

PERSEPHONE: SYMBOL OF REBIRTH

PAPER CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

MYTHIC TALE: SYNOPSIS

LORD HADES: ARCHETYPE OF THE DEATH FORCE

DEMETER: ARCHETYPE OF THE LIFE FORCE

THE UNDERWORLD: WORLD OF SHADOWS AND SOULS

PERSEPHONE: THE WAY OF THE FEMININE

- Name and Origins
- Daughterhood
- Abduction and Marriage
- Pomegranate
- Judgment of Seasons
- Motherhood
- Queenhood
- Deep Feminine
- Caretaker of Souls

RETURN AND REBIRTH

FEMININE INDIVIDUATION

CLOSING COMMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The mythic tale of Persephone's abduction by Hades, the personification of the Death Force, and the unremitting search by her mother, Demeter, Goddess exemplar of the Life Force, relates a fascinating account of how Death and Life Forces interact with each other. In the tale, Persephone holds the tension between Life and Death Forces and in doing so produces a new alternative, Rebirth. As maiden she is ever ready to birth, to give Life. Although Persephone's name means 'Bringer of Destruction', as Queen of the Underworld she regenerates the Souls that come to her realm. The mythic tale suggests that the resolution of the tension between Life and Death leads to the transcendent third.

The prior two chapters focus on transformation that is needed for the feminine to carry out the "return" from its suppressed state. The chapter on Pele and Hi'iaka brought attention to feminine transformation that occurred when relationship based on fertility gave way to relationship based on personal encounter. The chapter on The Goose Girl addresses the transformation that leads to feminine personhood when daughter separates from the mother. In this chapter attention is given to the transformation that rebirth brings about, namely, enabling and revitalizing the Individuation Process.

Renewal is a constant theme in Individuation and its progress can be marked through a series of psychological rebirths. Persephone's annual return in Spring links with Easter where Christianity celebrates annually Christ's resurrection. Where Christ's resurrection offers hope for a New Day, Persephone's annual return is testimony of overcoming the impasse that occurs when the Death and Life Forces are at a standstill. Psychologically, each round of growth flows from the integration of opposing forces that impede Individuation. In the myth the two opposing forces are Hades, God of the Underworld and Demeter, Goddess of Grains and Earth.

Persephone is both of Earth and Underworld. In a manner of speaking, it is difficult to view the myth of Persephone as a typical tale of feminine Individuation. And yet it does with the twists of peering into the Deep Feminine and into the caretaking of Soul. To arrive at the Deep Feminine the ego must travel to the metaphoric Underworld (the world of the unconscious) for it is there that the feminine ego encounters the Soul. (In contrast to the male ego, the feminine way to the Soul is a vertical thrust, that is, deeper within. For the male ego, the way to the Soul is through the feminine as the male individuates through a horizontal quest.)

The following presents a psychological review of the Myth of Persephone. After providing a synopsis of the tale, two main characters in the myth, the Gods Hades and Demeter are explored as is the realm of Hades. Thereafter an assessment is made of the tale's contribution to feminine Individuation particularly, its latter stages. The study ends with a commentary on Persephone's labor as Queen of Souls.

THE MYTHIC TALE OF PERSEPHONE'S ABDUCTION: SYNOPSIS

The mythic tale is told in the "Homeric Hymn to Demeter" and in Ovid's "Metamorphoses." The "Hymn to Demeter" recounts that Persephone was with other maidens (that included

Pallas-Athena and Artemis) gathering flowers in the field. A special narcissus flower attracted Persephone's attention. When she approached the narcissus flower the ground opened up beneath her and Hades, in his golden chariot driven by black horses, swept up Persephone and abducted her to his realm in the Underworld. When she found her daughter missing, Demeter dropped all other responsibilities and concerns until reunited with Persephone. In the wake of Demeter's raging search no crops bloomed and famine loomed ahead. Hekate (the former three-headed goddess of Sky, Earth and Underworld, and now largely restricted to the Underworld) informed Demeter that she had heard Persephone's cry for help but had not seen who had "raped" Persephone. Later Helios acknowledged that Zeus gave Hades permission to carry out the abduction. When hunger was about to fall on humanity, Zeus petitioned his brother, Hades, to return Persephone to earth. It was stipulated, however, that her return depended on a protocol that Persephone had not eaten any food during her interment in Hades. One personage in the Underworld declared that he had seen Persephone eat several pomegranate seeds. In Homer's version it is Hades that induced her to eat the seeds. Rhea, mother of Zeus, Lord Hades and Demeter, proposed that Persephone spend one third of the year (winter) in Hades and the other two seasons (Spring and Summer) on earth. (A three-season year is found in the Mediterranean region.)

Ovid adds that Aphrodite ordered her son, Cupid, to wound Hades with a love arrow that would inflame his love for Persephone and cause him to abduct her. Aphrodite's intent was to prevent Persephone from following the virginal ways of Athena and Artemis. Ovid's narrative relates that Persephone ate from a pomegranate not because of Hades conniving but because she innocently picked a pomegranate from a branch and put seven seeds in her mouth. Ovid also notes that Persephone, although sad, was now a queen, the "greatest in the world of shadows."

HADES: ARCHETYPE OF DEATH FORCE

Hades, Lord of the Underworld, is a powerful manifestation of the Death Force. Hades is one of six children born to Rhea and Cronus. The three sons, Zeus, Poseidon and Hades, after defeating the Titans drew lots to decide who would rule in the Sky, Sea and Underworld. Zeus won the Sky, Poseidon the Sea and Hades the Underworld. This drawing of lots depicts the patriarchal overthrow of an earlier matrifocal arrangement. Zeus gained complete control in the Sky with his sister, Hera, as subordinate wife. Although beholden to Zeus, Hera in her own right was a great goddess before the Olympian Zeus arrives in Hellas. Poseidon ruled the Sea which is only a part of the Middle World. It was agreed that Earth would be a common region over which no brother ruled. Although no brother ruled Earth, a patriarchal system was established there. Notwithstanding this development, Demeter, Goddess of earth's fertility, exercised great influence on Earth which was acknowledged by the brothers.

Lord Hades' Underworld belongs to the dead; basically there is no room for regeneration, that is, for Death to give way to Life. While this may be so, Death is constantly beleaguered by the Life Force to counter the Death Forces initiatives; it is in this manner that Rebirth takes place. Although Hades sterile nature suppresses any display of Life, the nascent seed of Life in Death causes him periodically to seek sexual engagements. Latent feelings of affection may have been the motivator to seek Persephone as wife. Lord Hades represents the energy caught in the grips

of all-to-ashes that champions Death over Life. In a manner of speaking, Hades projects the rogue force that tries to overthrow the Cosmic Order that ties Death to Life. At the same time, it is surprising that in allowing his wife to co-rule with him Lord Hades, rather than spew death, advances Life. He chooses Kore (the maiden) and takes this budding bloom of the Life Force down to Hades, not to destroy it but for it to bloom in the underworld. The intrinsic balancing act which is maintained by Death and Life infers that Lord Hades sooner or later turns toward Life. Were Hades, on the one hand, not to give way to Life and on the other hand, continue to spew all-to-ashes it would mean that Death had somehow broken free from the Cosmic balancing cycle where birth gives way to Death that gives way to rebirth that gives way to Life and so forth). Such a rent in the Cosmic fabric would make Rebirth impossible. Even though Lord Hades carries Death's banner, the Cosmic Cycle presses on him to seek a co-sovereign that will make possible Rebirth even in the pit of the Underworld.

If Lord Hades himself was shorn of restorative powers, they could be found in the Underworld, in Hekate's so called shamanic witchery. Prior to Persephone's coming, Hekate kept alive in the Underworld the feminine restorative powers. It is doubtful that Hekate would share these powers with Lord Hades who nominally suppressed her earlier rule of the Underworld. Hekate, however, she discarded Lord Hades presence. In terms of Hekate as a former one-time Triple-Headed Goddess, she lost two heads or domains, the Upper World and Middle World to patriarchal incursions. Even though Lord Hades was considered ruler of the Underworld, such does not seem to be the case. In a manner of working in the shadows Hekate maintained preeminence in the Underworld.

And when Persephone became Queen the Underworld became a safe place for the Deep Feminine and Soul. Until the feminine, once again ruled (or co-sovereign), the Underworld would be doomed to patriarchal sterility. (Meanwhile in the Upper World a sterile patriarchy reigns remains largely because no bona fide feminine is a true co-sovereign, neither Hera on Olympus nor Sophia in Heaven.

