

**Creating Civilization:  
Integrating The Anima and Becoming Wise**

Martha C. Beck  
Lyon College, United States of America  
martha.beck@lyon.edu

**Abstract**

This paper will begin, but only begin, to discuss the ways the Greek pantheon of goddesses is described in myth and tragedy, and show that the realm of Greek divinities is a realm of patriarchy, of male domination. The myths and tragedies expose the ways men do great harm while at the same time ignoring or denying the real impact of their behavior. Presenting these myths and tragedies people can learn the characters and recognize their own ability to do harm and will change. This paper will give a very brief description of the seven goddesses of Greek mythology taken from the book, *Goddesses in Everywoman*, by Jean Shindola Bolen. Examples are selected that show both positive and negative, creative and destructive aspects of each goddess. This paper concludes that the seven archetypes are powerful psychological forces in the souls of women, which in a patriarchal culture, the positive drive side is frustrated or destroyed and the destructive side emerges as a response to this unjust suffering. The purpose of this paper has been to describe the many dimensions of the anima force in women's psyches so that everyone, men and women, can work toward creating a less patriarchal society.

Keywords: *Realm of patriarchy, Greek pantheon of goddesses, Feminine Archetypes, Woman's anima force*

**Abstrak**

Tulisan ini dimulai, tetapi hanya sebagai awalnya, dengan mendiskusikan drama para dewa dewi Yunani yang terurai dalam mitos-mitos dan tragedi, dan ingin menunjukkan bahwa gambaran alam ke-Tuhanan Yunani adalah suatu alam atau kerajaan Patriarkis, maksudnya merupakan wilayah dominasi laki-laki. Mitos-mitos dan drama dewa-dewa ini memaparkan cara-cara pria melakukan kerusakan besar terhadap wanita sekaligus masa bodoh dan menafikan

akibat dari kelakuan mereka tersebut. Dengan mempresentasikan kisah-kisah dan karakter mereka tersebut maka orang dapat belajar dan menyadari kemampuan mereka melakukan kerusakan, tetapi mereka berusaha menahan dan merubahnya. Makalah ini akan mengambil setting drama dan kisah tentang tujuh karakter dewi dalam mitologi Yunani yang diekstrak secara ringkas dari buku *Goddesses in Everywoman*, karangan Jean Shindola Bolen. Kisah-kisah diseleksi yang memperlihatkan aspek positif/negatif dan kekuatan destruktif/kreatif dewi-dewi tersebut. Makalah ini menyimpulkan bahwa ke tujuh karakter dewi tersebut yang menampilkan tujuh arketif femininitas adalah merupakan potensi dan dorongan-dorongan psikologis yang sangat kuat dalam jiwa setiap wanita. Tujuan dari makalah ini menunjukkan berbagai dimensi dari kekuatan ‘anima’ (ruh hidup dan semangat) di dalam jiwa wanita tersebut sehingga setiap orang, baik laki-laki maupun perempuan, dapat bekerjasama untuk menciptakan masyarakat yang tidak patriarkis.

Kata Kunci: Alam Patriarki Yunani, Mitologi dan Kisah Dewa-Dewi Yunani, Arketif Feminin, Potensi Kreatif Psikis Perempuan, Sisi Kekuatan Anima Perempuan

### Introduction

The goal of all philosophy should be the promotion of the love of wisdom, “*philia-sophia*.” The love of wisdom is by definition a specific emotion. It is not the dispassionate idolization of human reason, or the human ability to articulate propositions through language. Even the Oracle at Delphi, the quintessential religious shrine dedicated to Apollo, god of reason, was ruled by the Apollonian priests for nine months and given over to the orgiastic, emotion-driven ceremonies dedicated to the god Dionysius, god of wine and sensual, spiritual ecstasy for three months each year. Socrates, the quintessential philosopher, spent his life on a religious mission as a disciple of Apollo and says explicitly in the *Symposium* that Eros is something about which he had knowledge. Aristotle’s model of the complete human life is based on the union of reason and emotion in the pursuit of human excellence, each aspect of which includes its own appropriate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.

