

**A Theology Of Mary: The Non-Christian Myth Of Mary, The Shadow Of Mary
And An Individual Connection To The Divine Self Through Mary.**

A Ph.D. Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

I don't know whether the archetype is "true" or not. I only know that it lives and that I have not made it¹

C.G. Jung

I found it suitable to open my work with Carl Gustav Jung's quote since my work is centred on the Virgin Mary who, in my view, represents the archetype² of the female divine³. In my work, I call this figure Mary. The aim of my thesis is to offer a theology of Mary which I understand as an inspiring mythology of and as a theoretical framework for the spirituality of the divine female, in this case – Mary. I chose the figure of Mary in recognition that the archetype of the divine female finds its expression, however concealed, in the figure of Mary at this particular moment of the religious history of the Western world. I understand the Western world as parts of the world influenced by the Greco-Roman civilization, Christianity, Renaissance, Protestant Reformation, the ideas of Enlightenment, the colonial expansion, the industrial revolution, the progress of science, technology and economy based on the extensive use of the non-renewable Earth's resources, the egocentrism, the striving for the "steady economical growth", the mass estrangement from religion, the modernism,

¹ C. G. Jung. *Letters. Volume 2*. Selected and edited by Gerhard Adler in collaboration with Aniela Jaffé. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 258.

² Jung wrote: "(...) for me the archetype means: an image of a probable sequence of events, an habitual current of psychic energy". (Jung quoted in Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on myth: An introduction* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 5-6)). According to Murray Stein, "(...) for Jung the archetype is a primary source of psychic energy and patterning" in a person. (Murray Stein. *Jung's Map Of The Soul: An Introduction* (Open Court Publishing, 1998), chapter 4). Jung also said that: "Every archetype is capable of endless development and differentiation. It is therefore possible for it to be more developed or less" (Jung, C. G. *Collected Works Vol.12. Psychology and Alchemy*. (London: Routledge [1944], 1968), 51). In the framework of my thesis, I understand Mary as a projection of various archetypes, or as the archetype in several dimensions: as the archetype of a woman/female, as the archetype of the female divine, as the archetype of a woman's soul/psyche; as the archetype of the mother, and as the archetype of the Self.

³ In my work, I use Divine, Divinity, Deity, God, and Self interchangeably. For me, these terms are similar in that they are understood to be numinous as well as instinctual. It was Jung who noted in many of his texts that archetypes are instinctual, numinous, plural, both female and male, and both positive and negative (see, for example, C.G. Jung. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (Princeton University Press, 1981)). According to Rudolf Otto, *numinous* is terrifying and fascinating at the same time (see R. Otto. *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational* (Oxford University Press, 1958)). Instinctual is referred to by some authors as "wild", for example, in Clarissa Pinkola Estés' understanding of the Wild Woman's archetype as the psychologically instinctual basis of every woman's psyche (C.P. Estés. *Women Who Ran With The Wolves*. (Ballantine Books, 1996)).

postmodernism and other ideas that stand in contrast to those parts of the world which do not view such developments as positive and do not identify with them ⁴

By writing a theology of Mary, I seek to offer a different myth of Mary, a different meaning to the archetype of Mary. The difference lies mainly in that I bring to attention the narratives about Mary that are non-orthodox, which compensate the conscious attitudes of Christianity and which therefore might be called the Shadow⁵ narratives in the Jungian terminology. I aim to uncover a mythology that compensates the Christian story of the non-divine, voiceless, subordinated, and immaculate Christian Mary. Instead, I offer a myth of the divine, powerful, sovereign, and charismatic Mary that I find in folklore narratives such as legends and fairy tales – which become the basis for the theology of Mary. The Shadow narratives of Mary represent the collective (common to many) layer of the theology of Mary. I am also interested in the personal and experiential possibilities of the theology of Mary, which I explore by engaging with such scholars as the psychoanalyst and philosopher of religion Luce Irigaray, and the Jungian author Clarissa Pinkola Estés. . This dictates the sequence of chapters in my thesis: the first two chapters explain the Jungian (Chapter 1) and the feminist (Chapter 2) frameworks which I apply throughout my thesis; the following two chapters (3 and 4) present and explore the so called Shadow narratives (legends and fairy tales), both positive and negative, which form the mythology of the theology of Mary; and the last chapters (5, 6 and 7) enquire into the experiential and individual nature of the theology of Mary. To convey my ideas, I use Jungian and feminist methodologies, literary analysis, and re-interpretation of visual images.

The image of Mary that I recover from legends and fairy tales radiates the power mainly coming from her Shadow. The Shadow of Mary is everything powerful and positive as well as negative about the female divine that was repressed by Christianity. Chapters 3 and 4 are dedicated to recovering the Shadow of Mary. To understand her

⁴For the further elaboration on the meaning of the “Western World” see, for example, James Kurth, “Western Civilization, Our Tradition”, in *The Intercollegiate Review* (Fall 2002/Spring 2004) URL: http://www.mmisi.org/ir/39_01_2/kurth.pdf

⁵ Jungians explain that the Shadow on a personal level means the negative side of the personality in which we accumulate all aspects of our personality that are in opposition with our persona - a culturally acceptable image of an individual. The Shadow of a person consists of the aspects of oneself one is not or does not want to be conscious about, for example, helplessness, shame, ruthlessness, guilt. The Shadow can also be positive and hold our unexpressed talents and creativity. The Shadow is also collective when a culture regards certain characteristics as evil and represses them from the conscious outlook, in which case they appear in the mythical stories. For more on the Shadow see Chapter 4, and also the work of Carl Gustav Jung and Marie-Louise von Franz.

Shadow and its effects on women, I analyse legends, some literary texts, and also the fairy tales of the Black Woman who, according to Marie-Louise von France, a contemporary of Jung, who wrote numerous books on the Jungian analysis of fairy tales, is representative of the Virgin Mary Shadow and generally of the female divine Shadow in patriarchal culture. Why is the Shadow realisation and incorporation important? Jungians inform us that the more Shadow we are able to acknowledge, the larger consciousness we develop, which means that our ego becomes stronger. The strong ego-consciousness⁶ is required to be able to understand and surrender to the Self's⁷ guidance, according to Jungian thought. If women are to establish a good relation to their own Self, the modelling of an idealistic relationship with Christian Mary will distort the reality because the traditional Christian image of Mary has been stripped of her Shadow and become too idealistic. The theology of Mary holds that the Shadow of Mary is capable of reflecting the Shadow in individuals granting them a chance to redeem it. The term "to redeem" here refers to actions which the protagonist in a the fairy tale that is concerned with the Shadow complex⁸ (in Jungian terms): he/she tries to understand how it works in one's life, to accept it, to incorporate it into everyday life, and thus to shake off the crippling affects of the Shadow in her/his life or in cultural attitudes.

I feel that I should clarify the relation between my vision of the theology of Mary as subjective (related to the Jungian notion of individuation)⁹, and my vision of

⁶ According to Jung, "(...) consciousness is always ego-consciousness. In order to be conscious of myself, I must be able to distinguish myself from others" (Carl Gustav Jung, *Aspects of the Feminine* (Routledge, 1986), 42). Ego is the centre of the field of consciousness in the human psyche. Ego is a complex (a feeling-toned energetic formation) and it reflects and has an aim to realise the Self archetype (as much as possible), therefore at times a person mistakenly thinks that the Ego stands for the Self. Consciousness (and the Ego) is vital for the realisation and creative adaptation of the Self and other archetypes.

⁷ The Self in Jungian psychology is the whole of the personality, or the totality of the psyche that includes both conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The Self is also an archetype and exists when we are born; the Ego-consciousness emerges out of it in the course of childhood development. The Self, according to Jung, is realised as the product of individuation, which in his view is the process of integrating one's personality. (Based on Ruth Snowden. *Jung*. (From the series "Teach yourself", Hodder Education, 2006), 55).

⁸ In Jung's view, the personal unconscious consists mainly of complexes. These are related groups of emotionally charged ideas, thoughts and images, that gather around a certain archetype. Complexes can be positive and negative. Complexes were first noticed by Aristotle, who in his *Psyche* called them part-souls that behave like little personalities that also had unconscious fantasy systems, often even after being partially incorporated into awareness. (Based on Ruth Snowden. *Jung*. (From the series "Teach yourself", Hodder Education, 2006), 50. Complexes can be quite autonomous and they are always loaded with emotions.

⁹ Individuation is a lifetime process of discovering what one is, and learning how to live with what has been discovered. Jung said that "Individuation has a holistic healing effect on the person, both mentally and physically" (C.G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of*

the theology of Mary as the reflection of the collective imagination. As I see it, the collective non-dogmatic narratives (fairy tales, legends, myths) give us an opportunity to acquire a different myth of Mary from the Christian one, and I envisage this non-Christian myth as the theology of Mary. It is collective because I did not create the fairy tales and legends from which I derive this myth. The subjectivity of Mary theology begins when/if the archetype of Mary becomes “alive” for a person because of such a non-Christian myth. If such a Mary captures a person’s imagination and becomes a reality of her or his psyche (for example, a person believes that the prayer to Mary is meaningful), and if the image of such a Mary helps a person on her or his path of individuation, this means that the archetype of Mary is alive for a person and is therefore able to provide an individual spiritual experience.

I most often use in my work “a” for theology of Mary, which is a generalised form, since I see it as being open to individual interpretations and development and not fixed in the particular form presented in my thesis. When I use “the” theology of Mary in the text, I mostly mean it as related to my thesis in a particular context.

Mary as the archetype

From Jung’s quote at the very beginning of the Introduction, it follows that one does not know whether the archetype of Mary is true, or what it exactly means. However, there is plenty of evidence that the archetype of the female divine represented by the image of Mary is active, or, in Jung’s words, that it lives, in the human psyche. This evidence comes, for me, from observing the unconscious activity of people in relation to the figure of Mary: the images of Mary inspire pilgrimages all over the world; many of her statues and paintings, especially the ones called the Black Madonnas¹⁰, are considered to be miraculous and are surrounded with votives¹¹,

Schizophrenia (vol. 2). (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962). In analytical psychology, it is held that the individual self develops out of an undifferentiated unconscious and its task is to integrate over time the peculiarities of itself into a well-functioning whole, while becoming conscious of and retaining its individualism. To quote Jung: “We do not sufficiently distinguish between individualism and individuation. Individualism means deliberately stressing and giving prominence to some supposed peculiarity, rather than to collective considerations and obligations. But individuation means precisely the better and more complete fulfilment of the collective qualities of the human being, since adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to better social achievement than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed” . Carl Gustav Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious”, in *CW 7: Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, (1928), 267.

¹⁰Black Madonna is a statue or painting of Mary in which she is depicted with dark skin. Usually, Black Madonna images in Europe do not have the features of ethnically black people; a popular view is that the Black Madonnas are black because they were a copy of the black Egyptian Goddess Isis. Other authors accept the idea that her darkness is related to the darkness of the Earth (Marija Gimbutas). In Jungian

jewellery and candles; crowds of people pray to Mary in organised rituals that are created for venerating particular images in Fatima, Lourdes, Częstochowa and other shrines of Mary. In other words, the people express their veneration for Mary as if she was divine which points to the numinosity¹² of her image; numinosity is a trait of the archetype. It is also quite clear that such veneration of Mary goes against Christianity's dogma which claims that Mary is non-divine. I observe here a split in people's conscious attitudes towards the Christian image of Mary and their unconscious feelings about the archetypal figure of Mary. The existence of the Mary cult emphasises that Mary is probably the only female divine archetype that is still active in the Western world, while the older prototypes of the female divine (such as Isis, Cybele, and others) have lost their archetypal influence, perhaps because they could no longer answer people's needs due to the development of the human psyche. This is the main reason why I focus my theology on the figure of Mary and not on the old Greek, Roman, Irish or Lithuanian goddesses or on the contemporary versions of them.

My work sets out to show that Mary, as the archetype, does not belong only to Christianity but also pertains to the human psyche on both collective and individual levels. Jung said that: "[Archetypes are] instinctual forms of mental functioning (...) *they are not inherited ideas, but mentally expressed instincts*, forms and not contents (...)"¹³. Also, according to Jung, "Every archetype is capable of endless development and differentiation. It is therefore possible for it to be more developed or less"¹⁴ Understood as such, the archetype of Mary can be individualised and enriched with non-Christian material.

psychology, the darkness of the Virgin Mary carries many meanings; one of them is that Black Madonnas represent the Shadow of the Virgin Mary and at the same time the Shadow of a culture and of an individual woman (Marie-Louise von Franz).

¹¹*Votive offering* is a small object that could be made of silver or other metal carved in the shape of a leg, heart or other part of a human body, or it could be jewellery which a believer places next to the sacred image expecting to gain favour with supernatural forces.

¹²Numinosum – a dynamic existence or effect, which is not caused by the subjective will but overwhelms and controls the human subject, who always appears more as its victim than a creator. Numinosum is an involuntary state of the subject, no matter what its origin is" (Carl Gustav Jung. *Psichologija ir religija*. (Vilnius: Aidai, 1998), 9. Eng. *Psychology and Religion*. Translated by Rasa Luzyte) According to Jung, numinous experience feels like being "in the hands of an archetype (...) An archetypal experience (...) gives an incorruptible value [to an individual] (...) The archetype is a force, it has an autonomy; it can suddenly seize you, it is like a seizure" (excerpt between the 6min 44sec and 8min 26sec) A video interview with C. G. Jung <http://www.sunshinecoasthealthcentre.ca/drugrehab/addiction-treatment-help/jung-addiction/27082009> accessed 26/08/2012.

¹³ Jung quoted in Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on myth: An introduction* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 5-6 (Jung's italics)

¹⁴ Jung, C. G. *Collected Works, Vol.12. Psychology and Alchemy*. (London: Routledge [1944], 1968), 51

The terms “non-Christian myth” or “non-Christian Mary” in this case mean for me the non-orthodox standpoint towards the figure of Mary. In my thesis, this standpoint is formed by the folklore narratives about Mary. The legends and fairy tales I present in my work do not feature in the mainstream teaching of the Roman Catholic Church although are considered to be a part of the popular Marian cult among the Roman Catholics. In my understanding, which is informed by the Jungian view, these non-orthodox stories seek to compensate the dominant Christian understanding of Mary and her Christian story. The Christian story of Mary is based on the four dogmas of Perpetual Virginity, Mother of God, Immaculate Conception and Assumption. In Irigaray’s view, the Christian Virgin Mary, the Mother of God,” is fixed in the role of mother through whom the son of God is made flesh”¹⁵. However, the legends and fairy tales I present are not concerned with redemption, salvation, or any other theological aspect of the Christian dogmatic stories of Mary¹⁶. Mainly, the legends talk about the miracles performed by the Virgin Mary, which point to her divine status¹⁷, and the fairy tales describe the Virgin Mary who behaves like a Witch who has to be redeemed by the heroine. Speaking from the Jungian perspective, these mythical stories represent the Shadow side of Mary in that they compensate her lack of divine status, immaculate innocence and her subordinate position in Christianity. Since I form the myth of Mary out of the Shadow and not the orthodox dogmatic stories, I hold that the theology of Mary in my thesis speaks of the non-Christian Mary.

¹⁵ Irigaray, “Divine Women”, in *Sexes and Genealogies* (Columbia University Press, 1993), 63

¹⁶ From the first impression, the legends about Mary which I present in Chapter 3 could be seen as belonging to the hagiographic stories, which described the biographies and the miracles of the saints in early Christianity (and in some other religions). However, the legends I analyse are so far removed from the dogmatic orthodox understanding of Christian teaching and moral values that, in my view, they do not present themselves as Christian. For example, consider the legend that speaks of Mary who turned herself into a nun and lived in the nun’s convent after the misguided nun ran away with a man who seduced her; the nun later was dropped by the man and lived as a whore for 15 years; when she finally returned to the convent, she found that Mary had taken her place and no one knew about her departure. In this legend, Mary stands as protection for someone who actively transgresses the Christian moral rules. Other legends are also far removed from the Christian framework, since they speak of Mary sitting on a tree branch or on the joist of a barn – details which have little in common with such details of her biography as can be found, for example, in the Bible. Therefore, I suggest that the stories I use in my work belong to the much less conscious substratum of a culture and perhaps seek to convey a more instinctual nature of the human psyche as well as to compensate for some suppressed collective attitudes.

¹⁷The Christian view is that the miracles of saints are not performed by the saints themselves but by God who shows his holy will on the request of the saints (J.C. Cruz. *Miraculous Images of Our Lady: 100 famous Catholic Portraits ad Statues*. (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, 1993), xii). However, in my thesis I aim to give the weight to the non-Christian reading, taking encouragement from the knowledge that myths have spoken about the female deities over thousands of years, which suggests that there exists a possibility that Mary represents the archetype of the female deity in our time.

The aim of my thesis is to contribute to the enrichment and development of the archetype of Mary in such a way that it can help to rebuild back the women's confidence lost during the long patriarchal centuries in which the female divine was suppressed, and with her – the women's validation of their power and sovereignty. A non-Christian myth of Mary can provide one with a theology – with a spirituality where the female divine is central, and where the hurts of patriarchy are attended, and not ignored, since Mary represents those hurts. Such a non-Christian myth of Mary, although subjective, is nonetheless embedded into a wider archetypal background which Jung calls the collective unconscious¹⁸, and which is represented in the theology of Mary by the legends, fairy tales and other narratives as well as images. This allows one to feel attached to a meaningfully rich environment, common to many.

In Chapter 6, I also discuss the instinctive part of the archetype represented by the image of Mary in engagement with Jung, Irigaray and Estés. Jung gave the following clarification on the relation between instincts and archetypes:

What we properly call instincts are physiological urges, and are perceived by the senses. But at the same time, they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call the archetypes¹⁹.

For example, the sexual desire is an instinctual urge, and the gods Aphrodite, Eros, Venus and Dionysius are the symbolic manifestations of the numinous aspect of the sexual urge. Through instincts, gods/the numinous energies incarnate us and make us understand the numinous, they make us spiritual beings. It is an interesting thought that Mary, as the archetype, represents our instincts. This thought, in a way, makes the Self and the divine force more understandable, and our connection to them more individual.

Mary as the Self archetype.

¹⁸ Jung distinguishes between the personal unconscious which consists of our everyday experience, and the collective unconscious which is common to every human being and “speaks” the language of images, myths, fairy tales. Personal unconscious consists of repressed or forgotten ideas, “but this personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn (...) I have chosen the term “collective” because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal (...) it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals” (Carl Gustav Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, trans. R.F.C Hull (London: Routledge, 2011), 3.)

¹⁹ Carl G. Jung. “Approaching the Unconscious”. In *Man and His Symbol*. (J.G. Ferguson Publishing, 1964), 66.

One of Jung's main notions that I use throughout my thesis on the theology of Mary is the archetype called *the Self*²⁰. Jung's analytical psychology says that the life of each person is regulated by the force, which Jung called the Self. According to Jung, the Self carries the numinous and the instinctive energy of the source of all life, and therefore the Self is the main archetype regulating the life of an individual – it is the power greater than the human ego-consciousness even though the ego-consciousness is vital in realising the guidance of the Self. The Self embraces the consciousness and the unconscious of an individual.

The force and the numinosity of the Self are represented by various images in culture, especially by images of gods and goddesses, queens and kings, or some fate-defining figures in fairy tales (for example, a gigantic bird who snaps up a heroine with its talons and takes her to the top of a mountain, where she experiences many trials).

Jung was very articulate in speaking about the need for the metaphysical representation of women in Christianity. Excited about the Papal dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin, he wrote:

The logic of the papal declaration cannot be surpassed, and it leaves Protestantism with the odium of being nothing more but a man's religion which allows no metaphysical representation woman. In this respect it is similar to Mithraism, and Mithraism found this prejudice very much to its detriment. Protestantism has obviously not given sufficient attention to the signs of the times which point to the equality of women. But this equality requires to be metaphysically anchored in the figure of "divine" woman, the bride of Christ. Just as the person of Christ cannot be replaced by an organization, so the bride

²⁰ Jung has offered many understandings of the Self. The notion of the Self is important to my work, therefore I give an extensive explanation of it throughout my work, and in several footnotes. According to Jung, "As an empirical concept, the self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole. (...) it is a *transcendental* concept, for it presupposes the existence of unconscious factors on empirical grounds and thus characterizes an entity that can be described only in part, but for the other part, remains at present unknowable and illimitable" (Carl Gustav Jung, *CW 6: Psychological Types* (Princeton University Press, 1971), 789). Jung said in one of his interviews that he is not claiming that the Self is God but that he sees a relation between the Self and God. That is, the Self is the presence of God's archetype in a person. The Self is a hidden regulating tendency in a person, a greater personality that binds the individual to become more aware of her or his potential and depth (often through the wounding of a personality) and challenges the Ego to realise its relatively small influence in the scope of the psyche. According to Jungian psychology, there are two centres of the personality: the Ego is the centre of consciousness, whereas the Self is the centre of the total personality, which includes consciousness, the unconscious, and the Ego.

cannot, be replaced by the Church. The feminine, like the masculine demands an equally personal representation²¹.

Women's understanding of the Self has been distorted by the male-only symbols of God in Christian culture and women have been deprived of the possibility of projecting their unconscious contents onto an image that would carry the experience specific to their gender. The stereotyping of their gender had, and continues to have, dramatic consequences on the lives of the majority of women in the Western World and elsewhere. Since the Virgin Mary/Mother of God is not recognised as divine, the permission to project woman's Self onto her image is not given by the Church. However, the archetypes and the unconscious in which the archetypes "live" are autonomous energetic formations, and the human consciousness (including Christian conscious attitudes) cannot control which part of our unconscious we project, and which we do not. According to von Franz²², the female part of the Self that was left unreflected in the mainstream Christian myth was projected through unconscious spontaneous collective fantasies onto the figure of Mary and was mostly expressed in the sub-Christian narratives, which are legends and fairy tales, and on the Black Madonna images.

How does the notion of the Self relate to the theology of Mary? In my work, I see Mary as a cultural and spiritual expression/image of the Self. The Self, equally as the force we call God, whom the Self represents in us, is mostly thought to be a genderless phenomenon. However, in Christianity, for a few thousand years it has been represented in its numinous manifestation by male figures – by God the Father and by Christ. This proves that, to a great degree, the Self is not free of gender in our imagination.

There are moments in my work where the terms the Self, the Goddess, and the female divine intertwine. The Self is a purely psychoanalytical notion of Jung, and the Goddess is a representation of the female divine in culture, for example, in the contemporary Goddess religion/movement in some Western countries that has been mostly informed by the second wave feminist theories in the 60s and 70s, of which I speak in Chapter 2. This Goddess notion is informed by the variety of goddesses of ancient myths such as Sumerian, Greek, Roman, Asian, African, and Indonesian. In my view, the Goddess image is largely individual for each person and depends on each

²¹ C. G. Jung, *Answer to Job* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1954), 170-171

²² See Marie-Louise von Franz, *Archetypal Dimension of the Psyche*, section on the Black Woman.

person's experience and background, however, all Goddess images have the common archetypal origin. Some scholars note that: "Goddess figures are also fluid, they are capable of multiple manifestations; they borrow from each other's stories, and absorb each other's characteristics"²³. In psychoanalytical terms, the Goddess symbolises in various narratives the numinous instinctual energy of the Self in the female form. The Self and the Goddess refer to one another, that one enriches the other, and that speaking of one is equal to speaking of the other, only in different – psychological and cultural – settings. Since the spheres of culture and psychology are closely intertwined and greatly affect one another, it is understandable that it is not strictly possible to separate these notions.

In addition to the Self, I also see Mary as the archetype of the soul/psyche²⁴ of a woman, the woman/female archetype, the *home* of the woman's soul/psyche, and some other images. The reason for this variety of understandings of Mary can perhaps be explained by reference to Jung who says in his writing that it is not possible to speak in precise terms about something that lives in our unconscious and acts from there autonomously²⁵. It is unconscious to us and we do not know anything real about it. Sometimes, therefore, there is no other way but to use mythopoetic language, for example, by equating Mary with women's soul, or ascribing to her such human traits as feeling pain, or having consciousness, and similar.

Shadow narratives: myths, legends, fairy tales.

I find it vital to re-create the mythology of Mary from the shadow narratives in order to reinstate Mary's divinity and to perceive the fuller sense of her power,

²³ Karen Jo Torjesen, "Preface", in *The Constant and Changing Faces of the Goddess: Goddess Traditions of Asia*. Editors: Deepak Shimkhada and Phyllis K. Herman. (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), xi.

²⁴ Greek ψυχή (psyche) meaning breath or blow was used in classic Greek as a synonym for the word *soul*, a mysterious part in a human being which is the source of life, believed to be unfading. The Psyche was also the Greek Goddess which personified the human soul. I use *soul* and *psyche* interchangeably although I am aware of the differences various authors see in them. I follow Jung's thought that certain notions can only exist in our language by symbolic projection and we understand them only approximately, therefore I leave it to the reader to place the meaning into the word *soul*. According to Jung, *psyche* embraces the Ego, the consciousness, the personal unconscious with all the complexes, the collective unconscious with all the archetypes, and all the libido energy that flows between these parts of the psyche (based on the online book *The Chaos of Jung's Psyche* by Gerald J. Schueler and Betty J. Schueler http://www.schuelers.com/ChaosPsyche/part_1_17.htm). Some authors think that soul is unfading and incarnates other bodies to further advance its purposes which are only known to the soul itself; yet psyche, as a more individual formation, disappears with the death of a person.

²⁵ Autonomously - when a person is acting unconsciously, often against her/his conscious convictions and values, which means that the complexes or archetypes of the person got hold of him/her in a negative way.

therefore I analyse at length the folklore stories in Chapters 3 and 4. I have defined earlier that my work is concerned with the ideas of the Western World, however, the archetypal nature of legends allows me to cross the boundaries of what is understood by the “Western World” and include narratives that come from Mexico or Brazil. Yet I mostly analyse European, and in particular Lithuanian legends, which come from the 13th century up to the 20th century. These legends form the narrative matrix out of which the mythology of a non-Christian Mary can be combined.

In the research I conducted, I have not been able to find a similar work to mine that uses the legends of Mary and fairy tales to create a non-Christian myth of Mary in order to form a theology of Mary. This fact meant that I needed to find my own direction in articulating my ideas. This task required me to be extremely creative in shaping my thesis and using the supportive material, inspiring me to bring together folklore narratives, Jungian depth psychology, feminist spirituality, and analysis of literary texts and images. Therefore, I recognise that, due to the variety of sources, some of the chapters have less structural integrity (Chapter 3 in particular, which presents the legends of Mary) than others. However, the legend material with which I worked, has dictated its own structure with the mythological language sometimes taking over the academic. My aim was to allow this mythological language to *be*, and to be *heard*, to take the messages of the legends more seriously than just as the old and no longer relevant pieces of narratives. For example, if Mary in a legend or in an apparition story asks people to build her a church, I invite the reader to consider that she is actually asking us to build a church to the female divine in our own souls/psyches, as well as in our conscious attitudes. This comes as a contrast to the popular Christian explanation of such legends where such requests of Mary are understood as an invitation to follow the teaching of Christ, but not her own. The patriarchal structure of the society and its academic language are among those restrictions which the non-Christian mythology of Mary is confronting, along with some patriarchal and Christian moral values.

I would now like to offer an explanation on the differences between these types of narratives. In my work, I understand myth in Jungian terms²⁶ – as the language of the collective unconscious, as an entrance to the collective unconscious, as a phenomenon which makes human lives meaningful in that that it allows humans to relate to the life

²⁶ More on myth by Jungians see, for example, Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on Myth*; Robert A. Segal, *Jung on Mythology*; Donald Kalsched and Alan Jone, “Myth and Psyche: The Evolution of Consciousness” in http://www.cgjungny.org/d/d_mythpsyche.html accessed 03/08/2013)

mystery. Myths and dreams were the sources that suggested to Jung the existence of the archetypes – the impersonal patterns of psychic behaviour, found within different cultures. Myths, dreams and images are the pathways, through which the unconscious part of the human psyche expresses itself.

According to the Jungian view on the evolution of the human psyche²⁷, the collective as well as the individual unconscious started forming millions of years ago when the languages as we now know them now did not exist and, therefore, being so old, the unconscious used images and imagination to tell what is happening in it. Myths, dreams, images are the ways through which the individual and the collective unconscious can be in some way “read”, that is, given some conscious interpretation. Jung held that myths which talk about gods and the awe inspiring events, describe the formations of collective psychic energy – the archetypes, which are numinous. According to Jung, archetypes are autonomous, which means that humans have little power to select what is being projected out of their inner world onto the external world through the mythical narratives and imagination. Therefore, myths are like mirrors of the collective unconscious at certain [historical] stages of psychic development. Jung used the analysis of the mythical stories in his work with patients, since he thought that without myth, “our clinical approach to the human mind was only medical, which was about as helpful as the approach of the mineralogist to Chartres Cathedral”²⁸.

Following from this, the fairy tale is a type of a myth, however, there is a difference. According to Marie Louise von Franz:

Fairy tales are the purest and simplest expression of collective unconscious psychic processes. Therefore their value for the scientific investigation of the unconscious exceeds that of all other material. They represent the archetypes in their simplest, barest and most concise form. In this pure form, the archetypal images afford us the best clues to the understanding of the processes going on in the collective psyche. In myths and legends, or any other more elaborate mythological material, we get at the basic patterns of the human psyche through an overlay of cultural material. But in fairy tales there is much less specific

²⁷ See Chapter 1 for a more detailed explanation of the Jungian understanding of the evolution of the human psyche. Also see E. F. Edinger’s *The New God-Image: A Study of Jung’s Key Letters Concerning the Evolution of the Western God-Image*.

²⁸ C.G. Jung. *Collected Works, Volume 18. The Symbolic Life: Miscellaneous Writings (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), 354 (para 833)*

conscious cultural material, and therefore, they mirror the basic patterns of the psyche more clearly²⁹.

The quote above also mentions legend as a type of a mythical story, which, similarly to a myth, has a more pronounced cultural layer than a fairy tale. According to von Franz³⁰, both legends and myths usually speak of a particular name, status, place, or time (as we will see from Chapter 3, some legends even give exact dates on which something happened). In fairy tales, the time is undefined (“once upon a time”) and the protagonists of the fairy tales have no names or carry archetypal names, common to many cultures. While myths usually embrace motives about gods or the creation of the world, and are generally longer narratives than legends, the legends usually are short explanations or records of some events or phenomena (for example, about the formation of a lake in a certain place). However, the legends retain the mythical numinous character since the events described in them are magical, miraculous, and awe inspiring. In my work, I sometimes call the legends and fairy tales simply “the stories”, “folklore stories”, or “shadow narratives” and I hold that together they sum up to the mythology of Mary. According to Jung, the myth is predominantly an expression of an archetype, and it talks about the deity and her/his power. A meaningful myth can be that spiritual source by which a person can live.

The radical and exciting possibilities of the incorporation of the Shadow of Mary.

During my research, I read a few hundred legends recorded in Lithuania and elsewhere. They produced an overwhelming feeling that Mary was perceived by the people as the highest most powerful divine authority embodied in the female. This supported my view that there was something different going on in people’s unconscious quite separate from Mary’s role within Christianity. In legends, Mary appeared to inhabit an autonomous spiritual system, she lived a life that in most cases had no connection to her Christian myth; she was autonomous to such a degree that she effectively escaped the Christian symbols (such as Christ, heaven, hell, saints) in many legends, especially the Lithuanian ones. In addition, the legends demonstrated that Mary’s system of truth and justification had no defined order comparable to the patriarchal and Christian system of justice, but operated by secret rules, which one was able to learn only if one had a personal connection to Mary. For example, in one of the

²⁹ Marie-Loise von Franz. *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*. (Boston and London: Shambala, 1996), 1.

³⁰ von Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 1

legends, Mary granted a safe escape to a thief who muttered a half of the prayer “Hail Mary” to her only once, because he could not remember more of it; however, this was enough to soften the heart of Mary. In the era of strict Christian and patriarchal morality, Mary stood for liberation and empathy, and narrowed the abyss in people’s psyches between religion and repressed sexuality. One legend particularly illustrates the compensatory aspect and the unusual justification system of Mary:

In a certain convent of nuns many years ago there lived a virgin named Beatrice under vow of chastity. Devout in soul and a zealous servant of the Mother of God, she counted it her greatest joy to offer up her prayers to her in secret (...) A certain cleric, seeing and desiring her, began to use enticements. (...) so her heart could no longer endure the fires of passion, but going to the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary (...) she said: “Lady, I have served thee as faithfully as I could; behold, I resign to thee thy keys. I can no longer withstand the temptations of the flesh”. Placing the keys on the altar she went in secret after the clerk, and he, after dishonouring her, within a few days deserted her. And she having no means of living and being ashamed to return to the cloister, became a harlot.

Having lived publicly for many years in this wickedness, one day she came in her secular dress to the gate of the convent (...) the Mother of Mercy appeared to her in the form of a woman and said: “For fifteen years I have filled your office in your absence. Return now to your home and do your penance, for no one knows of your departure”. The Mother of God had actually in her shape and dress taken her place as guardian. At once she returned and as long as she lived gave thanks to the Virgin Mary (...) ³¹

In this legend, Mary went against the established patriarchal rules demonstrating her loyalty to a woman in trouble and confusion. It exposes the problem of a deep need for an empathetic female divine who could understand the experiences of women living in the patriarchal world and having to submit to its moral values, which usually are based on the extreme restrictions to a woman’s body and her social behaviour. The unpredictability, the power and vibrant characteristics of Mary in the legends perceptibly compensate for the rigidity of Christian dogmas and serve as a

³¹ Johannes Herolt, called Discipulus (1435 – 1440), *Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, trans. C. C. Swinton Bland (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1928), 43

compensatory myth to the Christian myth of the ever-virgin Mary. This story shows the Shadow face of the Christian Mary.

The Shadow is complementary to Jung's idea of the Persona, which is "what oneself as well as others thinks one is"³² The Shadow integration is a difficult progression, and a culture or a person has to be conscious enough to deal with parts of the Shadow. The integration of the Shadow is a process when one recognises the Shadow and tries to incorporate it into one's life. For example, a person who could never say "no" to the people abusing her/him, practices to do just that, however, he/she must be ready to meet the consequences of her/his new behaviour and be ready to go through the stages of fear, uncertainty, rejection and loneliness. Yet it is even more dangerous to constantly live in the Shadow without realising it – the ignorance of the Shadow closes the door to the inner development of a person or a culture. Jung has emphasised that:

(...) *shadow* is that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors (...) If it has been believed hitherto that the human shadow was the source of evil, it can now be ascertained on closer investigation that the unconscious man, that is his *shadow* does not consist only of morally reprehensible tendencies, but also displays a number of good qualities, such as normal instincts, appropriate reactions, realistic insights, creative impulses³³

The Christian image of Mary represents the super-positive aspect of the female divine archetype. Its negative side has been unconsciously projected on women during many centuries: women's power and anger were seen as wicked, their sexuality – sinful. Jung once insightfully said that "the consequence of increasing Mariolatry was the witch hunt (...)"³⁴. In the last several decades, many women alienated from the Church in revolt against such views, many of them inspired a sexual and gender revolution that has been marked with the women's right to education, divorce, equal rights in pursuing a career, birth-control, and many other things. However, many struggled to find a new spiritual system to which they could belong. The development of the new spiritualities

³² C.G. Jung. *Collected Works of C.G. Jung Vol.9 Part 2. Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*. (Princeton University Press, 1979), para 221.

³³ C.G. Jung. *Collected Works of C.G. Jung Vol.9 Part 2. Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*. (Princeton University Press, 1979), paras 422 & 423.

³⁴ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 203.

comes hard since our psyches are so embedded by the Christian morals and thinking patterns. A large part of the Western cultures still accept Christian morals and values for their basis. Often, the Christian moral norms push an individual to reject herself/himself, to block the energy streams coming from within which results in the impoverishment of many valuable processes in one's life: to accept one's weaknesses, or to express anger without feeling guilty. A conscious or an unconscious wish to be "a good Christian" often forces one to sacrifice one's life dreams and leads to the accumulation of anger, which is followed by guilt for feeling anger. Every day an individual makes choices between the duty and the dream, between oneself and the other, and the price of this choice is very high either way.

According to Jung, "good does not become better by being exaggerated, but worse, and a small evil becomes a big one through being disregarded and repressed. The Shadow is very much a part of human nature, and it is only at night that no shadows exist"³⁵ Due to identifying with Christian morality, a person's conscious view of himself/herself is often illusionary and the ability to comprehend her/his inner needs is inadequate, affected by the Christian values, even if unconsciously. While trying to be always "good" and "right", one still reaches a point where one must choose between the sacrifice of himself/herself or the other. Throughout centuries, women were seen as the ones who had to sacrifice their own life for the sake of their children, husbands, parents, and the social morals, to let others control their own emotions (all angry women are mad and hysterical), bodies (from beauty, to weight, to sexuality, to childbearing), time and earnings. The ones that did not fit this behaviour were (and still are in many parts of the world) punished by a terrible feeling of guilt for not fitting into the society.

The acceptance of the Shadow side of the Christian Mary not only bestows an opportunity for the creation of the myth of the non-Christian Mary and for the voicing of the theology of Mary. The realisation of the Shadow of Mary further offers some exciting and radical possibilities for the Western culture in that it challenges the normative patriarchal ethics and laws. As we shall see from the legends in Chapters 3 and 4, Mary with the Shadow side incorporated manifests, in the Jungian author of *The Cult of the Black Virgin* Ean Begg's words, as "the elemental and uncontrollable source

³⁵ Carl Gustav Jung, "A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity", in *CW 11: Psychology and Religion: West and East* (1942), 286.

of life, possessing a spirit and wisdom of its own not subject to organisation or the laws of rationality”³⁶. He further notes that:

She has always helped her supplicants to circumvent the rigidities of patriarchal legislation and is traditionally on the side of physical process – healing the sick, easing the pangs of childbirth, making the milk flow. She knows how to break rigid masculine rules, bringing dead babies back to life long enough to receive baptism and escape from limbo to paradise, looking with tolerance on the sins of the flesh as when she acts as midwife to a pregnant abbess or stands in for a truant nun tasting for a time the illicit pleasures of sin. Politically, she is in favour of freedom and integrity, the right of peoples, cities and nations to be inviolate and independent from outside interference³⁷.

Many things that once belonged to the Shadow sphere have been accepted over the last decades thanks to feminism, such as the fact the women are no less intelligent and have the right to study at universities, or that they have the right to control their own bodies. If the societies accept and integrate more of the Shadow related to the divine female (which from the patriarchal point of view might seem irrational) many women and men will be saved from a painful psychological and cultural splitting. It would give an opportunity for women to shed a huge portion of guilt for not being the Virgin Maries on the Earth. The irrational Shadow-Mary (as presented in legends and fairy tales) challenges God and Christ as exceptionally “good”, and it consequently challenges the Church, the Law, the Army, the Kings, the Presidents, and other authorities that by the psychological association are representatives of God on the Earth. She challenges the patriarchal society to widen the feminine and masculine definitions, to rethink why some things are permitted and others are not for a certain gender. Communities with the incorporated Shadow of Mary would be more empathic, more liberated, more colourful, valuing life, health and good relations between people, having respect for the female divine in their own psyches.

The Shadow-Mary is sometimes irrational and dangerous as some legends and fairy tales show. However, it does not mean that it cannot guide one through his/her life. Clarissa Pinkola Estés, speaking about the *Dangerous Old Woman, the Crone*, suggested that the Crone, the Goddess of an old and wise age, holds women *in her*

³⁶ Ean Begg, *The Cult of the Black Virgin*. (Chiron Publications, 2006), 27

³⁷ Ean Begg, *The Cult of the Black Virgin*, 28

*danger*³⁸. That is, although both good and bad are expected from the same divine figure, there is no safer place than to be in the divine figure's danger. If one places his/her trust in such a divine figure as the epitome of the life/death source and power, the divine will take one through life. Similarly, the acceptance of the Shadow releases Mary's power, and makes her more whole so is she more able to hold women and men *in her danger*. If we bear in mind that Mary is the personification of the Self, we see that the incorporated Shadow will increase the Self's potential to guide us during all life's trials.

An individual myth of Mary.

My work is also concerned with an individual connection to Mary. I suggest that the non-Christian myth of Mary can help a person to create an individual connection to his/her own Self. For that reason, I discuss, throughout my thesis, and in particular in Chapter 5 where I engage with Irigaray, how an individual can develop a religious/sacred feeling of being in connection with his/her Self by addressing the non-Christian image of Mary.

In the Introduction, however, I would like to offer an example of how my individual myth of Mary has developed over a number of years and continues to develop. My own discoveries have eventually led to the idea of the thealogy of Mary. In my understanding, any thealogy involves a great degree of subjectivity since thealogies speak of not one image of the Goddess but of many different Goddesses coming from different women's (and some men's) experiences and cultural background. Therefore, subjectivity is one of the features which distinguishes thealogies from Christian theology.

My memories of Mary come from my childhood. I have a distant memory of the mysterious respect my Godmother would order me to pay to the statue of Mary after taking Communion in the Roman Catholic Church. The whole procedure consisted of taking the body of Christ in the form of a Communion wafer, then walking to the right side of the altar where the statue of Mary stood, and kneeling there under the statue for some time mainly looking down in reverence. The mystery for me was that I would see women next to me whispering something with their eyes closed, one hand pressed to their chest, sometimes looking up to the subtle face of Mary skilfully carved in fine

³⁸ The notion of 'standing in the danger of the Dangerous Old Woman (or the Crone) is taken from an online programme transmitted on www.soundstrue on 22 Sep 2010 in which C. P. Estés read live from her forthcoming book *The Power of the Crone*.

wood. I would copy them in looking up and looking down, and observe the movements of their hands trying to establish out of the corner of my eye when was the right time to cross myself and to get up. I did not know the words that women were whispering, and I was afraid to ask my Godmother since I thought everyone was supposed to know them. Instead, I pretended to say something moving my lips with non-words.

As I understand it now, this childhood experience built in me a feeling towards the figure of Mary that had no myth – I acquired an inner form of Mary with no content; I felt the archetype of the female divine at work but for me it was not filled with the Christian story of Mary. I gained a feeling that this woman was extremely special and mysterious and held a certain secret which was known to my Godmother and other women but not to me. Therefore, when some years later an influential feminist encouraged me to pray to Mary, I was intrigued as I unconsciously recognised my childhood feelings surrounding Mary. I thought Mary must have something to do with the feminist outlook I had recently accepted. Looking at the images of Mary in churches, I felt that Mary could potentially fulfil my feminist and spiritual anticipation if I could find how to relate to her. Finding how to relate to the patriarchal Mary meant for me finding how to relate to the patriarchal myself – to everything that patriarchy repressed, deformed or idealized in women and myself. Importantly, this feminist and spiritual expectation which I projected on Mary immediately withdrew her from the Christian framework in my imagination, and transformed her into the context for my personal associations.

ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE GREAT GODDESS

First of all, I associated the image of Mary with the narratives about the Great Goddess by the archaeomythologist Marija Gimbutas. In my imagination, Mary became the Great Goddess herself. Gimbutas argued that she had deciphered the symbolic meaning of the Great Goddess suggesting that she appears in the main aspects which I present in more detail in Chapter 2 – as the Birth Goddess, the Nurturing Goddess, the Abundance Multiplying Goddess, the Death Goddess and the Regeneration Goddess. Among the sculptures unearthed by Gimbutas there was the Birth Goddess who sat naked with her legs widely open and bent, displaying her vulva, ready to give birth (Image 1).

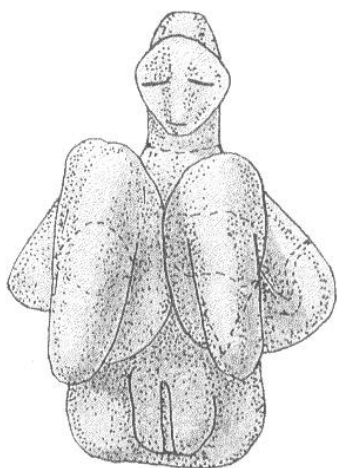


Image 1. The Birth Goddess in a position of giving birth. Achileon, around 6300 BCE³⁹.



Image 2. Mary With The Rose. Church of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Bydgoszcz, Poland⁴⁰.



Image 3. The Child-Bearing Goddess with a large pubic triangle, and with her hands cradling her stomach. Greece, around 5500 BCE⁴¹.



Image 4. The Black Madonna of Loretto with a red triangle. Santuario Della Santa Casa di Loreto, Italy⁴².

³⁹ Marija Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa* (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996), 153. Eng. *The Old Europe*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

⁴⁰ Image published in the collection compiled by the Siostry Niepokalanki convent *Z Dawna Polski Tys Krolowq*, 265.

⁴¹ Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa*, 156. Eng. *The Old Europe*.

⁴² *Tobie Maryjo zawierzam*, (Poland, VELAR:1989). Eng. *In You Mary I Trust*.

Taking a position that women's genitals/sexuality were popularly represented by red roses or other flowers in art⁴³, I related this image to the image of Mary, where she held a red rose, lily or other flowers in her hand (see Image 2). Such symbolic imaging of Mary's sexual potency, for me, meant an unconscious striving to convey the Goddess sexuality symbolism which was forbidden in the Catholic Church. Similarly, the emphasised pubic triangle symbolizing women's regenerative powers, seen on many figures of the Goddess as old as 7000-5000 BCE according to Gimbutas, can perhaps be present on the dress of the Black Madonna of Loreto in Italy: this dress is adorned with seven lines of ornaments, of which the second is a red triangle (Images 3 and 4).

That Mary represents both the Goddess of Death and the Goddess of Regeneration, was something I gradually realised while attending a number of funerals in Lithuania, including the funerals of both my own grandmothers. The elderly are still buried according to the Roman Catholic rituals. In villages, where the Roman Catholic traditions are more alive, the ritual leaders, usually women, always place an image of Mary in the hands of the dead which are tied together on the chest so that she/he could face Mary. Clearly, Mary is understood as the first and most powerful redeemer in the minds of people, and although the priests officially pray for the dead to be raised through Jesus, among mourners, the prayers to Mary and her rosary are the main ones observed at funerals.

THE NURTURING MOTHER, THE TREE, AND THE BODY OF MARY

There is perhaps a more obvious relation between Mary and the Mother Goddess, or the Nurturing Goddess. For example, a figure of the ancient mother suckling her child (Image 5) was unearthed by Gimbutas, exactly replicating the manner in which Mary nurses her child (Image 7) in traditional Catholic iconography. The nurturing mother is one of the most common archetypal images, found in representations of many cultures.

⁴³The goddesses of love and seduction (Greek Aphrodite, Roman Venus and Flora) were symbolically represented with flowers of lily, rose, myrtle, etc. Also, "deflowering" is a euphemism for breaking a virgin's hymen through sexual penetration. For further descriptions of flowers as sexual symbols see, for example, Rufus C. Camphausen, *The Encyclopedia of Erotic Wisdom: A Reference Guide to the Symbolism, Techniques, Rituals, Sacred Texts, Psychology, Anatomy, and History of Sexuality* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions International, Ltd., 1991); Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers* (Wiltshire, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Andrew Moore and Christopher Garibaldi, eds., *Flower Power: The Meaning of Flowers in Art* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2003);

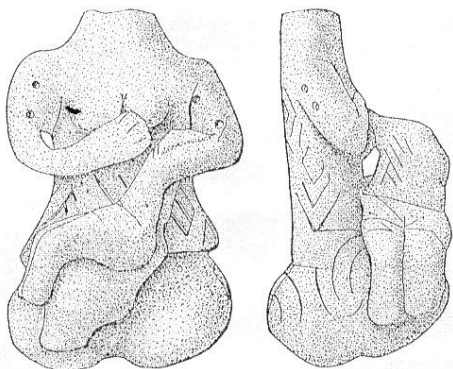


Image 5. A woman nursing a baby, Vincze, Serbia, about 5000 BCE⁴⁴.



Image 6. Isis metamorphosed into a Tree of Life suckling Tuthmosis. Image found in the crypt of Tuthmosis III in Thebes⁴⁵.



Image 7. Our Lady of Angels (Basilica of), Rome. A fragment of the painting by (possibly) L. Lotto⁴⁶



Image 8. The tree-altar with a miraculous image of Our Lady. Budapest-Máriaremete church near Pesthidegkút, Hungary⁴⁷.

⁴⁴ Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa*, 154. Eng. *The Old Europe*.

⁴⁵ Dundulienė, Pranė. *Gyvybės Medis Lietuvių Mene ir Tautosakoje* (Vilnius, 2008), 81 (Eng: The Tree of Life in the Lithuanian Art and Folklore)

One of its variations is especially interesting, namely Isis portrayed as a tree with a breast among its branches, which she holds with her strong arm which is growing from her tree-trunk body, so that her son, standing beneath the branches, can reach it; the boy is suckling the breast holding himself with both hands onto the arm of his mother-tree (Image 6).

During my fieldwork in Hungary in 2008, I found another mythological tree – it was the embodiment of the Nurturing Goddess as the Tree of Life. In the middle of the altar area in the church of Budapest-Máriaremete there was a fenced tree trunk with a small image of the Black Madonna fixed in its branches (Image 8)

The legend by the entrance to the Church was written in several languages in large letters so that the pilgrims could read and appreciate. It said that for a long time, people prayed to this image in the tree at the road, and their prayers were heard, Mary performed many miracles; as the crowds of pilgrims grew, it was decided to build a church around the tree, and that was how the tree appeared in the middle of the Church in the place of the altar. Such an obvious mythological interpretation of Mary made me feel that her myth was a religion that thrived independently in the centre of another religion. During the time I spent in the Church and its surroundings, I witnessed streams of pilgrims visiting this shrine. The tree and the painting are considered miraculous and attract much attention. It was my impression that the tree itself was understood by the pilgrims as Mary, as the body of Mary, even though it seemed that people prayed to the image in the tree. I got this impression when I observed people touching the tree trunk to receive the blessing before leaving after their prayer and witnessed how people held their newly bought candles or rosaries against the tree-trunk in order to bless them. Although this tree-Mary did not have an obvious breast as was the case in the image of Isis suckling her son, she symbolically performed the same action – blessing and giving spiritual milk and love to all the pilgrims who, symbolically speaking, were her children. It could be said, perhaps, that touching the tree performed the action of taking a sip from the central energy of life which was full of primordial truth and love, so allowing the people to re-attune their selves to this archetypal energy.

⁴⁶ This image is taken from a post-card which I bought on my fieldwork trip to Rome. On the card, the name of L.Lotto is marked with a questions mark, which suggests that the authorship has not been determined.

⁴⁷ The image on the tree: Our Lady of the Refuge, which is a copy of The Virgin of Einsiedeln in Switzerland.

As the tree-mother who offered spiritual food and blessing by remaining rooted in the mysterious depths of the Earth, Mary seemed symbolically to acquire the meaning of being rooted at the centre of our world. Arguably, this idea allowed people to feel psychologically centred, in the centre of oneself.

An interesting thought on the body of Mary was given to me by the painting of “Mary in the Sun” which I found it in St. Stephan’s church during my fieldwork trip to Vienna. I brought a copy of this painting with me in the form of a post-card that was sold in the Church’s shop. It depicts Mary as a gigantic woman-Sun compared to whom the Earth is just a small sphere for her to stand on (Image 9). The little people are praying at the feet of her huge figure, and golden sunrays radiate from behind the whole of her figure perhaps suggesting that her body personifies the Sun⁴⁸.



Image 9. Mary in the Sun, painting, St. Stephan church, Vienna.
(Gnadenbild Maria in der Sonne, Dom zu St. Stephan, Wien)

This image, for me, seems to visualise the symbolic of the ‘woman clothed with the sun’ mentioned in the Book of Revelation (12:1-6)⁴⁹. However, since my aim is to interpret Christian images in a new, theological, way, my interpretations are focused on the visual and psychological impression, and not on Biblical connotations. This image

⁴⁸ In such iconography in an orthodox sense, Mary is called “The Queen of Heaven”.
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_11101954_ad-caeli-reginam_en.html Accessed 2013-07-30

⁴⁹ The book of Revelation is the last book of the New Testament.

astonished me by the size of Mary in comparison to the Earth. In my reading, such a gigantic body of Mary expresses the importance which Mary had in people's unconscious beliefs. This huge body of Mary standing in the vastness of the universe (on the Earth) psychologically makes an impression of an extraterrestrial being, of the Goddess, and of an extremely powerful female figure. To me, this image corresponds to the Self in Jungian terms.

This image made me question the portrayal of the body of Mary in many other visual sources. The majority of Christian images portray Mary as a slender young woman whose body does not inspire a feeling of strength. In the Vienna image, although Mary's body remained slender, it looked gigantic in relation to the Earth, which gave me a feeling of the power hidden in the female body.

I found the continuation of the theme of the gigantic female body in a fairy tale, which allowed me to re-imagine Mary's body in a non-Christian setting, and connect Mary with the Earth symbolism. To illustrate this, I present a literary excerpt, which offers a powerful image of the divine woman as a mountain. It is taken from a Malaysian folk tale called *A Journey for a Bird*. In this tale, two male protagonists travel in search of a magical bird and suddenly one of them sees in the distance a mountain resembling a woman. Intrigued, he suggests to his companion to come closer and have a better look at this woman. His friend refuses at first saying that no woman is worth wasting time over. Yet after looking at her himself he recognises that *this* woman is worth going out of the way for since she looks extremely impressive. After they approach her, the fairy tale narrator says the following:

They (...) stood face to face with the strange woman. Not so much face to face though as their faces were opposite a toe of her foot. She sat with her legs crossed. Her colossal shapes were not much different from the rough rocks and were covered by hair similar to reddish moss (...)

“Who are you?” cried Lela Muda⁵⁰ fearlessly.

She looked at them from above. It felt like the Earth had lifted. Her eyes hung above them as two lakes fenced with black forests which were her eyelashes and eyebrows.

“I am Sambaran Gunung, a woman who tosses mountains (...)”

⁵⁰ Lela Muda is one of the male protagonists in the fairy tale.

She took them on the tip of her finger and sat them on her knee which she bent so steeply that they appeared at the level of her chest. Then they saw that on the other knee there sat the daughter of the giant woman and the mother was suckling her (...)

“Before I answer your questions”, she whispered deafeningly, “refresh yourself with my milk together with my daughter (...)”

They did as they were told and they felt superhumanly empowered [by her milk]⁵¹.

The episode with the mountain-woman suckling her daughter arguably makes an imaginative connection with the Nurturing Bear-Goddess and with Mary suckling her child. In my view, relating Mary to the mountain-woman resurrects Mary’s body, which has suffered from the iconographic impoverishment in Christian tradition. Mary envisaged as the mossy mountain gives an entirely new dimension to the body of Mary.

I further developed my image of Mary as the Earth Goddess when I discovered that the name “Mary” meant the Sea in Latin. This made me realise with surprise that a part of the Sea in Lithuania is called Marios, and that there perhaps is a relation between the two. Mary as the Sea was yet another dimension to the Mary as the World tree, the Sun, the Mountain. Such imaginations of Mary released her even further from Christian limitations in my mind.

The development of my individual image and myth of Mary has not stopped here; however, I feel that I have illustrated how one can form one’s own understanding of Mary.

Last introductory notes

Throughout my work I engage with many authors. The works of Carl Gustav Jung and the Jungians Edward F. Edinger, Marie-Louise von Franz, Clarissa Pinkola Estès, Lucy Huskinson and the formerly Jungian Naomi Goldenberg inspired the theoretical psychological background for the theology of Mary. The works of the authors in feminist philosophy and religion Luce Irigaray, Morny Joy, Charlene Spretnak, Carol P. Christ, Grace Jantzen, Starhawk, Elizabeth Johnson, Karen Armstrong, Mary Daly, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Melissa Raphael, Sarah Boss, Marina Warner and Rachel Fulton were pivotal in gaining a wider perspective on the

⁵¹ *Skamieniały Statek: Baśnie Malajskie* (Nasza Księgarnia, 1988), 49-112 Eng. *A ship enchanted into stone: Malaysian Fairy Tales* (in Polish). Translation from Polish by Rasa Luzyte.

female divine, theology, feminist theory, theology, religion, and the figure of the Virgin Mary. The resources for mythological ideas and knowledge were Marija Gimbutas, Pranė Dundulienė, Irena Čepienė, Petras Tarasenko, Elinor W. Gadon, Anne Baring, Jules Cashford, and Barbara G. Walker. The main sources of fairy tales and legends were the collected Lithuanian folk tales (by Jonas Basanavičius, 19th century), and the work of the priest Robertas Gedvydas Skrinskas who gathered in his book the rarest legends about Mary in Lithuania.

