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**CONTEMPORARY FEMALE IMAGES FROM
GREEK MYTHS IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S
THE BLIND ASSASSIN**

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ÖZET

Tezli Yüksek Lisans

Margaret Atwood'un The Blind Assassin Adlı Romanında Yunan Mitlerinden
Günümüze Kadın İmgeleri

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Arketipler, insanın kolektif bilinçaltında var olduğu savlanan, mitler ve edebiyat eserleri yoluyla da tekrarlandığı tespit edilen bireylerin ve toplumların ortak düşünce ve davranış kalıplarıdır. İlk olarak Carl Gustav Jung tarafından incelenen arketipler, insan psikolojisini şekillendiren ve ortak düşünce ve davranış kalıplarına neden olan önemli öğeler olarak kabul edilmektedir ve ilk örneksel teori adı altında sunulmaktadır. 1950'li yıllarda Northrop Frye tarafından yeniden ele alınan ilk örneksel eleştiri; arketipleri din, kültür, dil ve edebiyatı şekillendiren yapılar ve edebi eserlerde tekrarlanan anlatı kalıpları olarak ele almaktadır.

Feminist eleştirmenlerce yeniden gözden geçirilen ilk örneksel eleştiri, kadına ait arketiplerin ataerkil sistem tarafından yeniden tanımlandığını iddia eder ve tarih öncesi dönemdeki kadına ait arketiplerin günümüzde hâlâ kadın romanında ayırt edilebilir olduğunu savunur. Feminist ilk örneksel eleştiri, ataerkil yapının kadına attığı arketipleri, tarih öncesi kadına ait arketiplerle yan yana inceleyerek, erkek egemen yapının kadının bütünlüğüne ait özellikleri parçalayarak, onu ataerkil yapının devamı uğruna "kurban ettiğini" göstermeyi amaçlar. Öte yandan, kadının kendi doğasına ait arketipler yoluyla erkek egemen sistem içinde var olma çabasını sergiler. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Margaret Atwood'un The Blind Assassin (2002) adlı romanında, ataerkil sistem tarafından yeniden tanımlanan arketiplerin Antik Yunan mitlerinden günümüze kadın imgelerinde hâlâ geçerli olduğunu göstermek ve ataerkil sistemin bilinçaltını yansıtmaları bakımından incelemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 1) Arketipler ve Mitler, 2) İlk-örneksel eleştiri, 3) Feminist ilk-örneksel eleştiri, 3) Margaret Atwood, 4) The Blind Assassin.

ABSTRACT

Masters of Art Degree

Contemporary Female Images from Greek Myths in Margaret Atwood's

The Blind Assassin

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Archetypes, which are claimed to exist in man's collective unconscious, are common ideas, behavior patterns of the individuals, and society that are sustained by means of myths and literary works of art. Archetypes, which were first examined by Jung, have been considered as significant elements shaping thought and behavior patterns, and they are presented under the name of Archetypal Theory. In the 1950s, Archetypal Criticism was reexamined by Northrop Frye. He handles archetypes as structures shaping religion, culture, language and literature as well as recurrent narrative patterns in literary works of art.

Archetypal criticism is revised by feminist critics by means of which they claim that archetypes regarding women are redefined by the patriarchy and argue that archetypes belonging to the women in pre-historic times are still discernable in women's fiction. Feminist Archetypal Criticism aims to demonstrate that masculine system fragmented the characteristics related to the wholeness of woman and "victimized" her for the sake of the continuation of patriarchal structures via juxtaposing redefined archetypes by masculine system with the archetypes belonging to the wholeness of woman in pre-historic times. Furthermore, it presents woman's efforts of survival in patriarchy by way of the archetypes concerning her nature in pre-historic times. This study basically aims to demonstrate the reconstructed archetypes which are still valid from Ancient Greek Myths to the present time in female images and to examine them on account of their reflecting the unconscious of the patriarchal system in Margaret Atwood's The Blind Assassin.

Key Words: 1) Archetypes and Myths, 2) Archetypal Criticism, 3) Feminist Archetypal Criticism, 4) Margaret Atwood, 5) The Blind Assassin.

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INTRODUCTION

Margaret Atwood is one of the most popular and prolific writers. Born in Canada in 1936, Atwood is an eminent writer known worldwide. She is a celebrated writer nominated for several important literary awards. Atwood is impossible to pin down since she is a poet, a short story writer, an editor, a literary critic, a lecturer, despite being mostly known as a novelist. She also writes screenplays for television and radio, and books for children. Furthermore, her novels are difficult to be categorized because they consist of a great deal of various literary patterns. Her narrative strategies convey fresh approaches on accustomed literary conventions, theories of the victim, gaze and camera with renovated theoretical approaches towards feminism, psychoanalytic metaphors and images of ciphers, codes and hieroglyphs employed in a deconstructionist standpoint. She makes use of the journey metaphor as a quest for identity and to depict this quest as moving through the territories of the past and the unconscious leading to a transformed identity. She has achieved an outstanding writing style and voice which is steeped in the distinguished examples of world literature. The richness of her works emanates from her use of language to reveal the structures of entrapment and to liberate both men and women from the constrictions of the patriarchal system. In addition to language, the richness of her works stems from the historical and cultural depth offered within the contexts of her works. She is well known to mold images, situations, characters, stereotypes from mythology, especially Greek and Latin mythology, fairy tales and folklore in order to reveal the hidden sexist assumptions within them.

Atwood generally prefers female protagonists in her works in order to look at and to examine the women's role in society with a deep historical, cultural and mythological dimension. Her protagonists are portrayed with an identity having no unique voice and vision. Through these characters, Atwood pinpoints power politics based on gender and probes into the culturally institutionalized and internalized victimization and sexual violence towards women. In her portrayal of female figures, she exposes the entrapment of women by culture and mythology by re-defined and

re-constructed archetypes. She exhibits silenced, muted and blinded women images based on these archetypes structured by patriarchy. However, at the end of her novels, she depicts these female figures in an inner journey regaining authentic voice and vision in contrast to the patriarchal roles given to them. Atwood illustrates her protagonist in a context of survival against victimization.

This dissertation is a study on Archetypal/Myth theory from Feminist standpoint in Margaret Atwood's Booker Prized novel, The Blind Assassin. Composed of three main chapters, this study aims to analyze the female images in The Blind Assassin as they reflect the unconscious of the patriarchal system and to indicate that these female images are still valid at the present time. Alongside the analysis of female images in the novel, this thesis aims to illustrate the principles of Archetypal/Myth theory from the Carl Gustav Jung to Northrop Frye. In addition, it aims to re-examine this theory and its principles from the Feminist standpoint and to reveal the relationship between the female images in the novel and Archetypal/Myth criticism.

The first chapter of this thesis, which is composed of three parts, renders the principles of the Archetypal/Myth Theory. The first part of this chapter provides an introduction to archetypes as they have been formulated by Jung. In this part, brief information based on Jungian notion of "archetype" is introduced. Jung departs from the unconscious theory of Sigmund Freud to bring out the existence of a wider ground beneath the individual unconscious which he called the "collective unconscious." For Jung, collective unconscious functions as a store composed by all humanity, and its contents and modes of behavior are more or less the same in all individuals. Jung depicts archetypes as the contents of the collective unconscious, and he thinks that they are recurrent patterns with the same form of typical experiences which appear in the course of history. They are also handled as the collective heritage of human being and as basic patterns in mythic stories which shape culture, language and literature.

Therefore, in the second part of the first chapter myth and archetype are examined in terms of literary criticism. Initially, Jungian archetypal and mythical characters, themes and patterns which recur in literary works are the subjects of this part. Jung's theory helps to illuminate the psychological states of characters in literary works of art. In this part, Jungian "Self," "Shadow," "Anima," "Animus," and "Persona" are introduced respectively as the basic components of human psychology. In addition, other four archetypes "Mother," "Spirit," "Rebirth," and "Trickster" which Jung believes to exist and gives significance to illuminate human psychology are discussed in detail.

The final part of the first chapter concentrates on Northrop Frye's version of Archetypal/Myth Theory. In that chapter, Frye's view of myth as an essential constructor of culture, religion, language and narrative pattern is clarified. Conversely Jung's psychological approach to archetypes, Northrop Frye's handling of archetypes is from literary perspective. For Frye, archetypes are recurrent narrative patterns shaping literary genres. He bases his theory on grounds to understand literature and literary texts. His version of this theory relies on four genres: "Romance," "Tragedy," "Comedy," and "Irony/Satire" which are discussed respectively.

The second chapter examines and discusses archetypes and archetypal patterns through the lenses of Feminism. In that part, Annis Pratt, Meredith A. Powers and Estella Lauter's feminist theories on myths and archetypes are introduced. These feminist critics put forward the idea that the original and essential female archetypes, originated in the periods in which women were thought to be divine beings and their image to be representing wholeness and independence, have been revised by patriarchal system. Indo-European culture, which is a patriarchal culture, reconstructed female images especially by Greek myths. In Greek myths women are depicted as polarized, fragmented; women qualities are despised. The new image of woman who is prone to self-depreciation and suicide has purposely emerged. This new woman image is "muted," "blinded" and "other." Besides this, the whole system is also blind to their existence. Feminist scholars approach the

archetypes and mythos introduced and studied by Jung and Frye, for their point of view perpetuates patriarchal thinking patterns. Feminists believe that although divine female archetypes are revised by patriarchal culture through Greek myths, they are still discernable and recurrent in women's fiction. In the novels of women there are recurrent archetypal patterns such as "Green World Archetype," "Rape/Trauma Archetype," "Enclosure Archetypes," "Eros Archetype as an expression of the Self," "Archetypes of Singleness and Solitude" and Transformation Archetype." Some of these archetypes are handled as they reflect the patriarchal point of view, and some of them are discussed as essential archetypes leading women to their roots.