Aristotle, however, is notorious for his inadequate understanding of women’s souls, their biology and their capacity to exercise the highest levels of moral and intellectual excellence. Socrates is more generous: his references to women are mostly positive because he claims to have gained his knowledge of Eros from a woman, Diotima, and he compares his own activity of questioning his interlocutors and helping them “deliver” their

“intellectual offspring,” to the vocation of his mother, a midwife. Neither philosopher explores the many ways women’s lives and souls are intertwined with men’s in the complex network of interpersonal relationships we call a “culture.” Greek mythology, Homer and tragedy are filled with many different goddesses and the impact they have on the gods, women and men.

Women today who write in the voices of the goddesses want to make readers and audiences conscious of women’s true place in the pantheon of human civilization. Women can and do make positive contributions to the creation of a more egalitarian society. Under patriarchy, women are still wounded much more than men; when wounded, women can become very destructive and do great harm. The goal of bringing into focus the psychic forces alive in women’s souls is to create an international culture that unifies the male and female energies of the human psyche in ways that enhance both. Men and women are not identical; they are equal players in a complex connection of biological, emotional and intellectual forces that must be integrated and balanced to create a truly just society.

This paper will give a very brief description of the seven goddesses of Greek mythology taken from the book, *Goddesses in Everywoman*, by Jean Shinoda Bolen. It will use examples from mythology, tragedy, or Plato to show how the Greeks were taught to understand this particular psychic power. Then poems or excerpts from essays and books written in the last few years will show how these energies are alive in women and in culture today. Each goddess has the power to be destructive or creative. Examples are selected that show both positive and negative aspects of each goddess.

### **Hera**

Hera is the wife of the king, Zeus, “The Hera archetype first and foremost represents a woman’s yearning to be a wife. A woman with a strong Hera archetype feels fundamentally incomplete without a partner. She is motivated by a ‘goddess-given’ instinct toward marriage. Her grief at being without a mate [is] a deep and wounding inner experience,”<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, true to a society dominated by men, Zeus is continually unfaithful. However, “The goddess Hera did not express anger at Zeus for his public infidelities. The pain she felt at being rejected by him and at being humiliated by his affairs she channeled into vindictive rage directed at the other woman or at children fathered by Zeus. The Hera archetype predisposes women to displace blame for her mate—on whom she is emotionally dependent—onto others.”<sup>2</sup>

The story of Medea is the story of the Hera archetype lived out by human beings. When Jason needed to get the Golden Fleece, Hera and Athena

---

<sup>1</sup>Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Goddesses in Everywoman: Powerful Archetypes in Women’s Lives* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 142.

<sup>2</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 146.

convinced Aphrodite to make Medea fall in love with him. “She betrayed her father and her country and brought about her brother’s death” when she helped him steal the Golden Fleece. Jason vowed he would marry her and stay with her until he died. When they settled in Corinth, Jason took the opportunity to marry the daughter of the king and agreed to exile Medea and their two sons. Medea took revenge against the other woman by killing her and took revenge against Jason by killing their sons.<sup>3</sup>

Women over the last few centuries have recognized the kind of emotional prison women can experience within a marriage. In the nineteenth century, Margaret Fuller tried to make women more aware and reflective about their unhealthy dependence on marriage as a way to find meaning and purpose. I have urged on Women independence of Man, not that I do not think the sexes are mutually needed by one another, but because in Woman this fact has led to an excessive devotion, which has cooled love, degraded marriage, and prevented either sex from being what it should be to itself or the other. I wish Woman to live, first for God’s sake. Then she will not make an imperfect man her god, and thus sink to idolatry. Then she will not take what is not fit for her from a sense of weakness and poverty. Then, if she finds what she need in Man embodied, she will know how to love, and be worthy of being loved.<sup>4</sup>

Betsy Sholl gives a poetic description of the way women can be physically harmed by abusive husbands and still be unable to leave a relationship.

### **Farmwife**

The woman who has nodded to me from her porch  
for weeks, still nods now, bobs her head  
leading me inside to see  
21 grandchildren posed on a shelf,  
sills full of colored glass.

Twice, I heard, she left her husband  
and then returned.

He stays outside with the dogs,  
hollering them away from the barn.

Chickens flutter and squall,  
leaving patches of brown feathers.

She says she’s been nodding 26 years.

---

<sup>3</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 162.

<sup>4</sup>Margaret Fuller, “Women in the Nineteenth Century,” *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women’s Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 27.

The doctor call it 'the trembles,'  
but she know something sharper  
is pecking her brain.

