

Tauf

You heard their hatred crafted against me
as shameless as daily prayers

holy alliances condemning me
you saw the papers drawn up openly

their minds and their mouths fastened on me
like bloodsuckers

behind my back or in their company
I was spittle on their lips

in conference or on the street
I am the scapegoat uniting them

I lighten their labors
I am the guinea pig of their salvation

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*For the hands they raise to slaughter us
by your hand, Lord, strike them deeply within*

*let their pride be the poison they swallow
their hearts are stones, their minds tombstones*

*etched there forever let all their words mock them
with their bloody thoughts spilling into silent dust*

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(Chapter 3)

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TEN FEMININE ARCHETYPES IN THE JEWISH BIBLE

Twenty years ago an astute observer of the human psyche spoke of "a nascent new reality . . . an upheaval from out of the depths." As if anticipating the world-wide counter-culture movement which was yet some years off, he described a world in "reaction against the mechanized and soulless forces, in man as well as the machine, against the soulless mechanization that threatens to stifle the world." As if anticipating the Jewish feminist and havurah movements, he characterized the new development within the Jewish world as an "emphasis on the feminine. . . the irruption and descent of the soul into Jewish mankind."¹

These insights of Erich Neumann, the great Jungian analyst who practiced in Tel Aviv from 1934 until his death in 1960, remain as astonishing for their penetration as for their prescience. And an interesting question arises: How could German-born and Israel-residing Neumann have known so much and foreseen so accurately developments here in the U.S.? The answer, I believe, lies in his profound and uncanny awareness of archetypes and their function as motivating factors in human history.

What are archetypes? Basic to the Jungian portrayal of the human psyche, they are "certain *collective* (and not personal) structural elements of the human psyche in general . . . forms which are unconscious but nonetheless active . . . living dispositions, ideas in the Platonic sense, that perform and continually influence our thoughts and feelings and actions."² They are "living, functioning suprapersonal categories by which we can understand life experience."³ They are "patterns of psychic energy, of life energy. . . patterns, unseen determinants of psychic nature, that in themselves forever elude us . . ."⁴ but which are represented in fantasies, dreams, images, and myths. They are "the pictorial forms of the instincts . . . psychic organs upon whose functioning the well-being of the individual depends, and whose injury has disastrous consequences."⁵

In yet other terms, archetypes are the sources of the symbols deriving from

The 'objective psyche' . . . an objective dimension that is nonindividual, timeless, and universal. [They] mediate to consciousness the objective reality of the psyche that is not directly accessible to our sensory perception or to our logical reason. Archetypes symbolize the life of the nonindividual psyche that we all experience but which is not our personal possession.

The objective psyche is 'a living system of reactions and aptitudes that determine the individual's life in invisible ways—all the more effective because invisible.' The archetypes appear in the form of these inherited systems of readiness for action and readiness for images and emotions. The archetypal form is, then, a potentiality for experiencing, representing, and reacting to the world. It is the preconditioning framework for any kind of psychic awareness that can manifest itself anywhere at any time The objective psyche is conditioned by history but is not reducible to mere historical conditioning because it is itself a source from which history flows. Its contents, the archetypes, are the forms which the instincts assume in history.⁶

To summarize in slightly different terms: archetypes are cues from the realm of the Collective Unconscious or Objective Psyche which point toward the next stage of human psychic development. Operating through individuals, they are the forms from that realm of the Collective Unconscious which can energize and forward such development.

They must not be confused with instincts. Other animals have their behavior rather precisely determined by instincts, very specific patterns of behavior which are activated by particular stimuli. An example:

In Canada it was observed that during the rutting season male elk would throw themselves headlong against moving trains. It was then discovered that the whistle of the locomotive resembled the roaring of a male elk in rut, and this was why there occurred a "duel" between elk and locomotive. Such behavior is certainly not the result of any sort of reflection. The animal reacts "instinctively," not in the sense of a vague, indefinite urge, but in the sense of bringing to completion exactly regulated patterns of behavior which usually are meaningful in relation to the given situation.⁷

Human beings, although carrying inherent tendencies toward particular behavior in the form of archetypes, are less precisely regulated by these archetypes than are other animals by their instincts. The archetypal patterns are more numerous than instincts, more complicated, less precise in detail, and never fully utilized in their entire range.