The final chapter is devoted to the analysis of The Blind Assassin in terms of the above mentioned archetypes. These archetypes are introduced and applied to the novel respectively. In that chapter, Archetypal theory is mainly handled from the framework of Feminist Archetypal criticism and Jung and Northrop Frye's theories on myth and archetype are also employed to analyze the novel. Within the novel, Margaret Atwood portrays "muted," "silenced" and "blinded" women images under the patriarchal system. She depicts the sexual traumatization and victimization of women through her female characters. She makes use of the mythic elements to support her themes. Feminist archetypal patterns are evident in the illustration of the protagonist, Iris. Iris' inner journey to her authentic self beginning within the enclosure of the patriarchy is examined in terms of these archetypes. At the end of this metaphoric journey, Atwood presents through Iris a woman image who recognizes the victimization of herself along with the other women and who gains the potential to re-express and to re-create her "self." In order to see archetypes and myths employed in The Blind Assassin, it is necessary to revisit the land of heroes, gods and goddesses and to understand what they represent in each and every human being.

CHAPTER ONE

MYTH AND ARCHETYPE AS INVISIBLE HERITAGE

1.1. A Brief Introduction to Myth and Archetype

“Whoever speaks in primordial images
speaks with a thousand voices”¹

Myths are primitive legends which express primitive man’s experience. The primitive human being developed a logical interpretation out of his conception of earth and nature. “The outer worlds of physical nature, of human character, action endeavor, and the inner world of conscious and unconscious response to these things, formed themselves in him, and were in turn formed and developed by him into symbolic roots configurations, into metaphorical conceptions and expressions.”² By this way, he gives shape and order to his experiences.

Through myths, the human being conceives himself as a whole with the outer world. He does not separate himself thoroughly from the world that surrounds him. Levy-Bruhl names this “Participation Mystique.”³ Firstly, according to participation mystique, everything that happens outside happens also inside or vice versa. For example, the journey of the sun between night and day is the representation of a psychological journey.⁴ Secondly, Jung also likens participation mystique to the unconscious identity. Apart from identification with natural events, participation mystique also refers to identification with a mass. If a person is in a crowd, s/he enters into a mutual state of mind. S/he thinks, acts and experiences with the group, so “. . . those who are present [in the group] are caught up in an invisible web of mutual unconscious relationship. If this condition increases, one literally feels borne

¹ Carl Gustav Jung, quoted in K.K Ruthven (1976). *Myth*. (London: Cambridge University Pres), p. 22

² Elizabeth Drew (1992). “T. S. Eliot: The Mythical Vision”. In R. B. Sugg (Ed.) *Jungian Literary Criticism*. (Evanston: North- western University Press), p. 11

³ Frieda Fordham (1997). *Jung Psikolojisi* (A. Yalçın, Trans.) (İstanbul: Say Yayınları), p. 30

⁴ *ibid*, p. 30

along by the universal wave of identity with others.”⁵ This is a kind of acting through unconscious mind. Not the latter, but the first relation of the concept of participation mystique, namely identity with nature, is particularly related to the word myth because myth is also the symbolic representation of human being’s perception of the world and his relations with that world. Through myths, the human being is in unity with the world.

Myths are based on nature and its cyclical order, which is like a ritual, for rituals are united around cyclical movements such as the cycle of the sun, the moon, seasons, and human life. Dawning and setting of the sun, equinoxes, harvest times and in human life, birth, death, wedding are tightly connected to rituals. Some structures or patterns are periodically repeated in these events. Myths and rituals satisfied the primitive human beings reassurance and social stability.

Long before, the human being could not conceive and make sense of the nature around them. They were afraid of the rain, lightning, storms and wild animals. For this reason they divinized them and made sacrifices to calm them. Their primitive belief was born out of a fear that resulted from a thinking called “Animism” according to which everything in nature has a soul. As their living conditions and spiritual faculties improved, they began to see, the balance and harmony in nature made evident by the cyclical process of day and night, seasons, birth and death. Thus, they not only feared this divine beauty but also worshipped and felt grateful to its abundance. They created symbols out of nature, projecting their instincts of symbol making, their vision and experience of outer world and inner world to these symbols. Thus, they gave life, meaning and form to them.⁶

As already evident, the primitive human being had a symbol making instinct and they found the inspiration and source of these symbols in their own being. Jung names this source “the unconscious.” He describes it as “the eternally creative mother of consciousness, the never failing source of all art and of all human

⁵ Carl, Gustav Jung (1968). Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 126

⁶ Nüzhet Haşim Sinanoğlu (1999). Grek ve Romen Mitolojisi. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları), pp. 14-15

productivity.”⁷ Objects of the outer world were formed from the energy of the “unconscious.” During the process of giving meaning and form to the objects of the outer world as well as to their inner world, primitive human beings create symbols which form the contents of the collective unconscious. These symbols are called “Archetype.”

The concept of the archetype is an essential cornerstone for the comprehension of the Archetypal/Mythical criticism in literary theories. What then is archetype? As a term it was popularized, though not used initially by Jung. Before Jung took it up, it was a word that had been used by philosophers and writers but that did not have a specific notion and especially that did not have a concept in psychology and literature. Jung is the first psychoanalyst and literary critic to fill the form of the archetype with meaning. He identified it in psychology and made it a fundamental concept in human life. The new path he opened in psychology also had profound effects on literary criticism and the way literary critics handled recurrent patterns in literary works.

Jung’s discovering archetype as a concept begins by his studies on the unconscious. At first Jung agreed with the Freudian concept of the unconscious. Freud is a significant psychoanalyst who made a serious amount of studies on the unconscious. To Freud, the unconscious is the dark and gloomy part of the human mind. It is part of the mind beyond consciousness but it has a strong influence upon our actions. For Freud, unconscious functions as a burial where people bury their inner drives, desires, forgotten and ignored experiences and conflicts. They are forced out of conscious awareness to the unconscious. He states that unconscious history includes impossible and forbidden wishes which are repressed from the official record or ignored wishes that remain active in the unconscious and seek expression in dreams, mistakes, jokes, myths and other forms of communication. Freudian unconscious is based on “feeling-toned complexes.”⁸ He suggests that all art and myth are derived from such suppressions. “He interpreted all unconscious

⁷ Elizabeth Drew (1992). “T. S. Eliot: The Mythical Vision”. In R. B. Sugg (Ed.) *Jungian Literary Criticism*. (Evanston: North- western University Press), p. 13

⁸ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). Four Archetypes. (London: Routledge), p. 3.

derives exclusively in sexual and familial terms, and their emergence into myth and ritual as illustrating various aspects of the ambivalent emotions of love and hate admiration and fear, attraction and repulsion, inherent in the parent-child relationship.”⁹

Jung agrees with Freud that there is an unconscious layer which is totally personal and based on personal complexes. However, Jung continues, this theory is inadequate to explain the source of all art and myth. He thinks that such a dark part of mind filled with suppression and darkness could not explain all works of art and myth in human history. When one tries to interpret poetry and works of art with Freudian principles, Jung believes that such an interpretation provides only a basic level because Freud bases his theory of unconscious on infantile activities of the mind.

There are other grounds on which Jung thinks the Freudian approach reduces art. Freudian principles come from the school of medical psychology to works of art inaugurated by Freud. He calls literary historians to relate certain peculiarities in a work of art to personal life of the writer. Jung comments on this approach that “. . . it has long been known that the scientific treatment of art will reveal the personal threads that the artist, intentionally or unintentionally, has woven into his work.”¹⁰ Jung finds Freudian literary method reductive because Freud handles a work of art as if it is a diseased structure. Therefore, he tries to change it into a healthy adaptation. Jung thinks that such a method “. . . strips the work of art of its shimmering robes and exposes the nakedness and drabness of Homo sapiens, to which species the poet and the artist also belong. The golden gleam of artistic creation . . . –the original object of discussion– is extinguished.”¹¹

⁹Elizabeth Drew (1992). “T. S. Eliot: The Mythical Vision”. In R. B. Sugg (Ed.) *Jungian Literary Criticism*. (Evanston: North- Western University Press), p. 13

¹⁰ Carl G. Jung (2001). *On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry*. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.) *The Norton Anthology of Theory of Criticism*. (New York: Norton Publishing), p. 991

¹¹ Carl Gustav Jung (2001). *On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry*. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.) *The Norton Anthology of Theory of Criticism*. (New York: Norton Publishing), p. 992.

Freudian approach may often be suitable to discern the relation of the work of art to its author's biography. However, it is inadequate to express the source and the nature of all art. For Jung, a work of art is not a disease. Interpreting personal determinants in it would not make people comprehend it fully in its complexity. For this reason, he employs a new unconscious concept, which “. . . rests upon a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn.”¹² He calls it “collective unconscious.” It has no tendency to become conscious under normal conditions. It is never repressed or forgotten, so it cannot be brought back by analytical techniques; “[it is] . . . a unity with other minds.”¹³ He means by “collective unconscious” a universal ground shared by all minds. “. . . It has contents and modes of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substratum of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us.”¹⁴ For Jung, it is a universal and “. . . collective matrix out of which we all live.”¹⁵ In other words, Jungian collective unconscious is a vast layer which comprises not only consciousness but also the Freudian concept of the unconscious. Besides that, it includes deepest strings which bind people to the primitive human being in history.

Jung is of the idea that such an unconscious concept like his collective unconscious can solely express the nature of a work of art and bring out what lies at its depths. He thinks that investigating only the human determinants ie. the writer/author/poet, in a work of art will not enable people to understand it fully. In order to understand it, it is necessary to read solely the work of art. Jung likens the relation between a work of art and the poet to the relation between the plant and soil. He states that “the plant is not a mere product of the soil; it is a living, self-contained process which in essence had nothing to do with the character of the soil.”¹⁶ For

¹²Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes*. (London: Routledge), p. 3.