Twice his fists have hit,  
knocked her against the wall.  
Twice she returned

to face of grandchildren  
perfectly still in the tilt  
of their frames, glass  
shining on every sill,

to hens squawking themselves into trees  
whenever a dog come near.  
She sweeps up the puddles  
of brown and white feathers  
that fear sends flying,

pours them into ticking  
to cushion her relentless,  
affirming head.<sup>5</sup>

In her poem, "Prayer for Revolutionary Love," Denise Levertov gives a model of what a healthy, egalitarian marriage would be like.

That a woman not ask a man to leave meaningful work to follow her.  
That a man not ask a woman to leave meaningful work to follow him.

That no one try to put Eros in bondage.  
But that no one put a cudgel in the hands of Eros.  
That our loyalty to one another and our loyalty to our work not be set in  
false conflict.

That our love for each other give us love for each other's work,  
That our love for each other's work give us love for one another.

That our love for each other's work give us love for one another.  
That our love for each other give us love for each other's work.

That our love for each other, if need be, Give way to absence.  
And the unknown.

---

<sup>5</sup>Betsy Sholl, "Farm Wife," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 151-152.

That we endure absence, if need be, without losing our love for each other.

Without closing our doors to the unknown.<sup>6</sup>

### **Athena**

Athena is the daughter of Zeus, born from Zeus' forehead when Zeus swallowed his pregnant wife, Metis.

A Goddess of Wisdom, Athena was known for her winning strategies and practical solutions. As an archetype, Athena is the pattern followed by logical women, who are ruled by their heads rather than their hearts . . . As the archetype of 'the father's daughter,' Athena represents the woman who quite naturally gravitates toward powerful men who have authority, responsibility, and power---men who fit the archetype of the patriarchal father 'boss man'. . . once she gives him her allegiance, she is his most ardent defender or 'right-hand woman,' trusted to use his authority well and to guard his prerogatives.<sup>7</sup>

The negative aspect of Athena as defender of the patriarchy is shown in the story of Athena and Arachne. Arachne, famous for her weaving, challenged Athena, goddess of crafts and weaving, to a contest over who was more skilled. Arachne's tapestry portrayed many of Zeus' affairs. Athena, "very much her father's defender, punished her for making Zeus's deceitful and illicit behavior public."<sup>8</sup> Antigone is an example from tragedy of a father's daughter who speaks against Creon, the king, out of a sense of a divine law, a sense of justice beyond the power of any particular ruler. Like her father, she gets too angry. Creon overreacts himself, ordering her death through suffocation in a cave. Like all women living in a male-dominated situation, Creon's mistake ultimately rules the day and Antigone dies before Creon is able to reconsider.

The Presidential election in the United States in 2008 is a great example of two prominent Athena candidates, Hilliary Clinton and Sarah Palin. Clinton is both honored and vilified for acting like a man. She has worked to give women and minorities a larger place in social and political life. She clearly has the natural intelligence and political experience to take on the job. Sarah Palin, on the other hand, had very little educational background or experience in public life before being nominated for the vice presidency. Her views on religion, patriotism, feminism, and many other issues are extremely different from those of Clinton. Yet both share the Athena archetype and are determined to make their mark in public life.

In "Killers of the Dream," Lillian Smith recognizes the injustice of racism and works for African-American rights without becoming a hard-

---

<sup>6</sup>Denise Levertov, "Prayer for Revolutionary Love," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 41.

<sup>7</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 78, and 81-82.

<sup>8</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 77-78.

hearted manifestation of the Athena archetype.

Something was wrong with a world that tells you that love is good and people are important and then forces you to deny love and to humiliate people. I knew, though I would not for years confess it aloud, that in trying to shut the Negro race away from us, we have shut ourselves away from so many good, creative, honest, deeply human things in life. I began to understand slowly at first but more clearly as the years passed, that the warped, distorted frame we have put around every Negro child from birth is around every white child also. Each is on a different side of the frame but each is pinioned there. And I knew that what cruelly shapes and cripples the personality of one is as cruelly shaping and crippling the personality of the other.<sup>9</sup>

More recently, Carter Heywood expresses a similar desire for justice without losing one's heart.