Deprived of any generative capability Hades concerned himself mostly with filling his kingdom with more dead. He maintained a close friendship with Ares, the God of War, and welcomed the heap of dead that Ares produced. The tale, by placing Persephone as co-ruler, clarifies that neither Death nor Life can stand by themselves but function to bring forth the cycle of rebirths.

The point that is being made is that Death interacts with Life, that is each Force has its own truths which oppose each other. Therefore it is more correct to contend that Death does not cause rebirth but that its incursions stir the Life Force to rebirth. Persephone's Rebirth becomes possible even from the frightful Hades, Land of the Death. It needs to be stressed that Death, at least as the ego may tend to view it, can be pernicious. It should also be noted that the Deep Feminine of the Underworld has her own deadly characteristics. There is reason for why her name means "bringer of destruction." (Another meaning is "destroyer of light"). Although Persephone brings a regenerative force that a masculine Underworld lacks, it would be naive to overlook the destructive power that emanates from the Queen of the Underworld. (Hekate is said to emanate Medusa-like features, her glance has the power to petrify when wrongful acts are committed. Persephone may have received the name "destroyer" because of an earlier era when she occupied the Underworld or third head of Hekate's Three-Headed configuration: Selene-moon, Artemis-land and Persephone-crone-Underworld).

Death casts a great shadow over the frail ego which learns to be apprehensive of Death. The ego, until linked with Soul, tends to approach Death with anxiety and experience Death mostly as all-to-ashes and devoid of any rebirth capability. But were the ego to join with Soul, the ego may well be able to let go of its existential fear of Death. If the ego experiences Life to be in heated battle with Death, such is not the case cosmically where the two join more in dance than battle. In that it is rather rare in the current stage of human evolution for the ego to join with Soul, the vast majority of egos remain far removed from embracing a Life-Death balance. They remain struggling, on the one hand, to flee from Death and, on the other hand, to tap into Life Force's resources (such as Eros and reasoning) in order to ward off Death's heavy hand. Given that Persephone find features in Hades that are worthy of affection she reflects the fullness of Life and the feminine's regenerative power. In a manner of saying, Persephone brings a semblance of Life to the Land of the Death.

DEMETER: ARCHETYPE OF LIFE FORCE

Demeter is the Goddess of Grains and epitomizes the Life Force Archetype. On learning that Death had abducted her daughter Kore, Demeter became enraged and sent the world into a spin. She riled against Death. She did not accept what occurred no matter that Zeus, the chief God, condoned it. She as Life stood up to Death. And this rage continued until Kore was returned. Demeter's behaviors reflect the intense love between mother and daughter; the two (who are actually one). Her actions were not the instinctual reaction of a bear mother to protect her cub, but more an existential relationship that assures that Life will continue over the millenniums.

In the tale, Demeter, the premier symbol for the Life Force, threatens to create world-wide famine. In doing so, Demeter acts no different than the Death Force. Although it would seem counterproductive, it nonetheless stresses the power and primacy of the love component of the Life Force. Demeter deserves to be chastised for putting the children of Earth in harm's way but Demeter follows an evolutionary impulse to protect the sanctity of the mother daughter relationship that secures the preservation of the species. Demeter's determination to 'outlast' all the Gods may be found in her own rape by her brother, Poseidon, during the time Demeter was devastated by Persephone's abduction. Demeter had reached her limits: maleness submit or starvation. Such became the fury of Demeter.

If Demeter can be censured for causing famine, she can also be critiqued for keeping her daughter as daughter. As Goddess she is ever the Mother. And with the position of Mother always occupied by the Goddess, the daughter is fixated to remain Daughter. In short, Kore, remains maiden who never becomes mother in her own right. For the most part, remaining forever daughter is a death toll for the female. If Demeter is a powerful swirling manifestation of the Life Force, Kore represents the Life Force ever on the brink of giving Life. In short, Kore, is the perennial daughter embodied in the mother and projects the potential birthing (spring) aspect of the Life Force. Had Lord Hades not abducted Kore, there would have been no occasion for Persephone to engage in Rebirth, or for the transcendent function to arrive at the 'Third' and override the struggle between Life and Death Forces.

The endless Life-Death cycle has a shortcoming in that it keeps repeating itself without producing innovation; it keeps forging the same model, the same agenda, the same format. This characteristic may have triggered the mutation of the Homo sapiens species. The Life Force tends to hold in place what exists. This is especially true of nature's vegetative and creature existence: evolution becomes static at the apex of growth, indeed evolutionary changes are slow moving. Demeter reflects more the primal vegetative-animal Life Force than the human Life Force that has capacity for rapid change, innovation and Rebirth. Demeter is no Sophia who encourages the expansion of wisdom. She represents more the Life Force's tendency to conserve, to maintain the order of Life that already exists.

In the manner that Hades represents the primal Death Force: all-to-ashes (let nothing bloom), Demeter represents the primal Life Force: all-to-bloom. Left to their own, the Life and Death Forces act upon the ego as though they are in constant struggle with each other. But each is always at the verge to becoming the other. The tale highlights this tension in a subtle manner. Demeter, the upholder of the Life Force, becomes Demeter Erinys (Black or Fury Goddess) when she stops the fields from producing any harvest. Hades, the flag carrier of the Death Force, found himself with desire to join with the bloom of Life. With the abduction, Kore gives way to Persephone who, in turn, overcomes the clash between Life and Death by producing the 'third', Rebirth.

To proceed to the later stages of Individuation it is incumbent that individuals activate various archetypal energies. In the myth, Demeter turns to Helios (Sun) and Hekate (Moon of the Underworld) to find her daughter. The Sun, symbol of high consciousness, knows what happened to Persephone. Hekate, ever with a torch, symbolizes the shedding of light in the dark to gain consciousness. Hekate's light shines in the deep caverns of the underworld, psychologically, it is the dim light that shines on the shadow and also on the Soul. Helios of the Sky and Hekate of the Underworld can be viewed as consciousness-making archetypal energy that is available to the Life Force. The ego can call upon the Archetype of Solar Light (increasing conscious) and upon the Archetype of Underworld Moon Light (making the deeper levels of the Collective Unconscious conscious) in order to thwart Death Force incursions. The ego can also call upon the Demeter Archetype to stand up to Death. (It is said that a mother's love moves mountains; it moved Zeus to alter the prior decision he made with Hades regarding Persephone.

In the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, she grieves the abduction and loss of daughter but rages against the impunity of male Gods. Eventually her daughter is returned. The Eleusinian Festivities celebrates her return and honors the primal bond between mother and daughter and also the birth of the sacred child, Brimos. The rape is pushed to the background and the return and birth become central. Persephone in some accounts returns pregnant. She no longer is simply Kore, the maiden daughter; she is also for forevermore Persephone, Queen of Hades, the Underworld Land of Shadows and of Souls.

When all is said and done, it can be expected that the Life Force will counter any Death Force penetration (in this tale, an act of rape). Demeter, the Goddess associated with earth's fertility and progenitor of the Life Force, takes up the gauntlet. Initially in the tale, Demeter's towering greatness rests on her primal fertility and easily outshines the daughter, Persephone. But as the tale moves from Demeter to Persephone a shift occurs and fertility gives way to relationship and

implicitly to love. Persephone takes up the Life Force's cause and campaigns against the Death Force. This she accomplishes through her Queendom in Hades and caretaking of Souls. Love is one of the Life Force's valuable features if not its most powerful. In her paper, "Destruction as the Cause of Being" Sabina Spielrein alludes to how love brings about ego's Death and its subsequent Rebirth with and through the beloved. Love when added to the Life Force's primal fertility becomes a powerful transformative agent. On becoming Queen she set the Underworld upon an altered course. In her caretaking of Souls she brightened the Land of Shadows so that rebirth became a possibility. The masculine takeover of the Underworld suppressed a care of Soul which remained ashen and forlorn. Perhaps it was his failing to be caretaker of Souls that caused Lord Hades to seek out Persephone as Queen of Souls.

By the end of the tale, Demeter has demonstrated her power and greatness. At the same time, the would-be forever daughter finds her fulfillment secondly in Queendom and primarily through Rebirth. The linking of her Queendom with the winter season and her return with spring, fleshes out the path of Rebirth. Psychologically, depression, silence, introversion, dream state, meditation and trauma are circumstances that can thrust the human Psyche into Hades' winter. Such stay in the Land of Shadows provides opportunity to activate the Rebirth Archetype. Without periodic sojourns into the psychological Underworld the ego remains stagnant and Individuation stalled.

