

## DISCOVERING THE MYTH OF THE FEMALE DIVINE: REDEEMING THE SHADOW OF THE VIRGIN MARY AND RETHINKING HER INSTINCTS

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### Abstract

In this article, I speak of the importance of the symbol of Mary (the Virgin Mary), in particular – of the importance of locating and validating the Shadow of Mary and the instinctual side of Mary. For that purpose, I engage with the ideas of the Jungian authors Marie-Louise von Franz and Clarissa Pinkola Estés. I offer an interpretation of the Lithuanian fairy tale “Agnieškėlė” to show an example of the Shadow of Mary. The main aspect of my article is that I speak of the Virgin Mary in non-Christian terms as of the sovereign female divine who can be the source of the divine power and strength. KEY WORDS: Mary, female divine, the shadow, archetype, Jung, Wild Woman, instinct.

### Anotacija

Straipsnyje kalbama apie Švč. Mergelės Marijos simbolio reikšmę, būtinybę lokalizuoti ir įsisąmoninti jos šešėlinę pusę bei instinktus. Remiamasi jungiškiosios pakraipos autorių Marie-Louise von Franz ir Clarissa Pinkola Estés idėjomis. Švč. Mergelės Marijos šešėliui iliustruoti siūloma lietuvių liaudies pasakos „Agnieškėlė“ interpretacija. Pagrindinis straipsnio aspektas – apie Švč. Mergelę Mariją kalbama nekrikščioniškais terminais, atskleidžiant ją kaip savarankišką moterišką dievybę, kuri yra dieviškosios galios šaltinis.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Marija, moteriškoji dievybė, šešėlis, archetipas, Jungas, laukinė moteris, instinktas.

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### Introduction

The Virgin Mary is a figure who is not recognised as divine in Christianity. In the official dogmas, she has no power to make divine decisions, such as to create the world, give, save or redeem lives. These divine abilities have been reserved exceptionally for God the Father. In the Catholic dogma, the Virgin Mary, or simply Mary, is only a human container, a womb, to bear the Son of God. Through that, she takes her share in the redemption of humanity, and this earns her respect and adoration. However, since Mary is not considered to be a divine personality, “women have no metaphysical representant in the Christian God-image”, according to Marie Louise von Franz, the author in Carl Gustav Jung’s analytical psychology (Von Franz, 1993, p. 1). Von Franz further argues that,

Protestantism must accept the blame of being a pure men’s religion. Catholicism has at least the Virgin Mary as an archetypal representant of femininity, but this feminine archetypal image is incomplete because it encompasses only the sublime

and light aspects of the divine feminine principle and therefore does not express the whole feminine principle (Von Franz, 1993, p. 1).

Why is it important to have the female representation in the God-image? According to the second wave feminists, the current Western culture, to which most European, North American, Australian and other economically developed countries belong, is based on a strict patriarchal hierarchy and control mechanism which looks as follows:

God the Father → Jesus → man → woman (and where applicable, other “non-full-beings such as people of colour) → children → animals → nature (Spretnak, 1982, p. xiv).

Despite the fact that many people have departed from religion, the image of God is still extremely influential, mainly subconsciously, for the formation of the whole societal structure. The image of God embodies the best, the highest, the richest possibilities of what a human is or can be. Subconsciously, each person still needs a reflection of herself/himself in the image of God. However, in the patriarchal culture, women do not have that possibility to have the divine reflection in their sex.

For this, and for many other reasons, which I cannot discuss in detail in the narrow frame of this article, my work is focused on working with the images of the female divine, and in particular, with the image of the Virgin Mary. My choice to focus on the figure of Mary is based on that in the subconscious of those born into the Catholic culture, she is the female God. I find the proof of that in the way she is worshipped and in the folk-mythology. Her worship is reflected in the cult of the miraculous images, especially the Black Madonna ones, in the Marian shrine pilgrimage tradition, in the legends of Mary and in fairy tales about Mary. I call all these cultural religious expressions the myth of the non-Christian Mary. This myth consists of the images of Mary far removed from the Christian dogma. In these non-dogmatic narratives and traditions, Mary becomes the female divinity, with her own myth. Mary's non-Christian mythology shows that the divinity of Mary, although it has been repressed out of our collective consciousness into the subconscious cultural contents (fairy tales, folk-stories), continues to manifest.