¹³ Daniel Russel Brown (Summer, 1970). “A Look at Archetypal Criticism” in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol.28, No. 4. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/428486> p 467.

¹⁴Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes*. (London: Routledge), p.4.

¹⁵ Demis S. Wehr (1987) *Jung & Feminism: Liberating Archetypes*. (Beacon Press), p. 51

¹⁶ Carl Gustav Jung (2001). *On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry*. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.) *The Norton Anthology of Theory of Criticism*. (New York: Norton Publishing), p. 994

Jung, the artist is so mistakenly identified with his work that he cannot be distinguishable from the act of creation itself. Jung describes:

. . . [These works of art] come as it were fully arrayed into the world, as Pallas Athene sprang from the head of the Zeus. These works positively force themselves upon the author, his hand is seized, his pen writes things that his mind contemplates with amazement. . . Yet in spite of himself he is forced to admit that it is his own self speaking, his own inner nature revealing itself and uttering thing which he would never have entrusted to his tongue. He can only obey the apparently alien impulse within him and follow where it leads, sensing that his work is greater than himself, and wields a power which is not his and which he cannot command.¹⁷

Then, the nature of a work of art, the source of it is the collective unconscious. From Jungian point of view, solely reading the work of art cannot show us that the collective unconscious operates or functions in it. It is only possible to comprehend the meaning pattern of a work of art by deciphering its content. The collective unconscious contains “*a priori ideas*”¹⁸ that can create infinite possible fantasies. However, these ideas cannot be ascertained by themselves, they can solely be understood from their effects. We can only ascertain them by inferences from a finished work of art. It is these “*a priori ideas*” that Jung gives the name of “archetypes,” which he also calls “primordial images.”¹⁹ The primordial image or an archetype is a recurrent figure which appears continually in the course of history. When these images are examined closely, one can find out that they have the same form of typical experiences. In these images there are joys and sorrows that have been experienced several times in history by ancestors. “The moment when an archetypal situation reappears is always characterized by a peculiar emotional intensity; it is as though chords in us were struck that had been never resounded before, or as though forces whose existence we never suspected were unloosed.”²⁰

¹⁷ Carl Gustav Jung (2001). *On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry*. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.) *The Norton Anthology of Theory of Criticism*. (New York: Norton Publishing), p. 995

¹⁸ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes*. (London: Routledge), p. 13.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 12

²⁰ Carl Gustav Jung (2001). *On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry*. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.) *The Norton Anthology of Theory of Criticism*. (New York: Norton Publishing), p. 1001

The notion of recurrence is a significant aspect in the concept of archetype. Jung explores the existence and recurrence of archetypes in the clinical studies with his patients. During his studies related to his patients' individuation process, he notes recurrent patterns. For Jung, individuation process ". . . is, to an extent, a developmental account of a person's attainment of maturity."²¹ These patterns are nearly the same in his every patient's individuation process. This discernment leads Jung to search the same patterns in myths and literary works of art in history. He draws parallels between the recurrent patterns in individuation process and the patterns in myths. This study directs Jung from medicine to literature and to explore the literature in the light of the archetypes. They become the "building blocks"²² of literature. For him, archetypes mark a new path for a new literary criticism. He states that "knowledge of archetypes enables us to perceive the shared myths that literary works rely on and to explore through that awareness we can glimpse the underlying structure of the sources of all works."²³ Besides perceiving the nature and source of all works through them, archetypes enable people to see their own nature and their source of inspiration.

Jung means different things by "archetype" and "archetypal image" although these terms are often confused. According to Jung, "[archetype] . . . is not meant to denote an inherited idea, but rather an inherited mode of functioning corresponding to the inborn way in which the chick emerges from the egg."²⁴ He likens the archetype to a kind of energy. It is an indefinable energy but it functions as a patterning process in the human brain. It is also an instinctual energy. It expresses itself in universal human behavior patterns. For this reason, there are recurrent themes, motifs, symbols and images in human behavior universally. Jung names them "archetypal image." It is accompanied by emotion and human experience. They are the images we encounter in literature. Once these figures are created, they give us an abstract understanding of the unconscious process which is rooted in primordial

²¹ Ford Russel (1998). Northrop Frye on Myth: An Introduction. (New York and London: Garland), p. 116.

²² Vincent B. Leitch (2001). The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism. (New York: Norton Publishing), p.1443.

²³ *ibid*, p1444.

²⁴ K.K. Ruthven (1976). Myth. (London: Cambridge University Pres), p. 22.

images. “Mother,” “Trickster,” “Shadow,” “Anima” and “Self” are some of the best known archetypal images which will be discussed in the following chapter.

During the process of formulating collective unconscious and the concept of archetype and archetypal image, Jung was inspired by Lévy-Bruhl. He was a French anthropologist and he worked on primitive psychology. His notion of “Representations Collectives” presents an analogy to Jungian collective unconscious and archetypes. By “representations collectives,” Lévy-Bruhl suggests ideas related to spirits, witchcraft, and power of medicines which are still valid. For him, there is a striking difference between the primitive and modern psychology, and this he believes that civilized human being, is still “. . . archaic in his deep levels of his psyche.”²⁵ Such a notion obviously draws parallels to Jungian “collective unconscious” which Jung applies to literary context. In addition, Jung sometimes mentions William Butler Yeats’ “Great Memory” as it is analogous to his “collective unconscious.” Yeats was one of the leading poets interested in myth. Concerning “Great Memory,” Yeats says “whatever the possessions of man have gathered about becomes a symbol in the Great Memory.”²⁶ For Yeats, “. . . boundaries of the mind are permeable and can both admit the consciousness of others and create or reveal a single mind.”²⁷ Yeats believes that there is a layer which is deeper than individual consciousness and subconscious memory. This layer contains symbols which have their own power. They spring from the “Great Memory” and individuals could not control them. This notion is also analogous to Jungian collective unconscious and archetypal images. Jung employs them to describe his notion of collective unconscious.

Briefly, the concept of the archetype, formulated by Jung’s medical studies launches a new literary dimension. Jung’s search for some specific archetypal images during his medical studies led him to find a new permeable and collective

²⁵Carl Gustav Jung (1971). The Portable Jung. (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.) In J. Campbell (Ed.) (London: Penguin Books), p.51

²⁶ K.K. Ruthven (1976). Myth. (London: Cambridge University Press), p. 22

²⁷Alex Owen (2004). The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern (University of Chicago Press), p. 168

unconscious layer. The inspiration human beings find in nature and their fascination with nature's transformations have led to their own life cycles or transformations. The realization of their own transformations, experiences and emotions is embodied the same images, which Jung calls archetypal images. These archetypal images constitute the content of the collective unconscious. For him, collective unconscious organizes and informs the human mind and behavior. He thinks that innate archetypes have a profound influence on the human cycle. Archetypal images are the cornerstones of a system we live in. They are so recurrent that they become invisible to individual consciousness. They are nearly same in different cultures and places and they give an invariable shape to cultural systems. Tracing these images in myths and in a work of art forms the basis of Archetypal/Mythical criticism. Jung's archetypal approach is psychological in origin. He also led other critics to develop archetypal criticism. One of them is Northrop Frye whose Archetypal/Mythical theory is completely literary. He applies Jungian theory about collective unconscious and archetypes to literature. It is with his literary applications that Archetypal criticism is theorized. He examines archetypes from the framework of literary genres. Jung and Frye's views of Archetypal criticism form the two fundamental parts of that criticism. While one provides a context for psychological analysis of characters, the other provides a ground to analyze a work of art as a genre. In the following chapters, Archetypal/Mythical criticism from the two points of view will be discussed in detail.

1.2. Myth and Archetype as a Criticism

Emergence of myth and archetype in the context of literary criticism begins by noticing the recurrent images in myth studies. Anthropological studies of myth revealed repeated images. These studies solely focus on the parallels between the analogies of images in mythic stories. They deal with mythology and archetype in material terms. However, C.G. Jung deals with them in intellectual and immaterial terms. His studies theorize myths and archetypes and present them in relation to the collective unconscious. Although his archetypal theory is not originally formulated as a literary theory, his studies and his way of seeing through collective unconscious

and archetypes paved new paths for Jungian oriented literary theories. The leading one of these theories is Northrop Frye's Archetypal Theory and Criticism. He applied Jungian archetypes to literature and theorized them in literary terms. Rather than dealing with the collective unconscious and the archetypes as concepts, his interest is on their effects and functions. According to Frye, literary archetypes have an essential role in fashioning the culture. They embody and adopt culture for fundamental human needs and concerns. Northrop Frye's archetypal theory deals mainly with literature in terms of literary genres. Frye categorizes genres into four main titles. He uses seasons in his archetypal schema, which determines how an archetype is to be interpreted in a text. In the part below, Jungian Archetypal/Myth theory, the essential archetypes he focuses on and Northrop Frye's literary adaptation of Archetypal/ Myth theory and his genres based on seasons will be discussed in detail respectively.

