

I

What's the Matter with Mother?

If there is any concept that we in psychology have overused, it is that of the Mother. And we have blamed her extensively. At one time or another, in one way or another, we have used her to explain each of our pathological syndromes: our schizophrenia as a double-binding by her; paranoia, an inability to trust because of her (a need to tie our thoughts into rigid systems in compensation for her lack of order); hysteria, a tendency to oversensitize without feeling because of the wandering womb (*her* womb) in our bodies.

In light of the frequency of these explanations, I began to ask myself – so what's the matter with mother? What's the matter that makes her so useful particularly in psychology's explanations?

In order to explore this question, let us begin by turning it slightly to what mother's matter is – what the content of mother is. And let us focus on the Great Mother of our Western mythological tradition, as described by Hesiod in his *Theogony*. Hesiod honors the Great Mother Gaia, Earth, as the original divinity and progenitor of all the other divinities – all those many forms of our psychic possibilities, forms of psychic awareness. For all these, Gaia lays the original ground.

According to Hesiod, first there was Chaos, a formlessness, a nothingness. Then there was Gaia, Earth: the first form, the first principle, a something, a given.

But inasmuch as Creation takes place continuously – every day our psychic experience is created, our emotions and moods are given form –

rather than tell Hesiod's creation tale in the past tense, we might more accurately tell it in the present: first there is Chaos, and then there is Mother Earth. Within our experiences of chaos, at the same moment there is contained a specific possibility of form. Or each chaos mothers itself into form.

Now this view of chaos is different from our traditional linear notions, in which form is imposed later upon chaos from without or down from above, conquering and replacing the chaos.

To view this tale, however, as I am attempting, would be to see it as an image – more as a picture than as a narrative – so that the facets of the event (the chaos and forms or Earth) are given all at once. Some interesting things turn up in this image picture that don't show up in sequential narrative. For example, this way of looking sees chaos and the forms as co-present: within chaos there are inherent forms. Each moment of chaos has shapes within it, and each form or shape embodies a specific chaos.

Of course, this way of looking at things also has implications therapeutically. For example, here it implies that one must not rid oneself too quickly of chaotic feelings (by abreacting or primal screaming them) because then one would also lose the forms. Better would be to contain, and even to nurture, the chaos so that its shapes may exist as well. (The image further suggests that our forms cannot rid us of chaos, for where the forms are is also where chaos is.)

I can support what I have just said with matter. For mother, this mothering ground of our lives, is connected with the word "matter." Mother and matter (*mater*) are cognates. And matter has been viewed in two ways – almost as though there were basically two sorts, or levels, of matter.

One level is considered as a universal substrate. And as such it exists only in abstraction. In itself, this matter is unknowable, invisible, and incorporeal. Matter in this sense is itself a kind of chaos or, as Augustine describes it, an absence of light, a deprivation of being.¹ So

¹ Augustine, *Confessions* XII.3.

this view of matter holds it to be nothingness, a negativity, a lacking. Now the second view builds upon this first view.

The second sort of matter is not only the most nothing, but also the most something – the most concrete, tangible, visible, bodily. Augustine calls this matter "the Earth as we know it" and contrasts heaven, which is nearest to God, with this Earth that though most concrete is nevertheless nearest to nothing.²

There is within the idea of matter a paradox. Matter (and by extension Mother Earth) is both the most something and the most nothing, the most necessary (in order that something can happen) and, at the same time, the most lacking. With this combination of qualities, matter and mother have of course had a rather hard time of it in our Western spiritual tradition. Mother/matter is the ground of existence and yet doesn't count – she is nothing. Archetypally she is our Earth and, at the same time, is always lacking.³

When we get close to our "matter," our lower substrates, our roots, our past, the ground from which we came, our lower physical nature, our cruder emotions, it is not surprising that we feel something unsettling, something inferior, chaotic, soiled perhaps. But these feelings are given with the very nature of mother's matter.

Let me tell you of an experience Hesiod had. In the beginning of the *Theogony* Hesiod tells of his conversion to poet, to a man who praised the gods. As he tells it, he was out tending his flocks when suddenly the Muses appeared and berated him for his lowly state. They evoked in him a sense of shame for being only a man of the Earth. Hesiod became then a poet who praised the Muses, but he never gave up being a man of the Earth (a farmer) nor the Earth as his subject. He became instead a more complicated farmer – one who now sang the praises of an Earth that felt to him shameful.

