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Drawn by the Feminine Divine

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ABSTRACT

Jacob and Esau: On the Collective Symbolism of the Brother Motif is a creative and highly psychological interpretation and extrapolation from the biblical story. The review locates the development of this essay within the relationship between Jung and Neumann, as well as Neumann’s own development as a German Jew and analytical psychologist. It shows the origins, within his amplifications of the Jacob and Esau story, of many seminal concepts in Neumann’s thinking that became his legacy within Jungian theory, including the ego-self axis and the work on integration of the shadow that was to become *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*.

KEY WORDS

analytical psychology and Judaism, archetypes, brothers, collective unconscious, ego-self axis, Jacob and Esau, Jung, Erich Neumann, shadow

Drawn by the Feminine Divine

WILLOW YOUNG

Review of: Joseph Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*, Ed. Safron Rossi, Novato, CA: New World Library, 2013.

From the Paleolithic era, going back thirty thousand years or more, we already find evidence of the woman viewed mythologically both as the guardian of the hearth and as the mother of the individual’s maturity, the individual’s spiritual life.

Joseph Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine* (2014, 5)

Viewed mythologically, in the Paleolithic era, it is woman as Goddess who serves as the initiatrix of men and women in their relationship with the energies of the earth and universe. Her story, originally overshadowed by Campbell’s monomythic approach to the hero, which presupposes a male subject, is, at last, told in *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*. Editor Safron Rossi has recovered for the twenty-first century Joseph Campbell as a deep explorer of the feminine divine, and reveals the story to us in this elegantly edited collection of Campbell’s late lectures. His sensitivity to the place of the feminine in mythology and his natural reception of her story is itself an example of his unique capacity to value and receive the feminine as he explores her rich simultaneous tradition in world cultures.

Dr. Rossi’s radical insistence on the value of the feminine divine provides an insightful structure within which Campbell’s lectures are arranged to illustrate an historical timeline, the

beginning of which is supported by the rich and well-documented evidence provided by archaeologist Marija Gimbutas. In the early 1970s, a revolution was brewing in the mind of this brilliant explorer who would change the field's understanding of human cultural evolution as she pieced together linguistic, folkloric, and archaeological knowledge to explain the origins and migration into Europe and the Near East of Proto-Indo-European-speaking peoples, whom Gimbutas named *Kurgans*. With her research she rewrote human cultural history and profoundly impacted interdisciplinary research. Comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell stated he would have revised everything had her work been available while writing his book *The Masks of God* (1959). Campbell compared the importance of Gimbutas's work to Champollion's deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphics in his introduction to her last book *The Language of the Goddess* (1989), and he relied on Gimbutas's research for his lectures and writings of the late 1970s until his death in 1987. These writings on the feminine divine, collected in *Goddesses*, begin with examples of the Paleolithic figurines Gimbutas found and identified, along with a quote from her, which lays the conceptual foundation for subsequent chapters:

Although a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the "Earth Mother" of prehistoric religion, she is but one—of the aspects of this early Divine Feminine principle. One reason for this emphasis may be that, in the agricultural communities throughout Europe, she survives to the present day. Another is the fact, long accepted by ethnologists, that pre-industrial agricultural rites show a definite mystical connection between the fertility of the soil and the creative force of woman. In all European languages, the Earth is feminine. The Old European Pregnant Goddess is the likely

prototype of the Grain Goddess, young and old such as Demeter, and of the Earth Mother of all European folklore. As an Earth Mother she is also the Mother of the Dead. How old is she, this symbol of the nutrient earth, fullness, and the cornucopia of the fruitful womb?" (Gimbutas 1989; quoted in Campbell 2013, 8)

This and other relevant questions are addressed by editor and scholar Safron Rossi, who has selectively and brilliantly assembled the book. In this finely honed collection, we see the arc and depth of Campbell's appreciation for the reality and gravitas of the Goddess as she is imaged and storied in culture across time.

