, the evil stepmother or the evil mothers-in-law are the rivals. In both cases, they wanted the heroine dead.

This patriarchal rival motif is a perversion of the Triple Goddess, because the rivalry usually involves three sisters. Whether they represent the Triple Goddess as a single entity, or as her severed individual components, the sisters who in the matriarchal mythology had demonstrated solidarity among themselves, are now engaged in a constant battle against each other. The combative constellation of the step-

mother/evil sister versus the crown princess is only a variation in which the eldest sister with hostile maternal tendencies appears in the form of a witch and conspires with the second sister, who adopts the role of the false bride (compare *Mother Holle* and all the sister-brother tales). In *Snow White*, all that remains is the figure of the stepmother. In the original version, the rivals were two older sisters (compare also Gretel's older sisters instead of Hansel). Always these sisterly rivals trigger the crown princess' Other World journey, or at least her deathlike state, thereby inadvertently sending her to her true fate: to return again as the Goddess. Each of them, too, is a potential candidate for the role of false bride when the marriage comes around. This correlation is quite clear in the French tale, *Magic Bird*, in which the two older sisters attempt to prevent the marriage of the king to their younger sister. Once she has become queen, they see to it that she is ousted by accusing her of being a witch. The second sister, then, as a false bride, is foisted upon the king. The queen is not saved until her daughter, with the star on her forehead, appears. Thus, the second sequence belongs necessarily to this type of fairy tales of magic, and it is best preserved in the sister-brother tales. Besides *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*, all of the tales related to *Cinderella* demonstrate the second sequence. It is told that Cinderella, after her marriage with the prince or king, was deposed by the intrigues of her evil sisters and had to live in the wilderness (Mecklenburg version). In the meantime her sisters behaved as false brides; not until the king later finds her is she recognized and rehabilitated.

### ***Maid Maleen* or *The Princess in the Cave*, the last example of the second group**

*Maid Maleen* has incensed her father, the king, through her disobedience. She has refused to marry the man he selected for her to marry. Because of it, the father incarcerates her in a cave deep in the earth where she languishes for years. In the cave grow nettles from which *Maid Maleen* weaves beautiful, artistic tapestries during her long imprisonment.

Meanwhile, her fiancé prepares to marry her stepsister who has crept into his favor during *Maid Maleen's* absence. Because the stepsister is either ugly or pregnant, however, *Maid Maleen* must don the bridal clothes and go to church in her place. On the way, she addresses the brook which had been witness to her engagement, and the house of her father, which had fallen into ruin, etc., putting her words into verses. After they have left the church, the groom asks the false bride stepsister

*what she had said in her verses, but she knows nothing about it. In this way he discovers the deception, and in the end marries his true bride.*

The characteristics familiar to us from the second group are also present here: the princess finds herself in a burial mound, that is, in the Other World or, at the very least, in a deathlike state. Here she weaves unique and complex fabrics. In addition, the rivalry motif between the true and the false bride plays a central role. After she has been repudiated, Maid Maleen returns, and of her own initiative uses that return to her best advantage.

Nevertheless, the internal context of these typical characteristics has been destroyed in this fairy tale. We saw the seeds of deformation already in *Little Brother and Little Sister*, where the little sister did not consciously enter the deathlike state in order to deliver her brother. Because it was treated only as a bathing accident, she does not, in the end, possess the magical power of redemption; the witch must perform the magic herself. In the case of *Maid Maleen*, her imprisonment in the cave is inexplicable, because she has no one to deliver from enchantment. The tale lacks the first sequence, and begins immediately with the deathlike state. Perhaps, though, there was someone to save—for example, the fiancé—because Maid Maleen is weaving, in her deathlike condition, the magical tapestries that ensure deliverance, as happens in the sister-brother tales (compare the animal-groom tales, which also demonstrate this context). In the end, the false bride appears and is subsequently banished through poetic verses, which originally were magic spells, because the animal-groom has presumably been delivered from his enchantment on the way to the church. In the present tale, however, all the effects of the princess' stay in the Other World are lacking. The idea that the way through Death and Return as a means of acquiring magical powers and of emulating the Goddess has been completely lost.

This is not surprising in light of the princess' parents' generation. Her hereditary descent is no longer represented by a powerful, generous, otherworldly Mother Goddess, but rather by a patriarchal father king. The lost meaning of the fairy tale has been supplanted by another one: there is but one reason for Maid Maleen's banishment to the grave and her extreme hardship, and that is her disobedience of her father's will. We can understand, then, why the time in the cave is so despairing, because there is no opportunity for her to acquire magical powers in the course of such an "Underworld journey." The matriarchal woman who could not be completely conquered by the

patriarchal partner (compare the sister-brother tales) is finally defeated here by the patriarchal father.

As such, this fairy tale represents the last point in the development of the goddess-structure. It has been robbed of its matriarchal content and of its original structure. It is more of a romance than a fairy tale and was thus incorporated into many of the romantic epics of the European Middle Ages. Certainly, its configuration was attractive to the Christian Middle Ages: the woman, no longer a goddess, is but a martyr under the regiment of a patriarch.

# THIRD GROUP: FAIRY TALES OF THE REDEEMER

I include in this third group the following fairy tales: *The Frog King* (KHM 1) as well as all related tales of animal enchantment (for example the animal-groom tales), *The Four Ingenious Brothers* (KHM 129) and all related tales, and *The Brave Little Tailor* (KHM 20).

In contrast to the two groups analyzed thus far, the *heros*-structure dominates the foreground here. The *heros* is now the princess' partner, and because he is not always her brother, the relationship to the mate takes on added significance. We see a clear distinction between two stages: the *heros*-structure with an active woman and a passive man, and the *heros*-structure with an active man and a passive woman. The first of the two types of tales is still authentically matriarchal. The second, however, demonstrates the increments of transition to patriarchal tales and therefore illuminates for us the rules of transformation applied to the fairy tales.

## ***The Frog King, the first example of the third group***

*A princess is playing with a golden ball in the garden of the castle near a well. The ball falls in the well. Suddenly, a frog emerges from the water and promises to retrieve the ball for the weeping princess if she will take him with her to the castle. She promises to do so, but runs away as soon as the ball is again in her possession. The frog follows her and, at her father's bidding, she is forced to let him in, let him eat from her golden plates, and finally, to take him to her sleeping chamber. When it turns out that he wants to sleep with her as well, she grabs him angrily and throws him against a mirror. After the thundering crash, a handsome young king stands before her. She has broken the spell. In the end, the two of them marry.*

The Grimms' version of this fairy tale is extremely truncated at the beginning and at the end, and made infantile concerning its symbolic meaning. No wonder: it is an explicitly erotic fairy tale.

The tale, in its entirety, encompasses many more episodes. In the beginning there are three sisters who go to the well to perform a difficult task (i.e., procuring clear water from the well). The youngest is the only one who succeeds, for she does not run from the monster that emerges from the well. She makes empty promises, he makes the

water clear for her, she goes away and becomes crown princess. But the monster follows her (and the episodes described above ensue). After their marriage, though, the prince disappears and the three sisters commence a painstaking search for him. The youngest wanders throughout the cosmos (to the sun, the moon, and the wind) to find him. When she finally does, he has a false bride (presumably one of the sisters). The true bride then buys three nights from the false bride, during which the prince finally recognizes her. In another variation she is disguised as driver on the nuptial coach prepared for the prince and the false bride. The breaking of her heart is heard by the prince, which leads to her discovery and the happy end.

Here we see again the classical structure of fairy tales in which the crown princess, after the Initiation and her Sacred Marriage, is placed in an imperiled state. She is an active participant in her journey to the Other World (Heaven) and discovers along the way her true strength, and the deep knowledge of revoking the spell cast on the enchanted man. (His delivery actually belongs at the end of the story, as is the case in many of the animal-groom tales).

The man shares a fate similar to that of the brothers in the sister-brother tales: he falls under the spell of an old witch because he refuses to marry her ugly daughter (compare the three sisters). In most variants of the animal-groom tales, he is transformed into a wild and vagrant animal (wolf, bear) which lends expression to his transience and homelessness. His plight becomes dire when the witch turns him into a monster, one of her grotesque and symbolic Underworld animals such as the dragon, for example, which makes even more meaningful the deathlike state experienced by the *heros*. In this fairy tale, then, the prince is not really a cute little frog, but a gigantic snake (in the Slavic, Scottish, and Holstein variants). He is a dragon-like Underworld serpent from which the two older sisters are justified in fleeing, from terror. The well, too, is no idyllic spot in the castle garden, but an eerie place. Not even in *Mother Holle* was it portrayed as a picturesque village well, but rather as the gateway to the Underworld. The same is true of the well in the tale of the frog king, where, in the Scottish version, it is the well at the end of the world (compare the world well beneath the ash tree Yggdrasil in the Germanic mythology, where the three Norns are perched spinning the threads of fate). The prince, transformed into a dragon, is banished into this world well, the corridor to the Underworld. There, where he can be no further removed from humanity, his "death" is perfected.

Against this symbolic background the fairy tale takes an entirely different set of dramatics. It begins when the young, beautiful princess

arrives at this eerie place of the world well. She is the future redeemer, but is not yet in possession of the necessary capacities. She has been sent to retrieve pure, untainted water, clear as a mirror, which she reckons to find at the well of the Fate Goddesses. It is not difficult to comprehend what that means: she is destined to acquire magical cultic knowledge (mirror motif), which is knowledge of the fateful cycles of human lives. At the well, however, she encounters the primordial world snake (dragon), which as partner to the most ancient Creatress-Goddess, is a phallic symbol. The monster pursues her, not to eat from her golden plates or to play with her, but to have what all primordial snakes have wanted from their goddesses since the mythology emerged: the act of love. And it is high time it happens, for the world well has almost gone dry. Should it do so, it would mean the end of life on Earth (Gaelic variant, compare also the Greek, Cretan, Sumerian, and oriental Snake Goddesses).

The crown princess is destined to celebrate the act of love as magical Sacred Marriage, because through it, the whole land is awakened to renewed fertility. Our princess in *The Frog King* seems to be slow in grasping this. Indeed, she still has a lot to learn, though she is by no means the spoiled, squeamish maiden the Grimms' version portrays. She unequivocally demonstrates attributes of the Goddess. She approaches the well, for example, without fear, even playing with a golden ball, which is, in fact, the golden apple that symbolizes Love, and Death and Rebirth. It is what all heroes crave. The golden ball, or apple, belongs to her because she is no less than the fairy tale sister to Aphrodite. Since she drops her golden apple of love in the well, intentionally or not, it is not surprising that the phallic prince considers this an invitation for him to follow her to her sleeping chamber in the castle. There, he wants to "play" with her, but she thinks he is "too wet and slippery." The enchanted prince finally grows impatient with her hesitancy and jumps into her bed, whereupon she throws him against the mirror. The mirror motif implies her sudden realization of what the whole thing is about: she is suddenly in possession of the magical knowledge of love. At the very same moment the magic spell is broken and a beautiful king stands in the monster's place. The second sequence shows that her knowledge must be deepened before she can effect the total redemption of the man.

Thus we see that the action in this fairy tale adheres to a more clearly defined line than the sister-brother tales. Here, there is no additional male partner (king): the enchanted and rescued man is himself the mate to the princess. This matriarchal conjugal relationship shows yet again in the sister-brother tales that the patriarchal kings are

superfluous. They can think of nothing better than to accuse their mysterious mistresses of witchcraft. The phallic prince in this tale knows exactly what is the matter: replenishing the world well. Thus, he is a participant in matriarchal cultic knowledge. The similarities between his role and that of the brothers in the sister-brother tales also lead us to conclude that he was originally the princess' brother (compare *The Enchanted Foals*: the prince transformed into a dragon is the youngest brother of the princess). The chain of events occurring between the witch, the princess, and the brother-mate, requires no third party whatsoever. In these figures we encounter the classic matriarchal constellation of mother-daughter-brother.

Finally, if we consider this fairy tale (like all the animal-groom tales) from the man's perspective, we discover that not only the crown princess passes through the stages of Initiation, Sacred Marriage, Death and Rebirth, in order to partake of the powers of the Goddess, but her partner, the *heros*, does so as well. The enchantment of the man into an animal by a sinister crone is a state of death imposed upon him by the Goddess, in her Death Goddess manifestation. The removal of the spell by the beautiful princess, on the other hand, is through the benevolent Maiden Goddess. With her he celebrates the Sacred Marriage as soon as she assumes the form and attributes of the Love Goddess. (The chronological order in which this occurs is irrelevant, because the thinking is cyclical; furthermore, the second sequence is introduced with the prince's being transported into a deathlike state, after celebrating the marriage). Here, it becomes quite apparent who rescues whom: it is the woman in the figure of the Goddess or crown princess; she releases him from his inhuman state of existence by marrying him. In this manner she introduces him to her house, her possession of fertile, cultivated land, human clothing, and a fine appearance. At her side, he, as the *heros*, becomes the central focus of the human community and thereby is made exempt from any form of expulsion or abandonment. His rescue rests in his having been made human by the woman. He becomes worthy of her by virtue of his love. She, however, does not need rescuing by him, for she is reawakened from the deathlike state by the Goddess, her mother. Moreover, the deathlike state she experiences is never a brutal expulsion, but rather a mysterious union with the Goddess, whom she soon begins to resemble. The basic notion of our tales, then, is (because all of their symbols transmit this message): just as the woman assumes goddess-like stature through her mystical union with the Goddess, the man becomes more human through his erotic union with woman.

### **The Four Ingenious Brothers, *the second example of the third group***

*Four (or more often, three) brothers are engaged in a contest for the hand of a princess, who has many treasures. Since she can marry only one of them, she subjects them to a test: they are to gather magical objects and she will take as her husband the man who has the best one. The brothers travel to distant lands. They get a flying carpet, a mirror (or telescope) that reflects anything they want to see, and an apple that cures illness and awakens life. While they are away, they see in the mirror that the princess is mortally ill. They fly to her side on the flying carpet and heal her with the magic apple. The contest thus remains undecided because all of the magic objects are needed for her rescue.*

*A second contest follows that usually consists of a fight with a dragon. The youngest brother, the one who has brought the apple, conquers the dragon, but is wounded in the battle. An impostor hero takes advantage of the hero's unconsciousness to sever the head of the dragon, and presents himself to the princess as the winner. Because of her promise, she is forced to marry him, but on the day of the marriage the true hero arrives with the dragon's tongue as evidence of his deed.*

*The princess recognizes him, recovers his reputation, and marries him.*

This fairy tale is known internationally under countless titles, but it always demonstrates, with the same degree of clarity, the three phases of the *heros-structure*: Initiation, Sacred Marriage, and Death and Return.

The Initiation, here, though, differs from the one in *The Frog King*, which was more ancient and consisted only in the delivery of the golden apple, and where all the ensuing events were experienced and tolerated passively by the man. Here, he is initiated by tests of skill that afford him a more active role. The brothers must employ all their talents and perform tasks of wooing to win the crown princess, who possesses great "treasures" (divine fertility). Originally, these brothers were not strangers, but the princess' own brothers, who battle over who is to become the brother-mate and thus also the Sacred King. This was a custom among many matriarchal peoples and often even a "law," although no "laws" as such existed in matriarchal societies. In an analogy to the principle of ultimogeniture applying to the daughters, the youngest brother is always the victor among the brothers.

The princess herself determines what the tasks of wooing are. Only in patriarchalized versions does the father take on this responsibility. Of course, she devises tasks as close to impossible as can be: The acquiring of magic scarves, coats, or carpets, for example, are extraordinarily difficult tasks for a man, because ultimately, they are in the possession of the matriarchal Goddess of Fate, the subterranean weaver. Correspondingly dangerous is the manner in which he acquires them. Even more difficult is the acquisition of the magic mirror, or telescope, for this is a symbol of secret wisdom (compare the magic mirror in *Snow White*). This was cultic knowledge, strictly guarded by the priestesses of the Goddess. Any man wishing to obtain it must engage in a "contest of wisdom" against the priestesses (women seers, fortune tellers), which he would, in all likelihood, lose, and pay for with his life. The most difficult and especially devious of the tests of cleverness, is the acquisition of the magic golden apple (magic herb) that has the capacity to restore life. Originally, this was in the crown princess' possession; she only passed it to the one she chose to be her mate. In this manner she eliminated the element of chance from the selection process and decided herself the *heros* to whom she would give the apple. The giving of the apple meant his reign, love, and death (compare *Frog King*). For this reason, the contenders in the fairy tales often complain of the "haughty" princess and her impossible, unfair tasks of wooing. It probably seemed impossible to them that they should be expected to acquire what they could get only from her. And it seemed unjust that they should engage in a contest when she could dictate, according to her whims, who would win. Still, the tasks she posed were ideally suited to fostering their cleverness and imagination, and to inspiring them to heroic deeds. This put them in a more active position than they had been in before. In later occurrences of this type of fairy tales, the brothers' active role became an independent plot and adventure for its own sake. These heroes increasingly become the focal point of the tales while the princesses are relegated to passive roles. This was made easier by the fact that the princesses so often fall into their magical sleep-states, the significance of which is unrecognized by the heroes, because this knowledge, too, was part of secret cult knowledge. Because the princess is asleep in a deathlike state, the heroes feel forced to seek the apple elsewhere in some distant place, in order to finally awaken her from her undesired rest (compare also *Snow White*). This is how the man became the "redeemer" in the fairy tales.

In the most recent versions of this very popular fairy tale, one of the tasks of wooing is the fight. In the oldest form it was a passive acceptance of a gift of grace; in the second oldest form it was the test

of cleverness, knowledge, or courage. The fights conducted as tasks of wooing were originally fights against the Goddess' mythical animals, especially the third and most frightening of them—the primordial serpent, or snake dragon—symbols of death that threatened to devour the hero. It was a struggle against the Death Goddess herself in her animal form (compare the mythology surrounding Marduk and Tiamat). This is the standard for judging the degree of extreme difficulty posed by this task of wooing. Usually, the man fights until he is nearly dead (wounded, unconscious), enabling the false hero to steal proof of having slain the dragon. In slaying the dragon, though, the man really does become a folk *heros*, because he has conquered the sinister aspect of the Goddess, death; he does not fear it, and suddenly she appears before him in the grace of her Maiden aspect, the beautiful princess. This is the slaying of the dragon as viewed in a matriarchal context and system of values. However, within a patriarchal system of thought it assumes a different meaning: here, the hero, in slaying the dragon, conquers the feminine principle itself. That is valued as a laudable feat, for it is accompanied by an indiscriminate equating of the feminine with lust, evil, the sinister, and the chaotic. Such simplifications are indicators of cultural decline.

As is congruent with the *heros*-structure, the Sacred Marriage follows the Initiation or the slaying of the dragon. It occurs whenever no false hero has interceded. If, however, he becomes involved, his mendacity precipitates the second sequence of this type of fairy tales, in which the hero, like the heroine in the previous group of fairy tales, is deposed into a self-alienated state of existence.

In the case of the man, however, this is not the goddess-like state of "death," because he cannot emulate the Goddess. Instead, he is alienated from all he holds precious: his name, his deeds, his fame. His heroic deed is kept secret and attributed to someone else, while he, on the other hand, goes without recognition and is degraded. For him, as *heros* before the eyes of his public, this implies a deathlike state because he does not exist as *heros* in the minds of his people. At fault, of course, was the "witch," appearing this time in the shape of the dragon, who has induced this subtle spell. He is forced to depart to distant lands and is once again outcast, homeless, and wild. His complete transformation into the prototypical human male, the *heros*, was unsuccessful.

Again it is the princess who delivers him from the "witch's" spell (banishment). Based on circumstantial evidence, or rather on her own infallible power of intuitive judgment, she exposes the false hero and acknowledges the *heros* by instituting his rights. She brings about his

glorious Return, and the cycle is completed with the belated celebration of the Sacred Marriage. The princess thus marries a brother whom, to a large degree, she has chosen above the rest: he is hers by virtue of the principle of ultimogeniture, of his victory in the contest, of the slaying of the dragon, and of her own personal affinities. Because all these things coincide, the relationship is considered perfect.

### **The Brave Little Tailor, *the last example of the third group***

*A tailor takes his measuring stick and strikes dead seven flies that are perched on his jelly sandwich. Afterward, he embroiders the inscription "Seven at one blow!" on his belt and wanders throughout the land presenting himself as a hero.*

*In the forest, he meets a giant who doubts that the tailor is so strong. The giant challenges the tailor by squeezing a stone until water drips from it; the tailor tricks the giant by squeezing softened cheese; similarly the giant throws a stone so high it can barely be seen; the tailor deceives the giant by releasing the bird he has caught, which flies away "so high" that it does not fall back to earth. The tailor dupes the giant a third time in an incident involving the removal of a tree and the giant finally retreats in defeat.*

*As soon as the tailor arrives in a city, he is paraded as a hero before the king who promises him his daughter if the tailor can free his country from the three monsters plaguing it. The tailor vows to do it and captures, through an act of trickery, first a unicorn, then a wild boar, and finally, he tricks two giants into killing each other. He is thus allowed to marry the princess. But, after the wedding, she discovers he is but a mere tailor. Still, he manages to deceive her, too, and the whole thing has a positive outcome for him.*

Even the title, *The Brave Little Tailor*, sounds like a parody of the heroic ingenious brothers; the fairy tale is, in fact, actually a parody of the matriarchal *heros-structure*. The *goddess-structure* has here vanished from the scene. Inasmuch as it is a parody, it parades before our eyes the process by which the fairy tales have been patriarchalized.

The *heros-type* passed through several transitional stages before it degenerated into the brave little tailor: we learned that one of his tasks of wooing was the acquisition of magical scarves, or webs, or tapestries of fate. But he did not, by any means, possess the necessary knowledge for making them. In later developments, his task was made easier as he no longer had to strain himself to obtain them from women, but was able simply to make them himself. He becomes, then, "ingenious" in its full meaning, because he has supplanted the weaving Goddess of

Fate and has himself become the weaver in control of his own destiny. There is one fairy tale, *Anait*, in which the prince's ability to weave saves him when he is in danger. It helps the princess recognize him as the true hero because he weaves a message into the tapestry he makes while he is imprisoned.

Another transition occurs when the feminine arts of weaving (magical scarf), knowledge (magic mirror), and fertility (magic apple) are overshadowed by masculine arts, which, without exception, are martial arts. Once the warlike setting has been established by the initiation fights, the heroes become more and more committed to battling animals and human adversaries. In the end, they escalate into all-out slaughters.

Running parallel to the ever-changing characteristics of the *heros* is a consistent devaluation of the princess. In the end, he is a hero in the ordinary sense, usurping most of her activities, while she gradually fades into a passive, beautiful figure in the background. In case she does manage to achieve something, it is of little significance: the princess' demands are considered "arrogant" or "haughty." If she is still in possession of her magical powers, she is considered dangerous, evil, and false. Her malice is exorcised in an act of purification: Thus, in the fairy tale of the *Bride Catcher*, a suitor and helper of the prince kills the dragon who is engaged in a mysterious liaison with the princess; in some versions, the suitor even decapitates the princess herself. She is seen, then, to be a perfidious snake-like princess or "venomous" maiden. The only thing that can prevail over her is the firm confederacy of two men joined in alliance. As the story goes through the transition from fairy tale to farce, the female figures are stripped of every thread of goodness: cleverness in a woman is attributed to "feminine wiles"; patience and generosity is "woman's patience." If, on the other hand, she rebels and resists, it is a "woman's scorn." We encounter the most pronounced expression of this attitude in the oriental (Arabic) parodies, which can no longer be considered fairy tales.

Let us return our attention, though, to *The Brave Little Tailor* which also represents a last point in the development discussed here. In this story everything is taken to the point of absurdity. The *heros*, who, in the last instance was, at the very least, still a princely weaver, here becomes a puny and pathetic anti-hero, the tailor. He no longer sews his own fate with his thread, but rather the skirts and waistcoats of the bourgeoisie. His rise to glory is not, by any means, fueled by courage, but rather by deception and trickery.

The tailor is put to a number of tests, all of which are initiation fights: in the beginning, he wins a battle—he kills seven flies with one

blow. Thereafter, he proclaims himself a hero and goes out into the world. Seeking to win the hand of a princess in possession of great treasures, he engages in a series of contests as prescribed by the *heros*-structure: He begins with a triple test of his skills, which is, at the same time, a test of his cleverness, because the tailor outwits the giant (cheese, bird, tree). Afterward, he is paraded as a hero before the princess' father, the king. But, as was the case in *The Ingenious Brothers*, there is no decisive outcome in the test of his skills. Instead, it leads to a new series of fights (second sequence): the tailor is to free the empire of the monsters ravaging the country. These "monsters" are none other than the Goddess' three mythical animals, symbols of her calendar, which are said, in this case, to no longer provide for the land's fertility, but rather to "ravage" it. The patriarchal assessment of the Triple Goddess is clearly discernible here.

The mythical battles are waged against the unicorn, the boar, and two giants. The unicorn is a symbol of the Maiden Goddess, the Virgin, meaning a strong, young, and independent Amazonian woman, not a chaste little girl. The unicorn is regarded to be so strong in the myths as to be insuperable to all but the Virgin (Amazon), whom it pursues voluntarily: her strength alone is sufficient to tame it. Later, the symbol of the Unicorn and the Virgin was superimposed on Jesus and Mary, but, as we know, they are themselves remnants of the Goddess and her son. The unicorn, inasmuch as it has a rich symbolic function and is the Maiden Goddess with her son, also represents the Sacred Marriage of Goddess and *heros* (the horn as phallus), the eternal Rebirth of the *heros*, and thus the principle of life itself. In the tailor's tale, though, this profound symbol, laden with meaning, is handled with reckless disregard: the unicorn bores into a tree with his horn (phallus) and remains trapped there like a fool.

The second animal he battles is the boar, symbolically associated with the Woman Goddess as nurturer in her second aspect. We are familiar with the golden boar representing Freyr, the Fertility God, and the brother-husband of the Love Goddess Freyja, in the Germanic mythology. The boar is perpetually slaughtered, eaten, and immediately returned to life—a symbol of copulation and abundance, gifts of the Goddess of Fertility. But, our little tailor ridicules this far-reaching symbol as well: he imprisons the heathen boar in a Christian chapel, which results in its final and inexorable death.

The battle against the two giants replaces the slaying of the dragon in this example. Giants, in the context of matriarchal mythology, are elves and powerful fairy kings who are aesthetically pleasing and in possession of magical powers. Because of their intelligence and close

affiliation with the fairies, they are stronger than all the heroes; battles against them, regardless of whether they take the shape of giants or of dwarves, are always horrendous. But, since these heroes are generally stamped with a patriarchal imprint, the elves (giants/dwarves) are increasingly ridiculed into fools. First, it is said that they inevitably lose the battles. Later, the fairy dwarves are reduced to quaint, shoddy Lilliputians, and the giants to stupid, ugly dolts. This is how they are presented to us in *The Brave Little Tailor*. As guardians of the fairies, they often adopted the role of the dragon, in human appearance, who protected the fairy; thus, in the myths and in this fairy tale, battles with giants replace the slaying of the dragon. (The dragon is, as we know, associated with the Goddess in her third aspect).

The tailor's fight with the giants, who appear here in pairs, is no longer a tragic event, but rather comical, since the giants kill each other. In *The Brave Little Tailor*, this is, on the one hand, an indicator of their immeasurable strength, and, on the other, of their immeasurable stupidity. The contrast between this and the heroic slaying of the dragon in the previous type of tales (*The Ingenious Brothers*) could not be greater.

What is conspicuous about the calendar symbols of the Goddess here is that they are all male. Each of them represents a patriarchal partner of the Goddess, attempting to prevent the tailor from reaching her in the form of the crown princess. But, once he has "liberated" the princess from all the male rivals (son, *heros*, guardian), nothing can stand in his way. He meets the princess and she turns out to be a spoiled little Barbie doll who has no interest in the hero. This is a parody on the Sacred Marriage as an element in the *heros*-structure. However, the fact that her wishes are no longer paramount is an indicator of the extent to which she has been diminished: the barter is negotiated exclusively between her father, the king, and her future husband, the tailor, who, unlike the patriarchal brother-husbands, is literally a stranger. No matter how vehement her protests, she has no choice, because she has become the inanimate deposit on a bargain struck by her father.

The Death and Return motif, in the form of the princess' non-recognition and ultimate recognition of the *heros*, is as follows here: The princess is awakened in the night by loud-voiced dreams of the tailor about the tools of his handiwork, and wonders whether he is of equal rank. This is a parody of the *heros*' degradation because she recognizes the tailor for who he is—the false hero whom she cannot denigrate. He is the false hero because he is not a prince, and has obtained her hand in marriage in an underhanded way, employing trickery and deception. As she is not in a position to expose him, the princess is

duped a second time. He threatens her by again feigning strength. After that, no one dares question his rank. In patriarchy, the false hero, the deceiver, obviously represents the pinnacle of civilization: Not only is he the conqueror who can maintain his victory through force, he can bathe the true hero, the matriarchal *heros* whom he has deposed, in scorn and derision. Thus, this fairy tale, which is in fact no fairy tale at all, is a mere story without a happy ending. It ends, rather, in tragedy.

# TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE FAIRY TALES



Let us now examine the structures we have found in the fairy tales in their chronological sequence, since typical transformations in these structures reflect and make visible the typical changes that were made in the social structure.