² *Ibid.*, XII.7.

³ It is interesting to note in this regard that Theophrastus describes green, the color of nature, as "composed of both the solid and the void..." Cf. G. M. Stratton, *Theophrastus and the Greek Physiological Psychology Before Aristotle* (Amsterdam: E. J. Bonset, 1964), 135.

Now this would seem peculiar: that a man who was shamed, who was called a fool for being merely of the Earth, would turn now to praise this very Earth for which he felt shame. Or is it that the experience of shame is connected with the experience of Earth, and perhaps shame is a way that may even lead one to the experience of Earth?

Shame is a deep bodily reaction that cannot be controlled (at least very effectively) by the mind. And so shame points to something beyond the will – something of power beyond the human, which we might call the divine. Hesiod was led to experience the Earth as a psychic Earth that though shameful of himself was yet, because of his very shame, more than himself. Within this psychic movement, Earth became a divinity. No longer a mere flat expanse on which to pasture his sheep, as a goddess she became an Earth of many levels upon which his soul (his Muses) pastured as well. For Hesiod she was no longer “nothing-but” a physical ground, a neutral ground without quality; because she was experienced as a divinity, she was experienced psychically so that her matter mattered to and in the psyche.

Had it not been the experience of Earth that the Muses wished to evoke in Hesiod, they might have approached him in another way. They could have brought about his conversion through a visionary experience of great beauty in the distance; they could have asked him in an uplifting moment to lay down his staff and follow them, or whatever. But what was given was the experience of Earth – for Hesiod was to be a poet of the Earth, and from this Earth the entire *Theogony*, in praise of all the gods and goddesses, was to be sung.

Let me read you a Navaho chant that expresses something of the connection between shame and Earth. It goes:

*I am ashamed before earth;
I am ashamed before heavens;
I am ashamed before dawn;
I am ashamed before evening twilight;
I am ashamed before blue sky;
I am ashamed before darkness;
I am ashamed before sun;
I am ashamed before that standing within me which*

*speaks with me.
Some of these things are always looking at me.
I am never out of sight.
Therefore I must tell the truth.
I hold my word tight to my breast.⁴*

“I am ashamed” – who has not had that feeling when faced with the wonder of Earth? But this sense of shame occurs too when other aspects of “earthy” feeling appear. This happens in analysis when the “chthonic” is constellated: the bug-eyed, toady, twisted, grotesque, slimy, or hulking creatures that bring us startling recognition of ugliness and deformity. Strange that we should feel these creatures as deformed, arising as they do from such natural, earthy levels of the psyche.

We generally try to repress these creatures. If that doesn't work we try second best: to rush them through their transformations as quickly as possible. With a kind of desperation we paint, model, and carry on active imaginations. The principal difficulty is that – in the hurry – we may lose the experience. Because these shameful creatures of the Earth carry the experience of Earth, we lose something of the very Earth we are seeking when we transform them too smoothly. It is a funny psychological fact that being soiled is intimately connected with the experience and benefits of soil.

Fortunately for our mythological tradition, Hesiod's shame connects him to this earthy sustenance and generativist, so that out of her – out of Gaia – proceeds his *Theogony*. Out of her comes the starry sky, the mountains, the depths, the sea.

Strangely enough, all of those so-called masculine regions (starry sky, mountains – Olympus; depths – Hades; sea – Oceanus, Poseidon) have come out of her and are part of her basic matrix. Moreover, she creates her own mate, Uranus. As this Uranus sky is a phallic force proceeding out of Earth, we can see it as Earth's original hermaphroditism. Within the feminine as void, within her as passive, lies a sky-like potentiality. Hence to get in touch with Earth is also to connect with a sky that

⁴ Navaho Legends, trans. W. Matthews (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1897), 58.

proceeds from Earth, and the seeds that drop create a kind of original self-fertilization. Not one without problems. But for the moment it is enough to note that sky, mountains, depths, and generations all have their beginnings in primal Earth.

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In early worship black animals were sacrificed to Gaia Earth.⁵ Let us speak for a moment about sacrifice. The very word *sacrifice* means “to make sacred.” Thus it is the “black” that is sacred to Gaia and may help keep her sacred. Black: the dark, the depressed, grieving over losses, the inexplicable, the shadowy, the sinful (we might now say).