Finally, one point needs to be highlighted, namely, the primacy of mother-daughter relationship. This relationship assures the continuation of Homo sapiens. Take the metaphoric daughter away and Death triumphs. Such was the pending scenario after Death abducted the daughter. The mother, a Life Force counterweight, reacted in a madden manner. If no daughter means symbolically the end of humanity then so too does a lack of crops means no humanity. When the Gods recognized what was at foot and the end of human offerings, a solution was necessary to stop the mother from her suicidal course. But the mother-daughter relationship must be preserved to secure the continuation of the species. And to assure this result the mother would again produce food for humans to sustain themselves. A decision was made that Persephone would spend one-third of the year in the Underworld and two-thirds back on Earth. Thereafter the Eleusis Greater Mysteries (celebrated in late September) solidified the sacred mother-daughter relationship and the continuation of the species.

THE UNDERWORLD: WORLD OF SHADOW AND OF SOULS

In Greek Mythology the Underworld is the place where Souls go to after death. Psychologically, it is the inner world that represents the dark recesses of the human Psyche where the human Soul ruminates; it is the darken place to which the ego is dragged when psychological distress overwhelms. While the Soul may be present in the Underworld there is no certainty that any psychological descent to the Underworld guarantees that the ego will join with Soul and receive the Soul's healing grace. Time spent in the psychological inner, nonetheless, gives the ego a certain space to address what afflicts the psyche. The ego's periodic withdrawals are necessary to gain distance from issues that overwhelm but also to maintain equilibrium. Too long a stay in the Underworld, however, may well impair psychological stability in the external world. The danger is much less when the ego has gained great strength. In fact, the advanced stages of Individuation

would have the ego stay extended periods of time in the metaphoric Underworld (the psychological unconscious) in order to establish a relationship with the Soul.

The tale relates that the stay in the Underworld is a third of the year. What does a "third" of year signify? It is said that a healthy person should spend a third of life in sleep (a cousin to death). A third of the year hints that humans need to spend a good part of life with inner work especially if Individuation is to advance forward during the second part of life. Inner works includes dream interpretation, meditation that quiets the cognitive spin, emotional distancing or retreat from normal discourse, engaging depression, mystic or shamanic journeys/withdrawals into spirit land, and silence. The value of inner work is the opportunity to bring the contents of the shadow into consciousness; this can be done in a state of depression or contentment. Without work on the shadow it is doubtful that the ego can be strengthened. In short, extensive work with the Unconscious is essential to cultivate the Art of Individuation.

The Hades of the ancient Greeks is not as harsh as the Christian Hell where torments upon torments are dealt to its residents. Hell is for the wicked dead; its host is Satan (Lucifer). (Besides a punitive Hell, dead Christians might be assigned to Purgatory in order to atone for prior misdeeds.) Hades is for all the dead to include the holy and the noble. In Hades, the Souls of the dead were judged and sent to three locations: Asphodel Meadows for those neither virtuous nor evil; Tartarus punishing field for those judged evil doers; and Elysium Orchards for the virtuous. It has a bleakness and dimness that befits a House of the Dead. Both the Greek and Christian sites for the dead were placed initially under masculine custody. But a truth apparently broke into Greek consciousness: Death gives way to Life. In this context, it makes sense to place a (life-bearing) female as co-sovereign. Queen Persephone introduced beauty and brought a regenerative presence.

PERSEPHONE AND THE WAY OF THE FEMININE

Although the primary myth pertaining to Persephone revolves around her abduction by Hades, there are other tales that flesh out other aspects of Persephone, for example, being impregnated by Zeus (when he took the form of serpent), and giving birth to Zagreus. What follow in this section is an overview of what Persephone's myths contribute to understanding Feminine Individuation.

Name and Origins. Ann Suter, in her study of the origins of Persephone, concludes that Persephone's name has to do with destruction and that in the pre-Olympus era she was a Goddess of fertility and the Underworld; perhaps with a Kali-like destructive disposition (and probably originating in Crete). In this scenario the name of destroyer fits the pre-Olympus Persephone. Suter further claims that the earlier form of Persephone was too strong to be completely done away with. Persephone's transformation from fertility Goddess and severe Goddess of the Underworld takes her back to innocent daughter and subsequently to separate from mother and come to terms with the masculine that usurps her former prominence.

In the tale, Persephone carves out a feminine path of Individuation. By putting the "seasons" in order she becomes the "noble" Queen of the Underworld where she becomes caretaker of the Soul and sets the stage for Rebirth. In a manner of speaking, Persephone is transformed from

Destroyer of Life to Bringer of Life.

Daughterhood. In childhood, Persephone is known as Kore, (maiden). Her mother's (Demeter) stature as a Goddess insures that the mother will remain mother while the daughter will remain daughter. Persephone has an over-loving mother, which at times can be very overbearing. The positive aspect of this complex is that Persephone always feels loved. The negative aspect is that Persephone remains the innocent child drawing love but not effecting mature love on her own. To overcome this psychological impediment Persephone has to work through a dependency complex and come into her own identity but still remain the "beloved daughter of Demeter."

Demeter-Persephone symbolizes the primal feminine dyad. This bond is not to be interfered with; it underscores the feminine as the source of life. Psychologically, the mother prepares the daughter to take over the principal responsibilities regarding the nurturing of life. But in the Demeter-Kore reality the latter does not individuate. Such occurs when mothers undermine their daughters from being successful mothers on their own, or keep them dependent. In this psychological climate, the daughter would do well to find her own way as soon as possible.

The rituals pertaining to the Eleusinian Mysteries commemorate the return of daughter to mother. With the return, order is reestablished, earth continues to produce, life continues to thrive. But Persephone, who for a moment was her own person, reverts to being Kore, the maiden, although by now she has known the phallus (at least during the act of rape), and symbolically by taking in the impregnating masculine seeds (pomegranate.)

Abduction-Marriage. Although the abduction is called rape, the act symbolizes masculine takeover of the Underworld realm. This "overthrow" follows the actions of Lord Hades brothers who "overthrew" what may be called the feminine foundations in the Upper and Middle Worlds. Elsewhere note is made that Persephone's name means "bringer of destruction" which may be linked to Hekate to include being the same Goddess and pre-patriarchal ruler of the Underworld. This is to say, that the name "destroyer" comes from the Hekate configuration that opposed and continue to oppose masculine rule of the Underworld.

A different orientation of the tale holds that Lord Hades intended marriage from the beginning and had asked Zeus to allow him to wed Persephone. Because their sister, Demeter, would greatly object, Zeus neither said yes or no to Lord Hades' request. The latter thus took it upon himself to abduct Persephone. There are three viewpoints that shed light on the outcome of the rape-marriage. First, the rape can be considered nothing more than badgered masculine impunity. What caused Persephone to move on with life beyond the assault was her womanly ability to adjust to a host of unfortunate circumstances and turn things into something better. This mode of womanly behavior has a long history and has much to say about how motherhood adjusts to adversity.

The second way out of Persephone's predicament comes from the Goddess Gaia, Mother Earth, who supports Lord Hades' plan to take forcibly Persephone as wife. In comparison to Zeus' assaults on the feminine based on desire and impunity, Lord Hades is drawn to Persephone by need if not love. Mother Gaia recognizes that the Goddess Demeter will not permit Persephone to have her own sexual life and own motherhood. Therefore, the issue has to be pressed even if it

is abduction against Persephone's will. With maidenhood gone, Kore (or maid) becomes Persephone and why not Queen of one of three worlds. And it is this title that enables Persephone to be sovereign of a ghastly place like Hades. In somewhat different version of the tale, the Goddess Rhea tells Persephone, "Go, now, my child and obey; do not be obdurately angry at Zeus of the dark clouds but give prompt increase to the fruit, bringer of life to men." In short, Rhea is asking not only to "give in" but perhaps more important, to take up the challenge, set aside her name, 'bringer of destruction' and be 'bringer of life to men.'

The third way to overcome Persephone's perennial daughter complex was already alluded to in Aphrodite's intrigues to ensure that Persephone not go the way of virginal Athena and Artemis. To Aphrodite, such a state was an affront to women who were given the gift to be sexual and bear children. She had her son, Cupid (Eros), send an arrow into Hades so that he would fall in love with Persephone. Once this was done, the rest would follow and Persephone would be forced out from Demeter's loving clutches.

In the Psyche Myth, Psyche is to marry a monster and is put out on an isolated mountain ledge to become the monster's bride. The tale underscores the theme that marriage for the feminine has an aspect to being devoured or being abused; that loss of maidenhood involves a great loss of freedoms. Hades abduction signaled that it no longer was time to frolic as innocent daughter; it was time to take up the responsibilities associated with womanhood, to include mother and queen. The tale makes clear that the feminine in childhood needs to shore up the ego so that it can overcome the childhood complexes associated with parents, and the narcissistic tendencies of feminine adolescence. (It is noted that Persephone was picking her favored flower, the narcissus, when abducted.)