Love creates righteousness or justice, here on earth. To make love is to make justice. As advocates and activists for justice know, loving involves struggle, resistance and risk. People working today on behalf of women, blacks, lesbians and gay men, the aging and the poor in this country and elsewhere know that making justice is not a warm, fuzzy experience . . . Love is a conversion to humanity—a willingness to participate with others in the healing of a broken world and broken lives. Love is the choice to experience life as a member of the human family, a partner in the dance of life, rather than as an alien in the world or as a deity above the world, aloof and apart from human flesh.<sup>10</sup>

### Artemis

Artemis is the twin sister of Apollo, daughter of Leto and Zeus. She is goddess of the hunt and of the moon, spending her time outdoors. “The Artemis archetype gives women the innate ability to concentrate intensely on whatever is important to her and to be undistracted from her course, either by the needs of others or by competition from others. If anything, competition heightens the excitement of ‘the chase’”<sup>11</sup> The qualities of an Artemis woman are “achievement and competence, independence from men and male opinions, and concern for victimized, powerless women and the young.”<sup>12</sup> The destructive side of Artemis can be extreme. Although “An Artemis woman is more likely angry at a man or men in general for depreciating her or for failing to treat with respect something she values.”<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Lillian Smith, “Killers of the Dream,” *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 153.

<sup>10</sup>Carter Heywood, “Our Passion for Justice,” *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., (Boston, Beacon Press, 1991), 181.

<sup>11</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 49.

<sup>12</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 50.

<sup>13</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 68.

Artemis can also be cruel towards women. At one point, Niobe boasted to Leto that Leto only had one son and one daughter while Niobe had six of each. Artemis and Apollo avenged the insult by killing all of her children. In tragedy, Hippolytus worships Artemis and rejects Aphrodite. When his stepmother, Phaedra, falls in love with him and confesses her passion, Hippolytus is so appalled and unforgiving that Phaedrus responds by killing herself and leaving a note claiming that Hippolytus raped her. Hippolytus dies indirectly at the hands of his father. Artemis vows revenge and takes it on Aphrodite. When Aphrodite falls in love with Adonis, Artemis has him killed.

Annie Dillard is a contemporary example of the Artemis archetype. Her book, “Pilgrim at Tinker Creek,” is a story of her love affair with the natural world. At one point, she describes her quest to really “commune” with nature.

The secret of seeing is, then, the pearl of great price. If I thought he could teach me to find it and keep it forever I would stagger barefoot across a hundred deserts after any lunatic at all. But although the pearl may be found, it may not be sought. The literature of illumination reveals this above all: although it comes to those who wait for it, it is always, even to the most practiced and adept, a gift and a total surprise. I return from one walk knowing where the killdeer nests in the field by the creek and the hour the laurel blooms. I return from the same walk a day later scarcely knowing my own name. Litanies hum in my ears; my tongue flaps in my mouth Ailino, alleluia! I cannot cause light; the most I can do is try to put myself in the path of its beam. It is possible, in deep space, to sail on solar wind. Light, be it particle or wave, has force: you rig a giant sail and go. The secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind. Hone and spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent, broadside to the merest puff.<sup>14</sup>

Mary Oliver is another contemporary poet who spends her life amidst nature and writes about her response to it. The poem, “The Journey,” however, focuses on another aspect of the Artemis archetype, her independence of mind.

### **The Journey**

One day you finally knew  
 what you had to do, and began,  
 though the voices around you  
 kept shouting  
 their bad advice—  
 though the whole house  
 began to tremble  
 and you felt the old tug

---

<sup>14</sup>Annie Dillard, “Pilgrim at Tinker Creek,” *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 176.



at your ankles.  
'Mend my life!'  
each voice cried.  
But you didn't stop.  
You knew what you had to do,  
though the wind pried  
with its stiff finger  
at the very foundation—  
though their melancholy  
was terrible.  
It was already late  
enough, and a wild night,  
and the road full of fallen  
branches and stones.  
But little by little,  
as you left their voices behind,  
the stars began to burn  
through the sheets of clouds,  
and there was a new voice,  
which you slowly  
recognized as your own,  
that kept you company  
as you strode deeper and deeper  
into the world,  
determined to do  
the only thing you could do—  
determined to save  
the only life you could save.<sup>15</sup>

### **Aphrodite**

The Aphrodite archetype governs women's enjoyment of love and beauty, sexuality and sensuality . . . Every woman who falls in love with someone who is also in love with her is at that moment a personification of the Aphrodite archetype . . . she has a personal magnetism that draws others closer into an erotically charged field that enhances sexual awareness.<sup>16</sup>

In a puritanical and patriarchal society, this positive passion is perverted. "When sensuality and sexuality in women are degraded . . . the woman who embodies Aphrodite is love is considered a temptress or whore."<sup>17</sup>

When activated in a positive way, the energy represented by the goddess

---

<sup>15</sup>Mary Oliver, "The Journey," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 31-32.