Rossi's historically oriented arrangement of the chapters provides insight into the telling of world [his]story, or, in this case [her]story, supported by anthropology, art history, archaeology, biology, physiology, psychology, and extensive travel research, emerging as distinct sciences and practices in the mid to late 1800s. C. G. Jung's 1900–1906 psychological researches into the nature of unconscious complexes and associations encouraged the exploration and application of world religion, mythology, and cultural history to individual psychology.¹ Campbell's childhood passion for studying American Indians and the myths amplified in Native American art reveals the golden thread of his deep research and the culturally specific motifs present across cultures, space, and time. In Jung's and Campbell's distinctly valuable research, we see a natural sympathetic resonance as Campbell picks up Jung's interest in the archetypal patterns evident in world cultures, providing a refined education to a world-wide public.²

A Campbell article published in *Parabola* (November, 1980) serves as the introduction to *Goddesses*. It orients us to an arc of human history, beginning with the Paleolithic caves of

southern France and northern Spain (30,000–10,000 BCE), juxtaposed with the planting cultures of Southeast Asia and South America and the concerns of contemporary Western culture. Campbell's characteristic gift is his impeccable ear for the specific, idiosyncratic, and particular descriptions in a storyline. This, integrated with his insight into the underlying mythic theme of a particular motif, enables the reader to experience the integrity of a particular culture and the integrity of psyche or the collective unconscious, for which the myth is endogenous.

Campbell begins the introduction with a review of the contemporary struggles and dilemmas of gender, power, and biology that were characteristic of the conversations and concerns of the contemporary Western woman in the 1980s, for whom, at that time, no known myth seemed to have emerged. And even though, in Campbell's words, we are in the midst of a "free fall into the future . . . the old models are not working; the new have not yet appeared" (2013, xiv), such broad strokes of insight have, in the past, positioned Campbell in the sights of those critical of pop culture. The psychological relevance of Campbell's observations are, however, manifested by his unique scholarship and extensive erudition. Campbell provides both cultural context and hard information about the daily life of Stone Age humans who lived within the collective heartbeat of undifferentiated being; he focuses on the invisible yet palpable power of the female body and the primacy of the feminine through which all life came to be. For the men in this egalitarian system, who enacted qualities of the masculine principle, action and doing were in service of the whole. The whole included the experience of death and life as counterparts in the turning wheel of culture. Campbell writes, ". . . this is the prime

agricultural myth of a body that is a deity's body, so that in eating the plants we're eating God" (2013, 41). This is carried over, as well, to the idea of Jesus's sacrament: "this is my body . . . this is my blood" (Matt. 26:28). Campbell is ever aware of the archetypal motifs present in ancient mythologies, and Rossi expertly includes these primal patterns of psyche.

We are introduced to the planting cultures of Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Near East. Discovered in southern Anatolia, images from the archaeological collections of Marija Gimbutas provide evidence of cultural practices and amplify the mythic role of the feminine during the period spanning 7,000–5,000 BCE. As well, images from India (700 BCE) elucidate the primacy of the feminine in early Indian Upanishadic myths.

To read *Goddesses* is to be educated by Campbell's encyclopedic mind. Rossi's editorial mind is no less insightful and intelligently playful. In the introduction, Rossi includes a provocative question once uttered by Campbell: "And is it likely, do you think, after all her years and millennia of changing forms and conditions, that she is now unable to let her daughters know who they are?" (2013, xxvi).

Campbell begins his focus where the Goddess is primary and pervasively represented. Today the simple and evocative figures are referred to as the "Paleolithic Venuses." The geographic area extends from Eastern Spain through Western and Eastern Europe to Greece and Turkey. The gift of Campbell's research and depth of understanding is his insight into the function and meaning of mythology. For example, of the Neolithic cultures and people, he understands "that the individual is performing an act not out of his own impulse, but in accord with the

order of the universe” (2013, 5). And one might add, in accord with the energy of the universe, the energy of the sun and all it makes possible as well as that of the moon.