We now have another hint as to how we may get in touch with Gaia Earth, i.e., through feelings of depression, black moods, losses, and lostness. As shame is a way into the experience of Mother Earth, a related way is the feeling of one’s darkest nature and hopelessness – limitations that do not change, complexes that have marked one’s personality and will always be as they are, since they are the *ground* of personality, unique and individual. To attempt to lighten these experiences, to get away from these complexes, or to white-wash them with explanations, to rationalize them, would then also be to lose one’s possibilities for psychic body, for Earth. These limitations in fact are psychic Earth.

Depth psychology serves this ground of the mother in many ways. One is by giving support to the human sense of shame and infirmity, the incomprehensible, the rejected. Psychology not only draws support from the mother’s dark depths but, in turn, worships these depths by creating of them a theology of phenomenological descriptions, systems, and pathological classifications, much as Hesiod created his *Theogony*.

⁵ L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, 5 vols. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1907), 3:2. This sacrifice of the black animal (in Gaia’s case the ewe) was typical for Hades and other gods in their chthonic, Underworld forms. So we must realize that Earth Gaia is as much at home with the dead and the Underworld as she is with the seemingly more life-sustaining activities of agriculture and vegetation. For her there is no real contradiction between life and death, daily world and Underworld.

And this sense we have of something as pathological cannot be explained away as only due to society, or only because of our parents or the faulty interaction in our families. An idea of pathology, of something amiss, exists in every society. So it would seem to be an archetypal, primary experience. Though of course the designation of *what* is pathological may vary, nevertheless the archetypal fact of it remains constant, through the ages and from culture to culture.

By deepening the experience of pathology, we may deepen our recognition of the mother, the Earth. By this I do not mean experiencing pathology in projection, as something out there. If pathology is archetypal, then by definition we must experience it in ourselves, much as we would any other archetypal quality – *anima*, *animus*, *child* ... As meanings, they begin in ourselves.

Another of the qualities of mother Gaia is that of immovability. Gaia made things stick. She was the goddess of marriage.⁶ One swore oaths by her and they were binding.⁷ Mother/matter as the inert becomes now mother as the settler, the stabilizer, the binder.

We still can find this idea of Earth in psychotherapy as that which will settle down a youth who is too highflying, or a woman who doesn’t take responsibility for her home, or a man who is too intellectual. What these people need is Earth, we say: the young man we may send off to work on a farm for the summer or urge him to marry; the housewife we may tell to pay more attention to her homelike activities, to put up her own preserves, or work in the garden, or take up knitting; the intellectual we tell to get down to the practical and live life, even at the expense of his “bright ideas” and fantasies.

What we are attempting to cultivate in the psyche of all these people is some ground in which things “matter,” happen, become substantial – something into which their life experiences may etch. We are trying to develop the mother within them, their *prima materia*, into a

⁶ *Ibid.*, 15; see also W. W. Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1911), 121.

⁷ Farnell, *The Cults* (above, n. 5), 3:2.

supporting matrix, some basic substrate in which psychic movements may take form and gather body.

The curious thing is how literal these therapeutic prescriptions for Earth become. The analysts must actually, literally, do some concrete activity that everybody would agree is "earthy." And yet we all know that when people are even physically involved with the Earth, they haven't necessarily what we mean by psychic Earth. A person can grow his own grains and, at the same time, spin in a mental and emotional space with very little psychic grounding. So it isn't really just physical Earth that connects us to the divinity of Mother Gaia but psychic Earth that has become ensouled with divinity, psychically complicated and, like Hesiod's, touched by the metaphorical muses of soul.

But there is this apparent difficulty in speaking of any kind of Earth, because something about the nature of Earth makes us take it more literally than we take the other elements. If a person lacked air, we would never send him off to learn to fly an airplane.⁸ Or if a person's dreams showed that he lacked water, fluidity, we would hardly send him off to learn actually to swim. But when a person is lacking in Earth, we tend to prescribe something rather obviously connected with the Earth, like taking a cottage in the country, making a garden, or chopping firewood...

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that the Muses of metaphor cannot appear in these activities. I'm only saying that they needn't necessarily. The more we insist on enjoining these quite literal earthy activities, the more we may be blocking the appearance of the Muses and a genuine metaphorical Earth arising from within the person, where it makes matter (substance, containment) psychologically.