1.2.1. Archetypes in Psychology: Jung's Archetypal/Myth Theory

Jung, with his theory, offers an understanding of both literature and the life of the psyche. His psychological theory provides also an understanding of matters in literature and literary criticism. Jung's application of psychology to literature launches a literary criticism which enables scholars to draw parallels between contemporaneity and antiquity. Unearthing the ties between the contemporary works of art of literature and literary works of antiquity, it gives wide and deep historical significance to literature. Thus, this re-visioning of literature in terms of psychology ". . . give[s] shape and significance to the chaotic material of contemporary life."²⁸

Seeing literature in terms of a mythic framework gives a new conception also to myth. Etymologically the root of "myth" is the same as mystery.²⁹ Myth is linked with the mystery of human life and differentiates the human from rest of all the animals. "*Mythos* meant 'word', and the development of man's use of the term from

²⁸ Elizabeth Drew (1992). "T. S. Eliot: The Mythical Vision". In R. B. Sugg (Ed.) *Jungian Literary Criticism*. (Evanston: North- western University Press), p. 10

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 11

mythos to epos to logos is itself the story of his developing use of language: from the word meaning a symbolic reflection of his earliest consciousness to the word meaning a structure of events in time, to the word meaning a pattern of rational values.”³⁰

Jungian literary theory points out that myth is not a dead form but it survives in the collective unconscious. He says that “myth is not a historical remnant because it continues to make influence felt on the highest levels of civilization.”³¹ Its effects along with the effects of the archetypes are still evident in the collective unconscious of the contemporary wo/man. Jung thinks that the source and the energy for symbol making come from the unconscious. But, as already suggested, Jung’s conception of the unconscious departed from the Freudian conception of the unconscious. Jung thinks that such an unconscious layer which is personal and which contains the forces to be suppressed is inadequate to be the source of symbol making. He is of the idea that symbols are not only generated from the personal unconscious but also from a deep layer, which he names the “collective unconscious” and accepts as the source of symbol making.

To Jung, the collective unconscious generates some patterns called “archetypes” or “primordial images,” which he points out. Jung does not mean by archetypes certain, innate images or ideas. He discusses that even though they “. . . do not produce any contents of themselves; they give definite form to contents that have already been acquired . . . [and he arranges them] within certain categories.”³² The five categories Jung specifies as main archetypes of human psychology are: “Self,” “Shadow,” “Anima”/ “Animus” and “Persona.”

Jung defines self as a “supraordinate concept”³³ because he conceives it as denoted entity. After the unconscious, Jung’s starting point toward the concept of the

³⁰ Elizabeth Drew (1992). “T. S. Eliot: The Mythical Vision”. In R. B. Sugg (Ed.) *Jungian Literary Criticism*. (Evanston: North- western University Press), p. 11

³¹ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes*. (London: Routledge), p. 142

³² Micheal Vonnoy Adams (1997). “The Archetypal School”. In P. Young-Eisendrath, T. Dawson (Eds.) *The Cambridge companion to Jung*. (Cambridge University Press), p. 108

³³ Carl Gustav. Jung (1971). *The Portable Jung*. (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.) J. Campbell (Ed.) (London: Penguin Books), p. 139

self is “Ego.” Jung defines ego as “the complex factor to which all conscious contents are related. It forms, as it were, the centre of the field of the consciousness; and in so far as this comprises the empirical personality, the ego is the subject of all personal acts of consciousness.”³⁴ Jung means by the ego a centre which “rests on the total field of consciousness.”³⁵ When a total personality is conceived, the ego is not adequate to fill it. A total description of personality should also include the unconscious although it is impossible to know all its contents. Jung’s concept of the self is a total personality which includes consciousness and the ego as its centre and also the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. According to Jung, self is a kind of personality different from the ego-centered personality. It informs the individual about his own self. It represents also the relationship of the human with other humans, animals, plants, briefly with nature. It is the centre of this unity, functioning as a magnet which gathers all parts of the personality and the unconscious processes. In order to comprehend it fully, all parts of self need to be in balance because it consists of the contradictions or opposites such as human good and evil or feminine and masculine elements. It also includes four human functions: thinking, sensation, intuition, and feeling. Suffice it to say; apart from being a total personal centre, self is also a centre which is composed of relations with the whole world.

Self has archetypal images which are frequent in dreams, visions and fantasies. These figures are generally human figures such as “Shadow”, “The Wise Old Man, “The Child,” “The Mother,” “The Anima in man, “The Animus in woman.”³⁶ Besides human figures, there are also other two basic figures which appear in dreams, visions and fantasies. One is a circle which appears in various forms. The other is a four square. A thing that has four edges can be a symbol of the self.

³⁴ Carl Gustav Jung (1971). The Portable Jung. (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.) J. Campbell (Ed.) (London: Penguin Books), p. 139.

³⁵ *ibid.* p. 141

³⁶ Carl Gustav Jung (1968). Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 183

Shadow is the other chief archetype Jung investigates. It is also one of the determinants and the archetype of the self as stated above. It represents the repressed, denied, undeveloped things in the unconscious mind, thus, symbolizing images the person could not prevent and s/he does not wish to be.³⁷ It is the primitive and the uncontrolled side of the person. Shadow represents the wishes and the feelings that are incompatible with the social ideals and the standards. It is everything the person would be embarrassed to show and tries to repress. Generally, people do not want to know about their Shadow side.

Shadow exists both collectively and personally. Cultural shadow also helps personal shadow develop. Cultural shadow is about the ideology of the culture. Everything seen as evil, dark primitive unacceptable by the culture constitutes the shadow side of the culture.

As we become indoctrinated into the ideology of our culture, we repress the parts of our selves that do not readily fit into our culture's views of the admirable, the sacred, and the acceptable. These repressed aspects of our selves mesh with the character of groups that our culture marginalizes. We then project the evil side of our culture onto these groups, seeing them as more different, more threatening, than they really are.³⁸

These groups and the images they are identified with represent the "Collective Other" we are conditioned to despise. On the other hand, personal shadow is formed by the ideology of the collective shadow, but it is also formed by the ego because what ego excludes defines the contents of the shadow. "All the ideals, qualities, habits that the ego represses or denies go into the make-up of the shadow, which then manifests itself in dreams and unconscious symptoms."³⁹ One has to balance the wishes of his/her ego and his/her shadow. In order to do this, one has to own up to the dark qualities of his shadow.

³⁷ Frieda Fordham. (1997) *Jung Psikolojisi* (A. Yalçın, Trans.) (İstanbul: Say Yayınları), p. 161

³⁸ George H. Jensen (2004). "Situating Jung in Contemporary Critical Theory". In J. S. Baumlin, T. F. Baumlin, G. H. Jensen (Eds.) *Post-Jungian: theory and practice*. (Sunny: State University of New York), p. 16

³⁹ Susan Rowland (2002). *Jung: A Feminist Revision*. (Wiley:Blackwell Press.), P. 31

Apart from the shadow archetype, Anima is also mother unconscious aspect in the individual, chief aspect in the psychological development of the person. According to Jung, the unconscious mind completes the conscious mind. In every man, there is a supplementary unconscious female aspect. Jung calls it “anima.” Although, there are universal features of anima archetype that can be found in myths such as Eros and Psyche, Pluto and Persephone, Perseus and Medusa; each man has his own anima pattern.⁴⁰ It is variable in each man according to their experiences. It is “. . . a stable attitudinal / emotional / motivational pattern within the overall personality of an individual.”⁴¹ Jung states that the anima image is composed in a relationship with a woman, first with the mother. On other words, child’s perceiving the mother’s attitudes and manners constitutes the anima image in the child. Later, in life the child projects the elements of his anima onto the women and interprets their manners and attitudes in terms of his anima. According to Jung, anima image is dialectical. On the one hand, it is an innocent, good, royal and goddess like figure. On the other hand, it is a prostitute, witch and tempting figure. Anima archetype represents good and evil sides that are thought to be in women. In the situations when a man represses the female aspects in him or despises women and female qualities, his anima displays itself negatively in his relationships with women, also in his dreams, fantasies, creative activities and emotional situations. She is the force whispering to his ear, generating evil emotions in him and affecting his day negatively or appearing in his dreams in seductive figures and spoiling his sleep.⁴²

As in every man there is an “Anima,” in every woman there is an “Animus.” Jung’s ideas on animus are not as extensive as the anima. He says that women do not experience animus as men do the anima. It stems from two sources: one is her own masculinity based on her relationships with men. The other is her own masculine root within herself.⁴³ The father forms the animus image in the woman. As man does, in later life the woman would project the elements of her animus onto men and

⁴⁰ Elio Frattaroli (2008). “Me and My Anima: Through the dark glass of the Jungian/Freudian interface”. In P. Young-Eisendrath, T. Dawson (Eds.) *The Cambridge companion to Jung*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.), p. 173

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 173

⁴² Frieda Fordhan. (1997) *Jung Psikolojisi*. (A. Yalçın, Trans.) (İstanbul: Say Yayınları) pp. 67-69

⁴³ ibid, p. 69

perceive man according to her animus. Differently from anima, animus may be formed out of different men figures from the most primitive to the most almighty. Susan Rowland says in her book Jung: A Feminist Revision that unlike the anima “. . . animus is negative.”⁴⁴ It is accurate to some extent because Jung generally pointed out negative aspects of the animus. To Jung, it forms the rational, judgmental side of the woman. It creates the wishes of being resolute. When her animus affects her, she becomes cruel and hostile. She generally puts forward ordinary ideas and sets up rules. Animus appears as a boy or just a voice in the dreams of woman.⁴⁵

Persona is the other archetype Jung believes to exist in the unconscious along with “Shadow” and “anima/animus.” It is a part in ego which is the centre of consciousness. Jung used the word “Persona” on purpose because he was inspired from the masks that Greek actors wore on stage. Therefore, he uses the Greek word for these masks. In the civilization process, cultures define their borders including the approved way of life and excluding the denied, repressed thoughts and conducts which are represented by the shadow. In these borders, every one should conform to the roles expected of him. In order to be prosperous in life, one has to conform to what is expected of him/her. In other words, s/he should put on his/her mask, namely persona. Persona is defined as “. . . a kind of surface ‘personality,’ created to deal with the world in the form of strangers, it is the psychological ‘face’ shown in one’s professional job, and perhaps even to the immediate family if the unconscious has been pushed (unhealthily) out of relationships.”⁴⁶

Like shadow, persona is also both collective and personal. In a society every person has a role and society expects everyone to act out the roles they choose for themselves. Persona results from the need to establish relations with the outer world, and it indicates what can be expected from the outer world. Persona is personal when an individual chooses the role for himself or herself. They define their own roles in the world. However, when they fail to develop their persona, they become rude,

⁴⁴ Susan Rowland (2002). Jung: A Feminist Revision. (Wiley:Blackwell Press.), p. 50

⁴⁵ Frieda Fordham (1997). Jung Psikolojisi. (A. Yalçın,Trans.) (İstanbul: Say Yayınları), pp. 70-73

⁴⁶ Susan Rowland (2002). Jung: A Feminist Revision. (Wiley:Blackwell Press.), p. 31

restless people who find it difficult to keep up with their persona.⁴⁷ They feel lost and do not decide which role to choose. On the other hand, there are other types who are totally adopted their personas. Jung states that these people turn into stereotypes ignoring the other characteristics of their personality, so they are not successful in their relations with other people.