What has been repressed from consciousness, is called the Shadow, by Jung. Von Franz claims that the character of the Black Woman in some fairy tales represents the Shadow side of the Virgin Mary, the repressed aspect of the mainstream Christian image of the Virgin Mary. My aim is to suggest ways of finding and incorporating the repressed side (the unconscious presentations) of the Virgin Mary back into a coherent and conscious myth and image of the female divine. With

the incorporated Shadow side, the Virgin Mary becomes a non-Christian figure, her myth outgrows the Christian dogma. To show how the contents of a fairy tale can make the image and the myth of Mary non-Christian, I give in this article an interpretation of a fairy tale.

Further in the article, I contemplate the relatedness between Mary (with the incorporated Shadow side) and the Wild Woman, who is the numinous and instinctual female divine phenomenon described by the Jungian author Clarissa Pinkola Estés. The analysis is aimed at enhancing the imagination about the female divine, and the human soul in general. It seems that the soul (the psyche) and the divine live in the same place in a person. Making the divine alive in oneself is one of the most important psychological gestures helping women to form their identity and to reconnect with their instinctual knowledge, confidence, courage and creativity.

Naomi R. Goldenberg, an author of the second wave feminism whose work informed those interested in the thoughts of Jung and in the feminist critique of religion, wrote in her book “The end of God”,

...a profound alienation of women from religious systems (...) is always centrally marked by an experience of iconographic impoverishment – a lack of meaningful religious symbols (Goldenberg, 1982, p. ix).

Thirty years on, this insight echoes in many women with the same strength of actuality and urgency. As Christianity with its male God, its images and legends comes to an end for many women because they cannot express their experience or find religious identity within it, new generations of women try to explain to themselves what it is they miss and long for on the spiritual level, what is no longer alive for them or fundamentally missing in the myth of Christianity and why it does not speak to them. Many authors in feminist religious philosophy have realised that Christianity is missing a myth of the female divine. “The function of religion”, Jung believed, “is to provide people with myths to live by” (Goldenberg, 1979, p. 48). In a way, a myth and an image are the same:

...The most important feature of any religion is its myth. By myth, Jung meant much more than story or illusion. When Jung used the word myth he referred to the deepest sort of experience in human life. Mythic images are indeed pictures. However, they are pictures that involve us both physiologically in our bodily reactions to them and spiritually in our higher thoughts about them.

When a person is aware of living mythically, she or he is experiencing life intensely and reflectively. Such people experience life as meaningful (Goldenberg, 1979, p. 48)

With this in mind, I begin to search for the non-Christian myth of Mary in the fairy tales which portray her Shadow.

## **1. The relation between the Jungian Shadow, the Black Woman, and the Virgin Mary**

There are many variations of the tales about the Black Woman across Europe's folk heritage. Who is the Black Woman? It is a woman who used to be white skinned but was turned black by someone's curse. Some fairy tales start with the story that explains how she became cursed, for example, her parents curse her for not wanting to marry a certain man that they chose for her. However, most often fairy tales offer no explanation of a curse and subsequently, of the woman's blackness. Arguably, the blackness points to the fact that women have some blackness in themselves just because they were born in the female sex. It is a curse to be born a woman, and therefore, each woman starts her life with this incredible sin – being of the female sex.

The heroine in the fairy tale not only is/turns black, she is also estranged from society – she lives an isolated life somewhere in a forest, in a remote castle. The main plot of such fairy tales is the Black Woman's search for the possibility to be redeemed, to be brought back to her white skin, in other words – to be accepted by society. Although these folk-tales are hundreds of years old, they are extremely relevant to the women of the current society – each of us must find a way of being a woman in the society, family, herself.

The Black Women of the fairy tale can be redeemed by the help of a heroine or a hero. In some versions, all her land, servants and the castle are also enchanted along with her. Sometimes, she is not a black woman but a black cat, or a black crow and needs to be restored to her human shape. The Black Woman arranges her rescuers actively or passively. She is active when a girl heroine is involved – the Black Woman usually goes out of her castle into a village to search for a girl that would redeem her. She usually makes a deal with the parents before the birth of their daughter, to come to serve her in the enchanted castle.