In addition to written sources, I also carried out fieldwork in Lithuania, Poland, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Austria and Hungary. This involved visiting various Marian shrines in order to witness the pilgrim rituals, to take photos, to gather legends and images, and to experience the atmosphere of the shrines and people's behaviour towards the figure of Mary. In the fieldwork visits, I aimed to witness the "living" archetype, speaking in Jung's words, and to perceive the scope of the veneration of Mary in order to address in my work the diverging perceptions of the dogmatic Christian and the folkloric "shadow" Mary. Therefore, my fieldwork has been mostly actively observational-analytical. The research of the various new spiritual forms of the image of Mary is another fascinating topic; however, the scope and the complexion of my PhD did not allow me to carry out any substantial interviews of the pilgrims to find out their individual spiritual connotations to the figure of Mary. The desired scale of the travelling and interviewing in various languages would require funding, and the extent of the data analysis and interpretation would offer a scope for another extensive academic work. However, it is a possible direction for my future research.

In Chapter 7, I speak of the future imagination of the female divine through the image of Mary and her Daughter. This Chapter invites a process, which I call a symbolic imagination and which helps women imagine themselves on the lap of the Goddess as divine beings having a future. To summarise the view of a number of authors (such as Jung, Marie-Louise von Franz, Tony Wolf, Luce Irigaray and others), women need to be able to project their Self in their own gender and continue to understand their own selves through an uninterrupted and non-split relation between their ego and the divine Self image of their own gender.

One more important aspect of my work is that I attempt to reconnect by my thesis the split between the contemporary Goddess religion/the Goddess movement and the image of Mary. In my work, I give folkloric evidence that Mary is regarded as the powerful autonomous Nature Goddess; therefore the contemporary Goddess religion

which builds its tradition mainly on Pagan beliefs (even though it consists of various traditions) can be enriched by the mythology and imagery of Mary as well as by the individual connection to the divine which Mary can offer. Although I claim in my work that the myth of the non-Christian Mary should be regarded as a sovereign individualised spirituality, I also see the theology of Mary as part of the Goddess theology tradition. I hope that Catholics and other Christians can also find the material I provide inspirational in enriching their image of Mary. I claim that it was the image of Mary that carried the numinous of the female divine for a few thousand years during which Christianity promoted the male God in the West, and that it is by merit of the image of Mary that the current Goddess spirituality was able to spring anew. I hold that Mary's constant presence in the Western culture sustained the female divine image in our psyches since Mary unconsciously reminded us on the instinctual level that she was the female divine who had no lesser numinosity than the male gods of Christianity.

To summarise, I suggest that, especially for women of the Western world, the image of Mary represents that inner part in them that was equally suppressed and split in patriarchy. To attend to Mary is to attend to the suppressed/split parts in ourselves. By collecting her myth from various narratives into a whole myth we can acquire the language by which our consciousness can speak to our unconscious, so we can relate to the numinosity of our inner world, the Self. This relation can be strengthened by that each image of Mary has *a particular face* to pray to which makes our relation to the divine a much more personal experience. The main objectives of my thesis – to offer readers a non-Christian myth of Mary, to recover the power from the Shadow of Mary, and to suggest ways for an individual connection to the divine Self through the non-Christian image of Mary –contribute to the rebalancing of the possibilities for spiritual symbolism for women and men, and to raising the importance of the highest female divine figure in our still predominantly patriarchal culture.

CHAPTER 1. C. G. JUNG'S THEORIES AS A METHODOLOGY FOR A THEALOGY OF MARY

Introduction to Chapter 1.

The thealogy of Mary which I propose aims to help balance out certain psychological opposites and strengthen the sense of self in a person, and it therefore enquires into human psychology. One of the main tasks of this thesis is to bring to our consciousness those parts of the myth/image of Mary that have been repressed in Christianity, in particular, the powerful and the negative aspects of Mary that compensate for her weakness and elevated innocence in Christianity. A powerful Mary who has her own negativity, I argue, helps a person to reflect on her/his own negative psychological traits, the realisation of which raises consciousness in a person and rescues a person from an inner split between the “good” and the “bad” parts of herself/himself; instead, both those parts can be integrated and exist alongside one another. One can hardly deny that women in the West have been influenced by Christianity at least subconsciously. A number of feminist authors claimed that the Christian image of Mary negatively affected women by pressurising them to become subordinate to the patriarchal ruling and to achieve the impossible perfection of the Christian Mary, which caused the loss of self-worth⁵². My work suggests to create a myth of Mary from other sources than the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church.

To present the psychological aspects of my work in more detail, I would like to start with an explanation of the main points of the methodology of C.G. Jung's analytical psychology. For me, Jungian psychology offers one of the most reasoned psychological explanations, along with feminist theories in religion, for the need of the female divine and of an individual spiritual life in general. However, I would like to stress that my thesis does not belong to the field of Jungian analytical psychology but to the field of thealogies, which can be a combination of various methodologies.

I use Jungian theories to explain the possibility of looking at the figure of Mary as at the archetype which belongs to the human psyche rather than to the Christian religion. This allows me to speak of a figure of Mary that is to a great degree separate from the Christian tradition. Jungian psychological theories help me to enrich ways of

⁵² See Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Marina Warner's *Alone Of All Her Sex: The Myth And The Cult Of The Virgin Mary*, Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father*. Also see Introduction to Chapter 2 of this work.

relating to Mary, and to highlight the positive psychological effects on a person who engages with the female divine, and in particular – with Mary.

Before I begin a more detailed presentation of those of C.G. Jung's analytical theories that I use in forming the methodology of my thesis, and explain what determined my choice of Jung, I would like to briefly introduce the idea of psychoanalysis more generally. This cannot be accomplished without reference to a timeline formed by other thinkers who have, along with Jung himself, shaped the subjects of mind science; psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis.

Wilhelm Max Wundt (1832-1920) is often credited with establishing psychology as a field of scientific study independent from philosophy. Wundt's thinking was influenced by the ideas of earlier authors such as Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), James Mill (1773-1836), Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) and others whose writing became a precursor to the subject of psychology. Wundt carried out extensive experimental research on stimuli, perception, and feeling. Wundt's psychology stresses observation of the modes and the structure of the conscious mind and, hence, takes a scientific approach⁵³.

The German doctor Emil Kraepelin (1856–1926) pioneered 20th century psychiatry. He continued Wundt's scientific approach and made the disorders of the human mind the subject of his clinical studies. Kraepelin discovered schizophrenia and developed the first widely accepted classification of mental disorders; one that is still in use today⁵⁴.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist, is considered to be the founder of psychoanalysis. Sigmund Freud profoundly changed the modern view of the mind. “Before Freud developed psychoanalysis it was commonly held that if a person is nervous, there must be something wrong with his physical make-up, regardless of whether this could be substantiated by examination”⁵⁵. In the Middle Ages, the mentally ill were so despised that they were punished by being chained up for their obsessions⁵⁶. Only at the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century did Sigmund Freud develop an innovative method of engaging with the unconscious mind, the source of human drives and of the causes of various psychological sufferings. Freud initially

⁵³ Based on Thomas Knierim's online article “Mind and Consciousness”, published in Thomas Knierim's web page <http://thebigview.com/mind/> visited on 28/12/2012

⁵⁴ Thomas Knierim “Mind and Consciousness”

⁵⁵ A.A. Brill. *Basic Principles of Psychoanalysis*. (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949), 3.

⁵⁶ Brill, *Basic Principles of Psychoanalysis*, 3

spotted the potential for this method in hypnosis, and developed it further while working with patients in his private practice. In hypnosis, patients sometimes unconsciously spoke of childhood experiences, after which their symptoms would ease. Having noticed this, Freud introduced a technique called “free association” in which he encouraged his patients who lay on a couch without being hypnotised to speak their thoughts without reservation and to make no attempt to concentrate while doing so⁵⁷. Freud’s method was based on encouraging patients to remember a repressed sexual wish or a trauma since Freud thought that all symptoms are caused by the unconscious material that was repressed in childhood. The idea of the ‘unconscious’ and of ‘repression’ are developed by Freud as technical terms. Freud discovered and noted that the relationship between the therapist and the client was of immense importance. He was also the first to analyse the dreams of his patients; it was his work on dreams that led to the meeting of Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, with the latter taking the initiative in writing to Freud. Freud thought that the psyche was “fuelled” by sexual energy which he called “libido”. Freud took the view that religion, and particularly the monotheistic God, was an illusion and “the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity”⁵⁸ created by people’s infantile emotional need for a powerful, supernatural parental figure⁵⁹, therefore he gave preference to reason and science.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist who was nineteen years junior to Freud, shared with Freud some fundamental ideas. However, Jung ultimately developed them according to his own thinking. This resulted in the formation of a branch of psychoanalysis that later came to be called “analytical psychology”. Jung acknowledged the great merit of Freud in the field of psychoanalysis and maintained a close friendship with Freud for several years. However, their paths parted after Jung published his work on psychic energy, in which Jung wrote that “libido” was not made up just of sexual energy as Freud claimed but represented the energy of life, with the sexual energy being only one of its components⁶⁰. Jung also separated personal unconscious from the collective unconscious. What Jung called personal unconscious,

⁵⁷ Peter Gay. *Freud: A Life for Our Time*. (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 64-71

⁵⁸ Sigmund Freud. *The Future of an Illusion*, trans. and edited by James Strachey. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1961), 43

⁵⁹ James W. Jones. “Forward”, in Charles Spezzano and Gerald J. Gargiulo (eds), *Soul on the Couch: Spirituality, Religion and Morality in Contemporary Psychoanalysis* (Hillsdale, 2003), xi; also, Steven D. Kepnes. “Bridging the gap between understanding and explanation approaches to the study of religion”. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 25 (4): 510 (1986)

⁶⁰ Carl Gustav Jung. *Atsiminimai, vizijos, apmąstymai*. (Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2010), 115. (in English: C.G. Jung. *Visions, Dreams, Reflections*) Free translation by Rasa Lužytė.

corresponded to some degree to Freud's unconscious, and the collective unconscious was, for Jung, a part of the heritage of the entire human race, and therefore a sort of common pool containing the instincts and some patterns for mental behaviour⁶¹. Jung called these patterns of mental behaviour the archetypes. Jung believed that the psychological symptoms often signal the need for a patient to consciously re-evaluate not only the past (Freud's method) but also the present situation of her/his life – Jung argued that a person has to take the responsibility for his/her own life despite childhood experiences. For Jung, therapy meant the meeting of equals and not that of a patient and a doctor – Jung had his clients seated in a chair before him and not lying on a couch as Freud did. Jung disagreed with Freud and Adler who said that religion was an illusion or a neurosis. Jung thought that although religions were imaginary collective products, they had a real supportive effect on the human psyche, so they were real in human psyches, and therefore people had a deep inner need for religious emotions⁶². Jung interpreted a neurosis as a state of being at odds with oneself, caused by the conflict between opposing attitudes of the ego and the unconscious. Jung developed notions of “the ego”⁶³, “complexes”, the “Self”⁶⁴, “the Shadow”⁶⁵, “individuation”, and others. Jung suggested that symbols and myths were the language of the human unconscious (because it has its beginnings in such old times where no language existed) and therefore they were the best ways to understand the unconscious.

1.1. The reasons for choosing C.G. Jung's theories for a theology of Mary.

⁶¹ “The Old Wise Man”, in the weekly newsmagazine *Time*. Issue: 14th February 1955. Online source: <http://www.jungiananalyticpraxis.com/The%20Old%20Wise%20Man%20-%20Time%20Magazine.htm> Visited on 2012/12/05

⁶² C. G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. (N.Y.: Vintage Books, [1961] 1989), 140

⁶³ According to Murrey Stain, “‘Ego’ is a technical term whose origin is the Latin word meaning ‘I’ “. Stain says that “Consciousness is a state of awakesness and at its centre there is an ‘I’ “. Murray Stain. *Jung's Map Of The Soul: An Introduction* (Open Court Publishing, 1998), 1. For more information on what is the Ego, see footnote No.6 in the Introduction of this work.

⁶⁴ The Self in Jungian psychology is the whole of the personality, or the totality of the psyche that includes both conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The Self is also an archetype and exists when we are born; the Ego-consciousness emerges out of it in the course of childhood development. The Self, according to Jung, is realised as the product of individuation, which in his view is the process of integrating one's personality. (Based on Ruth Snowden. *Jung*. (From the series “Teach yourself”, Hodder Education, 2006), 55).

⁶⁵ According to Jungian psychology, the Shadow of a person is a complex. It consists of the aspects of oneself one is not or does not want to be conscious about: painful memories and feelings, helplessness, shame, ruthlessness, guilt. Speaking in psychological terms, people repress into the unconscious those parts of themselves which they or the society they are surrounded by consciously consider being inferior, shameful, or evil. (Based on Ruth Snowden. *Jung*. (From the series “Teach yourself”, Hodder Education, 2006), 56

In terms of my reasons for choosing Jungian theories as a methodology for my work, I felt that they provide me with comprehensive means for understanding the human psyche and its collective expressions such as cultures and religions. First of all, my attention was drawn by Jung's psychological argumentation in favour of the need for a religious outlook of some kind; Jung thought that a person both consciously and unconsciously tends to seek the comfort and security of religious symbols and to find in them the meaning of her/his life⁶⁶. I felt that this resonated with my own need for an inner spiritual life, and I observed that the search for a spirituality and meaning of life was a collective pattern followed by many people. According to my observation and experience, this pattern has been marked in the last decades by Western people importing Eastern religions, merging one religion with another, or creating replacements for religion. Some people who could not find adequate religious symbols have sought the help of an analyst to understand the symbols in their own unconscious and therefore, in a way, psychoanalysis has served for some as a religion. Jung emphasised the psychological importance of a religious outlook in his writing:

I have treated many hundreds of patients. (...) Among all of my patients in the second half of life, that is to say over thirty-five, there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers and not one of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook⁶⁷

The majority of my patients consisted not of believers but of those who had lost their faith⁶⁸.

As we see from the quote, Jung spoke from the experience of his psychological practice, therefore his insights on the need for a religion appear convincing to me. However, Jung did not necessarily mean that his patients needed to return to Christianity; on the contrary, he favoured the development of an individual inner spirituality as I will show in the following sections. I found through my personal experience that I was in agreement with Jung on the need for an individual connection to the divine, with a condition that this divine figure is the active archetype. This view was also supported by the authors in the feminist religion/spirituality field as I illustrate

⁶⁶ "The Old Wise Man", *Time* magazine.

⁶⁷ C. G. Jung. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. (NY: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1933), 264

⁶⁸ C. G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. (N.Y.: Vintage Books, [1961] 1989), 140

throughout section 2.3. in Chapter 2. With Jung and feminists in religion supporting such a view, the theology of Mary can be seen as a form of an individual spirituality rooted in a wider archetypal field. By this work, I offer my own subjective *myth of a non-Christian Mary* to demonstrate how an individual spirituality finds its expression.

The second argument for choosing Jung was my realisation that the phenomenon Jung called “archetype”, and especially the archetype of the Self, was at the heart of the theology of Mary. To me, it was apparent from the living/active cult of Mary, (where the words living or active embrace pilgrimages to her sacred shrines, legends about Mary, the widespread tradition of leaving votives/gifts at the images/statues of Mary) that Mary was a representation of the Self archetype. Moreover, I saw her as the archetype of a woman and of a woman’s soul/psyche.

The Self is the main archetype the guiding of which a person must understand in order to achieve his/her individuation, that is, to achieve one’s full lifetime potential, to discover the true self. According to Jung, all archetypes are bi-gender, positive and negative, single and plural. I felt that speaking of women’s individuation, I needed to speak of the Self that had a female gender since a woman needs a female divine image to achieve her individuation. Jung wrote the following about individuation:

In general, it is the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated [from other human beings]; in particular, it is the development of the psychological individual as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology⁶⁹.

When Christianity was at its strongest, people did not need to learn about archetypes because it provided its own symbols, even if they were limited. However, according to Jung’s view on the evolution of the psyche, the human psyche has reached a stage where Christianity has become inadequate for the majority of Western society. The religious symbols especially lost their meaning during the Protestant Reformation⁷⁰. Now, most individuals have to deal with the reality of their psyche on their own, and this involves finding a relationship to their own inner God/Goddess – the Self. For many, this task is far too challenging, and it is easier if a person does it through a symbol that is *like* the Self. Therefore, in my work I offer to take the view that Mary helps to unravel the guidance of one’s own Self. By developing a relationship with an image of Mary, and through creating one’s own myth of Mary, one makes

⁶⁹ C. G. Jung. *CW 6: Psychological Types*. (Princeton Press, 1976), par. 757

⁷⁰ “The Old Wise Man”, *Time Magazine*.

communication with the Self more possible. In other words, Mary becomes like a threshold/space through which and in which we reach our Self. It is my view that without having an opportunity to engage with a powerful religious symbol (which Mary is), the communication with the Self is impoverished.

I emphasise, once again, that I am speaking of a non-Christian Mary. As a representation of the divine Self archetype, Mary is a divine force on her own, a female God. A reader might ask why I use the name “Mary” if I do not want to speak of the Christian side of the female divine archetype which she represents. My answer to this would be that the figure of Mary is the latest active archetype of the female God-image in the psyches of the Western world, and it comes alive through the Roman Catholic Church in the figure called Mary. Therefore, I use her name in recognition that Mary is the name of the female divine archetype at this stage of our collective psyche’s development, at the same time stating that her Christian image is in a profound need of transformation and recovery of its divine powers. In *Answer to Job*, Jung wrote that papal proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin in 1950 was the greatest religious event since the Reformation. Jung thought that it was “historically and psychologically necessary, because the mass of Roman Catholic women (at least unconsciously) demanded it, to give them a symbol of identification in heaven”⁷¹.

Jung suggested that in the Western world, the God-image underwent an evolution in the human psyche: at first Gods were imagined in non-human shapes (or not only in human shapes), and it took time until the divine image formed into the current collective myth with the central symbols of God the Father and Christ. Jung thought that already in his time the images of God the Father and Christ were changing because the mind of the Western society was seeking for a more individualised and a more balanced⁷² spirituality. The feminist view is that the female God-image also underwent a long evolution (or rather devolution) in the human mind until it reached the Christian image of Mary. For some time it has now been thought, especially among the feminists of religion, that the current Christian image and myth of Mary are no longer

⁷¹ “The Old Wise Man”, in *Time Magazine*, the weekly news magazine. Issue: 14th February 1955. Source: <http://www.jungiananalyticpraxis.com/The%20Old%20Wise%20Man%20-%20Time%20Magazine.htm> Visited on 2012/12/05

⁷² Jung thought, similarly to the feminists of religion, that the current Christian religion is out of balance because God the Father and Christ are always good, denying the dangerous side of God, spirit only and male only. Therefore, by the word “balanced” I mean a state/stage of the human psyche which Jung called the Age of the Holy Spirit, in which he said the opposites would merge. In my understanding, it is a state where the oppositions such as male and female, spirit and body, goodness and evil seek to be integrated in one divine figure.

sufficient as a source for spirituality of women⁷³. However, instead of rejecting Mary, I take it as a sign that the image of the female God of the West, Mary, is evolving further in our minds seeking to be expressed in new myths and images that will be able to communicate more meaningfully the archetype of the female divine. My work on the theology of Mary presents a myth of Mary that always existed in the unconscious layers of the collective mind but which was not recognised as valid. My reading of the material with which I work is of course subjective; however, it is not my interpretation but the narrative and visual material itself that constitutes the source that each reader can interpret according to his/her individual view of Mary. I argue that it is extremely important to work with the image of Mary in order to restore that part of our psyche that Mary represents in our society, and consequently, in our psyches – the female who is stripped of divinity and lacking recognition of her experience, body, intellect.

The narrative material out of which I form the non-Christian myth of Mary belongs to the sphere of the collective psyche which Jung called “the collective Shadow”. For many years, I have explored the legends of Mary and the fairy tales about Mary and have observed that they belonged to folklore and were not part of Christian teaching about Mary. Yet they focused on the figure of Mary, and what was more important, this Mary had an empowering effect on the reader. The Shadow material showed the other side of Mary – the Shadow-Mary, or, as I chose to call her in my work, a non-Christian Mary. Jung’s theory of the collective Shadow and an extensive analysis of the Shadow of Mary offered by Jung’s follower and long-time colleague Marie-Louise von Franz allow me to place the legends and the fairy tales in the perspective of the human psyche. Therefore, I see it as one of my main tasks to restore the Shadow side to the myth and the image of the Mary archetype since in the Shadow contents, according to Jung, there is to be found the rejected power and energy.

One more cornerstone idea of Jung’s for my work is that of the “religious reality”. Jung’s encouragement to create an individual relationship with the Self, which is a form of an individualised spirituality, was inspired by the experience of his own religious reality which was different from the common understanding of Christian belief. My work is based on an assumption that each person has his/her own religious or spiritual reality – the way they perceive the divine, and therefore this allows me to take a subjective standpoint in speaking of the theology of Mary. To a great degree, I present

⁷³ I discuss the reasons for such a view on Mary in Chapter 2.

the theology of Mary as a model for an individual connection to the divine Self; however, my work is only one of countless possible interpretations.

Jung's view on religion as an analysis of the inner events of the soul is yet one more idea that I employ in my work. I suggest that when people establish an individual connection to Mary (that is, to their Self), they are able to see their life in perspective. By speaking to Mary and contemplating/creating an individual myth of Mary, a person is revisiting her/his life. This is a religious/spiritual act.

I hope I have illustrated by now how Jung's theories, especially the collective Shadow idea, make it possible for a theology of Mary to immerge. I use Jung's insights for fairy tale and legend interpretations. Jung's ideas about the different religious realities justify the subjectivity of the theology of Mary. Having said this, my work does not follow in the footsteps of Jung's theory blindly. Firstly, I suggest that the Self archetype can be seen as Mary. Secondly, I use ample mythological material to create a meaningful myth of Mary from the Shadow narratives. Also, since the Shadow narratives are non-Christian (compensating, or opposing the Christian), it allows me to leave aside Christianity and its male God-images of which Jung spoke, and position Mary at the centre of her own autonomous religion/spirituality, which I personally perceive as independent from Christianity, existing in the reality of one's psyche. Yet I think that the myth of Mary presented in my thesis could also be adopted by someone who is a practicing Catholic, Pagan, a member of Goddess religion or other.

To some degree my work implements Jung's vision of the individualised spirituality that arises out of the dialogue between one's ego and one's Self, however, the novelty of my work is that in the theology of Mary the relationship between one's ego-consciousness and one's Self is based on one's relationship with the archetypal figure of the female divine. To support my ideas on the relationship with the female divine I synthesise the thoughts of other authors such as Luce Irigaray and Clarissa Pinkola Estés.

To summarise, I am able to speak of a non-Christian image/myth of Mary because I consider the figure of Mary to be a psychological manifestation which is called the archetype in Jungian terminology. Jungian psychology explains that the archetype is a pattern or a form that a person can fill in with his/her own meaning. This allows me to take the figure of Mary out of the Christian system and enhance its archetypal meaning with the non-Christian mythology, such as legends, fairy tales and

my own experience of the female divine. The non-Christian image and myth of Mary constitute the theoretical basis of the theology of Mary.

1.2. The feminist critique of C. G. Jung.

Jung's work has been revisited by his contemporaries, post-Jungians and criticised by the feminist and non-feminist authors. It is not possible to offer an overview of all the criticism of Jung's theories in the scope of my thesis. I will therefore concentrate only on the feminist criticism which is most related to my work.

The confusion about Jung's standpoint in regard to women is created by the fact that he placed the feminine at the centre of his psychology while devaluing real women (at least in his writing) in the context of social setting. Most criticism has been focussed on his notions of anima and animus, the archetypes of contra-sexuality. According to Jung, the anima is the archetypal feminine symbolism within a man's unconscious, and the animus is the archetypal masculine symbolism within a woman's unconscious. For Jung, the anima and animus are the archetypes through which humans communicate with their collective unconscious and build their sexual and other relationships with the opposite sex (women – through the projection of animus, men – through the projection of anima), so it is important to be in touch with the archetypes. Jung held that men's connection with psychic vitality was the essence of anima, which, according to Jung, made her the archetype of life (for men). As a Jungian analyst Karen Hodges noted,

One cannot help but be struck by the resemblance between loss of anima, as Jung described it, and the definition of melancholic depression in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), right down to the detail of being “sombre and moody on waking”⁷⁴.

Jung thought that the reduction of anima influence in men results in the death of spontaneity, vitality, flexibility, and human kindness⁷⁵, and that their lives become dominated by weariness and resignation, for it is anima that “makes us believe incredible things, that life may be lived”⁷⁶, and that anima is “always the a priori

⁷⁴ Karen Hodges. “Reflections on Women, Depression, and the Soul-image”. Published in *Spring: A Journal of Archetype and Culture* (Spring & Summer, 1999), 3.

⁷⁵ C. G. Jung. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Transl., R. F. C. Hull. (Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, 1968), 26 (paragraph 56). Quoted in Karen Hodges “Reflections on Women, Depression, and the Soul-image”, 3.

⁷⁶ C. G. Jung. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Transl., R. F. C. Hull. (Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, 1968) 71 (paragraph 147) Quoted in Karen Hodges “Reflections on Women, Depression, and the Soul-image”, 3.

element in [a man's] moods, reactions, impulses, and whatever else is spontaneous in psychic life”⁷⁷.

Despite the obvious centrality of the feminine principle in the psychology of a man, Jung’s other writing sent different messages about the feminine and women. He clearly prescribed to women the sphere of Eros (feelings and relationships), and to men – the sphere of Logos (reason, spirituality, intellect). In Jung words,

Woman is compensated by a masculine element and therefore her unconscious has, so to speak, a masculine imprint. This results in a considerable psychological difference between men and women, and accordingly I have called the projection-making factor in women the animus, which means mind or spirit. The animus corresponds to the paternal Logos just as the anima corresponds to the maternal Eros. But I do not wish or intend to give these two intuitive concepts too specific a definition. I use Eros and Logos merely as conceptual aids to describe the fact that woman’s consciousness is characterized more by the connective quality of Eros than by the discrimination and cognition associated with Logos. In men, Eros, the function of relationship, is usually less developed than Logos. In women, on the other hand, Eros is an expression of their true nature, while their Logos is often only a regrettable accident⁷⁸.

The confinement of women strictly to the sphere of Eros by Jung led to a strong criticism from feminist authors such as Naomi R. Goldenberg, Mary Daly and others. Goldenberg questioned the inequity of Jung’s anima-animas model of the psyche. She noted that “the theory clearly favours men, even though it has been praised as a liberating concept because it supports that marvellous unseen creature –the “androgynous””⁷⁹ Goldenberg suggested that “It is less important (...) whether the basic human drive is labelled “male” or “female”; what matters is that the same primary impetus in human libido exists in men and women alike”⁸⁰.

The idea of the androgyny of the archetypes is at the heart of Jung’s concept of the archetypes. “Before accusing Jung simply of sexist essentialism”, suggests a post-Jungian Susan Rowland, “we need to remember that unconscious archetypes are all

⁷⁷ C.G. Jung. *CW Volume 9: Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, paragraph 57

⁷⁸ C. G. Jung. *CW Vol. 9 Part 2: Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self. (1951)*

⁷⁹ Naomi R. Goldenberg. “A Feminist Critique of Jung”. Published in *Signs*, Vol. 2 (Winter, 1976, pp 443-449), 446

⁸⁰ Naomi R. Goldenberg. “A Feminist Critique of Jung”, 446

androgynous”⁸¹. His model of the psyche is dynamic, which means that the consciousness is compensated by the unconscious contents. The dynamism works in relation to gender too. The unconscious contents are filtered by the conscious attitudes and as soon as the conscious attitudes change, they are compensated by the different unconscious contents. That is, a person consciously identifies herself/himself with femininity or masculinity which has for her or him a certain meaning, however, if during her/his lifetime, a person’s convictions of what is masculine and feminine change, these new convictions will be compensated by the contrasting aspects of the anima or animus, which might no longer be in line with the features which Jung prescribed to anima or animus. Therefore, says Rowland, “Gender *has* to be a process. So how is Jung able to write so often as if he is collapsing gender identity into bodily sex?”⁸². The answer lies, in Rowland’s view, the fact that Jung writes out of his rational ego which is distorted by his own anima projections: “the qualities of Eros that Jung airily and dismissively applies to women are most immediately *psychically experienced* by him as the property of his own anima”⁸³

Jung’s relationship with his mother in childhood had the deciding influence on his views. Emilie Jung was an eccentric person and often suffered from depression. She would be normal during the day but at night she would become absorbed by the spirits that she said visited⁸⁴. To Jung, she seemed strange and mysterious and he was afraid to approach her at night⁸⁵. She also once spent several months in a hospital, which particularly affected him. Arguably, the absences, unpredictability, eccentricity and depression of Jung’s mother made him see women as unreliable. His strange relationship with his mother was, as he said, a “handicap I started off with”⁸⁶. However, his mother was also the source of his extraordinary ability of insight and intuition that perhaps allowed him to understand the human psyche and to perceive its dynamics which he formulated in his many theories.

Rowland argues that “the qualities that Jung ascribes to his personal anima, to *his* anima, too easily spill over in his work into a fatal stereotyping of women as

⁸¹ Susan Rowland. *Jung: A Feminist Revision*. ((Polity: 2002), 40

⁸² Susan Rowland. *Jung: A Feminist Revision*. (Polity, 2002), 40

⁸³ Susan Rowland. *Jung: A Feminist Revision*. (Polity, 2002), 41

⁸⁴ Carl Gustav Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé. Translated from German by Richard and Clara Winston (Vintage Books, 1989), 18

⁸⁵ One night he saw a faintly luminous and indefinite figure coming from her room with a head detached from the neck and floating in the air in front of the body. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 18

⁸⁶ Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 8

possessing deficient intellectual powers”⁸⁷, however, she suggests that “theoretical approaches such as feminism (...) can make very necessary criticisms of the cultural biases deeply embedded in Jungian ideas”⁸⁸. She also emphasises that “Jung’s insistence that the feminine has been disastrously suppressed in modern culture, religion and the psyches of the ruling gender, is a powerfully resonant theory for feminism”⁸⁹. Some other post-Jungians place Jung’s anima and the feminine definitions into perspective by saying that “it is not simply an ‘essential feminine’ which is devalued under patriarchy. Rather, all which is devalued is placed in association with cultural conceptions of ‘the feminine’ ”⁹⁰.

Andrew Samuels defined a post-Jungian as someone whose task is “correction of Jung’s work and also critical distance from it”⁹¹. Samuels, a post-Jungian himself, invited us to take on the job of correcting the worst of Jung’s attitudes whilst at the same time acknowledging the potential of Jung’s insight:

Jung's attitudes to women, blacks, so-called “primitive” cultures, and so forth are now outmoded and unacceptable. He converted prejudice into theory, and translated his perception of what was current into something supposed to be eternally valid. Here, too, it is the responsibility of the post-Jungians to discover these mistakes and contradictions and to correct Jung's faulty or amateur methods. When this is done, one can see that Jung had a remarkable capacity to intuit the themes and areas with which late twentieth century psychology would be concerned: gender; race; nationalism; cultural analysis. (...) Recognizing the soundness of Jung's intuitive vision facilitates a more interested but no less critical return to his texts⁹²

The anima, according to Jung, manifests in the form of various goddesses in

⁸⁷ Susan Rowland. “Jung’s Ghost Stories”. In James S. Baumlin, Tita French Baumlin, George H. Jensen. *Post-Jungian Criticism: Theory and Practice*. (SUNY Press, 2004), 32

⁸⁸ Susan Rowland. *C. G. Jung and Literary Theory: The Challenge from Fiction* (2001), 188

⁸⁹ Susan Rowland cited in James S. Baumlin, Tita French Baumlin, George H. Jensen. *Post-Jungian Criticism: Theory and Practice*. (SUNY Press, 2004), 24.

⁹⁰ Margaret Cameron. *Patriarchal Mythologies: A Feminist Jungian Perspective*. An online article published on the webpage of Sophia, a Spirituality Centre established in 1991 by the Dominican Sisters in Adelaide. www.sophia.org.au/well-springs/Patriarchal_mythologies_doc.pdf

⁹¹ Samuels quoted in James S. Baumlin, Tita French Baumlin, George H. Jensen. *Post-Jungian Criticism: Theory and Practice*. (SUNY Press, 2004), 21.

⁹² Samuels quoted in James S. Baumlin, Tita French Baumlin, George H. Jensen. *Post-Jungian Criticism: Theory and Practice*. (SUNY Press, 2004), 21.

mythical stories and fairy tales. In Ginette Paris' words, "myths have no dogma"⁹³, they express the archetypal patterns and can be perceived as the dreams of the cultures. Jung extensively used myths in his work with patients as a source of amplification. This method of Jung gave rise to Jungian goddess feminism, in which "the metaphysical feminine principal is mapped onto the pre-Christian mythologies in order to see out non-patriarchal narratives and ways of thinking"⁹⁴, therefore it is "both a set of narrative resources for innovative therapeutic practice and a profound criticism of Western culture"⁹⁵. The authors writing in the field of Jungian goddess feminism rethink the archetypes of the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, the Black Virgin, Artemis, Athena, Hestia, Demeter, Hera and countless other mythical figures in order to revise Jungian notions of anima and animus, the feminine and the masculine.

Recognising the fact that Jung's work has been strongly critiqued, I continue to find a richly rewarding source of insight into my own themes for the reasons, which I have explained in the previous section.

1.3. Evolution of the human psyche and C.G. Jung's new God-image.

According to Jung, the God-image evolution went along with the evolution of the human psyche. Jung discussed religion and the God-image in many of his books, and left very informative material on what he called "the new God-image" in his private correspondence written during the last ten years of his life. I will unpack the meaning of Jung's new God-image in the following text in this section illustrating how it fits within the theology of Mary.

The distinguished American scholar of Jungian psychology, Edward F. Edinger gives perhaps the most comprehensive explanation of Jung's ideas on the new God-image by discussing the contents of fourteen of Jung's letters⁹⁶. Edinger emphasises the fact that Jung speaks of the God-image, and not of God, the true nature of whom no one can know.

In relation to the question of the evolution of the God-image, Jung supports his idea with the example of the human embryo that in its early stages develops gill slits,

⁹³ Ginette Paris. *Pagan Grace: Dionysos, Hermes, and Goddess Memory in Daily Life*. (Putnam, Connecticut: Spring Publications, Inc, 2003), 41.

⁹⁴ Susan Rowland, *Jung: A Feminist Revision*, 61

⁹⁵ Susan Rowland, *Jung: A Feminist Revision*, 65

⁹⁶ Edward F. Edinger, Dianne D. Cordic, Charles Yates. *New God-Image: Study of Jung's Key Letters Concerning the Evolution of the Western God-Image*. (Chiron Publications, 1996).

anatomical structures found in fish⁹⁷. Jung suggests that since remnants of evolutionary physical development appear in human embryo formation, there are grounds for assuming that a similar process happens in the development of the psyche, and that each individual psyche holds a memory of all the evolutionary stages. In other words, Jung suggests that the evolution of the image of God is directly related to the evolution of the human psyche by which he means the growth of human consciousness, explaining, for example, that:

First, in remote times (...) the main body of psychic life was apparently in human and in nonhuman objects: it was projected, as we should say now. Consciousness can hardly exist in a state of complete projection. At most it would be a heap of emotions. Through the withdrawal of projections, conscious knowledge slowly developed. Science, curiously enough, began with the discovery of astronomical laws, and hence with the withdrawal, so to speak, of the most distant projections. This was the first stage in the despiritualization of the world. One step followed another: already in antiquity the gods were withdrawn from mountains and rivers, from trees and animals. Modern science has subtilized its projections to an almost unrecognizable degree, but our ordinary life still swarms with them. You can find them spread out in the newspapers, in books, rumours, and ordinary social gossip. All gaps in our actual knowledge are still filled out with projections. We are still so sure we know what other people think or what their true character is⁹⁸.

Drawing on Jung's understanding of the development of the psyche, Edinger distinguished six stages in the God-image evolution⁹⁹:

1. Animism. In this stage, the psyche experiences autonomous spirits in all aspects of nature: in animals, trees, rivers. The whole surrounding environment is animated with what can be called a projection of the autonomous objective psyche.

2. Matriarchy. This stage is reflected in myths of the Goddess and her son, for example in the Cybele and Attis myth and its variations where the Goddess has a son-lover who is castrated and dies young, is mourned the way the vegetation is mourned and is then reborn again the following year.

⁹⁷ Edinger, xxi.

⁹⁸ C.G. Jung, "Psychology and Religion (1938)", in *CW 11: Psychology and Religion: West and East* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), 140.

⁹⁹ The evolution stages of God-image are presented, slightly paraphrased and complimented with other sources, as given by Edinger, *The new God-image*, xvi – xxii.

3. Hierarchical Polytheism. This is the religion of an urban society. At this stage, the masculine principle supersedes the feminine principle. The polytheism of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Nordic, German, Baltic and many other mythological traditions would be examples of this third stage.

4. Tribal monotheism. This stage was discovered, or created, by the ancient Hebrews. In tribal monotheism the tribe of nomad Hebrews owed their life to Yahweh but Yahweh owed his life to them. Monotheism expresses a new pattern in which there is a much more personalised experience between the human being and the God. Edinger notes that monotheism's hallmark – the phrase *Not Many But One* - separates Yahweh from ancient Near East polytheism.

5. Universal monotheism. Edinger notes that with the emergence of Christianity, tribal monotheism was universalised. It has further evolved by splitting into two: Yahweh was only the Father, but Christianity added the Son. The further split came in the form of their nature – the Father and the Son were both all good, and the evil part of Yahweh (Satan) was split off completely.

6. Individuation. This is the discovery of the archetypal psyche, a process of acquiring a psychological level which understands the religious imagery as the phenomenology of the objective psyche. This sixth stage marks the era of the new God-image and the new (more individualised) religion.

Arguably, the Western cultures currently live in the Individuation stage; many people are discovering the symbols of their own psyche and a much more personal spirituality like yoga, meditation and similar. A theology of Mary too is a result of such process of individuation of the human psyche.

Although the sequence of the evolution given above needs to be carefully judged (Jung often represented colonial, patriarchal, protestant attitudes of his time which his followers inherited), it is useful in that it suggests an interesting idea about the human psyche's gravitation towards a better and more individualised connection to the divine, which caused the development of the image of God from many to one, from a distant one to the one who suffered for the humanity and each individual's sake. However, there are other understandings of how the human psyche and the God-image progressed; for example, in Karen Armstrong's view, at first the people of the Palaeolithic Era (that lasted from around 2.6 million years ago up to 10,000 BP) believed one Supreme God and only then this primitive monotheism changed into

polytheism¹⁰⁰. A question remains whether the elevation of male power over female in the course of centuries was a natural psychic development. I tend to think that the strengthened ego-consciousness abused and overturned a natural equilibrium between male and female.

In any case, the very idea that the God image can change is the main message of such evolutionary views. They suggest that the female God-image is also part of the psyche's evolution. Following such theories, Mary is the *latest* incarnation of our conscious and unconscious perceptions of the female divine image in the Western World. However limited and limiting, the development of certain pre-Christian goddesses into Mary was part of the evolutionary process of the human psyche in the West. I therefore argue that rejecting Mary completely and trying to revitalise only the prehistoric and historic goddesses in searching for new female divine expressions could be psychologically impoverishing because the connection of the psyche to the reality which Mary represents, would be lost. This is one of the main reasons why I use the image of Mary while composing a subjective theology of the female divinity. My aim is to enrich the archetype of Mary with non-Christian material so that it regains its divinity and acquires a new, non-Christian, myth.

Feminist critique established that the figure of Mary became too impoverished within Christianity (see Chapter 2), therefore I believe that it is important to reconnect the myth of Mary and our own psyches to the earlier stages of psychic evolution (animistic, matricentral stages) through legends, fairy tales, and imagining. This would enrich the image of Mary and ourselves. Such imaginary exercise re-establishes an inner spiritual balance, where the female divine is given a much more significant weight. To recover a balance is the aim of the healthy human psyche. Jung discovered, after studying the dreams of hundreds of his patients, that "the psyche is a self-regulating system that maintains its equilibrium just as the body does"¹⁰¹. The feeling of being in equilibrium in this context signifies a good/creative connection of our consciousness to our Self, the regulating psyche.

¹⁰⁰ Karen Armstrong. *Trumpa mito istorija*. (Vilnius: Alma Litera, 2007), 30. (Eng. *Short History of Myth*)

¹⁰¹ C. G. Jung. *CW 16: The practice of psychotherapy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1985), 152. In an online article "Jung's model of the psyche" on the Society of the Analytical Psychology (UK) web page, Ann Hopwood explains her understanding as follows: "The psyche strives to maintain a balance between opposing qualities while at the same time actively seeking its own development or as he called it, individuation". <http://www.thesap.org.uk/jung-s-model-of-the-psyche> Visited on 15/12/2012.

Moving now to the perspective of the female God-image, or in this case it would be more precise to say the Goddess-image evolution, I will reflect on and stress the elements that are important to the theology of Mary.

Goddess-image evolution has already been presented in a certain historical-cultural sequence by some authors in this field, and as an example I have summarised here the evolutionary stages distinguished by Anne Baring, Jules Cashford and Elinor W. Gadon:

1. Earth or Mother Goddesses (The Eurasian Ice age, Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age iconography);
2. Historical polytheism (Ancient Near East: Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Canaan, Pre-Islamic Arabia; Indo-European traditions: Indo-Iranian, Greco-Roman, Celtic, Baltic, Germanic);
3. Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity;
4. Re-emergence of the Goddess: Feminism (for example, Goddess movement, Wicca, Gaia consciousness, Ecofeminism) and Neo-Paganism¹⁰².

This is a generalised scheme: it usually starts by describing matricentric¹⁰³ societies that revered the Great Goddess in her animistic and anthropomorphic forms, and concludes with the newest developments in Goddess spirituality, or feminist informed spirituality. By reconnecting with the earlier myths and images, the theology of Mary aims to compensate our far too conscious, dualistic and mythologically impoverished mind, especially in the area related to the female divine. The theology of Mary has the task of re-imagining the image of the Christian Mary, of relating her to nature, human Self, human instincts, women's experiences, and the divine in general. Western society can already observe a similar imaginative process in what Jung called the new era of human psychic development – the individuation stage; we observe how the collective Self seeks to compensate the Christian God image by incorporating into its substrata the memories of earlier developmental stages – animism, polytheism and sacred female – through various new spiritual forms. In my opinion, it is evidenced by

¹⁰² See, for example, *The Myth of The Goddess: Evolution of an Image* by Anne Baring and Jules Cashford, or *The Once and Future Goddess: A Sweeping Visual Chronicle of the sacred Female and Her Reemergence in the Cultural Mythology of Our Time* by Elinor W. Gadon.

¹⁰³ Matricentric societies are those in which women, especially mothers, occupy a central position. The term “matricentric” is used to avoid the term “matriarchal” and its resemblance to the word “patriarchal”, which is associated with the male rule over female. According to Gimbutas, the term “matricentric” does not imply an authoritarian domination by women or mothers ; on the contrary, the archaeological evidence tends to suggest that the matricentric societies were largely egalitarian.

the Goddess movement, the revival of Pagan religion and the New Age movement. The revival of the Goddess religion in any form evidences that the human psyche seeks compensation for the patriarchal religions of the West.

Why is it useful to reconnect our psyches to the animistic stage and other earlier stages of our psyche development? The Jungian psychoanalyst and author Clarissa Pinkola Estés explains this psychological need in simple words: “(...) we are all filled with a longing for the wild”¹⁰⁴. In my interpretation, by the words “longing for the wild”, Estés means the need of the human psyche and body to reconnect with our instincts, which have been suppressed or injured not just during our childhood but also during the historical development of human psyches throughout thousands of years. Jung has noted that the suppression of instincts was a huge achievement of the human mind since it widened consciousness and enabled the control over those instincts, releasing people from a tiring dependence on their emotional uncontrollable desires¹⁰⁵. However, the control of instincts came with the price of often losing contact with them and becoming stuck in one’s thoughts which are often disconnected from one’s life and body experience, and from the feeling of one’s own energetic flow. Therefore, Estés suggests that women must reassert their relationship with the wild nature and explains:

When we lose touch with the instinctive psyche, we live in a semi-destroyed state and images and powers that are natural to the feminine are not allowed full development. When a woman is cut away from her basic source, she is sanitized, and her instincts and natural life cycles are lost, subsumed by the culture, or by the intellect or the ego – one’s own or those belonging to others. Wild Woman is the health of all women. Without her, women’s psychology makes no sense. This wilderwoman is prototypical woman (...) ¹⁰⁶

At the heart of the thealogy of Mary is returning to Mary that prototypical woman, giving her back the archetypal value, recovering the wild instincts in Mary. The wild, Estés stresses, is associated with an instinctual power and wholeness, not with going beyond the boundaries of what is accepted. The thealogy of Mary draws this wilderness from the legends of Mary and in fairy tales, which I analyze in Chapters 5 and 6 and 7.

¹⁰⁴ Clarissa Pinkola Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves: Contacting the Power of the Wild Woman*. (Rider, 1992), Foreword.

¹⁰⁵ Edinger, Part 2.

¹⁰⁶ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 8

On the surface, the sequence of the Goddess-image evolution, as illustrated in the work of Anne Baring, Jules Cashford, and Elinor W. Gadon, seems to resemble that of Jung – it runs from the earliest communities through polytheistic and monotheistic religions to the individuation stage that is expressed by the Goddess movement, Wicca, Gaia consciousness and Ecofeminism movements. However, it was an evolution for the male God-image, but devolution for the Goddess-image. Some feminist authors think, as I do, that the evolution of the psyche went irrevocably wrong due to the male part of the society identifying their power with the ego-consciousness component of the psyche. The absolute reign of a monotheistic God for many centuries is thus responsible for the lack of the female divine in the current religions of Western society. The lack of the female divine authority and mythology is arguably one of the major causes of women's loss of identity, low self-esteem and neuroses. As a consequence, the authors tracing the Goddess-image evolution find themselves describing the Shadow of the male God-image because the female aspect of God has been repressed into the Shadow during the development of patriarchal polytheistic and, later, monotheistic religions in the West.

It took a lifetime for some researchers to recreate the texts and mythology of the Goddess, to trace the evolution of her image throughout thousands of years. For example, the Sumerian Goddess Inanna's story "The Cycle of Inana" has been restored by Samuel Noah Krame, an expert in Sumerian culture who translated and pieced together the story over a period of fifty years from tablets and fragments inscribed around 1750 B.C.E.. Diane Wolkstein has then woven his literal translation into contemporary poetic form¹⁰⁷. The fractures in the myth of the Goddess are also evident in the chronicles of the evolution of the Goddess-image which are crowded with references to hundreds of sources illustrating that the myth of the Goddess and which have been literally been pieced together by many other gifted authors. For example, in Anne Baring and Jules Cashford's book *The Myth of The Goddess: Evolution of An Image*, the authors traced the myth of the Goddess in the period from 20,000 to 3,500 B.C.E illustrated in figurines excavated by archaeologists, images on the walls of old temples and caves, as well as in old myths, and legends. Starting from the Bronze Age beginning around 3,500 B.C.E. when the art of writing was discovered, Baring and Cashford worked with texts translated or deciphered from ancient languages in addition

¹⁰⁷ Elinor W. Gadon, *The Once and Future Goddess: A Sweeping Visual Chronicle of the sacred Female and Her Reemergence in the Cultural Mythology of Our Time* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 115.

to looking for further information in images and sculptures. They have even detected sources referring to the Goddess in the New Testament on which Christianity has been built, however, the Goddess is barely visible to an untrained eye here:

When the Goddess myth was debased and devalued, it did not go away, but continued to exist in disguise – in images that were prevented from expressing themselves vitally and spontaneously, particularly in Judaeo – Christian tradition. In Greek mythology (...) Zeus ‘married’ the old mother goddesses, one after the other, and they continued to rule the provinces of childbirth, fertility or spiritual transformation in their own right, even though they were finally answerable to the Father God himself. But in Hebrew mythology the goddess went ... underground. She was hidden in the chaotic dragons of Leviathan and Behemoth, whose destruction was never complete, or in the ineluctable appeal of the forbidden Canaanite goddess Astarte, or, more abstractly, in the feminine personification of Yahweh’s ‘wisdom’ – Sophia – and his ‘presence’ – the Shekhinah. Eve, though human and cursed, was given by Adam the displaced name of the mother goddesses of old – “the Mother of All Living” – though with fatally new and limited meaning. The Virgin Mary, as the “Second Eve” – who has been gathering importance over the centuries in answer, it must be, to some unfulfilled need for many people – was finally declared “Assumed into Heaven, Body and Soul” as Queen only in 1950s. (...) The myth of the Goddess continued to act on the prevailing world view of the time (...) in the manner of any less-than-fully conscious attitude (...)¹⁰⁸

In other words, the submergence of the female divine symbolism has meant that it was only recognisable by the unconscious on an instinctual level; it lived on only in the hidden layers of the psyche, in the unconscious. Therefore, in speaking of the theology of Mary, unconscious creative material such as fairy tales, legends, myths and visual images are vital in restoring the myth and power to the female divine. In my work, I pay profound attention to the interpretation of fairy tales and legends since I consider the restoration of these archetypal narratives to the myth of Mary to be one of the most important parts of the theology of Mary.

To reflect on what was said above, the analysis of the evolution of the Goddess-image suggests that the evolution of the male God-image does not necessarily represent

¹⁰⁸ Baring, Anne and Jules Cashford, xiii.

a natural development of the psyche in the last 2000 years. A feminist standpoint typically adheres to the view that the evolution of the male God's image has gone along with the abuse of power by patriarchal societies, especially in regard to women. Jung himself focused mostly on analysing the image of the male God and therefore his understanding of the evolution of the God-image reflects the development of the patriarchal side of society; nevertheless, Jung was also adamant that we needed to recover the female God-image. In addition, Jung's insights are vital, in my view, to a better understanding of the way our psyches function. As I have already said, for my work on the theology of Mary, drawing on Jung's insights is crucial; the psyche seeks to compensate a split between the ego and the unconscious by reaching towards the opposite pole to achieve equilibrium. Developing this, it follows, arguably, that the more recent "modern" patriarchal psyche wants to reach the earliest "ancient" matricentral psyche and its female divine images. In other words, the God-image can be influenced by human circumstances and by a religious visualization of a group (that God is male or female, for example) and at the same time, the psyche contains within itself the memory of all the evolutionary stages which means that pre-Christian goddess figures are always present as part of the image of Mary in our psyches.

1.4. C.G. Jung's religious reality and how it is related to a theology of Mary.

As Jung himself admitted in his book *Dreams, Memories, Reflections*, his father, a Protestant pastor, suffered from the effects of the split between the truths proclaimed by his religion and the reality outside his church's walls¹⁰⁹. He could not reconcile the one with the other and his mind fell ill. This fact as well as his medical practice indicated to Jung that the problems of the loss of faith or the inability to alter one's own faith to suit the changing historical situation were no longer individual but universal.

Jung discovered his own religious reality during his childhood. His experience made him realise with great pain that he must give up the religiosity he had been taught by his father's church in order to achieve a new God-image, reflecting his own religious reality. Jung's spontaneous and unconscious vision of God dropping a turd on his town

¹⁰⁹ C. G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. (New York: Pantheon, 1963), 91ff

church showed Jung the split between the reality of the psyche and the dogmas of the church¹¹⁰.

Arguably, first and second wave feminists were in the same position when a new rising consciousness made the inner collapse of the patriarchal dogmatic God-image unavoidable and many of them also experienced the terrifying but also liberating birth of a new religious reality. For instance, Carol Christ described her own painful experience:

As I became increasingly alienated from God as Father, I found myself unable to attend church, sing hymns, or pray. With no new images to replace the ones I could no longer accept, I felt empty. Late one night, the anger that had been building up inside me spilled out. I cried out to God, "I want you to know how much I have suffered because you let yourself be named in man's image as God of the fathers, as the man of war, as king of the universe. I sobbed in pain and rejection, until my tears were gone. In the silence that followed, a voice said, "In God is a woman like yourself. She shares your suffering"¹¹¹.

Christ eventually found an affirmation of her life in a group of women practicing the rituals of the Goddess.

Naomi Goldenberg also drew on Jung's ideas of the new God-image and the new religion and discussed his childhood experience noted above. Goldenberg saw the importance of Jung's use of fantasies and dreams as streams of imagery inspiring religious reflection, and she supported Jung's idea that a person was engaged in spiritual activity when she or he followed the transformations of dream or fantasy¹¹². It is my understanding that these transformations occur when the ego is in dialogue with the Self. In the theology of Mary, I view Mary as symbolic of the Self, that is, as the object towards which the ego addresses itself and during this dialogue the fantasy or dream has an opportunity to be transformed and developed creating what I call the sacred experience.

Participants in feminist spirituality were hungry for the affirmation of their body and life experience, and they searched for the Goddess who was "the sea, original

¹¹⁰ Jung's childhood experience of his vision of God dropping a turd down on the town church is given in Carl Gustav Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé. Translated from German by Richard and Clara Winston (Vintage Books, 1989), 54

¹¹¹ Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 2

¹¹² Naomi R. Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods: Feminism And The End Of Traditional Religions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 66

source of life, the rivers ... mare, cow, crane, flower ... emotions within each of us"¹¹³. Having just escaped from patriarchal belief systems, some of these women were anxious not to create the Goddess in the image of the male God who represented the spirit only. The Goddess, therefore, for many participants in Goddess spirituality became associated exclusively with a woman's body and the Earth. Thus feminist spirituality often supported the dualism of Earth and Heaven, and of the body and the spirit, since it seemed to be the only way to compensate for the denial of woman's body experiences and the Christian focus on the human spirit. Trusting Jung's thought, I would suggest that a split like this is the signifier of a psychological threshold for the development of the psyche. It means that the psyche (both collective and individual) can reach a new level of development when it acquires more consciousness by realising parts of the unconscious, usually the Shadow. The consequence of conscious Christian attitudes that lasted two thousand years was to cause the image of the female divine to fall completely into the unconscious sphere of the Christian believer. The female divine existed only in legends, fairy tales, and sub-Christian beliefs¹¹⁴. The Goddess movement therefore marks a new consciousness which brings realisation of the collective unconscious contents related to the female divine. First of all I argue that Mary is the Nature Goddess. However, the legends that I analyse provide evidence that the symbols of Mary are not just the Moon or the Earth (which are common symbols of the Goddess) but also the Sun; this fact has a potential to reunite the Goddess with the Heaven's sphere from which the Goddess movement has distanced itself (see Chapter 2).

That Mary is Nature and the Earth Goddess, is my religious reality which arises, through the active imagination, out of certain narrative material which I give in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. This is my subjective reading of the material. To anticipate this briefly here, my active imagining is that Mary might be, for example, a mighty mountain, an enigmatic river, the sea as the source of all life, the green grass with its eager roots. This imagination gives me an experience of spiritual activity that could be seen as a form of a prayer since I believe I am engaging with archetypal energies.

This reference to my own experience gives me an opportunity to discuss the subjectivity of my work. I have been interested in the myth of a non-Christian Mary

¹¹³ Starhawk quoted in Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 2

¹¹⁴ By sub-Christian I mean those beliefs that are non-dogmatic, for example, the pilgrimages to the Mary shrines, the veneration of the Black Madonnas, the votive offerings to Mary, and others.

and in Mary as the Goddess of Nature for some fourteen years, during ten of which I have been gathering material such as fairy tales and legends. During the last eight years I have been writing my PhD on the thealogy of Mary. A reader might say that the material I have gathered reflects only a narrow side of the archetype represented by Mary, or that my material is selected to achieve the desired image of Mary I present. In response I would support my choice of material with Jung's statement that all experience is subjective and psychological experience, which means that all work, and especially creative work, is largely subjective. Jung epistemology's core message is that a person can only speak in categories and forms of perceptions that are part of his or her understanding process, from his or her "experience of the soul, because there is nothing else to be experienced except the psyche"¹¹⁵. I adopt such a point of view in my work on the thealogy of Mary since it frees me from claiming that my experience of the female divine is the only valid experience, or that my image of Mary is the only true image. It also makes me more open to the suggestions and views of other thinkers and practitioners. I suggest that the thealogy of Mary should be understood first of all as a spiritual space where the image of Mary gains new forms, meaningful to each person in her/his own way. The myth/myths of Mary cannot ever be fixed because they attempt to express the inexpressible archetype, and many more myths will be required to contemplate the changing image of the female divine. Although my interpretation of the Mary myth is subjective, my work have a wider, less individualistic aspect. This is so because I mostly draw from the collective (not created by me) material in my work such as fairy tales and legends.