In the Paleolithic wall art of North Africa there is a very striking picture of a woman in just exactly that posture with the navel cord coming from her body and connecting to the navel of the warrior or hunter, who has his bow and arrow and is shooting at an ostrich. In other words, it is her power that is supporting him, the power of Mother Nature, along with the power of the solar shaft. (Campbell 2013, 5)

Campbell reads the specific and detailed stories as they are illustrated in cave dwellings, gestural clay figurines, and incised clay tablets. From these details, he identifies symbols and motifs and, as C. G. Jung and later James Hillman exhorted, stays close to the image. This intimacy inhabits Campbell’s language and brings us into a felt relationship with the images, people, and culture. Jung writes, “It would be an unpardonable sin of omission were one to overlook the feeling-value of the archetype” (1981, CW 5, ¶411). Campbell does not overlook the feeling value, integrating as he does the principles of Logos and Eros in his writings. *Goddesses* is an example as he describes the relationship a people and culture have with their mythology and created objects. Of a sculpted jet amulet found in Peterfels, in southwest Germany, from c. 15,000 BCE, he writes the following:

Among the earliest explicit images we have of the Goddess are the so-called Venuses, female figurines from the Magdalenian period at the end of the Stone Age, scattered all the way from the west of France across to lake Baikal on the borders of China. The accent in these figurines is on the procreative mystery of the loins and the mystery of the breasts,

the reproductive and nourishing aspect of the woman. Nature has given to woman this power so she becomes, as it were, a manifestation, the signification of the mystery of nature itself. Woman is then the worshipped being in the human world. (2013, 8)

In Chapter 2, “Goddess-Mother Creator,” Rossi includes three Campbell lectures to reveal the Neolithic and Bronze Age “total goddess,” the whole impactful being who “has associations over the whole field of the culture system” (2013, 22). This undifferentiated inherent power of the Goddess as a transformer, activated as she is and in accord with the biology of the human female, appears in the planting cultures of Southeast Asia, Southeast Europe, the Near East, and Middle America. The figures of the Neolithic period embodied the energy of the female body and that of the feminine principle to make fecund the earth in which they were planted, companionship the seeds with energy, so that seeds would sprout, sink deep their roots, and bring forth bountiful crops with which to feed the surrounding populace. With the harvest comes the death of the plant energy. It recycles and is transformed in seasonal rhythms.

Exemplifying this theme of living on the planet in relation to the universal energies is the site of Anatolian Catal Huyuk in southern Turkey (c. 5800 BCE). The artifacts, walled dwellings, burial caves, and evidence of ritual practices, highlight the transformative power of the archetypal feminine. In particular, a green schist carved stone artifact in the shape of a double axe relates a complex archetypal image and mythological story. The image is that of a female figure as transformer, back to back with herself; on the left she embraces an adult male and on the right she holds a child in her arms. She is the transforming medium that transforms semen into life. She receives the

seed . . . and through the miracle of her body, transmutes it into life (Campbell 2013, 25).



Double Goddess (carved schist, Turkey, 6000–5800 BCE)

(Figure 9, page 24. Used with permission by New World Library).

This image captures the mythological focus and shift from the power of the earth deities to the power of the solar deities. In another such image, the double axe is centrally placed below the sun, moon, and river of life motifs and is surrounded by goddesses honoring and receiving the abundant new vegetative life (Campbell 2013, 49). These important and pivotal shifts in consciousness are symbolized throughout the mythology of the Goddess as she embodies the dualities of feminine/masculine polarities,



Goddess with *labrys*, symmetric double-headed axe, beside the Tree of Life (engraved gold, Minoan, Crete, 1500 BCE)

(Figure 29, page 49. Used with permission by New World Library).

the lifecycles of death and rebirth, and the polarity of chthonic and ouranic practices.

The historical thrust of time moves through Chapter 3, in which Campbell reviews the Indo-European male-oriented warrior cultures as they transformed Old Europe and Northern Asia. Images of the double axe in the presence of the goddess come along with vegetative, serpent, animal, solar, and lunar imagery. Chapters 4 and 5 record the bridge in time from matriarchal mythologies to the patriarchal, with imagery reflecting the northern nomadic Indo-European as well as the invasions and migrations of the southern Semitic nomads. The Goddess, the keeper and tender of the great mysteries of the earth, is herself transmuted as she becomes the initiator of spiritual transformations. The duality of spirit and matter are dynamically articulated in Egyptian and Greek mythology, as differentiated consciousness is waxing.