In one of the Lithuanian versions, a character closely related to the Black Woman is directly called Holy Mary. Although she is not black in this particular fairy tale, she behaves in a dark Shadowy way completely inappropriate to the Christian image of the Virgin Mary – she is cruel, egoistic, threatening. The plot of this fairy tale follows the traditional plot of the fairy tales about the Black Woman.

As I have mentioned earlier, von Franz suggests that the Black Woman in these fairy tales represents the collective Shadow archetype of the Virgin Mary. According to Jungians, the Shadow can be collective and personal. The Shadow of a person consists of the aspects of oneself one is not or does not want to be conscious about – it is one's unconscious. The Shadow is at the same time one's helplessness

and ruthlessness. One represses into the Shadow those parts of oneself which one consciously considers to be inferior, shameful, or evil. Jung called the Shadow of a person the “original sin” (Jung, 1912, 1972, p. 35), indicating that each human being inherits the Shadow aspects as part of being an instinctual, or natural, being, most likely referring to the fact that nature is both benevolent and cruel. However, the Shadow is not only about the evilness in each of us. Some perfectly acceptable human emotions and sensations such as anger or sexual feelings, as well as some character traits, talents, abilities that have been learnt in the course of life also become repressed if they are not accepted by the dominant culture’s ethical beliefs. For example, women are not culturally allowed to be cruel, angry, unpleasant, impatient, clever. In patriarchal cultures, all women have some vital aspects of themselves repressed into the Shadow of their psyches because the dominant patriarchal conscious attitudes would not accept them as valuable. In that way, the personal Shadow becomes a container not only for a personal evil but also for some of the best qualities and powers of oneself waiting for redemption and conscious recognition – the Shadow, as any archetype, is viewed as both positive and negative at the same time.

The collective Shadow, or the collective unconscious, usually strives to compensate for collective conscious attitudes which are too rigid, or for something that is missing in them. Because it is a compensation for something that is a dominant thought, the Shadow usually manifests outside the official dogmas – in fairy tales, legends, fiction literature and non-mainstream visual art, constituting the sacred stratum of the collective Shadow. In addition, the fairy tales, as well as dreams, not only compensate but also show the way to survival.

The work of many generations of Jungians is founded on understanding that many neuroses of women *and* men are caused by the long-term depreciation of the female values in the patriarchal world. The emergence of fairy tales which speak about the need to redeem the Black Women signal that a compensation is needed to the dominant collective conscious attitudes on women.

## **2. The fairy tale as part of the myth of the non-Christian Mary**

For the amplification of the non-Christian myth of Mary, I provide the full version of the Lithuanian fairy tale that has the plot typical to the fairy tales about the Black Woman. Variations of such fairy tales are widespread in many European countries. The Lithuanian version is unique in that the role of the Black Woman is played by the Virgin Mary. It goes as follows:

Agnieškelė

There lived a man and a woman. Well, and they did not have children. After some time a daughter was born to them but they were so poor they could not bring her up. The woman then put the girl into her apron and said:

– I will throw her into a river, we cannot afford to keep her.

And she set off. But on her way, she met Holy Mary.

– Where are you going? – asked Holy Mary.

– I am going to throw this girl into the river Ašmena.

Holy Mary then said:

– Leave the girl with me. I will give you some wood for your stove and you can carry it instead of the girl in your apron.

The woman agreed and took the wood. When she came back home and emptied her apron at the stove, the money fell out instead of the wood. Now the woman and the man were full of pity that they gave their daughter away because now they had the money to bring her up. But it was too late, and they did not know where their girl was.

Holy Mary was bringing the girl up. She gave her good clothes and all that was needed. Holy Mary would go away from time to time. One day she said to the girl:

– Agnieškelė – this was the name that Holy Mary gave to the girl – I am going away again. You look after the house but don't go into my room, don't sit in my chair, don't read my book, don't look into my mirror, and don't wash yourself with my soap.

– I won't, – said Agnieškelė.

As soon as Holy Mary left, Agnieškelė ran into the Holy Mary's room, washed herself with her soap, looked into her mirror and combed her hair with Holy Mary's comb. Then Agnieškelė sat in Holy Mary's chair and read her book. After some time, she heard Holy Mary coming back and left the room quickly.