1.5. Mythological material about Mary and its relation to one's religious reality.

Continuing to discuss the religious reality notion, it is useful to remember Jung's thoughts on the instinctive and compelling nature of his own religious reality:

The only way open to me was the experience of religious realities which I had to accept without regard to their truth. In this matter I have no criterion except the fact that they seem meaningful to me¹¹⁶.

Interestingly, the legends of Mary teach us that the laws of Mary are similarly compelling, and, in addition, unpredictable and spontaneous; she may choose to save a person who only uttered half of a prayer to her or to intervene in situations where her

¹¹⁵ Edinger, 9

¹¹⁶ Edinger, 18

judgement seems wrong from the point of view of mainstream patriarchal laws. As we will see from the legends in Chapter 3, Mary causes individuals to experience different religious realities from those of the mainstream church and teaches them to become attuned to the spontaneity of their psyche. Bearing in mind that the figure of Mary stands for the Self, we can see how, in this sense, Mary mythology highlights the fact that one must be watchful in order to read and name the messages of the Self.

In terms of Jung's psychology, Mary apparitions and legends are unrecognised collective religious realities. Arguably, through these creative narratives the collective unconscious attempts to compensate dogmatic Christian attitudes and to reinstate the significance of the female divine in the individual and collective psyches. In analytical psychology, the compensating symbols appear in individuals' dreams and therefore dreams become a medical tool for a doctor/psychoanalyst to reach the unconscious of a patient/client. However, Jung says that "those who have no access to these specifically medical experiences can derive practical instructions from fairy tales..."¹¹⁷ This indicates that Jung was not speaking of the new God-image as a matter of individual fantasy. The individual religious realities, paradoxically, do not belong solely to the individual level of the psyche. In terms of the theology of Mary, each subjective myth of Mary is grounded in the archetype of Mary who stands for the collective Self (God/ess) or the individual Self. The legends and fairy tales about Mary are part of the unconscious collective narrative material of the Western society, and in them Mary appears as the main protagonist. This suggests that Mary lives in the collective psyche in which all individuals are related, since, in Jungian terms, each individual's psyche is partly submerged into the collective psyche. And it is only in relation to the archetypal nature that the connection to Mary can be effective in terms of providing someone with their religious reality. At the same time, the theology of Mary revolves around an archetypal centre and therefore it will have a resonance for many people.

By discovering that the religious realities derive from the archetypes of the collective psyche, Jung established that honouring one's own subjective psychic experience is the only appropriate response. A difference between the dogmatic and the individual experience arises because a person has to deal with the individual and the collective Shadows, which Christian dogmas reject – such as figures of witches, or other powerful figures of divine women. In psychic reality, a person is forced by the

¹¹⁷ Carl Gustav Jung, *Answer to Job*, trans. R.F.C. Hull (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), 120

archetypal energies to integrate those figures rejected by conscious attitudes. To become a more whole person and to heal one's own split between conscious and unconscious experiences, one needs to integrate the Shadow into one's conscious *persona*¹¹⁸ image. In Murray Stain's words, "what Jung is advocating, ultimately, is Self-acceptance. Self-acceptance requires the recognition, without guilt and remorse, that one is not (...) perfectly pure and single minded"¹¹⁹.

The thealogy of Mary promotes this idea of Self-acceptance and integration of one's Shadow. It is achieved through the creation of one's own individual myth in which, in this case, Mary plays the role of one's Self, one's psychic instincts, and at the same time one's ego projection.

To summarise, what I am arguing is that the thealogy of Mary generally builds itself around the idea that an individual religious experience is subjective and therefore each person experiences her/his own religious reality (at the centre of which, in the case we are discussing here, is an image of Mary). However, to a great degree this experience comes from the collective psyche. The symbol/archetype of Mary is not invented by someone's conscious mind but represents unconscious religious contents. This is one of the main reasons for keeping the name of Mary and her image in creating a thealogy – a spirituality of a female divine. Each subjective thealogy of Mary adds a new mythological dimension to the archetype of Mary. At the same time, knowing that individual religious experiences are essential in psyche health and well being in the Jungian scheme of things, allows one to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the ideas of others in the search for one's own religious reality. The acknowledgement of subjectivity also liberates us from the expectation that we should force our religious realities on others.

1.6. A thealogy of Mary as a container for one's individual religion.

The basis for a spiritual individuation in Jungian terms is our psychic growth – the development of a more consciously appropriate relationship with the Self that is our archetypal psyche. Through the analysis of thousands of his patients' dreams, Jung observed that the human psyche works towards its own healing and development by producing religious symbols in dreams. Jung suggested that the source of this healing

¹¹⁸ In Jungian tradition, *persona* is a culturally acceptable image of an individual.

¹¹⁹ Stain, Murray, *Jung's Treatment of Christianity: The Psychotherapy of a Religion Tradition*. (Wilmette, Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1985), 153

and development as well as of symbols was what he called the objective or archetypal psyche, in other words – the Self. Jung thought that the archetypal psyche was autonomous since it manifested as a spontaneous system and appeared as symbols meaningful to each particular individual. In the light of Jung's thinking, his new God-image reflects a layer of each individual's psyche in which particular religious symbolic images form a meaningful image of the archetypal psyche. This means that each individual may feel a need for an individualised God-image, and for an individualised religion. That is, Jung spoke not of *the* new God-image but of the new God-images that can be specific for each person even though belonging to a certain religious system. Following this view, the theology of Mary is the individualised religion based on the female God-image in a form of Mary, where Mary is seen as the archetype of the Self or as the female God. As such, she might also be a figure of Christian theology if one is more comfortable to stay within Christianity.

This work on the theology of Mary is subjective and has no intention of offering any kind of a theological dogma. The theology of Mary is concerned with gathering together a non-Christian myth of Mary and also with the question of how a person can develop an individualised religion through the help of the archetypal female God image. I reason that this is only relevant to those to whom the image of Mary is already a significant symbol in the glossary of their own subjective psyche.

The image of Mary is not God, but points to God, or the Self. Communicating with the individualised image of Mary provides a person with the possibility of hearing the guidance of the numinous¹²⁰ Self whilst being protected at the same time from too direct an experience of it. In addition, while each theology of Mary can be seen, to my mind, as an individualised spirituality that has formed around the archetype of Mary itself, it can also be seen as a phenomenon belonging to the tradition of the Goddess religion, or Christianity, or New Age religion, or simply to a psychological spirituality. Since the archetypes are numinous, Mary should be regarded as a divinity, whether we call her the female divine, the Goddess, or the Self. To which framework one ascribes one's myth of Mary depends on the subjectivity of a personal myth. Since archetypes are notions of the depth psychology field, I can also say that my theology of Mary

¹²⁰ "Numinosum – a dynamic existence or effect, which is not caused by the subjective will [but] overwhelms and controls the human subject, who always appears more as its victim than a creator. Numinosum is an involuntary state of the subject, no matter what its origin is" (Carl Gustav Jung. *Psichologija ir religija*. (Vilnius: Aidai, 1998), 9. Eng. *Psychology and Religion*. Translated by Rasa Luzyte)

belongs to a psychological/symbolical spirituality. The archetypes can invoke religious feeling because they are numinous. Archetypes are surrounded by rich mythological narratives forming contexts for individualised religious myths; the figure of Mary has invoked the creation not only of Christian but of countless non-Christian legends and other narratives throughout the centuries as I shall begin to show below.

At this point, I would like to emphasise the fact that I understand the theology of Mary as constantly evolving. The development of the myth of Mary depends on the individual's religious realities, myths, images, shifts in the bond between one's ego and the Self and, consequently, between Mary and any person reflecting on her. I hold that there is no *one* theology of Mary but many individual theologies.

One of the main aspects of the theology of Mary is the development of an individualised spiritual relationship to the Self, or inner God, with the help of the image of Mary. I argue that one's conscious connection with the image of Mary resembles the ego's connection with the Self. This is not a blind spiritual bond but a bond that expands consciousness. A personal relationship with an image that is meaningful to the soul/psyche reduces the possibility of the ego splitting from the regulating psyche, and I suggest that the image of Mary and her myth or myths interpreted individually in a non-Christian framework, also perform a similar religious function to the one which the Catholic Church offers to its followers with the help of the figure of the Christian Mary.

1.7. C. G. Jung's new religion as a relationship between the ego and the Self, and how it works in a theology of Mary.

Jung's standpoint was that religion means *to take into careful account* (the antonym being *to neglect*)¹²¹. In the analytical psychology of Jung, the source of *numinosum* in a person is the Self archetype. In this case, religion expresses the ego's relation to the Self and it is the ego which has to take into careful account the relationship with the Self by reflecting on its own inner feelings, emotions and drives. Such an understanding of religion is one of the cornerstones in the theology of Mary while creating a personal spiritual relationship to the archetype of Mary which, I suggest, is the Self. Mary as the Self is more relevant to women. As I mentioned earlier, Jung thought that archetypes are expressed by God-images in culture. By dialoguing with the image of Mary, one is dialoguing with one's own Self.

¹²¹ Edinger, 35

The new psychological phase of the Western people which Jung called individuation, involves a return to observing the omens which amounts to understanding religion as Jung did: “religion means a watchful, wary, thoughtful, careful, prudent, expedient and calculated attitude towards the powers-that-be”¹²².

Effectively, by asking us to read the omens of our lives (for example, dreams, coincidences, etc), Jung is saying that for the health of the psyche the re-establishment of our relationship with the elemental state of the mind where birds, trees, wind and dreams speak in signs is vital. This process connects us with the unconscious instincts and with our Shadow from which, in Jung’s view, Christianity separated us.

Here in this thesis I am making the point that on the cultural level, the image of Mary from a non-Christian myth as a Pagan/Nature Goddess is a space where a woman has an opportunity to reconnect with the animistic level of her psyche in order to reunite with nature (I discuss Mary as the Pagan/Nature Goddess in Chapter 3); on a personal level, Mary is the place where a woman can meet with the Shadow of her own psyche in order to bring parts of it up to the surface for a conscious integration. Mary, being the most recent link in the chain of the female deities in the symbolic language of our psyche, unites all the stages of psychic development; being the most conscious incarnation of the female divine, she is the source of goodness to lean on when dealing with our own inner Shadow, in Jungian terms. Mary represents that part of the female psyche that has been formed during the last 2000 years. The devaluation and the split of the Mary myth and image (into spotless Mary and evil Eve, or the witches) resulted in the devaluation and the split of all women’s psyches. By integration of and reflection on the dark side of Mary, the opposites can become comprehensible in our own psyches. To comprehend the darkness of the Shadow, the light of Mary consciousness is required. To me, Mary consciousness is made of women’s experiences of living in the patriarchal world.

This reference to personal experiences leads me to emphasise the importance of a personal relationship with a deity. A long-term history of personal relationship between the people and the image of Mary is one of the main reasons I retain the name and the image of Mary while re-creating her non-Christian Goddess myth in the context of Mary theology. The developmental stages of the God-image suggested by Jung and discussed by me earlier in this Chapter, illustrate that the relationship between the God-

¹²² Edinger, 39.

image and a person became much more personalised in Christianity¹²³. Following Jung, this relationship is likely to become even more personal in the stage of individualised religions. Many people in Christian cultures have an established relationship to the archetype of Mary which is indicated by pilgrimages, legends about Mary performing miracles, and other expressions of devotion to Mary. This bond offers a unique spiritual space that a theology of Mary can occupy in order to invoke archetypal modes of existence in a person that consequently gives yet more meaning to a person. I am aware, of course, that the image of Mary has been contaminated by her Christian subordination myth. However, I stress that I am speaking throughout my thesis of a non-Christian bond between Mary and a person. I speak of Mary as of the archetype and in this case the Christian image of Mary is only one of the expressions of this archetype. I show in the following Chapters that the understanding of Mary as a non-Christian deity is not only possible but extremely liberating. This is first of all evident from her heritage from the Nature Goddesses.

Although Mary cannot by any means be limited to an association with nature, this may be another important element of her significance, alongside offering a strong individual relationship with a person. The legends, which I analyse in Chapter 3, highlight the features of Mary as the Goddess Earth, or Nature/Pagan Goddess. I suggest that the creation of a personal non-Christian myth of Mary is an exercise helping the process of individuation for a woman born in a culture that has been influenced by Christian thought that represses nature and the body.

Returning to Jung's ideas on the new (individualised) religion, he writes: "(...) there is a vision of the future, a vision of what the next aeon will bring. It will be the age of the Holy Spirit, when the warring opposites will be reconciled in the *coniunctio*"¹²⁴. This new age in which the opposites should come to oneness, is not possible if the male God-image is not counterbalanced by the female God image in the symbolic sphere of our psyches and in our culture. The theology of Mary aims to help balance out these symbolic opposites on cultural and personal levels. At the same time, one of the main tasks of this thesis is to bring to consciousness the opposing parts of Mary herself, the split and the Shadow parts of Mary, so that a non-Christian myth of

¹²³ For example, Christianity introduced God the Son who was a human being and could empathise with people which Yahweh could not do.

¹²⁴ Edinger, 61.

Mary can become a source of cultural renewal and a means for a person to reflect on her/his own Shadow.

CHAPTER 2. FEMINIST SPIRITUAL CONTEXT.

Introduction to Chapter 2.

In the first chapter, I have explained why I chose Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology as a methodology for my work. However, although Jungian psychology gives me the tools, the inspiration to write about the female divine and about Mary comes from the feminist spiritual outlook. Therefore, in this second chapter, I will explain how my work relates to the contexts of feminism and feminist-spirituality. I cover, to my mind, what are major historical and intellectual developmental points of feminist spirituality relating to my work, and introduce key ideas on the Goddess and the Goddess movement.

In what follows, I will explain the relationship between Jungian methodology and the feminist spiritual context in my work. Generally, feminist methodology complements Jungian methodology, and together they constitute the overall framework of my thesis. Therefore, I situate the chapters on both Jungian and feminist methodology at the start of my thesis so that the reader can refer to them when reading subsequent chapters. The Jungian methodology is fundamental to my work because it makes my main thesis (the creation of a non-Christian and individualised myth of Mary) possible since without the Jungian approach I would not be able to present the Shadow narrative of Mary or consider Mary as the archetype that is a subject of the human psyche, and not just part of Christianity. I would like to clarify that by "the Shadow of Mary" I mean not just the negative aspects of Mary but also her positive power and vibrancy of her character – everything that has been rejected or not recognised by patriarchal attitudes and Christianity in relation to the female divine/goddesses. The Shadow, or non-Christian, narrative balances out the Christian image of Mary and stands as the foundation for a different kind of spirituality of Mary. On the other hand, understanding feminist spirituality is also absolutely vital in understanding my work on the female divine in general and on the theology of Mary in particular. The feminist context is also very important in reviewing some rigid and outdated views on the female and the feminine by Jung, which has been discussed in Chapter 1.

I am aware that the figure of Mary has been very controversial in discussing the divine and feminism. Already in 1949 Simone de Beauvoir criticised the belief in which

“a mother kneels before her son and acknowledges, of her own free will, her inferiority. The supreme victory of masculinity is consummated in Mariolatry: it signifies the rehabilitation of woman through the completeness of her defeat”¹²⁵. Another feminist scholar, Mary Daly, has also largely rejected the figure of Mary; she controversially interpreted that Mary’s response “Let it be done unto me according to thy word” emphasises her non-resistance to rape, and noted that Mary is “enchained and subordinated in Christianity, as the ‘Mother of God’”¹²⁶. The trend of rejecting Mary continued with Marina Warner’s book, *Alone Of All Her Sex*, where she suggested that “the reality her [Mary] myth describes is over; the moral code she affirms has been exhausted”¹²⁷. Because of this and similar criticism, Mary was rejected by many feminists of the 70s. Although in the last decades the authors of feminist theology and other fields reintroduced various positive interpretations of the figure of Mary¹²⁸, she is still largely viewed as part of the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, the purpose of my thesis is to show, by the help of Jungian theories, that Mary can be considered as a non-Christian figure – as the archetype of the female divine.

In Section 2.1. of this Chapter, I recall the formation of feminist spirituality and revisit the myth of the Goddess. I consider the rise of feminism and the evolution of the Goddess-image to be the story of the Mary mythology/thealogy. In my view, Mary was the main image that sustained the idea of the female divine in the collective subconscious during the times of Christian suppression. This is one of the reasons why I position my work in dialogue with the Goddess’ religion and thealogy field in addition to the analytical psychology field.

Section 2.2. is dedicated to the overview of the *thealogy* notion. Section 2.3. looks deeper into the psychological reasons for the need of the female divine.

2.1. The feminist spiritual setting for a thealogy of Mary.

The Goddess is at the heart of the contemporary Goddess movement/religion, and of feminist spirituality. Before I proceed to explain how I view a non-Christian Mary fitting into the Goddess movement, it would perhaps be useful to remember the context in which the Goddess movement and Goddess feminism arose, in order to show

¹²⁵ Simone de Beauvoir. *The Second Sex*. (Vintage, 1989), 182.

¹²⁶ Mary Daly. *Beyond God the Father: Toward A Philosophy Of Women's Liberation*. (Beacon Press, 1985), 83.

¹²⁷ Marina Warner. *Alone Of All Her Sex: The Myth And The Cult Of The Virgin Mary* (London: Picador Books, 1990), 338.

¹²⁸ See, for example, the work of Tina Beattie, Charlene Spretnak, Luce Irigaray, Sarah Boss.

where my work stands within the timeline of the evolution of the intellectual and spiritual mind of the West.

The contemporary Goddess movement and feminist spirituality developed during the 1960s-1970s mainly in North America and Western Europe but also in other parts of the world. It has sprung up as a critical response, to quote Mellissa Raphael, to “the abstracted qualities of masculine rationalism”¹²⁹ and to the masculine power in the realms of the human spirit and soul, which to a great degree were achieved by devaluating women in the spiritual and other spheres. Goddess feminism, as well as feminism in general, has its roots in the critical mind of the Age of Reason, or Enlightenment, that gradually grew starting from the 17th century and peaking in the 18th century. For Kant, who was one of the most prominent philosophers of that period of course, Enlightenment meant “mankind's final coming of age, the emancipation of the human consciousness from an immature state of ignorance”¹³⁰. The philosophy of Enlightenment challenged the church, the state, and society's structures throughout Europe and in North America seeking to reform society using reason and scientific discoveries, and to my mind, it caused some women to doubt that the male God is the only possible form of the divine. The first ideas about it were expressed by the suffragist movement.

The suffragist movement began in the 19th century, during which the critical mind of the Enlightenment inspired the so called first-wave feminists such as Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826 – 1898) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815 –1902) to publish their ideas on a female Deity/God. Both Gage and Stanton became influential 19th century figures, the foremothers of modern feminist thinking. In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton used religious deconstruction to fuel the spirits of the suffragettes in her *Declaration of Sentiments* presented at a public meeting of women's suffrage noting that:

Man allows her in church, as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church. He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Mellissa Raphael. *Introducing theology*. (Continuum International Publishing Group, 1999), 12

¹³⁰ Porter Roy. *The Enlightenment*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 1

¹³¹ Patricia Monaghan, “Approaches to the Study of Goddess Myths and Images”, online article at the International (RCG-I) internet site <http://www.rcgi.org/salon/062009/goddessstudy.asp> of The Reformed Congregation of the Goddess. Accessed 10/11/2011.

In 1893, Gage wrote one of the first feminist books *Woman, Church, State* that was concerned with women's place in religion. Arguably, the book knocked on the door of the ancient memory of the psyche of many women as it sought to remind them of the pre-patriarchal civilisations. Gage wrote:

(...) records prove that woman had acquired great liberty under the old civilizations. A form of society existed at an early age known as the Matriarchate or Mother-rule. Under the Matriarchate, except as son and inferior, man was not recognized in either of these great institutions, family, state or church. A father and husband as such, had no place either in the social, political or religious scheme; woman was ruler in each. The primal priest on earth, she was also supreme as goddess in heaven.¹³²

And *The Woman's Bible*, which Stanton initiated and wrote together with a number of other female contributors in 1895, said:

The first step in the elevation of woman to her true position, as an equal factor in human progress, is the cultivation of religious sentiment in regard to her dignity and equality, the recognition by the rising generation of an ideal Heavenly Mother to whom their prayers should be addressed, as well as to a Father¹³³

These Stanton's words expressed an aspiration to have a female God, which signified the new religious reality of which Jung later spoke in his writings. Stanton's image of God was arguably born in the mind of a woman conscious of the necessity for the God-image to be incarnated in the female for the validation of a woman's psychic life, authority, and place in society. At the time it was not yet clear what Stanton and her contemporaries imagined as "her" God (as cited in her first quote above). Stanton's reference to the Heavenly Mother (in her last quote above) might have indicated some sort of evocation of Mary as divine; however this remains uncertain. In any case, the ideas of Stanton and her contemporaries on the female God were among the first consciously recorded expressions of the need for a female God and an example of the constellation of a different religious reality, to speak in Jung's terms.

However, Stanton and Gage's initial interest in the female Deity did not generate much further interest among feminists at the time. Only with the beginnings of

¹³² Matilda Joslyn Gage, *Woman, Church, State* (1893). Full text of the book online <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wcs/index.htm>, 13. Accessed 10/11/2011.

¹³³ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *The Woman's Bible* (Plain Label Books, 1974), 22.

second-wave feminism did these ideas develop into the Goddess movement. The Goddess movement offered the idea of a female deity that validated women's experiences and helped them to resist the organized Christianity's male-dominated influence on their minds. Creating Goddess spirituality, second-wave feminists initially referred to the old myths of Greece, Egypt, Asia. Later, from around the 1980s, the Goddess movement's richest source for mythology on the female divinity became the matricentral civilisation of the Old Europe discovered and described by the mytho-archaeologist Maria Gimbutas. Feminist spirituality soon grew its own body of writing in the works of Carol Patrice Christ, Charlene Spretnak, Naomi Golderberg, Starhawk (Miriam Simos), and others.

There were also some serious attempts to draw attention to the problem of the lack of the female divine derived from Jungian thought that became current before the start of feminist spirituality and the Goddess movement. For example, Tony Wolff, a contemporary of Jung, wrote in 1941:

The image of God is the supreme symbol of the highest human attributes and of the most far-reaching ideas of the human spirit. How then can woman find herself if her own psychological principle and all its complexities are not objectified in a symbol as in the case of man? The symbol takes effect in the human being gradually unfolding its meaning. The relationship with the Deity keeps man in continuous contact with all the conscious and unconscious contents which the Deity symbolically represents¹³⁴

In the light of this it would be timely to analyse the main effects which the lack of the female divine has had upon women, and how women discovered these effects. It is my understanding that the widespread conscious awakening of many Western women began with the suffragist movement when women asked who was speaking when they were saying what was right and what was wrong, and whose purposes were served by the patriarchal society structure and religion. This early feminist scrutiny of Western patriarchal social structures, ideology and religious symbolism unveiled sexism, hatred and control of women by men on psychological, financial, spiritual and other levels. In consequence, some feminists studied the fields of archaeology and mythology and found evidence there that satisfied them that patriarchy was predated by matricentral

¹³⁴ Cited in Ann Belford Ulanov, *The Feminine in Jungian Psychology and in Christian Theology* (USA: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 316.

societies¹³⁵, which were ruthlessly suppressed over several thousands of years. To some, at this earlier period, of course, patriarchal social structure was part of the natural evolution of human consciousness and of the society. The classicist Jane Harrison explained in 1922 her understanding that:

The shift (from matriarchy to patriarchy) is a necessary stage in a real advance. Matriarchy gave women a false, because magical prestige. With patriarchy came inevitably the facing of a real fact of the greater natural weakness of woman. Man, the stronger, when he outgrew his belief in the magical potency of women proceeded by a pardonable practical logic to despise and enslave her as the weaker¹³⁶

However, for many of the second wave feminists, society's historical and psychological evolution into patriarchy did not seem to signify advanced, natural, normal or healthy development. Charlene Spretnak, an American second-wave feminist scholar of religion and a social critic, thought that "there is nothing natural about patriarchal religion"¹³⁷. Spretnak supported Gimbutas' theory that patriarchy and its male gods were brought to Europe by barbaric invaders from the Eurasian steppes around 4500 B.C.E. Therefore, for Spretnak, patriarchy and its male-centred religions are relatively new inventions since, according to Gimbutas, Goddess religion can be traced as far back as 500,000 years ago¹³⁸

Feminists discovered, in Spretnak's words, that "patriarchal religion and society were built on the notion of hierarchical control: God the Father → Jesus → man → woman (and, where applicable, other "not-full-beings" such as people of colour) → children → animals → nature"¹³⁹. With this realisation, cruel facts of women-hatred came to light exposing the

(...) brutal slaughter of the Goddess-worshipping Pagans in the Biblical accounts, the Witch-burnings in Europe during the Renaissance, the psychiatric

¹³⁵ Some authors, such as Marija Gimbutas, held that these societies were not matriarchal (equally oppressing as patriarchy) but matrifocal/matricentral and egalitarian: women were at the spiritual centre of the society (for example, women held the positions of priestesses) which kept the lineage of the females but at the same time valued males in many aspects of community life significantly more than patriarchal society valued women.

¹³⁶ Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (New York: Meridian Books, 1922), 285.

¹³⁷ Charlene Spretnak, ed., *The Politics of Women's Spirituality: Essays On The Rise Of Spiritual Power Within The Feminist Movement* (Anchor Books Doubleday, 1982), xi.

¹³⁸ Marija Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess: The World of Old Europe* (HarperSanfrancisco, 1991), 222.

¹³⁹ Spretnak, *The Politics*, xiv.

incarceration and electroshock therapy of post-World-War-II housewives who refused to adopt a submissive role¹⁴⁰

Feminist analysis related these events to the divine order of God the Father by which patriarchal dominance is sealed and nurtured. A feminist theologian, Mary Daly, succinctly expressed the simple formula of patriarchal economics in a sentence “If God is male, then male is God”¹⁴¹. Ivone Gebara, a Brazilian Sister of Our Lady (Canonesses of St. Augustine) and one of Latin America's leading theologians, also highlighted the abnormality of such patriarchal hierarchy and the expected consequences of its views on nature, women and the poor in the following way:

Nature limits the extent to which some species can expand at the expense of others. When some exceed their life support niche by destroying others on whom they depend, this precipitates the collapse of the dominant group¹⁴².

Between the 60's and the 80's, feminists explored how much women-hatred and oppression was generated by patriarchal and Christian structures. In this way they continued the work of the first wave, uncovering layers of misogyny hidden in biblical and related sources, and bringing to light the misogynist writings of the first Christian patriarchs such as Epiphanius, Jerome, Basil, Ambrose, Augustine, John of Damascus (4th – 8th centuries). For example, feminists exposed the texts of Tertullian who preached in the 3rd century and who is sometimes called the founder of Western theology addressed women in these words:

And do you not know that you are each an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway: you are the unsealer of that forbidden tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert – that is death – even Son of God had to die. And do you think about adorning yourself over and above your tunics of skins¹⁴³.

¹⁴⁰ Spretnak, *The Politics*, xiv.

¹⁴¹ Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), 19.

¹⁴² Ivone Gebara quoted in Rosemary Radford Ruether “Ecofeminist The/ologies and Ethics: A Post-Christian Movement?”, in *Post-Christian Feminisms: A Critical Approach*, eds. Lisa Isherwood and Kathleen McPhillips (Ashgate, 2008), Chapter 3, 50-51. Also see Ivone Gebara, *Out of the Depths: Women's Experience of Evil and Salvation* (Fortress Press, 2002)

¹⁴³ Karen Armstrong, *The Gospel According to Woman: Christianity's creation of the sex war in the west* (Elm Tree Books, 1986), 52-62.

Another figure of early Christianity is Paul the Apostle, or St. Paul. His writings form a considerable portion of the New Testament, and his influence on Christian thinking was significant due to his role as a prominent apostle of Christianity during the spreading of the Gospel through early Christian communities across the Roman Empire. St. Paul proclaimed that:

As in all the churches of the saints, women are to remain quiet at meetings since they have no permission to speak; they must keep in the background as the Law itself lays it down. If they have any questions to ask, they should ask their husbands at home: it does not seem right for a woman to raise her voice at meetings¹⁴⁴

And:

What I want you to understand is that Christ is the head of every man, man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ. ... a man should certainly not cover his head since he is the image of God and reflects God's glory; but woman is the reflection of man's glory. For man did not come from woman; no, woman came from man; and man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman was created for the sake of man. This is the argument for women's covering their heads with a symbol of the authority over them, out of respect for the angels¹⁴⁵

These are just a few examples of the attitudes that have been promoted by the Christian churches during the centuries. Many feminist authors tried to understand the reasons for, as well as the implications of such attitudes, for example, Mary Daly expressed the view that "(...) the myth of the feminine evil [was] a foundation for the entire structure of phallic Christian ideology"¹⁴⁶.

In the light of the discoveries of this period of feminist deconstruction, it appears that women embodied everything that Christianity had rejected: body, sex, sin, evil, passion, nature. This rejection, women-hatred and women-fear peaked in the witch hunts. An author in comparative religion Karen Armstrong, analysing the witch panic phenomenon, made the chilling statement that:

The craze of persecution is not directed at real culprits or real enemies of society, but the victims act as scapegoats for neuroses which society has

¹⁴⁴ 1 Corinthians 14, New Testament.

¹⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 14, New Testament.

¹⁴⁶ Daly, 47.

repressed and can only express in this violent and irrational way. (...) [The witch hunts] have profoundly damaged the relationship between the sexes in our society (...). The witchcraft craze was (...) not merely the final act of hostility against women, it was also an unconscious and compulsive revolt against a religion which everybody accepted intellectually without question but which was too repressive and unhealthy emotionally. Inquisitors and ‘witches’ together in the torture chambers, in their dreams, in their fears created a fantasy which was a deliberate inversion of orthodox Christianity. Thus the Black mass became a horrifying but perversely satisfying ceremony where the Devil was worshipped instead of Christ; where instead of Communion there was a cannibalistic feast and instead of sexual repression a giant orgy where every type of sexual perversion so strongly forbidden by the church could be enjoyed in fantasy both by the witch (...) and, still more significantly, by the Inquisitor. The panic spread like wildfire because the neuroses had been so effectively and yet in so submerged a way prepared for over centuries¹⁴⁷.

The realisation that patriarchal Christian religion has been the source and expression of women-hatred, led the second-wave feminists to state that Judeo-Christian spirituality “has failed with disastrous effects on humans and on the Earth¹⁴⁸”, and caused them to focus their energy on the redemption of patriarchal society. This redemption, according to Spretnak who presented the view of many feminists, could be achieved by acquiring a religion focused on a female figure. This thought resulted in the creation or revival of the Goddess religion, Wicca, Paganism and many other forms of spirituality where female deities took the central place. Many women did not leave their Christian churches but started the work of loosening the rigid attitudes inside them, redeeming and re-introducing the female roles, and even the feminine side of God. In Spretnak’s words:

(...) the women’s spirituality movement is a loosely constituted highly diverse part of feminist movement in which women unsatisfied with patriarchal religions have explored and created numerous paths to authentic spiritual experience, including working with Abrahamic and other religions to transform them; practicing Buddhist meditation (no godhead of either sex); reading about the 11,000 known goddesses or the various cultural traditions of female

¹⁴⁷ Armstrong, 88-116.

¹⁴⁸ Spretnak, *The Politics*, xv.

shamans; studying the intimate communion with nature in traditional native people's religions; and creating meaningful spiritual practices¹⁴⁹

2.2. Who is the Goddess? The perception of Marija Gimbutas.

Feminist spirituality drew its major inspiration on the Goddess from the latest work of the Lithuanian born American archaeologist Marija Gimbutas on the civilisation of Old Europe – a term which she coined to refer to the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic (New Stone Age and Copper Age) societies of southern and eastern Europe in 6500 – 3500 B.C.E. When she published her Old Europe theory in 1973, she was an established scholar known for her work on the Balts and the Prehistorical Indo-European cultures. During her career, Gimbutas wrote twenty three books (five of them – in Lithuanian language)¹⁵⁰, including a monumental study on her other theory of the Bronze Age Indo-European cultures, and over 300 articles¹⁵¹. She directed five excavations in Europe, read more than 20 languages and brought to her work an extraordinary knowledge of European folklore and mythology¹⁵². In her theory on the civilisation of the Old Europe she presented the idea of a mostly peaceful, matrilineal but egalitarian civilisation that had existed for thousands of years before Christianity and patriarchy.

In her books on the Old Europe civilisation¹⁵³, alongside the meticulous archaeological analysis of the countless artefacts found at the sites she excavated, she suggested that the Old Europe civilisation's spiritual life was based on the religion of the Great Goddess who was many but also one. To design her theory on the civilisation and the religion of the Goddess, Gimbutas used a method which she developed earlier to formulate her famous theory about Kurgan invasions in 1956, which involved merging the disciplines of archaeology, linguistics, ethnology, and religion.

Gimbutas stated that the Goddess religion could be dated to some 500,000 years ago, when the first flint sculptures of female figures and animals appeared during the

¹⁴⁹ Charlene Spretnak, "Anatomy of a Backlash: Concerning the Work of Marija Gimbutas". *The Journal of Archaeomythology*. Special issue 2011, volume 7, 1-27 (see 22)

¹⁵⁰ Jonas Vaiškūnas, "Marijai Gimbutienei – 90" (In English: Marija Gimbutas - 90 years from the birth". An online article, the webpage of *The Association of the Lithuanian Ethnic Culture*, ALKAS. <http://alkas.lt/2011/01/23/marijai-birutei/> Accessed on 22/03/2014

¹⁵¹ Joan Marler, "Marija Gimbutas - Life and Work". An online article on the Pacifica Graduate Institute website <http://pacific.edu/innercontent-m.aspx?id=1762> Visited 22/03/2014

¹⁵² Peter Steinfels, "Idyllic Theory of Goddess Creates Storm". (New York Times, Feb. 13, 1990)

¹⁵³ The main books on the Goddess and the Civilisation of Old Europe in the English language: *The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe* (1974, 1982), *The Language of the Goddess* (1989), and *The Civilization of the Goddess* (1991); *The Living Goddesses* (2001)

period called by archaeologists Acheulian, belonging to the Lower Paleolithic¹⁵⁴. Providing a plentiful body of visual examples in addition to her theories, Gimbutas proposed an image of the Great Goddess as nature and the force behind the beginning and end of life, rebirth and everlasting life. Having unearthed and analysed hundreds of female figurines, which very often had noticeable breasts, pregnant bellies and vulvas, Gimbutas made the suggestion that the Palaeolithic and Neolithic people used this variety of symbols to express all aspects of “the Great Mystery (...) the unbroken unity of the deity (...) who is ultimately Nature herself”¹⁵⁵. She suggested that the female sculptures can be grouped by their symbolic meaning into three categories of Goddesses, who, however, represented different expressions of the same deity – Nature.

The first category, according to Gimbutas, was the Generative Goddess (or rather, Goddesses) who personified the generative forces of nature. As all the other Goddesses she was seen as both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic. Her symbols on various artefacts were the emphasised or stylised symbols of the vulva, woman’s pubic triangle, breasts, and buttocks as well as animal representations¹⁵⁶. In the human form she was represented in figurines of a woman giving birth, a breastfeeding woman, a pregnant woman, and in her zoomorphic forms she was the Goddess Bear, the Goddess Deer.

The second group of sculptures personified the Goddess who represented the destructive force of nature, or the Death Goddess (es), who in art often took the forms of a stiff thin nude woman, a snake (the Snake Goddess), or a bird of prey¹⁵⁷.

The third group included the Goddess of Death and Regeneration who, according to Gimbutas’ analysis, seemed to control the life cycles of the entire natural world and her symbols were the uterus, the pubic triangle, the foetus, or animals such as a toad (the Goddess Toad) or frog (the Goddess Frog)¹⁵⁸. The animal and bird features were mixed on the figurines with the female body parts.

Her ideas on the civilisation of Old Europe, the Great Goddess and her many manifestations were seized on by the feminists since they allowed many women to regain the confidence lost during the patriarchal historical past. In terms of my own

¹⁵⁴ Marija Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess: The World of Old Europe* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 222.

¹⁵⁵ Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess*, 223.

¹⁵⁶ Marija Gimbutienė. *Senoji Europa*. (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996), 177.

¹⁵⁷ Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa*, 177.

¹⁵⁸ Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa*, 177.

work on a theology of Mary, it is important to remember that Gimbutas also stressed the continuity of the Goddess with the Virgin Mary:

The Goddess of the Palaeolithic and Neolithic is parthenogenetic, creating life out of herself. She is the primeval, self-fertilizing “Virgin Goddess” who has survived in numerous culture forms to the present day. The Christian Virgin Mary is a demoted version of this original deity¹⁵⁹.

In her books, Gimbutas emphasised that the local goddesses in many places in Europe (Lithuania, Latvia, Ireland) were transferred on the Virgin Mary.

The praise and criticism of Gimbutas’ work

The rapidly increasing acceptance of Gimbutas’ work on the Goddess religion and on the Civilisation of Old Europe among the non-experts, mainly feminists, has arguably provoked some of the leading archaeologists and anthropologists to criticise her more fiercely than they might have done, had her theories not been so enthusiastically taken up by the feminists. Yet even then, their scepticism was usually spoken along with expressions of deep respect for Gimbutas as for an extremely knowledgeable scholar and a primary founder of modern Indo-European studies, whose model for Indo-European origins remains the leading theory in the field up to this day. The years of Gimbutas fiercest criticism coincided with the years of her struggle with lymphatic cancer.

Gimbutas is mostly criticised for her extended associations (which her critics understand as leaps) in interpreting the archaeological material. Using folklore, history and mythological motifs as clues she, for example, would interpret dots on a pot as the earth with seeds, or see frogs as goddesses, which was extremely unusual for the so called “objective” academic archaeologists. Bernard Wailes, a professor who at the time taught anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, said that most of Gimbutas’ peers considered her “immensely knowledgeable but not very good in critical analysis”; he further criticised her on the grounds that “she amasses all the data and then leaps to conclusions without any intervening argument”¹⁶⁰ One of Gimbutas’ fiercest critics was Cynthia Eller who rejected nearly all the aspects of the civilisation of Old Europe theory as well as the theory on the Kurgan invasions into Old Europe. According to Gimbutas, the Kurgan invasions ended the matricentral and egalitarian civilisation of

¹⁵⁹ Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess*, 223.

¹⁶⁰ Peter Steinfels, “Idyllic Theory of Goddess Creates Storm”. (New York Times, Feb. 13, 1990)

Old Europe and gradually established the patriarchal structure of society. Eller is critical of what she calls a “golden age,” a utopian feminist narrative fantasising of a time when women were free¹⁶¹. At the same time, she does acknowledge the “tremendous linguistic expertise” and the “encyclopaedic knowledge of Central and Eastern European archaeological sites that permitted her to speculate effectively on ‘big picture’ questions”¹⁶²

Gimbutas is no less criticised for being a “romantic” (in particular for her image of the civilisation of Old Europe as a mostly peaceful civilisation), and for a feminist bias. One must not forget that Gimbutas’ interpretations seemed extremely bold for many academics, men and women alike, since she presented in her books figurines of naked women with exposed vulvas and breasts, and called them the Goddesses, claiming that all of a woman’s body was sacred, and especially her regenerative parts: vulva, breasts, and buttocks. Such material was perceived as being hardly academic at the time she first published this work.

The process of writing a doctoral dissertation involves criticism of the very ideas and authors one is using, which is indeed a good self-reflective exercise. However, I find it difficult to criticise Gimbutas since I am a Lithuanian myself and, although she could be my grandmother in age, we have a lot in common from the cultural point of view. Some criticism, in particular related to the folklore sources Gimbutas used, I cannot share: it is perhaps foreign to most of Americans, but it is my identity as much as it used to be the identity of Gimbutas. It is natural for me to assume that a frog in some situations can be seen as a goddess because we still have old graveyards in Lithuania which are marked not with gravestones but with wood carvings of frogs; it must have come from the deeply ingrained belief that frogs or snakes, as the regenerative animals who can shed their old skin and be “reborn” to a new life by growing a new skin, can help the dead to do a similar “skin changing” and rebirth exercise. Since this relates to giving birth, the frogs in graveyards must have been the females. So, I can naturally accept the chain of Gimbutas’ associations when she says that the power to regenerate the dead was identified with a very powerful female frog – the frog in the graveyard was probably not just any frog but a powerful deity (frogs

¹⁶¹ Max Dashu. *Knocking Down Straw Dolls: A Critique Of Cynthia Eller's The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Won't Give Women a Future*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000) Available online at the Suppressed Histories website <http://www.suppressedhistories.net/articles/eller.html> accessed 22/03/2014

¹⁶² See Cynthia Eller. *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory: Why An Invented Past Will Not Give Women a Future*. (Beacon Press, 2001), 38

themselves were not Goddesses, but the powerful regenerative energy present in nature was imagined as a frog). What is a natural association for me, can be for others an impermissibly subjective leap.

Similarly, when Gimbutas is called a “romantic” for her folkloric evidence, I feel that I am a similar romantic because all generations of Lithuanians hear more or less the same Lithuanian largely pagan mythology in their childhood. Gimbutas’ reply to the accusations that she was being overly romantic was that “romanticism is the feature of thinking characteristic to Lithuanians”¹⁶³. Gimbutas’ description of the Civilisation of Old Europe as peaceful, matricentral and egalitarian was criticised for being a naive, idealistic or romantic illusion¹⁶⁴ (see Eller). However, there was much misunderstanding of what Gimbutas meant by those words. In Spretnak’s view:

Gimbutas did not claim that the civilisation of Old Europe was entirely peaceful; what she mean by saying “peaceful” was that the archaeological evidence that indicates that the settlements were not routinely sacked; she did not ever write that the residents of Old Europe did not have any arguments in daily life or constituted a utopia¹⁶⁵

Similarly, Gimbutas’ assertion that the civilisation of Old Europe was in no way matriarchal, was overlooked by many of her critics. Gimbutas called the civilisation of Old Europe matricentric (also matrilineal) and strictly rejected the structure of matriarchy. Yet many of her critics did not try to look deeper into the meanings of those similarly sounding but essentially different notions.

It is possible that the identity with her own culture and mythology suggested to Gimbutas that ancient people also identified themselves with their mythological culture, which allowed her to look for evidence in mythology. From the Jungian point of view, her intuition was quite correct since myths speak of archetypes, which makes it possible for a historical myth to carry the mythological elements of the Stone Age. Gimbutas once said, in her own defence, that what others see as her weaknesses, she sees as weaknesses of her discipline, because archaeologists are not interested in religion and lack the knowledge and language skills to use comparative mythology and folklore to

¹⁶³ Eglė Merkytė, „Viskas ką ji darė, buvo Lietuva...“ (In English: All she did was Lithuania...). An online article, the webpage of *The Association of the Lithuanian Ethnic Culture*, ALKAS. <http://alkas.lt/2012/11/26/e-merkyte-viskas-ka-ji-dare-visa-laika-buvo-lietuva> Accessed on 16/02/2013

¹⁶⁴ See Cynthia Eller. *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory: Why An Invented Past Will Not Give Women a Future*. (Beacon Press, 2001).

¹⁶⁵ Charlene Spretnak, “Anatomy of a Backlash: Concerning the Work of Marija Gimbutas”. *The Journal of Archaeomythology*. Special issue 2011, volume 7, 1-27 (see page 9)

interpret their findings¹⁶⁶. Gimbutas had developed the comparative method early in her study years: in 1942, she graduated from the University of Vilnius where she studied Lithuanian language, folklore, ethnology and linguistics, and only later did she choose archaeological studies¹⁶⁷; in 1946, she received a doctorate in archaeology, with minors in ethnology and history of religion, from Tübingen University, with her dissertation on “Prehistoric Burial Rites in Lithuania” (in German). Therefore, her archaeomythological method has been built since her youth years and it is quite understandable why Gimbutas felt confident in making certain mythological and folkloric associations, although I agree that some criticism of the associations she made is probably unavoidable and necessary.

A substantial portion of criticism was aimed at Gimbutas’ associations with feminists since her fondness for them gave her a very bad reputation within the patriarchal academia¹⁶⁸. However, Gimbutas’ theory on the civilisation of Old Europe was not created to suit feminists’ needs or fantasies about a world where women were esteemed – as some critics suggested. Her theory was first published in 1973, and for some time, it was mostly known in the circles of archaeologists; only in around the 1980’s did it become central to the second-wave feminist spirituality/Goddess movement when the feminist scholars approached her to ask for a permission to publish one of her articles in their anthology¹⁶⁹. Gimbutas herself has stated in an interview: “I was not a feminist and never had any thought I would be helping feminists”¹⁷⁰, although she admitted that the enthusiastic reception of her work by artists and feminists was “an incredible gift” coming late in her life¹⁷¹. Gimbutas recognised the psychological significance of her discoveries for the psyches of women. Yet her cooperation with feminists was extremely limited because they discovered Gimbutas at the start of her struggle with cancer. These several years were enough, along with other misunderstandings and intrigues in the academia, to damage her authority in the field of archaeology.

¹⁶⁶ Peter Steinfels, “Idyllic Theory of Goddess Creates Storm”. (New York Times, Feb. 13, 1990)

¹⁶⁷ Eglė Merkytė, „Viskas ką ji darė, buvo Lietuva...“ (In English: All she did was Lithuania...). An online article, the webpage of *The Association of the Lithuanian Ethnic Culture*, ALKAS. <http://alkas.lt/2012/11/26/e-merkyte-viskas-ka-ji-dare-visa-laika-buvo-lietuva> Accessed on 16/02/2013

¹⁶⁸ See Charlene Spretnak, “Anatomy of a Backlash”

¹⁶⁹ Charlene Spretnak, “Anatomy of a Backlash: Concerning the Work of Marija Gimbutas”. *The Journal of Archaeomythology*. Special issue 2011, volume 7, 1-27 (see 21-23)

¹⁷⁰ Cynthia Eller. *The Myth of Patriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Won't Give Women a Future*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 38

¹⁷¹ Peter Steinfels, “Idyllic Theory of Goddess Creates Storm”. (New York Times, Feb. 13, 1990)

However, Gimbutas' ideas on the Civilisation of Old Europe have been welcomed by distinguished authors like the mythologist Joseph Campbell who wrote a forward to one of her volumes before he died in 1987. During the last few years of his life, Campbell profoundly regretted that Gimbutas research on the Neolithic cultures of Europe was not available during the 1960's when he was writing *The Masks of God*; otherwise, he would have "revised everything"¹⁷². Campbell compared the importance of Gimbutas' work to [Jean-François] Champollion's decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphics¹⁷³. The anthropologist Ashley Montagu hailed Gimbutas work as a benchmark in the history of civilization, and stated that "Marija Gimbutas has given us a veritable Rosetta Stone of the greatest heuristic value for future work in the hermeneutics of archaeology and anthropology"¹⁷⁴.

2.3. Who is the Goddess continued: other perceptions.

Despite criticism, many of Gimbutas' ideas live on. However, they are no longer sufficient to describe all the different perceptions of goddesses. Any attempt to define and describe the Goddess/female deity and what it means to feminist spirituality or Goddess spirituality participants is likely to fail since there are as many perceptions as there are individuals thinking of the Goddess/female deity.

Apart from Gimbutas, there are many other authors who express their own understanding of what the Goddess means to them, and this understanding has also been changing and developing within the work of these authors themselves during the decades after the peak of second wave feminism. In the early 80s, Starhawk (Miriam Simos) emphasised that "the Goddess does not rule the world; she is the world"¹⁷⁵, so expressing the kind of liberation from a patriarchal way of thinking that arguably became possible through the Goddess. For Starhawk,

The primary symbol for "That-Which-Cannot-Be-Told" is the Goddess. The Goddess has infinite aspects and thousands of names – She is the reality behind metaphors. She *is* reality, the manifest deity, omnipresent in all of life, in each of us. The Goddess is not separate from the world – She *is* the world, and all the

¹⁷² Joan Marler, "Marija Gimbutas - Life and Work". An online article on the Pacifica Graduate Institute website <http://pacific.edu/innercontent-m.aspx?id=1762> Visited 22/03/2014

¹⁷³ Joan Marler, "Marija Gimbutas - Life and Work".

¹⁷⁴ Joan Marler, "Marija Gimbutas - Life and Work".

¹⁷⁵ Starhawk, "Witchcraft as Goddess religion", in *The Politics of Women's Spirituality: Essays on the Rise of Spiritual Power Within the Feminist Movement*, ed. Charlene Spretnak (Anchor Books Doubleday, 1982), 51.

things in it: moon, sun, earth, star, stone, seed, flowing river, wind, wave, leaf and branch, bud and blossom, fang and claw, woman and man.¹⁷⁶

For Carol Christ, also in the 80's, the Goddess was a symbol of the "affirmation of the legitimacy and beneficence of female power" allowing women to assert "the female body and the life cycle expressed in it"; and a source of energy who, invoked by the means of rituals such as chanting and dancing, raised a feeling of power in women¹⁷⁷. Nearly twenty years later, in 1997, Christ's position had not changed when she stated in *Rebirth of the Goddess*:

We have been taught that God is male, that he transcends the Earth and the body and that he is the light shining in the chaotic darkness of the natural world. Yet the Goddess is female; the Earth, the body, and nature are her image; and the darkness as well as the light are metaphors of her power¹⁷⁸

In her book *She Who Changes: re-imagining the divine in the world* published in 2003, Carol Christ includes the body of the male in her understanding of the divine but remains cautious of the divine in a heaven:

The idea that the universe is the body of divinity makes it fitting to use female, male, and other non-human imagery – including animal, cellular, and mineral imagery – to express the understanding that all is in Goddess/God and that Goddess/God is in the whole world. The process understanding of divine power as power with, not power over, can help us to guard against unconsciously re-introducing images of domination, including those derived from any hierarchical or violent tradition, into our feminist re-imaginings of symbols of the divine in the world¹⁷⁹.

This revolutionary revival of the Goddess religion was based on practice, ritual and passion for a female spirituality, distinctively representing the Earth-based deity. During the four decades from the 70's until now, this passion has been eventually channelled into the academic field and a philosophical body of writing has developed which scrutinizes various aspects of Goddess spirituality. The Goddess image has

¹⁷⁶ Starhawk, "Witchcraft", 50.

¹⁷⁷ Carol P. Christ, "Why Women Need The Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political reflections", in *The Politics of Women's Spirituality: Essays on the Rise of Spiritual Power Within the Feminist Movement*, ed. Charlene Spretnak (Anchor Books Doubleday, 1982), 76-80.

¹⁷⁸ Carol P. Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess: Finding Meaning in Feminist Spirituality* (New York, London: Routledge, 1997), 89.

¹⁷⁹ Carol P. Christ, *She Who Changes: Re-imagining the Divine in the World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 229.

moved on. The images and meaning of the prehistoric Goddess and various historic goddesses were not sufficient to accommodate the variety of perceptions of women looking not so much for an outer but an inner equivalent of the female divine; the Goddess has acquired new meanings and has begun to be referred to as “the woman God” by Merlin Stone in *When God Was a Woman*, “Divine Woman” by Luce Irigaray in *Divine Women*, “Gaia” by Rosemary R. Ruether in *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*, “the Wild Woman” by Clarissa Pinkola Estés in *Women Who Run With the Wolves*. New names include not only earthly and bodily but also psychological, ecological, instinctual and other aspects of the Goddess.

One of the most influential social theories that developed out of the interest in the Goddess, was the ecological theory, or ecofeminism. Such authors as Ivone Gebara and Rosemary Radford Ruether argued that the Goddess was closely related to nature and Earth. In her book *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*, Ruether offered a feminist view and evaluation of the destructive relationship of humans towards both nature and the Goddess within the Western Christian culture and called for a healing quest for the Earth’s ecology. For Ruether, this ecological healing is a theological and psychic-spiritual process, involving the examination of the ecological ethics of Christianity that have conditioned us as human beings, to believe that we have a rational soul which is higher than animal and vegetable souls resulting in the devaluation of nature. Ruether called for higher consciousness that is in accord with the laws of Gaia¹⁸⁰ which dictate what kinds of changes in nature are sustainable in the life system of which humans are an inextricable part¹⁸¹.

Starhawk, one of the leaders of the Goddess movement in America, echoed Ruether by saying that: “(...) when I say Goddess I am not talking about a new belief system. I am talking about choosing an attitude: choosing to take this living world, the people and creatures on it, as the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, to see the world, the Earth and our lives as sacred”¹⁸². This Gaia notion granted a new direction and purpose in the Goddess religion – as the sacred Earth she was now able not only to

¹⁸⁰ I understand Gaia as the Earth (who is seen as the female) in her divine dimension. This is my personal understanding with which Ruether may or may not agree.

¹⁸¹ The paragraph on Ruether’s view is based on Chienyu (Jade) Yi’s online review of Ruether’s book *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*. The review published on the internet site of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, “*The Web of Creation*”.

<http://www.webofcreation.org/religious-education/218-book-review-gaia-and-god-an-ecofeminist-theology-of-earth-healing> Accessed 10/09/2011.

¹⁸² Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics* (Beacon Press, 2012), Chapter 1.

bring healing to the devalued bodies of women which were identified with the body of the Earth, but also to evoke higher consciousness for the healing of the Earth. The ability to raise social and ecological consciousness was a new feature that added to the ancient primordial Goddess.

It should be said, of course, that notions of the Goddess as a feminine being affirming body and nature were charged by other authors as being too essentialist and a discourse arose among some feminist religious authors with the purpose of clarifying, and in many cases, separating the feminine divine from the female divine. Elizabeth A. Johnson, in *She Who Is*, argued that,

we must be very clear about this. Speech about God in female metaphors does not mean that God has a feminine dimension, revealed by Mary or other women. Nor does the use of male metaphors mean that God has a masculine dimension, revealed by Jesus or other men; or an animal dimension, revealed by lions or great mother birds; or a mineral dimension, which corresponds with naming God a rock. (...) If women are created in the image of God, then god can be spoken of in female metaphors in as full and as limited a way as God is imagined in male ones, without talk of feminine dimensions reducing the impact of this imagery¹⁸³

One of today's leading philosophers is the psychotherapist Luce Irigaray who introduced the term of the Divine Woman, suggesting that inner processes rather than outer ones have to take place in a woman in order for her to acquire a feeling of being in connection with the divine or to feel that she is a Divine Woman. Irigaray raised questions:

This God, are we capable of imagining it as a woman? Can we dimly see it as the perfection of our subjectivity? (...)

If she is to become woman, if she is to accomplish her female subjectivity, woman needs a god who is a figure for the perfection of her subjectivity...

In order to become, we need some shadowy perception of achievement; not a fixed objective, not a One postulated to be immutable but rather a cohesion and a horizon that assures us the passage between past and future, the bridge of a

¹⁸³ Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992), 54.

present that remembers, that is not sheer oblivion and loss, not a crumbling away of existence, a failure (...) ¹⁸⁴

Clarissa Pinkola Estés, a Jungian psychoanalyst and theorist, suggested that the female divine is the inner psychic phenomenon. Estés spoke of the Wild Woman referring to a place in a woman's psyche which remembers the primordial state of being, and which stands for the healthy instincts. She suggested that only by knocking on the door of the ancient and archetypal forms of soul's existence can a woman heal her soul, hurt by patriarchal thinking that repressed the most powerful female qualities into the unconscious. These ancient and archetypal forms are, for Estés, fairy tales, legends, poetry and other forms of creative expression.

Taking a slightly different approach, Melissa Raphael concluded in her book *Introducing Thealogy: Discourse on the Goddess* that the phrase "the Goddess" in no way means the same for everyone:

For some, the Goddess is not *the* Goddess, but simply (and more abstractly) 'Goddess'. For others, "the Goddess" sounds too monotheistic – too like a feminized God – and they prefer to speak polytheistically of Goddesses. For some the Goddess is a real self-originating divinity in her own right; for others, who might consider themselves atheists, she is a liberating archetype whose power is psychological and political rather than external to and transcendent of the individual or movement. Others again will move freely between a number of positions ¹⁸⁵.

In my own work on the thealogy of Mary, the Goddess discourse is important because I consider Mary to be the female divine, the Goddess whose image helps to maintain a good relationship between the ego and the Self in the psyche of an individual (speaking in Jungian terms). In my view, Mary is the deity who understands a woman's soul/psyche because her image and myth carries the experience of living in the patriarchal world. Also, in further chapters I analyse, with the help of legends, Mary's connections with nature. This connection brings her closer to the Goddess as she is understood by many authors – as the impulse, the source and energy of life on earth.