<sup>16</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 238.

<sup>17</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 238-239.

Aphrodite is the source of all kinds of creativity, not just the creation of a child. “Creative work comes out of an intense and passionate involvement—almost as if with a lover, as one (the artist) interacts with the ‘other’ to bring something new into being. This ‘other’ may be a painting, a dance form, a musical composition, a sculpture, a poem or a manuscript, a new theory or invention, that for a time is all-absorbing and fascinating.”<sup>18</sup>

When activated negatively, Aphrodite can do great damage to relationships. When Zeus, Apollo and the other gods are influenced by her, they get into sexual relationships that victimize the other goddesses in their relationship to the god and to the other goddesses. Many mortal women, including Myrrha, were destroyed by Aphrodite. Either because Myrrha’s mother boasted that her daughter was more beautiful than Aphrodite or because Myrrha refused to worship Aphrodite, the goddesses caused Myrrha to fall passionately in love with her father. She disguised herself so they could have an affair. His disgust at finding out the truth led him to try and kill her. Mortal men who rejected Aphrodite, such as Hippolytus, were also severely punished by her.

Nancy Willard describes the horror and pain that results when men are “possessed” by Aphrodite and rape an unwilling target.

### Clearing the Air

It’s been ten years since you tried to kill me.  
 Biking home one night, I saw only your legs  
 stepping behind a tree, then you fell on my throat  
 like a cat. My books crashed the birds out of sleep.  
 We rolled in the leaves like lovers. My eyes popped  
 like Christmas lights, veins snapped, your teeth wore  
  
 my blood, your fingers left bars on my neck.  
 I can’t remember your name,  
 and I saw your face only in court.  
 You sat in a box, docile as old shoes.  
 And I, who had never felt any man’s weight  
 sometimes felt yours for nights afterwards.  
 Well, I’m ready to forgive  
 and I don’t want to forget.  
 Sometimes I tell myself that we met  
 differently, on a train. You give me  
 a Batman comic and show me your passport.  
 I have nothing but my report card.  
 but I offer my mother’s fudge for the grapes  
 rotting the one paper bag you carry.

---

<sup>18</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 241.

In my tale you are younger and loved  
Outside you live in a thousand faces  
and so do your judges, napping in parks,  
rushing to fires, folded like bats on the truck,  
mad and nude in a white Rolls  
pinching dollars and leather behinds.  
Burned from a tree by your betters, you take  
to the streets and hand in the dark like a star,  
making me see your side, waking me  
with the blows and the weight of it.<sup>19</sup>

At the other extreme, Sharon Olds presents a poetic image of a man under the same influence but whose sexual passion is connected to marriage, children and respect for the bodily integrity of his wife.

### **New Mother**

A week after our child was born,  
you cornered me in the spare room  
and we sank down on the bed.  
You kissed me and kissed me, my milk undid its  
burning slip-knot through my nipples,  
soaking my shirt. All week I had smelled of mild,  
fresh milk, sour. I began to throb:  
my sex had been torn easily as cloth by the  
crown of her head, I'd been cut with a knife and  
sewn, the stitches pulling at my skin—  
and the first time you're broken, you don't know  
you'll be healed again, better than before.  
I lay in fear and blood and milk  
while you kissed and kissed me, your lips hot and swollen  
as a teen-age boy's, your sex dry and big,  
all of you so tender, you hung over me,  
over the nest of stitches, over the  
splitting and tearing, with the patience of someone who  
finds a wounded animal in the woods  
and stays with it, not leaving its side  
until it is whole, until it can run again.<sup>20</sup>

### **Persephone**

"If Persephone provides the structure of the personality, it predisposes a

---

<sup>19</sup>Nancy Willard, "Clearing the Air," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 150-151.