Holy Mary came and asked:

– Agnieškelė, did you go into my room?

– I didn't.

– Did you wash yourself with my soap?

– I didn't.

– Did you look into my mirror?

– I didn't.

– Did you sit in my chair?

– I didn't.

– Did you read my book?

– I didn't.

Well, Holy Mary said nothing. The next day, she went out again, and as soon as she left, Agnieškelė hurried into Holy Mary's room. There she washed herself

with Holy Mary's soap, dried herself with Holy Mary's towel, looked into her mirror, sat in her chair and read Holy Mary's books until the evening came.

When Holy Mary returned, she asked the same questions as last time, but Agnieškelė didn't admit being in her room. But Holy Mary knew Agnieškelė was not telling the truth. So she gave Agnieškelė a lovely white dress, then took her out, and left her sitting on a tall fir tree by a road. Agnieškelė was grown now, and in the white dress she looked very beautiful.

It happened that a king was passing by the fir tree, and he saw the beautiful girl. He ordered his servants to take the girl down. The king took the girl home and they married. After a year, she gave birth to a son. As soon as Agnieškelė fell asleep at night, Holy Mary came just before the dawn and took Agnieškelė's child away, and nobody saw her although the day was already breaking. In the morning the king saw that the child was gone. They looked everywhere, lamented and cried, but all in vain – the child was nowhere to be found. After another year, God blessed them with another son, and the king arranged many servants to guard the child to watch his wife – maybe she kills her own children, or hides somewhere. But when the night came, all servants fell fast asleep as if on God's order, and Holy Mary snatched the second child away noticed by no one. The king looked in the morning – another child gone. He then thought Agnieškelė was a witch who ate her children. She wept and said this was not true, she fell asleep and didn't know where the children disappeared.

After a year or two, Agnieškelė gave birth to the third son. The king said:

– I will guard myself this time.

But just before the morning, Holy Mary came, and everyone was so fast asleep that they had fallen out of their chairs. This time, she spread Agnieškelė with some blood before taking her child away. The king woke up and saw blood on his wife, and this time he truly believed that she was a witch who ate her children. He ordered his servants to build an iron stove and heat it up. When it was ready, he then ordered his servants to throw Agnieškelė into the stove and burn. She wept and begged to take pity on her because she knew she has done nothing. But the king was unappeasable.

But God sent such a storm and rain – because she was innocent – that the stove went cool, and when the servants brought her and threw her in, it was so cold she didn't burn!

In the evening, Holy Mary came to the stove and asked:

– So, Agnieškelė, did you go into my room?

Agnieškelė replied:

– I did.

– Did you wash yourself with my soap?

– I did.

– Did you look at my mirror?

– I did.

- Did you sit in my chair?
- I did.
- Did you read my book?
- I did.

Then Holy Mary gave her one child back. The next day Holy Mary came again and asked the same questions, and Agnieškelė again admitted all her wrongdoings in the Holy Mary's room. Holy Mary gave back her second child. In the evening of the third day, Holy Mary came and asked the same questions, and Agnieškelė admitted everything once more. Holy Mary gave her back the third child. The children were all grown a little and had the silver apples for toys.

After three days passed, the king thought to check if his wife's bones need more fire, and he sent his servants to the stove. The servants arrived, opened the stove, and saw Agnieškelė sitting there, and her three children playing next to her. They went to the king and told him what they saw. The king felt happy but he still could not believe this was true, and sent yet another, even more loyal servant to check. But this servant told the same. Then the king arrived himself in a carriage pulled by the horses, and met his wife and the children. They all rejoiced, kissed, returned home, and live together to this day (Gervėčių pasakos, 1997, p. 164).