2.4. The meaning of thealogy.

¹⁸⁴ Luce Irigaray, "Divine Women", in *Sexes and Genealogies* (Columbia University Press, 1993), 63-67.

¹⁸⁵ Melissa Raphael, *Introducing Thealogy: Discourse on the Goddess* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 1999), 13.

The term “thealogy” has been most widely used among feminist authors in religion. The word “logos” alludes to thealogy as a study of thought rather than a study of practice, however, thealogy is a complex notion to define, and its understandings are many. The word “thealogy” is made of two parts: in Greek “thea” means goddess and “logos” means word, meaning, discourse, reason.

The word “thealogian” was probably first used by Isaac Bonewits, an influential American Druid who published a number of books on the subject of NeoPaganism and magic. In *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, privately published in 1974, Bonewits used “thealogian” to refer to a Wiccan author, Aidan Kelly who may have given him the term or vice versa¹⁸⁶. In 1976, the term “thealogy” was used by Valerie Saiving, a feminist theologian, in her article “Androcentrism in Religious Studies” published in a journal *The Journal of Religion*¹⁸⁷. In 1979 in *Real Magic: An Introductory Treatise on the Basic Principles of Yellow Magic (1972, 1979, 1989)* Bonewits defined thealogy as:

Intellectual speculations concerning the nature of the Goddess and Her relations to the world in general and humans in particular; rational explanations of religious doctrines, practices and beliefs, which may or may not bear any connection to any religion as actually conceived and practiced by the majority of its members¹⁸⁸

Naomi Goldenberg, a feminist working in the field of religious studies used the term “thealogy” in *The Changing of the Gods* in 1979 saying that “*Thea* is the word for “goddess” and is a more appropriate root for a term referring to theories of feminist witchcraft”¹⁸⁹.

In broad terms then, thealogy can be understood as a discourse that reflects upon the meaning of the Goddess; it suggests a feminist approach to the divine. Some authors in feminist religion express the opinion that thealogy’s distinctive feature is the involvement in a philosophical discourse on the subject of the Goddess as a response to the intellectual quests of academia. On the other hand, a theologian and a thinker in feminist religion Ursula King said in 1989 that “most writing on the Goddess, when not

¹⁸⁶ An online source Encyclopedia 4u.com

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:3lZk3vYBlm4J:www.encyclopedia4u.com/t/thealogy.html+Isaac+Bonewits+mentioned+thealogy&cd=4&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=lt> Accessed 29/12/2012

¹⁸⁷ Vol. 56, No. 2 (Apr., 1976), 177-197.

¹⁸⁸ Isaac Bonewits Home Page, URL http://www.neoPagan.net/Pagan_Glossary.html Accessed 11/09/2011

¹⁸⁹ Naomi R. Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 96.

historical, is either inspirational or devotional, and a systematically ordered body of thought, even with reference to symbols, is only slowly coming into existence”¹⁹⁰. Of course, some in the field of theology specifically value experience over any intellectual exercise, and their descriptions of experiences of spiritual relationships with the Goddess are also considered to be part of the body of theology. This breadth of approach is perhaps reflected by Raphael when she writes that she is “open to the suggestion that “theology” could refer to any sort of discourse on any sort of goddess”¹⁹¹. For Charlotte Caron, the author of *To Make and Make Again: Feminist Ritual Theology*, theology is a “reflection on the divine in feminine and feminist terms”¹⁹².

Highlighting another important dimension of theological discourse, Carol Christ expressed the view in *Laughter of Aphrodite*, that those who create theology cannot avoid being influenced by the categories and questions posed in Christian and Jewish theologies. In one of her other books, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, Christ establishes some guidelines for theology, suggesting that theology begins and is rooted in women's experience and in embodied thinking. Experience, for Christ, is “embodied, relational, communal, social, and historical”¹⁹³. Embodied thinking means thinking “through the body”¹⁹⁴ and includes our reflection of “standpoints embedded in our life experiences, histories, values, judgements, and interests”. Experience and embodied thinking for Christ also is:

(...) everything I have ever tasted, touched, heard, seen, or smelled (...),
everything I have thought, felt or intuited (...), everyone I met (...), everything I
have ever read or heard about and everything I have ever done and suffered¹⁹⁵.

Christ's *Rebirth of the Goddess* is considered to be the first systematic theology of the Goddess, although it has invoked controversial responses. As Raphael notices, “not everyone in the Goddess movement would be comfortable with the term “theology” or would welcome the assimilation of their spirituality into an academic discipline”¹⁹⁶. Raphael also stresses that “Theology is not founded upon the body of

¹⁹⁰ Ursula King, *Women and Spirituality* (Macmillan 1989), 126-127.

¹⁹¹ Raphael, 9.

¹⁹² Raphael, xiii.

¹⁹³ Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 37

¹⁹⁴ Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 34

¹⁹⁵ Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 37

¹⁹⁶ Raphael, 11.

authoritative and sacred texts”¹⁹⁷. For her the most important factor is the notion that theology strives to describe the spiritual experiences of an individual while addressing a female deity.

Mary theology, similarly, is rooted in individual experience and this implies that there cannot be *the* myth of Mary or *the* theology of Mary. In terms of the analytical psychology I discuss in Chapter 1, Mary is the archetype. According to Jungian psychology, all archetypes are numinous; that is, when a person has an archetypal experience, it feels as if s/he is in the hands of gods¹⁹⁸. Consequently, the theology of Mary is perhaps relevant to all those to whom the experience of engaging with Mary gives a numinous, deeply transforming or empowering feeling, belong they to Roman Catholic Church or any other spirituality.

2.5. The psychological aspects of the need for the female divine.

Despite the growth in the western world of people who would identify themselves as atheists, the symbolism of God as male is still acknowledged in the psyches of individuals since, as the philosopher of feminist religion Grace M. Jantzen noted, “(...) God as Divine Father (...) in his eternal disembodiment, omnipotence and omniscience is the epitome of value”, because “(...) the divine is that which guarantees meaning”¹⁹⁹. Carol Christ voices the compensatory claim that “the simplest and most basic meaning of the symbol of the Goddess is the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of female power as a beneficent and independent power”²⁰⁰. In other words, a compensatory feminist response is to seek to establish or re-establish female divine symbolism since it can claim the authority of women, offer a source for women’s subjectivity and significantly rectify the negative male-centred pattern of thought towards the Earth’s ecology.

The research of many feminists into the myth of the female divine has been informed by the feminist notion that patriarchal religions are the sustainers and perpetuators of patriarchal structures of thought and belief within which the female divine symbolic is not recognized, is split into binaries or is too rigidly stereotyped. In my view, the splitting of religious images into rigid representations of a good God and

¹⁹⁷ Raphael, 10.

¹⁹⁸ See a video interview with C.G. Jung on questions of Transference and Archetypes http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=O18WALGq4C0

¹⁹⁹ Grace M. Jantzen, *Becoming Divine: Towards a feminist philosophy of religion* (Manchester University Press, 1998), 10.

²⁰⁰ Christ, “Why Women Need the Goddess”, 75.

an evil Satan, hell on earth and paradise in heaven, man as God's reflection and woman as man's reflection, has led to the hardening of religion to the point where it no longer connects to a person on an individual level. This splitting has particularly impoverished the mythology and the imagery of the female divine. In Christianity, Eve is the personification of sin, and Mary is the embodiment of innocence – these two aspects of primordial wholeness have been split into two figures, and neither of them is recognized as divine. Jung argued that the belief in witches was a compensation to the cult of an innocent, virginal Mary:

The relative depreciation of the real woman is thus compensated by daemonic impulses, since all unconscious contents, in so far as they are activated by split off sums of libido, appear projected upon the object. In a certain sense man loves woman less as a result of this relative depreciation hence she appears as a persecutor, i.e. a witch. Thus the delusion about witches, that ineradicable blot upon the Later Middle Ages, developed along with, and indeed as a result of, the intensified worship of the Virgin²⁰¹.

At the same time, bypassing Christian dogmas, the popularity of the Black Madonna images as the receptacles of Christianity's female divine power grew to outweigh the weakness of an immaculate but powerless Mary. In relation to these splits perpetrated within Christianity, another closely related problem was the expulsion of sexuality from any Christian teaching, mythology or imagery.

The promotion of Mary as non-divine and her low grading in the hierarchy of the church caused difficulty even to the earliest fathers of Christianity in accepting the imbalance between such an image of Mary and the inner feeling they had for Mary. For example, Rachel Fulton brings to light the English medieval historian Richard William Southern's observation of the difficulties faced by Anselm of Canterbury:

We do know (...) from the manuscript evidence that Anselm continued to revise the prayers [to Mary], even after he has sent them to Gundolf. Commenting on this process of revision, Southern has remarked how curious it is that Anselm, "who generally knew his mind very clearly before he wrote", had such difficulty coming to a satisfactory formulation of praise and petition to the Mother of God, particularly given the importance to Anselm's name and influence for the

²⁰¹ C. G. Jung. *Psychological Types or The Psychology of Individuation*. Translated by H. Godwin Baynes, M.B., B.C. Cantab. (New York: Pantheon books; British edition: T. and A. Constable Ltd., [1923] 1953), 292.

subsequent development of Marian devotions. Southern has proposed that Anselm's difficulties were primarily problems of emphasis: hitherto in his prayers to the saints, Anselm had begun by establishing an identity between the petitioner and the saint as both liable to sin, at the same time elevating the saint above the petitioner so as to establish him (or her) as an effective intercessor with Christ. With Mary, Southern has suggested, Anselm's method foundered because she was, on the one hand, entirely without sin and, therefore, beyond empathetic union with the petitioner and, on the other, so exalted above all other saints as to be beyond adequate praise – or, rather, beyond theologically justifiable praise, Anselm having exhausted even the more hyperbolic prerogatives of sanctity in his prayers to Saint Peter²⁰²

While neither Southern nor Fulton suggest that the confusion of Anselm may have sprung from the unconscious realisation that Mary represented the divine archetype and actually was perceived as God by Anselm, I would suggest exactly that. In the framework of Jungian psychology it is quite clear that Anselm's inability to write an appropriate prayer to Mary arose from not being allowed to apply to Mary as to God, or Goddess. Unfortunately for him, he had to repeat the patriarchal lie that Mary was just a woman who was not divine; however, his inner wisdom resisted this reasoning. He sacrificed his religious reality – his realisation that Mary *was* God, because it was the only choice for the theologian within the Church. It is not hard to understand how complicated it was for Anselm to integrate his religious reality; it would have inevitably lead to the admission that the source of the Christian Church's strength was the deliberate suppression of the pre-Christian Goddess. Arguably, such suppression helped the Christian patriarchs to build their powerful male-centred philosophy.

Knowing how the Christian church built its male-centred power then, we do not have to go far to look for reasons for the female divine. Starhawk, the founder of the modern Wicca religion, subtly alluded to the psychological implications of the female divine by saying that:

The mystery, the paradox, is that the Goddess is not “she” or “he” – or she is both – but we call her “she” because to name is not to limit or describe but to invoke. We call her in and a power comes who is different from what comes

²⁰² Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200* (New York: Columbia University, 2002), 227.

when we say “he” or “it”. Something happens, something that challenges the ways in which our minds have been shaped in images of male control²⁰³.

This poetic observation carries a powerful statement that the female divine can change the very roots of thinking formed by patriarchy during thousands of years. There is no other way to change our thinking and perceptions except to think of God as the female, name her the Goddess, and listen to how our souls/psyches respond to it.

Like Tony Wolff (quoted in section 2.1.), Luce Irigaray similarly claims that the female divine is an absolutely vital necessity for women’s personal development and women’s ability to connect and share with the surrounding world:

Man is able to exist because God helps him to define his gender (*genre*), helps him orient his finiteness by reference to infinity ... To posit a gender, a God is necessary: *guaranteeing the infinite* (...) In order to become, it is essential to have a gender or an essence (consequently a sexuate essence) as *horizon* (...) If I am unable to form a relationship with some horizon of accomplishment for my gender, I am unable to share while protecting my becoming (...)

This God, are we capable of imagining it as a woman? Can we dimly see it as the perfection of our subjectivity? (...)

If she is to become woman, if she is to accomplish her female subjectivity, woman needs a god who is a figure for the perfection of *her* subjectivity (...)

In order to *become*, we need some shadowy perception of achievement; not a fixed objective, not a One postulated to be immutable but rather a cohesion and a horizon that assures us the passage between past and future, the bridge of a present that *remembers*, that is not sheer oblivion and loss, not a crumbling away of existence, a failure (...) ²⁰⁴.

By choosing God in their own gender, women make a statement that they do not agree with silencing and “othering”²⁰⁵. Despite Irigaray’s position that the female God is necessary to create women’s culture and spirituality, she has also stated that there is “no such thing as woman”²⁰⁶, so disrupting any possible stereotypes of what women are or can be in the eyes of the culture. Irigaray’s statement is especially significant

²⁰³ Cited in Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess*, 24.

²⁰⁴ Irigaray, “Divine Women” in *Sexes and Genealogies*, 61 – 67.

²⁰⁵ The ‘other’ stands here for a rejected opposition – a woman is ‘other’ to a man in this case. The term was first applied to the relationship between men and women by Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* (1949).

²⁰⁶ Morny Joy, *Divine Love: Luce Irigaray, Women, Gender and Religion* (Manchester University Press, 2006), 114.

remembering that in other currently existing religions, where the symbolism of the female deity is strong, for example, in India, the symbol of the divine woman does not yet guarantee women an escape from patriarchal dominance, and can rarely grant a satisfying subjectivity and freedom for women. Again, one of the main reasons is the rigid stereotyping of the feminine as mother and wife in these cultures, with the result that the all-powerful Hindu goddess, who used to be identified with the Supreme God, ‘was reduced to being the consort of the Supreme God (...) thus reflecting the position of women in society’²⁰⁷ This association once more emphasises that psychologically the divine is perceived as the highest legitimate institution – the patriarchal social order is reflected in and secured with a religious myth of the superiority of the divine male. Perhaps the most objective approach has been suggested by the theologian Elizabeth Johnson who said that “the point of our interest is that the female deity is not the expression of the feminine dimension of the divine, but the expression of the fullness of divine power and care shown in a female image”²⁰⁸.

For many women and men, the need for a healing of wounds caused by the psychological splitting that lasted through thousands of years of patriarchy is so strong that it is only possible by identifying with or reflecting on an image and myth of the female divine, which is a deep act of psychic compensation.

²⁰⁷ Klaus Klostermaier, “Śakti: Hindu Images and Concepts of the Goddess”, in *Goddesses in religions and Modern Debate*, ed. Larry W. Hurtado (Atlanta, Georgia, University of Manitoba: Scholars Press 1990), 144.

²⁰⁸ Johnson, *She Who Is*, 33.

CHAPTER 3. MYTHOLOGY OF LEGENDS: THE POWERFUL DIVINITY OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN MARY

Introduction to Chapter 3

In this chapter, I give a considerable number of examples of the non-orthodox narratives about Mary. In my work, I call these short stories “legends”. Although legends were usually gathered and published as part of the Christian cult of Mary (Mariolatry), they did not belong to the dogmatic Christian teaching and represented the creative folklore. The earliest sources of the legends of Mary are the various versions of the “Six Books” apocryphon, which are likely to have originated during the late fourth century²⁰⁹. They emphasise the cult of Mary:

(...) from the towns and from distant regions; and from Rome, and from Alexandria, and from Egypt, and from Athens; daughters of kings and daughters of the magnates of nations. And daughters of Procurators and of rulers; and they brought honours and offerings, and they came and adored the Lady Mary (...) And whosoever had an affliction, she healed it”²¹⁰

The power of Mary to heal and perform miracles is also evident in the legends of Mary that formed in the subsequent centuries in Christian countries. The most recent legends I use in my work come from the 20th century Lithuanian sources. I suggest that such a widespread and long-spanning collection of narratives in the various Christian countries across the globe illustrates that the archetype of Mary is alive.

The purpose of this chapter is to bring to light the Shadow stories (the non-orthodox, compensating the orthodox) of Mary, and to offer a rich mythological source of a non-Christian Mary by the help of folklore amplification²¹¹ and some Jungian interpretation. In this chapter, I mainly use the work of the Lithuanian folklore researchers to elaborate on some details of the legends since, in my opinion, this strengthens their mythological resourcefulness. For example, if I tell a legend which says that someone saw Mary sitting on a tree branch, I enhance this legend with the

²⁰⁹ J. Shoemaker, “Marian Liturgies and Devotion in Early Christianity”, in *Mary: The Complete Resource*, edited by Sarah Jane Boss, 130-45 (London: Continuum Press, 2007)

²¹⁰ Agnes Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca* (studia Sinaitica, 11; London: C.J. Clay and Sons, 1902), cited in Stephen J. Shoemaker, “*Marian Liturgies and Devotion in Early Christianity*”

²¹¹ Amplification is Jung’s method, usually for analysing dreams. It involves the use of mythic, historical, cultural and personal parallels in order to clarify and add more meaning to the material that is obscure or difficult to understand.

folklore material which informs us about a Goddess who lived in trees in her bird demeanour; or if I tell a story about Mary's feet-marks on stones, I use the research material which says that in old times the mother of the tribe used to carve her feet on large stones to mark the boundaries of her tribe's land. Such an interpretation further fuels the mythological imagination about Mary, which is one of the purposes of this chapter. I consider the fairy tales and the folklore narratives about stone, water, lakes, tree, bull, etc., to be the amplification stories that explain the symbol of Mary.

I see these stories about Mary as the Shadow mythology of Mary which can contribute to reducing the psychological devaluation of women caused by the over-elevation of males in the most important areas of human life over thousands of years. Due to the patriarchal structure of society, the lives of many women have been reduced to an existence in the Shadow of the collective culture for centuries. However, everyone and everything that lives in the Shadow also has a story to tell.

These Shadow stories have a compensatory nature. How does this compensation work? For example, if the cultural collective attitude is that there is no female God, then in the Shadow narratives such as legends and fairy tales, we read about a terribly powerful figure such as Baba Yaga, or the Virgin Mary behaving like a witch. That is how the collective and individual psyches regulate themselves to remain whole, or to heal a split caused by one-sided conscious attitudes. In Baring and Cashford's view:

The predominant mythic image of the age – which could be characterised as ‘the god without the goddess’ – continues to support the very oppositional and mechanistic paradigm that the latest scientific discoveries are refuting. This means that two essential aspects of the human mind are out of accord with each other. It may seem a lot to claim that mythic images are so important to all areas of human experience, but the discoveries of Depth Psychology have shown how radically we are influenced and motivated by impulses below the threshold of consciousness, both in our personal and in our collective life as members of the human race (...) One way of bringing the myth of the goddess back into consciousness is to tell again the stories people have told down the millennia (...) then this neglected, devalued but apparently unquenchable tradition may speak for itself²¹²

²¹² Anne Baring and Jules Cashford, xiv.

Telling the Shadow, or non-Christian stories about Mary is what this chapter aims to do. Each story adds to the body of the non-Christian myth of Mary. The purpose of telling these stories is to change the imagination about Mary, to bring her Shadow qualities into our consciousness, to recognise that in these Shadow stories Mary shows characteristics of the sovereign female deity. Such a strong and charismatic Mary who has an independent life in the Shadow narratives such as fairy tales and legends, is the central figure of the thealogy of Mary. As I have mentioned in previous chapters, although I situate the non-Christian Mary at the centre of her own spiritual system independent from Christianity, Mary can also be seen as a powerful sovereign goddess within Christianity, Goddess religion, Pagan religion, and so forth, if a person feels that this expresses her/his religious reality better. My purpose is to provide readers with additional mythological sources for Mary.

Jungian analysis provides many people with a possibility to discover an inner spirituality because it works, usually through dream analysis, with the religious images produced by the numinous archetypes. The analysis of religious symbols that emerge from the unconscious allows one to reconnect with one's inner spirituality. Depending on the individual, it can revitalise her/his belief in the mainstream religion or inspire an individualised religion/spirituality. In any case, a person gains an individual myth that adds more meaning to life. In the late 1970s, Naomi R. Goldenberg, reading Jung's letters to Freud, observed that,

Jung suggested that psychoanalysis sets itself up as a new sort of religion – that psychoanalysis teaches people how to live by “myth”. This was the only way, he told Freud, that psychoanalysis could effectively combat 2,000 years of Christianity²¹³

Following this thought, I suggest that a thealogy of Mary based on the individually re-narrated myth of Mary has the potential to recover women's confidence which has been damaged during the 2,000 years of patriarchal dominance over women in Christianity. I suggest that the non-Christian Mary can provide women with a meaningful myth by which they can live. In other words, Mary could become the space in the women's psyches for the individual connection to the divine. It is my intention that the narratives provided in this Chapter serve as a basis from which each woman can derive her own myth of Mary.

²¹³ Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods*, 47.

I have argued that as the latest representation of the female divine in the Western World, Mary has a part in each woman's psyche in that she symbolises the archetype of the Self, therefore, women's personal lives and experiences are part of the Mary myth. A myth that includes women's experiences is no longer the Christian myth of Mary but a myth belonging to the female divine archetype that is sovereign in its existence. Finding how to relate to the patriarchal/Christian Mary means finding how to relate to the patriarchal/Christian side of woman's self – to everything that patriarchy/Christianity repressed, deformed or idealized in women.

The narratives about Mary become meaningful to a woman when she understands the myth of Mary in the light of her own feelings, personal experiences, associations, imagination, the fiction she reads, the fairy tales she knows, conversations, and many other aspects of her life. The personal relation to the female divine allows a woman to connect with her own divine self. This encountering of the divine through a personal myth enables women to avoid the fixation and rigidification of the female divine image. Seen through a personal myth, Mary can be that complete image, that divine horizon to which to aspire as suggested by Luce Irigaray²¹⁴ – different for every woman but an epitome of a life direction and self realisation.

Legends demonstrate the phenomenal powers of Mary and reveal her as a mysterious and complex divine figure. In what follows, I will mostly discuss Lithuanian legends published by the priest Robertas Gedvydas Skrinskas in his book *Piligrimo vadovas po stebuklingas Marijos vietas (The Pilgrim Guide to the Miraculous Places of Mary [in Lithuania])*²¹⁵, and a small number of legends from other countries.

The idea of this chapter is to highlight different aspects of Mary which legends seem to me to reveal, therefore, I created a subsection for each aspect: Mary the healer, Mary the Pagan Goddess, and others. For this reason, this chapter seems to fall out of the overall structure of the whole work. However, I would like to emphasise that this is done purposefully, in order to draw attention to these aspects, which would otherwise disappear among the interpretations and amplifications. Although the legends seem to repeat themselves in some of the subsections, I place an emphasis on a different aspect of the “character” of Mary each time. In addition, I purposefully give a large number of

²¹⁴ “Divine horizon” is a term coined by Luce Irigaray. See her essay “Divine Women” in *Sexes and Genealogies*, 61 – 67.

²¹⁵ R. G. Skrinskas has gathered the stories of Mary apparitions, paintings and carvings over a number of decades, and he kindly gave me his permission to use this material in my work.

legends in order to illustrate how widely these beliefs were spread, and to create a sense of a comprehensive myth. As I mentioned earlier, I enhance the meaning of each legend (or a group of legends) by my own interpretations, and by folklore material (this method is called “amplification” in Jungian analytical psychology) on the most important symbols with which Mary is associated – the stone, the well, the tree, the hill. These are predominantly the symbols of the Earth, and therefore represent Mary as the Earth Goddess. I also speak of Mary as of the Heaven Goddess although not in the framework of the Christian meaning of this title but as of the female symbol of the Sun.

The most significant theme conveyed through the legends that inspired in me the initial idea for a theology of Mary many years ago is Mary’s request that people should pray to her and build churches for her. Although some critics may object to my interpretation, I argue that the legends carry the message that Mary asks us to pray to her as to the sovereign female deity and build a belief in the divine female in our psyches/souls.

The power of imagination

Jung considered it to be a mistake to devalue the power of imagination. People all over the world use their imagination to create science, literature and art. Jung emphasised that:

The dynamic principle of fantasy is play, a characteristic also of the child, and as such it appears inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable. It is therefore short-sighted to treat fantasy, on account of its risky or unacceptable nature, as a thing of little worth²¹⁶.

An interpretation of Mary legends, as well as of fairy tales, requires employing fantasy and feeling/emotions, because the effectiveness of the myth depends on them. Taking the emotional factor into account while analysing religious symbols, myths, legends and fairy tales, is a method well founded in Jungian psychology. According to Marie-Louise von Franz, “An archetypal image is not only a thought pattern (...); it is also an emotional experience – the emotional experience of an individual. Only if it has

²¹⁶ C.G. Jung. *Psychological Types. or Psychology of Individuation*. (T. and A. Constable, Ltd, Printers to the University of Edinburgh, 1923), 82

an emotional and feeling value is it alive and meaningful”²¹⁷ In other words, if a religious symbol or a myth evokes an emotional response in a person, it is a sign that this symbol or myth is of an archetypal nature and that it is alive for a person. Therefore, if the non-Christian legends of Mary given in this Chapter make the reader feel emotionally involved, Mary is alive for him/her. The value of these stories will differ for each individual since it depends on the associations the legends trigger in each reader.

3.1. Mary as the central force of our Universe - the Sun.

The Sun is of feminine gender in many countries in Europe and elsewhere: Lithuania (Saulė), Latvia (Saule), Sweden (Sol), Germany (die Sonne), Norway (Bokmål language version, Sol), also in the Basque language in Spain and France (Ekhe), in Scottish Gaelic in Scotland (Grian), Yiddish (die Sune), Hebrew (Chama), also in the native American Indian Cherokee tribe’s language, and in Arabia²¹⁸. “In Anglo-Saxon *mōna* ... the moon, is masculine; *sunne* ... the feminine. ... In Old Saxon, too, *sunna* is feminine, *māno*, masculine ...”²¹⁹.

Before Christianity, the Sun was the female deity in many cultures, and “(...) In the Aryan in India, in Egyptian, Arabian, Slavonian, Latin, Lithuanian, Gothic, Teutonic, Swedish, Anglo-Saxon and South American the moon [was] a male God”²²⁰.

The mythologist Janet McCrickard asserts that sun goddesses are more common worldwide than the male sun gods. McCrickard suggests that the belief in the male solar deities spread due to a few popular Greek and Roman mythologies. However, detailed research reveals that these cultures had an earlier mythological layer in which the sun was embodied in the female deities²²¹. There are opinions that:

(...) the rising patriarchy in some cultures downgraded the power of the female realm assigning it to the Moon of lesser light claiming the power and brightness of the Sun for themselves (...) Sanskrit-related languages (e.g. Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Portuguese), assign a masculine gender to the Sun and a

²¹⁷ Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Interpretation in Fairy Tales* (Boston and New York: Shambala, 1996), 10.

²¹⁸ Various sources in the Internet. Yiddish - <http://www.behindthename.com/bb/fact/58072>; Hebrew: <http://www.unilang.org/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=8436&start=15>; Arabic: <http://www.phrasebase.com/archive2/all-languages/the-sun-the-moon-genders.html> Accessed 04/05/2012

²¹⁹ Max F. Muller, *The Science of Language, Vol.1* (Forgotten Books, 1891), 5.

²²⁰ Timothy Harley, *Moon Lore* (Forgotten books, 1885), 60.

²²¹ Janet McCrickard, *Eclipse of the Sun: An Investigation into Sun and Moon Myths* (Gothic Image Publications, 1990).

feminine to the Moon. Whereas in older languages of the same Indo-European family (e.g. Sanskrit, German and old Goidelic) the Moon is masculine and the Sun feminine"²²²

In the following paragraphs I present Lithuanian folklore beliefs in relation to the Sun. For that purpose I mostly cite and paraphrase the work of the Lithuanian folklore scholar Pranė Dundulienė.

In her research, Dundulienė came to the view that in the very early cultural stages, the Sun and the Moon deities had ornitomorphic (plant) or zoomorphic (animal) equivalents on the Earth; they were represented in people's imagination by the symbols of trees (especially the linden tree) or birds. The work of the 14th century Bishop Peter of Vilnius, says that Lithuanians regarded the Moon as feminine and called her Lela Manelia, the second most honoured deity after the Sun who was also feminine²²³. However, Dundulienė observed that with time, the Moon was identified with the masculine gender and it remains of masculine gender to this day, while the Sun is still feminine. She notes that Lithuanians very much respected the Sun and prayed to her. Also, it was taboo to point to the Sun using one's fingers, one could only point to her with one's face, otherwise it was thought that the Sun might get angry. It was also thought that the Sun lives forever and takes care of all the people equally²²⁴.

In Lithuanian myths, legends, songs, riddles and art, the Sun has been compared to and identified with a white (if rising) or black (if setting) cow or goat; a horse (often white, diamond, silver or gold); a snake; a bird; the World Tree; the linden tree (which was the dwelling place for female deities for many centuries); golden, silver and diamond apples and gardens; the fire; a diamond throne²²⁵. Also in widespread traditions in other parts of the world, the Sun was believed to be a bright eye, and it was said that many people with bad eyesight were cured at certain sacred solar healing wells²²⁶.

²²² Charles Musès, "Why the Sun is Feminine and the Moon Masculine", in "Lionpath" website dedicated to the work of Dr. Charles Musès. Site address: <http://www.lionpath.net/zwoelf.html> Accessed 06/12/2011

²²³ Dundulienė, Pranė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija* (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1988), 27 Eng. *The Cosmology of the Lithuanian folk people*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

²²⁴ Dundulienė, *Senovės lietuvių mitologija ir religija*, 130 Eng. *The mythology and religion of the ancient Lithuanians*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

²²⁵ Dundulienė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija*, 14

²²⁶ Charles Musès, "Why the Sun is Feminine and the Moon Masculine", in "Lionpath" website dedicated to the work of Dr. Charles Musès. Site address: <http://www.lionpath.net/zwoelf.html> Accessed 06/12/2011

When the Sun gained anthropomorphic features, she was imagined to be a beautiful girl with golden or fair hair wearing a long golden dress and a crown or a wreath; or as an old woman. She was interested in everything that was happening on the Earth and, while setting, she was concerned about the work people had accomplished. The Sun was the one to whom people were accountable for their work. As one Lithuanian folk song says, “The Sun asked about the day’s work/ Did you mow a lot?/ We mowed not too small an amount and not too great an amount/ We mowed one hundred [acres]”²²⁷.

Generally, according to Lithuanian mythology, the Sun lived a life like an ordinary woman: she would walk through villages and cross rivers, cook and wash, plant gardens, cut the bread, have a bath, etc. The Sun was an extremely empathetic Goddess, like a loving mother. For example, in a Lithuanian song about a soldier who dies in a battle the Sun speaks to the grieving sisters of the young soldier saying: “I will help you to grieve your brother/ For nine mornings I will be darkened by the mist/ And on the tenth morning I will not rise”²²⁸. In another song, a farmer who has lost his sheep asks the Sun for help. The Sun promises: “I will search for nine days/ And on the tenth day I will not set”²²⁹.

After the Winter solstice, the Sun would be imagined as coming back from a faraway land, beyond the mountains and valleys in an iron or a clay chariot. She also travels the skies in her golden or diamond chariot pulled by two horses – white (day) and black (night), and goes to sleep behind the mountains or in the depths of the sea. But before that, in the evenings, the Sun changes her chariot into a little boat in the shape of the young Moon. In Lithuanian songs, it is said: “The Sun lowered herself into the golden boat in the evening/ and in the morning she rose from the boat happily and flew up”²³⁰. Dundulienė observed that in popular art, the Sun was always portrayed travelling on the young Moon-boat that was not in its usual position but with its horns up; sometimes the horns of the Moon were so bent up that they looked like the horn of an animal, another religious object with which temples and places of prayer were adorned, representing the Cornucopia (in Latin *cornu copiae*), the horn of plenty. Dundulienė notes that this image of the Sun sitting in the boat-Moon or on the

²²⁷ Dundulienė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija*, 17.

²²⁸ Dundulienė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija*, 16.

²²⁹ Dundulienė, Pranė, *Pagonybė Lietuvoje: Moteriškosios Dievybės* (Moklso ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2008), 159. Eng. Eng. *Pagan Times in Lithuania: The Female Deities*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

²³⁰ Dundulienė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija*, 20

Cornucopia has been transferred to Mary who is very often portrayed standing on the young Moon. This Moon is the Sun's boat and her symbol of plenty, and Mary has taken on the meaning of the Sun. In some places in Lithuania (in the Lowland region), people still call Mary who stands on the young Moon "The Sun Goddess"²³¹.

In the European cultures of the North and around the Baltic Sea where long deep winters made the meagre sunlight vital for survival, the Sun meant the Mother, or the Grandmother. People had a close-knit relationship with the Sun as the source of energy, warmth and life so similar to the vital love of a mother. The Sun is called the mother in folk narratives and songs, and she particularly takes care of orphans – for many of them, she is their only source of warmth, the only object to speak to, onto which they can project their longing, expectations, pain and happiness.

According to mythological sources, the Lithuanian Goddess of Fate Laima was understood to be a stone (with a flat surface), in her material incarnation. In her ornitomorphic incarnation she was a linden tree and in her zoomorphic embodiment she was a bird (usually a cuckoo) that had her throne in a linden tree. In her anthropomorphic personification she was a woman whose throne was a stone, and in her divine embodiment she was the Goddess who lived in heaven and sat there in a diamond throne in the centre of the World²³². It is in this last personification that she is once again linked with the sun in which shape the Goddess Laima is an expression of the Sun's powers. Pranė Dundulienė²³³ observes that aspects of the Goddess Laima's incarnations have been bestowed on Mary, including the power of deciding fate and the habit of living in linden tree trunks as we find in many legends. It is not surprising therefore to see Mary in the legends sitting as a bird in a linden tree, appearing to be surrounded with a radiating light over the linden trees or stones, making the Sun dance and rotate.

This personification of Mary as the Sun or as the Sun Goddess is very important to a theology of Mary. It assigns light and consciousness to the realm of the female deity. As I have suggested already, this view challenges elements of contemporary Goddess religion that hold that the Goddess belongs exclusively to the realm of the night and the Moon, which in turn are identified with the unconscious. With the image

²³¹ The paragraph is based on Dundulienė, *Lietuvių liaudies kosmologija*, 19-85

²³² Based on Dundulienė, *Pagonybė Lietuvoje: Moteriškosios Dievybės*, 50-62. Eng. Pagan Times in Lithuania: The Female Deities.

²³³ See Dundulienė, *Pagonybė Lietuvoje: Moteriškosios Dievybės*, 50-62. Engl. *The Pagan Times in Lithuania: The Female Deities*.

of Mary being the Sun and the female, the world does not have to be divided into the female in the underground and the male in the heavens. Imagining the Sun as the female and the Moon as the male disrupts rigid views of the Goddess religion which often reiterate the patriarchal duality of heaven-earth, light-dark, male-female by limiting themselves only to the Earth/body and the moon/unconscious sphere. Such dualistic views seem to be heavily influenced by the patterns of gender revealed within classical mythology – perhaps, again, a consequence of being over influenced by elitist western purveyors of classical mythology as more or less the only alternate imagery to Christianity.

3.2. Mary - the Pagan Goddess.

Pagani means in Latin the country-dwellers, the rural people who resisted Christianity and remained loyal to their gods and goddesses when Christianity became popular in more urban areas and among richer people. Some Mary legends are invaluable in illustrating the shift from Pagan to Christian religion.

I have discovered Mary as the Pagan/Nature Goddess mainly in Lithuanian folklore sources. Lithuania was the last country in Europe to accept Christianity in 1387; one of its regions, Žemaitija (Lowland), was officially baptised only in 1413. Christianity was initially accepted by only a small number of high ranking persons while the rest of the country was baptised gradually during the following centuries. Therefore, the Pagan traditions were still strong even a few hundred years after the official national baptism, and legends coming from that period are revealing.

The following two stories are examples from Lithuanian folklore heritage illustrating the imagination of people at the introduction of Christianity:

Mary appeared in Šimonys (a small town in Lithuania) for the first time, in 1445, during the dawn of Christianity. Three children got lost in a forest while picking mushrooms. Scared, they started praying, and suddenly, they saw a vivid light over a pine tree. Staring into the light they saw an extremely beautiful Lady picking fruit from the pine tree. The children became even more frightened; they thought that by walking about the forest they had angered the Goddess of the Holy Forest, and she wanted to punish them because before [Christianity] no human being was allowed to enter the forest. But the Lady said: “Do not be afraid. This place has been sacred for ages and so it will remain. My name now is The Mother of Mercy. Build a house of prayer in this

place, and I will bless the whole country. Just like the branches of this tree extend in all directions, so shall I bestow favours from this place, to all who will need them”

The second revelation in Šimonys happened in 1670. The watcher of the forest²³⁴, on the 15th of August, saw a woman sitting on a tree trunk in the forest, with a child on her knees. She was crying that people had destroyed her home and for a hundred years now she had suffered cold and famine. The watcher proposed that the woman warm up at his house, but she answered: „This place has been meant for me for ages and I will wait here until good people build me a house”. The watcher asked her name, but she only replied: “Your son will tell you my name”. When he returned home, his dumb son began to speak. The first words he ever said were: “Mary, Mother of Mercy”. Soon they built a church in this place²³⁵.

On the basis of these legends it can be reasoned that Mary replaced the ancient Lithuanian Goddess of the holy forest, and took over her duties – to represent the sacredness and the power of the forest and nature, and to be the carer of all people. It is important to note, that the narratives of the legends above do not associate the Goddess of the forest with the Christian church – she has her own autonomous realm in which she dwells. When speaking to the children, the Goddess of the Holy Forest/Mary addresses the unconscious of the nation and the future of the nation. The future of the nation is symbolically represented by the children in the first legend: the children are not only the future but also individuals whose conscious attitudes have not yet become fixed or rigid and in fact have not yet fully formed therefore they can respond to unusual *religious realities* instinctively, genuinely and creatively. Her request to build a house of prayer in a natural environment can be read as a request to honour the instinctive, the wild – nature is the sacred house, the house of prayer. For those who will do so, she promises her blessing, which can be interpreted as a better connection with our instincts and the Self. Honouring the connection to the wild and instinctive in us will keep our souls/psyches healthier and happier. The fact that Mary’s figure in this legend is surrounded by light not only suggests that she is being likened to the central

²³⁴ A watcher of the forest was a person whose job was to look after the forest, guard it from thieves, clear it, replant it, collect wood for the fire for his employer - usually a rich person who owned the forest.

²³⁵ Robertas Gedvydas Skrinkas, *Pilgrimo vadovas: po stebuklingas Marijos vietas* (Kaunas: Judex, 1999), 36. Eng. *A guide for a Pilgrim: Visiting the Miraculous Places of Mary*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

force of the World, the Sun, but also that she is the light that enlightens people – Mary appears and explains things to people who are confused about the new religion, Christianity.

In the second part of Šimonys legend given above, a nameless woman is crying and saying she has been homeless for a hundred years, which probably marks the period from the start of Christianity during which people have gradually abandoned their Pagan beliefs. She refuses to leave the holy forest which used to be her home, a place where people and nature were once at one. This woman *appears* to be a powerless, confused and helpless woman because that is the image given to her by Christianity. However, the real power of this strange woman shines through in the story, in that, by requesting that people build her a house of prayer, she is effectively claiming back the respect and worship she deserves. She demonstrates her power by making a dumb child speak her name.

The Šimonys legends suggests that the archetypal life-assuring energy of nature was perceived by people as the female divine. It is quite noticeable in the legends that the Goddess of the holy forest was given a new name but in essence she stayed what she had always been – nature; that is not just the nature of the surrounding world, but the divine aspect of human nature as well. The light surrounding Mary is symbolic of her Sun aspect in people's minds; symbolically, the Sun is equivalent to the God/Goddess. The Sun and the Goddess symbols express the divine source of all creation ungraspable by human consciousness. Perhaps it was an instinctive act that the collective Self of Pagans was projected on the image of Mary during the period of religious turmoil in which the Pagan divine images that used to guarantee the meaning of people's life were condemned. We know from Jung that the rise of Christianity marked profoundly valuable changes in people's psyches – namely, a personal relationship to the divine and a clear separation of consciousness from the unconscious, the good from the bad. Yet arguably, many positive things have also been lost in this painful period, such as relation to nature, and respect for women.

Another legend from Pušalotas (in Lithuania) explains the origin of the local church and also helps us to further explore the mythology of Mary as the Pagan Goddess:

The name of this town [Pušalotas] arose from the word “pine”. (...) Mary appeared there towards the end of Paganism. One morning during the time of haymaking, a girl walking with a sickle saw a woman sitting on a pine tree with

the body of the dead Christ on her knees. The girl asked: “Why do you sit there?” The woman answered: “A church will be built here”. To this day in [the church of Pušalotas] there is a very old painting, representing this legend: the girl with the sickle stands under the pine, and the Divine Mother sits on the tree with the body of the dead Christ on her knees...²³⁶.

Mary sitting on the branch of a tree in the middle of Summer with the dead body of Christ on her lap is an unusual image to our informed consciousness – we know that Christ died in Spring, that a man’s body would be too heavy for a slender woman to carry up a tree, and that Mary should not be sitting on the branches of trees telling people to build churches in the place of those trees. A complete lack of precision for Christian symbols illustrates that for the people of that time the messages of the Church were foreign and they interpreted them in a way that suited their beliefs better. Paganism, still rooted in the unconscious of people during the early Christian years, could not immediately give way to the new religion; therefore we observe how people unconsciously smuggled Pagan motifs into the Christian mythology. Arguably, Christ is not understood here as a man with an actual weight or as a man who has just experienced a dramatic fate, but as the child of Mary, as an inseparable part of Mary, and therefore it is not important whether Mary holds him as a newborn child, or as the dead Christ. It makes sense if Mary is identified here with Mother Nature, and Christ with the fruit of nature – a fruit of the pine tree. There may also be parallels with the Lithuanian Goddess Laima who, according to the Lithuanian folklore mythology, dwells in trees in her Cuckoo incarnation, as well as the Great Goddess Bird described in Marija Gimbutas work. Laima, the Fate Goddess, was one of the main Lithuanian female deities in the last centuries before Christianity. It is a deeply rooted knowledge for Lithuanian even these days, that the Fate Goddess Cuckoo may spell the number of years left to live (it is equal to the number of the uninterrupted cuckooing one hears). In her demeanour as the Luck Goddess, a cuckoo can decide one’s money matters, therefore everyone hearing the cuckoo must have some money in their pockets; this belief is still very strong among Lithuanians, even if in a playful form. Lithuanian scholars such as Pranė Dundulienė and Marija Gimbutas undertook research into the Fate Goddess and discovered that her ornitomorphic form as a cuckoo later became the

²³⁶ Skrinskas, 39.

anthropomorphic Goddess Laima who in Christianity was transformed into the figure of Mary²³⁷.

The next legend that speaks of the Pagan genealogy of Mary comes from a small town Ugnioniai, Lithuania:

The name Ugnioniai comes from the word “fire”. In Pagan times a holy fire was lit there. (...) in Ugnioniai in the year 1413, Lithuanian knights Vytautas and Jogaila began to baptise the people of Žemaitija²³⁸, destroying the sacrificial altar-stone with signs on it. The locals visited this place [the stone] even after baptism; they brought offerings and worshiped it just as their great grandparents had, although the clergy forbade it (...)

A revelation of the Divine Mother happened in Ugnioniai in 1657. There was talk in all of Žemaitija that someone saw the Divine Mother near a spring [in Ugnioniai]. The water from this spring took on miraculous powers. They [the Church officials] sent a committee who did not find witnesses but also did not prevent anyone from washing their eyes in this spring. This spring, running from the left bank of the river Dubysa, was already known in Pagan times as having miraculous properties, and during Christianity, a picture of Mary was hung near the spring. To this day the locals are certain that in Ugnioniai Mary miraculously cures those who turn to her²³⁹.

The legend says that although people were baptised, they continued to worship the spring and the stone in Ugnioniai. The legend identifies and emphasises the connection between the miraculous powers of the spring in Pagan times and the miraculous power of Mary. We see that the people continued worshipping the Pagan places after the Baptism in 1413, however, a few hundred years later, in 1657, the miraculous powers of the spring were attributed to Mary. This way the legend as it illustrates the convergence of the Pagan and Christian beliefs.

²³⁷ Marija Gimbutienė, *Baltų mitologija*. (Vilnius: Mokslas ir gyvenimas, 1986) Engl. *The mythology of the Balts*; 2. Norbertas Vėlius. *Chtoniškasis lietuvių mitologijos pasaulis*. (Vilnius: Vaga, 1987). Engl. *The Chthonic World of the Lithuanian mythology*; 3. Pranė Dundulienė. *Paukščiai senosiuose lietuvių tikėjimuose ir mene*. (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2006) Engl. *The Birds in Old Lithuanian Beliefs and Art*; 4. Pranė Dundulienė. *Pagonybė Lietuvoje: Moteriškosios dievybės*. (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2008) Engl. *The Pagan Times in Lithuania: the Female Deities*, 2008).

²³⁸ In English – Lowland. It is one of the current Lithuanian regions, a sovereign land at that time.

²³⁹ Skrinskas, 41.

Next two short stories come from the Lithuanian ethnic lands²⁴⁰ in Poland. The first one – from Leśna Podlaska place:

The bas-relief [of Mary], situated at the main altar, is made from fieldstone with a reddish tone. The carving is oval shaped. The history of “the brightest image of Mary” begins in the year 1683, when on the 26th of September two boys herding cattle, found the figure, shining with brightness, on a wild pear tree. Worship of the Forest Queen evolved very quickly. Princess Anna Radziwiłłowa, chancellor of the Great Lithuanian Principality, funded a “dress” to adorn the figure, which was made of pure gold decorated with 155 diamonds, 291 rubies and 59 emeralds²⁴¹.

And from a place called Lubawa where there is a sanctuary in the name of Mary, comes another story explaining why this sanctuary was built in this particular place which in the past was a sacred Pagan forest:

The history of this sanctuary has its beginnings in the 13th century, when a missionary and bishop of the Baltic lands named Christian, came to the beautiful linden forest – the “Holy Grove” of Prussian Pagans. The Bishop was drawn to the vicinity of Lubawa by unusual news. Here, over a linden tree at a stream, appeared a great light and there was found the wooden figure of the Mother of God²⁴².

It is interesting that in the first legend from Leśna Podlaska Mary is given the name of the Forest Queen without the slightest hesitation, and that she is worshipped not as the Divine Mother or the Virgin Mary but as the Goddess of the forest. In addition we hear of an overwhelming number of precious stones placed on the dress of Mary which symbolise trust, expectation and gratefulness and emphasises the dimension of the cult of the Forest Queen/Mary. In the second legend, the Holy Grove of Prussian Pagans produced a statue of Mary, which, we understand from the legend,

²⁴⁰ Ethnic lands formed by changing the borderline between Lithuania and Poland who are neighbouring countries. People of the Lithuanian ethnic lands in Poland, Belarus or Latvia (which are countries sharing the border with Lithuania) still identify themselves as Lithuanians.

²⁴¹ Antoni Jackowski, ed, *Miejsca Święte Rzeczypospolitej: Leksykon* (Wydawnictwo Znak: Kraków, 1999), 159. Eng. *The sacred places in the territory of the former Lithuanian-Polish union called Zhechpospolita*; also: *Z Dawna Polski Tyś Królową: A guide to the crowned pictures and statues of Mary in Poland between 1717 – 1990*. Edited by the nuns of the Siostry Niepokalanki convent. (Szymanow, Poland, 1990), 243-245. Citations translated from Polish by Rasa Luzyte.

²⁴² *Z Dawna Polski Tyś Królową*, 336-338.

was a natural cause to build a sanctuary in that place. The Pagan Grove became the Christian sanctuary by the help of Mary.

The Pagan-Christian correlation was not just felt at the merger of the two religions. In the American author Barbara Walker's words, „it could be said that Christianity and paganism co-exist even now, for the greater part of Christian worship, sacraments, and basic theology came from pagan heritage”²⁴³.

How these short legends can compete with the well developed myths of Isis, Astarte and other pre-Christian female divine figures? Would I not be better speaking of those great deities in order to emphasise the Pagan roots of Mary? In my opinion, these short locally resourced legends are the best sources for recovering the Pagan heritage of Mary for one simple reason – the folk legends about local goddesses or spirits that connect in their storyline with Mary feels much closer to an individual's culture, whereas the myths about Isis or Astarte might feel too distant, arising from foreign or elitist belief systems and cultures. Various Western cultures with the Roman Catholic history has dozens and often hundreds of Mary legends in various folklore collections, research works, or church archives, which altogether constitute a vast body of Mary mythology, a large part of which stands at odds with the mainstream Christian myth. I would suggest for those interested that they might try to find a few local legends to make the myth of Mary and at the same time the theology of Mary closer to their experience. To take an example in Scotland, one of the richest folklore heritages belongs to Our Lady of the Isles of whom Fr. Michael MacDonald writes the following:

In Scots Gaelic there is a special name for the Virgin Mary which is used for her alone – "Moire" (Mary). The ordinary word for Mary is "Mairi" but this word is never used to denote the Virgin Mary. Her special place in the lives and culture of the people demands a special name. On the lips of many Gaelic speakers today can be regularly heard the phrase "A Mhoire" (By Mary). Innumerable blessings, hymns, religious songs, legends, and pious customs relating to "Moire Mhin Mhathar" (Sweet Mother Mary) form the great majority of all the collected material of Gaelic folklore in the Isles. Mary's name is to be found in

²⁴³ Walker, Barbara G., 758.

connection with plants, nuts, birds, and the sea itself, called "cuilidh Moire" (Mary's Treasury)²⁴⁴.

I invite the reader to interpret these ostensibly Christian sources their own way, so that they discover the character and the personality of Mary, and see her as an autonomous figure living her own mythical life (often as a goddess of nature) and not limited by her stereotypical Christian role as the sweet mother of Jesus or as an intercessor between the people and God.

3.3. Mary as the Goddess manifesting in Earth symbols.

In legends, Mary acts as the divine expression of natural powers, and her symbols are the soil, the stream, the tree, the spring, the hill, the stone in which, according to Gimbutas, the powers of the Earth are concentrated. Gimbutas especially noted this in relation to the Pregnant Goddess-Earth Mother, saying that the fertility of the Earth and the veneration of the pregnant Earth lasted at least from the start of agriculture in the Neolithic age for 9000 years until technology invaded the fields, and that during that time the people believed in the concentration of the energy in the humps, hills, and tree trunks²⁴⁵ which were pregnant like women's bellies.

A social psychologist Ginette Paris observed that "What we call today a "virgin" forest was in former times called a forest "of the Virgin"²⁴⁶ As Paris further noted, in our times, "unutilised" often means useless and non-profitable instead of untouched, unknown, and all virginal things come under this understanding. Arguably, the former understanding of a virginal nature gave people a sense of their inner sacredness. Some contemporary authors²⁴⁷ express a view that there is always a part of us that is virginal, wild, natural, that must stay unutilised. This is that inner and natural sacredness that is revered by people through the image of Mary. Mary legends, associating her with the simplest but fundamental objects of nature that are virginal in their essence, highlight these objects as a sacred part of ourselves.

Mary is worshipped in legends *like* pre-Christian goddesses who were seen as the embodiment of various aspects of nature. The research of some authors confirms the

²⁴⁴ Fr. Michael MacDonald, an online article "Our Lady of the Isles". On the internet site of RC Diocese of Argyll & the Isles (Sgir-Easbuig Earraghaidheal 's nan Eilean), internet address <http://www.rcdai.org.uk/our-lady-of-the-isles.html> Accessed 21/05/2013.

²⁴⁵ Gimbutienè, *Senoji Europa*, 185.

²⁴⁶ Ginette Paris, *Pagan Meditations: Aphrodite, Hestia, Artemis* (Spring Publications: Dallas, Texas, 1991), 114.

²⁴⁷ In particular, see the writing of Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Luce Irigaray, Ginette Paris.

uninterrupted myth of the sacred female continuing from the dawn of humanity through every religious transformation to this day. Gimbutas claims, for example, that:

There is no doubt that the prehistoric veneration of Mother Earth survived intact up to the time of the worship of Demeter and Persephone in Greece, Ops Consiua in Rome, Nerthus in Germanic lands, Žemyna or Zemes Mate in the Baltic area, Mother Moist in Slavic lands, and elsewhere. Her power was too ancient and deep to be altogether destroyed by succeeding patriarchal religions, including Christianity. She was therefore absorbed, and became known in Western Europe as various saints: Radegund, Macrine, Walpurga, Milburga, among others. In many other lands, especially Eastern Europe, she fused with the Mother of God, Marija. The Black Madonna is this same Earth Mother, whose blackness represents the colour of Earth's fertility²⁴⁸.

Sometimes Mary is simply dug out from the soil, like a fruit, a stone, a seed, which suggests that she is the Earth herself concentrated into a sculpture or an image, as illustrated by a legend from Gidle, Poland,

A miraculous figure, size hardly 9 cm, is grey and inconspicuous, carved in stone. The history of this sacred object begins in May of the year 1516, when a peasant Jan Czecek extracted the little figure of the Holy Virgin Mary while ploughing his field (...) ²⁴⁹.

The link between the worship of Mary and the belief in the Earth as a Goddess is mostly reflected in legends that bind her together with the symbols of the stones, springs, hills, water sources and trees. In the following sections, I give a series of such natural object/symbol interpretations, with the purpose of enriching the mythology of Mary. I base my interpretations on Lithuanian folklore in order to amplify the meaning of the above mentioned symbols.

STONE

The stone symbol is an inseparable part of the non-Christian mythology of Mary. Elinor Gadon reminds us that “the elemental form of the Goddess is a natural one, a sacred rock or a stone, charged with the energy of the molten fires deep in the Earth out of which all matter was formed”²⁵⁰. Many legends narrate that a sculpture or a

²⁴⁸ Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess*, 230.

²⁴⁹ *Z Dawna Polski Tyś Królowq*, 172 – 174.

²⁵⁰ Gadon, 29.

painting of Mary was found leaning on a stone, or that Mary appeared on a stone, often leaving an indentation on it in the shape of her foot, to collect the rainwater that can heal the eyesight. In Lithuania and elsewhere, stones were used as sacrificial altars in Pagan times. The connection between the sacrificial stone and the Christian church-altar is one of the most interesting motifs in the legends. A legend from Budslaviškis (ethnic lands of Lithuania, now Poland), says that:

About 1664 Mary appeared on a stone before shepherds. A small church was built there, and on the stone – an altar. Now the small church and the altar are part of a big church²⁵¹.

The stone symbol is not accidental; Gimbutas states that the powerful force of nature represented by the Great Goddess is accumulated in stones, mountains, trees, wells, animals²⁵², therefore she is inseparable from these symbols.

A stone does not only radiate the energy of the Earth; according to mythology, the Goddess herself occupies, or rather *is*, a stone. Folklore is a rich source for recovering the meaning of many symbols, especially in the Lithuanian tradition with which I am most familiar. In the animistic stage of the psyche, people believed that birds, animals and stones led the same life as them. All living or inanimate elements of nature had a soul, to which the soul of a person could be transferred, therefore one could change oneself into an animal or a stone²⁵³. Lithuanians believed that stones could wander just like people, and some legends say they used to grow²⁵⁴. One legend narrates:

Once upon a time, stones grew. It rained with stones; the bigger stones sank into the soil, and the smaller ones stayed on the surface and grew. In those times, people were miraculous and holy. Once, a woman walked carrying her child and stumbled on a stone, because she was barefooted. She then said: “I wish you had stopped growing!” And from that time the stones stopped growing. The woman hurt her toe and her blood spread on the stones. That is why some stones are red as if covered in blood²⁵⁵.

²⁵¹ Skrinskas, 96.

²⁵² Gimbutienė, *Senoji Europa*, 191.

²⁵³ Tarasenska, 18.

²⁵⁴ Tarasenska, 34.

²⁵⁵ Edita Korzonaitė, ed, *Kadaise ir akmenys augo. Lietuvių etiologinės sakmės* (Kaunas: Šviesa, 2007), 21. Eng. *Once upon a time the stones also grew: Lithuanian etiological legends*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

It is not hard to assume that the narrator of this legend has Mary in mind, who we recognise because she carries a child, is holy, and can perform miracles. She is a woman with an extraordinary power to make the stones stop growing; she participates in creating the matter of the Earth. Similarly, another Lithuanian legend narrates that:

In earlier times, stones also walked. But once God with the Holiest Mary and Holy Joseph were wandering on the Earth, and Mary pricked her foot [on a stone] so that the blood started running. She said, “Oh, I wish you could not walk!” And from then the stones stopped walking²⁵⁶.