<sup>20</sup>Sharon Olds, "New Mother," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 48.

woman not to act but to be acted on by others—to be compliant in action and passive in attitude . . . she represent the young girl who does not know ‘who she is’ and is as yet unaware of her desires or strengths.”<sup>21</sup> In a patriarchy,

It is her pattern to be chameleonlike, to ‘try on’ whatever others expect of her. It is this quality that predisposes her to be an ‘anima woman’; she unconsciously conforms to what a man wants her to be. With one man, she’s a tennis buff who fits into the country club set; in the next relationship, she’s on the back of his motorcycle as they roar down the highway.<sup>22</sup>

As a young woman, while picking a narcissus, Persephone was kidnapped by Hades and taken to the underworld. As a grown woman, she became the Queen of the Underworld.

Symbolically, the underworld can represent deeper layers of the psyche, a place where memories and feelings have been ‘buried’ (the personal unconscious) and where images, patterns, instincts, and feelings that are archetypal and shared by humanity are found (the collective unconscious) . . . Persephone the Queen and Guide of the Underworld represents the ability to move back and forth between the ego-based reality of the ‘real’ world and the unconscious or archetypal reality of the psyche. When the Persephone archetype is active, it is possible for a woman to mediate between the two levels and to integrate both into her personality.<sup>23</sup>

Rita Dove’s book of poetry, *Mother Love*, focuses on the story of Persephone and her mother, Demeter. In “Party Dress for a First Born,” Rita Dove gives the image of Persephone as an innocent young maiden. In “Persephone Falling,” she describes the abduction, and in “The Narcissus Flower,” she describes Persephone’s state of soul as a grown woman.

### **Party Dress for a First Born**

Headless girl so ill at ease on the bed,  
I know, if you could, what you’re thinking of:  
nothing. I used to think that, too,  
Whenever I sat down to a full plate  
or unwittingly stepped on an ant.  
When I ran to my mother, waiting radiant  
as a cornstalk at the edge of the field,  
nothing else mattered: the world stood still.  
Tonight men stride like elegant scissors across the lawn  
to the women arrayed there, petals waiting to loosen.  
When I step out disguised in your blushing skin,  
they will nudge each other to get a peek  
and I will smile, all the while wishing them dead.

---

<sup>21</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 199.

<sup>22</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 201.

<sup>23</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 202-203.

Mother's calling. Stand up: it will be our secret.<sup>24</sup>

### **Persephone Falling**

One narcissus among the ordinary beautiful  
flowers, one unlike all the others! She pulled,  
stooped to pull harder—  
when, sprung out of the earth  
on his glittering terrible  
carriage, he claimed his due.  
It is finished. No one heard her.  
No one! She had strayed from the herd.  
(Remember: go straight to school.  
This is important, stop fooling around!  
Don't answer to strangers. Stick  
with your playmates. Keep your eyes down.)  
This is how easily the pit  
opens. This is how one foot sinks into the ground.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Narcissus Flower**

I remember my foot in its frivolous slipper,  
a frightened bird . . . not the earth unzipped  
but the way I could see my own fingers and hear  
myself scream as the blossom incinerated.  
And though nothing could chasten  
the plunge, this man  
adamant as a knife easing into  
the humblest crevice, I found myself at  
The center of a calm so pure, it was hate.  
The mystery is, you can eat fear  
before fear eats you.  
you can live beyond dying—  
and become a queen  
whom nothing surprises.<sup>26</sup>

In her book, *Letters from a War Zone*, Andrea Dworkin describes her experience while writing a book on pornography, an experience much like the archetype of Persephone.

In writing my new book I experience the most intense isolation I have known as a writer. I lived in a world of pictures—women's bodies displayed, women hunched and spread and hanged and pulled and tied and cut—and in a world of books—gang rape, pair rape, man on woman rape,

---

<sup>24</sup>Rita Dove, *Mother Love* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 8.

<sup>25</sup>Dove, *Mother*, 9.