Von Franz makes the observation that in such fairy tales, “The fairy-tale figure (...) is in fact an archetypal figure that could be characterised as the Shadow of the Virgin Mary, analogous to Satan as the Shadow of Yahweh” (Von Franz, 1999, p. 203). By this, von Franz suggests that the Virgin Mary carries the divine dimension that is denied to her in the mainstream religion but in a negative way – the Black Woman is Satan's equivalent. Von Franz refers to the repressed layers of the polarised Christian mythology (polarisation – God is good, Satan is bad; Mary is good, Eve and all women are evil). Despite the fact that both good and bad exist in one person, earthly or divine, Christianity recognises only the good side of God, and no female representation in the God-image. Women are equated with evil and, therefore, their values are repressed in to the Shadow. One of the main purposes of the fairy tales about the Black Woman, and of this particular fairy tale Agnieškėlė, is to compensate the conscious collective attitudes towards the Christian stereotype of the Virgin Mary, and generally towards women. It usually involves the main heroine or the main hero of the fairy tale negotiating and discovering a healthy attitude towards the subject of femininity, balancing between their conscious and unconscious attitudes. Their task involves seeing the polarity between the all-positive stereotype of Mary of the Christian church created by the priests who have been in detachment from a healthy partnership with women for thousands of years, and the real women. Von Franz emphasises the split between the conscious and unconscious attitudes towards the female by quoting a chilling



insight of Jung: “The consequence of increasing Mariolatry was the witch hunt...” (Von Franz, 1999, p. 203). This corresponds to Jung’s words on the Shadow: “Good does not become better by being exaggerated, but worse, and a small evil becomes a big one through being disregarded and repressed. The Shadow is very much a part of human nature, and it is only at night that no Shadows exist” (Jung, 1942, 1975, p. 286). Which means, the more consciousness – light – we shed on the Shadow the clearer we can see it.

Enlightening and incorporating the Shadow side of the Virgin Mary into a cohesive myth (which I call the non-Christian myth of Mary) that embraces bright and dark traits of Mary is a vital exercise in re-imagining the female divine. Holy Mary in the fairy tale compliments the image of the absolutely blameless figure of the Virgin Mary of the Catholic dogmas and redeems the power of the female divine. One of the most profound insights of Jung was his recognition that many neuroses are caused by the repression of the values linked to the female in the patriarchal Christian cultures. Consequently, only by attending to the female and the female divine in the first place, can many women be healed and empowered. By giving more power to the witch figure Holy Mary, the fairy tale “Agnieškèlè” calls for more attention to the difficulties of motherhood and womanhood in the patriarchal society – each woman in patriarchy can be accused of being a bad mother and an evil woman who is worthy of being punished, burnt, killed. This is a way of taming women, keeping them in fear, subordinated. The fairy tale shows that only by recognising her inner power (Agnieškèlè admits that she behaved *like* the Goddess, *like* Holy Mary – sat in her chair, read her book, etc.) can she save her life, re-establish her status in the family and society (the king accepts her back). So, following the fairy tale, to live their lives more fully, women must realise that they are strong and can behave as if they were the goddesses, the creators, of their own life. If they do not feel it, it means that they have to look for their repressed strength in the Shadow side of themselves.

The more non-dogmatic characteristics, images and stories we can find about Mary, the better Mary can represent the Woman’s archetype. With the Shadow side included, Mary becomes so whole and powerful that she can hold women “in her danger” – a concept used by the Jungian author Clarissa Pinkola Estés when she spoke about the archetype of the Dangerous Old Woman, the Crone (Estés, 2011). One of the meanings of “standing in the danger of the Crone” that could be applied in the interpretation of the Agnieškèlè fairy tale, is seeing and experiencing the frightening power of the divine force but at the same time feeling that there is no safer place than to be in this danger, because this force is also a fierce, benevolent and passionate protector and carer. This understanding makes the female divine Self-sustainable in all aspects: the male God is not needed to validate her actions.

By regaining her power from her Shadow side and becoming both positive and negative at the same time, Mary is no longer divided; the two parts of the same archetype have reunited, and Mary can now represent the whole archetype of the Woman.

Looking at the Shadow of Mary requires looking at our own individual Shadow. Only then can an individual connection to the divine happen when one engages in the process of seeing the Shadow of both one's own and that of the female divine, and the ways they are related. In the analysis of the Black Woman, it is most important to raise awareness of the repression of numerous aspects of the woman's soul. Whatever a woman has represented (often by the projection of patriarchal negative attitudes) during the long ages of Christianity, she was extremely restricted, divided and overall devalued. Each heroine of the fairy tale equally as each woman has to find her own individual path of squeezing through the very narrow passage between the good Mary and the bad Holy Mary-Witch, without identifying with either. It comes as no surprise to observe the movements of witches in America and more recently in Europe – it is a natural and healthy compensation to the Christian values. But one has to be careful not to stay trapped in the Shadow side, not to declare the Shadow (the Witch) as the only female divine. Equally, the blameless Virgin Mary cannot stand for the female divine on her own. In the middle, in the dawn, where the darkness and the light meet, there we can find the divine Self, or in other words – the real female divine, the Goddess.