Demeter's madness of scorching the earth is of secondary importance in this analysis. It only reinforces the point that Demeter, as mother, was too overpowering for the daughter who would always remain enthralled to the mother unless she made a decisive break (even if the break looked atrocious). Clearly the daughter does not want to make a complete break with mother. That would be taking things too far the other way. Demeter's made a good case for having her daughter back. However, it is not clear that Persephone wanted to return under the old terms. When viewing the matter objectively, Demeter, mad or not, was correct to demand the return of her daughter; right to oppose masculine impunity and suppression. No matter what may seem acceptable right from a symbolic viewpoint, at the objective level the feminine opposes masculine subjugation.

With Earth shorn of food and humanity near to starvation, Zeus sought to end the standoff between the Death Force (Hades) and Life Force (Demeter). Hades reported that he was willing for Persephone to visit Demeter in the Upperworlds. The story relates that she ate some pomegranate seeds either unknowingly of the consequences or purposely so that she would not be brought back to the Upperworlds. The more cited version is that Hades enticed Persephone into eating a few seeds laced with honey so that Persephone would have to return to the Underworld after visiting with her mother.

Pomegranate. The pomegranate is filled with symbols particularly regarding sexuality and is generally taken for a symbol of fertility. Graves writes that the "pomegranate which sprouted

from Dionysus's blood was also the tree of Tammuz-Adonis-Rimmon; its ripe fruit splits open like a wound and shows the red seeds inside. It symbolizes death and the promise of resurrection when held in the hand of the goddess Hera or Persephone. The fruit's redness relates to feminine sexual organs and to hymenal blood but also to birthing and death. The fruit's seeds symbolize semen. At first glance, Persephone's eating of the seeds indicates insemination by Hades. She is to birth a (divine) child. But fertility does not solely refer to sexuality. Metaphorically there also is a fertility of spirituality. The Basilica of Montserrat (Spain) contains a statue of a Black Madonna with a Christ Child on her lap. In her right hand she holds a globe of the world. The Christ Child holds a pomegranate in his left hand. This employment of the pomegranate points to Christ's spiritual fertility.

Persephone did eat from a pomegranate tree that "grew" in the Underworld. This committed Persephone eternally to the world of the dead, but as circumstances indicate, it also committed her eternally to birthing (rebirth). There would be no meaningful myth had Persephone gone to the Underworld and not eaten the pomegranate fruit. Without the pomegranate there is no fertility, no divine child and no rebirth. Persephone brought life to the Underworld. This is remarkable development. As somber as life in Hades can be, as depressive as life can be experienced in the World of Shadows, the ego psychologically has opportunity to get in contact with unknown inner world. Such contact may stir new beginnings by having the ego confront the contradictions in the persona. Eating pomegranate seeds in the Shadow Land brings initiates the path to the deep inner space and gives birth to the unconscious. And it is shadow work that advances the Individuation process. Otherwise to be in the Underworld is to be dead, lifeless; stuck with an ineffective ego and buried with the discomfort discharged by existing psychological contradictions. As painful as it may be time in the Underworld can bring to the ego a rebirth experience; Persephone's presence makes it possible.

Metaphorically, when in the Underworld (as in the case of depression) it would serve to stay there a while. A short tenure in the Underworld may not allow for the right digestion to occur and therefore bring into question any claim of Rebirth. Some individuals find quick symptom-relieving techniques that remove them too quickly from the Underworld or from experiencing the dark night of the Soul. Consequently, a quick return to every day existence produces no sustainable change; individuals remain in the same rut that produces little growth. A significant stay (a season at most) holds promise that change can occur.

Prior to his desire to have Persephone for wife, it is assumed that Lord Hades had little regard for the Life Force on earth other than waiting for the coming of the death. Where Zeus was touched by the woe caused by Demeter's ceasing all food production, it is thought that Lord Hades welcomed the coming deaths. Theoretically, all people could die and his kingdom would be all the larger.

There may have been good reason for why Hades sought a wife. And that reason may have been the presence of the Goddess Hekate in the Underworld. As an independent witch and in a manner of speaking, Hades' co-ruler, Hekate was no Goddess with whom he wished to co-rule or spend time. In that there already was an informal co-sovereign, it might be much better to have a formal co-sovereign particularly if it could be the beautiful Persephone. The pomegranate provided the occasion. He probably reasoned that with his brother Zeus' support he could abduct

Persephone to Hades. But warding off his sister Demeter would be no easy matter. In this context, the pomegranate held a way to secure Persephone to Hades. The role that the pomegranate plays in the myth suggests that it affiliates with both the Life Force and Death Force. The most remarkable feature associated with the pomegranate tree is that it bears Life in the Underworld.

Judgement Of Seasons. Once the matter of food was settled the Goddess Rhea (mother of Demeter, Hades and Zeus), rendered a judgment (in other versions of the tale Zeus makes the judgment): one season (winter with Husband Hades) and two seasons in the upper worlds (spring and summer). This tripartite is filled with symbolic meaning: winter to be spent in a withered cold forlorn abode, the Land of the Dead (but also the land of Souls): summer with her mother (growing and harvesting the soil). But what about spring? Demeter is not about spring, but Persephone is; she becomes the spring that eternally brings new bloom. She returns eternally pregnant with life, partly to join with Demeter as Kore (maiden) and partly to enhance selfhood. .

The judgment subtly outlines the Three Fold Stages of Feminine Individuation: Outer Work, Inner Work and Integrative or Rebirth Work. Individuation begins with Outer Work where the feminine develops persona and achieves an identity. Outer Work for the women continues throughout the lifespan by a rearing propensity to care for the young (this includes mothering, ‘grandmothering’, educating, etc.). Outer work may also include participation in communal and political work. The Demeter Archetype carries the brunt of Outer Work.

Inner Work usually comes after the feminine has completed the arduous task of guiding the next generation pass their primal dependency. The prime time of Inner Work is the second half of life especially during Life’s winter season where Inner Works takes the feminine to the deep recesses of the Underworld. The Hecate Archetype presides over the depths of the Underworld where lie a treasure of wisdom.

Integrative or Rebirth Work processes and integrates what was learned from Inner and Outer Works, as well as what was acquired in the Integrative Work. This constant processing of new ‘things’ carries forth Individuation to deeper levels of the Psyche where the human Soul is thought to reside. The Persephone Archetype outlines the path that the feminine may follow (in their individual manner) to maximize human development.

Put differently the judgment, in casting three seasons, points to three works of Individuation. The work of the winter season, where Persephone stays with her husband as Queen of Hades, is associated more with the Hecate-Persephone configuration (most likely because of Hecate’s long struggle to oppose masculine incursions and sustain feminine spirituality and ways). Over millenniums Hecate fashioned a sacred path to arrive at the Deep Feminine and Soul. In the Greater Mysteries of the Eleusis Festivity, the Queen of the Underworld “Brimo” (standing for Hecate-Persephone) gives birth to a sacred son, “Brimos.” This narration points to Hecate as the main archetype to project the Way of Inner Works. Demeter as universal mother and principle Goddess of the Eleusis rites focuses largely on Outworks. She presides over the Greater Mysteries communal festivities that take place in late September. In the Greater Mysteries of Eleusis, Persephone reverts to Kore (maiden) and daughter. Meanwhile, Persephone is associated with Integrative Works in that she integrates what was gained in the seasons of Outer and Inner

Works. This is the basis for her Rebirth in the spring season. Her return to the Upperworld in Spring co-insides with the Festival of Flowers and celebration of Eleusis Lesser Mysteries (that are thought to pertain to Persephone). The theme of rebirth continues in the Greater Mysteries held in summer/autumn which celebrates the birth of the holy son who is thought to represent Dionysus).

In brief, Feminine Individuation calls for advancing Outer and Inner Works in order to sustain New Birth Works. A woman needs to concern herself with both society and spirituality while her Rebirthing Works reflects a woman's claim on "Personhood," (to go along with "Communalhood" and "Psychospiritualhood.") In general, women have forever participated in community. A select number of women devote their energies to expand psychospirituality. And more and more women, particularly in Western Civilization, have opted to express their Personhood. And it is in this sense that Persephone's return is nothing less than a claim on Selfhood. The above suggests that the whole woman would have to activate the works of Demeter, Hecate and Persephone Archetypes.