The archetypes introduced above form the basic elements of the human psyche. For Jung, self, comprising the shadow, the anima/animus, and the persona draws the fundamental and basic sketch of the human mind. However, other than these archetypes, Jung formulated several archetypes by which he illuminates human psychology. He gathers the most significant ones in his book Four Archetypes: Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster in which he explains these archetypes in detail. He believes that these archetypes have crucial effects on the human psyche.

The most fundamental archetype, Jung analyzes, is the “Mother” archetype. He bases this archetype on the concept of the “Great Mother” and varying types of her. Mother archetype is formed firstly by the image of the personal mother and the image of any woman whom the person is in relationship. Besides this, things that might be termed as a mother form the mother archetype such as “mother of God, “the virgin.” Jung states that mother archetype has a dialectical quality possessing two different aspects: positive and negative. He says;

the [positive] qualities associated with it are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic authority of the female; the wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcend reason; any helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains that fosters growth and fertility.⁴⁸

Mythology offers examples of that archetype; for instance, in Demeter and Kore myth: mother figure appears as the maiden figure. In the myth of Cybele-Attis, mother also appears as the beloved. Mother archetype also emerges figuratively for example,

⁴⁷ Frieda Fordham (1997). Jung Psikolojisi. (A. Yalçın, Trans.) (İstanbul: Say Yayınları), p. 60

⁴⁸ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). Four Archetypes. (London: Routledge), p. 16

. . . the goal of our longing for redemption, such as Paradise, the Kingdom of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem [constitutes the figurative images]. Many things arousing devotion or feeling of awe, as for instance the church, university, city or country, heaven, earth, the woods, the sea or any still waters, matter even, the underworld and the moon can be mother symbols.⁴⁹

Things and places that sustain growth and abundance also represent the mother archetype figuratively. Jung exemplifies that “. . . the cornucopia, a ploughed field, a garden[,] . . . a rock, a cave, a tree, a spring, a deep well, or . . . various vessels such as the baptismal font, or to vessel-shaped flowers like the rose or the lotus”⁵⁰ are examples of them. “On the negative side,” Jung indicates, “the mother archetype may connote anything secret, hidden, and dark; the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces, and poisons, that is terrifying and inescapable like fate.”⁵¹ In the figurative sense, Jung associates the negative aspects of the mother archetype with evil symbols such as “the witch” or “the dragon.” He also associates it with “. . . any devouring and entwining animals such as a large fish or a serpent.”⁵² “Death,” “nightmare,” and “deep-water” might also be the symbols for the mother archetype.

Mother archetype appears as a complex in a person and its effects are variable in a son and in a daughter. The mother complex of the son is projected through homosexuality, Don Juanism and impotence. The most common embodiment of mother archetype is Don Juanism. Jung described that “. . . in Don Juanism, [son] unconsciously seeks his mother in every woman he meets.”⁵³ Jung believes that there are positive and negative aspects of Don Juanism. He states that the positive aspect:

. . . gives him a great capacity for friendship, which often creates ties of astonishing tenderness between men and may even rescue friendship between the sexes from the limbo of the impossible. He may have good taste and an aesthetic sense[;] . . . he may be supremely gifted as a teacher because of his almost feminine insight

⁴⁹ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes*. (London: Routledge), p. 15

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 15

⁵¹ *ibid*, p. 16

⁵² *ibid*, p. 16

⁵³ *ibid*, p. 19

and tact. He is likely to have a feeling for history . . . cherish[es] the values of the past.”⁵⁴

Jung emphasizes that the negative aspect of Don Juanism may emerge as a positive aspect in man such as “. . . bold and resolute manliness, ambitious striving after the highest goals; opposition to all stupidity, narrow-mindedness, injustice, and laziness; willing to make sacrifices for what is regarded as right.”⁵⁵

Jung examines the mother complex of a daughter extensively because he believes that its effects are more variable and excessive on a daughter. Jung analyzes the effects under four titles. However, he focuses on the negative aspects of the effects. The first is the exaggeration of the maternal element in the daughter. Jung describes:

the only goal [of the daughter in this category] is childbirth. To her the husband is obviously of secondary importance; he is first and foremost the instrument of procreation, and she regards him merely as an object to be looked after, along with children, poor relations, cats, dogs, and household furniture. Even her own personality is of secondary importance; she often remains entirely unconscious of it, for her life is lived in and through others, in more or less complete identification with all the objects of her care.⁵⁶

Women in this category live for others and cannot make real sacrifices. She is unaware of the capabilities of her mind. In fact, they are blind to their own “selves.” The second aspect of the mother complex is the overdevelopment of Eros. Women of this type lack the maternal instinct completely. They have extended Eros. The third aspect is the identity with the mother. This type of woman’s femininity is tightly bounded to his mother. Her personality is the embodiment of her mother’s personality. She lives as a shadow of her mother. She is innocent and passive. She believes that she would not attain the perfection of her mother’s life so she turns to her mother in her every failure in life. The last aspect that Jung presents is resistance to mother. Jung points out that “the motto of this type is: anything, so long as it is not

⁵⁴ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), pp. 20-21

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 21

⁵⁶ *ibid*, p. 22

like mother!”⁵⁷ She does not like maternal traits. She is apathetic to matters related to family, convention or society. She uses her intellectuality to criticize her mother.

Although, Jung stresses the negative aspect of mother archetype on the daughter in detail, he notes its positive aspects in general. Mother of love “. . . means homecoming shelter, and the long silence from which everything begins and in which everything ends . . . intimately known and yet strange like Nature lovingly tender and yet cruel like fate . . .”⁵⁸ These images are attributed to the daughter as a positive aspects of the mother archetype.

“Rebirth” is the other significant archetype in the collective unconscious. Jung categorizes it into five groups: “Transformation of the soul,” “Reincarnation,” “Resurrection,” “Rebirth,” and “Process of Transformation.” However, he focuses his interest solely on the study of the archetype of “rebirth.” To Jung, rebirth is a psychic reality which comes indirectly. He divides the rebirth archetype into two groups. One is the experience of transcendence of life. Jung links this archetype to mystery-dramas. He says “. . . [it] is usually represented by the fateful transformations –death and birth– of a god or a godlike hero.”⁵⁹ In the process of this transcendence, “. . . an objective substance or form of life is ritually transformed through some process going on independently, while the initiate is influenced, impressed, ‘consecrated,’ or granted ‘divine grace’ on the more ground of his presence or participation.”⁶⁰ He uses the myth of Osiris as an example. In the myth Osiris, Osiris, who is the god in Egypt, is slayed and then is found in a trunk of a tree by his wife Isis. His body is dissected and than burned. His ashes are scattered to several places. Later, he is reborn like a phoenix from his ashes and becomes immortal.

A specific form of rebirth, Jung examines, is rebirth by means of one’s own transformation. He links that form with the differentiation of personality in a person.

⁵⁷ Carl Gustav Jung (1998). *Four Archetypes* . (London: Routledge), p. 24

⁵⁸ *ibid*, p. 26

⁵⁹ *ibid*, p. 51

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 51

Again, he divides the form of subjective transformation into groups. One is the diminution of personality. By diminution of personality, Jung means “loss of soul” and symptoms of depression in a person. It affects the individual both physically and psychologically. Consciousness is disintegrated, and one feels physically exhausted. The other form of subjective transformation is the opposite of the above mentioned. It is the enlargement of personality. Jung describes it as “new and vital contents finding way into the personality from outside and being assimilated.”⁶¹ Personality increases in a significant sense. However, if there is not adequate psychic depth in a person, this means s/he is not capable of assimilating the contents that come from without, causing an inner poverty. Jung stresses a proverb related to this type that is “a man grows with the greatness of his task.”⁶²

Change of the internal structure is another form of rebirth. In that form personality changes according to the role of the persona. The person is totally identified with his/her persona. For this reason, s/he is unable to develop his own unique personality. S/he lives in terms of her/his mask. In addition to identification with the persona, one can also identify his/her personality with his/her anima/animus or shadow. In such cases, they take over the ego of the person.

The final form of rebirth is natural transformation. Jung’s starting point is nature because death and rebirth are basic natural forms. He says that natural transformation takes place in the psyche, and it displays itself in the forms of symbols in dreams. Jung states that these symbols encountered in dreams are the reflections of inner feelings. Jung describes this kind of transformation as “. . . [it is] a long drawn-out process of inner transformation and rebirth into another being. This ‘other being’ is the other person in ourselves that is longer and greater friend of the soul.”⁶³

The third archetype Jung analyzes is “Spirit.” He turns to folklore to explain this archetype. He states that spirit is an entity between life and death and it is

⁶¹ Carl Gustav Jung, (1998). Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), p. 54

⁶² *ibid*, pp. 54-55

⁶³ *ibid*, p. 65

represented by “shadowy images.” Spirit archetype is generally illustrated by the father image that is chiefly projected as a wise-old man in dreams or in fairy tales. He has authority and he makes final judgments. He emerges when a hero feels desperate in a situation. He always gives a piece of advice and asks questions for the self-reflection of the hero. He is the representative of “. . . knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness, intuition, moral qualities, good will and readiness to help, which make his ‘spiritual’ character sufficiently plain.”⁶⁴ Spirit might also be represented by the image of real spirit of a dead person, talking animals and dwarf figures. There are also negative sides of the spirit archetype. It can appear as the opposite image of the hero.