We can see from the table of transformations included here why the fairy tales are so invaluable to the field of matriarchal research: In them we can recognize the different stages of development of matriarchal societies. The first structural level corresponds to the stage of the early matriarchy, in which the mother-daughter relationship predominates. It is represented, on the mythological and cultic level, by the Goddess-princess relationship. In terms of inheritance, it meant the bequeathing not only of material goods, but of cultic knowledge and magical powers. The characteristics of the all-encompassing Fertility Goddess prevail here; her home is the Underworld, or Heaven as the Other World; this Goddess has not yet adopted the traits of the astral Moon Goddess. The crown princess (daughter) goes through phases of Initiation in which she is withdrawn from the world. This enables her not only to become like the Goddess, but to be identified with her; she also wins the abilities of the Goddess. At this stage, male partners play no role whatever; they are not even considered to be "impregnators" because pregnancy is seen to be the result of eating a fruit, or viewing a magical sign (compare *Snow White* whose mother sees three magical drops of blood in the snow). The central action revolves only around mother and daughter. Problems arise through older sisters or surrogate mothers who seek to deprive the crown princess of her inheritance. This shows the patriarchal deformations.

The second structural level shows the stage of development in which male partners do play a role, but only as brothers: In the matriarchal society, the man was seen only as the son of his mother or as brother to his sister. Only as such did he have rights in the clan. According to the rules of matriliney, the mother's clan was the only one he was related to, for according to the matriarchal view, it was the mother alone who formed the body of a child. The biological father played absolutely no role in the matriarchal clan; he was considered a guest and not related to the children. Neither the idea nor the term of

Transformation	<p><b>1st Group: "The Abundance-Giving Woman in the Other World" (KHM 24, 15, 21, 130)</b></p>	<p><b>2nd Group "The Gift-Giving Woman in a Deathlike State" (KHM 50, 53, 9, 25, 49, 11, 198)</b></p>	<p><b>3rd Group: "Fairy Tales of the Redeemer" (KHM 1, 129, 20)</b></p>
1. Structure	<p><b>The Goddess and Her Princess (Mother-Daughter Relationship):</b></p> <p>Names and symbols of the Triple Goddess: "Mother Holle," "The Little Red Mother"; direct mother to daughter inheritance. Mother Holle to Gold Marie, Little Red Mother to Gretel, Dead Mother to Cinderella, Cow Mother to Two-Eyes; Underworld journey as Initiation of the daughter: Gold Marie and Gretel; Principle of Ultimogeniture: three sisters in <i>Mother Holle</i>, <i>Hansel and Gretel</i>, <i>Cinderella</i>, <i>One Eye</i>, <i>Two Eyes</i>, <i>Three Eyes</i></p>	<p><b>The Princess and Her Brother (Sister-Brother Relationship):</b></p> <p>The sisters save their brothers in <i>Twelve Brothers</i>, <i>Seven Ravens</i>, <i>Six Swans</i>, <i>Little Brother Little Sister</i>; Principle of Ultimogeniture by the mention of the brother-spouse (here only implicit); the youngest brother often plays a special role in the enchantment</p>	<p><b>The Princess and Her Brother (Sister-Brother Relationship):</b></p> <p>(none, Hansel a later figure)</p>
stage of early matriarchy	<p>Symbols of the Triple Goddess (implicit in the sister-brother tales: <i>Sleeping Beauty</i>, <i>Snow White</i>; indicated by the sisters (sister-brother tales); direct mother-daughter-inheritance relationship: the fairies-Sleeping Beauty, dead mother-Snow White (her wish for the three sacred colors=gifts); Underworld journey (deathlike state) as Initiation of the daughter: <i>Sleeping Beauty</i>, <i>Snow White</i>, all the sisters, <i>Maid Malen; Principle of Ultimogeniture: compare evil "stepmothers" and "false brides"</i></p>	<p><b>The Princess and Her Prince (Goddess-Heros Relationship):</b></p> <p>Goddess-heros relationship (implicit in the figure of the prince in <i>Sleeping Beauty</i>, <i>Snow White</i>, <i>Maid Malen</i>); brother-husband as heros in all sister-brother tales (motif of the animal groom as a Death/Return process)</p>	<p>Symbols of the Triple Goddess: Princess in <i>Frog King</i>; Underworld journey (deathlike state) as Initiation of the daughter: princess in <i>Frog King</i> (the well at the end of the world); the threatened/dying princess in the <i>Four Ingenious Brothers</i> (death-like state); Principle of Ultimogeniture: three sisters in <i>Frog King</i> (variant)</p>
2. Structure	<p>stage of classical matriarchy (further development of the relationships of the early matriarchy)</p>	<p>Goddess-heros relationship: the prince in the <i>Frog King</i> (motif of the animal groom as a Death and Return process; the gift of the apple as Initiation; brother-husband as heros in <i>Four Ingenious Brothers</i> (Initiation as a contest or battle, banishment of the hero as Death and Return)</p>	<p>The princess and her four ingenious brothers; Principle of Ultimogeniture through the mentioning of the brother-husband: the youngest wins the princess by winning a contest and slaying a dragon</p>
3. Structure	<p>stage of late matriarchy</p>		

patriarchalization:  
a) demonization  
of the Goddess

The Goddess as a "Witch" (*Hansel and Gretel*); the mother/sister as "evil stepmother" (*Mother Holle, Cinderella, One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes*); the true mother disappears into the background: "dead" mother (*Cinderella*), sisters as "envious stepsisters"

b) masculinization  
of the figures

Brothers instead of sisters (*Hansel and Gretel*); family father instead of family mother (*Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella, One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes*); parallel fairy tales with masculine heroes: *Iron Hans, Scabbard, Cinderella*

c) patriarchal  
instead of  
matriarchal  
relationship  
between mates

#### **Patriarchal Spousal Relationship:**

(none)

d) trivialization of  
the symbols

#### **Trivialization of the Symbols:**

The gingerbread house in *Hansel and Gretel*; housecleaning suppliants matriarchal arts (*Mother Holle, Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella, One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes*)

e) deformation of  
the structure of  
matriarchal  
mythology

#### **Deformation of the Myth-Structure:**

Loss of the second sequence: *Cinderella, One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes*

The Goddess as "evil fairy" (*Sleeping Beauty*); the mother as "witch" in all sister-brother tales and *Maid Malen*; the mother/sister as "evil stepmother" (*Snow White*); the true mother fades into the background: "dead" mother (*Snow White*), sisters as "jealous step-sisters"

Royal father instead of mother (*Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Maid Malen*)

Royal spouses in all sister-brother tales (they  
depose the matriarchal brother-husbands)

The princes' behavior in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*: a kiss or gaze instead of sexual union; the dwarves in *Snow White*; the brother as a deer with a gold neck bands (*Little Brother, Little Sister*); making the princesses into little children

Loss of the second sequence: *Sleeping Beauty, Snow White*; the man as redeemer: *Sleeping Beauty, Snow White*; separation of interrelated story parts: *Little Brother Little Sister* (no correlation between the return of the princess and the redemption of the brother); Underworld journey without its original matriarchal meaning: *Maid Malen* (making it into a romance)

The Goddess as a "witch" (*Frog King*), the dangerous princess (*Four Ingenious Brothers* and related tales)

Royal family father instead of mother (*Frog King, Four Ingenious Brothers, The Brave Little Tailor*); male usurpation of matriarchal arts (he receives magical objects in the *Four Ingenious Brothers*); the gifted male weaver replaces the female; men's instead of women's arts: combat and slaughter (*Four Ingenious Brothers, The Brave Little Tailor*)

The prince is no longer a brother-husband (*Frog King, Four Ingenious Brothers*); the false hero is husband (*The Brave Little Tailor*)

A frog replaces the primeval snake, a castle fountain replaces the world well, a golden ball replaces the magic apple (*Frog King*); bumping giants (*The Brave Little Tailor*); infantilization of the princesses; the *heros* as tailor (*The Brave Little Tailor*)

Loss of the second sequence: *Frog King* (princess searches for transported prince; "false bride" in animal-transformation fairy tales; masculinization of the myth-structures: *Four Ingenious Brothers* and related tales (Initiation of the *heros* instead of the *heros*; deposing of the *heros* by "false heroes"; deposing of princesses by "false brides"; passive instead of active princesses); parodies of the myth-structure: *The Brave Little Tailor* (Initiation-struggle, Marriage, and Return made ridiculous; the Princess as object) (*Schwank*)

“biological fatherhood” was known in matriarchy. The social fathers for the children of the sister were her brothers. Thus, the relationship constellation of mother-daughter-brother is therefore classic matriarchal.

The second structural level reflects precisely this constellation. Here, the sister is second only to her mother in terms of bearing responsibility for the fate of her brothers. Brothers were the only males with whom their sisters were legitimately engaged in an emotional relationship. The sister’s caring and love are not directed toward the mate, who is considered a stranger in a transitory relationship to the clan, but toward the brothers to whom, as partners, they devote all. The brothers, in turn, make every effort to aid and serve their sisters. Originally, these brothers were not only relatives, they were also brother-husbands who not only fulfilled the social function of paternity, but were in fact biological fathers. Either way, according to the rules of matriliney, they were considered the closest relatives of their sisters’ children because they all shared the same clan mother.

Because the matriarchal kinship bond between sister and brother was so intimate and served to complement the mother-daughter relationship, the sisters were obligated to deliver their brothers from peril. The enchantment of the brothers always happened when false sisters or mothers sought to deprive the crown princess of her rights, because it was necessary first to eliminate her indispensable brother assistants.

At the third structural level, the relationship between the sexes is again altered: The classical matriarchal constellation of mother-daughter-brother has been replaced by the *heros*-model, in which the brothers compete against each other to win the favor of the sister, the crown princess. This represents a still later matriarchal development. The solar *heros* now resides with the more differentiated lunar Goddess, the Moon Triad, a constellation typical of the matriarchy at its latest stage of development. The *heros*-model is most clearly defined as we see it in the contests and battle scenes. The selection of the *heros*, originally determined by his accepting a gift from the Goddess, and later determined by his success in a contest, is finally characterized by his victory in a fight (especially against the dragon). In some fairy tales, the elaborate scenery that once surrounded the *heros* is reduced to a brief interlude in which the prince still performs *heros*’ tasks. In *Sleeping Beauty*, for example, he forges his way through the deadly thorn hedge; in *Cinderella*, he finds the right bride; even in the weakest examples, he at least has the function of disentangling the knot (e.g., *Snow White, One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes*).

Lastly, the transformations leading to the fourth structural level show the patriarchal deformation of these ancient symbolic and behavioral patterns that created the fairy tales as we see them in the written literary tradition. The first deformation is the silencing of the figures' mythological names and through that, their simplification into typical characters. This is immediately followed by a demonization of the Goddess that is taken, in some cases, to absurdity. The true and giving mother recedes more and more into the background. The rule of matriarchal inheritance is completely destroyed by putting in the mother's place a domineering, kingly father who has complete command. The princess must obey him, even when it involves sharing food from her golden plates (*Frog King*). Similarly, brothers, stripped of any apparent function (Hansel), are introduced in the place of sisters. They differ substantially from the "enchanted brothers" who, as brother-husbands or *heros*-brothers, had many functions. The process of deformation affects them in two different ways. Where they continue to function as biological brothers of the princess, they come under the incest taboo, so that the sister-princess must take a patriarchal mate. This makes the loyalty of the sister's support of her brothers an inexplicable motif; she is simply said to be a "very good" sister (second group). When the "brothers" are considered to be related to each other, but not to the princess they woo, the incest taboo is satisfied, but this has the function of placing the princess in the background. After all, what kind of heroic deed should she perform for husbands who are strangers? The "brothers," on the other hand, become the luminous pivotal point in the plot. Their appropriation of matriarchal arts is just one consequence of this deformation (third group). Through this manipulation, the matriarchal relationship to the mate is also destroyed and is replaced in all fairy tales by a patriarchal relationship: Now it is the princess who is rescued, elevated, banished, humiliated, accused, or sentenced to death by her husband according to his arbitrary will, so that in the end, she is belittled into an absolutely ridiculous role (compare *The Brave Little Tailor*). In most cases, the husband directing these events belongs to a higher social class: He is king; she is a common maiden. In *The Brave Little Tailor* the irony lies in the reversal of this pattern, where it again works to the detriment of the princess. The property owner and heir is now clearly the man who mercifully elevates the woman to his position. She is immediately banished, however, as soon as she is suspected of having any ties to matriarchal ideas or practices (accusation of "witchcraft"). In *The Brave Little Tailor*, she has nothing to do but to be given as an inanimate object by the father to the husband.

There is also an element of parody in the trivialization of symbols: The princesses who, in the beginning, were magical and powerful, are portrayed here as little more than curious girls (*Sleeping Beauty*), naively fickle (*Snow White*), or capricious (the princess in the *Frog King*). These simple maidens are constantly doing housework (e.g., Gold Marie). Erotic acts are reduced to a kiss or a gaze or "playing" in the bedroom. Accordingly, the symbols surrounding these infantilized figures are: a golden ball; a sugary, sweet gingerbread house; a hoppity, though somewhat slippery, little frog; an enchanted little brother as a deer led on a golden leash; clever, but helpless and sentimental garden dwarves. Here, the brothers Grimm have diligently lent expression to the common doll-like version of woman.

The most drastic alteration, however, is evident in the deformation of the original structure of matriarchal mythology which occurred both consciously and subconsciously as the old meanings and context were forgotten. An example of a deliberate deformation is the parodistic *The Brave Little Tailor*, a masterpiece of absurdity. The loss of the second sequence may have been less intentional, and yet it is conspicuous that in the process, the most mythical of the fairy tale figures—Sleeping Beauty and Snow White—are robbed of their cosmic dimension. In the case of the others, the only goal worth pursuing seems to be marriage. Once the princesses have lost their cosmic dimension, the major portion of their activity becomes superfluous. Thus, even though they have done nothing to earn the privilege, the princes find themselves in the position of being the final rescuers and redeemers. It is precisely this second sequence that often includes the loss of the consort and the princess' subsequent mythical-magical search to find him (*Frog King*, *Cinderella*). It is, then, no coincidence that the elimination of the second sequence is auspicious for the male, but results in a reduction of the woman's role.

We have seen how these deformations ultimately lead to the dissolution of the fairy tale of magic, reducing it on the one hand to pure romance (*Maid Maleen*), and to a comical parody on the other (*The Brave Little Tailor*). Whenever male figures occupy the heroic patterns originally associated with the crown princess, the cultic daughter of the divine mother, a third process of dissolution becomes apparent, and the fairy tale tends to become a romance: The focal point is now the Initiation of the hero, not the heroine, and the Marriage of the *heros*, not the princess; the Death and Return motif, originally the retreat and return of the princess who has been supplanted by the "false bride," is now suppressed in favor of the Death and Return of the *heros*, who has been deposed by the "false heroes." Here we see the entire

mythical structure masculinized and filled with different, less magical, and at the same time more aggressive contents (compare *Four Ingenious Brothers* and related fairy tales). This is yet a step further towards the epic forms that report almost exclusively the deeds and adventures of male heroes, while the ladies provide only a beautiful, varied background. At first glance, this is indeed what the epics in the Indo-European region represent, whether it be that of India, Greece, or of Central Europe. At second glance, however, the ancient structure of matriarchal mythology is apparent in these stories, too. And that leads us to astonishing insights.

For this reason, in the third portion of this book, an analysis of the epics has been risked. It was not necessary to go as far as India with this analysis, therefore the epic tradition that is most geographically and historically close to us was selected: the epics of the European Middle Ages. In this example we will see how the matriarchal mythology continues to permeate even relatively late literary forms and is exposed here to different kinds of deformations.



## PART III

# THE MISTRESS AND HER HERO





## MATRIARCHAL MYTHOLOGY IN THE MEDIEVAL EPIC

The long epoch of matriarchal cultural development had, and continues to have, profound effects on patriarchal societies. These effects are nearly impossible to discern, however, in our patriarchal histories that rush from one high point of patriarchal society to the next; for example, from classical Greece to the Roman Empire, and from there without pause to the High Middle Ages. Such historiography ignores the fact that the intervals between these "high points" cover a greater span of time than the incidents themselves: Classical Greece embraced only seventy years, the Roman Republic but one hundred before it became preoccupied only with conquests, and the High Middle Ages only an infinitesimal fifty years. These short phases of patriarchal cultural flowering are embedded in a great expanse of time that historians label, somewhat disparagingly, the "early period," or the "late period," and are then dismissed with a brief few pages of history. It is these "interludes," however, that demonstrate very clearly the very different foundation upon which these much prized historical summits rest, and how precariously. Their rapid decline attests to just how tenuous their moorings were. Indeed, in this version of history all that rises to such a high point is always paradigmatically patriarchal, and therefore claims the entire attention of our historians.

If we return these disparaged "early" and "late" periods to their proper places and treat them as crucial, then we quickly recognize that "matriarchal opposition" in patriarchal societies was the fundamental philosophy and way of thinking for most people, and not, as presented, the resistance of scattered remnants of isolated mountain peoples or oppressed farmers. Furthermore, the patriarchal states and ideologies required considerable effort to establish themselves in their midst. Also in those "late" periods, the matriarchal ideals and practices that had been temporarily suppressed, rapidly resurfaced, only in a changed form. The conclusion is simple: that in between these high points they were never abandoned, but were only concealed, in the way a strong current of water runs partly above and partly below the earth.

To fully illustrate this point, however, is not the task here, for that would require a complete re-writing of history. A few brief references will have to suffice. According to the history books, the "early period" of Greece comprises the Minoan culture in Crete, which, as we know, was a classic matriarchy that had little in common with patriarchal Greece. In calling it an "early period," the implication is that it was

only an imperfect forerunner to patriarchal Greece. This represents the height of arrogance and ignorance, because it was, in fact, a complete and independent culture in its own right. Hellenistic Greece, the cosmopolitan so-called "late period," was an epoch in itself, too, one in which the ancient Mother Goddess cults, as that of Demeter of Eleusis, possessed more influence than classical Greek philosophy. The same is true of our image of the Roman "early period," which was not at all Roman, but an independent phase of the matriarchal Etruscan culture. It was on this foundation that Roman culture parasitically developed until classical Greece, with its deformed gods, came to their aid. The Roman "late period," on the other hand, spanning the rise of the Roman Empire to its collapse, was characterized by the flowering of the Egyptian-Oriental cults in Rome (Isis, Cybele, Orphean Mysteries) and by influences coming from the matriarchal deities in all its provinces. This is valid especially for the provinces, with the Gallians, Celts, Britons, and Germans, who by no means were clearly patriarchal, as we have seen, but had, during their merger with the matriarchal pre-Indo-European peoples, partially absorbed their culture and thinking. These people resisted both militarily and culturally many attempts at integration by the Roman Empire, until they brought the spread of this empire in their regions to a standstill (e.g., at Limes in Germania). As the Roman Empire was collapsing, they were the first who called for its final demise, and advanced to the ancestral Roman territories in Italy and the Mediterranean. Accordingly, only transitory impressions of the Roman legal norms, and later, the Roman-Christian state religion, were left in the central and western European region.

On this ambivalent soil, the medieval European feudal states of the Middle Ages developed. They were neither politically nor culturally the sort of patriarchal-Christian union as monumentally styled by our history books. Originating in the turbulent period which destroyed the Roman Empire, these resistant forces were far from placated in the new feudal states, which was an epoch in itself, and not "the early Middle Ages." The ancient conflict between matriarchy and patriarchy smoldered further and did not become resolved during the short time of the High Middle Ages. Even after 1200, in the so-called "late Middle Ages," the suppressed political powers and religious cults had reappeared, changed only in form. Instead of warring kings with their tribes, they were now the unruly farmers' revolts and the obstinate citizens' resistance; instead of "heathen cults," they were now the cults of "witches" and "heretics." The only way for the early medieval church to establish itself was by absorbing local "pagan" deities and seasonal

festivities, whereby the former were sainted and the latter absorbed into the "Christian ecclesiastical year." To maintain its position, the church conducted merciless persecutions at the beginning of the modern era. This is not a sign of strength, but instead indicates profound unrest and danger to the church's role as an ideological power. The feudal system of estates was an equally unstable institution. It was previously unknown to the free farmers, was then forced upon them in the High Middle Ages, remained steeped in controversy, and was abolished in the course of violent social upheaval. The *Civitas Dei*, the hierarchical Christian state of estates envisioned by the church fathers, remained the utopian dream of Scholastic philosophers of those days, and of historians up to today, who have transformed, in retrospect, the history of the Middle Ages to suit their own patriarchal-Christian ideology.

Just how sharply and consciously the conflict between matriarchal and patriarchal ways of thinking continued in the High Middle Ages will be demonstrated through examples from medieval literature, which served a very important ideological function in the royal courts. An especially brilliant example is the courtly epic, for here we see the significance of the ancient subject matter partially misconstrued into its exact opposite; this clearly illustrates the intention behind this deformation. This is not, however, immediately apparent. It is discernible only when we consider the medieval epic poetry in the same way we have thus far read the myths and fairy tales—in the light of a social-historical analysis.

The following literary groups of medieval epics will be analyzed: (1) the Arthurian epic, (2) the Tristan romances, and (3) the Nibelungenlied, with special emphasis on the Siegfried tales. These epics contain precisely the structural pattern present in matriarchal mythology that refers to their most ancient origin. Other groups of medieval epics such as the so-called "heroic poetry" (e.g., Rolandslied, Hildebrandslied), are excluded because they do not demonstrate the structural pattern of matriarchal mythology, and because they are thoroughly patriarchal. The analytic method is the same as that applied to the fairy tales: it differs from the comparative search for single motifs or isolated symbols so common to literary scholarship. The concern, rather, is with rediscovering the complete structure in which motifs and symbols are systematically arranged, and which cannot, therefore, be combined arbitrarily: these combinations are fixed. We have to find them always in their own complex order, because individual motifs or symbols, taken by themselves, tell us nothing. This has the advantage of excluding interpretive speculations that rage in studies

of literature about the fairy tales and epics. Motifs and symbols, when taken in their structural order, do not lend themselves to arbitrary interpretations; the systems of symbols and sequences of action determine their range of significance, and therefore limit the scope of possible interpretations.

It is just this structural character of mythology that makes it possible for us to rediscover the matriarchal pattern, not only in the religions of different peoples, but also in the chronological layers, distortions, and misinterpretations it sustained during the later patriarchal epochs. Moreover, as we witnessed in the case of the myths and fairy tales, these deformations follow certain recognizable rules which reveal them as systematic distortions of the fundamental structure. These rules in turn illustrate the social function of the distortions—to discredit the matriarchal world view by making it into a patriarchal ideology. As in the myths, a critical element opposing the new social order sparkles in the epics, which indicates a possible direction in which the utopian idea is going.

# THE ARTHURIAN EPIC

The primary sources of the Arthurian epic are in Britain (England, Ireland, Scotland, Brittany). This epic, permeated with Celtic mythology, revolves around the battles fought by the legendary Celtic King Arthur against the invading Anglo-Saxons.<sup>1</sup> A long time passed before the Arthurian myths, first conveyed orally, became written fragments, and then developed into the broadly elaborated romances of the Middle Ages. During this development, the material accumulated many non-Celtic elements, among which were Christian-superimposed non-European elements. Thus, a search for a single source of this material is hence invalid. By confining this discussion to the Celtic tradition as a primary source, others are not excluded. Such a unilateral approach to the question of sources has caused much confusion in literary scholarship, and discredited studies of sources altogether, prematurely and unjustly. The problem is solved, namely, if two points of view are used: If one proceeds from structures, then one does not pursue single motifs in a chance manner among likewise chance sources, but discovers the parallelism of such structures in the Indo-European region. This parallelism precludes assigning any pattern of symbols to only one source. Furthermore, we have to consider the chronological sequence of structures from various sources. Different sources have, at different periods, acted upon the material, subjecting it to typical transformations, so that the end result takes on a very complex character. To recognize the way the transformation system changes structures is to make questions searching for a single or a dominant source unnecessary. Therefore, all available sources have been used to accomplish this analysis, for they work together like pieces of a mosaic to reconstruct the basic structures of this material and their transformations.

## 1.1 FIRST EXAMPLE: THE ROMANCE OF YWAIN

(according to Hartmann von Aue and Chrétien de Troyes )

### Summary (as written in the sources)

*Ywain is a Knight of the Round Table at King Arthur's court. Through an adventure at a mysterious spring, in which he mercilessly murders a king, he wins his widow, Laudine, her castle, and her land. After a prolonged stay with his new spouse, he wants to again embark on another chivalrous exploit. With a heavy heart, she agrees to let him go under the condition that he return after precisely one year.*

*At King Arthur's court, he suddenly remembers his promise and realizes that he has already missed the deadline. A female messenger from his wife, Queen Laudine, appears, and curses his infidelity, whereupon Ywain goes mad with agony and strays through the wilderness like a lost animal. Finally, he is healed by wise women who take pity on him. This is followed by the most important sequence of adventures Ywain must complete: In the course of these events, he rescues many innocents from monsters, giants, and ruthless masters, and restores justice to those who have been mistreated. In the end, he returns to Laudine's castle and becomes reconciled with her.<sup>2</sup>*

Discrepancies in this romance have given rise to different interpretations: For example, how is it possible that Queen Laudine marries her husband's murderer immediately following his death? And how can such a trivial infringement as Ywain's forgetting the deadline result in such severe punishment as banishment, insanity, and a series of difficult fights that he must win, without his having any bad intentions? Moreover, in the Chrétien de Troyes' version, despite all the suffering and effort, Ywain still does not secure Laudine's forgiveness. These discrepancies either cast doubt on the psychological cohesion of the figures, or place Laudine's character in a very negative light.

The medieval writers chose the latter interpretation to vent their ridicule on the female gender by illustrating Laudine's frivolous behavior (remarriage) and arrogant callousness (banishment of Ywain). Modern literary historians tend to view the discrepancies from the former perspective: that they emerged from an attempt on the part of the medieval writers to adapt mythical materials to the moral norms and psychology of their time. However, because the much earlier patterns of action and content were not readily erased, the writers' "psychological adjustments" of the material to suit courtly taste and "moral

rationalization" to accommodate Christian norms failed to work from a literary standpoint, creating the unavoidable "discrepancies" in the plausibility of the figures.

While this view approaches the problem, it does not yet get to the core. The question remains: Which mythological pattern is at issue here and what content does it include? Literary historians have not been able to provide a definitive answer to this question.

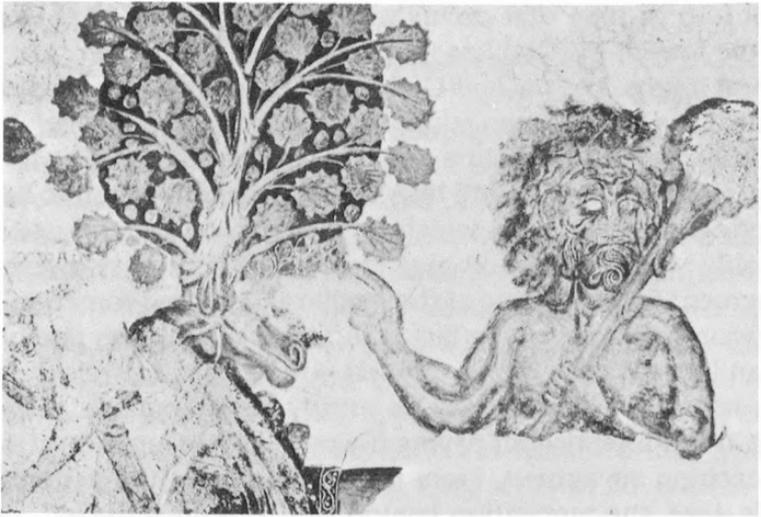
Let us consider the events surrounding Ywain more carefully: Laudine is not only a strangely superior person; she is also strangely withdrawn from the world. She resides in a wondrous land. Its location is not exactly clear; in older versions of the tale, the land cannot be reached through a spring, but through a lake. Both, however, point in the same direction: Magical springs are guarded by fairies who use them to influence weather, especially rain; these fairies are Fairies of Weather. Also, the wondrous land of the fairies is situated at the bottom of lakes; it is the subaqueous Other World of the Goddess, who is here manifested as a water fairy. The same becomes evident in variants containing a mysterious well: This well always represents the world well from which the weather comes, and at the same time is the point of entry into the Elysium Underworld of the Goddess (as Goddess of Fate). Laudine's name is as telling as the localities themselves: the name "Laudine" identifies her as the mythological sister of "Undine," the classical water fairy (in lakes, wells, springs), who is also a descendant of the ancient Underworld Goddess. A third evidence is Laudine's female messenger who is named "Lunete," which reminds us, not coincidentally, of the German-Roman Goddess, "Frau Luna," the moon.