Since Hades is where Persephone's prominence can be found, the Upper Worlds no longer have the allure for Persephone that they once held. The 'return' is mostly about Demeter, in quieting her rage and acknowledgment of the paramount nature of mother-daughter bonding. Persephone aided Demeter to strengthen her influence over earth. But there was one change that Persephone might have cherished. The division of seasons was linked to the three Worlds. Now that she no longer was a virginal girl but full-blown woman, Persephone siphoned the spring for herself remaining Kore only during the summer season. In this sense, she remained daughter only in the summer/harvest season. In the other two, she was either queen-wife or the rebirthing feminine. In short, the calendar was set in order: winter as Queen with husband, Lord Hades; spring in singular repose and as Archetype of Rebirth; and summer as daughter of the sacred Mother-Daughter dyad.

Motherhood. A host of tales that are linked with Persephone uncovers three offspring. Most accounts reject that she bore Lord Hades any children. But there is a confusion ferreting out who the fathers are of her children, this is because Zeus is also known as the Subterranean Zeus, that is, another name for Lord Hades. It is generally reported that Zeus impregnated her daughter Persephone who bore Zagreus. The question is whether Zagreus was the child that came from the initial rape. Zagreus was dismembered by Zeus' enemies, the Titans. Zagreus returned to life with help from the Goddess Athena. He thus also associates with the themes of spring and rebirth. There are accounts that contend that Persephone is Dionysus' mother. This confusion stems from the close resemblance between Dionysus and Zagreus who often are taken to be the same God. A prime similarity is that both experienced dismembered and return to life. (Graves reports that Persephone was given charge over the reconstituted Dionysus by Zeus. She in turn put Dionysus under the care of the King and Queen of Orchomenus.)

Some accounts state that she had two daughters. By Lord Hades (Subterranean Zeus) she had Makaria who as Goddess passed a select dead to the Isles of the Blessed Dead. It is reported that she had Melinoe by Subterranean Zeus (Lord Hades). Melinoe presided over the propitiations offered to the ghosts (Souls) of the dead. It is also noted that Persephone may have given birth by Lord Hades to the three Erinyes, Goddesses of the Underworld, who avenged crimes against the

natural order on perpetrators who entered Hades. Persephone's name of destroyer may stem from bringing the Erinyes into life. (But the more accepted tale is that the Erinyes sprang from the blood of Uranus, the Sky God, who was castrated by his son, Cronus.)

A charming tale of Persephone's motherly inclinations is found in the tale of Adonis. Aphrodite was attracted to the child Adonis. She asked Persephone to rear him. This Persephone did but refused to return Adonis to Aphrodite because of great attraction for Adonis. Zeus mediated and ruled that Adonis would spend one season with Persephone and one season with Aphrodite, and Adonis would choose where to spend the third season. Adonis decided to spend it with Aphrodite.

Tracking Persephone's motherhood is complicated particularly ascertaining whether there was an offspring from Lord Hades initial rape. An argument can be made that, as Lord of the Dead Force, he has no Life Force, or minimal at best, and hence unable to sire offspring. Regardless of the confusion attention needs to be given to the secretive birth of a divine child named "Brimos." As already mentioned, the Eleusinian Mysteries announce that Brimo (the mother and Goddess of the Underworld) gives birth to "Brimos" the divine male child. The divine child points to Zagreus (Harrison would point to Dionysus). Notwithstanding this intriguing birth, Persephone's tale mostly shuns her motherhood. This might be because Demeter over shadows Persephone when it comes to motherhood and the special focus of Persephone's life takes place in the Underworld where death rather than fertility dominates. (Hades supposedly has no nursery to rear Life.)

Queenhood. What is clear is that Persephone did not experience Hades as a somber deadening place. Her time as queen was limited when in Hades and it seems that there was much for her to do. Although not highlighted, Persephone engaged adequately in wifedom and motherhood. It should also be noted that she engaged in deep sisterhood with Hekate, the original Three Headed Goddess (who lost the Kingdoms of Sky and Sea to the invading Hellenes Gods, but maintained "de facto" co-sovereign in the 3rd Kingdom, the Underworld). Lord Hades, the Hellenes God, held only nominal rule. From the time of Persephone's arrival in Hades, Hekate befriended her. Interestingly both Goddesses have a torch for primary symbol. This symbol suggests that they play a role in bringing light (consciousness to the Underworld). And light is what is increasingly needed in that shadow land.

Before the abduction, Lord Hades', on taking over the Underworld, fashioned a sterile dismal habitat for the Soul. In a manner he had blotted out traces of the feminine. (It is noted that Hekate struggled to maintain a co-sovereign presence in Lord Hades' Underworld. The patriarchy countered by projecting Hekate in tones of witchcraft and hysteria.) In contrast to Lord Hades' grayness, Persephone reflects the vibrant colors that adorn flowers. This may be because she spends only one season in Hades but it also may be due to her rebirth prowess associated with spring.

Whereas the tale is heavy with Demeter's wanderings, not much is said about what went on in the Underworld between Lord Hades and Persephone. It is assumed that he must have told Persephone of his love. In turn, after some adjustment she may have seen an opportunity for herself and may have thought well of being Queen of one of the three "kingdoms".

Although not highlighted their nuptials took place. From what is reported they shared a pleasant relationship. In general, Hades did not imitate Zeus or Poseidon's masculine bravado. It is reported, however, that he occasionally left the Underworld for sexual exploits (what is not clear is whether or not these exploits were prior to his marriage). He was not a popular God. It is said that Ares, the War God, was a good friend. At the same time, it seems that he respected and attended to Persephone. They are seen as sharing the rule of the Underworld with Persephone perhaps being more in the limelight. She brought emotion and compassion to the Underworld. When Orpheus sought Euridyces' return both Persephone and Lord Hades were touched by Orpheus's love and granted Euridyces' return to the Upperworld. She permitted Herakles to take away temporarily Hades guardian, Cerberus, the three-headed-hound. She allowed Dionysus to take his mother Semele away from Hades. But perhaps the more important encounter was that between Persephone and Psyche.

If the daughter-Goddess came to the Underworld as Kore she left as the woman-Goddess Persephone. While the mother raged on earth Persephone began the process of coming into herself. She took the occasion to personalize the Queendom that she was offered. Were she to remain in the Middle World she would have been enmeshed in the mother-daughter dyad and her personal growth thwarted. But by accepting the Queendom she had opportunity to find her destiny (the care of Souls).

Deep Feminine. Besides the gift of Rebirth, Persephone bestows to humanity the "Deep Feminine" which opens the way to establish an intimate relationship with Soul). If nothing else Persephone uncovers "Deep Feminine" in the mythic Underworld or depths of psychic Unconscious (where the Soul is also thought to reside). In the archaic era that preceded Persephone's Queendom of the Underworld, the Deep Feminine, that once was available to the daughters of Eve, laid unnoticed probably overlaid with tarnished patriarchal patina. It was only after Persephone assumed Queenhood of the Underworld that consciousness of the Deep Feminine resurfaced. (Credit must be given to Hekate who, although generally spurn, kept alive in the Underworld the "knowing" or mysteries of the Deep Feminine.) The latter stages of Individuation are not addressed until the feminine ego breaches the Underworld, encounters the Deep Feminine which, in turn, strengthens the ego so that it can engage the Soul.

The Deep Feminine is founded on the wisdom of the million-year-old feminine that traces into the past perhaps back to the point when the hominid species loss instinctual programming. Women, prior to the patriarchal takeover of the Underworld maintained contact with this Deep Feminine intuitively. Women of old was grounded in their feminine procreative nature and in this sense, they knew who they were. This sense of sureness enabled the feminine to live with an organic wholeness and be part of Creation's mystery. Persephone's reign restored the viability of the Deep Feminine which can assist women to end their confusion regarding who they are. It allows the feminine to sense again the "grace" that the Mother of the Christian God extrinsically took for granted when hailed as "Full of Grace;" the grace that radiates form feminine wholeness. In a manner of speaking, engaging the Deep Feminine enables every woman to know who they are. In the pre-Olympus period it was, Hekate who guarded the secrets of the Deep Feminine. In the post-Olympus era, it is Persephone who resonates with the Deep Feminine.

In general, the Persephone Archetype enables the feminine to descend into the deeper layers of the feminine experience where she encounters her own Queendom that plies externally to rule and plies to enhance her Selfhood. However, there is no guarantee that the feminine ego's psychological descent into the Underworld will engage the Deep Feminine. To do so usually requires prior inner work of attending to the shadow contents in the unconscious as well as outer work to maintain a viable if not holistic way of Life. (In this regard, the tale of Psyche's struggles underscores the inner and outer work that needs to be done.)