<sup>26</sup>Dove, *Mother*, 12.

lesbian rape, animal on woman rape, evisceration, torture, penetration, excrement, urine, and bad prose . . . The reading itself made me physically sick . . . I became frightened and anxious and easily irritable. But the worst was that I retreated into silence. I felt that I could not make myself understood, that no one would know or care, and that I could not risk being considered ridiculous.<sup>27</sup>

### **Demeter**

A woman with a strong Demeter archetype longs to be a mother. Once she becomes a mother, she finds it a fulfilling role. When Demeter is the strongest archetype in a woman's psyche, being a mother is the most important role and function in her life . . . The mother archetype motivates women to nurture others, to be generous and giving, and to find satisfaction as caretakers and providers.<sup>28</sup>

When Persephone is taken by Hades, Demeter reacts obsessively and refuses to allow anything to grow. Finally the gods bribe her and convince her, once they have agreed to allow Persephone to return for one-half of each year. Psychologically, "When a woman of late middle age become depressed, angry, and disappointed because her adult children are emotionally or physically distant, she becomes a grieving Demeter. She is obsessed by her sense of loss and constricts her interests. Her psychological growth stops."<sup>29</sup>

In *Mother Love*, Rita Dove imagines Demeter's reaction when Persephone was abducted.

### **Persephone Abducted**

She cried out for Mama, who did not  
hear. She left with a wild eye thrown back,  
she left with curses, rage  
that withered her features to a hag's.  
No one can tell a mother how to act:  
there are no law when laws are broken, no names  
to call upon. Some say there's nourishment for pain,  
and call it Philosophy.  
That's for the birds, vulture and hawk,  
the large ones who praise  
the miracle of flight because  
they use it so diligently.  
She left us singing in the field, oblivious

---

<sup>27</sup>Andrea Dworkin, *Letters from a War Zone: Writings, 1976-1987* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1988), 33-34.

<sup>28</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 171-172.

<sup>29</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 175.

to all but the ache of our own bent backs.<sup>30</sup>

Sharon Olds also described her experience of being a new mother.

### **Her First Week**

She was so small I would scan the crib a half-second  
To find her, face-down in a corner, limp  
As something gently flung down, or fallen  
From some sky an inch above the mattress. I would  
Tuck her arm along her side  
And slowly turn her over. She would tumble  
Over part by part, like a load of  
Damp laundry, in the dryer, I'd slip  
An hand in, under her neck,  
Slide the other under her back,  
And evenly lift her up. Her little bottom  
Sat in my palm, her chest contained  
The puckered, moiré sacs, and her neck—  
I was afraid of her neck, once I almost  
Thought I heard it quietly snap.  
I looked at her and she swiveled her slate  
Eyes and looked at me. It was in  
My care, the curvature of her spine, like the first  
Chordate, as if the history  
Of the vertebrate had been placed in my hands.  
Every time I checked, she was still  
With us—someday, there would be a human  
Race. I could not see it in her eyes,  
But when I fed her, gathered her  
Like a loose bouquet to my side and offered  
The breast, grayish-while, and struck with  
Miniscule scars like creeks in sunlight, I  
Felt she was serious, I believed she was willing to stay.<sup>31</sup>

### **Hestia**

Hestia's way of perceiving is by looking inward and intuitively sensing what is going on. The Hestian mode allows us to get in touch with our values by bringing into focus what is personally meaningful. Through this inner focusing, we can perceive the essence of a situation. We can also gain insight into other people's character and see the pattern or feel the significance of their actions. This inner perspective provides clarity in the midst of the confusing myriad of details that confront our five senses.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup>Dove, *Mother*, 13.

<sup>31</sup>Olds, "New Mother", 44.

<sup>32</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 110-111.

On the one hand, “As an archetype on inner wisdom, Hestia lacks negativity. Thus it is not surprising that Hestia doesn’t present the usual potential patterns of pathology.”<sup>33</sup> In a male-dominated society, not surprisingly, the only negative aspect of Hestia is her tendency to be ignored. “To live ‘as Hestia’ means to be self-effacing, anonymous, a nonentity who nonetheless has a central position in the household . . . A Hestia woman characteristically lacks assertiveness and doesn’t speak up if she feels discounted or devalued.”<sup>34</sup>

May Sarton describes the slow process by which a Hestian woman goes from denying her own focus of consciousness for the sake of the well-being of others to finally being able to come into her own and live under the power of her own natural archetype, Hestia.