The fairy Laudine has a consort who watches, as she does, over the order of the atmosphere before Ywain disruptively intervenes; he is the Storm Knight, her "king." Ywain is forced to battle him if he hopes to conquer the spring. The battle has three phases in which the Storm Knight changes his shape at will and manifests himself in always new facets as the *Heros* of Atmosphere: His first encounter with Ywain occurs as Ywain approaches the magical spring. Here, he is personified as a hospitable old man who opens his castle to Ywain and entertains him. The old man is described, in one variant, as being a "yellow man in his luminous, rotating castle." This "castle" is a symbol of the revolving heavenly vault, with its constellations, and the "yellow man" is the sun (*Heros*, or Sun God, like the Irish *Curoi*). In this manifestation he is actually the original partner to the Goddess-Fairy Laudine, and in accordance with his dual friend-fiend character, defends her and her realm. When his demonstration of his atmospheric power fails to frighten Ywain, the old man appears in his less amicable second

manifestation: as a gargantuan shepherd who (in variants) has a single glowing eye; he carries a long-handled ax and a huge club; he protects lions, or bulls, or snakes (Ill. 38). The single eye is again a solar symbol representing the eye of heaven, the sun (compare the Greek Cyclopes). The double ax is symbol of the lightning bolt he has borrowed from his Goddess. The club, that when whirled thunders in a hollow oak tree (the magic of making rain), symbolizes thunder and rain. However, there is still more evidence of the wide spectrum of the functions of the *Heros* of Atmosphere, because he watches over lions, bulls, and snakes, precisely those animals which, taken together, are the calendar symbols for the mythical year of the Great Goddess. Their figures represent her, and are put in her place. The shepherd warns Ywain about the spring, but Ywain seems neither to comprehend the symbols nor to heed the warning, and so rides on. The *Heros* of Atmosphere is left with no alternative but to appear in his third manifestation as Storm Knight. This happens after Ywain has upset the weather, and thus the cosmic order, by pouring water from the spring onto a sacred stone. A thick fog develops, then darkness, then a terrible tempest in which the Storm Knight appears, accusing Ywain of having damaged the verdant landscape by causing the tempest. The knight is now clad in black armor, and carries, like the shepherd, an ax that wildly emits lightning, and the knight's face is flushed with flames. His symbols are completely the same, and now it is clear which cosmic forces Ywain opposes in this battle, and which cosmic goddess he wins by conquering the Storm Knight.

The function of this embittered struggle also becomes clarified: it is the predecessor-successor struggle over the possession of the Goddess-Fairy and her land. The successor remains always the victor, if only for a precise time: exactly for one mythical year. Thereafter, he must yield to the next successor. This is precisely the fate of the Storm Knight, and it is perfectly natural that Laudine marry the successor immediately after the death of the predecessor: It is the only way to ensure the blooming and fertility of her land for the coming mythical year. From this point of view, there is no room for moral speculations concerning her "frivolous behavior," nor is any "psychological discrepancy" evident.

Ywain, then, as successor, assumes the role of the *Heros* of Atmosphere with the attendant cosmic responsibility. But what does he do with it? As with the Storm Knight's warning, he does not seem to grasp his role; he is far too much of a patriarchally conditioned knight. Still, he is fine in the beginning. He enjoys his Goddess-Fairy and all the delights of her splendid land. As a result, he loses his sense of time;



*Ill. 38: Ywain meets the giant shepherd with a club who has only one eye.  
The shepherd points the way to the spring*



*Ill. 39: Enite with the falcon on the fairy horse ("Erec")*

what seems to him only a matter of days is in fact a year. It is the typical leap in time that occurs when a *heros* or knight is banished from the love of his Goddess-Fairy, a common subject in many fairy tales and myths. The ancient Goddess of Love is apparent here in the figure of Laudine. The man falls under her spell and is overcome by an ecstatic frenzy that makes him forget his earthly dimensions. He is not shaken from his ecstasy until his successor challenges him to battle at the spring, after the year, which seemed like days, has passed. This inevitably would lead to Ywain's death. This ending, however, was incongruent with the logic of the medieval serialized romance, therefore Ywain must survive. In fact, a successor does not so much as appear, and Ywain's reaction is unusual: After a year, he feels the excessive eroticism is detrimental to his courtly career and is determined to abandon Laudine without paying the price, preferring instead, to seek new, exciting adventures. From the perspective of the writers of the Middle Ages, the motivation behind this seemingly inexplicable action is clear: it is not good for a man to acquiesce in a woman's love, for then she can win power over him. Here we have, I think, the first evidence of discrepancy, but it is not a psychological one. It is a patriarchal one.

Laudine, helpless against such a hero, responds with a second patriarchal discrepancy: She lets him go, but retains her fairy-like characteristics by mandating that he return as his own successor precisely one year later. I doubt that her demand could be more lenient: She treats him gently and accepts his thirst for freedom, requiring only that he adhere to the mythical year, for the phases of Initiation, Marriage, Death and Return of the *heros*, must be strictly fulfilled to ensure cosmic fertility, which depends on the exact astronomical interplay between the sun and the moon. This is the reason why Ywain's failure to return is such a disaster, because it breaks this cosmic law (from a magical point of view). Ywain's own reason for committing such an egregious trespass is banal: while partaking of the pleasures at the patriarchal-feudal King Arthur's Round Table, he simply forgot. Accordingly, he is met with Laudine's mythical retaliation: She lets him fall out of the cosmic order and he goes crazy. This insanity, at the same time, is a lover's frenzy resulting from the erotic power of the Goddess. Whenever her Eros is lost through folly, the man falls out of the supporting cosmic net, and his rapture turns into craziness. Thus, Ywain pays for his refusal to die the *heros'* death with an especially painful death-like state. Only after he has been cured of this symbolic death by wise women with magical powers and has completed a series of

expiatory deeds can he finally return to his fairy as her *heros* (version of Hartmann von Aue).

We see, thus, that the entire Ywain romance in its oldest layer fulfills the structural pattern of matriarchal mythology: The predecessor-successor struggle as Initiation, Marriage to the Goddess (with the typical leap in time), and symbolic Death and Return of the *heros*. This structure corresponds precisely to that of the fairy tales, with its two sequences. At the same time, we witness exactly the typical transformations this most ancient pattern has undergone: The authentic goddess-*heros*-structure is represented by Laudine and the Storm Knight; in this case, though, the patriarchalized knight, Ywain, intrudes and usurps the Goddess and her land. Still, he must meet with her cosmic law. He, or the medieval writer, apparently believed he was exempt from it, but the mythological rules he has stumbled into influence Ywain's fate and the writer's tale. A long series of adventures interjected in retrospect serve to pad the tale and place Ywain in a splendid knightly light (second part). In this part, Laudine and the mythical pattern of action fade into the background, which was the intent of the medieval writers. Modern interpreters have concealed the original structure further by constructing strained, purely aesthetic links to join the two parts. What cannot be concealed are the "psychological" or "moral" discrepancies that, in fact, indicate something entirely different: They represent the unreconciled clash between two world views and two world orders, the magical-matriarchal and the feudal-patriarchal.

## 1.2. SECOND EXAMPLE: THE ROMANCE OF EREC (ACCORDING TO HARTMANN VON AUE AND CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES)

### **Summary** (as written in the sources)

*Erec is another knight at King Arthur's Round Table. After a series of adventures he wins the hand of the beautiful Enite, the daughter of poor but noble parents. He rides with her to Arthur's court where Enite receives from the queen an elegant dress to replace her shabby robe. Now she is the most beautiful young woman in the court. Once he has returned to his own kingdom, Erec marries Enite and soon begins neglecting his knightly obligations, because of his love for his wife. As soon as he realizes his shame, he sets off with Enite on yet another tour of adventure, during which he treats her harshly: she is again*

*forced to wear torn clothing, to ride in front of him in silence, and serve him like a valet.*

*He survives dangerous encounters with robbers, powerful elves (dwarves or giants), enemy lords of castles and knights. Enite always rescues him from his plight by breaking the ban of silence, and for that he punishes her. The challenges become increasingly difficult until he is faced with the final, most terrifying confrontation with Mabonagrín, the defender of the magical garden in which a beautiful lady rests. Erec conquers him and frees the place from enchantment, for which he is honored in Arthur's court. His shame is rubbed out. In the end, Erec and Enite reign happily over their own kingdom.<sup>3</sup>*

The writers of "Erec" have drawn a sharper and more conscious contrast between the two world views and world orders than was apparent in "Ywain." The central couple, Erec and Enite, is juxtaposed against another pair which sheds light on the distortions made here: Mabonagrín and the resting fair lady are in precisely that place where Erec confronts his most difficult struggle (*Joie de la Court*-episode). The situation is best assessed if we start again from the so-called "psychological discrepancies," which the medieval writers could not conceal, and which provoked modern literary historians to find a variety of far-fetched interpretations: Why does Erec, who is otherwise depicted to be a loving husband, treat his apparently innocent and devoted young wife so harshly? He had, after all, of his own volition committed his "shame," the neglect of his knighthood because of his passion for his young wife.

Here, we must reformulate the question: Who is Enite and which are her original characteristics, if they are not those of a subordinate, submissive, chaste wife? We can find the answer by examining the contrasting couple, Mabonagrín and his lady.

The lady lying on the bed in this tale is overwhelmingly beautiful and rests in the middle of a paradisaical garden, resplendent with the growth of voluptuous apple trees and healing herbs. It is a wondrous garden. Not only do magical apples grow there, the garden also is encircled by a transparent wall of air, which encloses it firmly; furthermore, it is situated on an island in the path of a raging current. This is the Other World mentioned so much in Celtic mythology: it is always islands in currents, or in the ocean, that possess the magical fruit of love and death, the apple. They reminds us of the Isle of Avalon where Morgane the Fairy, supposed sister of King Arthur, reigns, and where she took him after his death to help him back to life and grant him eternal youth with her magical apples. Just as with Morgane, who

moreover is a wise doctor, the beautiful lady lives in her garden; just as with Morgane, she possesses a magical wall of air (the "Fata Morgana"); like Morgane, too, she lies resting or sleeping, and is the great lover to various knights who enter her garden, in spite of the dangers involved. In short: She is Morgane the Fairy herself, only without a name. Morgane can be traced back to the Irish Triple Goddess Morrigan-Morcades, and to the Welsh Modron, a very ancient Mother Goddess and Goddess of Love and Death. Morgane, as water fairy, is also the old Triple Goddess.

In the tale of Erec, Mabonagrín is the consort of this fairy-like lady. In his character we also find a "psychological discrepancy," from the standpoint of ordinary logic: Why does Mabonagrín so murderously combat Erec, who actually appears as his liberator, to free him from the magical garden prison from which he cannot escape on his own? Would he not have every reason to wish to be defeated because defeat is the condition for his freedom?

Mabonagrín goes directly back to the Heros of the Sun, Mabon, the son and lover of the Mother Goddess Modron. He conducts himself similarly: He is clad in red armor and bears red weapons (in Celtic mythology, red is the color of the setting sun); his power intensifies with the rising sun until midday, rendering Erec unable to win over him; not until the sinking sun sets does his strength wane and disappear. Only now is he defeated. Mabonagrín had won the love and land of the fairy through a predecessor-successor struggle, as is now repeated typically between himself and Erec. Once he had won the fairy and her magical realm, he enjoyed all the delights and was enraptured by her eroticism, and the leap in time set in. His mythical destiny now would be simply to die at Erec's hand (compare the Storm Knight and Ywain), which at least clarifies why he defended himself so fiercely.

Into this matriarchal world Erec intervenes in the role of "liberator." He has, therefore, a much stronger patriarchal consciousness than Ywain, who was merely an intruder in this world, and who could not cope with its rules, much to his harm. For Erec to play the role of liberator, some typical deformations of the material had to occur: Unlike the *heros*-king, Mabonagrín strove to get away from his Goddess-Fairy (compare the Storm Knight who wanted to stay with Laudine until, finally, the successor violently drove him away.) This deformation is familiar to us: An excess of eroticism is considered to be damaging to the chivalrous reputation, to say nothing of the latent fear of female power. Mabonagrín, like Ywain, acts here in violation of the matriarchal world order, but Morgane is in a better position to help herself than Laudine: she holds him captive in her magical garden,

secured against his will by the wall of air. He cannot move on his own, any more than the others of Morgane's lovers. He would not be set "free" until the successor came, but that freedom, we know, was freedom by death. Against this prefabricated and distorted backdrop, Erec's "liberation" of the matriarchal king from his annoying Goddess-Fairy was lauded as a tremendous heroic feat. Yet, he consciously violates all the laws of matriarchy throughout: He "liberates" Mabonagrín, who supposedly seeks to escape his lady; he does not kill him, as he should; furthermore, he scorns the fairy's love and her land by refusing to become Mabonagrín's successor, different from the action of Ywain. The fairy is left to weep in the garden.

Such is the relationship of the patriarchal Erec to the matriarchal man. But what is his relationship to woman? It is evident in his behavior toward Enite and it brings us back to the original question: Why does Erec treat Enite as harshly as he does?

Enite is the essence of the ideal patriarchal wife: Whereas the Fairy is Mistress of the land, her queendom, Enite is poor and is elevated to a higher class by Erec, who owns a kingdom. This reversal of economic roles brings with it a reversal of social behavior patterns: Because Enite has no rights, it behooves her to conduct herself in a submissive manner, even in the face of unfair treatment. Erec, on the other hand, is master and acts accordingly; he establishes the rules governing her desirable behavior, which includes the mandate of her absolute marital fidelity. The extent of her dependency is especially well documented by the fact that she continues to serve him even under the most humiliating conditions; she rescues him, heals him, "loves" him, while Erec brusquely rejects her erotic love at the slightest indication that he might be too devoted, and then sets out to atone for his "shame." What a distance this is from the mighty Fairy who reigns over the cosmos, and her adoring *heros*. The distance is intentional: In the end, the ideal patriarchal couple, Erec and Enite, is triumphantly juxtaposed against the humiliated matriarchal couple, Mabonagrín and the beautiful lady. Enite, in a classic case of overzealous fulfillment of her obligations, ultimately accommodates the new morality—according to the invention of the medieval writer—by comforting the weeping fairy in her magic garden. Some consolation!

Nevertheless, in spite of appearances, Enite and Morgane the Fairy are not so far apart, for Erec's experience with Enite also resembles the leap in time: He was so in love with her that he lost track of time and of the earthly dimensions of his knighthood! Enite, then, posed a latent threat to Erec, whose drastic consequences are illustrated by Mabonagrín. Now it becomes clear why the wife is burdened with blame

and punitive penance for her husband's "shame." The motif of Enite's torn garment points in a similar direction: There are parallels in the Arthurian epic in which a woman wearing a torn garment is treated harshly by her spouse; this lady is generally the mythic beauty on the bed under suspicion of infidelity (best comparison in "Parsifal"). This means that the new patriarchal relationship of dependency is maintained by her husband by exerting force over the lady. Let us not forget that this lady was originally Morgane the Fairy, who was under no obligation to be "true" to her *heros* and who, in fact, according to the matriarchal-magical mindset, could *not* be. The presupposition that the fairy is always suspected of infidelity has been omitted in the case of Enite, because her figure has been transformed to fit the patriarchal ideal; it is just this presupposition, however, that clarifies the "psychological discrepancy" inherent in Erec's punishment of his unwaveringly true wife, as if she were under the suspicion of infidelity. We see, also, another instance of cultural-historical discrepancy: In the matriarchal system of values, the man has no claim to any vows of fidelity from the woman. Here, though, he punishes the woman as though he had. What is most absurd is that Erec's punishment of Enite is unwarranted, even according to the patriarchal value system, and yet he is supposed to be a paragon of knightly chivalrous virtue.

Enite's ability to induce the leap in time and the motif of suspicion of infidelity are remnants of her prototype, Morgane the Fairy, in her second aspect as Love Goddess. There are far more similarities, however, between Enite and Morgane in her first aspect, as the Maiden Goddess. As such, Morgane is mistress of the Maiden Castle, or queen of the Maiden Island, or proprietress of the Falcon Castle (the hunting falcon is symbolic of her huntress function). In another version, Morgane's female companions act as warrior-like Amazons who capture the knights and lock them up in glass prisons (mountains, castles) in order to make love with them. The "glass prison" is synonymous with the wall of air the knights cannot penetrate alone. Thus, Morgane, who had once been armed and riding on horseback, is said later to be dispenser of fairy weapons and fairy horses to her diverse lovers. In another version, we witness her leading a cavalcade of fairies, where she rides surrounded by women in radiant finery on horseback, each of them bearing a falcon in hand. In the beginning of the romance of Erec, we see Enite, too, riding in front of him on a fairy horse which she has received from a mysterious "female cousin" (Ill. 39). Fairy horses usually have three colors, white-red-black, or are white with red ears and have an unearthly sway in their gait. In addition, Enite carries the hunting falcon in her hand on this ride, a gift she supposedly

received from Erec as a trophy bird. Here, Enite seems to be the perfect image of Morgane in her Maiden Goddess aspect. Furthermore, we must consider that while Enite serves Erec as a valet, she is at the same time an able horsewoman and proves herself adept at saving Erec from dangerous situations.

Morgane's Maiden Goddess aspect, then, was the precursor to the maidenly, chaste Enite; but because the Goddess is always personified as a trinity, Enite never lost some traits of the other aspects. When she saves Erec, for example, by waking him from a faint or apparent death, she demonstrates the aspect of the Goddess of Death and Resurrection. This background provides us with the necessary evidence to know why Erec treated Enite so harshly: he must drive out every trace of her fairy-like magical powers. In the next step, he makes all her capacities—her Amazonian skill with horses, her eroticism, her power of resurrection—serve him. Erec's behavior, then, from a patriarchal point of view, is consistent with a man confronting a dangerous woman whose infidelity would result in his death at the hand of the inevitable successor.

We can now see clearly the development of the transformation. The first couple forms the matriarchal constellation: the powerful Fairy and her unconditionally devoted *heros* (Laudine-Storm Knight). The second couple is the powerful Fairy and the knight who is kept against his will, or who meets with her law in a different way (Laudine-Ywain, Morgane-Mabonagrín), a constellation that is already tainted by the patriarchal interpretation of the *heros*. The third couple is characterized by the patriarchal "liberator," who "frees" the *heros* from his relationship and leaves the fairy to weep helplessly (Erec, Morgane-Mabonagrín); this signifies the collapse of the matriarchal constellation. The fourth couple is the total patriarchalization of the woman, who, now dependent and obedient, is placed beside the patriarchal "liberator" (Erec-Enite); the patriarchal constellation is victorious.

This clarifies the vehemence of the struggle against the matriarchal couple, Mabonagrín and the lady-in-the-garden. According to the medieval writer's will, Erec and Enite are engaged in a psychological battle to overcome themselves: He distances himself from Mabonagrín and the seductive power of the erotic, while she distances herself from Morgane's and her own fairy-like power. Both are suppressing these parts of themselves which are forbidden according to patriarchal norms. However, if we again take the more comprehensive social-historical viewpoint, we see that the gist of the matter is the devaluation of the matriarchal way of life in favor of the patriarchal. The clarity with

which this is depicted indicates how deliberately the preferences have been placed in this romance.

### 1.3 THIRD EXAMPLE:

#### ROMANCES OF THE GRAIL AND PARSIFAL

("Perceval," "Peredur," "Sir Percyvella," "Parzival," "Perlesvaus"), the major poets: Chrétien de Troyes, Wolfram von Eschenbach)

##### Summary (as written in the sources)

*Parsifal's mother, a queen who fled from her enemies into the wilderness, raised him without teaching him anything about knightly chivalry. One day, though, when he sees some knights passing through the forest, he makes himself a set of armor from willow branches and abandons his mother. As a result, she dies of agony. While on his journey, Parsifal kisses a lady sleeping in her sumptuous tent, and, without thinking, kills the Red Knight, assuming these deeds to be part of his knightly obligations. At King Arthur's court, he wants to become Knight of the Round Table, but he must first perform heroic deeds, which he does following a period of apprenticeship with his uncle. After a series of adventures, he comes by chance to the Grail Castle, where he witnesses the grail procession and meets the lord of the castle, the wounded king. Because he forgets to ask the question about the king's health, though, he is expelled from the castle. Along the way he meets a female cousin, who, bemoaning the death of a murdered relative, whom she holds in her arms, is about to become a recluse. Upon his return to the court of King Arthur, Parsifal is elevated to the position of Knight of the Round Table. At the same time, however, a female messenger of the Grail suddenly appears and curses him for not having asked the question about the king's health at the Grail Castle. Thus cursed, Parsifal avoids human contact and wanders about the wilderness, searching in despair for the Grail Castle. Finally, he encounters another uncle who is a recluse and who informs him of the nature of his guilt. By clearing himself through penance, Parsifal is able to find the Grail Castle and pose the right question, thereby delivering the Grail King, who is also his uncle, from his suffering. Parsifal then becomes Grail King himself.*<sup>4</sup>

In the Lancelot cycle of the grail legends the action revolves around Lancelot and Galahad, Parsifal is a minor figure, merely the guardian of the Grail, not the one who returns it. In the proper grail romances,

however, he is the central figure, and becomes the Grail King. These romances are quite complicated because they encompass two separate strains of tradition which are in no way smoothly connected; their main subjects merely cross one another. These are the Question of Revenge, and the Quest for the Grail. Aside from that, they are filled with countless "psychological discrepancies."

The Question of Revenge revolves around avenging the death or injury of relatives. The blood-feud is between Parsifal's family and the clan of the Red Knight. The subject of this question is an unmitigated vendetta in which each clan murders members of the other. This subject is present throughout the tales of Parsifal's youth (the death of his "father," the loss of his land, his mother's escape into the wilderness) and is strewn haphazardly in random episodes throughout the material (the female cousin's mourning a slain relative, the motif of the broken sword-of-revenge); furthermore, it is also present in Parsifal's actions, which are inexplicable in the context at hand (the slaying the Red Knight). We are left to wonder about the full content of this strain of tradition. This content is not apparent in the texts themselves, and was not taken into consideration in the mystifying Christian interpretations of the Parsifal material. It is, however, related to the "psychological" problem of why Parsifal, being the last member of a clan engaged in a vendetta and thus on the verge of extinction, acts so naively, and even foolishly at a time when his survival and ability to exact revenge requires all his mental faculties.

The Quest for the Grail (or Unspoken Question), which has been frequently interpreted and covered by a thick layer of Christian-mystical speculations, revolves around the subject of Parsifal's search for the Grail. It also involves his improper conduct in the Grail Castle, his banishment, and his subsequent coronation as Grail King when he returns there after a long period of purification. The problem that stems from the "psychological discrepancies" in this material is the question of Parsifal's guilt: In his wonder about the mysterious events he witnesses in the Grail Castle during his first stay, he forgets to ask the question about the wounded Grail King's condition; for this harmless, childlike infringement he is cursed and condemned and subsequently does penance for years equal to a much more serious offense. What is most absurd is that Parsifal is unconscious of his own guilt. He is innocently guilty, without a clue as to what to do about it. Literary historians have scoured the entire medieval theology trying to solve this problem within the context of their interpretations, but with little success. It is Parsifal's recluse-uncle who gives the answer to his nephew about his guilt, but this answer is absolutely incongruous with medieval the-

ology: He is guilty of having abandoned his mother, thus causing her to die of worry. This is a strange guilt for the Christian-patriarchal Grail seeker that Parsifal is always made out to be.

My contention is that the whole subject of the Grail is neither Christian, nor is Parsifal a patriarchal grail seeker. In the grail romances, there is only one scene in which the medieval writers have used Christian ideas and vocabulary: the scene in which the recluse-uncle instructs Parsifal about religion. This was perhaps the most crucial scene in the entire material because the uncle actually instructs Parsifal in another religion than Christian. The falsifying re-interpretation of this scene, though, was enough to allow the entire material to appear in a Christian context, something literary historians excessively continue doing to today. The reaction of the medieval church, in contrast to these mystifications of the grail subject, was quite different and unambivalent: the grail legends were never recognized by it as genuinely Christian.

We face, then, the following question: What, exactly, is this pseudo-Christian Grail that such great lengths have been taken to conceal? It is also the same question that Parsifal faced. Instead of inquiring as to the king's health—a question that was silly in light of the pain suffered by the injured king—he should have asked: What is the Grail? Had he done so, he would have immediately been inducted into the mysteries of this pre-Christian religion.

In the many different legends about it, the Grail adopts a variety of shapes: it is a cup, a bowl or small cauldron, or a chalice, or horn; its exact shape is obviously uncertain. In any case, the vessel is invariably the source of inexhaustible wealth: food and drink, all the fruits of the Earth. What is more, it spreads joy, and everyone in its vicinity enjoys eternal youth. There are parallels to the Grail throughout Indo-European mythology: It is the inexhaustible Horn of Plenty of Greek mythology; it is the cauldron always full of meat or mead in Germanic mythology; it is the magic Cauldron of Inspiration, filled with herbs for a spiritual potion in Celtic mythology; in the latter myth, it not only renders wealth, but also magic knowledge and artistic inspiration. It is always one of the Goddess's original possessions: the Greek Horn of Plenty is always borne by a Fertility Goddess; the Cauldron of Inspiration belongs to the Celtic Mother Goddess, who uses it to inspire poets; the Germanic mead cauldron, that also contains an intoxicating potion, belongs to Nerthus, or her daughter Freyja, or when filled with meat, to her brother Freyr. It is guarded by giants, and is later stolen by Thor. In Irish mythology, there is even a Grail chalice that is borne by the Goddess Erin, the personification of the land of

Ireland. She presents it to a man who immediately becomes king of Ireland, and spouse to Erin for one mythical year. This is an even clearer indication that the transfer of the Grail is an act of Initiation in the selection of the king; it is a direct invitation to participate in the Sacred Marriage. The ceremony is performed by the Goddess, Erin, and her newly crowned king. As a result, she appears again in her original beauty and radiant youth, after she has spent the winter as an ugly hag.

Let us examine the Parsifal romances: In these, too, the Grail, in contrast to the all-male Christian priests holding the holy chalices, is carried by a young, exceptionally beautiful woman; as soon as she has transferred it to Parsifal, he becomes Grail King. Quite the opposite is the female grail messenger, who is horribly ugly. Her actions, accordingly, are just the opposite: Instead of elevating Parsifal, she pushes him to an abyss with a curse, because he missed, during his first stay, to ask the question for the Grail. As a consequence, he must live for several years in the wilderness, severed from society which, from a social perspective, is a death-like state from which he cannot recover until the beautiful carrier of the Grail delivers him from his plight. The grail messenger and the grail carrier are the two faces of one goddess in her manifestations as the sinister Death Goddess and the luminous Goddess of Resurrection. A third figure represents the Goddess in her second aspect as Goddess of Love. This figure is Kondwiramurs, who later as Parsifal's spouse became the Grail Queen. ("Kondwiramurs" means "leading to love"). There is clear evidence of her fairy-like character: Parsifal falls into a deep love trance when he sees three drops of blood in the snow beside some raven's feathers. The drops remind him of Kondwiramurs (version of Wolfram von Eschenbach), or cause him to discover his love for the black-haired lady (version of Chrétien de Troyes). Her eroticism is so powerful that it sparks his mystical rapture at the very glimpse of her three symbolic colors, white, red, and black. This riddle is simple to solve: Parsifal sees in these colors the Triple Goddess herself.

I think it is now clear what Parsifal stands to gain in obtaining the Grail—the Goddess and her land. As soon as he becomes the new Grail King, the land bursts into most resplendent fertility; it is as fertile as it had formerly been barren. We can see in Erin that the Goddess is, in herself, an image of the land, and in the same vein, that her "chalice" is she herself: It is the symbol of her inexhaustible womb from which life and fertility emerges. Ultimately, it is, then, a sexual symbol. (Compare the same thing in Pandora's "box," but in a perverted form; in the patriarchal context, it is thought to be the source of all evil.)

It is now understandable why Parsifal's Unspoken Question in the presence of the Grail caused his guilt: His naiveté had catastrophic consequences for the land. It remained infertile, causing an outbreak of hunger and death, because Parsifal failed to assume his function as successor to the *heros* and Sacred King to the Goddess. Like the dilatory Ywain, he disrupts the cosmic order with his failure and leaves Heaven and Earth to be devastated (motif of the "Wasted Land"). Thus, the curse, which is the same Ywain suffered, was justified.

What is still unclear is the cause of the naiveté that leads to Parsifal's failure. Wherein, exactly, lies his conscious guilt? His recluse-uncle not only teaches him about the Grail and its meaning, in the non-Christian sense, but also about his guilt: He has heartlessly abandoned his "mother." This means that he has turned away from the Mother Goddess to become a knight. He strove to attain precisely those patriarchal knightly ideals of her enemies from which she wanted to protect him, by taking him into the wilderness. This aberration caused his ignorance in the basic tenets of matriarchal religion, thus making him unable to fulfill his role as Sacred King, and to deliver his land from infertility and his people from famine. His mother foresaw the tragedy and died of pain as a result. Parsifal's fatherly advisers, all of whom are his mother's brothers, must now inform him, step by step, of the gravity of his guilt, while guiding him toward his real obligation to his maternal heritage.

In spite of his temporary confusion, Parsifal is recognizable as an authentic matriarchal *heros*. This also indicates this figure's ancient origin. In contrast to the more recent heroes such as Ywain and Erec, who allow us to view matriarchal structures only as outside observers, the figure of Parsifal provides us with the rare opportunity of observing them from within. Yet another clue to the ancient character of this story is the way the predecessor is succeeded: This does not occur through a bloody predecessor-successor struggle, but through a gentle question. Research into the identity of Parsifal's "father" reveals just how archaic this story is.