In Lithuania there are stones, which, some folk narratives say, were once people. A Lithuanian researcher of stone mythology Petras Tarasenska writes that supposedly when these people changed into stones, those stones were alive: they roamed from place to place, spoke with each other, cried and in other ways communicated that they were alive. Usually such stones were „enchanted girls or old women”, although sometimes they also happened to be men.²⁵⁷ The stories about stones that were still alive “not long ago” seem to be a relic of the animistic stage of the psyche when all the objects surrounding humans were felt as alive, and humans did not strictly distinguish themselves from other elements of nature. With time, these animistic memories were rationalised with some socially appropriate meanings relating to marriage or other life cycles. In the region of Varėna in Lithuania, for example, the following legend was recorded:

Near a river and a church, there is a stone, which is believed to have been an enchanted maiden. (...) It was believed that this stone possessed miraculous and healing powers. On the fiftieth day after Easter at the beginning of the 20th century crowds of people would gather there, particularly women. Believing that the ill would be suddenly cured, they walked around the stone, and then went to church on their knees. (...) It is said that this stone appeared in a mysterious manner. It was a petrified girl, whose father gave her away to be married to a man she did not love. On the way to church she cried and cursed her fate: “Better I change into a stone and remain at the side of the road, than live with a man I do not love”. It is said that until recently there were bridal ribbons on the

²⁵⁶ Korzonaitė, 22.

²⁵⁷ Tarasenska, 5.

stone, big tears rolled from it and at times heavy sighs were heard. But now the stone stands dumb, it does not wail and it does not cry²⁵⁸.

There are also stories that tell about stone-women protecting grain, which we can perhaps name the Goddess of Fertility:

In the village of Gaidukoniai (Lithuania), there is a stone between the bushes in the graveyard, which is covered in moss and named the Stone of Maiden. It is told that this is a petrified girl, who walks the acres and protects grain and after that she returns to the graveyard and lays there cold as a stone²⁵⁹.

The powers of grain multiplication and nutrition described in the above legend were attributed to Mary, which is evident in a mythical story from the Portuguese locality of Reguengo do Fetal, where Mary provides bread for a hungry girl and her family (the legend is given in the section 3.9).

In Lithuania there are also stones called “Old Women”. In the region of Molėtai there is a stone named the Old Iron Woman. It is said that in ancient times there lived a certain old woman who went around with a twig and hit people with it. After doing it, she would lie on the ground and would change into a stone. This figure’s characteristic function to hit people allows her to be recognised as a Goddess whom Maria Gimbutas called the Goddess of Death and Regeneration in whose hands were all the growth, health and well-being. This is a Lithuanian version of the Greek Goddess Demeter. Before Easter, on Palm Sunday (in Lithuanian it is called Posy Sunday; a compulsory ingredient of the posy was a budding twig of juniper, willow or other trees), there is still an existing tradition in Lithuania where a member of a family (usually a woman) goes to church very early in the morning to get the posy consecrated with the sacred water and, after coming back, she hits her still sleeping family on their bare feet with the budding twigs of juniper, birch and willow saying “It is the twig that beats you, not me, be happy and protected from all illnesses”²⁶⁰. The beating has the purpose to wake up the soul and body after the winter, make the blood run faster encouraging it to renew itself, be healthy and enjoy the renewal of the Earth²⁶¹. To come back to the legend, the old woman, after beating people with the twig, changes into a stone and merges into the Earth. The Earth appears to be her residence, her natural habitat, which prompts us that

²⁵⁸ Tarasenska, 6.

²⁵⁹ Tarasenska, 7.

²⁶⁰ This version of the saying has been taken from Irena Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 73. Engl. Ethnic Culture and Ecology.

²⁶¹ To make a slight deviation into the personal sphere, I would like to mention that my own grandmother used to do this to me when I was a child.

she perhaps *is* the Goddess Earth, and being a stone is simply one of her forms of being. In other words, the Goddess Earth can assume the shape of her creations – stones, mountains, trees. Such understanding arguably arises from the animistic stage of our psychic development.

Mary, who inherited the mythology of stones as her own mythology, was also often worshipped in the shape of a stone. One of the examples of Mary embodied in a stone is this legend:

In the place of Skepe, Poland, in the 15th century in the neighbouring forest sometimes a bright light was seen on a stone by the road, – so the residents marked the stone with a cross and prayed, experiencing numerous favours. The owner of the Skepe lands built a church there, and his daughter Sophia brought a figure of the Holy Mother (...) The miraculous figure, made from linden wood, presents the Mother of God as a young girl in a blessed condition²⁶².

This legend shows that the miraculous stone was associated with Mary, and indicates that the image brought to the stone was of the pregnant Mary. The stone, like the Earth, was believed to have contained the souls of dead people, and of unborn babies, as well as the powers of fruitfulness and healing.

Stone can also be a place that joins the Earth and the Heaven, a gate to both worlds. One of the Lithuanian fairy tales, “About a poor man’s daughter”²⁶³, which give in full in section 4.3 (Tale No.4) speaks of a father who searches for a Godmother for his new-born daughter, but his search ends in vain. Eventually, he sees the Virgin Mary sitting on a stone in the forest who agrees to become Godmother to the girl. The Virgin Mary baptises the girl on the stone on which she has just sat and requests the father to bring the girl back to the stone after 15 years. When the time comes, the father brings his daughter to the stone and the Virgin Mary takes the girl to the heavens to live in her house. While living there, the girl commits a wrong deed – she looks into the forbidden place. Angry that the girl disobeyed her order, the Virgin Mary throws her from heaven down on the Earth, and the girl drops next to the stone on which she was christened. The girl is eventually found by a prince who marries her and after many trials she settles to live happily. In regard to the stone symbol in this fairy tale, it appears in the first half of the tale as a door to heaven, and then as the door back to the

²⁶² *Z Dawna Polski tyś Królową*, 73-75.

²⁶³ Jonas Basanavičius, ed, “Apie vargšo dukterį”, in *Lietuviškos pasakos įvairios: antra knyga* (Vaga: Vilnius, 1995), 47. Eng. *Various Lithuanian Folk Tales: Volume 2*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

Earth. Through the stone, Mary is able to come to the Earth, take the girl up, and the girl can return to the Earth. Only on this stone, which serves as a threshold between the two realms, can the girl be christened. It is a sacrificial stone, which allows it to be used for both Pagan and Christian initiatory rites. As we have seen from the legends given earlier, the Pagan stones became the Christian altars. Clearly, new cultural images of Christianity were added to the old matricentral myth and the Pagan way of life: the Stone Woman or the Stone Goddess became Mary and had to be imagined living in the heavens, however, her connection to the Earth was preserved through the stone symbol.

MIRACULOUS IMPRINTS OF MARY'S FEET ON STONES.

A mystical power to make her feet create imprints on stones reveals yet another face of Mary as the Earth Goddess and enriches even further the mythology of Mary that is the main narrative body of the theology of Mary. The legends about the imprints of Mary on stones, I suggest, invite readers to imagine that the force, which formed the rocks deep in the Earth by applying pressure and heat on the minerals millions of years ago, was Mary, and therefore she possesses the power to make imprints on a hard cold rock as well. In legends, Mary can imprint a stone just by standing on it, which shows how immense her might is in the imagination of people's minds. In various small villages and towns of Lithuania, there are records about the stones with impressions of Mary's feet. In Lithuania, the most well known stone with Mary's imprint is situated in a famous for pilgrimages Lithuanian chapel of Šiluva – according to the legend, Mary appeared on this stone before shepherd boys in the year 1612, and later the Church altar was formed on this stone. Also, sources note the following stories: in a village of Mitkiškės, “There is a stone with the footmark of Mary, next to which there is a smaller impression which is considered to be the footmark of the baby Jesus. This stone was blessed, enclosed, and a cross put up beside it. This stone is distinguished for the wonders it performs”²⁶⁴; in Burbiškiai: “A stone with an impression of Mary's foot is located here – according to tales, Mary stood on this stone. This stone now serves as a foundation for the statue of Mary. The impression of her foot is clearly visible, 14 cm long, from her left foot”²⁶⁵; in Aukštakalnis: “It is known from the archives that a stone with Mary's footmark was here”²⁶⁶; in Daugėliškis: “In this village was a stone with

²⁶⁴ Skrinskas, 100.

²⁶⁵ Skrinskas, 99.

²⁶⁶ Skrinskas, 98.

two footmarks. It is said that in ancient times the Holy Virgin Mary rested on this stone and to commemorate that for people she made an impression of her feet on it²⁶⁷; in Skudutiškės there is a stone about which people say that:

(...) the water from the indentation on the stone can heal every wound, and one can be cured by drinking it. People gather the moss from the stone and make baths with it using the water from the nearby stream. People say that this cured many. The cross by the stone is nearly completely peeled off, and the stone itself gets smaller each time since people break off pieces for healing. The story of this miraculous stone started when Mary appeared on a stone and left the impression of her foot before the great plague in 1652. When the plague began, some people came to the stone with requests for protection and they survived²⁶⁸.

In Gelvonai (Lithuania), a stone known from the 13th century was built into the fence surrounding a church. People believe that the impression on this stone was left by Mary's foot and the following story is connected to it:

Three hundred years ago an heiress left for Vilnius, in order to pray at the picture of the Mother of God for a cure for her eyes. The night came upon her while she was still on the road in a forest. Suddenly, Mary appeared before her on a stone. When she disappeared, the heiress approached the stone and saw in it an indentation filled with water. She washed her eyes with it and was cured²⁶⁹.

The Lithuanian researcher of mythological stones Petras Tarasenska says that in 1958 in Lithuania there were around 150 stones with impressions of feet on them²⁷⁰. According to him, these impressions are called "the feet" referring to the longitudinal indentations in the stone, about 10-40 cm long, 4-15 cm wide, which sometimes resemble a bare footmark or a booted footmark. On the majority of stones the indents are already indistinct, but it is visible that they were human-made, that is, deliberately carved out. Stones with some footmarks, particularly those of Mary, are often considered miraculous²⁷¹.

Tarasenska notes that stones with impressions of feet are also encountered in Poland, France, Scandinavia as well as other lands of Eastern and Western Europe, and

²⁶⁷ Skrinskas, 99.

²⁶⁸ Skrinskas, 101.

²⁶⁹ Skrinskas, 43.

²⁷⁰ Tarasenska, 20.

²⁷¹ Tarasenska, 20

in Africa, North America and Asia. According to his research, mythologies throughout the world narrate that the feet are made by Mary, Jesus, the Devil, the Saints, a bear, Adam, Buddha, a giant, etc. This suggests that the impressions of feet were carved in stones with a definite goal, and in each culture this custom formed separately.

Tarasenka suggests that the Stone Age can be considered the beginning of setting footmarks on stones to mark the „footmark of Earth” and today a foot is used as an official unit of measurement in some countries; according to Tarasenka’s argument, it was the matriarchal societies whose tribes used stones to mark their fields, waters and forests – they engraved impressions of a foot of the mother, the founder of the tribe, whose name was inherited by the whole group, and after her death her daughters continued the tradition²⁷². The tribes believed that the engraved footmarks had magical meanings and helped to carry dead souls to stones. These souls became the guardians of the tribe, and at times a stone was covered with footmarks because the whole tribe wanted to come from it. Even when stones that used to mark the occupied grounds lost their importance, people still believed for a long time that in stones with impressions live the souls of the foremothers and forefathers. Also, Tarasenka informs us that a Lithuanian archaeologist K. Tiškevičius placed an article in *The Warsaw Gazette Nr.225* in the year 1857 noting that in the majority of places in Lithuania, after the death of a family member, the custom of throwing a stone with a foot impression into a river or a marsh was still observed. Tarasenka himself reports finding a stone with a footmark carved on it that had the initials H.L., as well as a stone with a footmark in a graveyard in Lithuania. Tarasenka suggests that this explains why in Lithuania as well as in other places in Europe there are so many stones with impressions of feet, why sometimes they are adult footmarks and other times children’s and why such stones are found in marshes, in water and other places that are difficult to access²⁷³. Explaining this custom, Tarasenka noted that, believing a clan or a tribe to have come from stones, people committed souls to stones and believed in the rebirth from stone or tree; when a member of a tribe died, their soul was transferred to stone, and when a baby came into the world, the soul came back from the stone. According to Tarasenka, this idea had its origins in the ancient belief in the abundant Earth, the Goddess giving birth to all. In the Earth there is constantly a multitude of babies, which are prepared to be born, just as there are seeds from which trees may grow. A revered stone is a cosmic uterus: life

²⁷² Tarasenka, 30

²⁷³ The paragraph is based on Tarasenka, 20-33.

comes out of the uterus and comes back to it. Tarasenka emphasises that from the belief in stones containing the souls of the dead later developed the custom of making tombstones from stone or wood; it was believed that they were the supports of the soul. Also, from archaeology and the work of Marija Gimbutas we know that European megalithic tombs were holy places, in which the ceremonials of regeneration and worship were conducted, and the stones at the entrance to tombs were marked with symbols of the Goddess (triangles, zigzags, cup marks²⁷⁴) played their role in forming our current tradition to place the stones at the graveyard.

The information which Tarasenka provides in relation to the origin of the footmarks on stones suggests that stones with impressions which are identified as Mary's feet, mark her right of ownership to that place. She is now the "Mother of the tribe", or nation; psychologically, to identify with her is to find one's own identity. These associations relate to the idea of a theology of Mary that Mary can be the place for finding an individual relation to the Self; as a result of this relation one can gain a better understanding of one's personal identity and acquire the validation of it.

WATER

In fairy tales, there are two types of the Waters of Life – the Healing Water and the Living Water. A Lithuanian researcher Irena Čepienė observes that in fairy tales, these Waters can restore eyesight, heal wounds and illnesses, make one younger, change one's appearance, make one gain a superhuman strength in a fight with a dragon or evil forces, allow one to come back to life from the dead. However, Čepienė notes that "it is not by [the Living Water] that the life is returned; the Living Water *is* the life itself that returns to the healed body"²⁷⁵.

The identification of water with life is not accidental; it comes from an archetypal knowledge. The belief that water and life are the same "reflects the old mythological worldview given to the value of water that it has an ability to pass its life-powers to humans and animals"²⁷⁶. The Waters of Life are difficult to get, they are found in the depths of the seas, in the realm of the dead. This is a symbolic representation of the waters in the depth of the Earth, of the birth waters in the womb, or of the unconscious, if speaking in the terminology of depth psychology.

²⁷⁴ Gimbutas, *The Civilisation of the Goddess*, 299.

²⁷⁵ Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 31.

²⁷⁶ Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 31.

Linguistically there is a connection between the female sphere and the water sphere in Lithuanian: a woman in Lithuania *išteka* (gets married), which in its literal interpretation means “flows out”, like a river, or running water, blood or other fluid.

Water in the shape of springs and wells was venerated; in Lithuania, for example, there are many records of the wells to which were attributed healing and other miraculous aspects, people would wash their sore body parts in them and bring some water home. For example, a legend from Barūnai (ethnic lands of Lithuania, now Poland), subtly explains the reason why Mary chose a particular place to be worshipped:

Around 1680, Mary appeared before a man called M. Pesliakas and told him that she wants a church to be built in this place (...) Underneath this church there was a miraculous spring²⁷⁷.

In this short legend, Mary asks by appearing to the man to mark the spring and to build a sacred house on it. The legend emphasises that the spring is in itself worthy of being the object of contemplation and prayer, it is worthy of a sacred house. This legend illustrates the thinking that Mary unites the healing powers of the Earth with the spiritual sphere. This is a motive of the psychological compensation for mainstream Christian approaches which honour the mind over body, the Heaven over the Earth.

Partly, the wells were considered miraculous because they sprang from the depth of the Earth – an unknown mysterious realm – and because the wells ripple and spring even in winter. The mythological records from the period just before World War II, tell that according to local people, “it is the old goddess that bestows the healing powers to the water, although her name is no longer remembered. However, people still leave pieces of cloth, food and money next to the well”²⁷⁸.

Mary’s identification with the miraculous water sources and her image as the divine healer show that Mary’s image strikes a deep archetypal chord in people’s unconscious. Mary is still perceived as the force in whose realm the essence of life is grounded, especially in the streams and wells. Mary *is* the well that springs from the depths of the Earth, therefore she is the mistress of the beyond and the source of life.

Not only was the water of the well felt to be alive. Any source of water was a living formation. In Lithuanian legends, many lakes are formed from bulls, pigs, lambs, and clouds. Some very big stones also have a relation to water. For example, one such

²⁷⁷ Skrinskas, 96.

²⁷⁸ Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 26.

stone called Mokas, lies in the region of Ukmergė, near the river Šventoji. The legend has it that:

A whole family of Mokas stones once existed: wife, husband and children. They all lived on the right side of the river Šventoji. However, here they were always bothered by the children from villages – they tossed stones at them, lit fires on them and tried to poison them. Angry at such insults, Mokas family decided to move to the other side of Šventoji. They made their way to the left side for nine days and nights, mooing loudly. The father Mokas with his children happily arrived on the other shore. Having gotten out of the water Mokas stopped to see where his wife was. It turned out that she had got stuck at the bottom of Šventoji and there she remained. Mokas kept calling his wife for a long time but to no avail. For a long time afterwards, the back-side of Mokas' wife stood above water, but after a time it disappeared under the water²⁷⁹.

Because the stones were mooing, we can assume that they were imagined as a cow and a bull. It is also worth noting that in the legend, the locals tried to poison the stones suggesting that they were alive. These two facts give us an impression that mythologically there was no difference between being a stone and being a bull (or a cow). Further, we read in the mythology of Old Europe described by Gimbutas, that a bull/cow was the epiphany of the Great Goddess, in other words, the bull/cow and the Goddess were the same. Gimbutas suggests that the head or the skull of the bull is a representation of a woman's uterus with fallopian tubes²⁸⁰. If this hypothesis is accepted, it is possible to understand, why the heads of bulls were so important in the symbolic system of Old Europe and why on ancient vases it is shown how plants or insects, and at times also the anthropomorphic form of the Goddess herself, arise from the skull of a bull. According to Gimbutas, the identity of the uterus and Goddess are the predominant motives in the religion of Old Europe, which serves as a key in understanding the majority of prehistoric symbols²⁸¹.

A confirmation of the symbolic proximity between the head of a bull and the uterus is the bull's connection with water. “The bull in legends is from water while the

²⁷⁹ Tarasenko, 13.

²⁸⁰ Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess*, 245.

²⁸¹ Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess*, 246.

lakes are from bulls”, says Marija Gimbutas²⁸². In Lithuania there is a lake called ‘The Lake of the One Who Moos’ (Baublys), and the following legend is related to it:

In a place where there now a lake lays, there was a huge forest. Once, a small girl was looking after a herd of cattle. Suddenly, an enormous cloud came over and a forceful storm began. All the bulls clustered together. Only one bull whose name was Baublys separated from the herd and ran through the forest. The girl ran after him but she could not catch him up. She got angry and swore at him, “I wish this frightening cloud would swallow you!” And with her words the cloud dropped there where the bull stood, and an enormous ditch filled with water appeared in that place. Since then this lake is called Baublys, and in winter, when the ice covers the lake, it moos like that bull²⁸³.

According to many legends in Lithuania, the lakes make a mooing or a howling sound, an impression which people probably gained during storms and windy weather. People also believed that the lakes appear directly from the travelling clouds: the clouds sometimes fall down from the skies with water and with whole fish in them. In Lithuania there are 127 lakes that are said to have formed from the waters of a cloud²⁸⁴. In many legends, the cloud waters come down after the people guessed the cloud’s name correctly. Those names were usually the names of the bulls or oxen. For example, one legend says that:

Once, a black cloud came over and started to howl greatly. The people did not know what to do out of fear. They brought a very old man who was around 100 years old. The old man started calling the cloud various names of oxen and when he guessed the name “Bulis”, the lake dropped down²⁸⁵.

That lakes were alive was a common belief that survived in some places up until very recent times. A teacher-researcher Stanislava Stripinienė has been recording legends for many years in the local area where she lived, in the region of the lake Plateliai in Lithuania. In one of the legends it is said that the lake Plateliai appeared after a little pig nuzzled the boundary of a lake in the ground, which was followed by a cloud that came over and lay there making a lake out of its waters with fish in it. Stripinienė’s notes include the memories of a local woman called Magdalena

²⁸² Gimbutas, *The Civilisation of the Goddess*, 246.

²⁸³ “Baublys (ežeras)“, at *Wikipedia webpage* [http://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baublys_\(e%C5%BEeras\)](http://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baublys_(e%C5%BEeras)) accessed on 22/11/2011. Eng. *The lake Baublys*.

²⁸⁴ Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 36.

²⁸⁵ Čepienė, *Etninė Kultūra ir Ekologija*, 37.

Kaniavienė (1909-1992) who lived near Plateliai. Magdalena narrated that her grandfather Sakaliauskis had no doubts that this strange lake will go away one day. As a little girl, Magdalena believed it and waited for the lake to walk away, she dreamt she would gather the fish from the dried bottom of the lake²⁸⁶.

There is also the entire mythology of the underground waters. At the bottom of the seas and lakes, divine and supernatural beings lived as if there was no boundary between the Earth and the waters. With the elevation of the importance of the heavens, the underground waters became associated with the realm of the dead, populated with the miraculous birds of water – ducks, geese, swans. These birds were often regarded as young girls who have changed into water birds after having been killed, having suffered a hardship or having been rejected by their loved ones – parents or lovers (an example of this is the well known story of the Russian folk tale the Swan Lake). From the mythological comparisons it can be said that Mary is the quintessence of the figure that Gimbutas called the Goddess Bird who was represented as a water bird and who decided about one's fate. Birds brought life's mystery in their eggs, nourished and regulated the wellbeing of people by providing eggs, meat and feathers, and therefore were considered to have a mysterious divine nature. According to Gimbutas, the Goddess Bird was understood as the giver of life but also as the harbinger of death in the guise of a bird of prey²⁸⁷. The relation of Mary to the Bird Goddess of Fate is strengthened by the power both of these Goddesses have in deciding one's fate or changing one's fate. As a life and fate giving Goddess, the Bird Goddess was imagined as a cuckoo; as a luck giving Goddess she was imagined most often in the form of water birds – ducks, geese, swans, cranes – because they were “an important source of food, and consequently, a symbol of well-being. Water birds remain as magical birds in folk stories, increasing or decreasing wealth and fortune”²⁸⁸. The water birds would probably not yet end this complex relational sequence of water mythology: Earth-springs-stones-bulls-lakes-water birds, to which Mary is closely connected, however, the idea is that as the Earth's living energy was expressed in legends and myths through the symbols discussed above and were attributed to the Pagan deities at first and then to Mary.

²⁸⁶ Stanislava Stripinienė, “Sakmės, Padavimai apie Platelius”, in Žemaičių kultūros draugijos redakcija http://www.samogit.lt/LANKYTINOS_VIETOS/sakmesPL.lt.htm (The website of Samogitia region in Lithuania). Accessed 22-11-2011.

²⁸⁷ Gimbutas, *The Civilisation of the Goddess*, 230.

²⁸⁸ Gimbutas, *The Civilisation of the Goddess*, 234.

TREE

The following legends show Mary's close connection with [sacred] trees. One of them, from Foy (Belgium) says:

A woodsman was cutting down an old oak tree on July 6, 1609 when he discovered in the middle of the trunk what seemed to have been an old wayside shrine of Our Lady. Along with a tiny sandstone figure [of Mary] were some beads, a lock of human hair and three bars of iron that once must have been a protective grille. A farmer and a labourer who were nearby ran to the astonished woodsman. They examined the articles and agreed that the tree had once provided a natural niche for the statue, but that in time the bark had grown over it.²⁸⁹

And a story from Poland narrates the following:

The history of the image of Mary in Tuligłowy, Poland, begins in the 14th century, when the residents of Kudrenice located the picture [of Mary] on a poplar tree (...) around which they gathered for shared prayers (...)²⁹⁰.

In legends, Mary (or her statue or painting) often is found in a tree, or appears over or on a tree. This suggests that the tree and Mary stand for each other. In many cases, both the tree and Mary mark the central axis of a village, of the local mythology, of the spiritual life of a person. Perhaps, just as the tree is rooted in the Earth, the archetype of Mary has an ability to make one feel psychologically rooted in her/his life. This is perhaps a remnant of those times, when the tree was identified with the mother. Jung noted that one of the symbols of the mother was:

(...) the wood of life (...) or tree of life. The tree of life may have been, in the first instance, a fruit bearing genealogical tree, and hence a kind of tribal mother. Numerous myths say that human beings came from trees, and many of them tell how the hero was enclosed in the maternal tree-trunk, like the dead Osiris in the cedar-tree, Adonis in the myrtle (...) Numerous female deities were worshipped in tree form, and this led to the cult of sacred groves and trees²⁹¹.

Dundulienė holds that the concept of the Tree of Life has been encountered in art and mythical stories from as far back as the Stone Age. Dundulienė reconstructed

²⁸⁹ Joan Carroll Cruz, *Miraculous Images of Our Lady: 100 Famous Catholic Portraits and Statues* (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc, 1993), 42.

²⁹⁰ Jackowski, 237. Also, *Z Dawna Polski Tyś Królową*, 148-150.

²⁹¹ Carl Gustav Jung, *CW 5: Symbols of Transformation* (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London and Henley, 1967), 219.

the Lithuanian image of the Tree of Life using universal mythological motifs, which were preserved in different types of texts, folk songs, paintings, monuments of architecture and common customs. She noted that the Tree of Life is similar to the Tree of the World, Tree of Fertility, Tree of Underground, Tree of Learning, and is often identified with the world axis, the pillar of the world, the mountain of the world, the cross of the world, a temple, and that the most revered trees were those that gave the greatest quantity of seeds and fruits, as well as those that stayed green all year²⁹².

The great power of the trees is defined, in Lithuanian, by a word that is used to express the budding of trees in spring; it is said that the trees “sprogsta” – burst or explode – a word which in Lithuanian describes the time when the buds open and the first young leaves appear. This word marks the powerful eruption of life, which Gimbutas compared to the birth of a baby. People believed in the transformative potency of the trees, which resulted in the cult of the Evergreen or Ever-Budding Tree. It is not surprising, therefore, that in ancient European art and folk culture the Tree of Life is closely tied with a woman giving birth and a woman nursing, which is illustrated by Image 6.

Most often, the Tree of the World, or the Tree of Life, was supposed to grow in a place acknowledged by people as the centre of the world within the territory occupied by them. This is also reflected in the legends of Mary where a church, and then a village grow around her miraculous image that is hung on a tree. Perhaps, placing Mary onto a tree in the early days of Christianity was a symbolical gesture allowing people to transfer the elements of their old religion to the new Christian religion.

Dundulienė's research shows that according to the ancient religious outlook of Lithuanians, it was thought that human souls come from trees, so they are born from trees. The body parts of humans were identified with the Tree of the World, and a person's body rose from the Earth: blood from water, breath from wind, warmth from fire, the head was identified with the crown of a tree (or sky), the eyes with the Sun, the chest with air, the abdomen with water, the feet and legs with roots and trunks of the tree, the bones with stones, the veins with branches, the hair with grass²⁹³. It was believed that the tree is immortal and even if it withers, the life inside it remains. The

²⁹² Pranė Dundulienė, *Gyvybės Medis Lietuvių Mene ir Tautosakoje* (Vilnius, Lithuania: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2008), 15. Eng. *The Tree of Life in the Lithuanian Art and Folklore*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

²⁹³ Pranė Dundulienė, *Gyvybės medis lietuvių mene ir tautosakoje* (Kaunas: Šviesa, 1994), 11. Eng. *The Tree of Life in the Lithuanian art and folklore*.

carriers of the substances of life were not only trees, but also their buds, and fruits. According to Lithuanian mythology, people believed that trees possessed souls and hearts, that they were able to feel pain, to groan and speak, and that from a cut tree the blood leaked.²⁹⁴ In Lithuanian mythology, people changed into trees if they died young, if they happened to have a great sorrow, if they were killed, or if they sinned. Also, the souls of all the dead lived in the trees, equally as in stones and water, but in the trees they were imagined as birds. The trees were the dwelling places for both the deities and the souls²⁹⁵.

In the old Lithuanian songs, people speak to the trees, for example, an orphan girl says in a song, “Oh, linden-tree, linden-tree, dear linden-tree/be my mother”; And the linden-tree answers, “I do not have the feet, or the hands/ I do not have, dear orphan girl, the kind words”²⁹⁶. Although the tree cannot replace the mother, the orphan’s pain is reflected and eased by invoking a conversation with the tree. It is similar to the effect which is achieved when praying to the image or a painting of Mary. Notably the statues of Mary which are made from wood illustrate the connection between Mary and the centre of the world or the inner person’s life personified in a tree.

In Lithuanian folklore, there exists a connection between a tree and the Goddess of Fate Laima, often in her ornitomorphic embodiment as a cuckoo. Mary’s relationship with the Goddess Laima, a Lithuanian version of the Goddess Bird described by Marija Gimbutas, is supported by the fact that both of them have the power to assign or change human fate, to cure or to punish, to feed and to increase people’s wellbeing. In legends, Mary, like the Goddess Bird, also sits on the branches of trees. During the early Christian period, people believed that Mary lived in the linden-trees or in other trees, which is illustrated by many legends which I have already presented in previous sections. This connection between the Earth’s vitality, tree, bird and female deities was inseparable and the mythology of Mary inherited it, which makes it an inseparable part of the theology of Mary.

HILLS AND MOUNTAINS

Hills or mountains were also understood to be concentrated places of the Earth, radiating the regenerative and creative power of the Earth, similarly to the stone, the

²⁹⁴ Dundulienė, Pranė, *Medžiai senovės lietuvių tikėjimuose*. (Mintis: Vilnius, 1979), 15.

²⁹⁵ Dundulienė, *Medžiai senovės lietuvių tikėjimuose*, 15.

²⁹⁶ Dundulienė, *Pagonybė Lietuvoje: moteriškosios dievybės*, 54. Eng. Pagan Times in Lithuania: The Female Deities

tree and the well. Walker notes that the hills and mountains “were identified with the breasts, belly, or mons veneris of the Earth, as well as with paradise where the gods lived”²⁹⁷. For example, a short legend from Alkovičiai (Poland) says:

(...) On the outskirts of the town there is a hill which is considered to be a sacred place of Mary, where miracles happen²⁹⁸.

Employing the Jungian way of thinking, this legend might be reminding us that miracles happen on the inner sacred hill of a person.

3.4. Mary – the Healing and Helping Deity.

The most common theme in the legends is about Mary healing the afflicted, which often intertwines with her instruction that people should pray to her. Whether the imagination that Mary as the female deity is able to heal is instinctual or compensatory, it seems to have captured people’s imaginations for many centuries. The research and treatment approaches of many modern psychologies and even some systems of depth psychology are constructed in such a way that they often downplay the importance and the healing element of the religious imagination (a certain meditation where a person creates an imaginary individual bond with a religious figure) and the healing role of religious myths in general. However, religious self-healing, first of all psychological but also physical, is founded on imaginary processes. Jungian psychology values both the imagination and the religious experiences of a person – these aspects are not only a prerogative of each person but an essential condition for re-gaining the meaning of life and healing the soul/psyche. Religious healing may vary from praying a Rosary, taking part in pilgrimages, experiencing the presence of Mary (through revelations, apparitions, or simply by reading legends or prayers to Mary), to conventional psychotherapy, shamanism and even spirit possession. Imagination is a creative ability given to every individual, and it is not always personal – in legends and fairy tales, according to analytical psychology, the collective unconscious reveals itself through the repetitive narrative patterns. The legends of Mary present first of all the collective unconscious substratum; however, they are designed to strengthen the individual’s relationship to Mary.

²⁹⁷ Walker, Barbara G., 695 (author’s emphasis).

²⁹⁸ Skrinskas, 96.

Very often, Mary heals with the help of a water source. The well is an especially effective healing substance in the legends of Mary. For example, a story from Višakio Rūda, a small place in Lithuania, says that:

Once a soldier was walking home after his service in the war finished. The soldier had lost his sight in the war. He was wandering all over the place because he couldn't see where he was going. In one place he stopped to rest and heard a stream rippling nearby. The soldier hurried towards the source of the sound and found a little well. He washed the dust from his face and suddenly started seeing. When he was praying and thanking God for this happiness, Mary appeared before him and asked him to tell all the people about this miracle. (...)Water from this spring has healed many people from incurable diseases.²⁹⁹

And another legend from Jodłówka, Poland tells that:

On the slope of the "Mountain of Mary", in the vicinity of a stream, a painting of the Mother of God hung on a tree. Beside it, in a poor cottage lived a widow with her only son. During the harvest, the mother was working in the fields and left her child in a furrow, where a snake bit the child. The desperate mother carried the child before the picture of Mary, washed the arm and face of her son with water from the well and called out: "Mary, deliver my son". The Mother of God heard the pleadings, and the child was cured³⁰⁰.

Not only are there many legends about the sources of healing water related to Mary; the number of healing springs or ponds associated with the Virgin Mary all over the world are impossible to count. The shrines on apparition sites or miraculous images of Mary which pilgrims of mixed spiritual and religious backgrounds visit seeking spiritual inspiration and healing, both emotional and physical, are inseparable from a spring, a cave, a stone – the Earth symbols – in the physical environment of the shrines, and in legends. Jenny and John Schroedel observe in their article "Health and Healing Springs", that apparitions and healing often go together, especially in "(...) places like Lourdes, France, and in India, where the shrine of Our Lady of Good Health exists to this day. Many apparition sites contain healing springs (...) where people can wash themselves and drink the water as they seek healing"³⁰¹. However, as we saw in the

²⁹⁹ Ilgevičienė, Audronė and Petras Ilgevičius, 70.

³⁰⁰ Jackowski, 114.

³⁰¹ Jenny Schroedel and Reverend John Schroedel, "Health and Healing Springs", in *NetPlaces* website. <http://www.netplaces.com/virgin-mary/messages-from-mary/health-and-healing-springs.htm> Accessed 05/10/2011.

above legends, not only famous places but also completely unknown and local places are full of the healing spirit of the Earth which is personified by Mary. The spring, the water and the roots of the tree can symbolically be understood as the entrance to the underworld, to the mother's womb, to the unconscious. Expanding on this theme, it is interesting to mention, in Barbara Walker's words that,

(...) springs, fountains, ponds, wells (...) in Northern Europe [are] associated with Mother Hel, whose name also gave rise to "holy" and "healing". Many pagan sacred springs throughout England received the name of Helen's Well during Christian times (...)»³⁰², and that water generally is thought to be the first of elements, the mother of all things³⁰³, therefore "correspondence between "water" and "mother" was (...) universal (...)»³⁰⁴.

A belief that a person can become cured at sacred sites is not surprising especially to Jungians who know that in our unconscious we have hidden possibilities for healing although it is also known that their manifestation cannot be controlled. In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung emphasises the water's relation to the mother and to the unconscious:

The maternal significance of water is one of the clearest interpretations of symbols in the whole field of mythology (...) From water comes life; (...) In the Vedas, the waters are called *matritamah*, 'most maternal' (...) The projection of the mother-imago upon waters endows the latter with a number of numinous or magical qualities peculiar to mother. A good example of this is the baptismal water symbolism in the Church. In dreams and fantasies the sea or a large expanse of water signifies the unconscious. The maternal aspect of water coincides with the nature of the unconscious, because the latter (...) can be regarded as the mother or matrix of consciousness. Hence the unconscious, when interpreted on the subjective level, has the same maternal quality as water³⁰⁵.

Although in my work I argue against the identification of Mary with the Mother, I do agree that the archetype of Mary also has its maternal function. Being the most recent living archetype in the Goddess-image evolution chain, Mary also represents the latest consciousness in the human-divine relationship. Mary is conscious to us as much

³⁰² Walker, Barbara G, 1067

³⁰³ Walker, Barbara G, 1066

³⁰⁴ Walker, Barbara G, 1066

³⁰⁵ Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, 219.

as we humans are able to reflect her divine archetype. As an expression of the archetype of the divine in the female gender, Mary embodies all that a woman can be; in her are hidden all possibilities and not only those of motherhood.

In legends, Mary heals in other unexpected ways. A legend from Monastirska in Belarus narrates the following story:

Near the Monastirska church there is a marsh, full of dirt and stones. The number of stones constantly increases. The people carve legs, arms, eyes and other images in the stones and put them into the marsh as votives [for Mary]³⁰⁶ expecting miracles in their illnesses and hardships³⁰⁷.

This legend is unique in that the marsh seems to serve for people as an embodiment of Mary. The marsh is the Earth that is moving, as if alive. The wetlands generally can be extremely viscous and fatal for humans as they have an ability to drag into the depths anyone who steps in them without care. However, they also drown forever something that people do not want. Biologically, a wetland is a very rich formation that accumulates acidic peat – a deposit of dead plant material. People must have known about its transformative ability; for example, it is widely known that iron in the Iron Age was dug out from the marshes and bogs.

The marsh's equation with Mary means that she is understood as the figure representing the mysterious viscous depths of the earth in which all illnesses can be isolated forever, or transformed. A marsh, like a spring-well, is an "eye", an opening connecting people with the force of the depths, with the inner divinity, with our unconscious, if we speak in psychological terms. People probably thought that the ruler of these unknown lands where no human can enter but the divine can – the unconscious and the deep or faraway places of the Earth – can take away any illnesses. The divinity they pray to travels beyond all worlds, easily passing the thresholds of life and death since these two aspects also belong to her; she is the one to be invoked when suffering in trouble or illness.

³⁰⁶ In ancient Roman religion, a votum, plural vota, is a vow or promise made to a deity. The word comes from the past participle of the Latin verb voveo, vovere, "vow, promise." As the result of this verbal action, a votum is also that which fulfills a vow, that is, the thing promised, such as offerings, a statue, or even a temple building. The votum is thus an aspect of the contractual nature of Roman religion, a bargaining expressed by do ut des, "I give that you might give." Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Votum> Accessed 11/12/2011

³⁰⁷ Petras Tarasenko, *Pėdos akmenyje* (Vilnius: Valstybinė politinės ir mokslinės literatūros leidykla, 1958), 32. Eng. *Footmarks on stone*. Citation translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

In the old times, Lithuanians used to send their illnesses not only into marshes but also into other faraway places by saying charms:

The Blessed Mother, the dweller of distant lands, take this illness over the dry trees, over the sand hills, over the iron mountain, where neither a dog barks, nor does a human enter. The Blessed Mother, carry this illness to the deepest pit, under the largest stones so that it will never ever return, so that it will not return³⁰⁸.

It is interesting to note that this chant calls Mary the dweller of distant lands, which aligns her with the bird that flies to faraway lands to spend a considerable period of time, or to the Sun that lives the whole night or winter behind the faraway mountains, forests and seas. So, Mary can take the illnesses over the seas and iron mountains, perhaps, in her Goddess Bird or Goddess Sun aspects. This is a beautiful symbolisation of those unconscious forces that govern people's lives and health. Arguably, this symbolisation *is* already a healing process.

Mary also heals in her tree aspect which, like water, signifies the entrance to the Earth, the centre of the world, including the inner world of an individual. A legend from the town of Rostenburg (Įsrutis) in the ethnic land of Lithuania which now belongs to Poland, narrates the following story:

In Rostenburg there is a place, where a tall Holy Linden Tree stands. This place is famous for its wonders. There is a chapel, where travelling pilgrims often stop. In Pagan times it was believed that under the roots of this tree lived small underground people called 'barstukai,' who appeared to the ill, usually at night under the light of moon. They cared for the ill and guarded them. For their friends, 'barstukai' brought goods from the cupboards of ungrateful people, and cared for their unfinished jobs. People, wanting to befriend 'barstukai', in the evening at home covered their table with white cloth and lay bread, cheese, butter and beer on it. If, on the second day, they decided that there was less food, it was a good sign, but if not – it meant that the gods abandoned their house. Later, the Holy Linden Tree became a place of gathering for Christians, where the Divine Mother was worshiped. This is connected with the following story: before an offender condemned to death appeared Holy Mary. To comfort him she left him a piece of wood and a knife, ordering him to carve what he would

³⁰⁸ Daiva Vaitkevičienė, ed, *Lithuanian verbal healing charms. Lietuvių užkalbėjimai: gydymo formulės* (Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2008), 165. Translated by Rasa Luzyte.

most want to see. When the day of punishment arrived, the offender stood before the court and showed what he had carved – it was Mary holding a child. Seeing this miraculous work, the Rostenburg judges let the convict go. He left town and began to search for a linden tree, on which he could hang his work, as Mary had ordered. So he roamed for four days, until he found a linden tree and hung the carved work. Since then the tree stays green in winter as well as in summer. At one time a completely blind man was walking past this linden tree. When he approached the tree, he felt a flooding light; he stretched out his arms and touched the carving of Mary. He was able to see at once. Hearing this, the residents of Rostenburg came with a great procession, took off the picture and carried it to town. They began to worship both the carving of Mary and the linden tree. But that same night the picture disappeared from town and again showed up on the tree, and this sequence was repeated a few times. Only then did the people understand the request of Mary and they built a chapel next to the tree. Even now at the Holy Linden Tree many miraculous things happen. In this area all the tops of the trees lean towards the chapel, as if the trees also reverence this place³⁰⁹.

We can make a few interpretations from this legend. Firstly, we see that Mary has been assigned the duties of the local Pagan health-guarding spirits ‘barstukai’. Secondly, the blind man in the legend approaches the tree and feels a flooding light coming from the carving of Mary. The act of coming closer (when the man approaches the carving) is similar to how Jung describes human life being a constant circumambulation towards the centre, towards the Self, which happens through the continuous dialogue between our ego and the Self. When one is close to the inner centre (in legends – to Mary) one becomes more whole, and all that was split becomes one again, therefore a person becomes healed (the blind man starts seeing again). Only in this place does it make sense to build a sacred house. This is perhaps the reason why there are so many legends telling how a picture or a sculpture of Mary is found by someone on a tree, a stone, a stream, yet when it is taken to the local church, it escapes and returns in a mysterious way to the place it was found, until people realise that the will of Mary was to build a chapel or church in that particular place. The message of the unconscious conveyed through Mary in such legends is about finding one’s own

³⁰⁹ Skrinskas, 40.

centre in oneself, looking at one's own heart and soul/psyche in order to read omens that enable one to understand where that sacred place is in oneself, instead of expecting to find it in places that do not offer much creativity – like the mainstream churches. My view is that the psychological message of such legends is an invocation to build the sacred house for the female divine in one's own heart. Mary legends embody the compensating component missing in the religion of the male God, and their narratives are in themselves a healing gesture of the human soul/psyche.

As I have mention in the Introduction, although the subject of the thealogy of Mary is discussed in this work in the framework of the Western world, the material for the discussion is used from many other parts of the world. Legends speak of archetypal energies, which found their expression in an image of Mary wherever this image was introduced. Therefore, for the thealogy of Mary, legends from Europe, America, Africa, Asia and other parts of the world are of equal importance if they bring a new way of looking at the archetype of Mary. For example, an interesting legend in terms of healing comes from Santa Anita, Jalisco, in Mexico. It uncovers yet another aspect of Mary – in it, the belief in Mary is understood as the watchful, observing relation of a human to the divine, which draws a similarity with the way Jung understood religion. The legend runs as follows:

In the year 1700, a certain Indian woman, a Christian, named Augustina, considered by villagers to be their *curandera*, or native doctor, took in a seriously ill, old hermit who brought with him a small wooden sculpture of Our Lady measuring only a foot and a half high. Before the old hermit died, he entrusted his treasured statue to Augustina. (...) Augustina, a devotee of the Blessed Virgin, told her patients to have devotion and confidence in the Mother of God. After each visit to the sick, she would routinely light a candle before Our Lady's image and would carefully observe the features. If the face became bright and glowing, Augustina knew that the patient would recover. If the face of the image became dark, she knew that the patient would soon die. She would then notify a local priest and prepare her patient for the reception of the sacraments³¹⁰.

It can be interpreted that it was her own soul/psyche that the *curandera* was watching by looking at the face of Mary to learn the answer about her patients; she was

³¹⁰ Cruz, 339.

consulting her insight, experience and intuition, and of course, the omens. Mary in the legend is at the same time the Fate Goddess and a mirror for the *curandera's* own Self. The legend alludes that whatever we ask Mary as our own Self, we will get an answer by carefully watching her face – that is, our own soul/psyche, the slightest shades of our own feelings, thoughts, knowledge, intention, experience.

Mary Ferrell Bednarowski, in her book *The Religious Imagination of American Women* researched how women from Jewish, Roman Catholic, Mormon, African-American Protestant, American Indian, Goddess-oriented traditions use their imagination and interpretation to transform or improve their religious tradition. In the chapter on healing and women's theological creativity, the author came to the conclusion that:

Over and over and in a variety of ways women in many communities suggest that “healing” is one of the essential functions of theological creativity.

Conversely, women hold both explicitly and implicitly that the most creative and compelling religious ideas – about the sacred, humankind, the world – are inevitably healing: that is, that however else they function, these ideas foster the possibilities of hope, persistence, and ultimate well-being for individuals and communities³¹¹.

In my understanding, Bednarowski means religious healing not as much in a physical sense but rather as a locus in which women can exercise their theological/theological creativity and authority, and find more meaning in their life. She further emphasises that imagining God as immanent, heals the alienation with the male deity, and cultivating ambivalence heals the split between wanting to accept the religion or reject it. The psychological benefits of religious creativity and imagination are also known to some psychological approaches such as Jungian depth analysis and the Chicana psychology which is oriented towards the American Mexican population. Roberto Velásquez, Leticia M. Arellano, and Brian McNeill express the view in their book that while most traditional schools of psychoanalysis do not incorporate the spiritual concerns of their clients into their approach, for the Chicana therapy it is essential since the life of people of Mexican descent is inseparable from spirituality, in which:

³¹¹ Mary Ferrell Bednarowski, *The Religious Imagination of American Women* (Indiana University Press, 1999), 150.

(...) of particular significance are the Catholic Church, and, in particular, the Virgin Mary. Successful treatment of Mexican American clients without consideration of their faith may be problematic. Many Mexican Americans highly esteem the Virgin Mary, or Virgen de Guadalupe, and consider her their “spiritual mother” thus looking to her for help and spiritual guidance. (...) For many Chicana/os and Mexicans, the image and concept of Our Lady of Guadalupe is more tangible, real, and accessible than God. (...) It is essential to understand the role clients assign to the Virgin Mary and how they perceive their relationship to her³¹².

Similarly, for most Roman Catholics, but even for many people without a Catholic background from the diverse community of the New Age spirituality³¹³, Goddess spirituality, or who hold undefined individualised beliefs, it might be beneficial to include in their spirituality visits to the shrines of Mary. The idea of the compensatory function of legends suggests that the telling of Mary legends allows people to invoke the presence of the female divine absent from Christianity’s myth. According to the Roman Catholic view, God the Father is everywhere and is observing everything at any given moment; yet the authors in feminist spirituality, as I have already mentioned in Chapter 2, noted the uneasiness of being under such a watchful eye. In contrast, legends give the impression that Mary can be invoked immediately after one says a prayer to her without placing a pressure on a person; legends suggest that symbolically, Mary appears like a sunray from the unconscious that lights up the consciousness and suggests a solution.

3.5. Mary – the Restorer of Life.

Legends in which Mary restores life to people illustrate the idea that her divine capacity is alive in the minds of people. Such legends symbolically prove that she is God, since only the creator of life can give it back. Legends in which Mary exercises her power to restore people to life are rich with symbols, which indicate that they spring

³¹²Roberto Velásquez, Leticia M. Arellano and Brian McNeill, *The handbook of Chicana/o psychology and mental health* (Routledge, 2004), 117.

³¹³The New Age movement is a Western spiritual movement that developed in the second half of the 20th century and it draws on both Eastern and Western spiritual, self-help and motivational psychology, holistic health, parapsychology, consciousness research and quantum physics. It aims to create an inclusive and pluralistic spirituality with a holistic worldview without borders or confining dogmas. (Based on Nevill Drury, *The New Age: Searching for the Spiritual Self* (London, England, UK: Thames and Hudson, 2004), 8-12).

from the unconscious mythological substratum. Not infrequently, such stories relate to Mary in her divine aspect as the Sea and Water Goddess. A source of water, as I have mentioned earlier, is a symbol of life, the unconscious, the mother. Mary is the archetype of the divine water powers, and the name “Mary” is linked etymologically to the word for ‘the Sea’ in many languages (in Lithuanian a certain type of Sea is also called Marios); perhaps that is why in the legends she can command a change in a fatal outcome and give life back to someone who has drowned, as in the following story from Trakai, Lithuania, from the year 1643:

A young boy drowned in a lake. When found, after two hours, he showed no signs of life. His parents, in despair, prayed for him to the Divine Mother of Trakai (a celebrated painting) and the boy came back to life³¹⁴.

Another story is from the works of Johannes Herolt called *Discipulus*, a Dominican Friar of Basel in the 15th century. It tells of a man who fell into a raging sea from a sinking ship and miraculously survived whereas many other people drowned. The man gives an account of his lucky escape:

When I was falling into the water, I called on the name of the Blessed Mother of God, and so, whilst thinking of her and calling on her name, I came to the bottom of the sea. And the Mother Mary, the Virgin Mary herself, who by no means can forget those who remember her, stood by me under the waters and in loving kindness covered me with her mantle, and thus protecting me under the waters brought me even to the shore³¹⁵.

Mary’s divine power to restore lives also manifests in other ways, for example, a legend about the image known as the Mother of Gypsies, originating from a small village, Rywałd in Poland, runs as follows:

In the year 1667, a priest wrote down a recovery of a boy from the dead. The devastated parents of a boy who died from suffocation delayed with the funeral for a few days but at last they went on a pilgrimage taking the body of their dead child to the Mother of God of Rywałd. Placed by the statute of Mary, the boy came back to life. This event was witnessed by a priest Łukasz Pilczewski. The cult of the Mother of God of Rywałd grew. In the year 1930, a mother of gypsy origin came to church with her very ill infant and cried for the help of Mary. Her child got well, and the gypsy woman cut her braid and offered it to Mary as a

³¹⁴ Skrinskas, 122.

³¹⁵ Herolt, 64.

votive. From her hair two wigs were made – one for Mary and another for Jesus whom Mary holds on her hands. The wig gives Mary a gypsy-like look, therefore she started being called the Mother of Gypsies³¹⁶.

It is my interpretation that the trust placed in and fantasies focused on Mary rise from the archetypal depths of the human soul/psyche which knows the power of the sea, nature, soul, spirit, the unconscious, the Self, and, subsequently, the female divine. Arguably, this knowledge comes from the time when, as the science tells us, humans were just the bacteria in the sea out of which humans have developed over millions of years. The symbol of restoring to life can be understood in many different aspects: finding one's own path, recovering from a spiritual death, from a creative death, not excluding the possibility of life returning in the physical sense as well. Since the female divine was not allowed in Christianity, re-telling such legends was probably vital in compensating for the lack of female power in the Christianity and in articulating the understanding of Mary as the essence of natural and divine powers.

3.6. Mary – the Deity of Supernatural Powers.

One of the most powerful demonstrations of Mary's divine might is illustrated in the apparition legend of the famous pilgrimage shrine at Fatima in Portugal, an excerpt of which I provide here:

The revelations of the Mother of God here lasted from May, to October 1917 (...) The witnesses of revelations became three little children (...) The first revelation happened on May the 13th. The apparition was announced by lightning in the east. Over the trees appeared the shape of a woman surrounded with a light that was brighter than the light of the Sun (...) The last revelation happened on October the 13th. The three children were then accompanied by around 70 thousand people. The “Lady from the sky” named herself the Divine Mother of Rosary. She ordered to build a chapel in her name in the place of revelations, and ordered people to pray the rosary every day. An unusual atmospheric occurrence happened just then – the so called ‘dance of the sun’. The sun had a silvery colour and was not blinding to the eyes. At a certain moment the sun dial began to rotate very quickly round its own axis. From the rotating surface colours separated (red, blue, green) lighting up the Earth. This

³¹⁶ Jan Korch and Włodzimierz Świdorski, *Miejsca Święte w Polsce łaskami i cudami słynące* (Warszawa: Adam, 2001), 236.

occurrence repeated three times. The Sun began to zigzag, as if dancing. At last it stopped and began to fall on the gathered like a fiery sphere (...) ³¹⁷.

Other sources claim that the same miracle of the Sun rotating and spreading colours was also a part of the Medjugorje (Bosnia and Herzegovina) ³¹⁸ and Naju (South Korea) ³¹⁹ apparitions of Mary. As I mentioned earlier, the Sun symbol has various meanings – the Sun is the symbol of the centre of the universe, of the Self, of God. In the icons and paintings Mary is often portrayed radiating sunrays from her body or her head. The Sun is perceived as the female deity in the legends of many countries and she is seen as providing energy, food, life, warmth. In the Fatima, Medjugorje and Naju legends, Mary stands for the ruler of the whole solar system the equivalent of which is the Self in the inner world of a person.

Marie-Louise von Franz claims that fairy tales and legends are often compensatory to the mainstream beliefs of a culture, just like individual dreams can be compensatory to something happening in the conscious life of an individual. Clearly, this apparition legend strives to compensate for the lack of the female divine, and for the lack of her power in Christian religion. The fact that hundreds of people claimed to have witnessed the Sun's dance at the Fatima apparitions, illustrates the depth of people's need to have the female divine and her religion, their desire to believe in her having such power that it can move the centre of the universe, of the existing rigid structure of society and religion. The Sun's dance reinforces Mary's order to build the house of prayer in her name, which, I would suggest, symbolically means to build people's belief in the female divine. From a psychological point of view it can be interpreted by the profound need to have an authoritative female divine – this need causes a group of people's collective unconscious fantasies to surface and become a believable reality that helps to restore equilibrium between the female and male divine powers in the collective unconscious.

Other stories illustrate the supernatural powers of Mary to control events that also require her to be in command of nature, as shown in the next two legends: in the first, Mary makes the flowers bloom on bare mountains, and in the second legend she draws a plan of a shrine from snow in the summer's heat:

³¹⁷ Zbigniew Pasek, *Miejsca święte: Leksykon* (Kraków, Poland: Znak, 1997), 93. Eng. *The sacred Places: Lexicon*. Translated from Polish by Rasa Luzyte.

³¹⁸ Pasek, 172

³¹⁹ Raymond Spies and Louis Couëtte, *Marija, kodėl verki?: įvykiai ir pranešimai iš Naju (Pietų Korėja)* (Kaunas, Lithuania: XXI amžius, 1995). Eng. *Mary, Why Are You Weeping?: Events and Messages From Naju in South Korea*.

In Guadalupe, Mexico, the Mother of God has been revered since the 16th century. Mary revealed herself four times to an Indian on the hill Tepeyac, the ancient place of the cult of the Aztec goddess, ten years after the capture of Mexico by Spanish conquistadors. Mary performed two miracles in order to convince the Bishop of those lands to build a shrine in her honour. She made live roses bloom on a bare hill in spite of the rocky nature of the place and its unsuitability for the growth of any vegetation, and above all she impressed in a miraculous manner her own image on the Indian's cloak³²⁰.

And the second legend runs as follows:

In Rome, Italy, after a warm summer night, the morning rays of the sun fell on the Esquiline Hill, on which a white cover of snow glittered in such a form that it resembled the form and dimension of a church. The snow, in spite of the torrid heat, did not melt. During the night, the patrician and the pope were informed in their dreams about the designs of the Mother of God regarding certain territory. There they built a chapel³²¹.

A very characteristic legend indicating Mary's supernatural powers shows her travelling in the opposite direction of the river flow. Only someone whose power is as strong as nature's can go against it, and on the cultural level it demonstrates opposition to the mainstream thought:

In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, in Poland, the meadows were once the place of ancient pagan worship. Legend has it that in front of the children herding cattle near the river Drweca appeared the figure of the Divine Mother surrounded with light and floating up the river. When she stopped at the level of today's monastic ruins, she was taken from the water and carried in a procession to church, from where during the night she disappeared. The next day, two lame beggars coming from town through the meadows saw this figure on a wayside tree. Having fallen to their knees, they were cured and received instructions to build a church there for the comfort of the religious folk³²².