“Trickster” is the final archetype Jung deals with in his book. Jung states that “all mythical figures correspond to inner psychic experiences and originally sprang from them.”⁶⁵ As a consequence, although he expresses mythical images of the “trickster” as a “shape-shifting” figure, “half- animal,” and “half-divine” which have dualistic nature, fundamentally he relates trickster archetype to shadow which is an inner psychic part of the unconscious. According to Jung, shadow is personified in civilization. Hence, “the ‘trickster’ [becomes] a collective figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals.”⁶⁶

Briefly, Jung’s studies on archetypes lead him to analyze myths and literary works of art in terms of recurrent patterns. In the course of his studies, he found similar patterns and similar meanings attributed to specific entities and objects which characterize the person’s psychology. In the long run of his studies, he formalized a distinct literary criticism based on archetypes. His archetypal theory includes myths since Jung conceives myths as a ground which indicates the essential archetypal patterns forming the human mind.

⁶⁴ Carl Gustav Jung, (1998). Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), p. 100

⁶⁵ *ibid*, p. 136

⁶⁶ *ibid*, p. 150

1.2.2. Northrop Frye's Archetypal/Myth Theory from Literary Perspective

Northrop Frye is one of the leading literary critics of our age and his application of Archetypal Theory to literature has had a great influence on several critics and writers. He marks a decisive turning point in the history of literary criticism. His book Anatomy of Criticism presents an influential theory to the reading of literature. Frye's critical theory is nourished by anthropological, historical and psychological researches. He is affected by Sir James Frazer's studies on anthropology while forming his critical theory on archetypes. Frazer's Golden Bough is a significant study because it marked a turning point in approaches to culture. In Golden Bough, Frazer gathers universal patterns in various cultures including the patterns of modern western culture of today. Again, Frye is influenced by Freud's Totem and Taboo in which he introduces the traces of primeval patterns in modern civilization. Northrop Frye is also influenced by historians like Spengler who was a German historian and culture critic. Spenglerian view of culture is a progressive one. He sees Western history as aging and cyclical in order to restore the system. Not only does Frye's critical theory interweave specific anthropological and historical studies, but also and most importantly, it is inspired by Jung's psychological approach to archetypes. On theorizing his Archetypal approach, C.G Jung's studies on archetypes and the collective unconscious become a starting point to Frye.

Essentially, influential studies like Frazer's Golden Bough and Joseph Campbell's A Hero with a Thousand Faces imply recurrent patterns in myths and their continuance beneath the surface of modern Western civilization. The impact of these studies led Jung to find a collective psychic territory which he called "collective unconscious." Jung's theorizing these repeated patterns and introducing the collective unconscious as their source launched a new perspective to culture and history from the point of psyche as their only cause. Jung's originating archetypes as a literary theory inspired Northrop Frye in great sense. However, Jung's theory envisioning the world through human psyche, collective unconscious and archetypes is not adequate for Frye to be a literary theory. Thus, he departs from Jungian theory and presents his own view of myths and archetypes as literary theory.

Frye bases his Archetypal Theory on understanding literature and literary texts. Therefore, different from Jungian Archetypal Theory, his theory is a kind of reading stages to understand texts. Again, his theory is similar to Jungian theory structurally. While Jung bases his theory on human psychology, Frye bases it to the reader. Jungian individuation process which is a person's developmental process to maturity is adapted by Frye to a model of reading texts. According to Jung, at the center of individuation process, there is self and the self is surrounded by four points which complete the person. They are thinking, intuition, sensation and feeling.⁶⁷ Self experiences these four points in an archetypal sense and they're presented in archetypal images. When they are balanced by the self, they create a sense of harmony in individual. Frye adapts this model of Jung to his theory. For Frye, at the center there lies the reader and four significant points that surround the reader are the literary genres by which Frye categorizes literary texts. These four points are "Romance," "Tragedy," "Comedy" and "Satire" which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Frye's application and adaptation of Jung's psychological archetypal theory to literature departed him from Jung. Frye theorizes a reading theory based on archetypes. He employs three main points: plot structure, character type and thematic phase in his genre oriented theory. By this way, while Jung sees literature through collective unconscious and archetypal images related to psychology, Frye divides literature to recurrent genres and conventions and handles literature in terms of genres which are specified by archetypes.

Frye puts forward the idea that literature should be learnt through criticism. He sees criticism as a science and he puts it among sciences because he thinks that criticism has every characteristic of science. According to him, there are two kinds of criticism. One is ". . . the unified criticism of all the arts."⁶⁸ The second one is ". . .

⁶⁷ Ford Russel (1998). Northrop Frye on Myth: An Introduction. (New York and London: Garland), p. 123

⁶⁸ Northrop Frye, (1973). The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism. (Canada: Indiana University Press.), p. 14

the same area of verbal expression which has not yet been defined and which is called mythology.”⁶⁹ While theorizing his criticism, Frye tries to base it on a ground. The important thing for him is that while generating meaning from a literary work of art, how meaning could be generated. He implies that “archetype” is the right word to derive meaning.

In his book Critical Path which is one of his fundamental books outlining his Archetypal theory, he presents a discussion of criticisms of literature. He discusses the literary theories of the nineteenth century and states their weaknesses to see literature objectively. He finds biographical approach inadequate because he believes that poet’s life or a writer’s life is not an essential key to the deeper understanding of a work of art. He also thinks that historical approach to literature will not assimilate literature from some other kind of history. He says that “criticism must develop a sense of history within literature to complement the historical criticism that relates literature to its non-literary historical background.”⁷⁰

Conventions, genres and archetypes of literature develop from historical origins. He thinks that a society has a framework of mythology, out of which all verbal culture grows out. Verbal culture has group of stories which are called “myths” or the “true fables.” According to Frye, folktales change from culture to culture. However, myths are permanent and they affect language, reference, allusion, belief and tradition.⁷¹ He says that “when a culture develops, its mythology tends to become encyclopedic, expending into a total myth covering a society’s view of its past, present and future; its relation to its gods and its ultimate destiny.”⁷² Frye thinks that there is such a ground or in his own words “total myth” that shapes the society. This kind of myth comprises everything that the society has. Frye calls it “mythology of concern.”⁷³

⁶⁹Northrop Frye, (1973). The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism. (Canada: Indiana University Press.), p. 14

⁷⁰ ibid, p. 24

⁷¹ ibid, p. 35

⁷² ibid, p. 36

⁷³ ibid, p. 36

Myth of concern establishes society. It has roots in religion which binds the society together as a main force. Frye states that belief was verbalized and it became a statement to participate in a myth of concern. Later, different branches such as political, literary were developed which derived from religion. Influence of social concern is traditional repeating similar legends and learnings. Frye thinks that “concern is deeply attached to ritual, to connotations, weddings, funerals, parades and demonstrations, where something is publicly done that express an inner social identity.”⁷⁴ For this reason, it is apparent that it creates a kind of cultural and social structure in a society. Frye says that “. . . it is not easy to break out of the mental habits formed by a mythical framework, or what is often called a tradition. . .”⁷⁵ Concern becomes an essential thing to be accepted by every individual because it is the only way to live in the human community. It is beneath the surface of every institution and psychological, scientific and historical presupposition in a society.

Northrop Frye thinks that literature is the great code of concern. It is tightly related to the central life of the humanity.⁷⁶ However, he adds that

literature is not it self a myth of concern. It displays the imaginative possibilities of concern, the total range of verbal fictions and models and images and metaphors out of which all myth of concern are constructed. The modern critic is therefore a student of mythology, and his total subject embraces not merely literature, but the areas of concern which the mythical language of construction and belief enters and informs.⁷⁷

So, Frye’s conceiving literature as the employer and displayer of myth of concern is the main point in his Archetypal/Myth criticism. For this reason, he defends that literature is best understood through Archetypal/Myth criticism.

Differently from Jung, Frye’s concept of archetype is tightly related to his notion of “myth of concern” and “literary narratives.” Jung handles archetypes as

⁷⁴ Northrop Frye, (1973). The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism. (Canada: Indiana University Press.), p. 44

⁷⁵ *ibid*, p. 50

⁷⁶ *ibid*, p.128

⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 98

they are the products of “collective unconscious” and thinks that collective unconscious shapes them. On the other hand, Frye does not employ the concept of collective unconscious to his theory because he accepts it as it is improvable part of human mind. Rather, he defines archetype as a symbol or an image, which recurs in literature as a recognizable element. His argument is on the recurrent narrative patterns which he names “mythoi.” They are the shared narrative patterns not only of pre-literary forms such as ritual, myth, folktale but also of literary forms.

Frye thinks that literature is the representation of “myth of concern” and human experience. He handles a literary work as a mere reflection of a real life. He based narrative and imagery patterns on myth, human rituals and folk customs. According to him, human beings need to humanize the natural phenomena around them. For this reason, narrative patterns emerge as the representations of natural cycles. All human beings try to cope with the similar natural characteristics and cycles so their coping with them is similar. They reflect this effort to literature. As a result, there is underlying recurrent patterns and structures in literature.