For those egos that struggle effectively with the contents of the unconscious, an extended stay in the psychological underworld enables the ego to turn shadows into bloom. Persephone brought to the Land of Shadows her full bloom of life which definitely altered Hades itself. Or better said, she restored, at least in part, feminine suzerainty over the Underworld. She brought to Hades basic feminine features, compassion for example. But more important she made available the beauty and grace associated with the Deep Feminine as well as a regenerative power of Soul that fosters rebirth.

Caretaker of Souls. Among the Greeks, there was no escape for mortal Souls not ending up in Hades. The Souls of the holy and honored dead were led by Persephone's daughter, Marakia, to the Isle of the Blessed. The other Souls strode mostly adrift in the various regions of the Underworld. If Hades can be called the Land of Shadows it can also be viewed as the Land of Souls. (Although the Souls of the Living do not inhabit Hades, Persephone's span of influence also covers the Living Souls.)

In pre-Persephone Hades, the Soul was, for all practical purposes, lost. Despair may well have gripped many if not most of the Souls in Hades. The ascension of Persephone to Queen of Hades brought about major change. As caretaker she prepared Souls for participation in the continuing cycle of Death and Life. In context of the reincarnation of Souls, it is thought that Persephone prepares the Souls of the deceased for their rebirth; she prepares the Souls to traverse the bardo (Buddhist period of time between death and reincarnation) and gain new life. In terms of Souls located in purgatory-like locales, Persephone assists them to continue their Individuation process at the transpersonal level until they have achieved the states of Nirvana or Celestial Heaven. In terms of Teilhard de Chardin's Noosphere, she enables the Souls to add their load of consciousness to the evolving mind's sphere, that is, the evolutionary follow-up to the earlier creation of the geosphere and biosphere. (In regards to the Souls of the Living, Persephone assists their egos to quest the Soul (Grail) through a series of psychological rebirths which may cause the ego to shift from an ego-based to a Soul-based existence.

Graves notes that Queen Persephone was both gracious and merciful and apparently enjoyed her role as Queen. But a paradox needs to be unraveled. In rendering her judgment regarding how Persephone would live out the year, Rhea asks that Persephone be a "bringer of life," that is the direct opposite of her name. But in what manner is she "bringer of life?" One way of course would be through children. (In Spanish, giving birth is "dar luz" or "give light.") There are accounts that Persephone became pregnant from the abduction. As already mentioned, she bore Zaregrus (Dionysius) by Zeus. She also may have borne, by Subterranean Zeus, Brimos, the sacred male child celebrated in the Greater Eleusinian rites. But the divine child may be symbolic referring to the birth of consciousness or to the rebirthing of Souls. In this context, her

return links with the theme of resurrection or psychospiritual renewal. (Suter notes that as Queen of Souls, Persephone acquired the power to raise the souls of the dead and restore or withhold their wits).

Erich Neumann noted, the woman experiences her power to bring forth light and spirit, to generate a luminous spirit that despite all changes and catastrophes is enduring and immortal. In the Western world Christ's resurrection from Hell (on Holy Saturday) is tied to spring. In a manner similar to Easter, Persephone arises as symbol of transformed life. During her stay in Hades she fulfills being 'bringer of life' by aiding Souls to regenerate. For those who intend to join ego with Soul, activation of the Persephone Archetype provides special energies particularly those of regeneration. This path is not to be found in any one form but in the manner by which the ego shifts from ego-centrism to Soul-centrism.

Prior to Persephone's Queendom, Lord Hades' Kingdom of Souls offered no "salvation," it was simply a place of emptiness and no hope penetrated the dimness. Perhaps worse of all, he did nothing to care for them and nothing was expected from them. On becoming consort, Persephone introduced to these darken fields compassion, light, grace and rebirth. She turned her generative powers to care for the host of Souls. If psychological toil in the Land of Shadow served the ego to correct persona flaws, raise consciousness, and bring forth psychological rebirth, it also cleared the way toward the Soul's regeneration.

The particular asset that Persephone brought to Hades was highlighted in the myth of Psyche and Amor. In her fourth task Aphrodite ordered Psyche to descend to the ghostly Underworld and request from Persephone a casket of ointment. She was to say to Persephone that "Venus begs of thee to send her a small portion of thy beauty, such at least as may suffice for the space of one brief day." After obtaining the casket, Psyche was tempted to open it and adorn herself with a bit of the ointment. On opening what seemed an empty casket, Psyche fell into deep sleep. Clearly, the beauty that Persephone had to give to Aphrodite, the Goddess of Beauty, was not related to the body but to Soul. And it was this beauty ointment of Soul that Persephone possessed and Psyche took upon herself. Erich Neumann speaks of "divine beauty" but Persephone's beauty is not one shared with all divinity. Robert Johnson may come closer to the point when he claims that the "nothing" in the empty casket is the "essence of that feminine quality which must remain a mystery, certainly to men, and hardly less so for women." And this essence? It may well be the feminine grace that exudes from the Soul through the Deep Feminine. Up to the point of opening the casket, Psyche's name does not yet mean Soul. But Psyche becomes her name, Soul, only after opening the casket and intaking the beauty of Soul.

By taking the risk to incorporate the essence of feminine grace emanating from the Deep Feminine (projected in Persephone), Psyche earned the name "Soul." At first glance, Psyche's taking Persephone's beauty ointment seems to put her in an ominous death-like trance. But the trance may also indicate that Psyche is in her wholeness of a Soul-based existence without any wanting from an ego-based life.

If Persephone represents the regenerative dynamic in the Underworld, Hades stands for the inevitability of Death. As Queen of the Underworld, Persephone injects a regenerative power onto the Souls that languish in Hades by preparing them for rebirth. As formerly mentioned,

Persephone, in a Buddhist context, assists the Soul to let go of the Death Force and set out on the forty-nine-day journey (Bardo) to join with the Life Force. In this context, her archetypal nature is not only that of “Rebirth” but also of “Caretaker of Souls.” (Persephone's role may be compared with Christ's role as 'Shepherd of Souls'. If the Second Coming has anything to do with the Coming of the Daughter rather than the Second Coming of the Son, then Persephone fits the prototype for the Coming Daughter that humanity unknowingly awaits.)

The tale indicates that entry into the Land of Shadows is no simple walk down the tulip path. It is most likely that an earth shaken occurrence lands the feminine ego in the Underworld. From there it is up to the ego to demonstrate its grits and readiness to proceed. There is no one way to experience the Underworld nor is there any protocol regarding how many times the Underworld should be visited. Caution however is necessary. In mythic terms, those who enter the Underworld usually are not allowed to leave. The entry into the psychological Underworld is often accidental rather than a thought out process; the ego may be caught in a psychological death grip that sweeps it into Hades. There comes a time in the Individuation process, however, when the ego is sufficiently strong to descend (similar to Heracles and Orpheus) to the dark Underworld and return more whole, largely by encountering Soul. A purposeful descent is a prerequisite for the sacred marriage of ego/Self with Soul to take place.

THE RETURN AND REBIRTH.

After the themes of daughterhood and abduction/rape, Persephone's tale centers on return and rebirth. Demeter made clear that the primal female dyad of mother-daughter would not be separated, that birthing and food production depended on that dyad. The Eleusinian Festivals were held to celebrate Persephone's return to her mother. To a certain extent this was a great triumph that clarified that the male Gods could not act arbitrarily. At bottom, it was Demeter's triumph which in a manner placed earth (the land portion of the Middle Kingdom) under feminine sway. From one point of view, Persephone's return or perhaps better said, Demeter's victory checked male dominance. In that the Three-Headed Goddess lost rule over the Upper Kingdom as well as of the Middle Kingdom (albeit the land portion was only nominally under Poseidon's rule), a case could be made that with her victory, Demeter reclaimed feminine control over earth's land masses. In short, Demeter expanded from Goddess of Agriculture to principal earth Goddess (after Mother Gaia herself).

For Persephone, the return meant a return to being Kore, the Maiden, but not completely so. Clearly Demeter dominated the scene. But when the return is recast as rebirth, the scene is entirely changed, and Persephone gains attention in her own right and not solely as Demeter's daughter. In this regard, the seasons are instructional: winter linked to Lord Hades/Death Force and summer/harvest linked to Demeter/Life Force. Neither of the two forces give way to the other. Here then is the classic standoff that triggers the transcendent function into action. The solution is the Third or Rebirth which, in turn, enables the Death and Life Forces to have their respective season. The stalemate is broken, and continuation of seasons possible. (As already mentioned, Persephone, as symbol of Rebirth, came to own Spring as her season.) Although Persephone remains ever young, she is no longer just Kore, the beholden daughter. She also projects the feminine energy that keeps the seasons in harmony. Where Kore is the youthful

feminine with no ground of herself, Persephone is the powerful woman who reveals the seasons' order. As symbol of rebirth, Persephone gains her own stature, her own space. As the eternal spring she joins with her mother (the eternal summer/harvest) and husband (the eternal winter) in perpetuating the seasons.