### **Now I Become Myself**

Now I become myself. It’s taken  
 Time, many years and places;  
 I have been dissolved and shaken,  
 Worn other people’s faces,  
 Run madly, as if Time were there,  
 Terribly old, crying a warning,  
 “Hurry, you will be dead before—“  
 (What? Before you read the morning?  
 Of the end of the poem is clear?  
 Or love safe in the walled city?)  
 Now to stand still, to be here,  
 Feel my own weight and density!  
 The black shadow on the paper  
 Is my hand; the shadow of a word  
 As thought shapes the shaper  
 Falls heavy on the page, is heard.  
 All uses now, falls into place  
 From wish to action, word to silence,  
 My work, my love, my time, my face  
 Fathered into one intense  
 Gesture of growing like a plant.  
 As slowly as the ripening fruit  
 Fertile, detached, and always spent,  
 Falls but does not exhaust the root,  
 So all the poem is, can give, grows  
 In me to become the song,  
 Made so and rooted so by love.

---

<sup>33</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 126.

<sup>34</sup>Bolen, *Goddesses*, 126.



Now there is time and time is young.  
Of, in this single hour I live  
All of myself and do not move.  
I, the pursued, who madly ran,  
Stand still, stand still, and stop the sun!<sup>35</sup>

In an excerpt from “A conversation with Gunter Gaus,” Hannah Arendt, a well-known public intellectual during the 1950s, exposes Mr. Gaus’ own excess concern for fame and describes her own motivation for writing, expressing the orientation of a Hestian woman.

What is important for me is to understand. For me, writing is a matter of seeking this understanding . . . You ask me about the effects of my work on others. If I may wax ironical, that is a masculine question. Men always want to be terribly influential, but I see that as somewhat external. Do I imagine myself being influential? No. I want to understand. And if others understand—in the same sense that I have understood—that gives me a sense of satisfaction, like feeling at home.<sup>36</sup>

Andrea Dworkin also writes in order to understand.

Writing is not a happy profession. The writer lives and works in solitude, no matter how many people surround her. Her most intensely lived hours are spent with herself. The pleasure and pains of writing are talked around or about but not shared. Her friends do not know what she does or how she does it. Like everyone else, they see only the results. The problems of her work are unique. The solution to one sentence is not the solution to any other sentence. No one else knows where she is going until she herself has gotten there. When others are contemplating the results, she is on her next project, all alone again. Her colleagues and competitors for the most part are dead. The work itself involves using the mind in an intense and punishing way. The solitude demanded by the work is extreme in and of itself. Others rarely live so alone, so self-created.<sup>37</sup>

## Conclusion

To conclude, then: the seven feminine archetypes are powerful psychological forces in the souls of women. Each archetype has both a positive and a negative side and can be motivated by Eros, a creative drive, or by Thanatos, a destructive drive. In a patriarchal culture, the positive drive is frustrated or destroyed and the destructive side emerges as a response to this unjust suffering. The purpose of this paper has been to describe the many dimensions of the anima force in women’s psyches so that everyone, men and women, can work toward creating a less patriarchal

---

<sup>35</sup>May Sarton, “Now I Become Myself,” *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women’s Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 28-29.

<sup>36</sup>Hannah Arendt, *Essays in understanding, 1930-1954* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1994), 3.

<sup>37</sup>Dworkin, *Letters*, 31.

society, one that includes the anima in all of its creative dimensions.

### **Bibliography**

- Arendt, Hannah, *Essays in understanding, 1930-1954*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1994.
- Bolen, Jean Shinoda, *Goddesses in Everywoman: Powerful Archetypes in Women's Lives*, New York: Harper Collins, 2004.
- Dillard, Annie, "Pilgrim at Tinker Creek," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Dove, Rita, *Mother Love*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995.
- Dworkin, Andrea, *Letters from a War Zone: Writings, 1976-1987*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1988.
- Fuller, Margaret, "Women in the Nineteenth Century," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Heywood, Carter, "Our Passion for Justice," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., Boston, Beacon Press, 1991.
- Levertov, Denise, "Prayer for Revolutionary Love," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Olds, Sharon, "New Mother," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Oliver, Mary, "The Journey," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Sarton, May, "Now I Become Myself," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Sholl, Betsy, "Farm Wife," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Smith, Lillian, "Killers of the Dream," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, M. Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Willard, Nancy, "Clearing the Air," *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, Marilyn Sewell, ed., Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.