So far as masculine and feminine tendencies to patterns of behavior, there are numerous archetypes. At one particular moment in history a given archetype may be dominant, but this can change with time, and so one must take care not to identify any single archetype with *the* masculine or *the* feminine as such. (This caution is especially important when speaking of Jewish tradition, where limited sexual stereotyping of the female has been unduly indulged—often in disregard of well-known historical Jewish women.)

Neither should archetypes be identified with role models. The latter are full figures who may invite conscious or intentional emulation; archetypes, on the other hand, are unconscious tendencies toward reactions, and in their symbolic or mythic representations are likely to be aspects of rather than full human beings.

With this as background, it now seems appropriate to consider how these Jungian insights might apply to those of us caught up in and participating with the deep and massive transformation of the Jewish collective psyche occurring in the U.S. today. For on reflection, such, it seems to me, is the deeper meaning, in psychological terms, of the *havurah* and Jewish feminist movements.

If archetypes function to energize and forward significant psychic development, it is highly advantageous to be in the fullest possible conscious contact with those most important at a given point in time. Within the Jewish world, feminine archetypes are especially significant now, and it is to these that I should like to direct attention.

For convenience, I'd like to use the schema of ten feminine archetypes presented by Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig in his delightful book, *Marriage-Dead or Alive*.⁸ While he illustrates the archetypes primarily from Greek mythology, there will quickly come to mind women from Jewish tradition who exemplify every single one of these archetypes. To keep the exploration simple, I shall draw our examples primarily from the Bible.

What, then, are the ten feminine archetypes here mentioned? Let's look first at seven where there is a significant relation to males, then at three where there is independence of males.

First there is the *maternal* archetype, nourishing and protective on the one side, devouring on the other. Who comes to mind for the nourishing and protective? Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, etc. What about the devouring aspect? Sarah in relation to Ishmael (Genesis 21); Rebekah in relation to Esau (Genesis 27); Athalia (cf. II Kings 11). Altogether, a surprising number of devouring mother archetypal figures along with the expected nourishing mothers, often combined (as in reality) in the same person.

A second archetype is the *mater dolorosa*, the mother mourning her child. Jeremiah's vision of Rachel weeping for her children while refusing to be comforted (Jer. 31:14) comes immediately to mind. Striking also are the *m'kon-not*, the "wailing women" whose ceremonial dirges and gestures evoke deep responses from their listeners (Jer. 9:16-20); Ezekiel 32:16; cf. also Ezekiel 27:30-32).

A third archetype is the *jealous* wife. Illustrated vividly by Hera in Greek tradition, it does not take long for her analogues in Jewish tradition to present themselves: Leah and Rachel (Genesis 29:29 ff.; cf. also Ginzberg's *Legends of the Bible*, p. 172);⁹ Peninah and Hannah (I Samuel 1:4-10); Sarah in relation to Hagar (Genesis 16).

A fourth archetype is the *hetaera*, the uninhibited companion of a man in sexual pleasure. Who comes to mind? Rahab (Joshua 2) and the "alien woman" of Proverbs 7:5-21. While the latter is sensually but deprecatingly portrayed (yet the sensual particulars suggest considerable fascination with the wench), Rahab is not only a heroine but receives respectful treatment. In later Jewish legend, in fact, she becomes a pious convert, the wife of Joshua, and the ancestress of eight prophets and of the prophetess Huldah (Ginzberg, op. cit., p. 508).

Another feminine archetype is the *desirable beloved*, more relational than the *hetaera* and best represented in Greek tradition by Aphrodite, goddess of

sexual pleasure. Is such imaginable in Jewish tradition? Quite apart from the entirety of "Song of Songs," where such a figure is ravishingly described in terms tactile, olfactory, and palatal as well as visual, Proverbs 5:15-20 provides another such archetype. Quite remarkable to find the sensual wife shining forth from the same book which brings us Eshet Hahil, the woman of valor!

Speaking of whom, we arrive at our sixth feminine archetype, "the wise, energetic woman, self-sufficient, non-sexual, nevertheless helpful to men." Athene in Greek tradition certainly has a companion in the woman of valor in Proverbs 31:10-31. Hardly a romantic figure, her severe utilitarianism stands at the pole opposite the exquisite creature of Proverbs 5:15-20.

A seventh archetype is the widow or divorced woman of marked independence. Who might such be in the Bible? Tamar, of course, the impressive widow whose triumph over Judah's neglect and hypocrisy earns additional cheers with each reading (Genesis 38).

All the foregoing archetypes are primarily related to the male and to children or family. Were these the only ones to be cited, one might be confirmed in the notion that the essence of feminine nature is erotic relatedness. But Guggenbühl-Craig presents three other feminine archetypes which have little if any significant relation to men, least of all erotic.