"Father," in the context of matriarchal kinship relationships, never refers to the biological father (who was unknown), but rather to the predecessor in office, or the mother's brothers, the maternal uncles who are the only men the young man considers his blood relatives. All of the uncles Parsifal meets are, therefore, his social "fathers," and they treat him accordingly. The wounded Grail King is simultaneously his maternal uncle and predecessor in office, and thus his social "father" in the strictest sense of the word. Furthermore, King Pellinor or King Gahmuret are (later) named as Parsifal's biological fathers. They are

not merely wounded, but actually killed. The figure of Parsifal's "father," then, hovers enigmatically between a wounded and a murdered king. The murdered/wounded king is a very old mythical figure: the God Bran (originally a god of the sea). He is the dying/returning king, or, in a weaker form, the wounded/healed king and partner in the Sacred Marriage to the archaic Welsh Mother Goddess Modron (Irish: Lug and Erin, who passes on the chalice). Bran's environment is congruent with his role: It is an ever-blossoming, happy island of eternal youth, which is why his retinue consists only of pages and children. Bran's festive banquets are famous for the extravagant wealth that springs from a magic vessel, the Horn of Plenty. Precisely the same is reported of the Grail Castle where the wounded king, also known as the "Fisher King," lives. Similarly, Gahmuret lives richly and extravagantly, surrounded by very young people. Furthermore, in every castle called "Corbenic" ("corbenic" means "blessed horn"), a king named Pelles, Pellias, or Bron Baudemagus, rules. Considered to be King of the Fairies, he is actually Bran, who manifests in myriad forms. However the name of Parsifal's "father" was, he is the original partner to the Mother Goddess Modron, and Parsifal is his legitimate successor. This constellation points, along with the Goddesses Morrigan and Erin (Ireland), and their partners, back to the pre-Indo-European epoch, which, in Ireland and England, was purely matriarchal.

It appears that the process of Death and Return does not progress as smoothly for the Goddess' partner in the Grail legends, as is otherwise customary; some problem has arisen to complicate the Parsifal stories. Normally, the "father"-king dies at the hand of the Goddess and immediately returns, or she wounds and subsequently heals him without any element of agony mixed in it. In the Parsifal story, though, the king is wounded and cannot be healed. He would like to die, but cannot. Also, the redeemer-successor who would deliver him is not present, but held hidden in the wilderness; the connection between them is severed. When he finally comes, he proves ignorant and incapable of solving the puzzle. It seems that not only the cosmic, but the social order is disturbed, and in every case the problem is connected with the motif of hostile invaders: the Red Knights. This brings us to the Question of Revenge.

The Red Knights were either the murderers of Parsifal's "father," or were those who wounded his uncle, the Grail King. They have hit his genitals with a spear. It is now understandable that after he has lost his ability to consummate the Sacred Marriage, the grail land remains as infertile as he. The spear that has wounded him is described as a bleeding or burning spear (compare Lug's and Odin's spears: a burning spear

is symbol of the lightning bolt); the spear indicates, like the red color of the knights, the attributes of the solar *heros*. By contrast, the God Bran, who is associated with the chthonic Mother Goddess, does not yet have solar attributes: he is purely an Underworld and Fertility god. This identifies him as the older partner to the Goddess than the more recent solar *heros*; the pre-Indo-European couple, Modron-Bran, goes back to the world view of the older matriarchy. The generation of her solar *heros* arrived later and is associated with the first wave of Indo-European migration (the so-called "Barbarian Invasions"), the invasion of the light-haired Celts, who battled their pre-Indo-European predecessors for the land, bringing death, injury, and a disruption of the old social order. The conquests were not successful everywhere, as the Parsifal legends illustrate, but where they were victorious, the Celtic conquerors adopted many matriarchal concepts. Yet, for their matriarchal forerunners, robbing the Earth was like raping the Goddess, because the Earth was the Goddess: The many myths dealing with the rape of the Goddess and the theft of her "cauldron" (vulva) stem from this period. Clearly, the Goddess' original king sustained "wounds" on his genitals in this process, because his Goddess was abducted. His wounds, too, were caused by a spear, the typical Celtic weapon that was a male sexual symbol in this context. Precisely such a bleeding lance is the object of mourning in the Grail Castle. Furthermore, when this lance appears in association with a vessel (Grail), perfected in the image of the lance stuck vertically in a "silver vessel" filled with blood, or of a burning spear that is dunked in a "vessel" filled with blood (Celtic mythology), it is, then, in terms of symbols of sexuality, the worst affront to the pre-Celtic matriarchal Grail King. The very sight of it would make him "wounded."

In light of this cultural historical background, the crucial significance of Parsifal's actions to restore the older matriarchal social order becomes clear: He must first "heal" the Grail King from his spear wound by re-discovering or retrieving the "Grail" (the Goddess, the land), thus acquiring his legitimate inheritance. Secondly, he must seek revenge against the conquerors responsible for the extreme injury of his "father," namely, against the Celtic Red Knights. This is the logical connection between the two seemingly unrelated subjects: the Question of Revenge and the Quest for the Grail. As we know, Parsifal solves them both, though with great difficulty: In the beginning, he remains ignorant of matriarchal cultic knowledge and the attendant social order, because he must grow up hidden from his "father's" enemies. In his naiveté, he goes so far as to adopt the knights, his arch-enemies, as role models, and strives to emulate them. Understandably, this breaks

his mother's heart. Yet shortly thereafter, the same naiveté prompts him to slay the Red Knight, his father's murderer. He thus becomes an innocent avenger, an authentic angel of revenge. Moreover, he slays the Red Knight using a wooden javelin, which is a sort of spear, meaning that he beats him at his own game. The ironic twist of fate is that Parsifal kills the knight to emulate him, thinking that this is a necessary component of the knighthood he reveres. He is not altogether wrong in this. The paradox of Parsifal's having become an innocent avenger solves the vendetta problem from a matriarchal point of view: Only if he avenges his "father" can Parsifal become king, but to obtain the position of Sacred King, he must be innocent. Since he is both avenger and innocent, he can begin the quest for his inheritance, the Grail, and that happens again apart from the patriarchal knighthood, in a step-by-step process, helped by his mother's brothers. However, the aberration of abandoning his mother for the sake of imitating the patriarchal Red Knights haunts him: He fails at the Grail Castle, and is subsequently cursed at Arthur's court, which is the Celtic Red Knights' home court, where Parsifal is out of place. Then he is wandering about the woods, not knowing where he really belongs until his recluse-uncle instructs him as to where he belongs. Parsifal finds the Grail Castle again, asks the question of the Grail, and thus helps his predecessor-"father," who recovers from his wound and immediately relinquishes the office of Grail King to Parsifal. This interpretation, then, disentangles all "psychological" and compositional discrepancies. We know now why Parsifal had to be as naive as he was: He is the paradoxical figure of an angel of revenge. That is why he was innocent in his guilt: Expelled from his inheritance by the social-historical confusion of his time, he was hard-pressed to comprehend and restore the old matriarchal order. Finally, we know how the Question of Revenge and the Quest for the Grail relate in their consequences to each other: The solution of the one was prerequisite to the solution of the other, in the historical situation of those days.

This clear connection between the two questions was destroyed by the medieval writers, who busied themselves at Christianizing the story's erotic and realistic symbolism; the more directly erotic and realistic it was, the stronger were their efforts to mystify it. Literary historians who perpetuated the mystification by heaping theological interpretations on it were unable to rediscover this connection. Caught in their unrealistic abstractions, the social historical background completely escaped their grasp, and the manifold "discrepancies," which in fact do not exist, emerged. This is regrettable, for the Parsifal leg-

ends provide a rare and beautiful testimony to the profound social transformation of Old Europe: the confrontation between the first patriarchal warrior tribes (Celtic), and the ancient matriarchies living there.

#### 1.4. FOURTH EXAMPLE: THE LANCELOT CYCLE

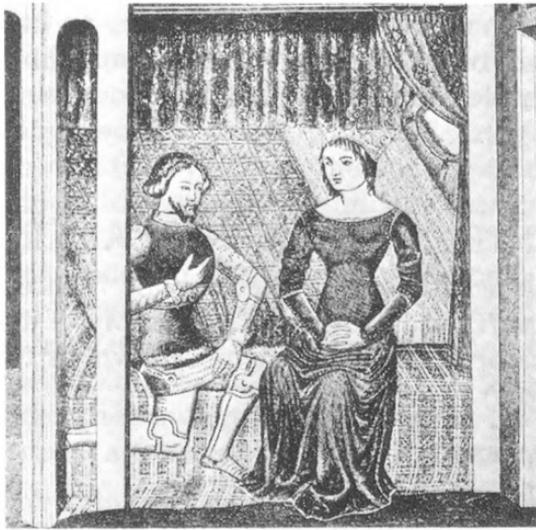
("Chevalier de la Charrette," Prose Lancelot: "Lancelot propre/Queste del Saint Graal/La Mort le Roi Artu," "La Morte d'Arthur," German prose romance of Lancelot; most significant writers: Chrétien de Troyes, Thomas Malory)

##### Summary (as written in the sources)

*The Lancelot cycle encompasses the complete history of Arthur's Round Table. Its background includes the story of Arthur's birth, his apprenticeship with Merlin, his coronation as king, his successful courtship of Guinevere, and his formation of the Round Table. In the center of the history of the Round Table, however, is Lancelot. He grows up in the fairy land located at the bottom of a lake. His foster mother is the water fairy (Lady of the Lake). He arrives at Arthur's court at a very young age and is accepted as a Knight of the Round Table. He performs astonishing heroic deeds which quickly earn him the reputation as the best of Arthur's knights. He falls in love with Queen Guinevere, who reciprocates his love (Ill. 40). Once, on a beautiful May day, the queen is captured, and Lancelot single-handedly rescues her from the castle of her abductor. Lacking a horse, he arrives in this adventure on a peasant's cart; this wins him the nickname "Chevalier de la Charrette" ("Knight of the Cart").*

*Full of resentment at this mockery, he leaves Arthur's court and arrives in the city of Corbin where he slays a dragon, and since Guinevere has unreasonably rejected him, he marries the crown princess of this city, the exceedingly beautiful Elaine. He returns to Arthur's court with Elaine, but the jealous Guinevere comes between them. Elaine gives birth to Lancelot's son in a convent and dies. As a consequence, Lancelot leaves the court and retreats into solitude.*

*Later, Lancelot's son, Galahad, comes as a young man to Arthur's court and is recognized as the most noble of knights. He leaves the court immediately thereafter on his Quest for the Grail. The penitent Lancelot sees the Grail in a dream (Ill. 41). Galahad finds the Grail Castle and the Grail and dies in exaltation. His companion, Parsifal, succeeds him as Guardian of the Grail.*



*Ill. 40: Lancelot with Guinevere*



*Ill. 41: Lancelot dreams of the Grail (pre-Christian)*

*Meanwhile, Guinevere's enemies accuse her of attempting to poison Gawain, the king's nephew. Lancelot abandons his solitude, fights, and exonerates her in an ordeal. The relentless enemies, though, discover Lancelot and Guinevere together. Lancelot flees. Guinevere is charged with adultery and brought to burn at the stake. In the company of his male relatives, who are knights, too, Lancelot saves her by bringing her to his fortress. Gawain and the Knights of Arthur's Round Table seize Lancelot's fortress. Lancelot returns Guinevere to Arthur and she goes into a convent. Lancelot retreats to France, but Arthur and Gawain pursue him in battle. In France, Lancelot kills Gawain in a duel. A lonely and aging Arthur returns to England to find that in his absence his nephew Mordred has occupied his throne. This leads to a decisive battle between Arthur and Mordred. Arthur slays Mordred but is himself mortally wounded. Arthur's dead body is taken to the Island of Avalon by his sister, Morgane the Fairy, where he lives forever after.*

An exhaustive analysis of these voluminous materials here is impossible. This discussion will instead show the typical constellations of the couples and analyze the major subjects and how they intertwine.

In Lancelot we meet one of the oldest figures, traceable back to the pre-Indo-European God Lug, partner to Erin, the Land of Ireland, and later made into a famous Celtic god (compare his spear as attribute). The figure of this god undergoes several transformations and continues into the epoch of the Arthurian romances, where he becomes the most famous knightly figure of all. Thus, it cannot be said that this figure was recently added to the Arthurian cycle as an afterthought, as is often maintained. The evidence that the opposite is true is produced here by examining the oldest available layer of this figure, which became extraordinarily complex in the course of its development.

Despite his knightly appearance, Lancelot's youth was mysterious: He was raised by the Lady of the Lake, who was explicitly said to be a fairy whose wondrous fairy realm was located at the bottom of a lake. He is considered to be her "son," and this is a correct assumption, because ever since the time of Lug, he was the son of the old Goddess Morrigan (later known as Morgane; here she is the Water Fairy Nimue). In the course of his fairy-like youth, supernatural powers were bestowed upon him by his divine mother: they made him invincible in contests with human beings and blessed him with an extraordinary capacity for eroticism in the matriarchal sense. Thus, he was predestined to become the best knight and a great lover. He also received a magic ring from her that allowed him to see through all forms of magic; this means that he has been initiated into the Goddess' cultic-magical knowledge.

As soon as he entered the world of humans, he received a fairy horse and fairy weapons from her. Unlike the solar *heros*, he always rode clad in her colors: his black hair was complemented by the white armor, and a shield with three diagonal stripes of red; elsewhere, he changed his horse, his armor, and his weapons during tournaments from white, to red, to black. This indicates that his figure is older than the solar *heros*, the Red Knights, among whom the golden-haired Gawain belongs, with his red weapons and golden shield.

Between Lancelot's adventures and affairs, especially with Arthur's Queen Guinevere, he is repeatedly associated with the fairy-like Other World, and with the Grail: He is not only the son of the Goddess Morrigan-Morgane, he is, as is congruent with the structure of matriarchal mythology, also her lover, and originally belongs to her alone. He wins the Goddess and becomes her *heros*, according to the classical pattern: He battles the terrible animal of the Other World, the dragon, and after his victory, his Other World journey begins. Mortally wounded, he lies in a death-like state on the ground and cannot awaken until he is touched by the most beautiful woman he has ever seen, the Princess Elaine from the Corbin Castle. She nurses him back to health; she similarly cures him a second time from the insanity that Guinevere has caused by once rejecting him. It is the familiar Death and Return motif. Elaine has the power to do this because she is a lunar fairy, i.e., the triple Moon Goddess herself: She always appears in white and silver, and is clear and luminous, like the rays of the moon that surround her, even when she is giving birth. Her name can be traced to Helene or Selene, an early lunar goddess in Greek mythology. She lives as Lancelot's spouse on an island paradise filled with fertile fields and fruit orchards. There, in the middle of the lake, Lancelot finds happiness and peace after the pangs of love suffered with Guinevere. His bliss, however, is only temporary: it lasts for one mythical year. Elaine's castle is called Corbin or Corbenic, the castle of the "blessed horn," which is actually the Horn of Plenty, or the Grail. Her "father" is King Pellès; as such, he is Lancelot's predecessor king. Lancelot's "father" in the realm of the Lady of the Lake was known as Pellias, a fairy king, who was his predecessor, too. Elaine's true identity is revealed here: She is none other than Lancelot's "mother" Morrigan-Morgane, who is an excellent doctor, well-versed in magic, but here she appears in her younger aspect as Maiden Goddess. In each case, the predecessor king is the same one, dating back to the God Bran (as we learned from "Parsifal"). Lancelot, subsequently, is the legitimate heir to the Horn of Plenty, or the Grail, or the Goddess herself, as he had been since the

time of Lug, who was the partner to Erin with the chalice (Grail) in much the same way.

In Lancelot's spouse, then, we find a splendid combination of all the aspects of the Triple Goddess: The paradisaical love and death island of the Other World, characteristic of Morgane; her character as Moon Goddess; and the presence of the ancient grail motif. Equally clear, Lancelot fits the classical matriarchal *heros* pattern: He undergoes an archaic Initiation (slaying the dragon), and peacefully supplants his diverse predecessors to celebrate the Sacred Marriage immediately thereafter; Death and Return are present, too, in the typical wounding-healing motif, in which the Goddess acts as healer. The grail tradition is now also clearer: In the Irish region, it is associated with the pre-Indo-European divine couple, Lug-Erin (or Morigain), while in Wales, with the pre-Indo-European divine couple, Bran-Modron. This establishes the connection between Lancelot and Parsifal: Both are legitimate heirs of the Grail; they are analogous *heros* whose differences are only regional in nature. In the Lancelot cycle, the Welsh *heros* Parsifal figures as a subordinate, with the real Grail Kings being Lancelot (Horn of Plenty) and his "son" Galahad (Grail).

Galahad is the son of Elaine (Morgane) and Lancelot. This makes him the mythical successor to Lancelot, who supplants him in his relationship to the Goddess and her land. As such, he arrives on the scene as the grail seeker *par excellence*. But before he reaches the Grail Castle, where he receives the "Grail" (i.e., the Goddess) in a state of exaltation, Galahad has a brief skirmish with Lancelot. In this fight his "father," the predecessor king, is defeated for the first time in his life. This predecessor-successor struggle would have meant Lancelot's inevitable death had he not been connected with the story of Guinevere and Arthur. If it had been presented according to the most ancient mythological structure, the matriarchal one, Lancelot's story would have come to its classical end: his death as the predecessor, and his return in the figure of the successor-son.

Having thus examined the Lancelot-Morigain-Galahad constellation, we will now consider the Arthur-Guinevere-Gawain constellation, which was originally separate from the Lancelot myth because the queen's lover was not Lancelot, but Gawain. Gawain's prototype is Gwri or Cuchulainn, the blond Celtic solar *heros*; his partner is the Goddess of Spring and Flowers, Blathnat. Guinevere with the golden hair is modeled after Blathnat, and is, therefore, the legitimate partner to Gwri-Gawain. Moreover, Gawain is the typical Red Knight. We recognize in both Gawain and Guinevere that they belong to the later,

Celtic stage of matriarchy that overlay the pre-Indo-European period. Arthur is the later patriarchal usurper of Gwri-Gawain's rights: He took away his Goddess and his land, made Guinevere his wife, and Gawain his vassal. Yet he cannot enjoy his possession of the Goddess-wife because she is abducted from him repeatedly by his cultural-historical predecessor, the bright spring *heros* who always represents an analogy to Gwri-Gawain. Gawain, though, chained to Arthur's court, ends up playing a different role altogether: Arthur sends him, of all people, to retrieve the abducted Guinevere, something Arthur should not have done because Gawain naturally had no intention of returning Guinevere to Arthur. Gawain loved her himself and could be only what he already was: the original lover of Arthur's queen.

The story becomes even more interesting when Lancelot, the knight, intercedes and takes Gawain's place as Queen Guinevere's lover. In this way the two constellations, which had been separate in the beginning, were combined. We must ask ourselves why the early, pre-Indo-European Lancelot, of all possible characters, does this. First, however, let us turn our attention to what emerged from that crossing and combination of stories: the so-called "Suite de la Charrette" ("Suite of the Cart").

Queen Guinevere is abducted while picking flowers in the green meadows in the middle of May, as is appropriate for any Goddess of Spring and Flowers. May is, according to the customs of the country people, the time of May-rams and May-poles, both phallic symbols, and of queens of May and weddings, the month of fertility and delight. The abductor is Meleagant, and even though Arthur immediately sends forth his best knight, Lancelot, accompanied by Gawain, precisely one year transpires between the time of the abduction and release—the mythical year. Thus, the struggles for the release and return of the queen take on the character of the predecessor-successor struggles. Lancelot, the victor, does in fact succeed Meleagant as lover of Guinevere.

Meleagant has all the traits of a prince of May, or Spring *heros*: He is a young man adorned with flowers and lord of the summer land (as his prototype, Melwas). His land consists of "glass islands"; it is neither too hot nor too cold, is not plagued by turbulent weather, storms, or snakes (i.e., sickness and death); it is a paradise of orchards and a spring that comes from the Horn of Abundance (Horn of Plenty); eternal spring and eternal youth prevail and everyone who goes there returns filled with joy. We are familiar with this place: it is Morgane's Paradise, which means that she cannot be far away.

The place is the Other World which is indicated by its inaccessibil-

ity. The "islands of glass" are situated in the middle of a raging black current and can be reached only by way of two virtually impassable bridges: a subaqueous bridge running under water and a huge sword bridge with the cutting edge up. The water bridge indicates that the islands may have been located under water, as Morgane's realm at the bottom of lakes. Gawain attempts to cross by way of the water bridge, but nearly drowns. Lancelot crawls across the sword bridge, cutting his hands and feet. He sinks into unconsciousness as soon as he reaches the other side. There he is re-awakened and healed by a beautiful woman well-versed in magic (symbolic death upon entering the Other World). Although she is here called "Meleagant's sister," she is none other than Morgane the Fairy, the real mistress of the glass islands. Lancelot is, in principle, her lover, and she conducts herself accordingly: She is loving toward him and locks him in a glass prison (compare the wall of air) in order to keep him to herself; as with all of Morgane's lovers, he is unable to escape of his own volition. In light of this sequence of motifs we have to ask whether Lancelot's introduction to this story was truly arbitrary and a late development. Probably not. What is a recent invention is his refusal, on account of Guinevere, to love the beautiful lady (Morgane) until she has pity on him and gives him, as a farewell gift, horse and weapons in her colors. Afterward, Lancelot has several battles with his predecessor, Meleagant, and at the end of the mythical year is victorious; he kills Meleagant even though it is against the rules of knightly etiquette. He has thus actually won the hand of "Meleagant's sister," but takes Guinevere, a recent addition to the story, with him instead. Instead of giving her back to Arthur, he himself becomes her lover.

Since Guinevere is actually a descendant of the Goddess, Lancelot's actions are, from a mythological point of view, justified: He takes her from the patriarchal Arthur, to whom the Goddess means nothing; he does the same with the weak Gawain, who is unable to defend her. With that he penetrates Arthur's world of knighthood, but not without consequence, because Lancelot goes beyond earthly dimensions: Not only is he invincible, he enjoys intimate contact with the Other World, often disappearing into a mystical retreat. What is most fatal to the stability of Arthur's patriarchal kingdom, ultimately toppling it, is his ecstatic erotic passion for Guinevere, a purely matriarchal power. Truly a divine trait!

In the legends there is a historical king named Loth who defends Morcades' (Morrigan-Morgane) land. In spite of year-long battles, Arthur cannot defeat him. Loth is as young as he is famous. Finally, Arthur conquers him by an act of trickery and kills him. The resulting

politics of alliance, however, are by no means void of complications: Arthur draws to himself the smoldering hatred of the entire world of fairies. If we take the full spectrum of development of this figure into consideration, from the God Lug to King Loth, to Lancelot the knight ("Loth with the lance"), can we really maintain that Lancelot's association with Arthur's Round Table, which had these disastrous consequences for Arthur, were a last-minute addition from the fantasy of a medieval writer? This answer must be no, for Lancelot, the "latecomer" to the Round Table, clearly reveals himself as Arthur's born opponent from the onset. (We will return to this later.)

# THE TRISTAN ROMANCES\*

## Summary (as written in the sources)

*Tristan is the nephew of King Mark of Cornwall. On King Mark's behalf he battles the usurping Morholt of Ireland and defeats him. The Irish princess Isolt, Morholt's niece, vows to avenge her uncle's death. Tristan, however, is mortally wounded, and has himself put into a boat without rudders and let out to sea to die. Instead, he lands in Ireland where the golden-haired Isolt, unaware of his identity, heals him.*

*King Mark wants to marry the princess with the golden hair. Tristan sets out in search of her, but again lands in Ireland, where he slays a dragon and is again wounded and again healed by Isolt. In the process she discovers who he is. Out of gratitude for his having slain the dragon, she spares his life. Tristan courts her successfully on behalf of King Mark, but during the ship's voyage to Cornwall, Isolt and Tristan inadvertently drink a magic potion that makes them fall in love. On the eve of her wedding to King Mark, Isolt substitutes a false bride and stays with Tristan.*

*Tristan remains at the king's court for one year until he and Isolt come under suspicion. King Mark banishes him in a rage, but Tristan always finds opportunities for secret meetings with Isolt. In the end they are found guilty and sentenced to death, but Tristan saves himself by springing from a cliff into the sea. He frees Isolt and flees with her into the forest wilderness, where they enjoy a happy love life.*

*Years later Isolt is permitted to return to King Mark, but Tristan is exiled. He travels to France, liberates a kingdom from its enemies, and marries the king's daughter, who is also named Isolt. Driven by longing, he returns to Cornwall where he again meets the golden-haired Isolt, once while disguised as a member of a hunting party, once as a monk, once as a minstrel singer, and once as a jester. After returning to France, he accompanies his brother-in-law on an amorous adventure in which he is severely wounded by an enraged knight, who is husband*

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\* According to Beroul and Eilhart von Oberg

*of the lady paramour. He arranges for Isolt to be called from Cornwall to heal him. She leaves King Mark and goes to France, but Tristan's jealous wife, the second Isolt, tricks Tristan with a lie and he dies. Isolt of Cornwall arrives too late and dies at his side. King Mark buries them together in Cornwall.*<sup>5</sup>

In the course of this story many similarities to the Lancelot and Guinevere love story surface. Among the two, however, the Tristan romance is less stylized to suit courtly tastes. This seems to identify it as the older of the two, and indeed, literary historians assume that the Lancelot-Guinevere romance adopted a great deal from the Tristan romance.

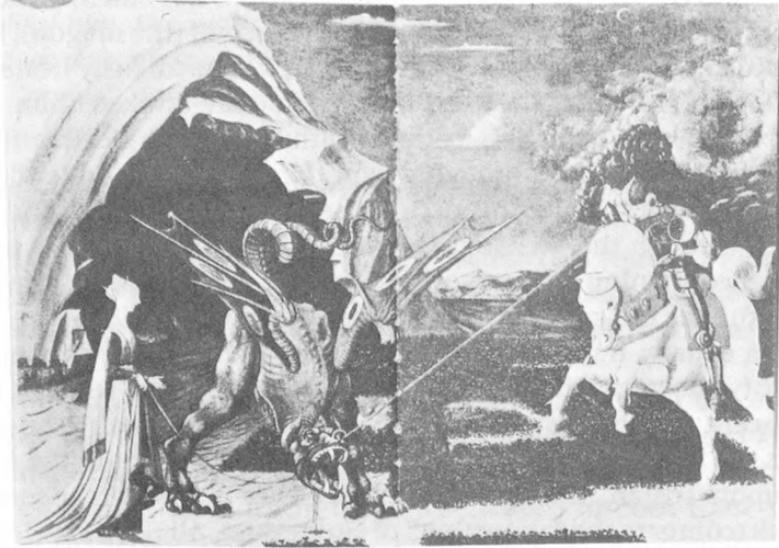
Yet in spite of similarities between individual scenes that certainly were borrowed from the Tristan romance, caution is advised against assuming a similarity to be true of the constellation as a whole. It is more interesting to compare the constellations in both these stories with the far earlier basic constellations to which they belong: the old Irish tales of *Aitheda*.

Before considering the *Aitheda* tales, though, let us analyze the Tristan story. The second part, which revolves around Tristan's exile and his marriage to the second Isolt, including its very unmotivated and forced ending, is omitted here. It is generally considered to be only a trivial continuation of the basic story, added on romantic adventures between Tristan and Isolt that have no significance. In the first part, which includes Tristan's youth, his Courting of the Bride, and the Romance preceding the Elopement into the forest, the matriarchal symbolic patterns are readily discernible.

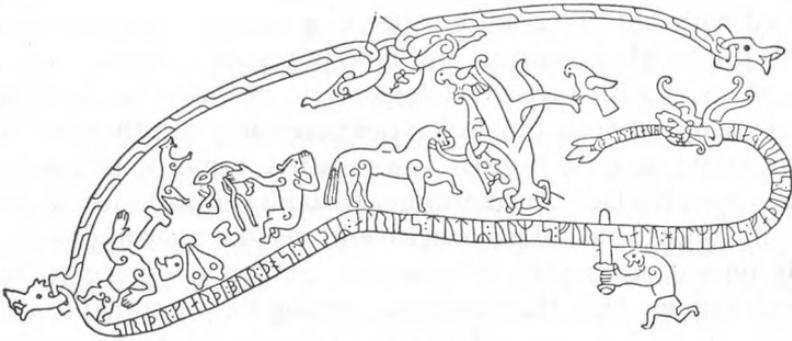
Isolt is a beautiful princess with golden hair who lives on an island (Ireland) on the far side of the ocean, which can be reached only under certain peculiar circumstances: in a boat without a rudder, and only by chance. This is precisely how one travels to the Other World islands of the fairies. Accordingly, Tristan is mortally wounded when he embarks on his journey to the Other World, carrying only his harp. He is promptly healed by the golden-haired fairy, who is a brilliant and wise doctor with magical skills; like the fairies Fand and Morgane, she can even heal from a distance. The mysterious voyage to the island, which occurs twice, is connected each time with battles: One is a battle against the mythical dragon, the other against the predecessor, Morholt. Morholt also has the sinister characteristics of a monster who demands human sacrifice (compare the Cretan Minotaur); he is a sort of human manifestation of a dragon. Both "dragons" are the primordial partners to and guardians of the fairy. Tristan conquers both after grue-

some battles (Ill. 42). After the first one (Morholt) has fallen, Tristan is mortally wounded and near death; after the second (the dragon), he is half-burned and unconscious. Both times he is miraculously healed by Isolt. The second time, she even most personally awakens him. Following this double Initiation, coupled with the double Death and Return motif, Tristan has thoroughly won the right to celebrate the Sacred Marriage with Isolt. This occurs also as an inevitability, and it is prepared through the exchange between the two of a chalice, a magical vessel containing a "love potion," as were exchanged by Erin and Lug. With that the goddess-*heros* constellation is clear.