### **3. Mary and the instincts**

The image and myth of Mary, representing both 'good' and 'bad' arguably suggest that Mary can now be perceived as the instinctual basement, as the source of healthy instincts for women. As was mentioned earlier, Mary can be said to represent the Woman's archetype. But what is the archetype? Jung says that the archetypes are "instinctual forms of mental functioning" adding that "they are not inherited ideas, but mentally expressed instincts, forms and not contents" and that "our instincts (i.e. archetypes) are biological facts" (Walker, 2002, p. 5–6). Jung finally explains that,

What we properly call instincts are physiological urges, and are perceived by senses. But at the same time they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call archetypes (Walker, 2002, p. 5–6).

The idea that the figure and myth of Mary are representative of the collection of instincts that fit under the archetype of the Woman opens a whole new sphere of associations that further enables us to enrich the myth of Mary. Mary as the

instinctual basis of women's behaviour in terms of generally human, specifically naturally female as well as socially conditioned woman's instincts seems to closely correspond to the figure of the Wild Woman. The Wild Woman is a term for the numinous instinctual foundation in the female, in a woman. The phenomenon of the Wild Woman was described by Clarissa Pinkola Estés in her book "Women who Run With The Wolves".

I am aware that an interpretation in which I engage in the following paragraphs may be far removed from Estés understanding. However, I hope that my interpretation is useful in that it addresses, to my mind, an interesting question of how the Wild Woman and the only living female divine archetype in Christian cultures – the Virgin Mary – are related. If they both represent the female god, what different aspects do each of them bring to our understanding of what the female god is or could be? In this article, I also ask the following questions: does Mary with the integrated Shadow side become a figure similar in her essence to the Wild Woman? Can Mary be as instinctual as the Wild Woman?

In an interview to a journal, Estés was asked: "What is the Wild Woman?" Estés answered: "She is...God". She was further asked if she is talking about finding a god within, to which Estés replied,

I would say it in a little different way. I would say that if you look in a woman's face, the god shows her face. You see this furred creatura right behind her visage, right behind her eyes (...) (M.E.N. magazine, 1992, November issue).

For Estés, god is a furred creatura, who not only lives in a woman as an inner feeling but is seen at the back of her eyes. The eyes symbolise the expression of the soul, the embodiment of the soul in the matter. If we accept this interpretation, it means that the creatura mentioned by Estés is the foundation, the "back-ground" of each woman's soul. This suggests that in each woman there is an instinctual basis which is perceived as divine. According to Estés, the Wild Woman is the source of many instincts within a woman.

Estés assigns the responsibility for the abuse of natural resources as well as of women to patriarchy. Therefore, in my interpretation, Estés' Wild Woman is alert of the patriarchy's influence on her, and it is from this political and feminist standpoint that she guides women in their struggle to survive, adapt and thrive in patriarchy. This suggests that the Wild Woman is not only natural instincts but also social ones. Estés says that the Wild Woman is the archetype of the whole, unhurt, healthy natural instincts of women, she is the one whom women consult in themselves to heal their injured instincts.

However, how can the Wild Woman, this pristine creatura be uninjured if she teaches women to heal their patriarchal hurts? How is the uninjured creatura able to help the women by her instinctual advice? Because surely, the feminist political

standpoint and social instincts arise from being hurt and from wanting to heal the hurt and restore justice. How can the Wild Woman have an instinct to warn women of the social traps if she has never happened to be caught in them?