The above legends are like flashes of realisation about the might of nature which people see in moments of instinctual and intellectual insight, and each of these stories are like precious stones or archaeo-findings in the fields of the psyche. By expressing

³²⁰ Pasek, 174, and also Cruz, 290

³²¹ Pasek, 218

³²² *Z Dawna Polski tyś Królową*, 64-66.

these insights, people created powerful narratives. Mary's extraordinary powers are acknowledged in the observations of some authors, often wondering why Mary is not recognized as divine. For example, an Indian author Madhu Bazaz Wangu described her experience that after arriving in the US she felt a longing for the female goddesses in which her own Hindu culture was so rich, and the American culture was so lacking. In her search, she visited Catholic churches and noted that "In local churches and cathedrals, I witnessed the majestic images of the Virgin Mary but was told that although she had extraordinary powers and unique characteristics, she was not divine"³²³. Similarly David R. Kinsley, an American professor of religion, notes that "(...) popular reverence for and worship of Mary have sometimes emphasized her powers in ways that the official church has seen as exaggerated or heterodox"³²⁴.

To come back to the legends, the next one tells about an unusual sign which Mary imposed permanently on the surface of the water:

In Ostrowąs, Poland, a shepherdess, guarding cattle near a lake, saw on a yew tree a picture of the Mother of God with a baby, surrounded by angels. The enigmatically delivered image was moved to a neighbouring village, where the building of a church was planned. However, the picture retreated through the lake Plebanka to its place of revelation, leaving to this day the luminous "path of the Mother of God" on the surface of the water. This was read as a sign that the church must stand in the neighbourhood of the tree on which the picture appeared³²⁵.

In the following legend, Mary's supernatural power is demonstrated by her mysterious travels in a boat without oars:

An ancient chronicler of Notre Dame of Boulogne (Boulogne-sur-Mer, Pas-De-Calais, France), relates that on a certain day of the year 636, under the rule of king Dagobert as well as bishop Saint Omer, at the delta of the river Liane appeared a mysterious boat – without oars, sails or a crew – which came to rest at the place, where today is situated the port of Boulogne. In the boat people found the figure of the Divine Mother surrounded by a strange glimmer.

³²³ Madhu Bazaz Wangu, *Images of Indian goddesses: myths, meanings, and models* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 2003), 9.

³²⁴ Kinsley, David R, *Goddesses' mirror: visions of the divine from East and West*. (Sunny Press, 1989), 235.

³²⁵ Korch, Jan and Włodzimierz Świdorski, 202. Also *Z Dawna Polski tyś Królową*, 466-468.

Surprised, people convened at the banks of the river. They took the figure with them and placed it in a chapel, which later was transformed into a church³²⁶.

The ability to move in the air is yet another demonstration of Mary's supernatural powers:

Some say that the figure from Cobre (Cuba) was hidden a long time ago in a cave on an island. Two Indians and a slave found themselves one day in the year 1600, on the waters of the bay of Nipe during a raging storm. Terrified, they began to pray to the Mother of God. Then Mary appeared before them and promised them motherly protection. The strong wind quietened down and the sun came out. Then the slave saw a white object hovering above the waves. It turned out that this was the figure of the Divine Mother, standing on a board³²⁷.

And here is another legend:

A legend from Tursko, Poland, narrates that an inn keeper from Lenartowice (...) Jan Biedała, whose apartment was damp, took a picture [of the Virgin Mary] from the wall and carried it outside, so he could dry it. Somewhere round 3 o'clock – in spite of the fact that there was no wind – the picture floated upwards, glided around 7 km and fell on a sandy place in Tursko. Many people witnessed this in 1764, on the eve of Green Feast³²⁸.

Mary, who can make the Sun dance and move in zigzags, who can keep the snow in the summer's heat and make flowers blossom on bear rocks, who can float up the river, sail on a boat without oars, imprint permanent signs on the water's surface, hover in the air or fly by air into places she wants – such a Mary is a new figure that can be the source of a liberating and empowering imagination. Mary presents herself as the vivid energy of movement, nature and power. This, in addition to the images of Mary already discussed where she sits on the branches of trees and on the beams of barns, lives in forests, walks the villages, gives expression of a supernatural and charismatic divine figure. I would like to emphasise that by such imagining exercise I do not aim to declare a piety for Mary in a way it is encouraged, for example, in the Roman Catholic Church; my purpose is to show that her image can be empowering, and to encourage symbolic richness of the image of Mary as the female divine in our psyches.

³²⁶ Cruz, 71.

³²⁷ Cruz, 63.

³²⁸ *Z Dawna Polski tyś Królową*, 318-320.

3.7. Mary – the Warring and the Punishing Deity.

The legends, in which Mary powerfully protects herself and her people, can be a source of empowering identification. In this section, I discuss legends in which Mary protects people as a warrior or punishes those that disobey her. By using her physical body strength and her commanding voice, she compensates for the whole culture of women's victimisation and identification with the often physically weaker sex. Through Mary, women are given permission to channel their instinctive and fierce self-protective energy. For example, tales by the Lithuanian historian T. Narbutas and the Carmelite Monk Father Hilarionas (18th century) speak of a certain miraculous event which happened in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania:

An insolent (...) soldier broke into a chapel in the Gates of Dawn³²⁹ in Vilnius, where there was a miraculous painting of the Divine Mother. The figure of Mary was adorned in gorgeous silver apparel, while the whole painting was decorated with beautiful precious stones. The high value of these inspired in the soldier the desire to possess them, so he climbed onto the altar and tried to tear away the silver adornment from the painting, but to his great surprise he could not do this, he felt as if a force was acting against him. Full of anger, he took out his sword and cut the face of the Divine Mother, causing blood and a scar to appear. The scar could never again be painted over. At the moment, when the soldier wounded Mary's face, she raised her arm and pushed the perpetrator so strongly that he flew out the window and having rebounded from the wall of the Gates of Dawn he fell to the ground, where only a bloody stain of him remained³³⁰.

This story illustrates a belief that an immediate result is expected not only in situations where Mary is called on for help but also where she is demeaned, showing that the relationship with the ego and the Self must be of correct dependency – a person depends on the divine being (in this case, Mary who symbolically is also the Self) more than the divine being depends on a person. The power and resistance of Mary stand in contrast with and compensate the mainstream Christian image of Mary who is most often represented as a young woman with a slender body constitution. In a psychological interpretation, such characteristics of Mary bring her close to the experiences of women who are not able to protect themselves and project their wish

³²⁹ The Gates of Dawn are the gates in the old defence-wall that surrounded the old town of Vilnius. The miraculous image of the Black Madonna is placed in the chapel above the gates and from this high position the image "oversees" a part of the old town through a large window.

³³⁰ Skrinckas, 145.

onto the supernatural being, the female deity, whose power to protect herself is unshakeable – Mary is understood as the inner strength of a believer.

In some cases Mary is invoked as the land Goddess under whose protection the whole village or country lies. Charlene Spretnak reminds us that Mary has often been called upon in times of struggle, one of these cases being in the Philippines: “(...) the modern world was shocked in 1986 to see news photographs of throngs of Filipinos “armed” only with statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary as they courageously faced down Marco’s tanks and armed troops during the non-violent revolution in the Philippines”³³¹. Some legends demonstrate how confident people’s belief was in Mary’s protection by stating that her voice alone was powerful enough to turn back the enemy, for example, as in this tale from Italy, in the Frascati, Lacjum region:

(...) among the mountains sounded the voices of soldiers, who approached Frascati. Suddenly squads stopped at the painted image of Madonna on the wall of the vineyard. The Virgin opened her mouth, and from it came a voice, with a power that would not accept any objections: *Indietro, fanti! Questa Terra e mia!* (Turn back, soldiers! This land is mine!). Nobody dared to counter. Frightened, they turned back (...) ³³².

These legends certainly create an image of Mary that is a long way from the dogmatic Christian myth. The images of Mary as the warrior, arguably provides people with resources for revitalizing their instincts of self-protection and re-establish people’s connection to their inner knowledge that something valuable in their lives can and must be protected.

3.8. Mary – the Deity demonstrating her will.

Mary expresses her will in different ways in legends – by speaking in revelations and dreams, or by actions. Her will is mostly evident in the legends in which Mary performs silent but clear actions such as escaping the place to which she (as a painting or a carving) was taken and going back to her initial place of her apparition, like in this legend:

In Dūdos (ethnic lands of Lithuania) it is told that the church was supposed to have been built 6 kilometres away from where it now stands, but the picture of

³³¹ Charlene Spretnak, *Missing Mary: The Queen Of Heaven and Her Re-Immersion in The Modern Church* (USA: Plagrave Macmillan, 2004), 129.

³³² Cruz, 202.

the Mother Divine kept appearing on a tree in this place, so it was decided that the church would be built according to her preference³³³.

This theme is probably connected to the symbolism of the World Tree, the axis of the world, in Jungian terms understood as the Self, around which the life revolves. The legend send a message that in order to find one's own spiritual central space one needs an insight and an ability to read the signs Mary by which she is making her will to be known. Mary points to a particular place in which she orders to build the spiritual wisdom inviting to trust her unmistakable knowledge of the terrain; it is the terrain of the human soul-psyche, in legends corresponding to the terrain of nature. The places she chooses embody the concentrated energies of the Earth – the hill, the stone, the tree. They correspond to the most powerful centre in oneself, which is not easy to find; the search involves rejecting conscious planning and following the divine signs. My reading of these legends, would be of course, that Mary's will is most significantly bound up in the need to build a sacred house for the female divine in the community and within the individual's own sense of self.

Mary is the centre of gravity for a community not only spiritually but also socially, inspiring people to form and develop the village around her divine figure, which is illustrated by the story from Šešuolėliai, a locality in Lithuania, which says that:

(...) in the place, where the church of Šešuolėliai now stands, previously stood a giant linden tree, surrounded by a dense forest. One day, people found on the tree a picture of the Divine Mother holding a baby and they carried it with great respect to the church, which was about 4 km away. However, in the morning the picture was again found on the tree. This sequence was repeated three times, until people reached the conclusion that this was the will of Mary. They built a small church there and the picture was located on the altar. People settled all around this place and so the village Šešuolėliai was formed³³⁴.

When a legend tells of Mary's appearance in someone's dream, we observe that the dream's message is taken seriously and realistically by the dreamer, recognising that dreams are an inseparable part of spiritual language and that they convey a message not only to the person dreaming but to the whole community, as in this short legend from

³³³ Skrinskas, 287.

³³⁴ Skrinskas, Chapter 2, story No 73.

Vištytis, in Lithuania, which narrates that “Mary appeared to a certain man in his sleep and instructed him to put up a cross at the spring, and people still pray at this place”³³⁵.

Mary’s will in legends is to make people pray to her, to believe in her. These requests have been interpreted by Christians as her call to strengthen the piety for Christ; however, in the Jungian psychological framework, Mary apparitions and legends can more appropriately be understood as providing compensation for the mainstream Christian view in which the female divine does not exist, and in which Mary appears as a character without any will. Therefore, I would suggest that by requesting that people pray to her, she is asking them to recognise her divinity, to feel her power, to appreciate the divine in nature, and to accept that the wholeness of spiritual life cannot exist without her, the female divine. Mary legends provide an opportunity for marrying the opposites of conscious attitudes and unconscious knowledge thus healing the split in people’s psyches.

3.9. Mary – the Deity Providing Bread.

The following legend was recorded, according to the sources, in Beguengo do Fetal, Portugal, in the 12th century:

Our Lady appeared to a single little shepherdess at Reguengo do Fetal at a time when the villagers were enduring the hardships of a severe drought. Not only were the people suffering, but the sheep were suffering as well (...) This made the little shepherdess cry when she was pasturing her sheep outside the village on the slope of the hill. Suddenly the little shepherdess felt a presence. Looking up with tear-filled eyes she saw, to her surprise, in the midst of a cluster of ferns, a Lady who spoke gently: “Why are you crying, my child?”

„I am hungry”.

„You must go and ask your mother for some bread”

„I did ask her already, but she hasn’t any”.

„Go home”, the Lady insisted, “and ask your mother again to give you some bread. Tell her that a Lady ordered you to tell her that there is bread in the chest”. The shepherdess ran home (...) The child’s vision of the mysterious Lady was believed without a single doubt when, true to the Lady’s words, bread was

³³⁵ Skrinskas, 253.

found in the chest. Indeed, a great deal of bread was found, of such texture and sweetness that it seemed as if it had been baked by angels (...) ³³⁶.

This legend connects Mary with the oldest mythology of the Goddess. Growing, multiplying and sharing are the traits of nature. Growing grain is a miracle of the Earth Goddess, in its symbolical meaning equal to being pregnant and giving birth physically, creatively, psychologically. Notably in the Neolithic times, when the Goddess was related to agriculture, fertility and grain, a ritual developed to bake bread in order to honour and imitate the eternal creation of the Earth Goddess who was imagined as being always pregnant with bread and other things, her womb symbolically seen as the bread oven. Marija Gimbutas notes that “(...) special altars were built for [the Pregnant Goddess] next to the bread baking ovens, and she was worshipped wherever grain was ground and bread was being prepared and baked” ³³⁷. Theresa C. Dintino, writing on the theme of the Goddess, expands the image of the Goddess by adding to it the cosmologic dimension:

(...) early people had an intuitive, if not more informed, way of knowing that the process that turns galactic clouds into stars, births planets and lifeforms is the same one that turns grass that starts from a seed into edible, warm velvety bread. It is the alchemical process of the universe—which they envisioned as the Goddess ³³⁸.

Perhaps it was this cosmologic Goddess to which women made sacrificial bread as recorded in the Book of the Jeremiah. In it, the Prophet Jeremiah reproved such religious worship as a disobedience to the God of Israel: “The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me to anger” ³³⁹. And in another part of the Book, the women defend their rites:

We will certainly do everything we said we would: We will burn incense to the Queen of Heaven and will pour out drink offerings to her just as we and our ancestors, our kings and our officials did in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. At that time we had plenty of food and were well off and suffered

³³⁶ Cruz, 368.

³³⁷ Gimbutas, *The Civilisation of the Goddess*, 228.

³³⁸ Theresa C. Dintino, “The Archetype of the Womb - Part II: Womb Ovens”, in *Goddess Pages: a Journal of Goddess Spirituality in 21st century*, Issue 17 (Summer 2012).

http://www.goddess-pages.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=348 Accessed 23/10/2011.

³³⁹ Jeremiah 7:17-18.

no harm. But ever since we stopped burning incense to the Queen of Heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have had nothing and have been perishing by sword and famine. When we burned incense to the Queen of Heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did not our husbands know that we were making cakes impressed with her image and pouring out drink offerings to her?³⁴⁰.

Psychologically, the offering has always been connected to the idea that one offers what one expects to be granted, or one offers the best of what one was given. The legend of Mary providing bread shows an unconscious intuition of the people that bringing forth bread and feeding are the realms of the unconscious, of the Mother, of the Earth, of the Universe, and that Mary is somewhat connected to these realms. Such legends in particular express an insight that Mary exists as a sovereign divine being in people's psyches, simply as the archetype of Life/the Self. The bread producing Mary manifests in her benevolent aspect like the female God and it seems unlikely that Christianity could fully own such a force of nature or confine it to dogmas – a thought which strengthens the divine sovereignty of Mary in the psychological sphere.

3.10. Mary – the Frightening Goddess.

Some of the tales speak of terrifying encounters with Mary which stands at odds with the Christian image of Mary. The majority of such stories come from the 19th and 20th century, marked by wars that invoked the darkest fears in people. The space *sacrum*, the archetypal world, is not only a source of happiness and joy; it is also a place of genuine fear because archetypes have an instinctual basis. In one of the legends from Sietynai (Lithuania) a woman related her meeting with Mary this way:

In the year 1960, I was walking a narrow forest path, which ran further down among birches. By the birches there stood a tall, slender girl. She gave me her hand and asked where I was going; she asked me to make an offering for her. If she had not been holding my hand, I would have run away because it was raining, I was all wet but the girl was completely dry, her face was white, without a drop of blood, which terrified me. Another time, I mustered enough courage to go to the same place and I told her that I prayed for her, which she

³⁴⁰ Jeremiah 44:17-19.

thanked me for. She ordered me to tell everyone to pray. I understood that this was the Virgin Mary³⁴¹.

One of the possible interpretations of this legend is that the bloodless Mary is a reflection of many women's inner "bloodlessness" – lack of identity, joy and energy of life. In her symbolic meaning as the soul of each woman and the collective soul of all women, Mary is perhaps showing the bloodless and fearful state of women and asking to pray – to take care with love – for her, for each woman's soul, for oneself. Another meaning of such a bloodless figure might be drawn from the symbolism of Old Europe where a very thin white unfeeling figure is the image of the White Goddess of Death described by Marija Gimbutas. According to Jungian psychology, the archetypal energies may not only enrich life but also ruin it and take the life away if there is no strong ego that can withstand such archetypal vibrations by expressing them in a creative manner. In patriarchy, women tend to be limited in the ways they can express themselves, and often suffer from the consequences of meeting such energies.

The following legend from Bajoriškiai, Lithuania, narrates that:

A woman called Bronė Šulinienė in the year 1981 heard someone knocking at the door, and saw Mary standing there who said, „Do not be afraid“, and then asked her to watch her. (...) She was around 1,85 cm tall, 25 years old, beautiful, (...) then she changed into a 15 year old girl. Mary went into the garden and sat on the branch of an apple tree near a well. After a year, the branch had dried up³⁴².

The image of Mary in this legend is not unusual; however, her visit makes the branch dry, which gives the legend an eerie feeling. It is interesting to notice that these legends are very recent, and that the frightful atmosphere can perhaps be related to the neuroses of our times. From the psychological point of view, it is possible that the female narrators of the legends "met" their own Shadow – their own fears, guilt, pain, which were reflected in the chilling images of Mary. However, it is also clear that such images of Mary, surfacing through the narrators' experiences, send a message from the collective unconscious that the image of Mary in the mainstream Christian myth is dangerously "bloodless" – lacking joy, power and life and that in a way all women are in danger and need to be prayed for. In the second legend, the apple tree alludes to the

³⁴¹ Skrinskas, 60.

³⁴² Skrinskas, 89.

issues of fertility, genealogy, female identity. The dry branch of the fruit tree symbolises the state of the female realm, the female genealogy and female needs.

From the Jungian point of view, being aware of the frightening side of Mary in our own souls gives us an opportunity to establish a closer contact with our Shadow and to realise it, which enlarges our consciousness. The deeper/higher is our consciousness, the better we can integrate the archetypal energies, and most importantly – the energies of the main archetype, the Self. This kind of individual inner work could be characteristic to those interested in the thealogy of Mary.

3.11. Mary – the Deity Without a Shadow.

An unconscious observation that Mary does not have a Shadow in Christian religion, arises in the following legend from Lithuania,

In 1968, at night a girl and her cousin went to the lake Ilgis and the nearby stream. (...) On the shores of the lake there grew large trees. (...) On a pillar, in a great light they saw a really pretty girl, who did not have a shadow (...) It is believed that the water from this stream can cure³⁴³.

An extraordinary feature of this legend is that Mary is shadowless. The legend seems to emphasise the perfectness of Mary who is a woman without a sin, without a Shadow – a “really pretty girl”. My interpretation is that the lack of the shadow of Mary in the legend points to the Christian problem of too immaculate Mary. Not having a Shadow is unnatural for humans. By emphasising this, the legend seems to convey the concern that something is wrong with the mainstream Christian attitude, which presents Mary as having already achieved the status, which others will gain, in Plutarch’s words, only “at the end of the world, [when] the blessed ones would be happy forever ‘in a state neither needing food nor casting a Shadow’ ”³⁴⁴. According to Jung, the rise of consciousness brought the split of God into good God and into evil Satan. The Shadow qualities of God (including the female aspect of God) were repressed into the unconscious making up the idea of the original sin in Christianity. Jung explicitly stated many times that the darkness of their Shadow caused many people to close their eyes on this part of their psyche:

Having a dark suspicion of these grim possibilities, man turns a blind eye to the shadow-side of human nature. Blindly he strives against the salutary dogma of

³⁴³ Skrinskas, 75.

³⁴⁴ Walker, Barbara G., 928.

original sin, which is yet so prodigiously true. Yes, he even hesitates to admit the conflict of which he is so painfully aware³⁴⁵.

The Jungian standpoint is that the realisation of the Shadow is the force that fuels a person's development. If we cannot see the Shadow in the divine being there is no real possibility of seeing our own Shadow side reflected. One reflection of the Shadow in the female divine has been available visually through the Black Madonnas in Christianity. The Shadow theme is vital in the Mary theology since the recovery of the Shadow allows the healing of the split between the good idealised Mary and her Shadow, usually imagined as a witch in folklore, or manifesting in the domestic violence against women in our times. In the Shadow there is huge power and life energy, which is required by all women who want to acquire the self-confidence and become the real creators of their own life and spirituality.

3.12. Mary – the Immanent Deity.

It is important to note that Mary's immanence is one of the most vivid features in legends. In them, Mary appears in places where people lead their everyday lives – in fields, barns, courtyards, villages, forests, trees, on stones, by local streams and nearby bushes, and even in places that would not normally be considered as special, like in a legend from Maženiai, Lithuania:

On September 8, 1961, children saw a pretty young woman in the light. The woman blessed the water in the drainage ditch, in which people later washed their wounded and weary bodies and stopped feeling pain. Parents told their children that this was Mary, for this was her day³⁴⁶.

Here we see that Mary helps a number of ordinary people with water from an ordinary ditch. This exemplifies that Mary's character in legends is dictated by the environment and the lifestyle of people who create these stories, and that Mary is invoked in any life situations as a very immanent deity. Mary continues the individual relationship with people attributed to the ancient Goddess, who was seen "(...) immanent, within every human being, not transcendent (...)"³⁴⁷, even though at the same time both Earth-centred and Heaven-centred. From the psychological point of view, Mary is accessible to us in the same way as our conscience, consciousness,

³⁴⁵ Jung, Carl Gustav, "On the Psychology of the Unconscious", in *CW 7: Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (Princeton University Press, 1972), 35.

³⁴⁶ Skrinskas, 71.

³⁴⁷ Gadon, xii.

unconscious, and instincts are; if we are in a good contact with them, insights into our life situations are never too far away. The message of the theology of Mary therefore is: having an individual relation to Mary is one of the ways to create and to sustain the relation to oneself and to have immanent access to our own inner sources.

3.13. Mary – the Deity of the Central Altars.

The centrality of Mary images in main altars in the Roman Catholic Church is tremendously significant. The centre in Jungian psychology is the Self (which is a symbol of God on the individual level), of being rooted, being in the stream of life energy. According to Jungians, the main purpose of the individual is to find her/his central point in life situations, to adjust to the Self – the Self centralises a person through the individuation trials. For Catholics, who have a great deal of mythology in their tradition, the main altar is the place where God dwells, where the Eucharist is kept (which is also called the Sacrament of the Altar, the Lord's Supper, and other names, that is – the body of Christ, which is shared during the mass service). Interestingly, Catholics often place the images of Mary in central altars, which signifies the unconscious recognition of her divinity and importance. This pattern is felt in many non-Christian (compensating the Christian) legends – I have given examples of the legends where whole villages have formed around the images of Mary. Sometimes, as we saw from legends, the stones and the trees on which Mary appeared were built into the altar or substituted the altar. Symbolically, in my view, this centrality of Mary and the unconscious significance placed in her images that are located on the central altars shows that her mythology oversteps the boundaries of Christian framing and therefore Mary exists in a different spiritual dimension from Christianity, as a sovereign centre for her own religion, at least in the psychological/symbolical sense.

The last notes on Chapter 3

Through my interpretations and amplifications using folklore, Jungian and other sources, I highlighted the various aspects of the archetype of Mary that surfaces in the shadow stories of Mary. Although the plots of the legends and the same symbols recur in several sections, I placed the emphasis on a different characteristic of Mary in each section. It was my intention to give a subheading to each aspect of Mary and by that to emphasise it.

I suggested in this chapter that the legends of Mary, similarly to the image of Mary, have the power of uncovering Shadowy parts of a person's psyche, and the power of healing and strengthening the natural instinctive reactions as well as developing confidence in expressing them. The rise of consciousness is related to the moment of realisation of the parts of one's Shadow. A higher consciousness strengthens the personality. In addition, the identification with the image of a strong mythological/female divine also enhances a woman's confidence.

In terms of Jungian depth psychology, having a contact with the archetype gives the person a feeling that his or her life is authentic and valuable in itself, and she or he is therefore able to stop clinging solely to impoverishing cultural attitudes, personal complexes or to the rational mind.³⁴⁸ In relation to the image of Mary, a great archetypal effect is achieved when a person realises the difference between the image of Mary in the legends and the Christian image of Mary. This realisation compensates and revives not only the image and myth of Mary for each person but also transforms that layer in each person's psyche that stands for the bloodless and impoverished Christian image of Mary in the cultures of the West.

The collective unconscious speaks through legends, visions, dreams, fantasies, sudden realisations, and this material should be incorporated with the help of our consciousness. It is my conscious interpretation that the archetype of Mary seeks, by the help of the legends some of which are presented in this chapter, to emphasise the need for a religious bond with Mary as with the living female divine archetype. Such interpretation would be meaningful for women's psyches. The legends about Mary are a rich source for understanding how the collective human psyche tries to compensate the lack of the powerful female divine in the Western cultures.

³⁴⁸ A video interview with C.G. Jung on questions of Transference and of the Living Experience of the Archetypes http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=O18WALGq4C0 . The case of a young female client of Jung: from 02 min: 19 sec to 07 min: 29 sec.

CHAPTER 4. CONSCIOUS FEMALE DIVINE: REDEEMING AND INCORPORATING THE SHADOW OF MARY

Introduction to Chapter 4.

In Chapter 3, I presented and explored numerous folklore legends about Mary. I suggested seeing these legends as a new myth of what I call the non-Christian myth and image of Mary, or as a source for such a myth. In the context of these legends, Mary emerges as an independent goddess with supernatural powers, as the divinity of nature, and as a goddess who has a close relationship with people. One of the ideas of my thesis is that by getting to know the powerful side of Mary women can recover their confidence since Mary symbolically stands for the women's Self. I term the legends non-Christian since I take the view that they compensate the Christian myth of Mary in that they emphasize the power and divinity of Mary. In this light, the Christian story of Mary belongs to the field of collective consciousness (a conscious standpoint), while the legends and other folklore narratives relating to Mary (legends, fairy tales, apparition stories) belong to the collective unconscious. Everything that is unconscious is in the Shadow, so the legends I presented in Chapter 3 were the Shadow stories of Mary. However, I would like to emphasise, that the legends given in Chapter 3 presented the *positive* Shadow of Mary, that is, they suggest that Mary uses her power for good purposes (for example, she brings the dead to life, heals the sick) which stands in contrast to her powerlessness and non-divine status in the Christian story.

In Chapter 4, I explore another type of the Shadow, the *negative* Shadow of Mary. I do this with the help of fairy tales in which the figure of Mary is no longer positive as in the legends. Instead, Mary subjects the protagonists of the fairy tales to terrible trials. This side of Mary also reveals her power; however, this power is dangerous, evil. The negative Shadow of Mary is very important since it compensates for the immaculate image of the Christian Mary. To recover both the positive and the negative Shadow sides to the myth of Mary means, drawing on the Jungian and feminist methodologies set out already in Chapters 1 and 2, to recover our ability to integrate our own strength as well as negativity into our personalities, and to be more aware of the fact that our own Shadow is part of our everyday lives. In the course of this chapter, I will demonstrate how Mary can be the space for the individual connection both to the divine Self and to one's own Shadow.

I have given brief explanations of the Shadow in the footnotes in the Introduction, and in Chapters 1 and 3. In this section, however, I would like to have a much closer look at the notion of the Shadow, and of the Shadow of the female divine in particular. To start with, I will set out three quotes, about which I will comment further in this section. The first two quotes come from Jung, and the last one belongs to the Jungian author Marion Woodman:

Can we address our prayer to the good God to the exclusion of the demon (...)? Have we the power of dissociating God like the country woman who said to the child Jesus, when he interrupted her prayer to the Virgin: “Shhh, child, I’m talking to your mother”? Can we really put on one side the God who is dangerous to us? Do we believe that God is so powerless that we can say to him: “get out, I’m talking to your better half”? (...) We’re going to have our bathe in the river, and never mind the crocodiles.

(Carl Gustav Jung)³⁴⁹.

One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.

(Carl Gustav Jung)³⁵⁰.

(...) Darkness of course is associated with the feminine. The goddess was thrown out of our culture long ago. And as I am looking at dreams both individually and collectively, I am seeing that the goddess is determined now to come back in, in a new way – she has never been conscious on the Earth before. So that there is a new consciousness, a mutation in consciousness taking place. And it is our task to voice that consciousness (...) The new light always comes from darkness (...) In trying to pull that energy from the shadow, you are pulling in a new consciousness (...) In that work that we do, in talking to our own shadow, in owning it, in embodying it, we are empowered (...)

(Marion Woodman)³⁵¹.

³⁴⁹ Jung quoted in Edinger, 97.

³⁵⁰ Carl Gustav Jung, “The Philosophical Tree (1945)”, in *CW 13: Alchemical Studies*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), 265.

³⁵¹ Marion Woodman, *Holding the Tension of the Opposites*. Audio book, Windows Media Player format (USA: Sounds True, 2007), 8 min : 32 sec to 30 min : 20 sec

These three quotations support my argument that it is necessary to discover the Shadow side of Mary in order to release the power hidden in her Shadow. With the Shadow side accepted, the figure of Mary acquires a new image that incorporates both positive and negative aspects of the female divine; such a figure of Mary is a much more whole image of the divine Self. This Mary is able to reflect both Shadow and light so helping people to combat forms of psychological splitting and making them more whole, which is one of the most genuine psychological and spiritual purposes of being in contact with a divine figure. Therefore, the uncovering of the Shadow side of Mary is one of the fundamental aims of the theology of Mary.

In Jungian depth psychology, there is an individual and the collective Shadow. The individual Shadow is a complex – a feeling-toned energetic formation that is quite autonomous in the way it manifests in people's lives³⁵². The Shadow of a person consists of the aspects of oneself one is not or does not want to be conscious about: painful memories and feelings, helplessness, shame, ruthlessness, guilt but also talents and strengths that did not have an opportunity to be recognised. Speaking in psychological terms, people repress into the unconscious those parts of themselves which they, or the society they are surrounded by, consciously consider as inferior, shameful, or evil. In the case of the collective Shadow, a culture represses those aspects of itself that go against its newest ideology, so for example, if the latest cultural ideology is that God is male, then the theme of the female divine will go into the collective Shadow and will only manifest in an unconscious way (it can manifest, for example, in the unconscious veneration of Mary as a divinity).

The repressed contents become unconscious, that is, not known – people forget about having those repressed traits, often passionately deny them if someone points them out, and harshly criticise those traits in other people without realising that in this way they are criticising their own Shadow. However, precisely the realisation, the acceptance and the integration of those Shadow aspects allows the healing of various malign influences on the cultural and individual levels.

Why is it so important to realise the Shadow? Jungians say that realising one's own Shadow expands consciousness. The expansion of consciousness changes individuals and cultures since it contributes to the further development of the psyche. According to Jungian theory, the energy of complexes, including the Shadow complex,

³⁵² For a more detailed explanation of a complex, please see footnote No. 24 in section 1.1. of Chapter 1.

always strives towards consciousness: the contents of the unconscious desire “to live”, to be realised, accepted and integrated into the conscious personality or culture. Therefore, the unconscious of an individual projects the contents of the Shadow onto other people around, without the conscious contribution of a person to this process. If individuals show no tendency to recognise their own Shadow, their Shadow projections make the world “a replica of one’s own unknown face”³⁵³ for an individual. This, notes Jung, isolates a person, wraps him/her into a cocoon of illusion and forces him/her to fall into an autoerotic or autistic condition, or becomes the source of dramas which could perhaps be avoided should an individual have recognised her/his Shadow side³⁵⁴. The personality of an individual or a culture who is absorbed in their own projections cannot grow since it is only possible to expand the consciousness by taking back the energy from the Shadow – by recognising as much of the Shadow as is possible intellectually and emotionally.

How can Mary be the mirror of a woman’s Shadow?

On the individual level, all women probably have a Shadow part that is equivalent to the Christian/patriarchal image of Mary. This Shadow consists of the inferiority of the Christian Mary. The inferiority of Mary is that she is not consciously recognised as divine despite clearly manifesting as the divine archetype illustrated by many personal experiences, visual sources, folklore narratives and even her own cult in the Christian Church. As Marion Woodman suggests above, the feminine as a whole is part of the Shadow side of Western Judaeo-Christian cultures. If this is true, the integration of the collective Shadow of Mary on an individual level is important in compensating this psychological inequality in our culture, in building stronger personal and collective egos, which allows a better connection to the instinctual guidance of the Self. The right connection of our ego (or what we perceive as “I”) to the Self (which stands for God in a Jungian framework) is perhaps one of the most worthy aims of human life.

In the second quote at the start of this chapter, we read that for Jung, imagining figures of light has a limited power to enlighten us; we need to accept the Shadow if we want to understand more about ourselves, to withdraw our Shadow projections from others and to regain the energy that was arrested in the Shadow and particularly in the

³⁵³ Jung, *Aion*, 9.

³⁵⁴ Jung, *Aion*, 9.

complexes. Instead of dreaming about being good and ideal, or praying to an ideal immaculate Mary, we need consciously to realise our Shadow and her Shadow; paradoxically, not the rejected but the accepted darkness can help us to be more enlightened, better personalities, in the Jungian view.

The realisation of our Shadow is a painful process, since it most often reveals itself by challenging our moral standpoint and conscience. For instance, we can assume that we came across our Shadow if in a certain situation we are overcome by the feeling of shame, guilt, anger, fear. If we follow our associations, thoughts, visions, dreams around this unexpected outbreak of feelings, we realise part of our Shadow. However, sometimes even our conscience cannot us help to see our Shadow since some parts of the Shadow are so deeply unconscious that they do not easily approach the threshold of consciousness; in that case, we need a “mirror” to reflect our Shadow. In many human situations, other people serve us as mirrors, telling us how they reacted to our words, our behaviour – they allow us to see those parts of ourselves that were unknown to us. One of the main aspects of my thesis is that I suggest that Mary with the restored Shadow (positive and negative) can help us to achieve enlightenment by reflecting our Shadow back to us.

In my view, the Shadow of Mary is visually represented by the images of the Black Madonnas who are considered miraculous. I would like to offer my own interpretation of why images of Black Madonnas are perceived to be miraculous. Usually, a person comes to the image of the Black Madonna with a genuine problem or a moral conflict, which indicates that this person is experiencing a high tension between the consciousness and the unconscious. This tension is the path towards our individuation which is successful as much as it can be embraced by the expansion of our consciousness³⁵⁵. The psychological tension and suffering is what causes people’s consciousness to suddenly expand. In this sudden light of consciousness people can become aware of their Shadow – their mistakes, but also their strength. In my view, this realisation is the enlightenment of which Jung speaks in the second quotation given above. I also think that the experience of becoming aware of one’s Shadow is deeply spiritual because it changes the ego, making one more whole and more in tune with the Self. Therefore, when a person prays to the figure of Mary (especially the Black

³⁵⁵ To learn more about “holding tension between the opposites”, or “staying with a conflict” between one’s conscious wishes and unconscious drives, and how this is related to consciousness, please listen to Marion Woodman’s audio book *Holding the Tension of the Opposites*.

Madonna), she or he might experience a miraculous enlightenment, a psychological healing, or a creative inspiration.

The most imperative observation in Marion Woodman's quote above is her statement that for the first time she witnesses in her patients' dreams that the divine aspect of the Shadow – the Black Madonna – is emerging *with new consciousness*. Also important is Woodman's note that *we* have to voice this consciousness; we have to speak on behalf of the emerging Goddess. Woodman's view that the feminine is wholly hidden in the Shadow, fully unconscious, is of great weight in understanding the structure of cultural Shadow. Following this view, a woman's experience is completely out of culture's conscious reach. Jung writes that "psychologically, the Self is a union of conscious (masculine) and unconscious (feminine). It stands for the psychic totality"³⁵⁶. As with all over simplistic statements, Jung's understanding of feminine as unconscious and masculine as conscious has been reviewed by the feminist critics who recognise that feminine and masculine notions are much more complicated³⁵⁷. Possibly, they can both represent consciousness and the unconscious. Yet the value of Jung's insight here is that perhaps the Self should be represented in divine symbolism in both genders, which is not the case in patriarchal Christianity.

Woodman says that in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the feminine has been wholly in the Shadow because the feminine (in both men and women) was associated with matter, Eve, serpent, evil, greed, lust, hate, jealousy, sin, earth, body – all things that are not compatible with one's positive attitude to life. All these notions were split from the spirit, which was given the priority in patriarchal culture; in Woodman's view, in the cultures influenced by Christianity, the spirit floats freely, disembodied and full of scorn for the body³⁵⁸. In her citation at the start, Woodman's message is that we have to voice the darkness, the Shadow – the body, the mother, the matter. The feminist and the contemporary Goddess movements illustrate that these notions have approached the threshold of consciousness and demand to be noticed – they seek the light of our consciousness. When we voice these notions, we give consciousness to the Goddess. In Woodman's view, the conscious Goddess no longer means exclusively the instincts, the body or the unconscious; she is the Goddess who bears the light of consciousness out of

³⁵⁶ Jung, *Aion*, 268.

³⁵⁷ For more on Jung's critique of the feminine and Anima meanings see, for example, the work of Susan Rowland, and for the critique of the feminine see Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*.

³⁵⁸ Based on Woodman, *Holding the Tension of the Opposites*. Audio book, 02:30 to 05:30 (minutes: seconds)

her own darkness – who is the spirit incarnate, the matter united with the spirit and the mind.

Although a large part of the phenomenon that is called *the feminine* by Woodman and some other Jungians was repressed into the Shadow, not the whole of the realm related to the female was. Only the split part of the female realm, which was not allowed into the collective conscious attitudes, became the Black Madonna, who stood for the powerful female divine in the collective Shadow compensating for the powerless Mary in conscious collective attitudes. Therefore, the images of the Black Madonnas have a capacity to shake a woman's soul by mirroring her Shadow. By raising awareness about her Shadow a woman is given an opportunity to change the course of her life. Sarah Jane Boss provides a literary example of how the Black Madonna can shake one's soul, by analysing the story of *Peredur Son of Efracw*. Boss writes:

At several points in the narrative, Peredur fights with men who are described as "black". The final denouement to the story is at least as strange as everything that has gone before, and in one part of it concerns a terrifying woman called the Black Virgin, *y forwyn ddu*. The Black Virgin challenges Peredur as to why (...) he did not question the meaning of the blood-dripping spear. She says that if he had only asked what this meant, much bloodshed could have been avoided. But he did not, and his failure to ask the right questions has had terrible consequences. So the Black Virgin makes the hero aware of his sins of omission: she forces him to confront those things in his past which he would prefer to ignore.

Now, the confrontation with past sin is central to the Christian tradition. It is through confession of one's sins and the grace of forgiveness that one breaks one's attachment to the past and is freed to form right relationships with God and one's fellow creatures. The rite of Christian initiation, baptism, is specifically for the forgiveness of sins, and Christ says that we must forgive those who wrong us as many times as they cause us offence. Yet full acknowledgement of past wrong-doing, and even mistakes and other failings, can be painfully difficult, so it is not surprising that the figure who calls the hero to account, the Black Virgin, should be a frightening one.

It may therefore be the case that part of the spiritual meaning of the Black Virgin in Christian devotion is likewise one of recalling sin – of

becoming aware of that which is “black” within us, and confronting “dark” events in our lives. (...) So the Virgin’s blackness may in part signify her frightening function of summoning us to address our own “blackness”³⁵⁹.

In my view, Boss insightfully captures the meaning of the Black Virgin through a theological analysis and her insights illustrate that the meaning of the Shadow is similarly understood by theologians and psychoanalysts; Jung has even called the Shadow the original sin³⁶⁰. However, in the theology of Mary, Mary is the central reference point and therefore I have to deviate from Boss’ further view that:

“(...) if the Virgin calls us to acknowledge the darkness of sin, this is only in order that, by doing so, we become freed from that sin and are brought out of darkness into the light of Christ. That is to say, the black Virgin signifies and provokes the process of spiritual enlightenment”³⁶¹.

Challenging this I would say that as a projection of the Self, Mary carries the light which theologians ascribe to Christ. It is Mary who has the light of the Self and allows us to invoke the individual connection of our ego-consciousness to the Self. There is a reason to suggest that the Self of women is perceived in the female gender: the Self and the god are probably genderless in their essence, however, according to Jung, we never reach the Self, so we never reach its genderless manifestation and therefore in the course of our life we always perceive the divine in the frame of our gender. The message of the theology of Mary is that if the Black Virgin provokes enlightenment, she is the light and the source of that enlightenment; she is not a mediator to reach the light of Christ. In the theology of Mary, the central focusing point is the relationship of a person to her/his Self, Mary, who is the source of light and darkness at the same time. Such an interpretation of Mary is what Woodman calls *the voicing of consciousness* of the Goddess in her quote at the start of this section; the Goddess is emerging with consciousness through women’s interpretation and out of women’s need to find a conscious divine identity and the source of the divine light (and darkness) in their gender.

The role of fairy tales in recovering the Shadow of Mary.

³⁵⁹ Sarah Jane Boss, *Mary*. New Century Theology series (Continuum, 2003), 81.

³⁶⁰ Jung, “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”. In *CW 7: Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, 30

³⁶¹ Boss, 81.

Jung thought that the individual psyche understands the language of myth not because of our experiences but because it partakes in the archetypal psyche. He wrote: This unconscious, buried in the structure of the brain and disclosing its living presence only through the medium of creative fantasy, is the *suprapersonal unconscious*. It comes alive in the creative man; it reveals itself in the vision of the artist, in the inspiration of the thinker, in the inner experience of the mystic. The suprapersonal unconscious, being distributed throughout the brain-structure, is like all pervading, omni-present spirit. It knows man as he always was, and not as he is at the moment; it knows him as myth³⁶².

The coding in myth is perhaps a vestige of our psychic development but this is how our psyches work. The theology of Mary builds its mythology on the Jungian notion that myths, legend and fairy tales are the means for our consciousness to relate to the unconscious, and that this relation fuels the development of the psyche, according to Jung.

As I have already mentioned, according to Jungians, the collective Shadow often compensates for collective conscious attitudes that are too rigid, or for something that is missing in them, through the cultural narratives springing from the collective unconscious, such as fairy tales, legends, or fiction literature. According to Jungian view, these narratives constitute the sub-sacred stratum of the collective, which lives as if under the conscious stratum of the sacred – culture’s mainstream, officially recognised religions. That is, these narratives are the Shadow of the mainstream religions and conscious attitudes. Therefore, in this chapter I focus on interpreting some of these narratives. In section 4.1., I illustrate the negative side of the idealised Christian Mary using literary analysis of the Lithuanian writer Žemaitė³⁶³. In section 4.2., I analyse fairy tales in order to restore the Shadow side to the image of Mary and to the myth of Mary. Marie-Louise von Franz was one of the first pioneers to encourage the search for the repressed female divine in fairy tales. She argued that:

In the West, [a deep uncertainty in modern women] is due to the fact, as Jung has pointed out, that women have no metaphysical representation in the Christian God-image. Protestantism must accept the blame for being a pure

³⁶² Carl Gustav Jung, “The Role of the Unconscious”, in *CW 10: Civilisation in Transition* (Princeton University Press, 1970), 3-28.

³⁶³ Žemaitė is a pen-name of Julija Beniševičiūtė-Žymantienė (1845 – 1921). Žemaitė was the Lithuanian Lithuanian realist writer, whose work embraced the last fifteen years of the 19th century and the first twenty years of the 20th century. She has been the most passionate feminist writer so far in Lithuanian literature.

men's religion. Catholicism has at least the Virgin Mary as an archetypal representation of femininity, but this feminine archetype is incomplete because it encompasses only the sublime and light aspects of the divine feminine principle and therefore does not express the *whole* feminine principle. In studying fairy tales, I first came across feminine images which seem to me to complement the lack in the Christian religion³⁶⁴.

According to von Franz, fairy tales are the "purest and simplest expression of collective unconscious psychic process"³⁶⁵, the purest speech that uses symbolic figures to speak of the archetypes. It is so, in Jung's view, because "every archetype is in its essence an *unknown* psychic factor, and therefore there is no possibility of translating its contents into intellectual terms"³⁶⁶ Von Franz adds that the speech of fairy tales is much less influenced by specific cultural material than the speech of legends and myths; for example, they do not usually contain names of people or places. Therefore, many archetypal motifs such as the Shadow, motherhood, sexuality, spirituality, are common to the fairy tales of various cultures; they arise out of a universal substratum of humanity, out of its collective unconscious, speaking in Jungian terms. A particular culture develops its own themes, which most often compensate the outlook of the conscious attitudes. Von Franz says that:

After working for many years in this field, I have come to the conclusion that all fairy tales endeavour to describe one and the same psychic fact, but a fact so complex and far-reaching and so difficult for us to realize in all its different aspects that hundreds of tales and thousands of repetitions with a musician's variations are needed until this unknown fact is delivered into consciousness; and even then the theme is not exhausted. This unknown fact is what Jung calls the Self, which is the psychic totality of an individual and also, paradoxically, the regulating centre of the collective unconscious. Every individual and every nation has its own modes of experiencing this psychic reality. Different fairy tales give average pictures of different phases of this experience. (...) every archetype is in its essence only one aspect of the collective unconscious, as well as always representing also the whole collective unconscious³⁶⁷.

³⁶⁴ Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Feminine in Fairy Tales* (Boston and London: Shambala, 1993), 1.

³⁶⁵ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 1

³⁶⁶ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 1

³⁶⁷ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 2.

If we accept this idea, speaking of the history of the fairy tales is important only to a degree in my work. Von Franz noted that “already in Plato’s writings it is said that old women told their children symbolic stories – *mythoi*”³⁶⁸. In antiquity we also find Lucius Apuleius' novel *The Golden Ass*, written in the 2nd century AD in which he gives *The Tale of Amour and Psyche* which is a version of *Beauty and the Beast* that is popular nowadays across the whole of Europe³⁶⁹. Von Franz notes that “A scientific interest in the fairy tales began in the 18th century with Winckelmann, Hamann and J.G Herder”³⁷⁰. According to her view, this period coincided with a more general “dissatisfaction with Christian teaching, and the first longings for a more vital, earthly, and instinctual wisdom began then”³⁷¹. Around the same time, many people such as the well known brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm started writing down the fairy tales in many countries, thanks to whom we have many rich collections for various purposes, including this work. Psychoanalysts, starting with Sigmund Freud, Otto Rank and Carl Gustav Jung looked to fairy tales to represent the anatomy of the psyche³⁷², and it is an established practice to use fairy tale interpretation in the Jungian analysis. However, there are other theories on the subject of fairy tales. The feminist view is represented, among others, by writers Angela Carter and Marina Warner. They reclaimed folktales with the rise of feminist theory to analyse the inner world of women. Carter is well represented by *The Bloody Chamber*, her early collection of fairy tales re-written from the point of feminist perspective. Marina Warner is known for her book *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers* that is concerned with women both as narrators and as central characters of the traditional fairy story. While Carter represents the more practical side of re-writing folk stories in the feminist manner, Warner offers theoretical insights into the interpretation of fairy tales from the feminist viewpoint. Jack Zipes is yet another well known folktale theorist. One of his most known books, *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale*, deals with the evolution, psychological, social and political role of folktales in civilizing processes.

4.1. Mary and the litany of violence.

³⁶⁸ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 4.

³⁶⁹ Hendrik Wagenvoort, “Cupid and Psyche”, in *Pietas: Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Brill, 1980), 84–92.

³⁷⁰ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 4.

³⁷¹ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 4.

³⁷² Bette U. Kiernan, „The Uses of Fairy Tales in Psychotherapy“. An online article <http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4/papers/Kiernan.pdf> Accessed 2013/08/08

Mary, as the female vessel for the divine, even though unrecognised as such by the Christian Church, is the archetype, or an expression of the archetype of the divine, and consequently, of the Self. To me, she is also the soul/psyche archetype of a woman, and the archetype of the psyche of a woman. Therefore, on a personal level, Mary's Shadow is an individual psychological *scar*³⁷³ – shame, pain, hurt, grief – that a woman suffers for being a woman. An illustration of the expression of the Shadow of Mary in culture came to me in the form of a novella by Žemaitė. The novella, which I discuss in this section was written in the beginning of the 20th century and it is called *The child did not have a good mother*.³⁷⁴ Its storyline runs as follows: in a poor hut in the midst of an extremely cold and deep winter, as their infant is dying, the husband curses his wife blaming her for the death of the baby and for everything else he is unhappy about. His curses fall on her in such a rhythmic manner that, being raised as a Catholic, I noticed the similarity of the rhythm of his curses to the rhythm of litanies of Mary. A litany is a poetic form of prayer where the deity or a saint is addressed in the most honourable terms, followed by repetitive petitions:

Holy Mary,
 pray for us.
 Holy Mother of God,
 pray for us.
 Holy Virgin of virgins,
 pray for us.
 Mother of Christ,
 pray for us.
 Mother of divine grace,
 pray for us.
 Mother most pure,
 pray for us³⁷⁵.

³⁷³ I base my understanding of women's scars on the reading of Jungians, and in particular on Clarissa Pinkola Estés' chapter *Battle Scars: Membership in the Scar Clan* in her book *Women Who Run With The Wolves*.

³⁷⁴ Žemaitė, "Neturėjo geros motinos", in *Raštai I* (Vilnius, Lithuania: Žara, 1995), 61-68. Eng. *Collected Works of Žemaitė, Volume 1*. Translated into English by Gintautas Kaminskas, USA.

³⁷⁵ An excerpt from *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary* approved by Pope Sixtus V in 1587. Site address: <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/litany09.htm> The website is hosted by the Catholic Community Forum. Author: Terry H Jones. Accessed on 10/01/2012.

And so forth. For comparison, I took the curses of the man from the novella and compared them with the sentences from the various litanies of Mary, which uncovered a striking opposition between the two. I give my comparison below:

Lazy bitch! Useless bitch! – begins the husband in his “litany” of violence.
 Holy Mary, Holy Virgin of virgins! – begin Catholic litanies of Mary.

You blasted witch!
 Spiritual vessel! Cause of our joy! Queen of the fullness of times! Queen of all our heart's treasure!

You useless, clumsy woman!
 Woman transformed, Woman clothed with the sun! Seat of wisdom!

You slut, you carrion!
 O Regeneration of life! O Beauty of the world! Mother undefiled!

You rotten bitch!
 Pride of human race!

You are so lucky you have a good husband!
 Queen of Patriarchs! Chosen daughter of the Father!

Any other husband would have killed you by now!
 Woman graced by a husband's love!

I'll whack you one in the snout so hard that you'll drop dead on the spot!
 Virgin most powerful!

You belong in a pigsty!
 Daughter of Sion! Tower of David! O Noblest-Born of the Christian flock!

When I whack you one, at least you'll be crying from pain!
 Woman of perfect freedom! Mother inviolate!

I swear I'll beat the last breath out of you!
 O Queen of Life! Queen of our destiny!

My little one never had a good mother!
 Glorious Son-bearer!

What do you earn?!
 House of gold! Queen of all the earth! Queen of heaven! Queen of the universe!

If that boy dies because of you, I'll exterminate you, like a toad!
 Mother most admirable! Mother most worthy!

The devil can come and get you and your kids!
 Queen assumed into heaven!

You always do something to infuriate me!
 Mother of good counsel! Queen of peace!

A hundred curses on you!
 O Blessed and most blessed! Honour of the sky!³⁷⁶.

One can see in the “litany” of violence of the male protagonist that the Shadow side of Mary has been projected on women – they have been seen at fault where Mary shone in the ideal aura. The attitude of the husband to his wife fixates women in opposition to the image of Mary. Žemaitė ruthlessly and with great insight portrays the reality of life in some traditional patriarchal village families of the 19th-20th century in Lithuania. Although during the 20th century the lives of women started changing and patriarchal Christian religion started having less influence on the culture, the deep rooted attitudes expressed in this novella continue to affect the collective and individual unconscious. It is recognised by many feminist authors that the tension resulting from women having to occupy this space of terrible opposition between their lives and the ideal normative image of the Christian Mary, devalues and exhausts them, and that for this reason many of them have rejected Mary as an unsuitable source of the divine³⁷⁷. It is my view that the ideal Mary cannot reflect the Shadow side of an individual, which is vital for normal human functioning. To have a form of the divine that could mirror to us our Shadow, we need to recover the negative Shadow of the divine in the myth. With that purpose I analyse several fairy tales in the following section.

4.2. Redeeming the Black Woman.

In this section, I will discuss a fairy tale called *The Black Woman*. There are many variations of the tales about the Black Woman across Europe’s folk heritage. The Black Woman is a cursed woman. Some fairy tales start with a story that explains how she became cursed, for instance, her parents cursed her for not wanting to marry a certain man that they chose for her. However, most often, fairy tales offer no explanation of the curse or subsequently, of the woman’s blackness. The woman is already black at the start of the fairy tale and lives an isolated life somewhere in a forest

³⁷⁶ The litanies are based on those presented on the Catholic Tradition webpage <http://www.catholictradition.org/Litanies/litanies.htm#MARY>; the Catholic Doors Ministry webpage <http://www.catholicdoors.com/prayers/litanies.htm>; the Catholic Community Forum webpage (author: Terry H Jones) <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/litany09.htm>; and others. Accessed on 15/04/2012

³⁷⁷ See, for example, the work of Mary Daly.

in a castle. She seeks to be redeemed – returned to her original white skin-colour through the help of a heroine or a hero.

The Jungian psychoanalyst Marie-Louise von Franz, who wrote a number of books on fairy tale interpretation, notes that the hero and heroine represent the ego consciousness which is common to the whole culture. According to von Franz, every person in a culture has an ego which is modelled on *the* ego – the hero or heroine – in fairy tales of that culture³⁷⁸. Therefore, the heroine at the beginning of a fairy tale is representative of the collective consciousness, which surrounds a certain collective problem or aspect – and in the fairy tale of the Black Woman this problem is related to the female realm. Von Franz says that,

*(...) the hero is an archetypal figure which presents a model of an ego functioning in accord with the Self. Produced by the unconscious psyche, it is a model to be looked at, and it is demonstrating a rightly functioning ego, an ego that functions in accordance with the requirements of the Self. That is why the hero seems, to a certain extent, to be the Self: because he serves as its instrument and completely expresses what the Self wants to have happen*³⁷⁹.

Fairy tales about the Black Woman are of two types – with heroines and with heroes. For the purposes of this work, I will analyse fairy tales with heroines since I suggest that women relate better to the heroine's experiences. The heroine represents the female part of the culture, and the relation she establishes with the Self makes a change in the whole culture as we see from the end of the fairy tale. The fairy tales about the Black Woman show how the culture sees the female divine and how the female realm is related to the Shadow of the culture. The fairy tale below illustrates a general plot of all tales about the Black Woman in which the heroine plays the main role. The following is the Austrian version, which has remained in my memory from the time I first read it as a child.

Tale No 1: Austrian fairy tale “The Black Woman” and its interpretation.

Once there was a very poor family. One day, the man of the family went to the forest to gather some fuel for cooking and for the heating of their hut. As

³⁷⁸ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 57-58.

³⁷⁹ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 57-58.

soon as he started gathering twigs and branches, he suddenly saw a tiny black man who appeared before him and asked:

“What are you doing here?”

“Well, you see”, said the man, “I am gathering the twigs because we can’t afford to buy firewood. We don’t have money. We are very poor”.

The tiny man said:

“If you promise to give me something you don’t know exists in the house, you will have plenty of everything you want when you come back home”.

“You can take what I don’t know I have”, said the man.

The tiny black man left all happy, and the poor man took care to gather plenty of twigs. When he had as much as he could carry, he hurried home. He was worried and concerned to see whether the black man was telling the truth. As soon as he entered his courtyard, he saw a huge pile of firewood. When he stepped into the hut, his wife immediately placed food before him and then hurried to the fireplace to cook some more food and she seemed to have plenty of everything. He was very curious and asked:

“What is this, I don’t understand? You would always moan that you don’t have this and that but today you cook and bake and you don’t moan at all”

His wife replied:

“I don’t know where all these things came from but there is plenty of everything today!”

“Well”, said the man, “I will tell you”. And he told her what happened to him in the forest.

The woman became frightened and said:

“You have promised to him your own child! Didn’t you know that I am expecting? And now, the child will not be mine!”

All the happiness vanished for the man. Although from that day they never saw hardship and had plenty of money and other goods, they didn’t know real happiness any more.