Depth psychology would seem a discipline in which this reworked and more metaphorical sense of Earth is quite pronounced. It is a field in which we work a good deal for the benefit of, and in keeping with, the metaphorical ladies of soul. And yet even we find ourselves caught in the trap of Earth literalisms. Perhaps it appears in the feeling that our particular orientation is the way – and certainly it begins with our

⁸ See J. Hillman, *The Dream and the Underworld* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 77.

persuasion as to what is most "real." For what's "grounded" and what's "real" tend to be habitually interrelated.

In Jungian psychology, some of us see as most real our personal mother, our childhood, the breasts we actually nursed from as infants. Others of us see what is empirical as most real – those grounds that can be measured and tested. Still others see the social as most real, and so we strive for "genuine" personal interaction and require group therapy, or they may see synchronistic events as most real.

But whatever we take as most real (and partly dependent as Jungians upon whether we inhabit the Earth of London, San Francisco, New York, or Zurich) is what we are using as our mothering ground. And this grounding is extremely important: it is that which gives our thoughts fertility and substance, our therapies, body and results. It is what nourishes our psychological endeavors and makes them matter.

Yet we must not forget the other side of mother's nature (her archetypal being as lack, absence, deprivation). So however hard we work at grounding, each in his own way, we never feel this grounding complete. Always hidden in the very ground we are working is a gnawing sense of lack.

In other words, what we assume as most real, as our mother, is, at the same time, that which gives us a feeling of unsureness. And so we compensate this unsureness with insistence. We insist that one must go back and re-experience childhood, relive the good and bad breast dilemma, for this would give the grounding and the body that is needed. Or we say, if Jungian psychology is not to be lacking, it must be tested and proven to the world. Or, enough of all this flying around in the air talking about synchronicities, we must get down to where people really live with others, in personal emotions and real-life entanglements.

When one orientation fights another, the dispute is fairly serious, for each of us is defending the incompleteness we depend upon as our mother – the ground that has given, and is giving, our activities sustenance. But because we fear her nature as lack, we strive for more support by substantiating her ever more surely. As a solar hero, one fights for the death of the mother's ambiguity by fighting to the death for this increased grounding and substantiation of the mother. Thus identified,

one casts aside other, less heroic, modes that would allow the incompleteness of mothering ground to connect with the Muses of metaphor, for whom lacking ground is fertile ground indeed. Metaphor depends upon this sense of lack, this sense of the "is not" with every "is."⁹

We must ask how it is that this literalizing tends to occur with Earth. One explanation lies within the myth. We have mentioned how Gaia created out of herself not only the world but even her own spouse, Uranus. Every night, Uranus, the sky, spread himself down over Gaia in mating. But the children thereby engendered he kept imprisoned in the Earth, which gave Gaia, Earth, great pain, the more so with each additional child, so that by the time the twelfth child arrived (twelve being the completion of a cycle), she plotted an end to this ever-increasing burden. And so she crafted a sickle to castrate Uranus.

This motif of the child trapped in the Earth suggests a way of looking at the problem of literalization. A child, a new possibility, is born, but then this child is trapped in matter. It is imprisoned in the Earth (making this Earth only physical, only literal matter). So the spirit of the new offspring, or the psyche or soul of it, is buried in an Earth that is merely material. Interestingly enough, according to the tale, this materialism gives Mother Gaia herself great pain. She is burdened with each successive offspring buried within her. She is forced to carry what has been projected into her (as literal plans, goals, whatever), thereby losing her more metaphorical possibilities, that part of herself that is insubstantial.

In the myth, the mother eases her burden by turning her destructive potential against this concretism. We might call her in this role the negative mother. She plots castration and devises the means for it. The sickle she invents, however, is fashioned of iron, that metal so important to the building of civilization. So her destructive act is not without benefit and expresses her pain over the way she as Earth is being used.