Psychologically Persephone manifests the Archetype of Rebirth. In order to activate this archetype, the female needs to extract herself from being laden with societal responsibilities. In Persephone's case she has a Positive Mother Complex which can be as limiting as a Negative Mother Complex. For this to work out best, mother must let go of motherhood in order that the daughter also becomes mother who, in turn, must let go of daughterhood in order to become mother. Regardless of her torment, Persephone can free herself of the mother complex only with a decisive separation: poignant separation, enthronement in the Underworld and return as complete individual. But the separation may be disconcerting and the concomitant suffering can overwhelm the ego so that it loses consistency. Psychologically the ego's descent to the world of shadows (the Unconscious) provides the ego with opportunity to work through the complexes and therein regain the strength to return to the Upper World in a changed manner. The trauma of rape as metaphor for psychological trauma brings the female ego to the Underworld. Once there the ego learns to take personal responsibility for the destiny that comes its way.

Where Eve ate of the apple to achieve consciousness, Persephone ate of the pomegranate to meet her destiny and in doing so, fashioned the Archetype of Rebirth (cycles of increased consciousness). By accommodating herself to the Land of the Death she finds the "treasure" that lays buried there. Regardless of the personal suffering that she initially experienced, Persephone accepts the separation from mother. She turns into the woman that descends on her as she become more conscious.

As teenage Persephone struggles with separation from mother, Persephone knows that she is not Demeter, yet does not know who she is. But such knowing will come about as she reigns as Queen. Her stay in Hades enables her to master several of Life Force's critical tasks, namely, achieving a viable identity and subsequently, achieving wholeness. (In a somewhat similar manner, Don Quixote, even though in the throes of delusions, was able to say truthfully, "I know who I am.") In the Underworld as co-sovereign, Persephone begins to claim her feminine Selfhood.

The myth suggests that individuation cannot advance without visits to the Underworld; that humans must learn how to utilize both the Life and Death Forces; that time spent under the aegis of the Death Force provides occasion for separation so that existing psychic contradictions can be examined and ways to address them explored. Persephone lends a positive approach to the chilling experience of the Underworld. She demonstrates that proximity with the Death Force has a role in the Individuation process. As she grows into Queen of Hades, she enables those who enter the Underworld to experience Rebirth. It needs to be kept in mind, that time in the Underworld is limited. The other two "seasons" enable the ego to integrate what is gained below. Were she to stay all three seasons there would be no activation of the Archetype of Rebirth. This is the numbing aspect of a sterile masculine order: endless entrapment, in the sense of no contact with throbbing Life. In the end, Persephone's saga bequeaths to humanity the Rebirth Archetype (as does Christ centuries later).

FEMININE INDIVIDUATION

The tale coaxes females to commit themselves to Persephone's abode and toil in inner work. If Individuation is to be fruitful the ego needs to put off the Underworld's darken and ominous character. If not the ego is likely to fake eating the pomegranate. When such occurs Individuation stalls and the ego deceives itself into thinking that the ideation of contacting the Deep Feminine and joining with Soul is the actual contacting and joining. When such occurs, the feminine ego finds itself in a pseudo-Underworld. But the tale itself shows the way to Individuation: eat from the pomegranate (to begin the way to Selfhood), step out beyond daughterhood, explore and bring to light what strews in the Land of Shadow and integrate archetypes (such as sage) that link with the Deep Feminine on the way to embracing Soul.

The Persephone myth indicates that feminine Individuation is rooted in a former socio-era when a matrist ethos existed. What followed was a patriarchal cultural layer that was placed on the feminine. In turn, feminine Individuation has labored to reclaim its roots in order to proceed more directly. And it was in the Underworld that the feminine had opportunity to encounter her roots and advance Individuation to its latter stages. (Hekate with her torch symbolizes the psychological value that is to be found in the Underworld.) At the same time Hades surmounting of Persephone enabled her, in a most disagreeable manner, to move from daughterhood to womanhood and subsequently, to Selfhood and Rebirth). In short, Persephone, by eschewing fertility characteristics found in her mother, working through a forced relationship with Lord Hades, opted to partake in Rebirth and took on Soul-leaning attributes.

The myth indicates that feminine Individuation requires separation from mother and even more important, pursuit of Selfhood. In the tale the mother demands return of the daughter. Although such occurs, it does not occur fully. And it is in that 'not fully' that the female raises her claim, aside from evolutionary demands, to personhood.

The most profound meaning of the myth may be found in the seasonal judgment where Persephone is required to remain the winter season in the Underworld and the other two seasons above. The reorientation of the seasons has the summer/harvest season committed to outer work (of particular note is the celebration of the feminine rites at Eleusis). Summer is followed by winter and commitment to inner work. If feminine Individuation is to provide rebirth, much inner work must be done during the winter season. Success here enables repeated bouts of Rebirth that eventually allows contact with Soul. As much as Persephone may have brought order and expectations to the Souls in Hades, she ever kept her name of "destroyer" which suggests that the feminine may need to oppose any future degradation of the feminine.

Persephone's journey to the Underworld is an annual one. While the myth does not recount how Persephone prepares for her winter stay in Hades or her spring Rebirth, it can be imagined that she conducts special rites. The Flower Festival and rituals of cleansing associated with the Lesser Eleusis Mysteries suggest such rites. In short, it is as Queen of Souls and symbol of Rebirth that frames her feminine greatness. It is she who invites women to stay awhile in the Land of Shadows and commune with the Deep Feminine. She images the 'way' to balance if not

integrates the Life and Death Forces, a central aspect of the Individuation process which prepares the ego to Cross the Bar. But there is no certainty that the stay will always be pleasant; after all, it is ashen Hades.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Masculine assault is traumatic and grips women terribly. Such trauma is not easily worked through. Lord Hades' abduction of Persephone, while perhaps motivated by elements of love or seeking a mate rather than of lust, nonetheless shattered trust. In this context, the tale has value in implicating masculine impunity. Demeter pressured both the Gods and humanity to address the act itself rather suppress or wash it away. The Mother in a raging storm resisted masculine tyranny. Her strength flowed what may be called an imperative that the mother-daughter dyad be preserved. If not, Demeter would produce no grain; everybody (even the Gods) would suffer.

In the myth, Zeus finally had to recognize feminine core issues. Furthermore, a creeping apprehension may have surfaced that the feminine would no longer go along with masculine impunity. If for Demeter the focus was the primal mother-daughter relationship, for Persephone it was the usurpation of her former Goddess state and degradation of her feminine eminence. Yet it was necessary to let go of her former fertility role that tied the feminine to an evolutionary tide. So long as fertility was her function, she would not serve as a model of feminine Individuation. The result of Persephone's "demotion" from fertility Goddess to Kore (maiden) was that she was given opportunity to chart a non-fertility path that would lead to a more personal animation.

In the mythic tale, Persephone becomes an innocent victim with little idea of what was happening. She was passive in that her fate was still in the hands of others. The abduction, in this circumstance, resembles an unwanted arranged marriage to an unknown husband without the bride's consent. (Over the ages, women have survived this crucible by making the best of it generally by bearing children and rearing them.) But once in Hades, Persephone recognized certain advantages to be her own person. Thus, she took up the opportunity to become Queen of the Underworld.

Although both the "Hymn to Demeter" and the "Metamorphosis" infer that Persephone was taken to Hades against her will, once in Hades Persephone may have been more open to what was being offered, namely, not just Queendom but more importantly access to the Deep Feminine and forging a rebirth process. Also offered was continuation of the Mother-Daughter primal paring. What is not clear is the exact role that Persephone played in fixing the final arrangement. Was Persephone an active player; did she willingly eat of the pomegranate so that she could distance herself from the mother? The kidnapping inferred that Persephone would not return to Demeter as daughter but more likely as mother-to-be. Could she weave a personal destiny in relationship with Death (Lord Hades)? This unique situation opened a path for renewal which may have tempted Persephone to take up the cause of the Life Force in the Underworld; she became Caretaker of Souls and prepared them for new life. By the end of the mythic tale she personified Rebirth itself.

Persephone may have had little say in regards to how fate made her Death's bride but once done, she staked out her selfhood rather than let the mother or abductor possess it. By separating from

mother and fashioning her own Queenhood in Hades, Persephone claimed her Selfhood and innate generative powers to use as she chooses. By going beyond the pulls of mother (Life Force) and of husband (Death Force) she set the stage for a transcendent alternative, Rebirth. While the division of seasons made her both of the Middleworld and Underworld, it also allowed her to possess her own season, namely, spring. She pitted Demeter's summer/harvest season with Hades winter season and recasts herself as spring, that is, new growth. In this context, the rites of renewal became the rites of spring.