The time passed and the wife gave birth to a daughter who was the most beautiful child in the house. But on the third day, a black chariot pulled by black horses approached the hut and in it there sat a Black Woman. She stepped out, came into the house and said:

“Here I come to take what was promised to the black man in the forest”

The poor mother started crying and begging:

“How can I give my child and not know where she is going to be and what is going to happen to her? If you could wait until she is a little bigger, at least until she is seven years old!”

Since the mother cried so much and begged, the Black Woman said in the end:

“Alright, I will leave the girl for now but when I come for the second time, I will take her”.

After seven years passed, the Black Woman came back and took the girl with her. They both sat in the black chariot and drove away leaving the girl’s parents crying.

The Black Woman was a cursed woman. She took the girl into her castle. The girl was happy in the castle; she had everything she wanted for her playtime. The Black Woman showed the girl the whole castle and all the rooms and allowed her to go everywhere. Only at one door she stopped and said:

“You can go everywhere and look at everything but you can’t ever come into this room and look into it, otherwise you will be in big trouble!”

In that room, the Black Woman was spending days herself.

Once, while the girl was playing, she heard miraculously beautiful music. She dropped the toys and ran into the courtyard. But she could not hear any music there and she could not see anything that could make this sound. She came back to her room with sadness.

The next day – and meanwhile, a whole year passed – the girl was again playing alone and heard the miraculously beautiful sounds. She ran quickly into the garden, looked everywhere but could not find where the sounds came from. So the second year of her visit passed, because a day was equal to the whole year there.

On the third day the time of the curse would have ended, and the Black Woman would have been redeemed. But now, even more beautiful sounds reached the girls’ ears. She ran in the castle searching for where these beautiful sounds may have come from. She forgot about the prohibition to enter a certain room and thought, “I’ll go and look into that room, someone must be playing there where the Black Woman is”. The Black Woman had become more white

than black by now but as soon as the girl looked into her room, she became black again.

The girl quickly came back to her own room but the woman followed her and asked sternly:

“What have you done? Why did you look into the room?”

The girl didn't want to admit it but in the end she did not have much choice.

The Black Woman knew that the forbidden command had been broken and she could not be redeemed. Therefore she said:

“Because you were disobedient and looked into the room, you cannot stay here!”

She harnessed the horses, sat the girl in the chariot and took her into the forest. When she approached a tall steep rock, she stopped, pulled the girl out of the chariot, undressed her till she was naked, pushed her down from the rock and drove away with her black cart.

The girl badly hurt herself in the fall. She lay there all scratched until she slowly came back to herself. She cried sorrowfully and tried to get out of the forest but in vain. Eventually she found a big tree with an empty hollow, brought some moss into it and spent her nights there. During the days, she gathered various roots and ate them.

After she had lived there for some time, a doe came to her. The girl was afraid of her at first but soon became accustomed to her and started stroking her. The doe also got accustomed to the girl and allowed the girl to milk her. After that, the girl had a splash of warm milk as well.

In the winter, a king with his escort arrived to hunt. They spotted the footprints of the female deer and set the dogs to find her. Eventually the dogs found the doe by the tree and the girl cried out:

“Don't shoot, don't shoot!”

The king commanded her to show herself but she said:

“I am ashamed to come out because I am naked”

The king gave her his cloak and the girl came out. The king wanted to take her with him but she said:

“I would rather die here in the forest than to get into the same hands as before!”

But her protests were in vain – the king took her with him and on the way, in an inn, he ordered his servants to wash and dress her. When the king saw her

beauty, he decided to take her with him into his castle, raise her and then marry her when she was old enough.

Here the girl grew up, and the king wanted to marry her but she refused saying:

“What if I appear to be unsuitable, who knows what would happen to me then?”

The mother of the king, hearing of her son’s plans, expressed her disagreement:

“Can you not find a bride richer and better than this girl? Nobody knows who she is. She did not appear in the forest without a good reason”.

He did not allow himself to be persuaded and continued asking the girl to marry him. She told him about the Black Woman of whom she was still afraid and said;

“The Black Woman can take away our children and I will be in trouble then”.

But in the end she agreed and they had a great wedding. After a year, she gave birth to a boy, and asked her husband to guard her because she was afraid of the Black Woman. The king put a guard by his wife’s bed and stayed there himself. But at midnight everyone fell asleep and the Black Woman snatched the boy. The next year the same happened. The king was even more sorrowful this time, and his mother had an opportunity to convince him that she was right: “You see, I told you not to marry her. No one knows who she really is and now the children disappear one after another”.

The third year the young queen gave birth to another boy but the Black Woman took him away after midnight when everyone was asleep. The king said:

“If my three sons vanished, I don’t need you either”.

And he gave an order to burn his wife. Many people gathered to watch the execution. When a big fire was made, the queen was taken to the stairs to climb up into the fire.

Suddenly, everyone saw a chariot in the distance pulled by white horses. A white woman sat in the chariot and held three boys dressed in white. The white woman was waving a scarf giving a sign not to start burning the queen. When the chariot approached, the white woman came out and took out the boys. She greeted the young queen and said:

“Here I return your children. You did not manage to redeem me but your children did. You will not die the death your husband ordered for you”.

The queen thanked the white woman with tears in her eyes, and the king was happy to see his sons. The white woman sat back into the chariot and her horses took her away. And the fire burned out.

The king sat his wife and the children in his own chariot, and they drove home being greeted by a happy crowd of people.

The king's mother died soon and they lived happily and peacefully. Maybe they still live to this day, if they have not died yet³⁸⁰.

Marie-Louise von Franz maintains that fairy tales and dreams can be read in terms of the stages of development of a classical drama – they start with the exposition (time and place), move on to tell about the *dramatis personae* (the people involved), name the problem, then take on the *peripeteia* (the ups and downs of the story), reach the climax (the highest tension) and end with a final outcome (a tragedy or a happy ending)³⁸¹.

Von Franz notes that the place and time in fairy tales is always the timeless and limitless collective unconscious – “once upon a time”, “in the seventh kingdom”, etc. The people involved in the tale about the Black Woman at the exposition are the poor couple, the unborn girl, and the tiny black man – the quaternion representing the totality of the Self whose structure appears to be perilous for the idea of the female/feminine.

As I have already mentioned, fairy tale characters, according to von Franz, are representations of the archetypes; they are not humans. In the Black Woman fairy tale, the archetypes are disguised in symbols understandable to human consciousness. The tiny black man, as the Jungian psychoanalyst Lilija Vasiliauskiene³⁸² suggests, can be viewed as the Shadow side of the poor man himself. The tiny black man appears in the Christianised image of evil and he is destructive against something new, still unborn, some new idea or process that is not yet conscious – the man's unborn daughter. The fact that the poor man does not know his wife is pregnant shows that his relation with his own female aspect is also poor. We can also interpret that his psyche has little energy without this relation, and symbolically it is expressed in his financial status – he lives in poverty.

³⁸⁰ “Juoda moteriškė“, in *Septynios Stirnos: Austrų pasakos* (Vinius, Lithuania: Vyturys, 1988), 31-37. Eng. “The Black Woman”, in *Seven doe: Austrian fairy tales*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

³⁸¹ Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 39-40.

³⁸² A private conversation on 15/01/2012 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

As the archetype, the poor man represents popular cultural values – the culture is so deprived, so poorly related to its feminine/female³⁸³ aspect, that it cannot acquire energy (the firewood) and is barely surviving; there is a lack of positive connection in the relation between the male and female realms within this culture. At the same time, this lack generates a positive dynamism: the poor man is forced to go to the natural source, a forest, to find energy there. That is, the culture turns towards its unconscious source represented by the forest, to its Shadow residing in the unconscious, in order to find the firewood, the creative energy, the renewal. It is not accidental that the man's challenge starts in a forest, in the embrace of the Earth, of the matter, which is the initial source of feminine values – in Woodman's terms³⁸⁴. The poor man's (the popular culture's) main problem is his poor relation to the female realm; to his unborn female child and his wife. Further on in the story, we see how the dominant male-focused culture sacrifices female related values (the poor man's daughter) in seeking to establish status and wealth by giving away to the evil (in Christian terms) or to the Shadow (in Jungian terms) the unborn girl.

The culture's ignorance of the female realm and its negative approach towards it is the main problem of the fairy tale. The low class of the poor couple suggests that there is not enough attention given to this problem in the society; it is not being dealt with on the highest level of the kings and queens.

The heroine of the fairy tale is the unborn girl. The situation into which her father and the tiny black man draw her is her problem, her fate, her own Shadow. She has done nothing wrong to obtain this darkness but be born, that is, she inherits her Shadow just by being born in patriarchal society. For the rest of the fairy tale, she is redeeming herself from the dark arrangement of the two men, that is, from the negative attitudes of society towards women. To draw parallels with Woodman's view expressed in the quotation at the start of this chapter, the female/feminine which the girl represents was sold to the darkness and is now fully on the negative side, in the Shadow of the collective unconscious. Her challenge now is to come to the light, to become recognized. According to Jung, “[the shadow] is always the same sex as the subject”³⁸⁵.

³⁸³ In academia, the notions of “the female” and “the feminine” are opaque, controversial and sometimes overlapping. Since my work is not dedicated to defining their meaning, I embrace them both in my text where I feel they complement each other. In parallel I use the notion “the female realm”, referring to biological, social, intellectual, emotional and other conditions by which women live at any given moment of history.

³⁸⁴ Listen to Woodman's audio book *Holding The Tension Of The Opposites*.

³⁸⁵ Jung, *Aion*, 10.

Therefore, although the girl's father met his own Shadow in the shape of a tiny black man, the Shadow of her father now becomes her own Shadow and is further presented in the form of the Black Woman. Her father's Shadow became her own – the patriarchal culture's Shadow is a Shadow of every woman born into that culture.

In this fairy tale version, the Black Woman has no special requirements for the girl, she only needs to play and grow older in the Black Woman's castle. The girl does not need to clean the rooms, as she does in a version presented by von Franz in her book *“Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche”*. This cleaning task refers to the need to clean the Shadow since, as von Franz explains, “the castle is a symbol of the feminine self and thus an analogy for the black woman herself”³⁸⁶.

The girl who represents the collective consciousness seems to have been compelled by the collective Self to be captured by her own Shadow. Her overall task is to grow – to enlarge the culture's consciousness. On the individual level, the girl's task is to understand who she is, what the woman, the feminine, or the female is. The girl is the consciousness by which the Shadow wants to be accepted and understood. This new cultural consciousness is young and not yet strong just like the girl, but it is growing there right in the middle of the Shadow, in the castle, which results in the Black Woman becoming less and less black, less cursed. An illustrative moment of how the girl and the Black Woman are connected is the fact that the girl has everything she wishes for in her games and occupation. Marie-Louise von Franz shares the insight that the girl acquires the features of the Black Woman. This is evident in the way that the things the girl wishes for simply appear before her, and therefore von Franz comments that “she can do magic just like the witch herself”³⁸⁷, which means that the girl acquires the power of using the Shadow energy creatively.

The girl's consciousness is aroused by the alluring sounds of music. In my interpretation, these are the sounds of the Self, an allusion to the most beautiful numinous and sexual experiences; the girl has grown now. This music indicates a change in the Shadow – each time the Black Woman becomes whiter and freer from her curse, the sounds begin to flow. The ego and consciousness, represented by the girl, cannot stay aside from this process. The girl is part of the totality, and the changes in the Shadow affect her, therefore this process provokes her curiosity. Twice she turns aside from understanding the meaning of these sounds, but the third time a

³⁸⁶ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 190.

³⁸⁷ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 188.

transformation happens in her, she enters the forbidden room and is whirled into a different reality (once again, the number three is a number of transformation).

According to Jung, the expansion of consciousness always comes at a cost, it involves a painful experience. Something that the girl sees in the room plunges her into the darkest trials. The girl witnesses a 'truth' about the Black Woman, but she is punished for arrogant curiosity and disobedience. This truth is about what she is herself (on the individual level) or what she is as a culture (on the collective level). Perhaps, she realises the problems relating to her gender and sex, women's position in society, the problem of being a mother in a patriarchal culture.

According to Jung, our consciousness is open to influences from the outer world, both good and bad. Some people and situations help us, but some distract and take us away from feeling the deep inner guidance of the instinctual Self archetype; this causes us to take a path that is wrong for our individuation. The further we follow wrong convictions, the bigger becomes the gap between the consciousness and the instinctive energy of the Self; this leads to the neurotic split reflected by a more or less superficial way of life, far from the true inner guidance³⁸⁸. Speaking of personal experiences, Jung says that the main function of dreams is to try to rebuild our psychological balance through creating a certain subtle dream material. Fairy tales are the dreams of a culture and they have the same aim – they are unconscious fantasies that suggest a correction to the collective consciousness in order to regain balance in the collective psyche.

Later in the tale, when the girl is brought to the forest, stripped naked and pushed from a rock by the Black Woman, this is only a confirmation of the shock the girl endured looking into the forbidden room. She saw something in it that struck her like the fall from the rock; this fall symbolises a sudden change in life, disorientation, the loss of the ground under one's feet. The girl, and at the same time the collective femaleness, is naked, vulnerable, she is now herself cursed, the cure being the fact that on the one hand, she is no longer a little naïve girl, but on the other, she does not know how to be an adult woman with such a Shadow, with such a guilt, with such a sin placed on her by patriarchy. We could probably interpret that the girl's fall from the rock and her life in a tree hollow corresponds to a profound depression but also transformation

³⁸⁸ This is my own translation-interpretation of an excerpt from Jung's book printed in Lithuanian: Karlas Gustavas Jungas, *Žvelgiant į pasąmonę* (Taura, 1994), 38-39. Eng. Carl Gustav Jung. *Looking into the unconscious*.

and healing. She descends into the deepest layers of the soul after realising the discrepancy between her girlish illusions and the collective reality. It is the fall of the world she once knew, a collapse of the cultural ego whose old ways of behaviour can no longer function. This is an experience of the new religious reality Jung was speaking about – a meeting with one's own selfhood. The fairy tale goes on to suggest the best way of surviving such a shock. The girl's descent signifies a dormant transformation of the culture.

This experience is better understood on a personal level. Not everyone in real life agrees to ponder on what they saw, to search for a genuine way of existence distinguished by the search for harmony between the inner and the outer worlds. For example, a woman may realise the injustice towards her at some point in her life (we all happen to look in the forbidden room) but still support the oppressive system because she does not want to or cannot confront it – this often happens to women in patriarchal society. The fairy tale says that she should remain meditative and in touch with her pain so that she emerges from this pain and ascends as a newly formed person who has the strength to demand changes in the system that oppressed her. The fairy tale tells us that to descend into one's own depths is the wisest form of behaviour in order to retain the wholeness of the self.

Although the shock of the discovery of the truth, the admission of her own arrogance (even if forced by the Self) in wanting to know the forbidden truth, and her isolation in the forest are difficult experiences for the girl; the deepest hurt is inflicted on her through becoming a mother, which suggests that part of the problem she saw in the forbidden room was related to the mother archetype, or the mother complex which is the mother archetype expressed on an individual level. In the forbidden room, the girl could have seen the wrong and shameful ways in which the society treats mothers who are blackened by humiliating and unfair attitudes. She could have realised how many of the traits of the Black Woman – her negative mother complex – she had assumed into herself.

The forest, in addition to being a symbol of the unconscious (non-cultural, not made by humans, set in opposition to the urban), is also a symbol of the mother archetype and the mother complex, in this case – a positive complex which provides shelter and healing for the girl. The isolation in the forest is the time for the girl to ponder on what she realised about her worth and place in life, and how she fits into society's picture of a woman. The cultural Shadow consisting mainly of repressed

female values which, according to this reading, she saw in the forbidden room, was something that she had to take on and carry despite knowing this could cost her life. The girl's sadness springs from the knowledge that she will have to live the negative Shadow of the motherhood out – which reaches a climax when she is accused of infanticide. Although having been embraced by the positive mother (the doe, the tree hollow) she is now able physically to become a mother, she is not ready psychologically; she does not know how to deal with the blackness that has overwhelmed her. Yet, had she not gone into the forbidden room, she would have remained unconscious and continued living as her mother lived, perhaps completely swallowed up within a blind instinctive motherliness, or by a complete lack of connection with her children and the world, perhaps giving her daughters away as, in the beginning of the story, her own mother had done with her.

Marie-Louise von Franz offers the insight that the girl's unexpectedly quick transformation into the queen is connected with and perhaps is a direct consequence of what she saw in the forbidden chamber. This terrifying revelation produced a sudden growth of consciousness which created an opportunity for the girl to become elevated over her Shadow, to gain a control over it, to validate her weakest and most repressed aspects. Arguably, this expansion of consciousness is represented symbolically by acquiring a queen's status. Looked at from the point of view of the archetypal patterns, it means that the culture becomes conscious of its Shadow problem and starts dealing with it on the level of its highest consciousness – the queen and the king.

However, in the fairy tale, the young queen lacks confidence in her ability to retain her consciousness; her ego is not yet strong enough. She is challenged to retain her consciousness in circumstances that are impossible – she is accused of such terrible things as eating her own children in some versions, and she is faced with the death penalty. In von Franz' words, the young queen “becomes a mother herself, and at this moment the problem of the “dark mother” reappears”³⁸⁹. Von Franz also observes that the girl's deepest agony and the highest point of tension are represented by the flames and the heat of the bonfire. On a cultural level this may correspond to new cultural ideas being born from the deep burning need – discoveries of various sorts in science or other fields of cultural development, perhaps the invention of a fish net, a pot, a print, the formation of new politics or new religions, and other collective achievements, and

³⁸⁹Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 196

of course the development of the collective psyche and the consciousness, which is always a painful process. Just then, when the tension is at its highest, when it looks like as if there is no solution, help unexpectedly comes from the archetypal energy, from the mother archetype, from the female divine's archetype who now comes in the figure of the White Woman. Finally it appears that by this suffering and inner burning, the girl does redeem her Shadow, or a large part of it and it now emerges coloured in white, regaining the most precious aspects of the Self – her children, who are the symbol of the projection of the Self. However, precisely which of the girl's actions or attitudes, actually brought about the redemption of her Shadow?

The answer seems to lie in the girl's adamant refusal to belong to the Shadow realm, to identify with it. To look in the Black Woman's room is to become the Black Woman – someone who knows the secrets of an isolated cursed realm. Arguably, what the girl sees, makes her realise that she is so much weaker than the secret of the Shadow that she immediately draws a line between herself and the unconscious Shadow denying that she saw anything. It is as if the Black Woman at the same time wants and does not want the girl to know her secrets, therefore the optimal way is for the girl is to see them but to act as if she had not. Both requirements of the Black Woman are fulfilled in this way. The Black Woman in this particular case stands for the Self, for the regulating system that knows what is needed for a better connection of the ego to the Self. Since the girl stands for the collective consciousness, her refusal to admit her wrongdoing means that she refuses to disappear into the unconscious, to become the Black Woman. The Self makes the ego stronger by a terrible trial but it is the only way it can bring back the connection with the ego into a more harmonious state.

In von Franz's view, the fairy tale problem and its redemptory force is related simply to the mother archetype:

We should try to keep in mind what an almost supernatural and heroic sacrifice the queen's persistence in her lie [the denial that she entered the forbidden chamber] means, for in so persisting she consciously sacrifices one of the most profound female instincts, maternal feeling for her child. The individuation process leads here to a sacrifice and thus to a making conscious to the ultimate degree of merely blind instinctive motherliness, and it is precisely this sacrifice that "redeems" the archetype of the black mother through this process of making

conscious, in other words, that brings it back, in the figure of the new queen, to its meaningful psychic function³⁹⁰.

However, as I mentioned earlier, I regard that the Shadow problem in this fairy tale as something much wider; it embraces the whole complexity of being a woman in a patriarchal culture, and the dark mother complex is only part of the Shadow. The girl also redeems her functioning in society, her status, her future, her ideas as well as the dark mother archetype.

There is another question to consider here in relation to this particular fairy tale. Why did the girl eventually succumb to the pressure of the Black Woman and admit to looking into the forbidden chamber? I suggested earlier that her refusal to confess her wrongdoing (looking into the forbidden room) represented a way of retaining her consciousness – she drew a firm line between herself (consciousness) and the unconscious contents (a secret scene which she witnessed in the forbidden room). However, how can it be that when she does confess her misconduct in some versions of similar fairy tales about the Black Woman, she remains conscious? Looking for an answer to this confusing question, it is important to remember that fairy tales have many cultural layers: the confession of a sin may be a layer placed during the centuries of Christianity to reflect its understanding of moral values. This confession suggests that one will be saved if one trusts God, even after admitting the wrongdoings. So we can interpret that the religion offers safety to the human psyche and it no longer needs to hide its wrongdoings from herself/himself. However, this can also mean that the psyche has developed its own inner God (it found relation to the Self) and therefore feels safe to admit any wrongdoings.

Before moving on to explore ways in which the figure of Mary could be related to the Black Woman, I want to analyse one more fairy tale from Lithuania. It is called *The Poppy*. I have chosen it since for me, it has parallels with the Demeter and Persephone myth; it could almost be regarded as a Lithuanian version of that myth. For me, this myth is a prototype version of the Christian myth of Mary (I write in more detail about the relation between Mary and the Demeter and Persephone myth in Chapter 5, section 5.3.). The Poppy fairy tale is valuable for various reasons: firstly, as I have already suggested, it provides a link between Mary and the Demeter and Persephone myth and secondly, Poppy is the Shadow heroine since she is black, so we

³⁹⁰ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 196-197.

can trace the Shadow of Mary in the figure of Poppy. This gives us the idea that the prototype of Mary did have a Shadow. In other words, *The Poppy* fairy tale allows us to recognise that the Christian myth of Mary has lost many aspects which are still present in *The Poppy* fairy tale or in the Demeter and Persephone myth.

Tale No 2: Lithuanian fairy tale “The Poppy” and its interpretation.

There was an old man and old woman and they had a small daughter called Poppy because she was very black, like a poppy-seed. The mother told the father:

“Put her into the draw-well so she becomes white”.

The father carried the daughter to the well and lowered her down. The mother cooked some eggs with lard, took them to the well, and said:

“Poppy, my daughter Poppy, put out your hand, has it whitened already?”

Poppy put out her hand, took some food and ate it. The mother said:

“Stay here, you are still black, and don’t put your hand out if someone else calls your name”

A wolf heard this. He went to the well and called in a big voice:

“Poppy my daughter Poppy, put out your hand, has it whitened already?”

But Poppy did not put her hand out remembering her mother’s warning. Then the wolf asked a blacksmith to make his tongue thinner. After the blacksmith had flattened the wolf’s tongue, the wolf went to the well and called Poppy in a voice just like her mother’s. Poppy put out her hand, the wolf grabbed it and took Poppy to the forest.

The mother had no daughter any more. So she lay down on a bench and died. People asked the wolf and Poppy to come to the funeral.

Poppy came and cried:

“My mother, my guest, you fell like a leaf of a maple-tree...”

And the wolf cried:

“My mother-in-law, you broke like a millstone...”

The people dug out a hole in the ground, filled it with burning coal, and pushed the wolf into the hole. Then the mother stood up from the bench alive,

took a stick, and beat the wolf to death. So the mother had her daughter Poppy back³⁹¹.

Similarly to the myth of Demeter and Persephone, Poppy is captured by a male who is the king of his own realm: Hades is the king of the underworld and death in the Demeter and Persephone myth, and the wolf is the king of the forest as we know from folklore. The forest is another symbol for the underworld for the unconscious, which can also be viewed as a place where consciousness dies/disappears. In Jung's words:

This unconscious (...) is like all pervading, omni-present spirit. It knows man as he always was, and not as he is at the moment; it knows him as myth. For this reason, also, the connection with the suprapersonal or collective unconscious means an extension of man beyond himself; it means death for his personal being and a rebirth in a new dimension, as was literally enacted in certain of the ancient mysteries³⁹².

Like Persephone, Poppy marries her abductor who stands for that energy in the psyche which arrests her consciousness, and so she disappears into the unconscious enacting the mystery of inner transformation. Like Demeter, the mother of Poppy suffers from grief after being robbed of her daughter but eventually both mothers demonstrate their power and become reunited with their daughters.

In the above tale, there is no Black Woman who has to be redeemed by the heroine, a young girl. This time the fairy tale's language and symbolism is more straightforward – it is the young girl herself who is black, and she needs to redeem herself. This could mean that *The Poppy* fairy tale comes from older cultures than the Black Woman fairy tale; arguably, the simpler the plot of a fairy tale is, the more archaic it is³⁹³. We can see the similarity with the *Black Woman* tale since Poppy goes to the forest to live with her blackness – the wolf – like the young heroine in the *Black Woman* fairy tale who also goes into a remote place to live with her blackness, the Black Woman. Similarly, as in individual dreams where all the characters are parts of the dreamer, the fairy tale characters describe the collective psyche of a culture at a certain period³⁹⁴.

³⁹¹ Kerbelytė, Bronislava, ed, "Aguolėlė", in *Gyvasis Vanduo: Lietuvių liaudies stebuklinės pasakos* (Vyturus: Vilnius, 1989), 7. Eng. „The Poppy“, in *The Water of Life: Lithuanian folk wonder tales*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

³⁹² Carl Gustav Jung, "The Role of the Unconscious", 3-28.

³⁹³ See Marie Louise von Franz *Introduction to the Interpretation of Fairy Tales*.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

In *The Poppy*, as in the *Black Woman* fairy tales, the need for redemption from blackness is dictated by the archetypal pattern by which all that is unconscious wants to become conscious. This archetypal pattern carries us away into the depths of our souls/psyches, which is represented in this fairy tale by the draw-well, at some stage of our lives. We are taken there by our Shadow and we have to find a way back into society and consciousness, to reunite with dominating cultural attitudes.

It is possible that *The Poppy* fairy tale comes from a pre-Christian matricentral culture. This is suggested by a few facts: firstly, the daughter is reunited with the mother at the conclusion of the fairy tale and by the end they stand for the dominating cultural attitudes; and secondly, the father is not mentioned any more at the end of the fairy tale, which suggests that he perhaps was the wolf who perished, or rather – who was transformed through the power of the fire. As we established earlier, in patriarchy, the female darkness is the socially implied Shadow consisting largely of repressed female values, and of negative attitudes towards women. In matricentral society, we can assume, the Shadow is the negative mother complex from which the girl needs to untangle herself. In any case, fairy tales such as *The Poppy* and *The Black Woman* as well as the Demeter and Persephone myth indicate that women have always taken responsibility for redeeming the female/feminine values in both patriarchal and matricentral societal structures.

It has been accepted by many Jungians that in the patriarchal duality the unconscious is associated with the feminine, female (while the consciousness is associated with maleness and masculinity). Yet some mythological narratives show that it is the males, such as Hades and the he-wolf, who reign in the unconscious of women; the dark men chasing women in dreams come from this realm³⁹⁵. The existence of the Shadow male figures in women's unconscious suggests, against Woodman's view (in the quotation in section 4.1. of this chapter), that the culture's Shadow and the personal Shadow do not contain only the female/feminine values repressed into the unconscious but also the male/masculine darkness/Shadow. This is perhaps why the heroines in fairy tales are tested to the utmost when they enter motherhood. They not only face the darkest Shadow of the mother complex which surfaces when they have their own children but the dark man from their unconscious reaches women more easily through their mother complex: a woman's Shadow includes her negative mother complex, and a

³⁹⁵ For more about the dangerous intruder into the women's dreams see Clarissa Pinkola Estés *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, Chapter 2.

mother's negativity often springs from the negative images and emotions that surround her experience of men. This gendering of the Shadow, the interweaving of the cultural Shadow continues through generations: it is being passed by fathers onto daughters, by mothers onto sons. Yet when it comes to redeeming the blackness, women take the responsibility for it. For example, in the Austrian fairy tale No. 1, the poor man's Shadow appears just briefly as a tiny black man who then transforms into the Black Woman. So, the poor man is not concerned with the redemption of his Shadow, he transfers this task onto his daughter. She redeems her own Shadow, and also her father's Shadow. From the point of the Western culture's collective consciousness, Christ is the redeemer of all the people from their darkness; but this is only our conscious imagery, and therefore, only a part of the story. Poppy, and the girl in the Black Woman's castle are the redeemers of our Shadow in the unconscious, they are the Shadow figures to Christ. Following this thought we can see parallels between the *dominant religion* (Christianity in our case) of a culture and the unconscious *religious reality* (Jung's term discussed in Chapter 1) of that culture.

Poppy can also be understood as the Black Madonna, the Virgin Mary, because she is black and her symbol is a well. Poppy is also a symbol of each woman who lives in the Shadow of the patriarchal and Christian culture. We visit the dark woods of our own Shadows like Poppy, and like her, we bring our share in redeeming the female Shadow. Similarly to Poppy who is the redeemer of the whole culture, we are saviours of our own lives on an individual level. Poppy also demonstrates the importance of the deep connectedness with the archetypal Goddess, her mother, who stands for the old, wise and archetypal female divine, the Self.

On a personal level, the wolf is the dangerous male in Poppy's unconscious. The wolf is also her negative father aspect. On a cultural level, the wolf is the negative side of God the Father, the one that is not allowed to exist in Christianity, the evil. The fairy tale suggests that Poppy's blackness is represented by the wolf after it snatches the Poppy from the well. This means that Poppy is now in a position to have a relationship with her blackness rather than just be overwhelmed by it to such a degree as to allow it to hold her in the descent, in the depths of her soul, in the well, in the unconscious. Poppy marries the wolf; we know that because she calls her mother "guest" which is the case when a woman gets married and leaves the mother's house to live in her man's house – she now sees her mother only when she comes as a guest. The wolf too calls her "mother-in-law". The marriage is a symbolic gesture of a deep engagement. Poppy

is the consciousness the wolf needs, a little light in the dark woods; the female consciousness that is so required by the patriarchal culture. However, one cannot stay forever in the unconscious (in the forest), one needs to come back to reality and integrate what one saw in the forest. With the help of Poppy's mother (who stands for the conscious positive cultural attitudes towards the female), the patriarchal Shadow that stole Poppy is de-activated and Poppy is returned into the conscious life.

So far, I have avoided engaging in associations between the Virgin Mary and the Black Woman. I did it in order to prepare the reader, since the fairy tales I analyse from here on, do not have female figures that are black. However, the readers will see that in the Lithuanian fairy tales I present next (No. 3 and Nr.4), the role of the Black Woman is played by the Virgin Mary; we recognise this from the fact that these fairy tales have a very similar plot to the Black Woman fairy tale. This naturally connects the Black Woman and Mary, and offers many valuable insights into the Shadow of Mary.

Tale No 3: Lithuanian fairy tale “Agnieškėlė”³⁹⁶.

There lived a man and a woman, and they did not have children. After some time a daughter was born to them but they were so poor they could not afford to bring her up. The mother then put the girl into her apron and said,

“I will throw her into a river, we cannot afford to keep her”. And she set off. But on her way, she met the Holiest Virgin.

“Where are you going?”, asked the Holiest Virgin.

“I am carrying this girl, I am going to throw her into the river Ašmena” said the woman. The Holiest Virgin then said:

“Leave the girl with me. I will give you some wood for your stove and you can carry it instead of the girl in your apron”

The woman agreed and took the wood. When she came back home and emptied her apron at the stove, money fell out instead of the wood. Now the woman and the man were full of sorrow that they had given their daughter away because now they had the money to bring her up. But it was too late, and they did not know where their girl was.

³⁹⁶ Pronounced: Agnyeshkeyley.

The Holiest Virgin raised the girl – she gave her good clothes and all that was needed. The Holiest Virgin would go away from time to time. One day she said to the girl:

“Agnieškėlė – this was the name that the Holiest Virgin gave to the girl – I am going away again. You look after the house but don’t go into my room, don’t sit on my chair, don’t read from my book, don’t look into my mirror, and don’t wash yourself with my soap”.

“I won’t”, said Agnieškėlė.

As soon as the Holiest Virgin left, Agnieškėlė ran into the Holiest Virgin’s room, washed herself with the Holiest Virgin’s soap, looked into her mirror and combed her hair with the Holiest Virgin’s comb. Then Agnieškėlė sat on the Holiest Virgin’s chair and read her book. After some time, she heard the Holiest Virgin coming back and left the room quickly. The Holiest Virgin came and asked:

“Agnieškėlė, did you go into my room?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you wash yourself with my soap?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you look into my mirror?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you sit on my chair?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you read from my book?”

“I didn’t”

Well, the Holiest Virgin said nothing. The next day, she went out again, and as soon as she left, Agnieškėlė hurried into the Holiest Virgin’s room. There she washed herself with the Holiest Virgin’s soap, dried herself with the Holiest Virgin’s towel, looked into her mirror, sat on her chair and read the Holiest Virgin’s books until the evening came.

When the Holiest Virgin returned, and asked:

“Agnieškėlė, did you go into my room?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you wash yourself with my water?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you look into my mirror?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you sit on my chair?”

“I didn’t”

“Did you read from my book?”

“I didn’t”

But the Holiest Virgin knew Agnieškėlė was not telling the truth. So she gave Agnieškėlė a lovely white dress, then took her out and sat her on a tall fir tree by a road. Agnieškėlė was grown by now, and in the white dress she looked beautiful.

It happened that a king was passing by the tree, and he saw the beautiful girl. He ordered his servants to take the girl down. The king took the girl home and they got married. After a year, she gave birth to a son. As soon as Agnieškėlė fell asleep at night, the Holiest Virgin came just before the dawn and took Agnieškėlė’s child away, and nobody saw her although the day was already breaking. In the morning the king saw that the child was gone. They looked everywhere, lamented and cried, but all in vain – the child was nowhere to be found. After another year, God blessed them with another son, and the king arranged many servants to guard the child and to watch his wife – maybe she kills her own children, or hides them somewhere he thought. But when the night came, all the servants fell fast asleep as if on God’s order, and the Holiest Virgin snatched the second child away noticed by no one. The king looked in the morning – another child gone. He then thought Agnieškėlė was a witch and ate her children. She wept and said this was not true, she had fallen asleep and didn’t know where the children had disappeared.

After a year or two, Agnieškėlė gave birth to a third son. The king said:

“I will guard him myself this time”

But just before the morning, the Holiest Virgin came, and everyone was so fast asleep that they had fallen out of their chairs. This time, she smeared Agnieškėlė with some blood before taking her child away. The king woke up and saw blood on his wife, and this time he truly believed that she was a witch and ate her children. He ordered his servants to build an iron stove and heat it up. When it was ready, he told his servants to take Agnieškėlė and throw her

into the stove and burn her. She wept and begged him to take pity on her because she knew she had done nothing. But the king would not be appeased.

But God sent such a storm and rain – because she was innocent – that the stove went cool, and when the servants brought her and threw her in, it was so cold she didn't burn!

In the evening, the Holiest Virgin came to the stove and asked:

“So, Agnieškèlè, did you go into my room?”

Agnieškèlè replied:

“I did”

“Did you wash yourself with my water?”

“I did”

“Did you look at my mirror?”

“I did”

“Did you sit on my chair?”

“I did”

“Did you read from my book?”

“I did”

Then the Holiest Virgin gave her one child back. The next day the Holiest Virgin came again and asked the same questions, and Agnieškèlè again admitted going into the Holiest Virgin's room, washing with her soap, looking into her mirror, sitting on her chair and reading from her book. The Holiest Virgin gave back her second child. In the evening of the third day, the Holiest Virgin came and asked the same questions, and Agnieškèlè admitted it all once more. The Holiest Virgin gave her back the third child. The children were all grown a little and had silver apples as toys.

After three days passed, the king thought to check if his wife's bones need more fire, and he sent his servants to the stove. The servants arrived, opened the stove, and saw Agnieškèlè sitting there, and her three children playing next to her. They went to the king and told him what they saw. The king felt happy but he still could not believe this was true, and sent yet another, even more loyal servant to check. But this servant said the same. Then the king

arrived himself in a carriage drawn by horses, and met his wife and the children. They all rejoiced, kissed, returned home, and live together to this day³⁹⁷.

Tale No 4: Lithuanian fairy tale “About a poor man’s daughter”.

There once lived a very poor man. His wife gave birth to a daughter. The poor man went to look for godparents but no one wanted to take on such a commitment. He wandered further with tears in his eyes and saw a woman sitting on a stone – the Holiest Virgin. This woman asked why he was crying. The man explained,

“My wife had a daughter but I can’t find godparents for her”.

The Holiest Virgin said,

“Bring her here, I will christen her”

The poor man brought his daughter. The Holiest Virgin christened her and then said:

“Bring a tub covered with a white cloth here tomorrow”.

The man did as he was told. He then came the next morning and found the tub full of money. The Holiest Virgin commanded him to take the money and added,

“When your daughter is 15 years old, bring her to this stone”

The man promised and picked up the money. Now he became rich. His daughter grew up and reached the age of 15 when she had to be taken to the stone. Reluctantly, the father took her to the stone where he found the Holiest Virgin sitting again, he gave his daughter into her care and returned home. The Holiest Virgin took the girl together with her into the heavens. She showed the girl all the corners of heaven, and also brought her to the Olive Garden. The Holiest Virgin said,

“You stay here, and I go to see my families. But do not look into the Olive Garden”.

But how can the girl resist having a look into the Olive Garden? After an hour the Holiest Virgin came back and asked:

“Did you look into the Olive Garden?”

³⁹⁷ *Gervėčių Pasakos* (Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas: Vilnius, 1997), 164. Eng. *Fairy Tales of Gervecių region*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

The girl said “no”. Three times the Holiest Virgin asked but the girl said “no” each time. Angry, the Holiest Virgin threw the girl down from heaven. The girl landed at the stone at which she was christened. She sat by the stone and started reading books.

Meanwhile, a young king had been hunting in the forest. He got lost and while looking for a way out he approached the stone by which he saw a beautiful girl. He liked her very much and took her for his wife. They had a daughter but she vanished soon after the birth. The king cried but could not change anything. Later they had a second daughter – but she also disappeared. The same happened with their third daughter. “Perhaps I married a witch”, thought the king. He decided to burn his wife. He ordered his servants to bring plenty of wood and erect a bonfire the length of “varstas”³⁹⁸. Then he ordered them to bring his wife. He was seated on one end of the bonfire, while the opposite side was set alight. The Holiest Virgin came and asked the girl:

“Did you look into the Olive Garden?” The girl said, “no”. Half of the bonfire had burnt by now. The king sent his servants to check. The Holiest Virgin came again and asked:

“Did you look into the Olive Garden?”

She said “no, no”. The fire approached her. The Holiest Virgin came again and asked:

“Did you look into the Olive Garden?”

The queen, seeing that she will soon burn, cried out, “I did, I did”. At that minute three most beautiful thrones appeared before the bonfire and her three daughters sat in them. The servants saw it and ran to tell the king. The king ran in a hurry to the bonfire and saw his wife sitting on it and next to her – his three daughters. He joyously ran and kissed his wife, and they all returned to their castle³⁹⁹.

³⁹⁸ *Varstas* is equal to 1067 km and was an official measurement in Tsarist Russia, and the lands occupied by it, before the metre was introduced. In Lithuania, *varstas* was used between 1796–1915.

³⁹⁹ Jonas Basanavičius, ed, “Apie vargšo dukterį”, in *Lietuviškos pasakos įvairios: antra knyga* (Vaga: Vilnius, 1995), 47. Eng. *Various Lithuanian Folk Tales: Volume 2*. Translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

Interpretation of fairy tales No 3 and No 4.

The storylines of the two tales above have a number of similarities to the Austrian fairy tale No. 1 about the Black Woman, except the Black Woman is replaced with the figure of the Virgin Mary. It allows applying the analysis of the Black Woman fairy tale to the two Lithuanian fairy tales by reading “the Virgin Mary” instead of “the Black Woman”. For that reason, I will not repeat it in this section; instead, I will comment on some new aspects and summarise the analysis of all the fairy tales given in this chapter.

One of the main differences between the Lithuanian fairy tales No. 3 and 4 and *The Black Woman* (as well as *The Poppy*) fairy tale is, of course, that they seem to have been Christianised, because they speak of the Christian figure, the Virgin Mary. However, the behaviour of this Virgin Mary is far removed from her typical Christian image. As I have already suggested, this may well reflect the evolution of the fairy tales, the old fairy tales being intertwined with a new, Christian, layer. There are some noticeable aspects of Christian influence in the two Lithuanian tales I provided. For example, the Virgin Mary gives the girl a beautiful white dress in the tale *Agnieškėlė* (No. 3) instead of stripping her naked and dropping her down the rock like in the Austrian fairy tale (No.1), and the castle of the Virgin Mary is in heaven in the fairy tale No. 4. However, the two Lithuanian fairy tales are still very authentic. They all express the female Shadow that seems to be uninfluenced by Christian models of behaviour: in the tale *The poor man's daughter* the Virgin Mary throws the girl from the heights of the heavens down onto the stony earth, demonstrating her evil features; in the *Agnieškėlė* fairy tale, the mother herself takes her newborn daughter to drown, which contravenes Christian morality.

The drowning symbolism is absent in the Black Woman fairy tale. For us, it is immoral; however, it is a natural act for the mother in the fairy tale. What is interesting, that she is not hiding this fact, she does not seek to retain their good Christian face (persona) and shake off the responsibility for her actions by saying that she was seduced by some tiny black man (in contrast to the father in the Austrian fairy tale). The evil in Christianity is not allowed to exist within a person and therefore it is shown as detached from the poor man in the Austrian fairy tale. Yet in the tale No. 3 the Shadow aspect is not yet repressed in the parents; it is integrated, a natural part of a person. This may mean that the Lithuanian fairy tale is older than the Austrian fairy tale, and that the figure of the Virgin Mary has been incorporated into it unconsciously, without

acceptance of Christian morality. On the other hand, we might conclude from *The Poppy* fairy tale that her parents did not really intend to drown her but to place her into the well – into the depths of the psyche. Their action was not in this reading a sacrifice or killing but a spiritual gesture, like a prayer or meditation, reaching into the depths of the soul with the help of their inner child who is a projection of their own Self. To me, the mother's journey to the river to throw into it her little daughter in the tale No. 3 has parallels with the christening in the river. The cleansing aspect that is so clear in *The Poppy* fairy tale most likely acquired the meaning of drowning when people forgot its initial connotation, and therefore in the later versions, we read that the parents wanted to drown their daughters. Knowing this, we may perhaps adopt the reading that in the tale No. 3 the girls' mother is looking for a better fate for her daughter, for a spiritually richer life. This is supported by the fact that in the version No. 4, the father is looking for a Godmother, that is, for the divine direction. Yet, we cannot completely rule out the drowning idea as not genuine; as we have established earlier, being born female was *the* original sin in terms of Christianity, and therefore women's place was on the margins, beyond, below the mainstream cultural life – at the bottom of the collective consciousness, at the threshold of the unconscious, deep down in the well. Perhaps, at times women and girls were so unwanted (for instance, during the witch hunts) that drowning newborn girls could have been seen as a gesture of kindness. The isolation in the well is symptomatic of what the second wave of feminists called “nothingness”⁴⁰⁰ when they described the impoverishment of their self-worth and the emptiness caused by being outside of the visible culture – in language, arts, philosophy, science, politics. Paradoxically, the well is also the place where the redemption of the “sin” of being a woman can be achieved.

It is not by accident that the fairy tales tell us that the Shadow (the Virgin Mary) is rewarding the parents of the girls; the Shadow pays for the girls who are unwanted. The Shadow takes with itself this little growing consciousness, a new projection of the Self, and by doing so, some of the Shadow becomes realised immediately, releasing some energy, which manifests as the gift of the Shadow to the parents. The gifts that the Virgin Mary gives to the parents of the girls are reflected in the increased wealth of the

⁴⁰⁰ The term “Nothingness” was especially meaningful to feminists such as Mary Daly, Carol Christ and others in the early eighties. This feeling manifests for each woman differently and was used to describe the woman's self-perception when living in patriarchy. See, for example Carol P. Christ, *Diving Deep & Surfacing: Women Writers on Spiritual Quest*, or Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow. *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*.

parents who represent the culture. The culture which gave the girl (representing the consciousness) to its Shadow problem became spiritually and energetically richer – the parents acquired firewood for creative burning, spiritual food, and energy in the shape of money.

Analysing the fairy tale of the Black Woman, Marie-Louise von Franz observes that “The fairy-tale figure, the black woman, is in fact an archetypal figure that could be characterised as the shadow of the Virgin Mary, analogous to Satan as the shadow of Yahweh”⁴⁰¹. The Black Woman is the other side of the archetype that is represented by the figure of Mary in Christianity, the one that cannot be recognised in Christianity by the collective consciousness. Christianity does not recognise the female divine manifestation (neither good nor bad), and in addition it distances its male God from his Shadow side which von Franz names as Satan. In the fairy tales, the Virgin Mary not only exposes her dark side but also carries the divine dimension that is denied to her in the mainstream religion. One of the main aspects of the theology of Mary is to gather such material in order to develop a cohesive myth about the female divine that embraces bright and dark traits.

The Virgin Mary performs two roles: that of the Self and of the Shadow. According to Jung, the Self embraces the ego-consciousness and the Shadow (as well as other archetypes), therefore it is not surprising to find Mary in these two roles. In the role of the Shadow of Christianity, she needs to be redeemed. As the representation of the Self, Mary is the instinctive wisdom of the divine in female form that directs and guides the heroine.

The fairy tales’ main task is to bring the people’s imagination and experience of the female divine Self closer to the inner truth and further from rigid dogmas in order to restore the health of the collective psyche; to close the gap between the perfect Mary and the Mary-Witch. This duality of the Virgin Mary is felt throughout the fairy tales No. 3 and 4 since it tears apart the lives of the heroines.

In one of the fairy tales, the Virgin Mary gives enticing instructions: “You look after the house but do not go into my room, do not sit in my chair, do not read from my book, do not look into my mirror, do not brush your hair with my brush, do not wash yourself with my soap, and do not dry yourself with my towel”. It is a warning not to try to learn the divine wisdom of the Virgin Mary (“do not read from my books”) but

⁴⁰¹ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 203.

rather admit human limitations; not to sit on the throne of divinity (“do not sit on my chair”) to avoid the inflation of the ego; not to identify with the divine appearance (“do not look into my mirror”) to avoid the ego thinking that it is the creator of itself; not to mix the ego’s essence with the Self’s essence (“do not use my hair brush); not to learn how the divine cleans itself from its Shadow (“do not use my soap and towel”). The heroine shows us that in this case the task of increasing consciousness (entering the room and performing all forbidden action) is more compelling than suppressing it. Perhaps the most intriguing part for the girl is the soap and towel clue – they are the means by which the secret of the Virgin Mary’s isolated life can be washed away, and the girl must learn this secret. The fairy tale seems to suggest that only when these tools are used by the consciousness which the girl represents, can the integration of the Shadow really take place.

In the fairy tales, the heroine represents the ego which is behaving the way the Self finds ultimately most harmonious for the whole personality/culture. The purpose of the fairy tales is to show how the ego should connect with the Self so that the old structure of life is changed into a new, more balanced and authentic one. Since the heroine of the fairy tales is *the* ego (the model ego representing the egos of many people, or women), we observe in the fairy tales’ plots a possibility for a cultural change, a culture’s unconscious dream of it. In the Lithuanian tales No. 3 and 4 the heroine is telling us how to find a relation to the Virgin Mary in ourselves, to the part represented by Mary of which Christianity would rather not speak – the female divine, and the Shadow of the female divine. A conscious union of the split character of Mary in us, individuals, can inspire a change in the culture.

The oneness of the dark and light myths of Mary enables us to see her as a container for the female divine that is undivided and can hold and reflect each woman’s experience in the divine dimension. Such a Mary is no longer only the virgin or only the good mother as the Christian mythology suggests. One of the meanings of *standing in the danger of the Crone* (this is Estés expression) that could be applied here, is seeing and experiencing the frightening power of the divine force of Mary but at the same time feeling that there is no safer place to be than in this danger, because this force is also a fierce, benevolent and passionate protector and carer. There is nothing safer than to belong to it, and there is no safer place to hide from it than in the centre of it. This understanding makes the female divine, self-sustainable in all aspects; no male God is needed for a better protection, nor is there a need for a God who is more powerful. This

is not to say that there is no need for male God(s) for anyone; I want to emphasise that my work is aiming to strengthen the female divine symbolism in order to regain the balance with the male divine symbolism.

In sum we are talking about Mary's wholeness; by regaining her power from her Shadow through the growth of consciousness, and becoming both positive and negative at the same time, Mary is no longer divided. Now, looking into this undivided image, we are also no longer divided in our morality, self-identity, or spirituality. We saw from the legends in Chapter 3 that Mary stands for natural forces and the source of life; a powerful female divine. We also see from the fairy tales in this chapter that Mary has a negative Shadow and therefore she is able to reflect our own Shadow. The incorporation of these aspects into our consciousness is perhaps the only way to compensate for the image of the Christian Mary that was elevated far above women with such painful consequences for them. To attend to the female divine means to attend to it in its wholeness where no aspect is exaggerated over another, to meet with the Shadow of the female divine in the middle between the two opposites – at the dawn, at the twilight, which is when Holy Mary in the fairy tale *Agnieškėlė* comes to steal the children.

The heroines of the fairy tales show women a way of finding their own individual path, which involves squeezing through the very narrow passage between the good Mary and the bad Mary-Witch without identifying with either. It comes as no surprise to observe the spiritual movements of witches in America and Europe – it is a natural compensation to Christian values. But one has to be careful and very conscious not to stay trapped in the Shadow side after identifying with it and not to think that this is the only true form the female divine can take. To declare that the Shadow, or the Witch, is divine should be only a means for bringing more balance to the female divine image and myth. The Witch archetype, like all archetypes, is both good and bad. It is true that it should not matter from which side we start rectifying the problem – by bringing the 'good' Mary closer to the 'bad' Witch in our imagination, or lighting up the 'bad' Witch by bestowing to her the features of the 'good' Mary. Both ways are valid; however, I am arguing that a shift towards the middle must happen.

CHAPTER 5. MARY AS AN INDIVIDUAL CONNECTION TO THE DIVINE SELF: THE SORROW BIRD, THE FIXING OF THE BROKEN BREATH AND SOUL, AND THE HIDDEN STRENGTH OF MARY.

Introduction to Chapter 5.

This chapter is concerned first of all with an individual connection to Mary, and it also continues to explore the possibilities to integrate the Shadow of Mary into our spirituality on the individual and collective levels. I continue the theme of the Shadow of Mary while discussing the aspects of the hurt women's experiences. To recap briefly, in Chapter 3, I dealt with the positive Shadow of Mary, and in Chapter 4, I analysed her negative Shadow. While Chapter 4 explained the cultural importance of Mary recovering her negative Shadow, Chapter 5 endeavours to investigate how a woman can develop a richer spiritual life by establishing an individual connection to her own Shadow, and to her Self represented by Mary. In the first section of this chapter I offer my interpretation of *the Sorrow Bird* fairy tale as an example of a possibility for an individual connection to the Self through Mary. Further, I engage with the philosopher of religion Luce Irigaray's ideas about how a woman can retain her individuality and identity in her own soul/psyche and connect to the divine in oneself, and what the mytho-poetic expressions "woman's breath", "woman's virginity" mean. I will also analyse an episode from the Lithuanian writer Žemaitė's novella that emphasises her individualised approach to the imagining of Mary.

I have been writing some sections of this chapter over a number of years. About ten years ago, I visited the Black Madonna shrine in Częstochowa in Poland. The Częstochowa Madonna is an image that is considered to be miraculous and draws thousands of pilgrims. A few years after this visit, I came across a fairy tale called *The Sorrow Bird*, and realised that for me, the bird whose name was "Sorrow" bore a striking resemblance to the Black Madonna of Częstochowa. This was because the Sorrow bird was black and had two bloody stripes on its wings, and seemed to parallel the Madonna of Częstochowa who had two deep bloody cuts on one of the cheeks on her black face. In addition, they were both powerful figures able to decide a person's fate, and I also related Mary with the Goddess Bird from the Lithuanian folklore and Gimbutas mythology. The fairy tale narrative also seemed to describe the sorrowful

facial expression of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa in such a way that it had the potential, in my view, to integrate the depth of human sorrow on the individual level.

5.1. The Sorrow Bird (a shortened version of the Czech fairy tale)⁴⁰².

Once upon a time in a kingdom there lived a princess who was very wicked and cruel. She forbade unhappy and poor people to walk by her windows. But despite her orders, one day three unhappy women appeared in the street wearing black clothes and crying. The women said they were crying because they had a great sorrow. “What is sorrow?” mocked the princess, “I have never seen sorrow. What does it look like?”

And she gave her servant a coin and ordered her to buy some sorrow. In a market, the servant wandered unhappily wondering how she was going to buy such a thing – sorrow. Then, she saw a strange black-eyed man from far lands who held a cage with a beautiful bird. The bird was all black and had two red stripes on each of its wings. The man said its name was Sorrow. The servant rejoiced and bought it feeling relieved to have easily accomplished such a difficult task.

The princess liked the bird very much and carried it in a cage wherever she went. But one day, when walking in a garden, she let the bird out of the cage, and suddenly the bird started growing and growing, then seized the princess with its talons and took off. It flew until it approached high mountains and dark woods, and laid the frightened princess on the top of a mountain.

“Have you never seen sorrow?” asked the bird. “From now on, you will have more grief and sorrow than you will know what to do with.” Then it took off and vanished. The princess wandered in the woods for a few days, crying, scared and hungry, until one day she saw a shepherd’s hut. The shepherd took her for a servant. One day when the princess was scraping wooden dishes there, it suddenly became dark and the bird with the bloody stripes on its wings appeared in a window. The princess’s heart stopped beating in her breast. The bird flew in, started growing and growing until it stretched its wings so wide

⁴⁰²Voitěch Martínek, “Sielvarto paukštis”, in *Gyvačių karaliaus dovana: Čekų pasakos*. Serija Pasaulio Pasakos (Alma Litera: Vilnius, 2008), 51. Eng. “The Sorrow Bird”, in *The Gift of the Snake King: Czech folk tales*. From the series of Folk Tales of the World, published in Lithuanian. The fairy tale translated from Lithuanian and shortened by Rasa Luzyte.

that it smashed the hut into pieces. Then shouted, “Did you want to know sorrow?”, and flew away.

The shepherd chased her away – he was sure that it was the princess who destroyed the hut. Similarly, she was taken for a servant by a villager and by a tailor, but the Sorrow Bird destroyed every house in which she served. Angry villagers threw stones at her and chased her in to the woods.

Then a prince found her in the forest, and fell in love with her. Alas, on their wedding day the Sorrow Bird flew in and destroyed her beautiful wedding dress, tables and all the food (...) Everyone thought that she was a witch who had done all this, and tried to convince the prince to take her back to the woods, but the prince still married her. She gave birth to three children in three years but each year the Sorrow Bird with the bloody stripes on its wings would fly in through a window and take the newborn child away from her, shouting, “Do you know now how sorrow feels?”

After she lost three children, the prince believed she was a witch, took her back to the woods, and left her there for the wild animals to tear to pieces. She lay on the grass in despair but was fearless when the Sorrow Bird appeared above her and spoke: “Do not be afraid, your trials have finished. All your grief will turn into joy because you have not betrayed me despite your tortures.” The princess replied that she was not afraid of the bird anymore because it had taken away everything that was precious to her, and she had nothing more to lose. Then the bird said, “I will reward you with seven joys for the seven sorrows that I caused you”. The bird ordered her to follow it, and it brought her to a new castle in the woods with a beautiful garden full of wealth and chests full of money – those were the four joys. There she also found her three lost children, and these were her fifth, sixth and seventh joys. After this, the Sorrow Bird flew away and never returned. The grieving prince eventually found the castle while hunting and reunited with the princess. With the seven joys, the fairy tale only starts, but it ends for us. Can you hear the little bell ringing – it tells us that the story came to an end...

This fairy tale begins with a young princess ruling a kingdom, which is quite unnatural in real life as well as in fairy tales. There are no parents or they are completely inactive, which can be interpreted that existing cultural values are ineffective, lacking of parental love or guidance. This might be the cause of the

princess' sorrow. Her sorrow eventually turns to wickedness and anger. According to Marie-Louise von Franz:

The king (...) incorporates a divine principle on which the entire welfare – psychic and physical – of the nation depends. He represents the divine principle in its visible form; he is its incarnation or embodiment, its dwelling place. (...) The queen would be its accompanying feminine element – the emotions, feelings, the irrational attachments to its dominant content (...) a certain habit or style of life, a feeling style and that Eros style influences how people relate to one another⁴⁰³.

In another of her books, von Franz also expresses her view that:

Thus, always, all ruling attitudes are accompanied by some feeling attitude. If the queen is absent, it means there is no longer Eros in the old ruling system. That is why the whole weight of the story goes on the daughter. The renewal of the kingdom, the necessary balance provided by the feminine, comes through the princess⁴⁰⁴.