In addition to recognizing an imitation of nature as a structure in literature, Frye implies the importance of recognizing the imitation of other poems. He says that

if we do not accept the archetypal or conventional element in the imagery that links one poem with another, it is impossible to get any systematic mental training out of the reading of literature alone. But if we add to our desire to know literature a desire to know how we know it, we shall find that expanding images into conventional archetypes of literature is a process that takes place unconsciously in all our reading.⁷⁸

As a whole, Frye’s Archetypal theory deals with the recurrence of certain narrative patterns in the history of Western literature which he called “archetype.” For him, “archetypes are associative clusters, and differ from signs in being complex variables. Within the complex is often a large number of specific learned associations

⁷⁸ Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 100

which are communicable because a large number of people in a given culture happen to be familiar with them.”⁷⁹ It is a communicable symbol. It travels through the world without effort within folktales, ballads getting over barriers of culture and language. Frye thinks that archetypes are derived from the human’s attempt to humanize natural cycles so he draws parallels between the natural cycles, rituals and myth. He bases his Archetypal theory on these parallels. His Archetypal theory is a method of classification because in his view of criticism of literature, one has to stand back from the literary work to see its underlying organization and to notice the analogical patterns with other literary works. In order to understand recurrent narrative patterns that literary works share, he divides literary works into specific genres and draws parallels between natural cycles and myth.

Frye’s theory of genres which he called mythoi is based on seasons. This theory includes “mythoi of summer (romance),” “mythoi of spring (comedy),” “mythoi of autumn (tragedy)” and “mythoi of winter (irony and satire).” He uses the symbolism of the Bible and Classical Mythology theorizing his genres. In his book Anatomy of Criticism, before outlining his genres, he begins by emphasizing the two myths, heaven and hell as apocalyptic and the demonic. In his theory of mythos he sets out the structures of imagery in these worlds because of basing his genres on them. The Apocalyptic world, in other words “heaven of religion,” [provides] the categories of reality in the forms of human desire as indicated by the forms they assume under the work of human civilization.”⁸⁰ The city, the garden, and the sheepfold are structural elements in that world. There are three human fulfillments: individual, sexual and social.⁸¹ On the other hand, Demonic Imagery is

. . . the world of the nightmare and the scapegoat, of bondage and pain and confusion; the world as it is before the human imagination begins to work on it and before any image of human desire, such as the city or the garden, has been solidly established the world also of perverted or wasted work, ruins and catacombs, instruments of torture and monuments of folly.⁸²

⁷⁹ Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 102

⁸⁰ *ibid*, p. 141

⁸¹ *ibid*, pp. 141-147

⁸² *ibid*, p. 147

It is the world that human desire rejects. The organizing elements of that world are threatening powers of nature in an underdeveloped society. There is human futility when compared with divine order. Sacrifices, punishments, obedience to natural and moral laws are the demands in that world. In the demonic human world, there is a polarized society; on the one hand, there is one individual who is the tyrant-leader.⁸³ He is “. . . inscrutable, ruthless, melancholy, and with an insatiable will who commands loyalty any if he is ego-centric enough to represent the collective ego of his followers.”⁸⁴ On the other pole, there is a sacrificed victim or “pharmakos,” in other words scapegoat, who has to be killed for the sake of others.⁸⁵ Frye thinks that the imagery in these worlds is unchanging. They provide the fundamental imagery base in Frye’s Archetypal theory.

In his theory of mythos, besides the Apocalyptic and Demonic world imagery, there is a cyclical process. He employs seven categories of images in that cyclical process. The first is cycling divine movement, death and rebirth. He identifies this movement with other cycling process such as disappearance and return, incarnation and withdrawal which are the central movements in the divine world. The second is the cycling rhythm in the fire-world of heavenly bodies: the daily journey of the sun-god across the sky, solstitial cycle of solar year and lunar cycle. He relates them to death, appearance and resurrection. The third is dualistic cycling rhythm in the human world between the divine and animal world. These rhythms are like light and dark, waking and sleep, seeing and blindness. The fourth one is the difficulty of living a long, peaceful full span life. Tragic process can be encountered like accidents, sacrifices. The fifth is the cycle of the vegetable world like seasons. The sixth is about the poets. They have been Spenglerian. They employ the cycles of growth and decline. The seventh is water symbolism. It is also cycling in nature.⁸⁶ These cycling symbols are divided into four phases by Frye as “the four seasons,” “four periods of the day,” “four forms of water-cycle (rain,

⁸³ Northrop Frye (1957). *Anatomy of Criticism*. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), pp. 147–148

⁸⁴ *ibid*, p. 148

⁸⁵ *ibid*, p. 148

⁸⁶ *ibid*, pp. 158-159

fountain, river, sea, or snow),” “four periods of life.”⁸⁷ He suggests that “this symmetrical cosmology may be a branch of myth.”⁸⁸

In his narrative structure, he uses three-fold narrative imagery, he uses the Biblical symbolism, the “Heaven” –Apocalyptic world– is in the above place, and the “Hell”–demonic world– is the world below. In this dialectical structure, he put the cyclical order of nature in between. He calls the apocalyptic world, the world of romance and analogy of experience. Frye bases his genres on that dialectical symbolism. His “narrative categories of literature [are] broader than, or logically prior to, the ordinary literary genres.”⁸⁹ He forms his genres as opposing pairs, tragedy opposes comedy, romance opposes irony. However, he states that they can be blurring. For example, romance may include tragic or comic elements or tragedy may move into ironic realms.

In the discussion of “Mythoi of Spring,” in other words “comedy,” Frye explains the plot and characters of comedy. This is one of the most influential genres in his critical theory. As usual, he defines fundamental principles of comedy. Hero’s desire and his encountering with obstacles in achieving his desires form the action in comedy. Hero’s trying to overcome the obstacles becomes the comic element in comedy. In the final stage, comedy includes as many characters in its final society. The movement in comedy is from illusion to reality. Conventionally, it begins with “. . . disguise, obsession, hypocrisy or unknown parentage.”⁹⁰ It ends with reality, the opposite of it. Frye states two principles to develop a comedy. He implies the emphasis on the blocking characters and the emphasis on the discovery and restoration of harmony as the significant forms in comedy. Frye emphasizes that the fundamental element of humor is the repetition of pattern. He outlines four typical characters of comedy. He states that the fundamental character in a comedy is “alazons”⁹¹ which means a person who imposes law. In this character there is a lack

⁸⁷ Northrop Frye (1957). *Anatomy of Criticism*. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 160

⁸⁸ *ibid*, p. 161

⁸⁹ *ibid*, p. 162

⁹⁰ *ibid*, p. 170

⁹¹ *ibid*, p. 177

of self-knowledge, he is “a man of words, rather than deeds.”⁹² This character is generally applied to a heavy father figure with threats and rages. “Eirons” are the other type of character. Frye uses this word for the type of character who protests against the law imposer. This character is generally an innocent and neutral one; “Buffoon type” is also another type in comedy Frye stresses. They are functional characters in comedy. They are used in order to “increase the mood of festivity rather than to contribute to the plot.”⁹³ Professional fools, clowns, pages are among the Buffoon types. The last character type is “Agroikos” which means a type of character who is rude and rustic. They are the source of humor.

Besides outlining typical characters in comedy, Frye also outlines phases in it. If comedy is an ironic comedy, the world is demonic. There is a fear of death and it ends with serious and emotional tone. In the second phase, Frye emphasizes that hero does not change the society; he leaves it as it was before. In the third phase comic tone is strong. The details of the new society are emphasized. The fourth phase includes the transformation of the world of experience to the world of innocence. A happy society is established at the end. In the fifth phase, actions move from confusion to order. Chaotic world order is turned to an ordered world.

Frye’s theory of comedy narrative employs tragic concepts of “anagnorisis” or “cognito” and “catharsis” in comedy. He uses anagnorisis for the hero or heroine’s finding themselves in the contribution of reconciliation in a new society at the end. He thinks that comedy has catharsis like tragedy. In comedy, catharsis is raised by ridicule and sympathy.⁹⁴

Frye also has a detailed view of romance. First of all, he implies that romance is about a “wish-fulfillment dream.”⁹⁵ In fact, in every mythos he elaborates, he points out that there is a quest-myth so his romance genre is closest to all genres. He says that in each age “. . . the ruling social or intellectual class tends to project ideals

⁹² Northrop Frye (1957). *Anatomy of Criticism*. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 172

⁹³ *ibid*, p. 175

⁹⁴ *ibid*, pp. 163-185

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 186

in some form of romance, where the virtues heroes and beautiful heroines represent the ideals and the villains the treats to their ascendancy.”⁹⁶ But, he also emphasizes that there is a persistent aspect in romance which is in search of golden age in time. The fundamental element in romance is adventure sequences. The main adventure in romance gives the quest. Frye says that successful quest has three stages: the perilous journey and minor adventures (agon); the crucial struggle or battle in which hero or his enemy dies (pathos) and the exaltation of the hero (anagnorisis). This twice folded structure is repeated in several myths as the death, the disappearance and revival elements.

Dragon-killing is the central theme in romance. Its source is the Bible and the Genesis. Dragons or monsters represent the evil side and hero comes and rescues the kingdom, city or the world. In many myths, the dragon-killing theme is represented like this: hero travels to a dark labyrinthine of the underworld between sun setting and rising. This may also occur as a structural element in fiction. The labyrinth of the underworld presents “. . . a period of part time from which the hero is released by the sacrifice of a heroine.”⁹⁷ The other significant and central theme of romance is the quest of buried treasure. Here, treasure means wealth but metaphorically it may represent wisdom and power. The price of extra ordinary wisdom or power is mutilation or being disabled physically. Award for the quest is generally a bride. The quest theme in romance is analogous to rituals and dreams. In dreams, a person reaches the desires punished by parents or s/he is in search of libido. In rituals that Frye stresses, there is a triumph of fertility over the wasteland.