To answer this, let us imagine, that a woman's soul has many layers which are related to different human experiences/development periods. Some of a woman's soul/psyche layers formed in pre-patriarchy, other ones – in patriarchy. Knowing that women in patriarchy have been devalued, the soul layers that have been affected by patriarchy signify the injured layers of the soul in women. However, Estés believes that at the very bottom of women's souls, beneath the injured instincts, there is this archetypal instinct to heal the other, injured, instincts, an inclination to compensate and outweigh what was hurt. It is a flow of energy that runs towards the place in the soul-psyche where the energy is short. This source of the energy, this healthy instinct, for Estés, is the Wild Woman. The Wild Woman can be fierce in her fight for the parts that belong to her and that are precious to her because she is the unfailing feeling of justice and balance. She has the features which Jung assigned to the unconscious:

If it were permitted to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and, from having at his command a human of one or two million years, almost immortal. If such a being existed, he would be exalted above all temporal change. The present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one hundredth century before Christ, he would be a dreamer of old-age dreams and, owing to his immeasurable experience, he would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of the individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering and decay. (...) The collective unconscious (...) seems not to be a person, but something like an unceasing stream or perhaps an ocean of images and figures which drift into unconscious in our dreams or in abnormal states of mind (Jung, 1933, 2001; chapter IX).

So, if the Wild Woman is the collective unconscious of women, who represents the consciousness of women? And if the Wild Woman does *not* represent the injured instincts, who, if at all, represents *the injured* instincts in a woman? My suggestion is that in Christian, and in particular, Catholic cultures, the collective consciousness and the hurt of women is represented by the figure of Mary.

A particularly powerful image of such an injured Mary is the image of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa in Poland where Mary has two deep bloody cuts on her cheek and a painful, if determined, expression on her face. Such a hurt Mary is a representative of a woman who suffers. Mary initiates a woman into the patriarchy, she suffers, together with the women, from the same wounds inflicted by the

sacrifices she and women had to make by the request of the patriarchy. Therefore Mary is that part in us which must undergo trials, to be redeemed from the curse and blackness.

To summarise the relation between Mary and the Wild Woman – it seems that the Wild Woman is the deepest layer of each woman's and of Mary's souls, the healthy instincts, the truly ideal state with all psychic contents in balance. In her own turn, Mary can truly stand for the Wild Woman's consciousness in the patriarchal Christian age. Mary is that part of the Wild Woman that has a political and feminist standpoint, she is aware of all the patriarchal wrongdoings done to her. Mary expresses her rage and her power (of which she was robbed in Christianity) in legends, fairy tales and other stories. In these Shadow stories she proclaims her authority, gives orders, punishes people by death for insulting her, miraculously heals the sick, grants a second chance of life, bestows freedom to those captured, makes the Sun dance – all of this showing her God-like powers.

It would perhaps be useful to imagine that the Wild Woman without Mary is God without the location in space, in time, in context – like a woman with all the instincts but without a name, nationality, or date of birth. Mary is the source and the representative of women's instinctual energies and patterns of behaviour equally as the Wild Woman. By having a visual appearance in images, icons and statues she offers women a tangible space for an individual connection to the divine self. The individual connection to the divine in oneself develops when one creates her/his personal myth and the image of Mary. Such an individualised but still archetypal Mary is able to validate all that a woman is, thinks and feels. Such a Mary is no longer the Christian Mary – the contents of the archetype become changed through the individual connection to Mary. This individual connection allows to break the stiffness of Mary's Christian stereotype. When a woman overcomes the stiffness of the image and myth of the divine female in herself, a further personal development becomes possible. According to Jungian thought, to supply a person with a space for the individual development is the foremost purpose of religion. In our age, when the stiffened attitudes of Christianity often no longer fulfil this purpose, the individualised and the non-Christian myth of Mary comes to the rescue.

## Conclusions

1. The patriarchal society is sustained by the male God images.
2. To disrupt the patriarchal structure of society, an image of the female divine is needed.

3. In the so called “Catholic” countries, the figure of the Virgin Mary can stand for the powerful female divine. However, this happens only if her shadow side and her instincts are incorporated into her myth.
4. The shadow of Mary can be found in various folk mythology, for example, in legends and fairy tales. In these narratives, Mary behaves in a way which is entirely non-Christian. Therefore, with the incorporated shadow side, Mary becomes a non-Christian deity with a non-Christian myth.
5. Such a non-Christian Mary stands for the consciousness of women who want to survive and thrive in patriarchy. Such Mary can help women to realise their own shadow, their hurts, and recover instincts.

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