It could be that when we put too many of our children, our possibilities, into concrete explanations and literal programs, burying their meanings for the soul by living them materially, we are not at all propi-

⁹ As pointed out by R. Romanyshyn in 1977 at the Conference for Archetypal Psychology in Dallas, Tex.

tiating the mother. We are offending her and causing her great pain. We might, therefore, re-examine some of the negative-mother phenomena that appear in dreams and fantasies to see if the negative mother, the castrating mother, isn't attempting (with her belittlement of us, the insecurity and inadequacy she makes us feel) to relieve herself of the concrete demand, the materialistic burden we have placed upon her. What we experience as "castration" of our powers in the world might be that which can move us into a more psychic view of matter. In a curious sense, the effect of the mother's negativity may be to return us to soul. By destroying the superficial surface of that Earth upon which we stand, our literal projections into and upon Earth (achieving more and more – establishing ever more solidly – our materialism), perhaps she is giving opportunity for a deeper ground, a psychic Earth beneath the level of appearance and in touch with the Muses.

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Now let us look at the children trapped in the Earth in another way. Let us see them as the children "in us" who wish to remain as children buried within the mother, within the concrete. There seem several ways we could do this.

One way would be to identify with the child and then project a goodness, an all-embracing lovingness upon Mother Nature. Then because Mother Nature is all good, I-the-child am also good, innocent, helpless, without Shadow and indeed without much body. I feel no shame – there is no such thing as shame – I am innocent. This state might resemble Hesiod's state before the Muses, and before he was called upon through his experience of awkwardness, separation, and shamefulness to worship the mother. Insofar as a child feels no shame, he is also unable to worship.

Another possibility would be for the child to reinforce his state as child by seeing the mother as all bad. This would be the nihilist perspective and just the converse of seeing the mother as all good. It, too, would deny the mother's possibilities as psychic, complex, worked Earth. This child, scarred by the world's harshness, remains forever the unloved child, but nevertheless still the child.

Another way in which to remain as children buried in the Earth is by dividing experience of the mother into two separate mothers: good mother/bad mother, good breast/bad breast. Although the opposing aspects of the mother are expressed, they have been separated and literalized, seen as nothing-but good here and bad there. And because they are literalized, they tend to be projected into the world as realities out there. This substantiation and projection give them extraordinary power so that I-as-child find myself overwhelmed. Unable to cope in a world so loaded with goods and bads, rights and wrongs, the child languishes ineffectually. Because the world is so important, the child becomes unable; the world's ambiguity becomes the child's ambivalence.

Most often, however, our child abandons his pattern at this point and moves into the neighboring one of hero. Then the darker attributes of the mother appear as the dragon to be heroically slain. Child-turned-hero now girds himself and charges off to do (what turns out to be a rather continuous) battle with the dark mother now become monster.

When heroically opposed, the mother turns monster. The religious sense of her is lost. Her nature as nonbeing, absence, lack is no longer part of her mystery – that which makes her greater than our own narrow senses of life and achievement. Rather, she becomes a contrary force to rule over and conquer. Her Earth becomes replaced by our egocentricity, our illusions of competence, self-sufficiency, ego capability. We deny the Earth's divinity and exchange her ground with its complexities, its twisted chthonic creatures, and shame for our goal-directed, clean, ever self-bettering fantasies of goodness, health, and achievement.

The nature of the hero is to take literally the mother's negativity. Her nature as lack, nonbeing, becomes a real something, an enemy to be fought; her femininity and passivity become a succubus to that heroic life fixed upon progressive achievement. The result is a heroic overachievement and overproduction, which must be countered by equally literal prophecies of doom and destruction. The mother as lack, as negative, returns in prophecies of ultimate, literal catastrophe. Because the Earth is taken so literally, its negative reappears in the forebodings of an equally literal destruction.

The hero's mother complex is characterized by his struggles to be up and out, and above her. And because of his heroic labors to free himself from her, it is he who is most surely bound to her. Better service to the Earth Mother might be to assist her movement down to the deepest regions of her depths. For the mother's depths are the Underworld. Gaia's original realm included both the upper realm of growth, nurturance, and life and the Underworld realm of death, limitation, and ending.

We must describe a bit of this Underworld to appreciate how astounding it is that this realm was once part of our mother's Earth.

The Underworld was a pneumatic, airy realm. The beings there, called shades (*skiai*) or images (*eidola*) were insubstantial like the wind.¹⁰ It is a realm in which objects cannot be grasped naturally, that is, taken literally, but only felt in their emotional essence. Ulysses, for example, in his visit to the Underworld, yearns for his mother, but when he attempts physically to embrace her finds she is only an immaterial shade. It is a realm of the nonconcrete, the intangible.