Although the psychological categories into which von Franz places the king and the queen may appear outdated and essentialistic at first, we cannot rule them out completely because these categories express the stereotyped conscious attitudes to the role of the male and female in patriarchal society. In my interpretation, the fairy tale refers to the patriarchal ruling system, and its accompanying feeling attitude. It is ineffective because it is too stereotyped in terms of what women are allowed to feel in one or another situation. The fact that the princess is the only ruler reveals the task of the fairy tale: to change or to redeem the rigid stereotypical attitudes towards the young female (female culture).

One of the fairy tale's main issues is the princesses' lack of a range of feelings. At the beginning of the fairy tale, the princess lives in an illusory world; she creates an illusion of perfection around her by forbidding unhappy, poor and disabled people to appear under her windows. In this way the princess refuses to admit having these elements or feelings in her kingdom or in herself. She fails to see that, just like these disabled and unhappy people, she needs a tremendous amount of attention which she acquires by demanding that the servants serve her as soon as she gives a cry. She herself is an invalid who needs to be served immediately otherwise the whole system

⁴⁰³ Franz, *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 52-54.

⁴⁰⁴ Franz, *Animus and Anima*, ed. Daryl Sharp (Inner City books: Canada, 2002), 15.

will collapse. Until these imperfect parts and this anguish are recognised and understood by her consciously, the princess cannot deal with them and remains angry and cruel to herself since we know from Jungian dream interpretation that symbolically her servants are her inner parts. The only feeling that is still alive in the culture is rage. Clarissa Pinkola Estés explains that:

Rage corrodes our trust that anything good can occur. Something has happened to hope. And behind the loss of hope is usually anger; behind anger, pain; behind pain, usually torture of one sort or another, sometimes recent, but more often from long ago⁴⁰⁵.

If we see the princess as a young woman of our own culture, there are so many things that could have hurt her. Violence, sexual abuse, physical and psychological imprisonment, physical and spiritual hunger, lack of love, neglect of all kinds, indifference and loneliness and many other negativities could have turned the princess' heart into stone and her feelings into ice. The princess' anger, cruelty, tantrums and overbearing manner are symptoms of this experienced neglect; the princess, being the Ego model of all the young women of her culture is also a model for the experience endured by all women in the society. The instincts of the princess are badly injured and her feelings are almost dead which is indicated by the fact that from the countless spectrums of feelings only anger is left.

As we know, fairy tales operate with archetypes, and not with real people, so the princess stands for the female divine archetype. This young goddess is angry and does not have authorities who would set wise rules in her life. Jungians emphasise that if people do not have authorities or do not realise their Shadow, their lives are ruled by fate⁴⁰⁶. In this fairy tale, the force of fate is the Sorrow Bird; it also represents the regulating force of the collective Self. The energy of life expressed as the Sorrow Bird forces the princess on a journey through which she will redeem her culture that is non-functional. Although I have said that the princess stands for the female divine archetype, she is also the wise collective ego⁴⁰⁷, and as such, she leads the reader towards the desired change in the culture. Often the ego is a reflection of the Self's

⁴⁰⁵ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 353.

⁴⁰⁶ Jung's quote is as follows: "The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate". Chapter "Christ, A Symbol Of The Self" in *Aion: Researches Into The Phenomenology Of The Self* (Pantheon Books, 1959).

⁴⁰⁷ Marie Louise von Franz suggests that the heroine represents the wise Ego, see *The Feminine in Fairy Tales*, 22.

wisdom when their relation is in harmony. As the ego, the princess teaches us how to take responsibility for our Shadow – to buy (that is, to accept) our sorrow, and therefore everything that our sorrow destroys in this particular fairy tale, in the shape of the Sorrow Bird. And arguably, the black Sorrow Bird with the bloody stripes on its wings and the Black Madonna of Częstochowa with the bloody cuts on her face are both expressions of the same archetype. They both represent the dark side of Mary. The scars of Mary are the scars of inferiority and violence towards women, the feelings of helplessness and nothingness. In my view, on the collective level, the scarred Madonna of Częstochowa points to her Christian Shadow conditioned by the inferiority of being the female divine in patriarchy. On the individual level, she probably expresses all the painful experiences of a person.

Symbolically, the princess is also the Christian Mary who strives to redeem her ideal persona. The princess would not allow unhappy people to pass by her windows at the beginning of the fairy tale; by doing that she mistakenly hopes that by distancing herself from her own Shadow, shame and pain she would sustain her ideal persona. Mary too had an ideal persona for far too long in Christianity. Both need to redeem their ideal images by integrating their dark aspects into consciousness. While the princess incorporates her Shadow by accepting some of her own sorrow and cruelty, I suggest that Mary incorporates her terrible aspects by becoming, in our imagination, the fateful Sorrow Bird in the fairy tale. The princess pays money for the sorrow so she can accept it as her own; owning the Sorrow Bird makes her aware and conscious of her own negative Shadow. This gesture invokes in her a new feeling – love. The princess loves the bird from first sight and this suggests that with the act of purchase of her own sorrow, the princess has warmed up towards herself, which means that the integration of the Shadow has started.

In my view, the most significant message of the fairy tale is that *we need to be faithful to our Self*. At the end of the fairy tale, the Sorrow Bird rewards the princess because she has not betrayed it. The princess is rewarded for recognising that the destroyer was in her, not in a servant who bought the bird, not in the bird, not in her husband or in his mother. This conscious attitude redeems her Shadow by incorporating it, accepting it as her own. The fact that the princess is given her own castle as a gift means that she can create a new kingdom: new reality, new culture, new patterns of cultural behaviour.

Arguably, then, we can read this story in parallel with representation of the Madonna of Czestochowa and perhaps other Black Madonnas. Mary-Black Madonna engages, by the help of the princess in the fairy tale, with her deepest patriarchal wound expressed here as the violent Sorrow Bird, which is the Shadow of the female culture of the West. This Shadow hides the pain, the shame, the grief of Mary/the princess/you/me. It resembles the “litany” of men’s curses on women⁴⁰⁸. By engaging with her Shadow, the Mary with scars becomes an indicator for our personal Shadow because each woman can relate the attacks of the Sorrow Bird to the denied grief, pain or guilt of one or another kind in themselves. Standing before the image of the scarred Madonna of Czestochowa and contemplating her own Sorrow Bird, a woman can connect her darkest side with her brightest side in the light of her own consciousness and that of Mary’s, to enlighten a part of her own Shadow.

5.2. An individual connection to the divine Self: on the soul, the breath and the female divine in engagement with Luce Irigaray.

Can every woman afford to have the breath and the soul?

Luce Irigaray suggests that:

Our tradition tells us that the woman lover in the Song of Songs leaves her home to search for her beloved. This is also the case for feminine mystics – and for almost all women – who run risk of so losing their breath, their soul. In traditions where breathing is cultivated, rather it is a man who seeks to approach woman as a source of life, natural and spiritual. Then solitude and silence get endowed with a very positive meaning: a return of a woman to herself, in herself for a meeting again with her own breath, her own soul. Woman takes thus an active part in her spiritual becoming⁴⁰⁹.

Irigaray’s vision of a woman returning home (to her soul) raises the question whether women whose breath and soul were forced out of them, who were forced out of their homes by the Shadow of the culture, can ever hope to return to themselves to

⁴⁰⁸See the “litany” of men’s curses on women in the section 6.2., Chapter 4.

⁴⁰⁹Luce Irigaray, *Key Writings* (London: Continuum, 2004), 147.

“meet their soul”. How can such wounded women return home, how can they stay at home?

In my understanding, “home” means a space with a roof to live in; the mother and the relationship with the mother; a woman’s soul; a woman’s breath; a woman’s body which is the home for the soul. However, what if a woman has a difficult relationship with one or more meanings of home? What if a woman does not want to live at home because it is in ruins and means loneliness and pain to her? What if a woman’s home is one in which there is no love, there is no one to speak to, or worse – she is tortured in her own home? What happens to a woman’s relationship with her soul if she flees her home (and soul) in order to survive?

As quoted above, Irigaray suggests that a woman should cultivate her breath so that it allows her to stay at home, within herself, within her body. However, such a wounded woman often cannot stay with her breath. The breath, like the soul, is her inner home, and any home she flees. She has too often choked on her breath out of fright while running away from her perpetrators, her breath has been disrupted by the fear of her mother or father being dead, absent, hating her, forgetting her. Such a woman has separated from her breath a long time ago because she was afraid it would make her feel the pain again, and, as a consequence, she has separated from her soul. Such a woman is terrified to breathe her own breath, to be in herself.

How can *this* woman speak about breathing, connecting with and delighting in her soul? How can she speak about being a virginal soul, the one who can give birth by her soul (“give birth” here meaning to create, to communicate, to be), as Irigaray suggests:

Woman cannot therefore remain pure nature, even in motherhood. It is as a ‘virgin’ that she can give birth to a divine child. The word ‘virgin’ here doesn’t signify the presence or the absence of a physiological hymen, of course, but the existence of a spiritual interiority of her own, capable of welcoming the word and the other without altering it. Virgin and mother therefore mean: capable of a relationship with the other, in particular with the other gender, respecting the other and oneself. Virgin and mother could correspond to a female becoming, on condition that these words are understood in the spiritual and not just in the material-natural sense. It is with her ‘virgin’ soul, as much as if not more than with her body, that Mary gives birth to Jesus. The figure that she can represent for us is that of a woman who stays faithful to herself in

love, in generation. In this, Mary's virginity surpasses, in divine dignity, motherhood⁴¹⁰.

Irigaray's suggestion about how to understand Mary's virginity as an inner feeling of being at home, undisturbed by the surrounding world, evokes and grounds the spiritual powers and confidence in an individual woman. Such a woman is opposed to the woman lover from the Song of Songs in that she remains within her soul, faithful to herself. However, what does it mean to be *faithful to herself* for women who have fled home (soul, breath)? For them, such spiritual creative virginity is unachievable unless they open up to a different feeling dimension that would allow them to reconnect with their own souls.

The Virgin Mary as home, as breath and as soul.

I would, therefore, suggest that this feeling dimension, and at the same time the spiritual virginity about which Irigaray speaks, can be a woman's *individual connection* to the Virgin Mary, to an image of the Virgin Mary. I suggest that this figure is Mary, because Mary is the only *living* (the one whose archetype is felt to be at work in people's lives) female divine figure in the Western world marked by Christianity; her archetype is active in people's minds one way or another. As we know from Jung⁴¹¹, the archetypes are forms (or themes) for a content which is discovered through our own individual experience; those forms (themes) can be sexuality, parenthood and others, but what we understand them to mean for us is ultimately an individualised experience. Therefore, if women speak of experiencing their soul and the divine in themselves, the only way to achieve it is through relating to the female divine soul archetype that is still alive for them in their culture. If Mary is the archetype that feels alive for women, then they can find their own soul in the archetypal figure of Mary.

To breathe, to be a virginal soul, the homeless woman first of all needs to come back home, into her own soul, into her own body, and make it her own. This involves facing all the Shadows and Sorrow Birds related to the ruined home, which is a daunting task, and therefore woman's soul needs a temporary home – Mary – in whom it can live while transforming itself. By placing her soul into an image of Mary, a woman learns to trust a divine woman, and this is equivalent to a woman trusting

⁴¹⁰ Irigaray, *Key Writings*, 152.

⁴¹¹ Jung thought that "[Archetypes are] instinctual forms of mental functioning ... *they are not inherited ideas, but mentally expressed instincts*, forms and not contents..." (Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on myth: An introduction* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 5).

herself. With the help of the female divine, a homeless woman wounded in her soul can eventually try and come back to her frightening home, abandoned some time ago out of fear, and start making it her own home. Through being connected to Mary, a woman is able to grieve for the lost intimate connection with someone important – be it the mother or someone else. I suggest that Mary can become that door that takes a woman home, and that in Mary’s presence a woman is able to breathe as long as she allows Mary to be her soul.

This bond with Mary is not necessarily anything like being a Catholic Christian. It may be about both a woman and the misappropriated figure of Mary being wounded; together they are able to give expression to a woundedness and homelessness that itself provides a ‘home’ for each of them.

Irigaray suggests that Mary is a model for us, as she is the one who “stays faithful to herself in love, in generation”⁴¹². I would extend this vision and add that in the theology of Mary, Mary *loans* herself to those women who have fled their souls. This allows women to mend their souls because Mary is the archetype of the female soul. As the female soul archetype, Mary stands for the soul of each woman. Therefore, to connect oneself with Mary illustrates what Irigaray means when she describes: “giv[ing] oneself a feminine mind or soul, and internal dwelling, which is not only physical but also spiritual: linked to breath, to speech, to the mind”⁴¹³.

In Christianity, Mary is non-divine, so she is churchless despite being called “the church”, which means that she is homeless. In Christianity, Mary’s story and image are distorted by patriarchal projections and this affects her breath, her breath has no strength – her Christian myth is often powerless to help women, because it is a myth of a woman robbed of her divinity. Following Irigaray’s advice for women, to be virginal, chaste, strong and faithful to their own mind, soul and breathing, Mary needs to find her own home. This is the reason why I suggest that her home can be found in the very women whose souls Mary is mending. The non-Christian image of Mary which I build by this whole work does have any other home except the women’s psyches who believe the archetypal power of Mary. Here is the paradox: although Mary is a hurt woman’s first safe home, the hurt woman’s soul is the only place where Mary can find her *own* home, build her *own* church and find her *own* followers. Only if Mary is

⁴¹² See Irigaray’s last quote in section 7.3.1.

⁴¹³ Irigaray, *Key Writings*, 61.

recognized in women's souls as the divine being will women have dusted off the demeaning patriarchal Christian influence on them.

5.3. Mary's strength is hidden, not lost.

Continuing the theme of a hurt woman/culture and searching for the ways to heal her/it, I would like to emphasise once again that the hurt comes from the Christian image of Mary. Therefore, in my work, I speak of a non-Christian image and myth of Mary since my aim is to show the Shadow-side of Mary that mostly reflects her power. As I have already discussed, Mary's power is hidden in folk mythology⁴¹⁴. These legends strongly suggest that in the mythological sense Mary is like the Baltic, Nordic, Sumerian, Greek, Roman, Indian and other goddesses. While the other goddesses are no longer present in current Western religions, Mary is. Mary's strength is that she is the *living* goddess – that is, people pray to her *as if* she was the female God in her own right in the current mainstream patriarchal religion of the West.

Arguably it is for this living factor that Mary is so important to those who take her up in the effort to recover an image of a strong female divine in themselves.

Irigaray says:

Our task is to give life back to that mother, to the mother who lives within us and among us. We must refuse to allow her desire to be swallowed up in the law of the father. We must give her the right to pleasure, to sexual experience, to passion, give her back the right to speak, or even shriek and rage aloud⁴¹⁵.

Following Irigaray's imagery, we must give Mary her desire, her rights and her rage back, in order to restore her power. What evidence is there that she had such powers in the past? We may look at the mythology of other female divines who existed before Mary. For example, if we allow the idea that the Demeter (the Greek goddess of the bountiful harvest, the fertility of the earth and the seasons) myth is an older layer of the Virgin Mary myth in the virtual space of collective unconscious⁴¹⁶, the comparison

⁴¹⁴ See Chapter 3 for sources

⁴¹⁵ Irigaray, *Sexes and Genealogies*, 18.

⁴¹⁶ Here is one of Jung's explanations of collective unconscious: "My thesis then [of collective unconscious] is as follows: in addition to our immediate consciousness, which is of a thoroughly personal nature and which we believe to be the only empirical psyche . . . there exists a second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals. This collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of pre-existent forms, the archetypes, which can only become conscious secondarily and which give definite form to certain psychic contents". Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 43.

of the two divine women is illustrative. When Demeter's daughter Persephone was stolen by the male gods Zeus and Hades, Demeter shook the earth and the heaven demonstrating her might, letting her rage and grief be known, making the earth freeze and all living people to die so there was no one to worship the male gods who stole Persephone from her. Demeter was not afraid not to be "nice" or to look "mad", as women are only too often called in Western culture when they dare to express their rage and grief. Demeter had nothing more authoritative than her own feeling of righteousness, and she refused to join the plan of Zeus – the highest God in the divine hierarchy of Greek Olympus; Demeter was strong enough to be the fate creator herself for her child. However, when Mary lost her son Jesus, according to the Christian myth, she did not rage, did not threaten God the Father. Her loss was within his plan, and Mary herself had no plan of her own, no story of her own, no power to amend the fate for her child, and no rage.

These two myths exemplify how women's instinctive powers have been gradually suppressed. Supporting ourselves with Jung's collective unconscious theory, we can assume that both the Mary and Demeter myths speak of the same archetypal female energies, only in different societal and historical settings. In the Mary myth, the role of women is clearly muted; they must follow the male divine plan and there is no room for women's rage and power.

However, this power can be re-created from the narratives that do not belong or only partly belong to the Christian culture. Jungians say that nothing disappears without a trace in the soul. The female divine who lives in each of us has changed her face from the powerful goddess Demeter to the powerless non-goddess version of Mary but she has not disappeared completely. At the bottom of our souls there is the ability to rage, and the power to resist, the courage not to be afraid of any unfair authority, a clear vision of one's own life, and the freedom to heal the wounds by seeking for a change. The absence of these powers in the Christian story of Mary does not mean they have vanished from her myth or from people's lives – they reappear in the compensatory non-Christian material such as legends about Mary, fairy tales, dreams, literature, arts – I provided a range of material on the sub-Christian mythology in Chapters 5 and 6. Studying them we could argue that the soul still remembers the female divine power of the Virgin Mary. Legends about Mary are one of the key elements of my thesis since, as I have discussed in Chapter 3, they are the tissue by which restoring/creating the non-Christian mythology of Mary can be achieved.

Finding the suppressed powers of the female divine in the compensatory narratives and images as well as in our own compensatory imagination is the most important task for women – it keeps us in touch with the silenced female soul and power. To speak about what one is uncovering in this silent communication is to breathe one's soul.

Through applying the personal associations and creating a personalised myth, Mary can be released from her rigid Christian images, purposes and symbols. This approach releases Mary from the *petrified* Christian outlook on women and offers a new meaningful myth of Mary, a future narrative of it. The *petrified* Christian outlook is a notion used by Marie-Louise von Franz in her book *Individuation in Fairy Tales*⁴¹⁷, where she speaks about religious *petrification* when analysing *The White Parrot* fairy tale. She explains that the speaking parrot stands (among other things) for the automatic repetition of rigid religious truths. In the fairy tale, the parrot petrifies careless people, turning them into stone. One of the meanings of this is that unbending religious attitudes petrify people making the further development of a person impossible.

Therefore, an individual spiritual truth (that often differs from dogmas) about Mary is vital in the theology of Mary. The narratives and images of the goddess of the Old Europe, fairy tales and imaginative interpretations re-create the myth of Mary and centralise the female power. In her turn, Mary opens the gate to the divine self of a woman through her knowledge of the pain of living in patriarchy. The myth of Mary, gathered image by image and narrative by narrative from different life experiences, allows the creation of a new individual myth of the female divine, offering a meaningful divine space for self-reflection for women.

5.4. Literary example – Lithuanian writer Žemaitė and her powerful individualisation of the Mary image.

Literary narratives about Mary can be particularly informative in researching the individualised relation to the divine. Whether this relation is conscious or completely unconscious and unintentional one, it conveys the instinctual need for a personal projection of one's psychological aspects into the divine in order to validate them. In my own research, I found an illustration of this in the writing of Žemaitė whom I introduced in section 4.1. (see footnotes).

⁴¹⁷Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing*, 66-70.

In one of her novellas written in the year 1906, Žemaitė describes a religious festival dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the middle of this Marian pilgrimage festival in the little town in Lithuania called Šidlavą, two older female Church goers speak between themselves and unexpectedly enter into an argument with a book-salesman who sells books in the street during the festival and hears the dialogue of the two women. Spontaneously, one woman cries out something that explains her individual religious reality, her religious truth about Mary. This humorous scene runs as follows:

“What a year, what a magic!”, uttered an old woman standing next to a bookseller’s table. “There have not yet been such parades, such beauty”.

“This is because the Last Judgement of the lord God is not far, don’t you know?”, said another. “Only four years are left...”

“If it was only four years left, the Antichrist would have been born by now”
[said the old woman]

“No, he will be born in four years; it is clearly written in the books, how do you not know?” [commented the second woman]

“Who wrote such books? Where did you read it?”, asked the bookseller laughing.

“The Lord Jesus himself wrote”, snapped out the old woman.

“The Lord Jesus did not write any books, I don’t know...” [said the bookseller]

“If the Lord Jesus did not write it, then the Holiest Mother did, but the book does exist (...) You are sitting here covered in books but know nothing!” [cried out the old woman] ⁴¹⁸.

The conviction of the old woman that Mary can write books sounds profoundly grounded, instinctive, righteous, even if defensive. The old woman is ashamed and therefore furious that the salesman laughs at her illiteracy and in her defence, she projects her feeling of justice into Mary. Rooted in Mary, she is able to withstand her embarrassment and cry out, “If Jesus did not write a book, then Holy Mary did!”

Behind this outcry one can feel the unconscious intention of the author. Perhaps without realising, Žemaitė places her confidence in Mary The Writer. So, Žemaitė makes Mary a writer. In my interpretation, this little scene supports the idea that Žemaitė projected onto Mary her ambition to become one of the first women writers in Lithuania. Žemaitė wrote her first novel at the age of 49, tracing letters with difficulty

⁴¹⁸ Žemaitė, „Kelionė į Šidlavą“, in *Raštai 2*. (Vilnius: Žara, 2001), 216-242. Eng. *Collected Works of Žemaitė, Volume 2*. The excerpt translated from Lithuanian by Rasa Luzyte.

at first as she was not able to write in Lithuanian – a language that was considered inferior in her Polish speaking family – and became a very well-known author in late 19th century Lithuania. This short sentence “If Jesus did not write a book, then Holy Mary did” raises Mary to the status of the creator of the laws of the world and life. The old woman in the novella has confidence that Mary can not only write but also decide when the Antichrist will come – when the world will end. To give to Mary the power and the right to create the world is to give oneself the right and power to create one’s own life – because Mary here is perceived as the Self of a woman, speaking in Jungian terms, or as her soul. With this short sentence in the novella, Mary becomes the female divine who acts as a legislator in women’s lives. By her unexpected imaginative spontaneity, the author creates Mary The Writer and in return, Mary creates Žemaitė who now has confidence to write.

In my view, this personal relation to Mary arises from the inner need of a woman to have the highest divine authority in the female form who can offer a space for individual projections and affirmation. This episode is also an example of how the Shadow aspects of the Virgin Mary become incorporated – the aspects of the female divine who is a writer, a powerful creator of life, a witch-like figure who can determine the end of the world. All these aspects become integrated by the leap of imagination of Žemaitė.

It seems that Žemaitė had a profound sense for the archetypal truths. The old woman, and through her Žemaitė, articulates the belief that the creation of the world is not just a prerogative of the male God, and that women also have their creativity and power. The confidence placed in Mary is enormous. To the bookseller, the woman seems a silly illiterate old villager, yet behind the old woman we can feel the power of the generations of women who carried forth the knowledge of their instinctive rights, and who projected their insights onto the figure of Mary. As Jung noted, the evolution of the God-image is a two way process – people do not just receive images of divine force unconsciously but they also add some features and values to these images consciously, that is, they take part in the creation of the God-image.

Žemaitė instinctively interpreted the image of Mary and individualised it. In her writing, Žemaitė criticises the church and its corruption, therefore she could not accept all of the church’s teaching and instinctually sought for her own religious reality. Her situation is similar to what Marie-Louise von Franz noticed when she said that when the gods come to meet the people disguised as poor men in myths and folk-tales, it means a

compensation for a similar need, that is, “(...) it crops up at a time *when personal encounter with and individual relationship to the divine has become a necessity*, outside the institutionalised forms and views of religious life”⁴¹⁹.

⁴¹⁹ Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, 59 (author’s italics).

CHAPTER 6. MARY AS THE ARCHETYPAL SOURCE OF OUR INSTINCTS, IN ENGAGEMENT WITH C. G. JUNG, L. IRIGARAY AND C. P. ESTÈS

In Chapter 3, I provided the positive Shadow of Mary, and in Chapters 4 and 5 I spoke about the negative Shadow of Mary and its incorporation on the collective and personal levels. I argued that such an integrated image of Mary can be perceived as a much more instinctual foundation, as a source of instincts for women.

In this chapter, I will explore how the non-Christian Mary with the integrated Shadow can help to heal our individual and cultural instincts.

6.1. The relation between the archetype of Mary and the instincts.

To start, let us consider what is the connection between Mary as the archetype, and instincts? The thinking of Jung on the relation between the instincts and archetypes was thoroughly discussed by Steven F. Walker. In a chapter called *Instinct and Archetype*, he includes the following quotations from the work and letters of C. G. Jung which elucidate the matter:

(...) for me the archetype means: an image of a probable sequence of events, an habitual current of psychic energy. To this extent it can be equated with the biological pattern of behaviour... [Archetypes are] instinctual forms of mental functioning (...) *they are not inherited ideas, but mentally expressed instincts*, forms and not contents (...) our instincts (i.e. archetypes) are biological facts (...) What we properly call instincts are physiological urges, and are perceived by senses. But at the same time they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call archetypes⁴²⁰.

Since we agreed in the framework of this thesis that Mary stands for the female expression of the Self archetype, or for a woman's soul archetype, I replaced the word *archetype* with the word *Mary* in the above quote to see how it reads and what thoughts such a view raises:

(...) for me [Mary] means: an image of a probable sequence of events, an habitual current of psychic energy. To this extent [Mary] can be equated with

⁴²⁰ Jung quoted in Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on myth: An introduction* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 5-6 (Jung's italics)

the biological pattern of behaviour... [Mary are] instinctual forms of mental functioning (...) [Mary] are not inherited ideas, but mentally expressed instincts, forms and not contents (...) our instincts (i.e. [Mary]) are biological facts (...) What we properly call instincts are physiological urges, and are perceived by senses. But at the same time they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call [Mary].

In my view, the idea that the figure of Mary is representative of instincts opens a whole new sphere of associations that further enables us to enrich the myth of Mary. Mary as the instinctual basis of women's behaviour in terms of generally human, specifically naturally female as well as socially conditioned woman's instincts seems closely to correspond to the figure of the *Wild Woman* – who is the numinous instinctual foundation in a female, in a woman – described by C. P. Estés in her book *Woman who Run With The Wolves*. This instigates new interesting associations and questions, such as: does Mary with an integrated Shadow side become as instinctual as the Wild Woman? If yes, what are the arguments for it? If not, why? I engage with a few of Estés' ideas to address these questions in the following paragraphs of this section.

In an interview with a journal, Estés was asked: “What is the Wild Woman?” Estés answered: “She is (...) God”. She was further asked if she was talking about finding a god within, to which Estés replied, “I would say it in a little different way. I would say that if you look in a woman's face, the god shows her face. You see this furred criatura right behind her visage, right behind her eyes (...)”⁴²¹.

I am aware that the interpretation in which I engage in the following paragraphs may be far removed from Estés' understanding. However, I hope this interpretation suggests interesting ideas in addressing the significant question of how the instinctual basis called the Wild Woman (who can probably be understood as woman's archetype bearing in mind that archetypes are divine at their core), and the Virgin Mary who is the only living female divine archetype in Christian culture, are related. By saying that Mary is the only *living* female divine I mean that her myth is at the centre of the contemporary Roman Catholic religion which is among the most widespread religions in the world; Mary is at the centre in its official myth and also in the popular Marian

⁴²¹ An interview to the *M.E.N. Magazine* in November 1992 issue. <http://www.menweb.org/estesiv.htm> Accessed on 01/05/2009.

cult. If both Mary and the Wild Woman represent the female god, what different aspects do each of them bring to our understanding of what the female god is or could be?

For Estés, god is a furred creature, who not only lives in a woman as an inner feeling but is seen at the back of her eyes. If we interpreted the eyes as an expression of the soul, an embodiment of the soul in the matter, it would mean that this *creatura* is the foundation, the ‘back-ground’ of each woman’s soul. This alludes to the fact that in each woman there is an instinctual basis which is perceived as divine. The Wild Woman is the source of many instincts within a woman, which is revealed by Estés discussing many different aspects of femininity and the female in a variety of fairy tales.

Estés’ references to patriarchy’s abuse of natural resources as well as of women, suggests to me that the Wild Woman has a political standpoint. To me, the Wild Woman is aware of the male world’s influence on her. It is from this political and feminist standpoint that the Wild Woman guides the female ego (the heroine of the fairy tales) in its struggle to survive, adapt and thrive in patriarchy. This suggests that the Wild Woman represents not just natural instincts, but also social ones. Yet, Estés’ Wild Woman is whole, unhurt – she is the instincts of women, she is the one whom women consult in themselves when seeking to heal their injured instincts. But how can this pristine natural uninjured *creatura* be at the same time one with a political standpoint, one who developed social instincts? Because surely, a political standpoint and social instincts arise from wanting to heal a hurt and to restore justice. How then can the Wild Woman provide guidance to women on detecting the social traps if she has never happened to be caught in them at least once and been injured?

Perhaps it is possible to look at this in the following way – that a person’s soul/psyche has many layers (to make it easier, I imagine these layers being related to different life experiences/cycles), some of them are injured and some of them are numb, but at the very bottom of our souls there is the instinct to heal the injured instincts, an inclination to compensate and outweigh what was hurt, a tendency to long for a return of the instinct which was hurt until one starts feeling it working again. If we look at the heroines of the fairy tales as at both the ego and reflection of the Self, the Wild Woman is the tension that strives to ensure balance between them.

The Wild Woman represents the archetype of that instinctual energy which floods in where there is a need to heal a wound. Like Demeter fighting for the return of her abducted daughter, the Wild Woman can be fierce in her fight for the parts that

belong to her and that are precious to her because she is the unfailing feeling of justice and balance. However, is this intelligent energy – the Wild Woman – entirely unconscious? Jung described the collective unconscious in the following way:

If it were permitted to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and, from having at his command a human experience of one or two million years, almost immortal. If such a being existed, he would be exalted above all temporal change. The present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one hundredth century before Christ, he would be a dreamer of old-age dreams and, owing to his immeasurable experience, he would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of the individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering and decay. (...) The collective unconscious (...) seems not to be a person, but something like an unceasing stream or perhaps an ocean of images and figures which drift into unconscious in our dreams or in abnormal states of mind⁴²².

On the basis of the above example, it is possible to perceive the Wild Woman as the female expression of such a personified collective unconscious. This personified figure has a million years of experience of being the female. If the Wild Woman stands for the collective unconscious, I would suggest that Mary, with her patriarchal experience, stands for the consciousness of the Wild Woman, and they both are one inseparable entity reflecting the Self on an individual and collective level.

Mary seems to represent the hurt instincts in a woman, that part of women's psyche which is injured. A particularly powerful image of such an injured Mary is the image of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa in Poland where Mary has two deep bloody cuts on her cheek which give her, subjectively speaking, a painful, if determined, expression on her face. Speaking in Estés' terms, she could be called the Scarred Mary to mark her relation to the *Scar Clan* described by Estés⁴²³. The Scarred Mary would then be the female divine who knows what pain is and therefore she could initiate a woman into the Scar Clan. The Scar Clan is a home for women who have scars of all kinds, who grieve and search for healing, who seek transformation and empowerment. In my view, the Scar Clan women and the Scarred Mary suffer from the

⁴²² Carl Gustav Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, trans. W. S. Dell (Routledge Classics, 2001), 190.

⁴²³ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 374-386.

same wounds inflicted by the sacrifices they had to make to the demands of patriarchy. The Scarred Mary is represented by each heroine in the fairy tales I have discussed earlier – those who have to undergo trials, to be redeemed from the blackness or the negative Shadow.

If we adopt the imaginative view that the Scarred Mary is the ego-consciousness of the female divine, then the Wild Woman is the deepest and oldest layer of Mary's soul – her healthy instincts (to follow Estés), her virginity (to speak in Irigaray's terms) and her truly ideal state with all its contradictions in balance. Mary is that part of the Wild Woman that has a political and social standpoint, she is conscious of all the patriarchal wrongdoings done to her and to all women. As we know from the legends, Mary expresses her rage, power, authority, she gives orders to respect her, punishes people with death for insulting her, miraculously heals the sick, grants a second chance of life, bestows freedom to those captured, makes the Sun dance. These actions are inspired and guided by the Wild Woman residing inside Mary who strives to integrate these previously rejected aspects of Mary into the wholeness. At the same time, the Wild Woman without Mary is unrealised God, without a location in space, in time, in context – like a woman who has all the instincts but does not know her name, nationality, or date of birth. The Wild Woman can only be realised through Mary – the consciousness. However, Mary and the Wild Woman are not two completely separate layers. Mary *is* the Wild Woman in a certain historical setting. Therefore, Mary is the source of women's instinctual energies and patterns of behaviour as much as the Wild Woman. By having a visual appearance in images, icons and statues she offers women a tangible space for an individual connection to the divine self in themselves. The individual connection to the divine develops when one intertwines Mary's myth with the myth of one's life. Such an individualised Mary is able to validate all that a woman is, thinks and feels. Such a Mary is no longer the Christian Mary – the contents of the archetype become changed, the individual connection to Mary allows one to break the rigidity of the Christian stereotype. When a woman overcomes the rigidity of the image and myth of the female divine in herself, a further personal development becomes possible.

6.2. Reaching the virginal instinctual Self.

The relation between the female god and the woman's soul is especially meaningful to Jungian psychoanalysts. In the beginning of her book *Women Who Run*

With The Wolves, Estés tells a tale about the old woman called *La Loba* (Wolf Woman), whose job is to gather the bones of the wolves in a desert. After she finds all the required bones, she assembles the entire skeleton, and then she sings a song over it during which the skeleton grows flesh and fur, and the wolf starts breathing. Eventually it bounds up and runs away into the desert. Estés then adds:

Somewhere in its running, whether by the speed of its running, by splashing its way into a river, or by way of a ray of sunlight or moonlight hitting it right in the side, the wolf is suddenly transformed into a laughing woman who runs free toward the horizon⁴²⁴.

The juxtaposition of the wolf and the woman signifies the moment when a woman runs with the wolves – when a woman is in contact with her instincts and has a profound awareness about the life within her and around her. She is set to survive in the best possible way, and she enjoys life fully. A woman can arrive at this moment, to this place where she runs with the wolves, only by singing over the bones. The bones signify the forgotten female instincts and powers. The singer is an old all-knowing woman who lives in each woman, who is the root of all the instincts of humanity but also specifically female instincts too. She not only knows where and how to look for the bones but she also knows, “remembers,” how to assemble the skeleton correctly by choosing the right nature of singing. What is this singing? Estés explains:

La Loba sings over the bones she has gathered. To sing means to use the soul-voice. It means to say on the breath the truth of one’s power and one’s need, to breathe soul over the thing that is ailing or in need of restoration. This is done by descending into the deepest mood of great love and feeling, till one’s desire for relationship with the wildish Self overflows, then to speak one’s soul from that frame of mind. That is singing over the bones. We cannot make the mistake of attempting to elicit this great feeling of love from a lover, for this women’s labour of finding and singing the creation hymn is a solitary work, a work carried out in the desert of the psyche⁴²⁵.

This gathering-breathing-loving-singing ritual of reconnection with the Self, and of restoration of the instinctual female power and knowledge parallels Luce Irigaray’s idea which I discussed in Chapter 5 about the necessity for a woman to stay inside her

⁴²⁴ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 24.

⁴²⁵ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 24.

own soul, remain at home, remain virgin, and to relate to herself and the world through breathing – through speaking her own story and creativity.

Both Estés and Irigaray use the words “breath” and “soul” interchangeably. Irigaray speaks about the woman lover from the Song of Songs, who is risking losing her breath and her soul by leaving her home to look for the beloved. For Irigaray, a woman’s staying at home (in her own soul) connected with her own breath, bears the symbol of virginity; and an act of woman’s coming back home, staying home, meeting her own breath and her own soul means taking an active part in becoming divine:

The divine appropriate to women, the feminine divine, is first of all related to the breath. To cultivate the divine in herself, the woman (...) has to attend to her own breathing, her own breath, more even than to love (...) Why want to eat the forbidden fruit to gain knowledge, instead of cultivating one’s own breath? Breathing itself invites to an awakening, and the divine knowledge is in me⁴²⁶.

For Estés too, in my interpretation, the state in which a woman is connected to her Self, is a pristine state, which corresponds to Irigaray’s virginal state. In Estés terms, in this pristine state a woman is restored to her ancient knowledge through singing over the bones; Irigaray would perhaps call it *breathing*. Through such breathing, or such singing, a woman is able to connect with her inner life/instincts and become an authority on her own in all areas of life, and most unquestionably, of her own divinity, of her spiritual life. Estés’ writing develops further Irigaray’s notion of breathing as the means for autonomy by explaining that this breathing in her own soul means indeed a woman’s connection to the deepest knowledge – the instincts, instinctual feelings, inner energies and drives. For both Irigaray and Estés, the knowledge of oneself and renewal of the relationship with the Self, the soul, the divine, cannot be found in the other – a lover, a child, in a forbidden fruit. Irigaray believes that only her own breathing can make a woman capable of being whole, sovereign, divine:

Breathing, in fact, corresponds to the first autonomous gesture of a human living, and it is not possible to be divine without being autonomous with respect to the mother and the father, to the child, to the others in general, women and men⁴²⁷.

⁴²⁶ Irigaray, *Key Writings*, 165.

⁴²⁷ Irigaray, *Key Writings*, 165.

Both Estés and Irigaray agree that women must walk a lonely path to discover the divine in themselves. As we already saw in the above quote on *La Loba*, Estés emphasizes that singing over the bones is a solitary task for a woman. Irigaray echoes this by saying that:

Becoming divine is accomplished through a continuous passage from nature to grace, a passage that everyone must realise by oneself, alone. Nobody can accomplish this process in my place, for me⁴²⁸.

6.3. The layers of the Soul, both human and divine.

By saying that becoming divine a woman must move from nature to (divine) grace, Irigaray highlights where her understanding may be departing from Estés' who does not differentiate the spirit and the body – the place where women run with the wolves is a place where nature meets grace; nature is graceful in itself. For Estés, soul, psyche and wild nature, standing for the intact instincts, are made of the same material. However, it seems that it is not any soul that Estés has in mind, but the deepest layer of the soul, the one that has the ancient memory of the healthy instincts, from the times when the female body and soul were *known* to be divine, and were cherished. In my understanding, *this* soul is the Wild Woman, *La Loba*. However, there is also a *hurt* soul (a hurt layer of the same soul), and it is not the wise soul, it cannot stand for the wild self. That is why *La Loba* needs to gather the bones and sing over them.

Very generally, we might say that *La Loba*, and perhaps Demeter, represent the healthy instinctual layer of the soul in a woman, and Mary represents the hurt one. Alternatively, we may imagine that *La Loba* and Demeter constitute the deep, intact layer of Mary's divine soul, whereas the mainstream Christian myth of Mary stands for the hurt layer of Mary's soul. As I have discussed earlier, the hurt soul means the painful breath and lack of home, lack of peace in oneself. Such a soul depends on what Irigaray terms "the others" heavily, and, also, on their gods, the way Mary in the Christian version of her myth depends on God the Father.

For Irigaray, moving from nature means moving away from the dependence on the others toward the virginal graceful self in order to acquire autonomy and divinity. This implies that Irigaray means that virginal is not the same as natural, wild and instinctual. This virginal state is conscious, and therefore it is the opposition to the

⁴²⁸ Irigaray, *Key Writings*, 165.

seemingly unconsciously instinctual *La Loba* state. The virginal state of which Irigaray writes seems to be a purely conscious state of self-awareness. However, for Estés, the pristine self, soul, instincts and mind are unquestionably natural, intelligent and spiritual at the same time, as she writes:

The old one, The One Who Knows, is within us. She thrives in the deepest soul-psyche of women, the ancient and vital Self. Her home is that place in time where the spirit of women and the spirit of wolf meet – the place where mind and instincts mingle, where a woman’s deep life funds her mundane life. It is the point where the I and the Thou kiss, the place where, in all spirit, women run with the wolves (...)

(...) So when something is lost, we must go to the old woman who always lives in the out-of-the-way-pelvis. She lives out there, half in and half out of the creative fire. This is a perfect place for women to live, right next to the fertile *huevos*, their eggs, their female seeds. There the tiniest ideas and the largest ones are waiting for our minds and actions to make them manifest⁴²⁹.

The woman’s soul archetype, as well as the Self archetype for which Mary stands for me, *can and cannot* be expressed by one image or name. It cannot be expressed in one image because, according to Jungians, the archetype cannot fully be graspable by our consciousness and one image only shows one aspect of the archetype. However, at the same time an image stands for the whole archetype, in the same way as an animal hair stands for the whole animal, or a thing (a belt or a hat) stands for the whole human being in fairy tales – by the metonymy principle⁴³⁰. Because it is archetypal, Mary’s soul is older than a woman’s by billions of years. Mary is only one image of the archetype, however, we can interpret that she represents all expressions of this archetype of the female divine: the earliest known goddesses described by Marija Gimbutas such as the ancient goddesses in animal forms (Frog, Snake, Deer, Bear), all the Baltic, Sumerian, Greek, Roman, Indian and other goddesses in various mythologies as well as what Estés calls the Wild Woman and *La Loba* – that is, all other possible, known and yet unknown representations. This could mean that Mary’s past is very deep and that she knows where all the bones are buried, she can recall by heart the structure

⁴²⁹ Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 26.

⁴³⁰ The observation about the metonymy phenomenon was made by Marie-Louise von Franz in her book *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, where she suggested that an animal hair stands for the whole animal.

of the skeletons, and she knows several creation hymns to sing over them. In fact, Mary is the bones and the skeleton; she carries the instincts of women.

At the same time, Mary, as I have interpreted in the sections on the Shadow, understands our pain and she has images and myths to prove it: in the image of the dark scarred face of the Black Madonna of Częstochova, in the images of the Mater Dolorosa, in the figure of Persephone as a victim of the divine rape, by all the women whose soul and breath were hurt or broken, who were chased from home, beaten and sworn at, who do not want to remember their stories.

Precisely such a paradoxical image of Mary is the desert of each woman's psyche, the sand through which women must sift, the stories that women must analyze to understand what has been lost, what has been hidden from women in patriarchy.

I would like to support Irigaray's thought on the divine women further and suggest that the image of the instinctual Mary can be the divine horizon which women did not have. Revisiting Irigaray's thoughts on the divine horizon, we read:

Man is able to exist because God helps him to define his gender (*genre*), helps him orient his finiteness by reference to infinity (...) To posit a gender, a God is necessary: *guaranteeing the infinite* (...) In order to become, it is essential to have a gender or an essence (consequently a sexuate essence) as *horizon* (...) If I am unable to form a relationship with some horizon of accomplishment for my gender, I am unable to share while protecting my becoming (...) This God, are we capable of imagining it as a woman? Can we dimly see it as the perfection of our subjectivity? (...) If she is to become woman, if she is to accomplish her female subjectivity, woman needs a god who is a figure for the perfection of *her* subjectivity (...) In order to *become*, we need some shadowy perception of achievement; not a fixed objective, not a One postulated to be immutable but rather a cohesion and a horizon that assures us the passage between past and future, the bridge of a present that *remembers*, that is not sheer oblivion and loss, not a crumbling away of existence, a failure (...) ⁴³¹.

Therefore, standing in front of Mary as before the female God, as before the uttermost female divine horizon, we can ask the questions that Estés identifies as the

⁴³¹ Irigaray, "Divine Women, in *Sexes and Genealogies*, 61-67.

questions for ourselves while standing in the desert of our psyche next to the assembled skeleton, taking time to decide on the song to chant over the bones:

What has happened to my soul-voice? What are the buried bones of my life?
In what condition is my relationship to the instinctual Self? When was the
last time I ran free? How do I make life come live again? Where has *La Loba*
gone to? ⁴³²

In terms of the analysis I have proposed in this thesis, these are the new questions for our conscience, which could replace or enrich the Catholic questions of confession which ask whether we stole, lied or believed in other Gods. By answering the deep searching questions posited by Estés, we may discover that we can speak to and about Mary in a non-Christian framework and perceive her rather as a sacred place for self-analysis, reflection and the recovery of instincts. We may see Mary as a supervisory and analytical *status* of our soul and spirit, a conscious *look* of ourselves upon ourselves, a *process* of our feeling and thinking, our *conscience*, a *mirror* of our past, present and future, a *place and process* for our grieving, consolation, redemption, passion, love and joy; a *source* for our spiritual life, connection to nature, sacred imagination and inner strength. This connection to Mary is a new individualised religion according to Jung.

⁴³² Estés, *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, 33.

CHAPTER 7. MARY'S DAUGHTER: THE FEMALE FUTURE PROJECTION OF THE DIVINE

According to Luce Irigaray, the task of women is:

(...) a matter of demanding a culture, of wanting and elaborating a spirituality, a subjectivity and an alterity appropriate to this gender: the female. It's not as Simone de Beauvoir said: one is not born but rather becomes, a woman (through culture), but rather: I am born a woman, but I must still become this woman that I am by nature⁴³³.

Morny Joy, in her book *Divine Love*, where she explores Irigaray's writing, comes to the conclusion that for Irigaray there are two ways of achieving this culture: the first one is "a re-evaluation of the mother/daughter relationship; and the other is a restoration of the notion of virginity"⁴³⁴. One of the tools with which to carry out those tasks is the reinterpretation of Christian iconography. For instance, Luce Irigaray advises "To anyone who cares about social justice today, I suggest putting up posters in all public places with beautiful pictures representing the mother-daughter couple – the couple that illustrates a very special relationship to nature and culture", and goes on to suggest the examples of Mary and her mother Ann, and those of Greek mythology⁴³⁵.

Some years ago, I undertook the exercise of analysing over a hundred Mary images. I discovered that the child on Mary's lap would occasionally look like a girl. I felt that these images called for a myth of Mary and her daughter. Therefore, I intentionally interpret that the child of Mary looks like a girl in the images I give below: the striking resemblance to the mother, the way the child's head is positioned, the way the features of the face are presented by the artists resonate with what is commonly understood to be stereotypically girly; these aspects allow us to imagine this child as female:

⁴³³ Luce Irigaray, "You who will never be mine", in *I Love to You – Sketch for a Felicity Within History* (Routledge, 1996), 107.

⁴³⁴ Joy, *Divine Love*, 91.

⁴³⁵ Luce Irigaray cited in Morny Joy, *Divine Love*, 92.



Image 10. A greeting poster in the entrance hall of the Jáki Kápolna church in Budapest, Hungary⁴³⁶



Image 11. Our Lady of the Road. Artist: Feszty Masa, 1948. Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart, Hungary⁴³⁷



Image 12. The Mother of Gypsies. Church of St. Sebastian and of the Birth of the Virgin Mary, Poland⁴³⁸



Image 13. The Mother of Consolation. Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Poland.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ Photo by Rasa Luzyte.

⁴³⁷ The image is owned by The Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart, Budapest, Hungary. Photo by Rasa Luzyte.

⁴³⁸ Image published in the collection compiled by the Siostry Niepokalanki convent *Z Dawna Polski Tys Krolowq*, 361.

We can at any rate imagine that these images unintentionally imitate the patriarchal image of Mary and Jesus in such a way that it disrupts the patriarchal myth of Mary as the bearer of the male God. The Christian Mary, according to Irigaray, is fixed between the two male Gods:

There is no woman God, no female trinity: mother, daughter, spirit. This paralyses the infinite of becoming a woman since she is fixed in the role of mother through whom the son of God is made flesh⁴⁴⁰.

Symbolically, these images of the divine mother and daughter transform Mary from the fixed passive place between the two male Gods into an active continuity of the female divine genealogy. By imagining the child as a girl, Mary is no longer just a female body required to reproduce the male God; she is no longer fixed between the Father and the Son. The divine child-daughter, as the female, is a mirror of the female divine parent – so the male God stops existing in this picture and in this divine system of the two women because there is no son to reflect him. In such a way, a new reading of an old image makes the myth of Mary meaningful for an individual or for a community yearning for the continuity of the divine in the female. Susan Rowland draws attention to the roles of image and narrative in Jungian thought:

A myth (...) is not just any narrative, but one capable of ‘framing’, making collectively meaningful individual archetypal images, just as picture frame defines and encodes as artistically meaningful the elements within the work of art. Powerful collective narratives frame images and so the psychic work of the two together constitutes a myth, to Jung. These myths structure social as well as psychological meaning: the two are not separable; they are discourses. If there is no narrative frame then the archetypal images may remain unrealised⁴⁴¹.

The mother-daughter theme invites us to discuss the limitations of the image of Mary as the Mother. However, although the divine mother images are symbolically vital for women for many reasons, we must be aware that the emphasis on Mary as the mother placed its Shadow effects on women by ultimately equating women only with reproductive and caring abilities. As a representative of the archetype of the Self, Mary is an expression of many different instincts and experiences. As such she can denote an

⁴³⁹ Image published in the collection compiled by the Siostry Niepokalanki convent *Z Dawna Polski Tys Krolowq*, 587.

⁴⁴⁰ Irigaray, “Divine Women”, in *Sexes and Genealogies*, 63.

⁴⁴¹ Susan Rowland, “Jung as a Writer of Myth and Discourse”, in *Dreaming the Myth Onwards: New directions in Jungian therapy and thought*, ed. Luce Huskinson (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 73.

instinct to become a mother for some women, and an instinct to avoid becoming a mother for other women in certain situations – according to what the Self finds more harmonious within the whole personality in certain circumstances in life. Indeed, the Self’s own future projection is a child and that is why the instinct to have children is one of the strongest in people. If we understand Mary as the female divine, the Self, who holds all our instincts, she becomes freed from the identification with the mother archetype alone. De-identification with the role of the mother constructs Mary as a model of individual projection and a signifier of the instincts for each woman individually.

Describing the divine child’s archetype, Jung wrote that “One of the essential features of the child is its futurity. The child is potential future; [it] signifies (...) an anticipation of future developments”⁴⁴². If Mary has a daughter, the sequence of the male gods has been broken, the sequence of the feminine divine and feminine power has been created, Mary has released herself from the fixed position as a bearer and insurer of the divine masculine. In this way Mary has transformed the old moribund imagery of Christian religion and now reigns with her daughter in our imagination and in our Selves.

The task does not end by simply validating the divine mother-daughter image. The quality of their relationship is of immense importance if we are to change patriarchal society. Irigaray claims that the quality in this relationship can be re-instated by rejecting Freud’s Oedipal theory since to enter the Oedipus-complex, a girl must hate her mother in order to want to “marry” her father. According to Irigaray, this view makes it impossible for a girl to give meaning to the relationship with her mother. Irigaray holds that the abstract mother and daughter relationship is empty of any individuality and must be shed, replacing it with a woman-to-woman relationship⁴⁴³. I agree with Irigaray’s position, and suggest that the theology of Mary sees Mary as a space for the individual connection to the Self where Mary first of all is seen as the Female/Woman archetype, and only then as the Mother or the Daughter archetype. By establishing an individual bond with Mary and her Daughter, daughters and mothers can create bonds with their Selves since this female divine pair reflects a bond between the ego and the Self speaking in Jungian terms. With the help of this image, women

⁴⁴²Carl Gustav Jung, *CW 9, Part 1: On the psyche of the child archetype* (Princeton University Press, 1981), 164.

⁴⁴³See Luce Irigaray, “Questions about the premises of the Psychoanalytical theory”, in *This sex which is not one* (Cornell University Press, 1985), 63.

may begin feeling released from their fixated abstract positions of the mother and the daughter wherever and whenever they are unwillingly fixed to such roles in their lives.

CONCLUSIONS

My work on the theology of Mary conveys a largely subjective way of thinking, it does not claim to present the view of any group, and it does not profess to suggest a theoretical agenda for a cult or a religious movement of Mary. The framework of this work is grounded in symbolic (legends, fairy tales and images), psychological (the structure of the psyche according to Carl Gustav Jung: the Self, the conscious, the unconscious, the Shadow) and imaginative (individual interpretations of narratives and images) spheres that are combined with feminist spirituality theories, religious philosophy and literary analysis.

This work looks at the images of and narratives about Mary in terms of depth psychology where Mary is understood mostly as the female expression of the divine archetype on the collective level, and as the Self archetype on the individual level. This thesis is based on a subjective interpretation that, imaginatively speaking, takes the image of Mary out of Christianity and places it in an individual space of spirituality, where it is possible to give it a new mythological narrative.

According to Jung's theory, the archetypes are forms and not contents, that is, an archetype can be comparable to an empty shell, which we fill with our own experience. From the point of Jungian thought, Mary is the archetype of the female divine. I also hold that Mary expresses the archetype of the woman and the archetype of the woman's psyche. These understandings offer me a much more individually applicable image of Mary than the commonly accepted Roman Catholic images of Mary as the Mother or the Virgin.

Taking the image of Mary out of the Roman Catholic context and giving it a new mythological narrative means to me a possibility to develop an individual relationship with the divine in its female personification. However, although my thesis is to a great degree subjective, its subjective ideas are set in wider, collectively common frameworks such as the folklore narratives, the analytical psychology of Jung, Goddess religion and feminist theory. Therefore, the adaptation of this work can be not just individual but also collective, that is, useful not just to anyone who is interested in developing an individual bond with Mary as the female divinity, but to groups that are practicing spirituality of the female divine and are using mythology and creative imagination.

The realisation of the need for the female divine arose together with the birth of feminism that asked the questions “Who is speaking when claiming to be an authority?”, and “Who is benefitting from what is being said”. Women realised that the patriarchal authority in society was established with the help of the most authoritative symbol – God, who was male. This invoked the need for a symbolic space for the female divine. In addition, Jung suggested that an individual bond with the divine is more relevant to modern humans than collective organised religions, an insight which was confirmed by his own experience and the experiences of many feminists. Jung developed this idea further by observing the evolution of the psyche which he paralleled by the evolution of the God-image in the West. Although Jung’s evolution of the God-image reflects the thinking of a highly educated westerner influenced by the colonial and patriarchal outlooks, it nevertheless is worthy in that it gives an idea of the development of the psyche, human consciousness and the God-image. In the background of Jung’s vision of the God-image evolution we realise that the evolution of the Goddess-image went into the Shadow at some stage of the human psyche development. Therefore, my work aims at recovering the Shadow stories about the female divine by analysing the Shadow narratives about Mary.

I view Mary as the most recent living symbol of the Goddess-image in the cultures influenced by Christianity. Her image marks, to me, the latest development of the human consciousness on the level of the female divine manifestation. Therefore, I emphasise that Mary allows women to connect to reality better than the goddesses of the pre-Christian era. The redemption of Mary’s Shadow (which was largely formed by patriarchy) means redeeming the Shadow side in women which Mary represents in them. I claim that through the connection with the image of Mary a woman can deepen her consciousness, insights, feelings, thoughts, wisdom and discover her Shadow side; in other words – she is able to establish a better relation to her own Self.

The conclusions of my thesis are the following: I argue that Mary has a non-Christian myth made up of her Shadow narratives of legends and fairy tales; and that the individual bond with the image of Mary offers women new spiritual powers, the redemption of some of the aspects that have been lost within patriarchal structures, a feeling of being connected to their own selves and a feeling of being in relation to their own soul/psyche life. On the collective level, the theology of Mary creates a space in the symbolic spiritual sphere where the female divine stands next to the divine male balancing out the religious one-sidedness of the past few thousand years in the West.

As I have mentioned earlier, my work is interdisciplinary and covers various areas. My overall aim was to develop a creative space for the spiritual imagination about the female divine with the help of depth psychology. I am aware that my interpretations of myths, legends, images, and other texts are limited due to the subjectivity of my experience and knowledge. I also understand that my choice of Jung's depth psychology as a framework for my thesis can be at times limiting. The field of depth psychology, as well as spiritual imagination, cannot be regarded as objective since they deal with the aspects of the human personality that are subjective and impossible to be explored scientifically. However, despite all limitations, I hope that my work offers a few valuable ideas and insights for religious feminist philosophy, Goddess religion, and also for anyone else who is interested in such ideas.

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Robertas Gedvydas Skrinkas, Dean of Domeikava Parish Church. Address: Plačioji g. 22, Domeikava, 54360 Kaunas, Lithuania (Legends of Mary from the book *Pilgrimo vadovas: po stebuklingas Marijos vietas. Eng. A Guide of a Pilgrim: Visiting the Miraculous Places of Mary*)

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