It is equally transparent with the second and larger part of the basic story, including the constellation Mark-Isolt-Tristan, which is very reminiscent of the constellation Arthur-Guinevere-Gawain/Lancelot: Mark is the later usurping king who takes the Goddess from the *heros*, whereupon Tristan, through a series of clever maneuvers, conquers her back (compare the "abduction" of Guinevere). All the tricks Tristan employs to vanquish Mark recall the tasks of wooing that were not combative in nature, but rather were tests of cleverness and intellectual agility: mastering the harp, imitating bird's voices, creating artistic wood carvings, shooting little twigs in Isolt's garden, accomplishing gigantic leaps and comical antics, all of them marks of identity to inform Isolt of the secret or disguised presence of Tristan. Every time he performs one of these feats, a happy union with Isolt follows. Tests of cleverness and agility are earlier than battles against the predecessor. Compared with the courtly chivalry of the Arthurian world, the way of life in these legends seems altogether earlier: The architectural structure of King Mark's castle, Tintagel, is old-Irish, not French, and is supplied with but one common sleeping room for the royal couple and all the knights. Raucous and bloody scenes transpire here (e.g., ankle shackles with incisor blades present obstacles to paramours). Tristan's manner of courting Isolt is not necessarily courtly either. What knight would disguise himself as a minstrel, a monk, or a jester, in order to meet his lady? Furthermore, Tristan's exquisite artistic handicrafts, including some of his own inventions (the unerring bow), were hardly typical of knightly occupations, but were appropriate to the old-Irish heroes. Also, the paradisaical setting for the romance (Sacred Marriage) is far less civilized and less fairy-like than the castles encircled by gardens in the Arthurian epic. It occurs in a lover's hut or grotto in the wilderness of the forest. The couple's elopement into the forest is a fundamental element in the old Irish *Aitheda*, which are tales of the Elopement of Lovers. These *Aitheda* tales always end with the death of the lovers tragically entwined in love. Such an extreme is



Ill. 42: The knight kills the dragon, guardian of the woman ruler of the land



Ill. 43: Siegfried kills the dragon (Germanic cliff drawing with rune script)

totally uncourtly. No single courtly love relationship, however perilously steeped in guilt and insanity, ends in death in the Arthurian epic; even Lancelot and Guinevere survive Arthur's death, though separated. Tristan and Isolt, however, die, and in an older variant, even more directly and less contrived: They are lured out of the forest by false promises. King Mark then mortally wounds Tristan, who flees to another castle. Isolt leaves King Mark and goes to him. The dying Tristan takes her in his arms, squeezes her to death, and they die together. Here, only the three main figures are present in the end. The husband has had his own brutal and direct revenge without any thought of courtly sentimentality. We can regard this as the authentic conclusion, because this is precisely how the *Aitheda* tales end.

In the *Aitheda* tales (such as *Diarmaid and Grainne*, *Naisi and Deirdre*, *Aillill and Etain*) the following happens: A young woman is made to marry a king without having been asked, and against her will. Consequently, she hates him and soon seeks his most outstanding vassal as her lover. She is the one who chooses her lover, and he is then torn between his loyalty to the king and his love for the queen. Finally, he gives in and they elope into the forest or some other region outside the royal kingdom. With false promises they are lured back, the lover is killed, and the woman is returned to the king's jurisdiction. Ultimately, she dies there, in one way or another.

The tragic motifs of old Irish literature, drawn as they are from this subject of "unlawful" love, are far more powerful and of greater consequence than the Arthurian epic. The conflict is always between an extremely passionate love of a magical nature, and the social order. More precisely, it is between two social orders: an earlier matriarchal one and a more recent patriarchal one. These forces clash here more directly than anywhere else. It is no longer a matter of progression from one stage of matriarchy to another, but rather a transition from matriarchy to the patriarchy of the early warrior kings. It is conducted with a clarity and relentlessness that leaves nothing more to be accomplished. One of the laws established by these patriarchal warrior kings was that the crown princesses, formerly free and mighty women, must now become their wives against their will, and must remain unquestioningly faithful. As wife, she is treated as a contractual object between father and spouse. The husband considers her to be his property, to do with her in every respect as he wants. For example, he can kill her for not being faithful. According to this law, the lover is a thief and criminal who may lawfully be sentenced to death. The older matriarchal order, on the other hand, finds expression in the love relationship: The woman is the one who chooses; her lover gives himself

to her. The guiding principle is not one of ownership and control, but rather of Eros, with its magical power. Here, Eros represents, of course, the world-creating and world-sustaining principle. Thus only the rights of those who serve Eros are legitimate, because they sustain the life of the world. This love is "unlawful" only in the eyes of the new conquerors, the patriarchal warrior kings (Finn, Mark, Arthur, *et al.*).

All the queens in these *Aitheda* tales, including the queens in the Tristan romances and the Lancelot cycle, refuse to conform to patriarchal law. They act instead in accordance with their older matriarchal rights. They choose their lovers freely and give themselves to Eros. In contrast to the patriarchal warrior kings, these lovers bear fairy-like features that stress their *heros*-character: Diarmaid's magical erotic pull emanates from a beauty mark; Naisi's attraction stems from the three fairy colors he possesses: his white-red face and black hair; Aillill's double is a stranger who is Fairy King; Tristan is a dragon slayer with knowledge of all the magical arts; Lancelot, like Naisi, carries the fairy colors and is a dragon slayer as well. This means that they are all *heros*-models and were rightly chosen, for they are the original partners of the queens and once have been their Sacred Kings. From this perspective, the patriarchal king is the "thief," because he makes the matriarchal queen his conjugal possession against her will, while degrading the matriarchal king, whom he robbed of his land, to the position of his vassal. This could not have been achieved without the use of blatant force, manifested in the murder of the *heros* and the rape of the Goddess (compare especially Greek mythology). Later, that force would be perpetuated and hidden in the new patriarchal "law."

If we consider this social-historical background, perhaps we can better decipher the complete meaning of these stories of the power of Eros, which on occasion may destroy the whole patriarchal empire. The *Aitheda* tales, with its directness, clarify it: The love relationship between the queen and her "vassal" was an open revolt by the earlier order against the newer, violent, usurping order. This revolt destroyed, in the first aspect, the relationship between king and queen, denying the king a possible biological successor to uphold the kingdom. The constellation was particularly tragic for the king because, in those days, it was not the "biological son" in our sense who was of concern; the patriarchal line of inheritance from father to son was not at all strictly enforced. Instead, the legitimate successor was the nephew, the son of the sister, the matriarchal "son" and heir. It was just this "son," the legitimate heir, who was taken away from the king by the queen. Therefore, the king loses both the queen and the heir, and he was furthermore stripped of his hope for a biological son (constellations of Mark-

Isolt-Tristan, Finn-Grainne-Diarmaid, Arthur-Guinevere-Gawain, Arthur's nephew by Morcades). The constellation of Arthur-Guinevere-Lancelot was certainly not a kinship relation, like the others, but Lancelot nevertheless robbed the king of both, his queen and his dynastic successor, by killing the king's nephew and legitimate heir, Gawain, in the final duel. This event marked the beginning of the demise of Arthur's kingdom. Thus, the second aspect of the revolt of the matriarchal Eros against the new, patriarchal order becomes evident: It also destroyed the relationship of loyalty between the warriors of the king, who now killed each other off so that the kingdom finally fell apart in an act of self-destruction (constellation of Lancelot-Guinevere and the Knights of the Round Table, Naisi-Deirdre, and the Ulster warriors).

This, then, brings us back to our original question: What is the relationship between the Tristan/Lancelot stories and the old Irish *Aitheda* tales? Clearly, greater similarities exist between the basic structures of the Tristan-Isolt and Diarmaid-Grainne stories on the one side, and the Lancelot-Guinevere and Naisi-Deirdre stories on the other, than between those of Tristan-Isolt and Lancelot-Guinevere, as is often maintained. This is evident in the fact that the Tristan story, as well as the Diarmaid *Aithed* tale, turn around the theme of the queen-nephew love, which the king, in the end, quickly revenges without any danger to the stability of his kingdom. By contrast, in both the Lancelot cycle and the Naisi *Aitheda* tale, a whole spectrum of political scenery is involved in the motif of the love story, which ends in the downfall of the patriarchal warrior kings and their kingdoms (Arthur, Conor). Also Naisi, like Lancelot, is not the king's nephew, but nonetheless is an insuperable warrior surrounded by his male relatives who are competent warriors, too (altogether three brothers, the sons of Usnach. Compare Lancelot and his two brothers, Lionel and Ektor, who are also three warriors). Furthermore, Naisi, like Lancelot, wears the three fairy colors and both of them elope with their queens to another land (in the case of Lancelot, the elopement with his queen and the flight to another land are separate). In both cases, the enemy kings follow them there, and in the end, their kingdoms crumble in a fratricidal strife called forth by betrayal (Arthur opposing Mordred, Conor opposing Fergus).

Taking all this into consideration, we cannot assume that the basic structures of the Tristan-Isolt and the Lancelot-Guinevere stories are congruent, or that the latter is a replica of the former and, consequently, a "later invention." The basic structures of the Tristan romances and the Lancelot cycle are not at all similar, but rather, each

can be traced to a corresponding *Aithed* tale (the connection between the Tristan romances and the Diarmaid tale has been recognized by scholarly research on the subject). This means that the Lancelot-Guinevere constellation is at least as old as that of Tristan-Isolt. Both possess the complete contents of the *Aitheda* from which they originated: the rebellion against the forceful rule of early patriarchy.

# THE NIBELUNGENLIED AND SIEGFRIED LEGENDS\*

## Summary (as written in the sources)

*The story of Siegfried's youth: Siegfried is raised by a dwarf in the wilderness who teaches him the art of smithery. Siegfried forges a sword for himself that he uses to slay a dragon (Ill. 43). This wins for him the dragon's hoard, a treasure of gold, and a Tarnkappe, a magical cap that makes the wearer invisible. On one of his journeys, he comes to a fabulous rock where the armored and armed virgin, Brunhild, a Valkyrie, is asleep. He springs on his horse through the magical circle of fire surrounding the jutting rock, and awakens the virgin. He stays with her for a while, receives from her a ring as a pledge of her love, then continues on his way.*

*The Nibelungenlied: Siegfried comes as Prince of Xanthen (Lower Rhine), to Worms-on-the-Rhine where King Gunther of Burgundy lives with his brothers and his sister, Kriemhild. Siegfried and Kriemhild fall in love, but before they can marry, Siegfried must win the hand of Queen Brunhild for Gunther. Siegfried and Gunther travel to Brunhild's distant queendom, where Brunhild recognizes Siegfried. Because, however, he has come on Gunther's behalf, she suggests difficult contests of strength that Gunther would never be able to win against her. Siegfried makes himself invisible with his magical cap and is thus able to win each contest for the sake of Gunther. Now, Brunhild has to follow Gunther to Worms, where two weddings are celebrated at once, that of Gunther and Brunhild, and that of Siegfried and Kriemhild. But even on the wedding night, Siegfried must coerce the strong and willful Brunhild on Gunther's behalf.*

*Queen Brunhild and Queen Kriemhild get in a fight over who is higher in royal rank, and in her rage, Kriemhild reveals to Brunhild how she was duped by Siegfried. Brunhild then vows to exact revenge*

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\* "Nibelungenlied," "Sigdrifumal," "Thidreks Saga," "Sigurdlied," "Seyfridlied"

*upon Siegfried and enlists Hagen to murder him. While on a stag hunt, Hagen kills Siegfried from behind, then under cover of night sinks Siegfried's treasure, the dragon's hoard, in the Rhine.*

*Vowing to exact revenge on Hagen and her brothers who protect the murderer, Kriemhild marries the King of the Huns, Etzel (Attila), and departs from Worms to become queen of Hungary. After a while, she invites her brothers and Hagen to come there, where they are betrayed and attacked by the Huns. In spite of Etzel's attempts at appeasement, heated battles ensue in which many Huns and all of the Burgundians are slaughtered. Gunther and Hagen, the last of them, are paraded before Kriemhild in chains, and Kriemhild demands that Hagen return to her Siegfried's treasure. When he refuses to reveal its location, Kriemhild orders Gunther's death and decapitates Hagen with her own hand. Finally, Dietrich of Bern, condemning her for the chain of murders, kills her with his sword.<sup>6</sup>*

As with the other materials researched here, a distinction is made between the several chronological layers: (1) the mythical-cultic layer of pre-Indo-European origin; (2) the mythical-cultic layer of Celtic origin (stemming from the Late Celtic Period, which is a Celtic-Germanic mixed culture on the Lower Rhine); (3) the historical layer that includes an assimilation of known historical personalities; (4) the medieval layer that introduced courtly and Christian elements. What interests us in this context are the two mythical layers, inasmuch as traces of them are still present in the Siegfried legends and the Nibelungenlied. They can be reconstructed in their systematic coherence partly through folkloristic and archeological research and partly through comparative mythology. Literary historians consider as authentic Siegfried legends: (1) his youth and battle with the dragon; (2) the awakening of the virgin on the rock, and (3) his death on the hunt. Considered as later additions are: the legend of courtship (where Siegfried woos Brunhild on Gunther's behalf), the legend of the Albenhort (where Siegfried acquires the treasure in a battle with elves who are powerful dwarves), and the whole part of the demise of the Burgundians; this latter part, in particular, is considered as historical and not mythical.

The authentic Siegfried legends, then, revolve around two main characters, Siegfried and Brunhild. The story shows conclusively our structure of matriarchal mythology: Initiation expressed through the battle against the dragon; the awakening of the virgin and the Sacred Marriage; Death during the hunt, caused by the very same virgin. Let us examine these three parts of the story more closely: Siegfried is a wild child of unknown origin who grows up under perilous circum-

stances (as did the Irish *heros* Finn and Parsifal). He battles elves, dwarves of extraordinary powers (as did all the Celtic heroes), especially, though, with a dragon (as did Tristan and Lancelot). The impression of there being a great physical distance separating the dragon from the desired virgin has been created as a result of additions to the story. However, two elements of the battle against the dragon provide telling evidence: by tasting only one drop of the dragon's blood, Siegfried understands the birds' voices. This means magical inspiration through the power of the Death Goddess (compare Finn and Taliesin); the latter, after drinking but a few drops from the Cauldron of Inspiration, suddenly understands the voices of all animals and possesses all knowledge). We must take into consideration the fact that the "dragon" not only appears in the form of a guardian of the Goddess, but can also represent the Death Goddess herself. Furthermore, Siegfried discovers a treasure of gold in the dragon's cave. Gold is the mythical symbol of the wealth of fertility in the womb of the Earth. What is more, in the treasure he finds a golden ring (the "Ring of the Nibelungen") which, too, possesses magical properties. As with Odin's mythical ring, Draupnir, it dispenses riches by virtue of its inexhaustible capacity for self-reproduction. Originally it belonged to Brunhild, who gave it to Siegfried as a farewell gift, in the same way that many Celtic heroes received rings from their fairies (compare Lancelot). Furthermore, Siegfried acquires and wears a *Tarnkappe*, a magical cap or mask which, when donned, makes him "invisible."

After slaying the dragon, Siegfried wins the virgin Brunhild on the Rock of the Hind ("Hindarfjall") where she is encircled by the ring of fire. This clearly demonstrates her Amazonian character (the Goddess in her first aspect). For that reason, Siegfried must first cut through her armor with his sword, and later has to win contests of strength against her. Prior to this, she is deep in sleep, as was Sleeping Beauty in the hedge of roses, or Morgane the Fairy in her magically sealed gardens of fertility. She sleeps in her castle on her island, i.e., in the Other World (the Goddess in her third aspect). That Siegfried's journey to Brunhild is an Underworld journey is discernible not only because he crosses the ocean, but even more clearly in his jump through the ring of fire that seals her island hermetically, the same as with Morgane's magic wall of air. In one tale, Morgane, like Brunhild, even sleeps inside the fire ring, namely, on the peak of Mt. Etna (*Floriant et Florete*). This rotating wall of flames around a castle is, furthermore, the mythical symbol of the heavenly vault which rotates with its sidereal fires. The heavenly castle, too, hosts an enclosed virgin, Blathnat, the Goddess of Spring and Flowers (*Cuchulainn* legend). Just as the Celtic fertility

Goddess Blathnat is released by the solar *heros* Cuchulainn, Brunhild is released by the golden-haired solar *heros*, Siegfried.

Is Brunhild also a fertility goddess? Indeed, for barely has she awakened than she blesses the green, budding land. She gives Siegfried a horn full of mead as a drink for remembering their Sacred Marriage; we are familiar with the "horn" as the Horn of Plenty, and mead as an intoxicating, inspirational drink. As we know, the transfer of the horn or chalice is symbolic of the Sacred Marriage itself (compare the Grail) (*Sigrdrifumal*). Here, Brunhild appears as the Goddess in her second aspect, not unlike Morgane. Similarly, she is extremely wise, for she alone knows and reveals to Siegfried the truth of his origin. Furthermore, she gives him a magic ring and the miracle horse, Grani, as does Morgane, the Giver of Horses (*Thidreks Saga*). Even in the Nibelungenlied, Brunhild possesses a magic belt that makes her so strong no man (but Siegfried) can take it from her. From Greek mythology we know that this belt has to do with the magic power of love (compare Aphrodite). Brunhild is also, like her mythological predecessor Morgane, a Goddess of Love and Fertility. The Goddess Freyja, too, is perhaps another mythological predecessor of Brunhild, for as Goddess of Battles she is the prototype of all subsequent Valkyries. Brunhild, too, is described as an Amazonian Valkyrie. Like Morgane, Freyja is also a Love and Fertility Goddess, for she possesses a magical necklace (love charm) and she makes everything burst into bloom in the spring. Freyja and her brother-groom Freyr are far more ancient than we see them in Germanic tradition. They, too, went through a period in which they were adapted to a Celtic and later Germanic world view.

Brunhild's aspect as Death Goddess is clearly expressed, too, for she is the catalyst for Siegfried's death in every version of the material. This happens sometimes directly through her use of "witchcraft" (Merowinger version), and sometimes indirectly through the cyclical predecessor-successor, Hagen, with whom she contracts to kill Siegfried. Because Hagen is already associated with Gunther, the patriarchal warrior king, one might conclude that this is a case of the Celtic-matriarchal solar *heros* being liquidated by the advancing Germanic warrior kings. The matter is not as simple as that. In the Celtic as well as in the Germanic myths, there is the pattern in which the dying and returning solar king is killed cyclically by the winter king, who relieves him of his position for the duration of the dark winter months (compare the Celtic pair of Havgn the Light, and Arawn the Gray; compare the Germanic pair Baldur the radiant one, and Hödur who is blinded by fog). The similarities between Siegfried and Baldur have been substantiated by scholarly research. These similarities also exist between Hödur

and Hagen, meaning that the figure of Hagen is much older than the Burgundian kings.

In the case of Siegfried-Hagen, we are lucky that there has been discovered (through archeology and folkloristic studies) an ancient European cult game originating in pre-Indo-European times, that shows precisely these events and, overall, which corresponds with our matri-archal structural pattern: the cult game "Hunting the Stag." These kind of cult games were conducted using masks of sacred animals, in this case, the stag; thus, Siegfried's magical cap was a stag mask. This would explain why he was called the "horned" or "horny Siegfried": it is not because he wore a horny layer, but because he wore stag antlers (compare the Gaelic God Cernunnos, who is a *heros*).

The cult game "Hunting the Stag" consists of two parts: an erotic game of the stag, and a game of hunting and killing the stag. In the erotic game, the "stag wins the "hind" (doe), who is, of course, the virgin on the "Rock of the Hind." In the hunting and killing game the "stag" is killed by the shot of an arrow fired by the gray Wild Hunter (winter king) at the onset of winter, and is then drawn through the region on a sled. We can assume that in the beginning the death of the "stag" was real, then later symbolic. In both cases it was a ritual death of the *heros*. Siegfried was killed in the same way at the hand of the gray, gloomy Hagen: with the thrust of his spear during a stag hunt. The word "stag" that Hagen ironically used before the hunt began, was meant for Siegfried (compare this and other stag metaphors for Siegfried, which run though the Nibelungenlied as incoherent motifs).

The sacred stag often occurs in mythology: I have already mentioned the Celtic-Gaelic Cernunnos, although unfortunately, we do not know a lot about him. The Germanic God Freyr is also accompanied by a stag. Freyr, clearly a Fertility God, is son of the Earth Goddess Nerthus and brother to the Goddess Freyja. Ingwi-Freyr is a similarly luminous figure, like Baldur and Siegfried. He is, like the others, not at all of Germanic origin but rather pre-Indo-European; he was later subjected to Celtic and Germanic influences. Presumably, he died a cyclical death as did Baldur and Siegfried, but we have no evidence of this. What we do have is evidence of the classical death of the stag-*heros* from Greek mythology: Artemis, Goddess of the Amazons of Ephesos, first transforms her *heros* Acteon into a stag, then kills him with a single shot of her arrow. She does not even need a Hagen to help her. Her mythological sister in the Celtic region, the Goddess Liban, is, by contrast, more gentle in her handling of the stags: she ranges them

before her chariot or, in winter, before her sled. Or did she perhaps place the dead "stag" atop the sled in winter?

This is the most ancient level of the Siegfried legends and of the Nibelungenlied, in which the pre-Indo-European mythology merges with Indo-European-Celtic elements. In spite of the way it has been shattered into fragments, which I have combined here, in mosaic fashion, it clearly demonstrates the figures of Brunhild and Siegfried being the typical constellation of the matriarchal goddess-*heros* pair. This illustrates how non-Germanic the "Germanic hero" Siegfried is. And not only this, he is thoroughly matriarchal.

This level was later almost completely concealed when the German warrior king, Gunther, entered the picture and did what all patriarchal warrior kings did: He took the Goddess (Brunhild) from her *heros*, made her abandon her island queendom to become his wife and possession, and degraded the *heros* (Siegfried) to his vassal. What is particularly perverse in this story is that the *heros* must now help the king, through deception and betrayal, to win away his own Goddess, even during the wedding night. Cynically, he is therefore seen as particularly stupid, and because of his ignorance, must be killed by Hagen, whose function, too, has been twisted.

The deformation of the pattern of action is by no means unintentional, as is recognizable in the role of Kriemhild: She is Gunther's obedient sister and is quickly placed in the forefront to make the *heros* forget his Goddess. To do this, though, she must borrow the Goddess' most significant attribute: She gives Siegfried, the *heros*, a chalice filled with a "drink for forgetting," thus imitating Brunhild's Horn of Plenty, which was filled with a drink for remembering. Siegfried immediately forgets Brunhild and falls in love with Kriemhild, so fixated is he on the transfer of the chalice! In this manner, we come to the absurd double wedding of the matriarchal Goddess with the patriarchal warrior king, on the one hand, and the matriarchal *heros* with the patriarchal king's sister, on the other. Naturally, this cannot go well. Under these conditions, the rebellious flame of matriarchal Eros cannot even flicker between the king's wife and his best vassal (as it did in the *Aitheda*); all that is sparked by these perversions is deep-seated hatred. Hatred, in the eyes of the early patriarchy, was the sole reason the *heros* had to die, just as deception was the only means by which the Goddess could be won.

This new moral consensus is also expressed in the second part of the Nibelungenlied, in the demise of the Burgundians. They fall in the same way they rose to power: in endless bloody slaughters that, in the end, pit them against themselves. Here, Kriemhild figures prominently,

but are her motives not of a superior nature? Ultimately, she causes the Burgundian kingdom to fall to avenge Siegfried's death. The kingdom falls, then, not as a result of Siegfried's rebellious Eros (something he did not have), but as a result of his death. This is, at any rate, the common assumption and an understandable explanation for Kriemhild's tragic motif.

However, upon examining the conclusion of the *Nibelungenlied*, we are disappointed: Nothing more is said of Siegfried's death, only of Siegfried's treasure. This means that between the adversaries Hagen and Kriemhild, the issue is no longer about mythical fertility, but about economic value, material wealth, and power. This is the reason Hagen sank the gold and why Kriemhild wants it back. When she does not succeed, she kills both Gunther and Hagen. We see, then, that she is true to her patriarchal conditioning. If we place these poetic images against the actual historical background surrounding them and take them seriously, as we should, we can say that at this time early patriarchy reached one of its first summits.



# TRANSFORMATIONS OF MATRIARCHAL MYTHOLOGY IN THE EPICS



In the different epic materials of the Middle Ages we have found parallels that link entire symbolic patterns. These parallels produce a general structure that the epics, in their total composition, follow.<sup>7</sup> This composition is characterized by the triadic sequences of Initiation, Marriage (climax), and Death (decline) and Return of the *heros*. These sequences are interconnected by a double-adventure course of action which replicates precisely the fairy tales with their double course of action. This structure is not only present in the total composition, the majority of single episodes follow the same pattern: The diverse episodes of the heroes' castle adventures consistently lead to Initiation struggles, gain of the mistress's love and her castle and land, followed by the problematic abandonment of the lady. (An analysis of the individual episodes is omitted here in favor of representing the epics as a whole.)

Such striking similarities between the symbolic and structural patterns of the medieval epics, together with their parallels to the structure of the fairy tales, is not coincidental: We have recognized in them, in great as in little things, the structure of matriarchal mythology, and have interpreted them in the light of their cultural and social-historical background. Furthermore, we have pointed out that the layerings of symbolic patterns are correlated with each successive social-historical overlay, since the transformations of the symbols appear simultaneously with the advent of recognizable social changes. The rules of transformation refer us further to the social function that the deformations of mythical world views have in conjunction with the changing of the social systems; the issues touched upon only implicitly thus far will now be made explicit.

In the discussion above, the connection was established between four cultural-historical epochs that led to the European Middle Ages and the various stages of transformation of matriarchal mythology in the medieval epics: (1) the pre-Indo-European cultic stage; (2) the Celtic-cultic stage; (3) the stage of migration of the Germanic peoples, during

which older mythological patterns were combined with prominent historical figures of the time, thus creating a patriarchal shift in meaning; (4) the medieval stage, during which the legends were transformed: (a) into epic compositions, (b) the contents were Christianized (through moralization), and (c) the epic materials were adapted to the courtly conventions (through rationalizing, psychologizing, and adaptation to courtly tastes). All the medieval epics dealt with here went through these phases and were transformed in the characteristic manner demonstrated by the comparisons in the accompanying table.

The first structure of symbols which belongs to the oldest matriarchal constellation of Goddess and *Heros* of Fertility (God/King), is a component of the pre-Indo-European level. In Ireland, it was Erin, the Goddess of the Land of Ireland, and the God Lug; together they celebrated *Lugnasad*, or "Lug's Marriage" in an annual event, thus restoring the land's fertility for the coming year. Participating are Lug, the God with the spear (symbol of sexuality), and Erin, the Goddess with the chalice (symbol of sexuality), which she gives to him, and later, to the Irish kings who functioned as his "sons." This initiated them as kings and permitted them to celebrate the Sacred Marriage with her. The same occurs between the Goddess Morcades (Morrigan-Morgane) and her King Loth (Lancelot) who, like her, wears the three sacred colors. In Wales, the vessel of abundance is exchanged between Modron and Bran. The relationship between the Goddess Isolt, or the Virgin on the "Rock of the Hind," and their male partners, is less classical in nature, but thus also more primal. These male partners appear in the much earlier form of a dragon-snake (phallic symbol) or a monsterking with barely recognizable human traits (Morholt). This symbolism belongs to the most ancient matriarchal stage, whereas the Irish and Welsh constellation reflects the developed stage, which had, however, not yet progressed from a chthonic to an astral religion; it precedes the Celtic phase with its solar *heros*.

The second structure of symbols belongs to the Celtic level. The pre-Indo-European peoples of Europe were suppressed by the first wave of light-haired Indo-Europeans, the Celts, who opposed the ancient cults. The symbolism reflects the struggles in the recurring constellation of two parties fighting over the Goddess, or Queen, who represents the land itself. The abduction of the Goddess-Queen signifies the conquest of her cult or her cult site, i.e., of her land, the fertile Earth. We can assume that the defenders surrendered as soon as the conquerors took possession of the cult site. Immediately afterward, the Celtic invaders assumed the place of the earlier *heros*-kings in the cult and in the land, and in this manner, they became the successor-spouses to

the Goddess, in accordance with the same mythical way of thinking (Celtic-matriarchal mixed culture). One of the first shifts toward patriarchy is evident here, but it became, to a large extent, absorbed by the rich tradition of matriarchal culture. Our symbolism is proof: Instead of the Underworld *heros*, there now appears the golden-haired solar *heros*. Instead of the peaceful transfer to the designated successor of the Goddess' "chalice," there are now constant bloody battles that surround its acquisition and succession. Until the exception of Parsifal, the golden-haired conquerors remain ever victorious. Still, the mythical structure of Initiation, Sacred Marriage, and Death and Return is retained completely intact, and the new mythical *heros* adhere to the laws of the ancient Goddesses.