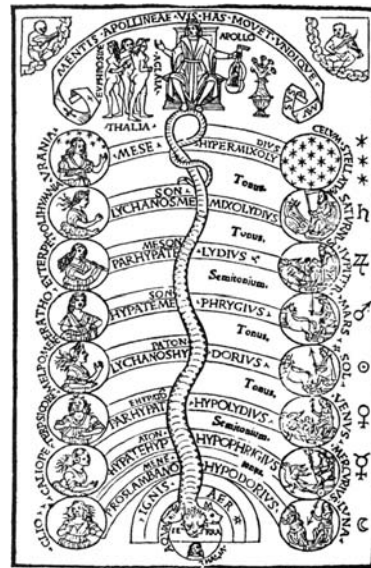
And yet the Goddess continues to be present. With the dynamic presence of her energies, she accompanies, with more differentiated and individualized form, the gods, whether as Isis accompanying Osiris on his journey through the underworld, or as Thetis, overseeing the initiation of Peleus by snake bite. The inherent integrity of the archetypal image from its basic “irrepresentable” energy and form, is intact with Campbell as he explores the Goddess in her multivalent representations and places her within the ongoing storyline of mythology. In Chapter 6, “The Iliad and Odyssey: Return to the Goddess,” Campbell explores the capacity of the Greeks to experience juxtapositions that appear ambiguous and yet are nuanced moves for experiencing and understanding the whole. Campbell enables the reader to make similar conceptual moves, expands our experience of the feminine principle, and, in so doing, enlarges the

masculine as well. Our conceptual and felt experience is refined, made more accessible, and widened. As Campbell writes: “The energies that inform the world may be thought of as one variant of a single energy, or as differentiated entities, pairing this, that, or another aspect of nature with our own lives” (2013, 151).

The Greeks, too, participate in the “mutual manner of experiencing deities” as “inflections of the totality” and exemplify Campbell’s assertion, learned from Jungian psychiatrist Karlfried von Durckheim, “that a deity or a myth is a metaphor transparent to transcendence . . . and can lead you beyond your powers of knowledge” (2013, 152). As Campbell asserts, “that is the point with deities: they are personifications, metaphorical representations of the powers that are operating in our lives right now. There’s a truth in them, it is the truth of our own lives and attitudes” (152).

Campbell describes the energy in the archetypes of the collective unconscious as they infuse our life with images and their fundamental meanings. The meanings may remain unconscious, however: “The archetypal representations (images and Ideas) mediated to us by the unconscious should not be confused with the archetype as such. They are very varied structures which all point back to one essentially ‘irrepresentable’ basic form” (Jung 1981, ¶417). As these dynamic forms consolidate in an image, they carry the invisible force of energy and have the power to frighten and inspire. Jung identified the confrontation with an archetype as that process whereby one consciously assimilates the unconscious energies and images and, in doing so, forges an integration of the personality.

Through the inseparable opposites of death and resurrection, feminine and masculine principles, the chthonic and ouranic, the underworld and heaven world, and the spiral



Practica Musicae (printed book, Renaissance, Italy, 1496)
(Figure 153, page 258. Used with permission by New World Library).

of time characteristic of the Axis Mundi, Campbell reveals the three functions of the feminine divine as giver of life, receiver of life, and the inspiration of spiritual and poetic realization. He writes, “It is we who come from her, go back to her, and rest well in her” (2013 257). And it is we who stand with her, “this afternoon on the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change” (Campbell 1973).³

In the final chapter of *Goddesses*, Campbell illustrates the stages of illumination, of becoming conscious, with a drawing from fifteenth-century Italy, published in a book entitled *Practica Musicae*. The drawing depicts the “process of rendering into the world the radiance of the Apollonian consciousness” through the integrating dynamic of the Graces as they pour their “rhythm into us through the poetry of the Muses” (2013, 262).

The evolution of consciousness studied by Neumann, Jung, Ellenberger, and others, is

beautifully illustrated by Campbell. There are archetypal patterns and mythic themes in the dreams of my patients that are clearly articulated in *Goddesses*, so my copy sits among the reference books in my office, close at hand, in order to share with patients a corresponding image and story as we amplify dream images and kindle the light of consciousness in our work together.