And yet an essence of personality is preserved. Cerberus is said to strip away the flesh of persons who enter, leaving only their skeletal structures, those essential forms on which the flesh of each life has been modeled. This sense of essence is also shown by the repetitions that some shades enact (Ixion on his wheel, Sisyphus and his stone, Tantalus and his everlasting hunger and thirst). These repetitions may be viewed symbolically as the characteristic pattern of each individual personality.

The Underworld is colorless.¹¹ Even the shade of black does not appear except in the Upperworld that sacrifices to it,¹² hence we emphasize the experience of blackness in connection with Gaia, for black is our Upperworld experience of the Underworld, our way into it. But once there, one is, so to speak, deeper than one's emotion. One is beneath

¹⁰ F. Cumont, *After Life in Roman Paganism* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1922), 166.

¹¹ K. Kerényi, *The Gods of the Greeks* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1961), 247.

¹² Cumont, *Roman Paganism* (above, n. 10), 166.

the depression, the black mood, by having gone down through it to the point where it no longer is. When we no longer cling to the light, blackness loses its darkness.

In the Underworld one is among the essences, the invisible aspects of the Upperworld. The word "Hades" means the invisible or the "invisibility-giving."¹³ It is that realm deep beneath the concrete world and yet somehow within it, in the same way that the seed is within the full-grown plant, and yet is its inherent limitation, its structure, its *telos*.

But there came to be a split between the Upperworld aspect of Gaia's Earth and its Underworld aspect. Her upper realm became Ge-Demeter while the under realm became Ge-chthonia and relegated to Persephone.¹⁴ The Upperworld became a Demeter realm of concrete, daily life, devoid of the spiritual values, the sense of essence and the dark (and beneath the dark) carried by her Underworld daughter, Persephone. For reunion with this Underworld daughter, Demeter suffers inconsolably. And we, without a religious sense that includes and connects us with the Earth's depths and essential insubstantiality, suffer as well.

In our efforts to establish a solid "real" world and make the mother carry our concreteness, we have lost an aspect of her grounding – a grounding that has not so much to do with growth in any of the more concrete senses of Upperworld development. More psychologically futile is our invisible mother in the Underworld: the Persephone who rules over the soul in its essential, limiting, and immaterial patterns; and that original mother of all – Gaia – she who is Earth, and yet without contradiction, that deeper ground of support beneath the Earth's physical appearance, the nonbeing beneath and within being. Our fruitfulness – our fecundity, our sense of what "matters" – has its roots in our very unsureness, in our sense of lack.

¹³ Kerényi, *The Gods* (above, n. 11), 230. H. J. Rose suggests that the name Hades may also be derived phonetically from "the Unseen." (*A Handbook of Greek Mythology* [London: Methuen, 1965], 78.)

¹⁴ Whereas Demeter, like Gaia, appeared imagistically as the ripened or ripening corn, she never appeared in connection with the seed in the ground or with Underworld figures as did Gaia; see Fowler, *The Religious Experience* (above, n. 6), 121. This absence of Demeter's Underworld aspect makes an Underworld Persephone "necessary."

II

Neurosis and the Rape of Demeter/Persephone

My particular interest in myth is to understand its workings in people's lives, in psychological practice, and in psychopathology. C. G. Jung laid the groundwork for all this with his original understanding of myth as the content of the psychoses. Then in *Symbols of Transformation* he went on to draw parallels between processes in mythology and in schizophrenia. I am interested in making the same sort of parallels between mythology and the more humdrum processes in neuroses – particularly defenses and resistances. This seems to me useful since we deal with such neurotic processes primarily in terms of Freudian "defense mechanisms" on the one hand and personalistic process interpretation (transference reactions) on the other. To view these defenses archetypally gives added ground and dimension and helps to extend Jung's insight with the psychoses, and indeed all psychic phenomena, to the more specific workings of neurotic patterns. But first the job is to locate more precisely where certain patterns belong archetypally and may even be necessitated by a myth.

Demeter is an example of a mythic figure evidencing neurotic behavior. In approaching this figure and this myth, however, I shall not be doing an "interpretation"; I shall not be dealing with the events in the story step by step, making them coherent and "fitting" as a narrative or case history. Rather, I shall read the story as a mythical image,¹⁵ as

¹⁵ See below, "An Approach to the Dream" (esp. on Simultaneity), where I attempt to lay the groundwork for this approach to products of the imagination.