Thus, the golden-haired Cuchulainn prevails over his gargantuan predecessor Curoi to win the Flower Goddess Blathnat. At the same time, he passes through his yearly phases of death. Ywain wins the hand of Laudine by prevailing over the *Heros* of Atmosphere, personified again by Curoi, but as a consequence he must meet with her laws. The golden-haired Gwri-Gawain, clad and armored in red and carrying red weapons (the Red Knight figure as the solar *heros*), prevails in the Other World over his earlier predecessor, Melwas-Meleagant, to win Guinevere. She, too, has changed her appearance: Instead of the black-haired Goddess or Fairy, with Mabonagrinn as her solar *heros*, she is a golden-haired queen, the perfect example of the new standard for beauty. Tristan, like Gawain, wins a golden-haired queen, but almost dies in the battle against his predecessor, King Morholt. Siegfried is the sunny, golden-haired solar *heros par excellence*, but also nearly dies in the process of winning Brunhild. Parsifal, on the other hand, belongs to the old school, being a directly descended "son" of Bran; he wants the Grail (Goddess) himself. In his efforts, he becomes entangled in heavy battles with the Celtic solar *heros* (Clan of the Red Knights), who murdered his "father." He is the sole exception to the rule of Celtic influence on patriarchy: In the end, he is content to receive his inheritance by way of the classical transfer of the chalice.

The third structure of symbols brings with it an end to the mythical-cultic way of thinking. The *heros* are now confronted with the brutal warrior kings of the period of Germanic invasions. They conquered Europe in several waves, and plundered and appropriated the old cults yet again. A second shift toward patriarchy occurred: the land suddenly came under the sole possession of the king for his lifetime. With the introduction of vassalage a strict hierarchical social order was established, headed by a single individual, the king. The Goddess-Queen of the old cults became the lifelong spouse of this single king. This was

Transformations (1)	Greece	Crete	Egypt	Sumeria/Babylon	Asia Minor/Palestine
<p><b>1. Structure:</b> Pre-Indo-European level (Mother Goddess-<i>Heros</i>)</p> <p>a) early matriarchy</p> <p>b) advanced matriarchy</p> <p>c) cyclical Battle of Demons</p>	<p>a) Gaia-Uranus (Eurynome)</p> <p>b) Artemis-Aceteon, Aphrodite-Adonis, Athena-Erechtheus, Hera-Heracles, Demeter-Iakchus/Dionysus</p> <p>c) —</p>	<p>a) Gaia-Uranus, Rhea-Chronus</p> <p>b) Rhea/Dictyanna-Zeus, Hera-Zeus, Demeter-Dionysus/Zagreus</p> <p>c) —</p>	<p>a) Nout/Neit-Ra</p> <p>b) Hathor-Horus, Isis-Osiris</p> <p>c) Ra-Apophis, Osiris-Seth</p> <p>a) (Earth God Geb)</p> <p>b) Ra-Hathor</p> <p>c) Ra as father to all gods, i.e., Ra-Hathor, Ra-Isis (Ra-Osiris, Ra-Seth)</p> <p>d) —</p> <p>e) Isis cult</p> <p>DOWNFALL</p>	<p>a) (Tiamat)</p> <p>b) Inanna - Dumuzi, Ishtar-Tammuz/Marduk</p> <p>c) Marduk-Tiamat</p>	<p>a) (Rahab, Iahu)</p> <p>b) Kubaba-Teshub, Cybele-Attis, Atargatis-Hadad, Anat-Baal, Hawwa/Eve-Adam</p> <p>c) Anat-Mot, Jehovah-Rahab</p> <p>a) Iahu-Eve to Jahweh/Jehovah (the dove representing the masculine spirit)</p> <p>b) Jahweh-Iahu</p> <p>c) Jahweh as Father God and all his descendants (Eve-Adam)</p> <p>d) Lucifer's revolt against Jahweh</p> <p>e) Cybele-Cult, popular Anat-Baal cult</p>
<p><b>2. Structure:</b> Indo-European level (Father God-Goddess)</p> <p>a) masculinization of the Goddess</p> <p>b) Goddess as wife of the patriarchal god</p> <p>c) Goddess as daughter (<i>Heros</i> as son) of the patriarchal god</p> <p>d) the Myth of Rebellion</p> <p>e) emergence of a patriarchal counter culture (secret cults/subculture)</p>	<p>a) —</p> <p>b) Olympian Zeus-Hera, Poseidon-Demeter, Hades-Kore</p> <p>c) Olympian Zeus-Artemis, Zeus-Aphrodite, Zeus-Athena (Zeus-Dionysus, Zeus-Heracles)</p> <p>d) Rebellion of the gods against the Olympian Zeus, led by Hera/The Titan Rebellion</p> <p>e) the Cult of Demeter of Eleusis (Greece), the Isis and Cybele cults, Orphean/Dionysian Mysteries (Rome)</p>	<p>a) Greek-Orthodox Christianity</p> <p>b) the teachings of classical philosophy</p>	<p>a) Coptic Christianity</p> <p>b) Islam</p>	<p>a) Islam, early Christianity</p> <p>b) Islam</p>	
<p><b>3. Structure:</b> Patriarchal world religions (universal Father God)</p> <p>a) abstract mythology</p> <p>b) philosophical abstractions</p>					

Transformations (2)	Persia	India	Europe: The Celts	Europe: The Germanic Tribes
<b>1. Structure:</b> Pre-Indo-European level (Mother Goddess-Heros)	a) Nanaia b) Anahita-Mitra (Ahura-Mazda-Anahita)	a) Prithivi, Uma b) Sarasvati-Brahma, Shakti-Shiva, Lakshmi-Vishnu	a) Dana-Dagda b) Modron Morrigain-Bran, Erin-Lug	a) Jörd-Tyr-Heimdall b) Freyja-Freyr, Frigga-Od/Baldur
a) early matriarchy				
b) advanced matriarchy				
c) cyclical Battle of Demons	c) Mitra-Darkness	c) Shakti (Kali)-Demons, Lakschmi/Gods-Demons	c) Gods-Fomore	c) Gods of Sun-Loki
<b>2. Structure:</b> Indo-European level (Father God-Goddess)	a) Nanaia to Nanna, Ahura-Mazda (masculine) b) Mithras-Anahita	a) — b) Dyaus Pitar-Prithivi, Brahma-Uma/Sarasvati/Gayatri, Vishnu-Lakshmi	a) Dana to Don (Donnus) b) Brian/Juchar/Jucharba-Bamba/Eire/Folla	a) Jörd to Njörd b) Odin-Frigga
a) masculinization of the Goddess				
b) Goddess as wife of the patriarchal god		c) Dyaus Pitar/Vishnu as the father of all gods, Brahma as the highest principle	c) all gods as children of Don	c) Njörd-Freyja (Njörd-Freyr), Odin-Valkyries, (Odin-Baldur)
c) Goddess as daughter (heros as son) of the patriarchal god	DOWNFALL	d) —	d) Erin (Lug) opposing the Fomore, Bran (Branwen) opposing Ireland	d) The Vanir led by Jörd against the Aesir led by Odin, Loki against the gods
d) the Myth of Rebellion			e) popular belief in fairies	e) popular belief in the Earth Mother
e) emergence of a matriarchal counter culture (secret cults/subculture)		e) popular Kali cult, popular Shiva cult		
<b>3. Structure:</b> Patriarchal world religions (universal Father God)	a) Zarathustra-Religion (Zoroastrianism) b) Islam	a) Hinduism (Brahma/Shiva) b) Buddhism	a) Celtic Christianity b) Philosophy and modern science	a) Roman Christianity b) Philosophy and modern science
a) abstract mythology				
b) philosophical abstractions				
			DOWNFALL	DOWNFALL

a logical development because whoever wanted to own the land for himself for a lifetime must, according to the old way of thinking, perform the feat of securing exclusive, lifelong possession of the Goddess-Queen, who symbolized the land. This explains why lifelong fidelity on the part of the queen-wife was so important in early patriarchy—it was not to secure patrilineal descent, but to secure the land in the hands of the king. This also explains the violence with which the fidelity of the queen-wife, and thus of the land, was imposed. It also explains why infidelity on the part of the queen-wife, in a majority of cases, resulted in such devastating consequences for the kingdom (compare the *Aitheda*). In this manner the old mythical way of thinking continued to have an effect, though it involved a complete reversal of values. The remnants of symbols that did not fall prey to this type of distortion were used by the new masters to veil the violent acts they committed in a mythical aura: this is where the process of transforming mythology into ideology sets in (Celtic-Germanic mixed culture).

The fundamental social changes that occurred through the patriarchalization process show themselves in our epic material in the following rules of transformation: The symbolism of the mythical *heros* and pairs is first absorbed by the newly arrived and now powerful warrior kings. It was thus that Arthur, a Celtic warrior king, who gradually and in a brutal way conquered the matriarchies of Britain, subjugated the earlier *heros*-kings as his vassals. His “nephews” (Gawain and his brothers, sons of his fairy “sisters”) were especially devoted to him, but his betrayal also began in their ranks (Mordred): they vacillated between opportunism and rebellion. Parsifal did not share the fate of the other vassals because he kept himself apart, engaged with searching for and defending the Grail. Because of his opposition, he later became a sacrifice to the most zealous Christianization.

Loth's fate was unique: After Arthur finally succeeded with great difficulty in vanquishing him through deception, he became a sort of “conditional” vassal in the figure of Lancelot. He always managed to maintain certain liberties in the form of secret realms to which he retreated. Arthur constantly sent all his knights out in search of him. His Goddess, Morcades-Morrigan-Morgane, too, eluded Arthur's worst form of subordination: She never became wife to a king or knight and was thus never stripped of her Goddess character. She was always the Fairy personified. Yet, as Arthur's “sister,” her prestige was misused to elevate him to a mythical level: She was forced to hand over her magical Round Table for his knights; furthermore, the famous sword Excalibur, that lent him invincibility, was hers from the onset; the magical tent that could house an entire army, but which at the same

time could be folded and made tiny, was given to Arthur by her, too. Finally, in the myth of Avalon, she secured his immortality and inspired his followers to believe in his return. We see, then, that all his glory was borrowed, but he shows little gratitude toward Morgane: He never trusts her completely; she stands under constant suspicion of having a wavering demeanor, of unpredictability, of malice, of betrayal. It does not occur to him to accept her as his teacher as Lancelot does, and as is appropriate to her status as Goddess-Fairy. His teacher is a man, Merlin, the sorcerer who is, of course, constantly pursued by "evil sorceresses" who are fairies (Viviane, Nimue). Guinevere is the pivotal figure between Loth-Lancelot and his re-styled Goddess, Morgane, on the one hand, and King Arthur, on the other. The unresolved conflict between them ultimately leads to the demise of Arthur's kingdom.

The other warrior kings have similar experiences: The warrior king, Mark of Cornwall, who took the Goddess Isolt from Tristan and subordinated this *heros* as his "nephew," is constantly confronted by the rebellion of the total Eros, which destroys all his subsequent relationships. The warrior king, Gunther of Burgundy, who usurped Siegfried's Goddess Brunhild and made Siegfried dependent on him, is no longer confronted by ardent Eros, but by sweltering hatred. This, too, is enough to let his kingdom collapse in ruin.

The new law of fidelity can be inferred from the queen-wives as a particularly severe fate. Not only is the former Goddess-Queen forcibly drawn into and kept in the warrior-king's possession, when she rebels, she is subjected to the most horrible fate a matriarchal person could meet: she is condemned to death by fire. Thus Guinevere and Isolt are sentenced to be burned at the stake, and Brunhild suffers a questionable "free-willed" death by fire (variant). In this way, the warrior kings decide not only over the earthly life and death of their queen-wives, but even over their eternal life and eternal death. Because their bodies would be completely destroyed, their corpses would not be returned to the womb of Mother Earth; they therefore would not be able to emerge again in the cycle of rebirths. According to matriarchal beliefs, the destruction of their physical bodies in death by fire would permanently oust them from this cycle. The queens barely escape this gruesome fate only through the spirited intervention of their humiliated *heros*-lovers (see Guinevere-Lancelot, Isolt-Tristan).

Regarding the fourth structure of symbols: the brutal customs common to the barbarian invasions and the warrior kings of this time did not continue; the process of civilization set in to soothe and disguise the blatant patriarchal cruelty. In accordance with medieval courtly

culture, everything became "rationalized" and analyzed in "psychological" terms, and the Christian church did the rest by spiritualizing the new laws.

Accordingly, our epic material is again transformed. Tragic conclusions like that of the double-death of a matriarchal pair (compare *Aitheda*), are toned down. The lovers are perhaps allowed to survive as sinners and penitents (Lancelot-Guinevere). Or, simpler yet, the material is expanded with the serial introduction of more and more episodes, so that the pair survives for the sole purpose of playing a role in the sequel; once they finally do die, no one knows anymore why they did (Tristan-Isolt). This later composition of the epic material not only blurs the patriarchal double punishment, it also erases the lucidity and significance of the inherent structure of the matriarchal mythology. Thus, the original pattern of meanings is marred by a series of "discrepancies." Literary historians still wrestle with them today: for example, Tristan's delayed, inexplicable death (in the second part); or Siegfried's unclear relationship to Brunhild resulting from the omission of their "engagement" (Nibelungenlied); or the disassociation of the Question of Revenge and the Quest for the Grail in Parsifal; or Laudine's dubious character in *Yvain*, and Erec's dubious behavior toward Enite. The best composition of the epic material is found in the fusion of the Lancelot and Arthur materials in the Lancelot cycle. They form the most monumental epic creation of the European Middle Ages. Here we find a perfect merger of overt and covert meanings, though undoubtedly this merger is not intentional. In the former analysis, these meanings are hinted at in the ambiguity. The next step is to work them out in the context of the greater social-historical background. This involves a new reversal of the material, but now from a matriarchal point of view, which leads to the following interpretation:

*The warrior king Arthur founded the Round Table by means of the power and magical objects of the matriarchal Goddess Morcades-Morgane (Britain). The fact that she never became the possession of Arthur as his queen-wife can be attributed to the heroic struggle of her former god, Lug, and her later heros-king, Loth-Lancelot, who are mythologically analogous. Thus, Arthur is forced to enter a political compromise and make her into his relatively independent "sister." Still, he accuses her of a great deal of malice. In the meantime, Lug-Loth-Lancelot has been recovering from the rigors of the battles at the bottom of a lake where the realm of his Goddess is situated (here he is "son" of Morgane as the Lady of the Lake). He therefore arrives late at the Round Table to line up with the rest of the king's vassals. As we*

soon discover, though, his intent was subversive. Defeated by Arthur and robbed of his queen (Morgane and Britain), Lancelot takes Arthur's queen, Guinevere, away from him at first sight. He does so, however, not through force of weapons, but through the matriarchal Eros. Perhaps he hopes, by winning her, to win back the land (Britain) from the usurper, Arthur.

It does not matter to Lug-Loth-Lancelot that his actions serve to oust the solar heros Gawain from the role of the queen's lover. Gawain, after all, has let himself be corrupted by Arthur and made into his "nephew." He could not even manage to defend Guinevere from falling into Arthur's possession. In any case, Lug-Loth-Lancelot has something against the Celtic solar heros, who at one time imagined taking Morgane away from him. That, however, was long ago. Now there was the even stronger Arthur on the scene. Lug-Loth-Lancelot pretends to be on friendly terms with Gawain while in Arthur's court, but he secretly despises him. That is why he almost lets him drown on the lower underwater bridge while he himself crosses over the sword bridge. Meanwhile, he frees and makes love to the queen.

Afterward, he revels in the ecstasy and the agony of his love. Unfortunately, Guinevere, under Arthur's rule, is often domineering toward Lug-Loth-Lancelot. Still, he remains hopeful that she will again learn to act in accordance with the matriarchal Eros. When he is exhausted by their misunderstandings, he retreats into "solitude," or so he says. Actually, though, each time he goes to the magic realm of his Goddess, where his power is rejuvenated: to Morgane-Elaine, as Fairy of the Moon. His absences make Guinevere jealous and Arthur nervous. Arthur, therefore, sends his knights after him to find out what his plans are.

Morgane-Elaine has given Lug-Loth-Lancelot a son, Galahad, who immediately performs his designated task. He seeks to win back his rightful inheritance, the Grail (Goddess of Britain). His father, Lancelot, lost the Grail; that is why he has bad dreams about this magical vessel; he is all too familiar with its properties. According to the legend, Galahad succeeds in finding the Grail, but suffers a premature death in the process because he cannot deal with the reality of the situation.

Since Lug-Loth-Lancelot was unable to win back Britain through his son, he tries another approach: For a second time he engages in war against Arthur, but Arthur would rather see his possessions, Guinevere, and Britain, go up in flames than relinquish them to someone else. "A typical patriarchal stance," Lug-Loth-Lancelot thinks, and therefore rescues the queen and the land from this kind of stupidity, guarding them from Arthur until Arthur promises to conduct himself differently. Finally, Arthur sends his zealous vassals, the "nephews," to battle

*Lug-Loth-Lancelot. Former solar heroes that they are, they believe they can exact retrospective historical revenge from Lancelot, the heroes of the Other World, but they are all vanquished. Gawain and his brothers fall.*

*As is always the case, falsity lurks just around the corner from servile compliance. At the first opportunity, one of Arthur's own vassals—his "nephew," Mordred—stabs him in the back. Lug-Loth-Lancelot, meanwhile, can watch in peace from his castle as the Arthurian kingdom tears itself limb from limb and crumbles. The incoming heroes step down in the same way they ascended, by warfare. In the end, only Morgane, Lancelot, and Guinevere survive in the beautiful country of Britain.*

After this outline of a matriarchal interpretation, it is useful here to comment briefly on the other two transformations that occurred in the Middle Ages: the tailoring to courtly tastes, and Christianization. The former had the primary function of domesticating the ecstatic matriarchal Eros to suit the new moral fashion of Courtly Love. The power of the matriarchal Eros was at least recognized as a revolutionary force by the early patriarchal warrior kings. Now, this primal world-creating passion was supplanted by an artificial system in which "love" and "loyalty" must be kept at a cleverly calculated standard. Thus, "discipline," "modesty," "due propriety," and "honor" became the guiding principles of chivalry. The knight was no longer driven by the desire to experience a rapture that transcended time and space with a Goddess-Fairy. This trend toward "rationalizing" and "psychologizing" basically translates into a shift toward artificiality. This shift is still rather weak in the ecstatic love story of Tristan and Isolt and thus that story is not considered "chivalrous" in the sense of the system of Courtly Love. Nor is there much discipline and modesty to note in the Nibelungenlied: the ecstasy of Eros has been perverted into ecstatic hatred. The relationship between Siegfried and Kriemhild is the only one covered with the poor cloak of Courtly Love. Both epics demonstrate the mind-set of the epoch of the patriarchal warrior kings. The Tristan tales, however, are told from the perspective of the conquered, whereas the Nibelungenlied is told from that of the conquerors. The Arthurian epic, on the other hand, was subjected to a greater degree of adaptation to courtly convention. Lancelot, of all characters, came to epitomize the classical figure of the knight of Courtly Love. His relationship with Guinevere fell prey to the specious reasoning of this system so that again and again the queen argues over "love" and "loyalty" with her knight. No wonder, then, that Lancelot is baffled by it

all and furthermore does not adhere to the rule that no Courtly Love relationship is allowed to bring the kingdom down upon itself. Ywain and Erec, too, are viewed as acceptable in the eyes of the new Courtly Love system, but Laudine's "excessive" behavior and Erec's treatment of Enite do not fit the picture. Gawain becomes the typical chivalrous knight, ever bold and gallant, racing, in the Parsifal romances, from one adventure to the next. Thus, he conforms neither to the old paradigm, nor the new, for in his case, eroticism has been reduced to a random sequence of spicy stories. This is the reason why he becomes the negative background for the chaste Parsifal. While superficiality has resolved the conflict between "love" and "loyalty" for Gawain, Christian morality comes to the rescue in the case of Parsifal, and the problem's solution swings to the opposite extreme: "love" and "loyalty" are fused to become one in the notion of connubial love. This, too, leads to the collapse of the system of Courtly Love. Since the epic heroes, because of their archaic traits, proved themselves to be so aloof, the specious reasoning inherent in the system of Courtly Love was maintained only in the poetry. There it gradually severs itself from any actual social reality, and degenerates directly into *l'art pour l'art* (art for art's sake).

The internalization of the newly established patriarchal norms was far more intensive in Christianity than in the courtly love-loyalty system. Under this system, eroticism, however domesticated it may have been, was still recognized to be of high value. Under Christianity, however, it was condemned in favor of the principle of universal chastity. The erotic principle and all that is female came to personify evil, and the female figures were accordingly reinterpreted: sin and seduction emanate from every woman who refuses to relinquish her eroticism (Eve-Lilith mythology, the woman as "witch"). If she is to find any recognition, she must subject herself to the principle of chastity taken to its extreme in devotedness (the mythology surrounding Mary who, on the one hand, was made into an obedient vessel, and on the other, was made to fade into a completely unreal personality). We witness the same ambivalence toward female figures wherever Christianity had an effect on our epics. The most pronounced expression of this reversal, however, is apparent in the Grail legends, because they represented, with their unabashed magical eroticism, the greatest affront. Thus, the Grail chalice was reshaped into the last supper chalice from which "supernatural" life springs, not real life. The Horn of Plenty was transformed from the *Cor beni* to the *Corps benic*, the body of Christ. The magical lance was reinterpreted into the lance used to wound Christ on the cross. With these transformations of sacred relics, the figures in

the vicinity were changed accordingly: Parsifal and Galahad, once Goddess seekers, were made seekers of God. As is congruent with the all-male clergy, the women in their lives receded increasingly into the background. In the Parsifal romances, Kondwiramurs is a chaste wife without character or color, who never steps out of the background; even as the Grail Queen, she never becomes more than a supernumerary. Other women have no influence on Parsifal. As a crusader, Galahad is even more rigid and is completely detached from women; he and the other "pure" Knights of the Grail prefer their own company. A man like Lancelot, on the other hand, who is still tied to the matriarchal Eros, was made a sinner doing penance, who can only have begotten his son, the "pure" Galahad, unwittingly. And yet, his sin is not as grave as Guinevere's: Unlike the unfortunate queens of the *Aitheda*, she escapes death, but in the end, she finds her proper place in the convent. Her figure serves as an example that clarifies the source of all evil, all that is bad, all that is chaotic in the world: it comes from woman. The figures of the Greek Pandora or of Eve in Paradise are drawn from this same ideology. For centuries, this has been the way to close the social and political system to women.

And yet, even beneath the densest layer of ideology, a utopian element can sometimes be found. If we continue our contrary reading of the myths, fairy tales, and epics of the Indo-European region against the cultural-historical background, we can discover it, for there is a covert meaning for every overt meaning. Have we not seen repeatedly the collapse of patriarchal kingdoms as a result of their own first principle, namely, that of war? Have we not seen them overcome by the force of the matriarchal Eros? It confronted us in the *Aithed* of Naisi and Deirdre. It was implicit in the all-conquering love of Tristan and Isolt, and in the demise of the Burgundian kingdom. It was most clearly apparent in the Lancelot cycle.

Lug-Loth-Lancelot, this most developed and interesting figure of all in the medieval epics, has powerful mythological equivalents. Even a brief view beyond Celtic mythology makes this much clear:

His Germanic counterpart is Loki, that thoroughly sly, cunning, inventive God of the Underworld. Lug and Loki are closely related not only in name, but also in deed: Loki, too, is a rebel. After the patriarchal Germanic Asir gods Odin and Thor make Loki their vassal, he is forced into servitude and must apply his ingenuity to extricating them from every predicament into which they get themselves. After awhile, he protests. As a result, he is banished into the Underworld, chained, clubbed, and sprayed in the face with poison from snakes which hang over him. Whenever he writhes in pain, there is an earthquake. The

only one who tries to relieve his pain is the old "witch" Sigyn, his wife, who collects the poison in a small dish. In the end, though, Loki breaks free, and together with all the "monsters" of the Underworld—dragons and giants—rises in revolt against the Asir gods. The Asir kingdom, then, crumbles in the Twilight of the Gods, not because of Christianity's approach (this interpretation was later contrived), but because Loki defiantly destroys it.

Lug and Loki are components of mythologies that are no longer living. One of their mythological counterparts, however, continues to permeate contemporary mythology: the Christian mythological figure of Lucius-Lucifer. In the ancient Gnostic tradition that was suppressed by the patristic church, he is a powerful, luminous figure: "Lucifer," the bearer of light, as his name suggests. Loki, too, is considered the keeper of the flame (light), and Lug carried, at the very least, the flaming spear. In accordance with the patristic-patriarchal mindset that prevailed within the church, he was later made into a dumb, lecherous devil who carried on with "witches." And yet, relics of the other vision have survived in the Apocalypse and the Apocrypha: At the end of all time, Lucifer will extricate himself from the shackles of hell (Underworld) and become a powerful, rebellious opponent of the Christian god who banished him to the underground place. This signifies the demise of this God's reign on earth. Lucifer's female partner is not a demonic or ridiculous witch, but rather the Mistress whom he obeys: She is "Hagia Sophia," sacred wisdom personified. She stands at the center of Heaven and her head is crowned with stars. —



# ENDNOTES

## PART I. THE GODDESS AND HER *HEROS* THE MATRIARCHAL RELIGIONS

1. The following portions of this comprehensive work on the social structures and history of matriarchies have been published: *Das Matriarchat I: Geschichte seiner Erforschung (The Matriarchy I: A History of Research)* Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1988; *Das Matriarchat I: Stammesgesellschaften in Ostasien, Indonesien, Ozeanien, (The Matriarchy I: Tribal Societies in East Asia, Indonesia and Oceania)* Stuttgart, 1991; *Das Matriarchat II, 2. Stammesgesellschaften in Amerika, Westasien, Afrika (The Matriarchy II, 2: Tribal Societies in America, West Asia, Africa)* Stuttgart, 1996.
2. ccf., Heinrich Cunow, *Die matriarchalische Familie*, in: H. Cunow, *Die Marxsche Geschichts-, Gesellschafts- und Staatstheorie*, Dietz, Berlin, 1923, pp. 125-129.
3. ccf., Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, 1877.  
ccf., Bronislaw Malinowski, *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia* (Trobriand Islands, British New Guinea), Paul R. Reynolds, Inc., New York, 1929.  
ccf., Wilhelm Reich, *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality*, Mary Boyd Higgins, Trustee of the Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust Fund, New York, 1971.
4. ccf., Johann Jakob Bachofen, *Myth, Religion and Mother Right*, Princeton University Press, Princeton N.J., 1967.  
ccf., E. O. James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, Praeger, N.Y., 1959.
5. ccf., J. G. Frazer, *Man, God and Immortality*, London, 1927.  
ccf., R. v. Ranke-Graves (Robert Graves), *The Greek Myths*, Penguin Books, N.Y., 1955.
6. This is particularly clear in W. Schmidt's article "Geschichte der Theorien über Mutterrecht," in W. Schmidt, *Das Mutterrecht*, Wien-Mödling, 1955, pp. 17-21, 181-186; aside from his vast prejudices, Schmidt is an insightful researcher of matriarchies.
7. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Basic Books, N.Y., 1976.
8. ccf., G. Dumzil: *L'Ideologie tripartite des Indo-Européens*, Paris; ccf., Ranke-Graves, *ibid.*
9. This structure of matriarchal mythology is derived from the excellent, detailed examination of Greek mythology provided by Ranke-Graves, *ibid.*
10. ccf., for Greece and Crete: Ranke-Graves, *ibid.*, as well as Ranke-Graves, *The White Goddess*, Ferrar, Strauss and Giroux, N. Y., 1986; all sources are listed there.

11. ccf., O. Höfler, *Siegfried, Arminius und die Symbolik*, Heidelberg, 1961. Höfler proves that the European ritual games of "Hunting the Stag" have a counterpart in the Celtic mythology and even appear to be the most archaic background for the Siegfried legends (This is dealt with in detail in Part III of this book, *The Mistress and her Hero*).
12. ccf., E. O. James, *ibid.*
- ccf., Veronika Jons, *Egyptian Mythology*, Paul Hamlyn, London, 1968; all sources cited there; ccf., also Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*.
13. ccf., E. O. James, *ibid.*, all sources cited there.
- ccf., *The Gilgamesh Epic*.
- ccf., Diane Wolkstein, *Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth*, Harper and Row, N. Y., 1983.
14. ccf., Ranke-Graves, *ibid.* (Heracles).
15. for Asia Minor, Palestine, Persia, and India, see Ranke-Graves, *ibid.*, and James, *ibid.*, all sources cited there.
16. Elaine Morgan, *The Descent of Woman*, Souvenir Press, Ltd., London.
17. Jan de Vries, *Keltische Religion*, Stuttgart, 1961; Ranke-Graves, *The White Goddess, ibid.*; ccf., also *Mabinogion*; all sources cited there.
18. see Part III of this book, *The Mistress and her Hero*, especially footnote 1.
19. see Part III of this book.
20. R. L. M. Délorenz, *Götter und Mythen der Germanen*, Einsiedeln-Zurich-Cologne, 1963; all sources cited there.
21. ccf., see Part III of this book.
22. ccf., see Josefine Schreier: *Göttinnen*, Verlag Frauenoffensive, Munich, 1978.