The myth does not discuss how Lord Hades was affected by Persephone's co-sovereignty. Unlike Zeus, Lord Hades remained deeply committed to his wife perhaps due to his former loneliness. By sharing his kingdom with a Queen, he entered into a new form of masculine order. Without a feminine co-sovereign something would be missing. Persephone's movement between earth and the Underworld, although not to his liking nonetheless was accepted; he gave way to what women want most, their sovereignty.

These changes do not indicate that death no longer is a fearsome threat. But Persephone made Death part of a larger cycle. Given the third option, rebirth, Death loses a bit of its sting and falls closer to the normalcy of events. In working through the finality of Death, the ego is likely to overcome many of the obstacles that impede Individuation.

Prior to Persephone's arrival Lord Hades' rule in the Underworld was constrained in that Hekate possessed great power in the Underworld. One such power, which Zeus acknowledged, was to grant or withhold desires both to mortals and immortals. She, more than Lord Hades, resonated with the wealth of the Underworld. Although relegated to witchery, Hekate brooked little opposition to her ways. All respected her stature in the Underworld. While it may be true that Persephone preferred Hekate's company to Lord Hades', it was her marriage to him that enabled Persephone to become Caretaker of Souls. If Lord Hades shunned Hekate, he sought Persephone's company and acquiesced to her wishes.

Persephone's co-sovereignty and freedom of movement hints that she may have been the original sovereign of the Underworld. She, similar to Hekate, represents the Triple-Headed Goddess that preside over the Upper, Middle and Lower Worlds when society was still "matrist." At such time, Persephone may have well carried the name of "bringer of destruction." But her co-reign with Lord Hades enabled her to acquire another name, "bringer of life." Meanwhile her relationship with Hekate mirrored Persephone's relationship with Demeter. If Persephone indeed was to be her own person, she had to make the relationship with Hekate no stronger than what she had with Lord Hades. Otherwise she would remain daughter. There is no doubt that she consulted with Hekate but ruled as co-sovereign with Lord Hades.

If the patriarchal order came to accept gender equality in the Underworld, attempts to establish similar equality on Earth and Sky were squelched. Feminine incursions were quickly denounced as devilish and decadent by the patriarchal order. Persephone-Hekate, in a manner of speaking, stand at Hades' gates waiting to advance the Way of the Feminine. Ultimately Persephone-Hekate energy will alter the Upperworlds and perhaps even constitute a "gylany" (female-male) orientation.

Persephone's abduction and role as Queen altered the Underworld. What began as a tragic event to a maiden, in the end, placed the Underworld in better order. (With Persephone's ascendance to co-sovereign, Hekate no longer needed to remain hostile toward Hades.) Besides introducing change to the Underworld, the myth advances Rebirth as the manner in which to integrate Life and Death. Given that change occurred in the Underworld would similar change occur in the other worlds? Will they effect a bona fide co-sovereignty? Presently, Zeus (Yahweh) rules as single sovereign. Hera does not enjoy true Queendom or co-sovereignty in Olympus as Persephone does in the Underworld. (In the Christian World Mary, on her assumption into Heaven, was given the title of Queen of Heaven but with no actual co-sovereignty.)

Persephone's myth opens the door to the Underworld's reformation. Hekate's long standing primacy in the Underworld and Persephone's more recent reforms together with Lord Hades' general deference, indicate that the Land of Shadows is open to a feminine quest. But this does not suggest a feminine regime in the Underworld. It is important that there be co-sovereignty. In this tale, such is likely to improve as Lord Hades himself becomes more competent. The development of the Homo sapiens species may well depend on whether the Upper Worlds will effect change so that true co-sovereignty will be established there. Continuation of a one-sided patriarchal reign particularly in the Sky Kingdom portends great distortion of what humans are capable; meaning, that Zeus's thunderbolts in the modern age are too dangerous to be left under patriarchal control.

The seasonal judgement pronounced in the tale outlines the basic formation of feminine individuation. The summer/harvest season, where Demeter reigns, is the time for "outer works," while the winter season, where Hekate is the long serving feminine voice that holds court, is the time for "inner works." The spring season is for integrating the new consciousness that arises during summer and winter. Persephone's integrative bloom, in a manner, enables her to appropriate the spring season; she demonstrates the Way between Death and Life and integrates the fruits of outer and inner works. Of particular value is inner shadow work which is one of the boons available whenever the Psyche enters the Underworld.

In short, it may be said that Persephone's path of Individuation that she fashions leads to the Deep Feminine. On the one hand, Persephone had to outgrow her fertility impulse and on the other hand, had to work herself up from daughter to Queen of the Underworld. In such a manner she paved the Way of Rebirth. And there in the dim crevices is found the Deep Feminine entwined with Souls that seek Rebirth. There, where dim moonlight shines, the treasure of the million-year-old crone lies, and is accessible to those who seek it. All of this Persephone's bequeathed to the feminine.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, Norman O., LIFE AGAINST DEATH: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING OF HISTORY (New York: Vintage Books; 1959).

Carlson, Kathie. LIFE'S DAUGHTER/DEATH'S BRIDE (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1997).

Cervantes, Miquel, ADVENTURES OF DON QUIXOTE (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1999).

Covington, Coline and Barbara Wharton, SABINA SPIELREIN: FORGOTTEN PIONEER OF PSYCHOANALYSIS (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2003).

Evens-Wentz, W. Y., THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE DEAD (London: Oxford Un. Press, 1960).

Downing, Christine (ed.), THE LONG JOURNEY HOME: RE-VISIONING THE MYTH OF DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE FOR OUR TIME (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1994).

Fromm, Erich, ANATOMY OF HUMAN DESTRUCTIVENESS (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).

Frazer, James, THE GOLDEN BOUGH: A STUDY IN MAGIC AND RELIGION (New York: Macmillan Co.; 1951).

Graves, Robert, GREEK MYTHS (London: Penguin Books, 1957).

Gray, J. Glenn, THE WARRIORS: REFLECTION OF MEN IN BATTLE (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

Hedges, Chris, WAR IS A FORCE THAT GIVES US MEANING (New York: Anchor Books, 2003).

James, William, THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE (New York: Mentor Books, 1958).

Johnson, Robert, SHE: UNDERSTANDING FEMININE PSYCHOLOGY (New York: Harper, 1989).

Jung, Carl, "The Psychological Aspects of the Kore," in Carl Jung and Carl Kerenyi, ESSAYS ON A SCIENCE OF MYTHOLOGY (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969).

Jung, Carl, ON THE NATURE OF THE PSYCHE (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

Kaufmann, Walter, THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE (New York: Viking Press; 1954).

Kerenyi, Carl, *ELEUSIS: ARCHETYPAL IMAGE OF MOTHER AND DAUGHTER* (New York: Beacon Press, 1967).

Kerenyi, Carl, "Kore," in C. Jung and C. Kerenyi *ESSAYS ON A SCIENCE OF MYTHOLOGY* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969),

La Barre, William, *THE HUMAN ANIMAL* (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1954).

Lopez-Reyes, Ramon, *POWER AND IMMORTALITY* (New York: Exposition Press, 1971).

Neumann, Erich, *THE GREAT MOTHER* (Princeton, NJ: Pantheon Books; 1955).

Montagu, A, *IMMORTALITY* (New York: Grove Press, 1955).

Neumann, Erich, *AMOR AND PSYCHE: THE PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEMININE* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971).

Raines, Theron, *RISING TO THE LIGHT: A PORTRAIT OF BRUNO BETTLEHEIM* (New York: Knopf, 2002).

Rank, Otto, *BEYOND PSYCHOLOGY* (New York: Dover, 1958).

Sjoo, Monica and Barbara Mor, *THE GREAT COSMIC MOTHER: REDISCOVERING THE RELIGION OF THE EARTH* (New York: Harpers, 1987).

Stein, Charles. *PERSEPHONE UNVEILED* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2006).

Suter, Ann. "The Origins of Persephone," in *QUEEN OF THE SACRED WAY*; ed. Melitta Benu (Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2012).

Utke, Kathryn Farrell. The author greatly appreciates the numerous insights gain in personal conversation with Ms. Farrell Ute, mystic, that went into writing this chapter.

Warner, Samuel, *THE URGE TO MASS DESTRUCTION* (New York: Grune&Stratton, 1957).

Yalom, Irvin. *STARING AT THE SUN: OVERCOMING THE TERROR OF DEATH*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009).