Safron Rossi's deeply meaningful editorial presence brings Campbell's beautiful and evocative languaging of the myths of the goddess and the feminine divine, into superbly realized form in *Goddesses*. Rossi demonstrates in *Goddesses* the process whereby we become conscious of the images as they represent the feminine divine, and its profound eternal impact on the lives of man- and womankind. *Goddesses* is an essential addition to the Campbell opus and legacy.

ENDNOTES

1. Originally published in two parts in the *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen* (Leipzig) III-WV, 1911-12, and then in 1916 as *Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of Libido* (1991), and later in 1924 as *Symbols of Transformation* (Volume 5 of the *Collected Works of C. G. Jung* [1967]), Jung engages in cross-cultural amplification to understand patient dream and fantasy material.
2. *A Hero with a Thousand Faces*, originally published in 1949 and revised in 1968, has sold over one million copies and has been translated into over twenty languages.
3. The paraphrase of Campbell's famous quote "the latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of Beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change" (Campbell 1973).

NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are

published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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ABSTRACT

Viewed mythologically, in the Paleolithic era, it is woman as Goddess who serves as the initiatrix of men and women in their relationship with the energies of the earth and universe. Her story, originally overshadowed by Campbell's monomythic approach to the hero, which presupposes a male subject, is, at last, told in *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*, Editor Safron Rossi has recovered for the twenty-first century Joseph Campbell as a deep explorer of the feminine divine, and reveals the story to us in this elegantly edited

collection of Campbell's late lectures. His sensitivity to the place of the feminine in mythology and his natural reception of her story is itself an example of his unique capacity to value and receive the feminine as he explores her rich simultaneous tradition in world cultures. Campbell relied upon Gimbutas's research and incorporated her findings into his lectures and writings of the late 1970s until his death in 1987. These writings on the feminine divine begin with considerations of the Paleolithic figurines Gimbutas found and identified. The inherent integrity of the archetypal image is illuminated from its basic "irrepresentable" energy and form, to the highly differentiated feminine and masculine counterparts in Hindu and Greek mythology, to the illumination stories in the Biblical tradition. Campbell crudely presents the Goddess in her multivalent representations and places her within the ongoing storyline of mythology, exemplifying the archetypal motifs present in these ancient and contemporary mythologies. Rossi expertly includes these primal patterns of psyche in her scholarly compilation.

KEY WORDS

Joseph Campbell, feminine divine, Marija Gimbutas, Goddess, mythology, Safron Rossi

Embracing Synchronicity

Toward a New Medical Science of Meaningful Coincidence

JONATHAN DAVIDSON

Review of: Bernard Beitman, *Connecting with Coincidence*, Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 2016.

*And as the smart ship grew
In stature, grace and hue,
In shadow, silent distance grew the Iceberg too.*

*Alien they seemed to be:
No mortal eye could see
The intimate wedding of their later history,*

*Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event.*

*Till the Spinner of the Years
Said 'Now!' And each one hears,
And consummation comes, and jars two
hemispheres.*

From "The Convergence of the Twain,"
by Thomas Hardy

The idea of connectedness between humans and their environment through meaningful coincidence may be taken for granted by poets and writers. In lines penned to raise money for the families of those drowned in the *Titanic* disaster, Thomas Hardy eloquently captured the simultaneity of two formative processes—the building of a grand ship and the distant formation of a North Atlantic iceberg (Williams 1960, 87). Seemingly dissociated from one another, they collided in a legendary and catastrophic manner. The poet's job is to put experience or insight into words, not to explain the mechanism of things. In "The Convergence of the Twain," Hardy tips his cap to fate, which he refers to as "the Immanent Will" and the "Spinner of the Years." It is more for scientists to explain how such coincidences come about, yet coincidence is often brushed off as random and meaningless.

With writing that is part poetry and part science, Bernard Beitman's new book, *Connecting with Coincidence*, represents a rare offering from a respected authority within mainstream medicine. Beitman sees himself as "an engineer for Jung's theoretical ideas" (2016, 3), by which he is referring to Jung's notion of synchronicity—the "concurrence between a psychological conflict and a