## PART II.

### MATRIARCHAL MYTHOLOGY IN THE FAIRY TALES

1. ccf., Jan de Vries, *Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie*, Freiburg, Munich, 1961.
2. The Brothers Grimm propounded the notion of fairy tales being "sunken" myths in the following works: Jacob Grimm, *Vorrede zu den Volksmärchen der Serben*, (Karadschitsch) 1854; Wilhelm Grimm, *Vorrede zum zweiten Band der KHM (Kinder und Hausmärchen)* 1856. This notion has been countered by Lang, Wundt, Panzer, Herrmann, and Naumann. The difference between genres (myths/fairy tales) has been discussed by Jolles, De Boor, Lüthi, De Vries: André Jolles, *Einfache Formen*, 1972 (5.); Helmut de Boor, "Märchenforschung," in: *Zeitschrift für deutschen Unterricht* 42 (1928); Max Lüthi: *Das europäische Volksmärchen*, 1974 (4.); Jan de Vries, *ibid.* A return to the opinion that fairy tales emerged from myths, though not directly, can be found in Van Gennepe, Wesselski, *Eliade*.
3. ccf., Wladimir Propp, *Morphologie des Märchens*, 1972.
4. ccf., Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*, Helsinki, 1961 (3.), FFC 184; and Stith Thompson *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: A Classification*

*tion of Narrative Elements*, Copenhagen 1955-1958 (2.) More than 40,000 individual motifs are catalogued here in six volumes.

5. ccf., Johannes Bolte and Georg Polivka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm*, Neudruck, 1963.

The first three volumes of this five-volume work include the collected fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm as well as a lot of explanations and an extensive index of variations on the fairy tales. (My numbering of the fairy tales corresponds to Bolte/Polivka.)

6. August Nitschke attempts a social historical analysis of the fairy tales in the same region in his "Soziale Ordnungen im Spiegel der Märchen," Bd. 1: *Das Frühe Europa*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart, 1976.

The book is stimulating reading. Nitschke's knowledge of anthropology, though, is utterly superficial. His treatment of matriarchy acknowledges a period of prehistory in which women dominated, but he classifies it as a "hunting society" and a "pastoral society," a social order that is not classically matriarchal. On the other hand, according to his account, the dominance of women has disappeared from the "agricultural society in Old Europe" and the "earliest urban cultures of the Near East." Yet, this is precisely the period in which the early and advanced matriarchy flourished. Based on these fundamental errors, his interpretations of the fairy tales are accordingly skewed. Unfortunately, his analysis is unsatisfactory from the perspective of literary scholarship as well, because Nitschke does not include the variants or existing insights produced by the research of fairy tales.

7. As we know from the first part of this book, my analysis of the fairy tales is based upon the double structure of matriarchal mythology (Goddess-Heros structure) that was gleaned from the excellent studies of Robert von Ranke-Graves. The fact that this structure is evident in the myths, fairy tales, and epics throughout the entire Indo-European region—as I illustrate here—proves my thesis that the region shares a common matriarchal cultural origin.

8. Another commentary on the psychological interpretations of myths and fairy tales that has swept the field of research like an epidemic from the onset. A typical example among countless others is: Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri, *Die Mutter im Märchen*, Stuttgart, 1977.

In all psychological interpretations, motives of myths and fairy tales are equated with abstract psychological concepts. This always produces numinous archetypes that exist in a social and historical vacuum, for example, the "Death Mother," the "Fire Mother," the "Mother in Nature," etc. Their meaning is defined in terms of theoretical psychological concepts as, for example, the archetype of the "mother" who is alternately associated with the "subconscious" which presents itself as threatening, ice cold, red hot, destructive, or helpful. The range of interpretations is arbitrary and therefore all these interpretations are worthless.

In each case, the symbolic structure of the motifs and their cultural-historical environs are lost. Where knowledge of social and cultural history is at all present in psychological interpretations, it is, as a rule, limited and diffuse.

Furthermore, such interpretive endeavors always employ the prejudicial patriarchal concepts of femininity conjured by psychological theories (Why is the "mother" only the "subconscious"?). This type of interpretation applied to myths and fairy tales may serve the purpose of edification, but it contains absolutely no further insights.

### PART III.

#### MATRIARCHAL MYTHOLOGY IN THE MEDIEVAL EPIC

1. ccf., Roger S. Loomis: *The Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes*, New York, 1949; see also R. S. Loomis (Ed.): *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1959.

Loomis is the primary support for my analysis of the Arthurian epic. My own knowledge of comparative mythology, especially of Mediterranean, Germanic, and Celtic myths, support Loomis in some cases and correct him in others. On the subject of mythology, see also Jan de Vries, *Keltische Religion*, Stuttgart, 1961; R. L. M. Délorenz, *Götter und Mythen der Germanen*, Einsiedeln-Zurich-Cologne, 1963; Ranke-Graves, *The White Goddess*, Ferrar, Strauss and Giroux, N.Y., 1986; Ranke-Graves, *The Greek Myths*, *ibid.*; James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, *ibid.*

2. ccf., On Iwain interpretations and structure, see P. Wapnewski, *Hartmann von Aue*, Stuttgart 1962.

3. ccf., On Erec interpretations and structure, see Hugo Kuhn, *Erec*, in: Hugo Kuhn, *Dichtung und Welt im Mittelalter*, 1959.

4. ccf., On Parsifal interpretations and structure, see J. Bumke, *Wolfram von Eschenbach*, Stuttgart, 1964; see also Jean Markale, *The Celtic Woman*, Dianus-Trikont, München, 1984; Independent of my research, Markale comes to the same conclusions as I regarding the theme of the Grail.

5. ccf., On Tristan interpretations and on the analysis of the material's history, ccf., Gertrude Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt*, 1960, first published in 1913; see also Helaine Newstead, *The Origin and Growth of the Tristan Legend*, in Loomis, (ed.), *Arthurian Literature*, *ibid.*

6. ccf., On the analysis of the pre-Indo-European layer in Nibelungen, ccf., Otto Höfler, *Siegfried, Arminius und die Symbolik*, Heidelberg, 1961.

ccf., On the analysis of the Celtic layer in the Siegfried legends, ccf., F. R. Schröder, *Nibelungenstudien*, 1921, and Jan de Vries, *Kelten und Germanen*, 1960.

ccf., On the comparison of the Siegfried legends with the vegetation myths, see M. W. J. Kroes, *Die Sage vom Nibelungenhort und ihr mythischer Hintergrund*, in *Fragen und Forschungen*, 1936, and Kroes, *Die Erweckung der Jungfrau hinter dem Flammenwall*, in *Neophilologus*, 36, 1952.

ccf., On the analysis of the historical layer in the Nibelungenlied, see O. Höfler, *Siegfried, Arminius und die Symbolik*, *ibid.*; also Hugo Kuhn, *Brunhild und das Kriemhildlied*, 1953 in Kurt Wais, *Frühe Epik Westeuropas und die Vorgeschichte des Nibelungenlieds*, vol. 1.

ccf., See also parallels drawn between the complete *Nibelungenlied* and the structure of the Arthurian epic (including the Tristan legends) by Hugo Kuhn in *Tristan, Nibelungenlied, Artusstruktur*, Munich: Vortrag Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973.

As insightful as H. Kuhn's essay is in its comparative perspective of the epics, I still cannot follow him completely because he neglects to consider that the various structures are different in chronology. He treats them as though they were simultaneous, and one single superstructure. This is the result of an insufficient awareness of the cultural and social historical background and consequently leads to a formalistic construction. This hovers in a social historical vacuum.

7. See also W. Haug on the question of structure: *Vom Imram zur Aventiure Fahrt. Zur Frage der Vorgeschichte der hochhöfischen Epenstruktur*, 1970. Haug approaches the ancient structure of matriarchal mythology, but because he lacks the necessary cultural and social historical background, he clings to formalistic constructions, too.



# ANNOTATED ALPHABETICAL REGISTER OF THE MYTHOLOGICAL NAMES:

*Abdiheba* (Adam): *Heros* to the Palestinian Goddess Jehwa (Eva); primary cult site: Jerusalem; his forerunner is the Sumerian Dumuzi-Tammuz; his Greek parallel, Heracles (Hebe's consort).

*Adam*: (see under Abdiheba).

*Adonis*: *Heros* to Aphrodite; he was mutilated by a wild boar (Olympian version); actually, she magically transformed him into a boar and tore him to pieces; oriental forerunner: Attis; Germanic variant: Freyr.

*Adrasteia*: Rhea in her manifestation as a magical ash tree.

*Agni*: Indian God of Fire (compare: Shiva).

*Ahura Mazda*: "Master of All Wisdom," Persian Father God; originally Mistress of All Wisdom, the Persian Triple Goddess Ahura-Mazda-Anahita.

*Acteon*: *Heros* to Artemis; he is magically transformed by her into a stag and killed with an arrow.

*Amaltheia*: Rhea manifested as the Sacred Goat.

*Anahita*: Persian Goddess of Heaven and Atmosphere posed on a four-horse chariot; she is also the Goddess of Fertility and Wisdom; as the Triple Goddess of Susa, she is known as Ahura-Mazda-Anahita; she is mother and protectress of Persian kings; her forerunners are the Sumerian Inanna-Ishtar and the Persian Nanaia; her parallels are the Phrygian Cybele and the Greek Artemis-Aphrodite-Athena taken together as one; Ahura-Mazda was later masculinized into the "Master of Wisdom."

*Anat* (Asherat, Ashtaroth, Astarte): Palestinian Goddess of Love and of Battle, and Goddess of Grain and Agriculture; as Asherat, she is the omnipotent creatress and destructress; she is sister-bride to Baal whom she seeks in the Underworld; there she treats badly the God of Death, Mot, until he finally releases Baal; her Sumerian forerunner is Inanna-Ishtar, her Indian forerunner Shakti-Kali (to Asherat); her Cretan parallels are Demeter and Rhea; her Germanic variant is Frigga-Freyja.

*Aphrodite* (Roman: Venus): Greek Goddess of Beauty and Love in whom the Woman aspect clearly predominates (Olympian version); she was originally Aphrodite-Urania, the universal Goddess of Creation having no masculine principle; she later became the Triple Goddess; as the Goddess of Death she is called Persephone. Primary cult site: Cyprus; her forerunners are the Babylonian Ishtar, the Persian Anahita, and the Indian Lakshmi; her Celtic variant is Morrigan, her Germanic variant is Freyja, who, in the Middle Ages was still influential as "Frau Venus," or "Frau Minne."

*Apophis*: Primordial serpent of the Underworld and Ra's enemy; he attempts to devour Ra on Ra's daily Underworld journeys; his parallels are all the oriental dragon-snakes; his variants are the Cretan-Greek Ophion and the Germanic dragon, Nidhögg.

*Arawn*: Celtic God of the Underworld, who takes the death hounds on a stag hunt; he was originally Rhiannon's consort and *heros*; his parallels are the Celtic Bran and the Germanic Hagen.

*Ares*: (Roman: Mars): Greek God of War, son of Hera.

*Ariadne*: Princess of Knossos (Crete) and Theseus' lover; "Ariadne" was also the name of the Cretan Goddess of Moon and Stars, and of the lunar priestesses (crown princesses); her rightful consort and *heros* was Dionysus-Zagreus; her Egyptian forerunner is Nout-Hathor; her Celtic variant is Arianrhod.

*Arianrhod*: "Silver Wheel," the Celtic Goddess of the Moon and of the rotating stellar sky; her consort and *heros* is Curoi, the Celtic Sun God; her forerunners are the Egyptian Nout-Hathor and the Cretan Ariadne (as Goddess of Moon and Stars).

*Arinna*: Hittite Sun Goddess; mother and spouse of the *heros* Telepinu, whom she seeks with the help of the other gods; her Sumerian forerunner is Inanna-Ishtar, her Hittite forerunner is Kubaba, her parallels are Atargatis and Anat as well as Egyptian Hathor-Sachmet (Sachmet being the destructive force of the sun).

*Artemis* (Roman: Diana): Greek Goddess of the Hunt and the Moon; the Maiden aspect clearly predominates: eternal virginity (in the Olympian version); originally, as Artemis Alphaia, she was supreme Goddess of the Amazons; primary cult site: Ephesus; her Cretan forerunner is Britomartis, the Mistress of Wild Animals; her Celtic variant is Liban, the stag-drawn Chariot Goddess; her cultic games were the European games "Hunting the Stag" (compare the Siegfried legends).

*Asclepios* (Roman: Askulap): Greek *Heros* of Medicine (manifested as a snake); Zeus killed him with a lightning bolt because he healed someone from death (Olympian version); originally, he was killed by the Goddess Athena (as Athena Hygieia) with her lightning bolt.

*Atargatis* (Dea Syria): Syrian Earth Mother Goddess; mother and spouse of the *heros* Hadad; her cult is identical to that of Cybele.

*Athena* (Roman: Minerva): Greek Goddess of War, of Science and Arts; the Maiden aspect predominates: eternal virginity (Olympian version); on Mount Olympus, she is considered to be the daughter of Zeus; the Pelasgian Athena, on the other hand, is the parthenogenetic daughter of Metis; the Pelasgian Athena originates in Libya (Lake Triton) and came to Greece through Crete; primary cult site: Athens (Acropolis); her Egyptian forerunner is Neit, her oriental forerunner Anat, Goddess of Battle; in India, Sarasvati corresponds to her as Goddess of Wisdom and Arts; her Germanic variant is Freyja as Valkyrie (Goddess of Battle) and Goddess of Art.

*Attis*: Phrygian God of Shepherds; son, consort, and *heros* to Cybele; he dies after his castration beneath a pine tree, which becomes his symbol; his forerunner is

the Sumerian Dumuzi, his parallels are the Syrian Hadad (heros to Atargatis), the Egyptian Osiris, the Cretan-Greek Dionysus-Zagreus, and Adonis of Cyprus.

**Baal** (Bel): Palestinian God of Atmosphere; *Heros* of Grain, brother-consort to Anat, he is killed annually by his enemy, Mot, and reawakened by Anat; primary cult site: Baalbek and Jerusalem (there he is called Jerubbaal); his forerunner is Dumuzi-Tammuz, his parallels are the Egyptian Osiris-Horus, the Cretan Dionysus-Zagreus and the Cretan Pan-Zeus; his variants are the Celtic Beli and the Germanic Baldur.

**Baldur**: Germanic Sun God; son of Frigga and Odin, consort to Nanna; originally son, consort, and *heros* to Frigga; he suffers death by shooting, followed by a burial on a ship; his immediate forerunner is Od; he is related to Freyr; his Celtic parallel is Beli; his oriental-Egyptian forerunners are Mitra, Tammuz, Baal, and Osiris-Horus.

**Beli**: Celtic God of Atmosphere and Sun God; originally *heros* to Modron; his immediate forerunner is Curoi; other forerunners include the oriental Gods of Atmosphere and Sun Gods, especially the Palestinian Baal and Greek Apollo; his Germanic parallels are Freyr and Baldur.

**Bendigefran**: younger form of Bran (see Modron and Bran).

**Blathnat**: Celtic Goddess of Flowers and Spring; her consort and *heros* was Curoi; the hero Cuchulainn kidnaps her and becomes her consort and *heros*; her forerunner is the Greek Kore.

**Brahma**: Absolute Father God of India, ultimately nothing but an abstract intellectual/spiritual principle; originally, he was the God of the River Brahmaputra and *heros* to the Goddess Sarasvati (Mother of Ganges); *Heros* of Atmosphere and Rain, his parallels are the later made absolute Gods of Atmosphere Yahweh (Palestine) and Zeus (Greece).

**Bran** (Bron, Bendigeidfran, Baudemaguz): Celtic-Welsh God of the Sea and God of Fertility who went by many names; he is son, consort, and *heros* to the Goddess Modron; he is torn to pieces, but his severed head continues to prophesy; he is God of the Underworld and lives there in eternal youth, celebrating festive feasts and enjoying wonderful music; his immediate forerunner is the Celtic Dagda; and, like Dagda, Bran is a variant of the Egyptian Osiris, the Cretan Dionysus-Zagreus, and the Greek Orpheus.

**Branwen**: "Sister to Bran" (see Modron and Bran).

**Brigid**: Celtic Goddess of Inspiration and Wisdom, of Poetry and of Music; "daughter" to Dagda; younger version of Dana-Cerridwen; later Christianized into St. Brigid (Brigit, Brighid).

**Britomartis**: Cretan goddess as Mistress of Wild Animals; she was worshipped on mountain tops; forerunner to the Greek Artemis.

**Cernunnos**: Celtic stag-*heros*, presumably consort to the deer-drawn chariot Goddess Liban; later became the god with the stag antlers; his forerunner is the Greek Acteon; Siegfried is his German parallel.

**Chronus**: Cretan God of Atmosphere and Rain God, son of Gaia, brother-consort and *heros* to Rhea; he dethrones his predecessor "father," Uranus; he is in turn dethroned by Zeus, his successor "son."

*Chumbaba*: the Sumerian form of a Sphinx with bird, lion, stag, and snake characteristics (compare Sphinx as calendar symbol).

*Curoi*: Celtic God of Atmosphere and Sun God with a single eye (sun); he is Beli's direct forerunner; he also appears as a gargantuan shepherd and is consort and *heros* to the vernal Goddess Blathnat or the Moon Goddess Arianrhod; his forerunners are all oriental Gods of Atmosphere and of the Sun, especially Shiva (India), Mitra (Persia), Dumuzi-Tammuz (Sumeria-Babylon) and Horus (Egypt); in Irish folklore, he was later thought to be the Fairy King.

*Cybele*: Earth Mother Goddess of Phrygia and Lydia (Asia Minor); originally, she was an androgynous goddess; she later became mother and spouse to her *heros*, Attis; Cybele is the goddess on the lion-chariot, her cult was associated with an arbor cult; her priests, "Cybeloi," castrated themselves to emulate the androgynous Goddess; her forerunners are the Sumerian Inanna and the Hittite Kubaba; her parallels are the Syrian Atargatis, the Egyptian Isis, the Greek Demeter, and the Germanic Jörd; she had a cult in Rome and her rites exerted substantial influence on early Christianity.

*Dagda*: "good god," Celtic-Irish Father God; originally a God of Atmosphere and Rain God, *heros* to Dana; he brings people to tears and laughter by playing his magic harp; he can lead them into sleep and death; he is God of Music and Poetry, and God of the Underworld: his Underworld is a place of abundance, of music and gaiety; his immediate forerunner is Orpheus (Orphean Mysteries were still practiced in Rome); he is a variant of the Cretan Dionysus-Zagreus, the Mycenaean Heracles (as club bearer) and the Egyptian Osiris.

*Dana* (Don): Celtic-Irish Earth Mother Goddess with the Cauldron of Abundance and Inspiration; the pre-Indo-Europeans named themselves after her ("Tuatha de Danaan"); her immediate forerunner is the Cretan Earth Goddess Danae; she is impregnated by the golden rain of her *Heros* of Atmosphere, or she transforms herself into a splendid celestial cow and lets the golden rain fall; she is a variant of the Greek Demeter, the Cretan Rhea-Hera, and the Egyptian Hathor-Isis; her Celtic parallel is Cerridwen, her Germanic parallel is Jörd; Dana was later masculinized into Don.

*Danae*: Princess of Crete and mother of Perseus; originally a Goddess of Agriculture of Crete who was impregnated by the golden rain of her *Heros* of Atmosphere, her direct parallels are Io of Corinth and Hera of Argos; she is forerunner to the Celtic Dana-Cerridwen.

*Demeter* (Roman: Ceres): Greek Earth Mother Goddess as Goddess of Agriculture and Grain; the Mother aspect predominates (Olympian version); originally the Triple Earth Goddess Kore, the Maiden, Persephone the Goddess of Love, and Hecate, the Crone; primary cult site: Eleusis; her Egyptian forerunner is Isis, her Cretan forerunner is Rhea (Demeter is Rhea's daughter); her Cretan name is "Eileithyia"; she is related to all oriental goddesses who seek their *heros* in the Underworld; her Celtic variant is Modron, her Germanic variant is Frigga (as mother of Baldur); her cult strongly influenced the development of early Christianity.

*Diancecht*: Celtic God of Healing.

*Dictyanna*: Cretan Earth Goddess from the Dicta Cavern; identical to Rhea; her forerunner is the Sumerian Goddess Inanna.

*Dionysus* (Roman: Bacchus): Greek God of Wine, Fertility, and of Cultic Drama; son of Zeus (Olympian version); as Iakchos or Dionysus-Zagreus (Cretan) he was son and *heros* to Demeter; he is dismembered and reborn from the Underworld; his Egyptian forerunner is Osiris, his oriental forerunners are Dumuzi, Teshub-Telepinu, Attis, Hadad, Baal; his Celtic variant is Bran, his Germanic variant is Baldur; the Dionysian (Orphean) Mysteries still existed in Rome.

*Dumuzi*: Sumerian God of Shepherds; consort and *heros* to Inanna; he undergoes a cyclic descent to and ascent from the Underworld; primary cult sites: Uruk, Akkad; as Sacred King, he is the "good shepherd" of Sumeria; all kings are identified with Dumuzi; he is the immediate forerunner to the Babylonian Tammuz, as well as to all oriental fertility *heros* (Teshub, Attis, Hadad, Baal); also to the Persian Mitra, the Egyptian Osiris, Dionysus-Zagreus, the Cretan Zeus, and the Celtic Dagda and Bran.

*Dyaus Pitar*: Absolute Father God of Heaven in India; originally *heros* to Earth Goddess Prithivi; he copulated with her in the form of a bull; his parallels are the Absolute Father Gods Ra (Egypt), Yahweh (Palestine), Zeus/Jupiter (Greece/Rome) and the Germanic Odin.

*Eileithyia*: Cretan Goddess of Earth, Fertility and Birth; orgiastic, "furious" Goddess; Cretan version of Demeter; primary cult site: the Eileithyia Cavern in Crete.

*Erechtheus* (Erichthonios): *Heros* to Athena manifested as a snake, or having snake-like feet; first King of Athens; his sanctuary is the Erechtheion in Athens (Acropolis).

*Erishkigal*: Sumerian Goddess of Death; she is considered to be "sister" to Inanna, who visits her in the Underworld; originally, she was Inanna in her manifestation as Goddess of the Underworld; Erishkigal is the forerunner to Egyptian Nephthys and the Greek Persephone.

*Erin* (Eire, Soveranty of Erin): Celtic Earth Mother Goddess and personification of the land of Ireland; under the names Bamba-Eire-Folla she is the Triple Goddess as Warrior, Mother, and Visionary; in the summer she is a beautiful maiden, in winter an ugly old woman; she transfers her cauldron or chalice to the king at the Sacred Marriage as an indicator of his new status; she is spouse and protectress to all Irish Kings; primary cult site: Tailtiu (Tara) in Ireland; her direct predecessor is the Irish Dana, as well as all Mother Goddesses who are the personifications of their lands (Isis, Inanna, Kubaba, Prithivi).

*Eris*: Greek Goddess of Discord, daughter of Hera.

*Eros* (Roman: Amor): androgynous son of Aphrodite.

*Eurynome*: Pelasgian-Greek Creatress Goddess who creates the world after dancing with the primordial snake.

*Eva*: (see Jehwa)

*Fenris the Wolf*: Germanic wolf of hell (darkness); son of the Earth Goddess Sigyn and the God of Death Loki; at the Twilight of the Gods he devours the Sun God Tyr and the Father God of Heaven Odin; his forerunner is the Greek Cerberus.

*Freyja*: "Mistress, Princess," Germanic Goddess of Beauty, Love, and Fertility; daughter of Jörd; originally, she was the Germanic Triple Goddess personified as Goddess of Battle (Valkyrie), Goddess of Love, and Goddess of the Dead in the Underworld; her Underworld hall, the Folkwang, is a site of art and music, of joy and youth; her brother-consort and *heros* is Freyr; she is spouse and protectress to all Swedish kings; primary cult site: Uppsala in Sweden; her Celtic parallel is Morrigan; her forerunners are the Indian Lakshmi, the Persian Anahita, the Babylonian Ishtar, the Egyptian Hathor-Isis and the Aphrodite of Cyprus; in the Middle Ages she was called "Frau Venus" or "Frau Minne."

*Freyr* (Fro, Ing, Ingwi, Ingunar): Germanic God of Light, Sun, and Fertility; son of Jörd and *heros* to Freyja; he is torn to pieces in his manifestation as a wild boar only to subsequently be resurrected; Swedish kings were identified with him; primary cult site: Uppsala in Sweden (Freyr temple); he is the immediate son-successor of Tyr, his parallel is Baldur; his forerunners are the Persian Mitra, the Babylonian Tammuz, the oriental Baal, and the Egyptian Horus, all of whom are Gods of Light; included are the Cretan Dionysus-Zagreus as a mutilated god, Adonis of Cyprus, who is also torn to pieces as a wild boar; Freyr lives on in the legends of Siegfried.

*Frigga*: Germanic Mother Goddess and spouse of the Absolute Father God Odin; originally, she was the Triple Goddess, as was Freyja, with whom she is nearly identical; her *heros* is Od or Baldur whom she seeks everywhere, shedding tears that turn into stars; her forerunners are all of the oriental Mother Goddesses in search of their *heros*; as a willful wife to the Absolute Father God she resembles Hera; throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, her presence in folklore remained in the figure of "Mother Holle."

*Gayatri*: Indian bride and substitute wife of Brahma; she is brought to him as a young milk maiden (or manifested as a milk cow); the Greek Io is one of her variants.

*Gäa* (Gaia): Greek Earth Goddess, mother, and spouse to Uranus (Sky); her children were the Titans, among whom were Rhea and Chronus; she corresponds to the Indian Earth Goddess Prithivi; the Celtic Dana and Germanic Jörd are variants.

*Geb*: Egyptian Earth God, consort to Nout.

*Gilgamesh*: Sumerian hero of epics by the same name; rebel opposing the Goddess Ishtar; originally, he was her *heros* (compare Tammuz) and performed feats for Ishtar; primary cult site: Uruk; he is forerunner to the Greek Heracles (Hercules), the Celtic Cuchulainn, and the Germanic Siegfried.

*Hadad*: Syrian God of Atmosphere and Sun God; son and *heros* to the Syrian Goddess Atargatis; his cult is completely identical to that of the Phrygian god Attis.

*Hades* (Roman: Pluto): Greek God of the Underworld, son of Rhea; he abducts Kore (or Iakchos) into the Underworld; his forerunners are the Egyptian Seth (who brings Osiris to the Underworld) and the oriental Mot (who brings Baal to the Underworld); his Germanic variant is Loki (who brings Baldur to the Underworld).

*Hagia Sophia*: Palestinian Great Goddess, later adopted by Greece; her variant is

Diana Lucifera; her son and *heros* is Lucifer, the Bringer of Light; she was supplanted by the patriarchal Yahweh.

*Hannahanna*: Hittite Earth Mother Goddess, identical to Kubaba.

*Har-Siesis*: Horus, the son of Isis, also called "Horus the Child"; originally, he was not a solar *heros*, but rather the moon personifying the son of the Earth Goddess; he took revenge on Seth for the death of his father, Osiris; he later fused with Horus, the son of Hathor; the childlike Har-Siesis seated on Isis's lap is the prototype of Jesus on Mary's lap.

*Hathor*: Egyptian Goddess of Love, Joy, Beauty, and Music; as daughter to Nout, she, too, is a Mother Goddess and the beautiful Celestial Cow; her son is Horus in the form of the solar bull, or portrayed as a falcon-headed Sun God; Hathor is considered mother and sister-bridge to all pharaohs (who were identified with Horus), protecting them in life and in death; primary cult site: Dendera; as Hathor-Sachmet, she is the dreaded Goddess of Battle; her Indian forerunner is Shakti-Kali (as Mother Goddess); her Cretan-Greek parallel is Hera (as Mother Goddess); further parallels are all Goddesses of Love and Battle such as the oriental Anat, the Celtic Morrigan, and the Germanic Freyja.

*Hebe*: Greek Goddess of Youth, Bearer of the Chalice, or vessel, for the gods; daughter of Hera, spouse of Heracles.

*Heimdall*: Germanic guardian of Heaven with a hunting horn; as consort and *heros* to Jörd, he was originally a God of Atmosphere and Sun God; his horn was the Goddess' Horn of Plenty; he is identical to Tyr.

*Hecate*: Greek Goddess of the Underworld and of Magic, Queen of the Witches; a threefold figure personified by the Erinnyes (Roman: Furies); originally, she had been the Triple Goddess who inhabited Heaven, Earth, and the Underworld; later, she represented merely destructive force (Olympian version); Hecate is the Crone aspect of the Earth Mother Demeter; Kali is her forerunner in India; her Germanic variant is Sigyn.

*Hephaistos* (Roman: Vulcan): Greek God of Fire and Smithery; son of Hera, consort to Aphrodite.