The eighth archetype is the Amazon, the female warrior. Amazingly enough, Jewish tradition has readily available such figures: Deborah the warrior and prophetess (Judges 4 & 5); Yael, also, should be mentioned, even though technically a Kenite, for she is a significant figure both in the Bible (Judges 4:17 ff.; Judges 5:24 ff.) and in later Jewish legend (Ginzburg 521 ff.).

A ninth archetype is represented in Greek tradition by Artemis, an independent figure whose only relation to man is to her brother Apollo. In Jewish tradition Miriam, whose significant relations with males are confined to her brothers, Moses and Aaron, comes immediately to mind.

Finally, another archetype not related to men or children is the nun or priestess, the Vestal Virgin. Miriam again comes to mind, especially in her role as leader of the song of triumph at the Sea (Exodus 15:20-21). So do Huldah (II Kings 20:14-20), Jephtha's daughter (Judges 11:29-40), and the "Witch" of Endor (I Samuel 28:3-25). Jephtha's daughter is especially intriguing archetypally, being associated as she is with virginity, with woman's companionship prior to her being sacrificed, and posthumously with an annual Israelite cult gathering of women. The mysterious and archaic episode involving Ziporah circumcizing her son (Exodus 4:24-26) probably also belongs in this category.

So much for all this too brief survey of ten feminine archetypes readily found within Biblical tradition. What are we to make of it? What is its significance?

First of all, it is clear that the range of archetypal resources for females within Judaism is considerably broader than one would have guessed from the limited stereotypes which pass for "traditional." "Traditional" is placed in quotation marks because, as used in this context, it represents a reduced and quite untraditional reading of feminine possibilities within Judaism, and is but a small slice of full historical fact.

Secondly, this range of archetypal resources invites loyal, even traditional, Jewish women to experiment with and live our various combinations and proportions of feminine possibilities as represented by these archetypes (understanding that the combinations and the results will not necessarily be due to conscious choice—archetypes are as much choosing as chosen!).

Thus, for example, the woman who elects a rabbinic career need not feel herself in opposition to Judaism in its fullness. Recalling the archetypal Miriam leading the community in exultant song at the Sea, the rabbinic candidate will hopefully feel energized and at peace with her calling. And upon the sad occasion of a death in the community, might she not function more effectively by the activation, at some symbolic level, of the mater dolorosa archetype? Examples could be multiplied, but the above may indicate ways in which archetypal awareness can support some of the transformations occurring in our community today.

At the same time, it must be said that archetypal awareness in itself cannot and should not determine all questions. Archetypes themselves are varied, as we have seen, and different ones may exert greater or lesser influence at various times in the personal and societal process. Archetypes are also but one component of the full human being. For both reasons, they must be subject to critical questioning and evaluating by conscious human faculties, including the ethical. They are, in short, not to be simply acted out unquestioningly.

Nevertheless, by realizing that archetypal feminine figures do exist within Biblical tradition, greater depth, more precise orientation, and increased psychic energy may become more characteristic of the lives that Jewish women, and men as well, will lead. As Guggenbühl-Craig puts it:

Everything that we are, we are through the working out, through the experience and the refinement and the humanization, of the archetype. Precise archetypal patterns always govern our behavior. We can cultivate this behavior, grasp it in images, become conscious of it, and give form to it. But we can seldom function solely from the will in important matters. To say this another way, we experience our activity as meaningful only when it is related to an archetypal foundation.

The specifics of renewal and revitalization within Judaism from all this are hard to predict, nor is that necessarily our task. Better, I think, is to live them out, then "taste and see" the results. That they will profoundly affect all of us, men and women alike, does seem to me beyond doubt.

1. Erich Neumann, "Note on Marc Chagall" in *Art and the Creative Unconscious*, New York, 1959.
2. C. G. Jung, *Four Archetypes*, Princeton, N.J., 1973.
3. Edward F. Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, Baltimore, 1973.
4. M. Esther Harding, *The "I" and the "Not-I"*, New York, 1965.
5. Neumann, *The Origins and History of Human Consciousness*, New York, 1954.
6. Ann Belford Ulanov, *The Feminine in Jungian Psychology and in Christian Theology*, Evanston, Ill., 1971.
7. Cited in Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, *Marriage—Dead or Alive*, Zurich, 1977.
8. Ibid.
9. Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Bible*, Philadelphia, 1956.