*Hera* (Roman: Juno): Greek Mother of Gods, the degraded and jealous wife of Zeus on Mount Olympus (Olympian version); she had originally been, as Rhea's daughter, the younger version of the Triple Goddess of Heaven, Earth, and Underworld in Crete (Knossos) and Argos (Mycenean Hera); her Cretan name: Dictyanna, Mistress from the Ida Mountains; primary cult sites: the Dicta Cave in Crete, Argos in the Peloponnesus (Mycenean culture), the island of Samos, the Grove of Olympus, the oracles of Dodona and Delphi; her forerunners are the Egyptian Goddesses Nout and Hathor, the Sumerian-Babylonian Inanna-Ishtar, all oriental Mother Goddesses (Kubaba, Cybele, Atargatis, Anat), the Persian Anahita, the Indian Sarasvati, the Indian Shakti (as Triple Goddess); her Celtic variant is Modron-Morrigan, her Germanic variant is Frigga.

*Heracles* (Roman: Hercules): Son of Zeus and the Queen Alcmene, most significant Greek *heros* (Olympian version); originally he was son and *heros* to Hera; his twelve deeds were the typical tasks of wooing for the Sacred Kings of Hera's cult; he later became the consort of Hebe, Hera's daughter; primary cult site: Tyrins in

**Argos** (Mycenean culture); his forerunners are the Egyptian Horus as son and *heros* to Hathor, and the Sumerian-Babylonian Gilgamesh; his Celtic variant is Cuchulainn, his Germanic variant is Siegfried.

**Hermes** (Roman: Mercury): Greek God of Commerce and Theft, son of Maia (Olympian version); originally a phallic stone symbol (compare "Hermen"); he later became the Leader of Souls, God of Arts and Wisdom, *heros* to the Goddess Maia (Crete and Messenien in Greek); on Mount Olympus, he is forerunner to Apollo as God of Arts; Hermes is of Egyptian (Horus as Harmachis, or Anubis as Leader of Souls) or perhaps of Indian (Hermes as son of Maia) origin; his parallel is Loki (as inventive "trickster," Bearer of Fire, God of the Underworld).

**Hestia** (Roman: Vesta): Greek Goddess of the Hearth Fire, Guardian of Home and Family, daughter of Rhea, sister to Hera; actually, she is Hera as the Goddess of the Household; cult of Vestals in Rome.

**Hödur**: Blind brother of Baldur, whom he shoots unintentionally; originally, he is the dark Winter King who kills the light Summer King (compare the Celtic Arawn).

**Horus** (Haroeris, Harachte, Harmachis): Son and *heros* to Hathor; as the falcon-headed god, he is the younger personification of the Sun God Ra; all Egyptian pharaohs are considered to be incarnations of Horus; primary cult site: Edfu; his parallels are the Indian Shiva and the oriental Baal; his Greek variants are Heracles and Apollo; his Celtic variants are Beli and Cuchulainn; his Germanic variants are Baldur and Freyr.

**Iakchos**: Son and *heros* to Demeter; identical to Dionysus; like Dionysus, he is torn to pieces and re-born annually in Eleusis.

**Iahu**: "Divine Dove," Sumerian Moon Goddess and Goddess of Love; she is the forerunner to the Babylonian Ishtar and the Greek Aphrodite, as well as to the Palestinian Goddess Jehwa (Eva); the dragon-serpent Jam (Yam) presumably escorts her as a phallic symbol; Iahu, personifying the dove, was later masculinized into Yahweh (Father God of the Israeli-Judaic tribes); she is still present in the Christian trinity and represents the "Holy Spirit" manifested as a dove.

**Iduna**: Germanic Goddess of Youth and Love in possession of the golden apples; she is related to the Germanic Freyja and the Celtic Morrigan; her antecedents are the Greek Hebe (daughter of Hera) and the Palestinian Jehwa (Heba, Eva).

**Inanna**: Sumerian Great Goddess, personification of the Land of Sumeria; Triple Goddess of Heaven, Earth, and Underworld; spouse to her *heros* Dumuzi, mother and protectress of all Sumerian kings (who are identified with Dumuzi); primary cult site: Uruk, Akkad; she is a very ancient goddess and forerunner to the Babylonian Ishtar and all oriental Mother Goddesses (Kubaba, Cybele, Atargatis, Anat), also the Persian Nanaia-Anahita; her parallel is the Indian Prithivi; her variants are the Egyptian Isis, the Cretan Dictyanna (Rhea-Hera), the Greek Demeter, the Celtic Dana, and the Germanic Jörd.

**Indra**: Indian Sky and Sun God, later made absolute; originally, he was son and *heros* to the Earth Goddess Prithivi (as solar bull); he absorbs the characteristics of his "father" and predecessor, Dyaus Pitar; his parallels are the Persian Mitra and the Egyptian Ra; variants are the Palestinian Baal, the Greek Apollo, the Celtic Beli, the Germanic Tyr.

*Ingunar* (Ing/Ingwi): (see Freyr)

*Io*: Mother of Dionysus-Zagreus; identical to Demeter and Hera as the tricolored lunar cow.

*Ishtar*: Babylonian Goddess of Love and all the Stars; spouse to her *heros* Tammuz, mother and protectress of all Babylonian kings (who were identified with Tammuz); primary cult site: Uruk, Babylon; her forerunner is Inanna; the oriental Goddesses of Love Atargatis and Anat stem from Ishtar; her parallels are the Persian Anahita, the Indian Lakshmi; she is forerunner to the Egyptian Nout-Hathor, the Mycenaean Hera, the Greek Aphrodite, the Celtic Morrigan and Erin, and the Germanic Freyja.

*Isis*: Egyptian Earth Mother Goddess, Goddess of Agriculture and Magic; she personifies the Land of Egypt and is sister-bride to Osiris, mother of Har-Siesis (Horus as son of Isis); originally, she was the Triple Goddess of Egypt, whose Goddess of Death aspect became established in the figure of Isis's sister, Nephthys; primary cult site: Busiris in the Nile Delta; later, she was fused with Hathor and thus became the mother and protectress of all pharaohs (they were identified with Horus as "son of Isis"); she is related to all oriental goddesses who seek their *heros* in the Underworld; her Cretan variant is Rhea, her Greek variant is Demeter, her Celtic variants are Modron and Erin, her Germanic variant is Frigga (as Mother Goddess); her cult was extremely influential in Rome and on early Christianity.

*Jahweh* (Jehova): Judaic Absolute Father God; originally a Palestinian God of Atmosphere (Jerubbaal) and *heros* to Anat (Iahu); he led cyclical battles against the Palestinian dragon-snake, Rahab; his forerunner is the Sumerian Tammuz; his parallels are all Absolute Father Gods as the Indian Varuna/Dyaus Pitar/Brahma, the Egyptian Ra, the Greek Zeus, and the Germanic Odin; ultimately, he mandated exclusivity ("monotheism").

*Jam* (Yam): Palestinian primordial snake and dragon; enemy to the *heros* Baal; forerunner is the Babylonian Tiamat; parallels are the snake in the Palestinian Paradise, the Egyptian Apophis, the Greek Ophion (Ladon), the Germanic Nidhogg.

*Jehwa* (Hawwa, Heba, Hebe, Eva, Eve): Palestinian Earth Goddess and Goddess of Love with the phallic snake (Jam) and apple orchard Paradise; her brother-consort and *heros* is Abdiheba (Adam); primary cult site: Jerusalem; Jehwa's forerunner is the Sumerian Goddess of Love Iahu, manifested as a dove; her parallels are the Cyprian Aphrodite, the Greek Hera-Hebe, the Celtic Morrigan, the Germanic Freyja-Iduna; she was dethroned by the Judaic Father God who appropriated her name as "Jehova."

*Jörd* (Gerd, Njörd, Nerthus): Germanic Earth Mother Goddess and Mistress of the Underworld; her Underworld is an island in the western ocean from which she arrives on a ship; she travels throughout the land on a chariot drawn by cows bringing light and fertility; her son, consort, and *heros* is the luminous God of Sun or of Heaven; her daughter is Freyja, her son is Freyr; she was worshipped throughout Germania; her forerunners are the Indian Prithivi, the Sumerian Inanna, Kubaba-Cybele of Asia Minor, the Egyptian Isis, the Greek Demeter; her parallel is the Celtic Dana; she was later masculinized into Njörd.

*Kali*: (see Shakti)

*Kore*: Daughter of Demeter (Olympian version); originally, she was the Maiden aspect of Demeter; as Persephone, she becomes spouse of Hades, goes to the Underworld and returns; primary cult site: Eleusis.

*Kubaba* (Hebatu): Hittite Earth-Mother Goddess; personification of the land of Asia Minor; mother and spouse to her *heros*, Teshub; mother and protectress of all Hittite kings (who were identified with Teshub); primary cult site: Yazilikaja (Turkey); her forerunner is Inanna; the Hittite Goddess Arinna and Phrygian Goddess Cybele are derived from Kubaba; Kubaba (Hecuba) was Goddess of Troy.

*Lakshmi*: Indian Goddess of Love, Beauty, Joy, and Wealth; Goddess of the Full Moon who was born of the ocean; as Sita, she is Goddess of Grain; her consort is Vishnu; her parallel is the Babylonian Ishtar; her variant is Aphrodite of Cyprus.

*Liban*: Irish stag-chariot Goddess, variant of the Greek Artemis.

*Loki*: Germanic God of Death, God of Fire, and of the Underworld; he possesses infinite wisdom (magic) and knows all the arts (inventions); he is a "trickster" figure; he causes Baldur's death and ultimately precipitates the Twilight of the Gods for the Asir, led by Odin; he is consort to the Earth Goddess Sigyn, the Mistress of the Underworld ("witch") and father to the monsters of death; his forerunners are the oriental-Egyptian Gods of Death, Mot and Seth, as well as the Greek Hades, the Indian Fire God, Agni, the Palestinian Lucifer, and the Celtic Lug, Bearer of Fire and Master of Magic.

*Lucifer*: Palestinian God, Bearer of Fire and Master of Magic; as the Bringer of Light, he is *heros* to Hagia Sophia (Diana Lucifera); he is adversary to the patriarchal Yahweh and is later "demonized" by him.

*Lug*: Celtic-Irish God of Battle and Poetry; he possesses infinite wisdom (magic) and knowledge of the arts; he is thought to be the son of the God of the Sea, Mananaan Mac Lir (or Bran), and to have freed Ireland from its enemies; originally, he was son, consort, and *heros* to Erin, with whom he celebrated the Sacred Marriage (*Lugnasad*) annually; his forerunner is Bran; as the bearer of the flaming spear he is related to the Germanic Loki and the Palestinian Lucifer who are also bearers of fire; he lives on in the legends and epics as King Loth and Lancelot, both of whom are adversaries to the patriarchal Arthur.

*Mabon* (Mabonagrín, Apollo Maponos): Celtic God of Sun and Poetry; originally, son, consort, and *heros* to Modron; his forerunner is the Greek Apollo.

*Marduk*: Babylonian solar *heros*, identical to Tammuz.

*Mananaan Mac Lir*: Celtic God of the Sea, immediate predecessor to Bran; he is considered to be Lug's father.

*Melissa*: Rhea, manifested as the bee queen.

*Metis*: Libyan Goddess of Wisdom, mother to Athena.

*Minos*: Title given to the Sacred Kings at Knossos (Crete); analogous titles for the kings were "Dionysus," "Zagreus," "Zeus," "Heracles," "Horus," etc.

*Mitra* (Mitrás): Fertility *heros* and solar bull of the Persian Goddess Anahita; the

Persian kings were identified with Mitra; primary cult site: Susa; his forerunner is Dumuzi-Tammuz, his parallels are the Egyptian Ra-Horus, the oriental Baal, the Cretan-Greek Zeus-Apollo; his variants are the Celtic Beli and the Germanic Freyr-Baldur; Mitra was later made absolute and given the name Mitras ("Master of Heavenly Light").

*Modron*: Celtic-Welsh Earth Mother and Goddess of Death with a Cauldron or Horn of Plenty; her son, consort, and *heros* is Bran, later, Mabon; Branwen (sister of Bran) is her younger manifestation; her Irish parallel is Morrighu, her Germanic parallel Frigga; her immediate forerunner is Dana.

*Morrighain* (Morrighu, Morgane): Celtic-Irish Triple Goddess; Mistress of the Amazonian Isles, Goddess of Beauty, Love, and Fertility, Goddess of Battle and of Death; she re-awakens her *heros* in her Paradise with golden apples in the West (Avalon); her Underworld is situated at the bottom of seas, lakes, and other bodies of water; she surrounds her paradisaical gardens with an impenetrable wall of air ("Fata Morgana"); she is the prototype for all Celtic fairies; her Germanic parallel is Freyja; her forerunners are the Babylonian Ishtar, the Egyptian Hathor-Isis, the Cretan-Greek Hera, the Cyprian Aphrodite; as "Morgane the Fairy" she maintains an enduring presence in the epics and literature of the Middle Ages.

*Mot*: Palestinian God of Death; he is adversary to the *heros*, Baal, whom he takes with him annually to the Underworld; as a result, Baal's sister-bride, Anat, fights and ultimately defeats him; his forerunner is the Babylonian Tiamat (who battles Tammuz); his parallels are the Egyptian Seth (who kills Osiris), the Greek Hades (who abducts Kore and takes her to the Underworld) and the Germanic Loki (who kills Baldur).

*Nagelfar*: Germanic ship of death, comparable with the Egyptian and Celtic death ships (compare Germanic cult of burials on ships).

*Nanaia*: Persian Earth Mother and Fertility Goddess; primary cult site: Susa; she is the forerunner to Anahita.

*Nandi*: Shiva's sacred bull.

*Neit* (Neith): Very ancient Egyptian Goddess of the three regions of Heaven, Earth, and Underworld, and protectress of the dead; largely identical to Nout; primary cult site: Sais on the Nile Delta; she originated in Libya where she was the high goddess of the Amazons; as the Goddess of War and of Wisdom, as well as all handicrafts and arts, she is forerunner to the Greek Athena.

*Nephtys*: Egyptian Goddess of Death, daughter of Nout, spouse to Seth, mother of the leader of the dead, Anubis; she helps her sister, Isis, bury Osiris; she was originally Isis as the Goddess of the Underworld; her Sumerian forerunner is Erishkigal, her Greek variant Persephone.

*Nerthus*: (see Jörd)

*Nidhögg*: Germanic dragon of hell; son of the Earth Goddess, Sigyn, and the God of Death, Loki; at the Twilight of the Gods he defeats Thor, the God of Thunderstorm; his forerunners are all oriental dragons who battle Gods of Atmosphere and Sun Gods (Tiamat, Rahab, Jam, Apophis, Ophion).

*Njörd*: (see Jörd)

*Norns*: Germanic Goddesses of Fate, related to the Greek *Moiren* and the Roman *Parzen*.

*Nout* (Nut): Egyptian Goddess of Heaven and the Eternal Night, who gives birth to the sun each morning; she is also portrayed as the celestial cow who gives birth to the solar bull each day; as protectress of the dead; she is mother of the primary Egyptian deities: Isis, Nephthys, Seth, Osiris, and Horus; Hathor is her younger version; her Persian parallel is Anahita, her Cretan-Greek variant is Rhea, her Germanic variant is Frigga (as mother to the solar *heros*).

*Od*: *Heros* to the Germanic Goddess Frigga, he was presumably manifested as a goat buck (compare the Cretan Pan-Zeus or Dionysus-Zagreus); he enters the Underworld after he has been hanged and gleans wisdom from the Cauldron of Inspiration (compare Odin); his forerunners are all the fertility *heros* who are sought so desperately; he himself is immediate forerunner to Baldur.

*Odin* (Wotan): Germanic Absolute Father God; master of Heaven, wayfarer on Earth, and guest in the Underworld; he returns with the knowledge of runes and all that is magic, thus becoming God of Wisdom and Oracle; originally, he was just a God of War and Battle; the cult was most widespread in Norway; his forerunners are all the Absolute Father Gods like the Indian Varuna/Brahma/Dyaus Pitar, Palestinian Yahweh, Egyptian Ra, Greek-Roman Zeus-Jupiter; he is present in the legends as the mysterious wayfarer, or the white horse rider, or the Wild Hunter.

*Oengus*: Son-successor to the Celtic God, Dagda; as such, he represents the younger version of Dagda.

*Ophion* (Python, Typhon, Ladon): The primal snake or dragon who is consort to the Creatress Goddess (compare Eurydice, Erichthonius and Athena); guardian of the Earth Goddess' oracles and her orchard Paradise (compare Hera); he is battled annually by the Goddess' *heros*; he was later permanently defeated by patriarchal gods who either murder the dragon or make him the principle of evil; his forerunners are the Egyptian Apophis, the Babylonian Tiamat, and Eve's snake in the Palestinian Paradise; variants are the Celtic dragons and the Germanic dragon, Nidhöggr; battles with snakes and dragons continued to figure prominently in the epics and fairy tales.

*Orpheus*: Most famous Greek singer, poet, and lover to Eurydice; originally, he was *heros* to the nine muses or Maenads; after they tore him to pieces, his head continued to sing and prophesy; as Eurydice's (Goddess of the Underworld) consort, he became God of the Underworld; his immediate forerunner is the Egyptian Osiris; his parallel is the Cretan Dionysus-Zagreus, his Celtic variant Bran; the Orphean or Dionysian Mysteries were still celebrated in Rome.

*Osiris*: Egyptian God of the Underworld, a wise judge of the dead and God of Resurrection; he originally personified the Nile and was brother-consort and *heros* to Isis; he was king of the Nile region and proponent of agriculture; he was torn to pieces annually and reborn from the Underworld; primary cult site: Abydos; his oriental parallels are Dumuzi, Teshub-Telepinu, Attis, Hadad, Baal; his Cretan-Greek variants are Dionysus (Iakchos, Triptolemos) and Orpheus; his Celtic variant is Bran; he was a tremendous influence on Rome (the Cult of Isis) and on early Christianity (compare Jesus as judge of the dead and God of Resur-

rection).

*Pan*: Son of Rhea in her manifestation as a Goat Goddess, Amaltheia; Pan manifests likewise as a goat buck; he is the foster brother of Zeus and a fertility *heros* to Rhea; his northwest European variant is the goat buck-"devil" who is part of the so-called "witches' cults."

*Persephone* (Roman: Proserpina): As Kore, she is Demeter's daughter; as Persephone, she is Hades' spouse and Goddess of the Underworld (Olympian version); originally she was Demeter in her aspect as Goddess of Love and Goddess of Rebirth (compare Aphrodite); primary cult site: Eleusis; her Egyptian forerunner is Nephthys, the "sister" of Isis; originally, Nephthys was Isis herself in her role as a loving Goddess of the Underworld; her Sumerian forerunner is Erishkigal, Inanna's "sister."

*Poseidon* (Roman: Neptune): Greek God of the Sea, son of Rhea.

*Prithivi*: Indian Earth Mother Goddess, personification of the land of India; mother of all gods and humans and protectress of the dead; she is revered in her manifestation as a stone; her *heros* is Dyaus Pitar, manifested as a bull; her daughters are the night and the rosy dawn; the sun is her son (Indra as solar bull); primary cult site: Harappa culture on the Indus; her parallels are the Sumerian Inanna, the Egyptian Isis, the Egyptian Nout; variants are the Cretan Gaia-Rhea, the Celtic Dana, the Germanic Jörd.

*Pwyll*: Legendary Prince of Wales; originally, a younger version of Arawn; like Arawn, he goes on a stag hunt with the death hounds; he is consort and *heros* to Rhiannon.

*Rahab*: Palestinian Goddess of Death in her manifestation as a dragon-snake; her forerunner is the Babylonian Tiamat.

*Ra*: Egyptian Sun God; as son of Nout, she re-births him daily and every evening he is again devoured; also as son of Nout he sometimes manifests as the solar bull; he crosses the sky every day in a solar skiff, traversing the same path at night through the Underworld to return; primary cult site: Heliopolis; in the Heliopolitan era, he became the omnipotent, supreme Absolute God; his Persian parallel is Mitras (Master of Light), his Germanic variant is Freyr (the god in the solar skiff); Dyaus Pithar, Yahweh, Zeus/Jupiter, and Odin, as fathers to all gods, are comparable to the Absolute God Ra.

*Rhea*: Cretan Great Goddess, daughter of Gaia, spouse of Chronus; mother of Demeter, Hera, Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus; primary cult site: Dicta Cavern in Crete; her Cretan name: Dictyanna; her forerunners are the Sumerian Goddess Inanna and the Egyptian Nout.

*Rhiannon* (Hippona, Epona): Celtic Horse Goddess of amazonian character; she rides through the battle and determines its outcome; she lives in the Underworld and leads humans to their death and reawakening; her parallels are the Celtic Morrigan as Mistress of Weapons and Horses, and the Germanic Freyja as the Goddess of Battle and Death; her forerunners are all oriental-Egyptian Goddesses of Battle, as well as Greek Athena Polias (Athena as Horse Goddess).

*Rudra*: Indian God of Thunderstorm and Fertility (compare Shiva).

*Sachmet*: Egyptian Goddess of Battle, described as a blood-thirsty, lion-headed goddess (Heliopolitan version): originally she was the warring aspect of the Triple Goddess Hathor, and thus the Goddess of Mythical Battle and Royal Sacrifice; in this role, she was the Goddess of the ironclad Law of Fate; her parallel Goddesses of Battle are the Indian Kali, the oriental Anat, the Egyptian Neit.

*Sarasvati*: Indian Goddess of Wisdom and Eloquence, Poetry, and Music; as Ma-Ganga (or "Mother of the Ganges"), she is Goddess of Great Currents and Fertile Waters; she was considered the source of all life and light; her *heros* was Brahma, God of the River Brahmaputra; primary cult site: Bengalia; her parallels are the Persian Ahura-Mazda-Anahita as "Mistress of all Wisdom," and the Egyptian Neit as Goddess of Wisdom; her variant is the Greek Athena as Goddess of Arts and Sciences.

*Semele* (Selene, Helena; Roman: Luna): Greek Moon Goddess and mother of Dionysus-Zagreus; identical to Demeter (Kore) in her lunar manifestation; she continued to exert influence into the Middle Ages as "Frau Luna."

*Seth* (Sobek): Egyptian God of Death, brother-consort to Nephthys; adversary to Isis and Osiris, whom he murders; he is defeated by Har-Siesis (Horus) and expelled; his parallels are the oriental Mot (who kills Baal), the Greek Hades (who abducts Persephone to the Underworld) and the Germanic Loki (who kills Baldur).

*Shakti* (Kali): Indian Goddess who went by many names: as Uma, she was an Earth Mother Goddess, as Parvati, a Goddess of Hills and Mistress of Forests and Animals, as Shakti, Goddess of Love and Fertility, and Creatress of the World; as Kali she was Goddess of Death, Goddess of Battle, and Devourer of the World; she was a very ancient and universal goddess who is still worshipped today in Bengal; primary cult site: Calcutta ("city of Kali"); her *heros* was Shiva as God of Fertility; comparable is the Sumerian goddess Inanna and the Egyptian Nout-Neit, one of the oldest of the Goddesses; her variants are all the great mother Goddesses such as Kybele, Isis, Demeter, and Hera.

*Shiva*: Indian God of Atmosphere who went by many names: as Rudra, he was God of Thunderstorm, as Agni, God of Fire; as Bhairava, he was an orgiastic god and *heros* to Shakti (Kali); he was androgynous like Attis; he was later re-styled into an abstract, creative principle; he is the prototype of all subsequent Gods of Atmosphere and *heros* (compare the age of the Shakti cult).

*Siegfried*: Germanic stag *heros*, comparable to Celtic Cernunnos and Greek Acteon; later, he was made parallel to Germanic solar gods like Baldur and Freyr; like the Greek Heracles, he performs certain feats as tasks of wooing; in the Middle Ages, he became one of the major figures in the *Nibelungenlied*.

*Sigyn*: Germanic Goddess of the Underworld; a "witch" who gives birth to monsters (dragon, hell hound), she was spouse to Loki; she is the dark aspect of the Earth Mother, Jörd; her Greek forerunner is Hecate.

*Sphinx*: Mythical animal, usually consisting of three animals combined (lion/bull/snake, or bird/lion/snake, or human/lion/snake); all sphinx, whether male or female, are calendar symbols of the Triple Goddess' mythical year.

*Tammuz*: Babylonian solar *heros*; consort and *heros* to Babylonian Goddess Ishtar;

he battles Tiamat, the Goddess manifested as an Underworld serpent whom he cyclically conquers and by whom he is conquered; primary cult site: Babylon; all Babylonian kings were identified with Tammuz; his forerunner is the Sumerian Dumuzi; all oriental *heros* stem from Tammuz (Teshub, Attis, Hadad, Baal), also the Persian Mitra, the Egyptian Horus, the Cretan Zeus, the Greek Adonis (Cyprus), the Celtic Lug, and the Germanic Freyr-Baldur.

*Telepinu*: Hittite God of Atmosphere; originally, rain *heros* to the Sun Goddess Arinna; he is sought by all the gods until he is finally found sleeping in the Underworld; his Sumerian forerunner is Dumuzi, his immediate Hittite predecessor and "father" is Teshub; his parallels are Hadad and Baal.

*Teshub*: Hittite God of Atmosphere; originally, son, consort, and *heros* to Kubaba; all Hittite kings were identified with Teshub; his forerunner is the Sumerian Dumuzi; the more recent Hittite, Telepinu, is derived from Teshub.

*Thor* (Donar): Germanic God of Weather, God of Atmosphere and Rain; he makes thunder with his hammer; he steals the magical Cauldron of Inspiration and Abundance from the giants; most prevalent in Iceland; his immediate forerunner was Heimdall whom he dethroned; he is related to all patriarchalized Gods of Atmosphere (like Yahweh and Zeus).

*Tiamat*: Babylonian Goddess of Death manifested as a dragon-snake; Goddess of Chaos, the Primordial Water, she is the adversary of Tammuz-Marduk, whom she kills cyclically or who defeats her cyclically; she is forerunner to the Palestinian dragon-snake, Rahab, and all oriental Egyptian snake-like Underworld Gods (Yam, Mot, Apophis, Seth), as well as the Greek *heros*-snakes, Typhon and Erchtheus; also all Celtic and Germanic dragons (the ocean serpent, Nidhögg).

*Triptolemos*: *Heros* to Demeter, who gives him the wheat grain; he spreads agriculture on a cultural mission; Egyptian forerunner is Osiris.

*Tyr* (Tiw, Ziu): Germanic Sky, Light, and Sun God; originally son, consort, and *heros* to Jörd; God of Wisdom and Runes; at the Twilight of the Gods he battles the hell hound (darkness) and is swallowed by him; his forerunners are all oriental Gods of Sky and Light (Mitra, Tammuz, Horus); his parallel is the Celtic Curoi.

*Uranus*: Cretan God of Heaven; brother-consort and *heros* to Gaia, he is dethroned by his successor-"son," Chronus.

*Varuna*: Indian Absolute God of Heaven.

*Vishnu*: Indian Absolute God of Heaven; originally God of Atmosphere and of Rain under the name of Rama; consort and *heros* to Lakshmi; his parallels are all other Gods of Atmosphere (Shiva, Mitra, Baal, Teshub, Tammuz, etc.).

*Valkyries*: Germanic virgin warrior Maidens, who are actually younger versions of Freyja as Goddess of Battle.

*Yam*: (see Jam).

*Yggdrasil* (Yngdrasil): Germanic world tree that burns at the Twilight of the Gods; compare all trees sacred to the Earth Mother Goddesses.

*Zeus* (Roman: Jupiter): Greek God of Heaven, father of gods and humans, ruler of

Mount Olympus (Olympian version); primary cult sites: Grove of Olympia and Dodona; originally son and *heros* to Rhea with the cult site of Dicta Cavern at Crete (Psychron); as Cretan Zeus, he is a god who dies and is reborn annually; death by the Goddess' "thunderbolt," (double ax, or Labrys); the brother-consort and *heros* to the Cretan and Mycenaean Hera who later became his obstinate, but subordinate wife; his forerunners are all the absolute patriarchal Father Gods, such as the Egyptian Sun God Ra (Heliopolitan era), the Palestinian Yahweh, the Indian Dyaus Pitar and Varuna (both as Absolute Gods of Heaven), his Germanic variant is the God of War and father of Gods, Odin.

This landmark book is translated by Lilian Friedberg, with the assistance of Dr. Heide Göttner-Abendroth.

Healing comes in psychotherapy when we consciously unite with hidden and repressed parts of ourselves; it is also possible that wounds deep in our culture can be healed by corrections in our historical perspective.

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An important psychological implication of Dr. Göttner-Abendroth's research affects our customary view ourselves as men and women: We see, for example, that an older, more balanced view, in which men and women were regarded as equal, was shifted to patriarchy (inequality) by relatively recent historical events (in Europe, at least). We find that this inequality is not, as we are taught, "the natural order," but an imposed order. Moreover, that older view was never entirely extinguished. It even now has reappeared in our interest in ecology, and New Age philosophy.

Heide Göttner-Abendroth was born in 1941 in Thüringen, Germany. In 1973 she received her Ph.D. from the University of Munich, where she taught philosophy for ten years. In 1976 she collaborated on instituting Women's Studies in German universities. Since 1986 she has been director of the autonomous women's academy, HAGIA, which she founded. She has three children.

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