Characters in romance are dialectical. They are black or white and they are the opposites of their antagonists in moral law. Protagonist is pure and brave but, the antagonist is coward and evil. Frye says that “the faithful companion or shadow figure of the hero has his opposite in the traitor, the heroine her opposite in the siren or beautiful witch, the dragon his opposite in the friendly or helping animals.”⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 186

⁹⁷ *ibid*, p. 190

⁹⁸ *ibid*, p. 196

In romance narrative, Frye outlines six significant stages. Birth of the hero is the first stage. Generally, the beginning or ending of the cycle is represented by flood or other kinds of water symbols. Water is sometimes associated with a womb. In dry lands, generally animals keep an eye on the child or nurture him. In that stage, there is a mysterious parentage and there is a mark as a symbol on his body. Second stage includes hero's youth. It is similar to the story of Adam and Eve before their fall from the Eden. In that phase, young hero is controlled by parents. Characters want to escape to the world of action. Frye states that the third stage is the normal quest theme that is discussed above. In the fourth stage, the innocent world is against the world of experience. It is the stage that hero is accomplishing his quest. The fifth stage takes part after action. The lovers get on top of a hierarchy in that stage. The last stage points the end of the quest from action to a relaxed state.

“Mythos of autumn” in other words, “tragedy” is the other mythoi Frye defines. Frye gives a more importance to this genre because he thought that it is about present and the characters behave more like human. He says that in romance, characters are dream characters, in satire characters behave like caricatures and in comedy characters are sketched for the happy ending. However, in tragedy characters act according to nature, there are no magical or supernatural elements as “deus ex machine” to solve the conflicts. There is generally a bleak mood in tragedies. However, in order to have a bleak mood, they do not have to end in catastrophe or disaster. While comedy deals with a group of people, tragedy deals and focuses on an individual and the criticism is on the acts of that individual. He calls that individual tragic hero as “[he] is on top of the wheel of fortune, half way between human society on the ground and the something greater in the sky. In tragedies, gods are there to balance the nature, they do not have ultimate power and fate is the strangest power in tragedies.

Frye implies that tragedy has two formulas. The first one is “omnipotence of an external fate.”⁹⁹ In that formula human effort is limited and there is a power above all human. The central character is a hero and s/he has great splendor which gives the tragedy the characteristic of excitement when the hero falls. The other formula is the “violation of moral law”¹⁰⁰ by human or a divine being. Frye says that almost every tragic hero has hubris which means excessive pride and self-confidence which brings him to his downfall. Hubris is an essential term in tragedies. Frye uses Aristotelian framework of tragedy so he used Aristotelian concepts. “Anagnorisis” is one of them. It is an essential concept in tragedy related to the hero. It is the hero’s discovery of his self but it is not a simple knowledge about him. “It is the recognition of the determined shape of the life he has created for himself with an implicit comparison with the uncreated potential life he has forsaken.”¹⁰¹ “Cognito” is another element related to time in tragedy. It is the recognition of unavoidable flow of time. Hero’s downfall makes him recognize the cognito so time begins for the hero with his fall. “Mimesis of Sacrifice” is another element which occurs in crucial moments in tragedy. It is a state based on paradoxes. There is “. . . a fearful sense of rightness (the hero must fall) and a pitying sense of wrongness (it is too bad that he falls).”¹⁰² Frye likens this paradoxical situation in tragedy to sacrifice. In the same way, in sacrifices there is a unity, a group and in spite of a group there is great power for which a thing or a person should be sacrificed for the sake of the group.

In terms of characterization, Frye says that hero belongs to “alazon” group. Alazons as defined before are imposters of a law. They are deceived by their hubris. They are “semi-devine figure[s] in [their] own eyes.”¹⁰³ In great majority of tragedies, there is a foreseer or soothsayer who sees the end and warns the hero. Suppliant characters are generally female who are helpless, fragile and destitute. They are threatened by death or rape. The suppliant character has generally a place that lost the place of greatness. The other character type is the dealer with the event.

⁹⁹ Northrop Frye (1957). *Anatomy of Criticism*. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 209

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*, p. 210

¹⁰¹ *ibid*, p.212

¹⁰² *ibid*, p.241

¹⁰³ *ibid*, p. 217

It is generally a reliable and loyal friend of the hero who refuses to accept the tragic actions through catastrophe.

Frye states that there are five phases in “tragedy.” The first phase begins with the birth of a hero with full of dignity, innocence and courage. The second phase is about the inexperienced youth of hero. She is “lack of worldly wisdom.”¹⁰⁴ The third phase corresponds to the achievements of the hero. The fourth phase is about hero’s downfall because of hybris. This is the period in which hero passes from the innocent stage to experienced stage. With the fall of the hero, ironic tone emerges. In the fifth stage, ironic tone increases, heroic one diminishes. In that phase, hero feels that s/he has no sense of knowledge and direction. The last phase of tragedy ends with shock and horror for the hero. After that, with the loss of heroic state, hero feels humiliated and he feels great sorrow. Frye emphasizes that symbols in that stage are torture and mutilation. Besides, prison or madhouse is other essential symbols.¹⁰⁵

“Mythos of winter,” in other words, irony and satire is the last genre of Frye. Frye defines them as “. . . [they are] the mythical patterns of experience, the attempts to give form to the shifting ambiguities and complexities of unidealized existence.”¹⁰⁶ He makes distinction between irony and satire. He argues that irony is a form of tragedy of an ordinary person. Its basic theme is defeat. Its content is completely realistic. On the other hand, Frye describes satire as a comic form of irony. In satire, name giving, rude calling or shouting are elements. There is an object which is to be verbally assaulted. This situation creates comedy in the audience. There is a humorous and witty tone in it.

Frye points out six phases in that genre but, he divides them. The first three phases are about satire; the latter phases are related to irony. In that part, Frye does not explain developmental stages in satire. He discusses different types of it. The first phase is about low-norm satire: that is about “a world which is full of anomalies,

¹⁰⁴Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helene Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press),p. 220

¹⁰⁵ *ibid*, pp. 206-223

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*, p. 223

injustice, follies and crimes which are permanent and undisplaceable.”¹⁰⁷ Characters are ordinary and common and there are childish types. Social convention is based on dogmas. If a person behaves independent of institutions, s/he should be fixed according to the rules. In order to behave witty, one should not question the social convention. The second phase is about comedy of escape. Hero escapes to another society without spending any effort to transform his society. Basic theme is ideas and theories about life which the hero escapes from. The third and last phase of satire is about high-norm satire. In that phase, audience sees the world from the point of ordinary hero. Central theme is thinking about fixed social convention and thinking about future. The fourth phase is the first phase of irony. Again here, Frye sets out the types of irony. Fourth phase is about implying human sides of a character to make fun of him. It focuses on the humanity of the hero to explain his downfall. In that type the tone is tragic. In the fifth phase, main theme is natural cycle and inescapable fate. Last stage of irony has demonic world view. In that stage characters are pushed through inescapable circles by tragedy. The mood is bleaker than the others.

To sum up, Frye thinks that there is a central unifying myth shaping the religion, culture and language out of which all verbal culture grows out. Thus, myth becomes a significant element which is evident in the human being's life. In addition to his views on myth, he bases his Archetypal/Myth theory on literature examining the archetypes as recurrent elements in myths and literary works of art. According to Frye, archetypes are the fundamental elements to understand the literary works of art along with the construction and the effect of myths on human beings.

¹⁰⁷ Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press.), p. 226

CHAPTER TWO

ARCHETYPAL PATTERNS FROM FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

2.1. Archetypal Patterns From Feminist Perspective

Digging down, cutting through layers, delving deep, uncovering: that is what it takes to find her. She has rested there in her earth womb, ready for rebirth these thousands of years . . . She brings rebirth. She is a forgotten possibility of female power. She turns to us now, thrusting herself out of the earth. She brings memories of a time so old we had almost forgotten it, except for the old stories. She asks us to remember what a woman might be like, unearthing her old powers. This is what she means by healing.¹⁰⁸

Myth, as it was defined in the previous chapters, is created by the human being to identify the unknown within him/her with the unknown within nature or vice versa. Through this identification process, several stories are created which are named mythology or myth. Myths are repeated patterns –until accepted as truth. In a society they may achieve the state of the sacred. Whether they are true or not, it is impossible to change them. Estella Lauter states that “[myth] is depended on some other system of our validation which is an integral part of our apparatus for structuring our lives.”¹⁰⁹ They become the building patterns of culture. Northrop Frye says that mythology expands itself permeating all the institutions in a society. It permeates the past, present and future. In every myth, there are archetypes which are thought to be typical for all human beings in general. Until they were re-evaluated and redefined by the feminist critics, they were thought to represent a unique quest pattern for every person in fictions. However, several feminist critics consider that

¹⁰⁸ Kim Chernin (1987). Reinventing Eve: Modern Woman in Search of Herself. (New York: Harper Publishing), p. 27.

¹⁰⁹ Estella Lauter (1984). Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.), p.1

archetypes are different for women and for men. They are of the opinion that archetypes symbolizing men are not suitable to express the activities of the heroine in literature. They are not adequate to trace the quest patterns of female characters in women's fiction. As it is stated above, the source of the archetypes are myths. For this reason, critics who analyze the female archetypes in women's fiction in Western literature return to Greek myths to trace the archetypes. In analyzing the mythic stories and recurrent men/women images created in ancient Greek, they have found out that those archetypes of female quest pattern related to female personhood and self in Greek myths are still present in women's fiction. Joseph Campbell in Hero with a Thousand Faces states that heroism is considered to be a similar conception as divinity and Greek myths are based on heroism and divinity. The denial of the feminine divine in Greek myths makes the conception of the heroism only applicable to men.¹¹⁰ For this reason myths are written from the masculine perspective. In such a masculine culture, the place of female archetypes is of secondary importance in mythic stories. They are given a supportive role in narratives. Besides, being given secondary importance, the goddess image is polarized. "The goddess and mortal women who do appear in myth are mothers, wives, mentors, temptresses, ogresses and victims."¹¹¹ In the stories focusing on women, "there seems to be no acceptable, self-determined heroine in the bunch. Women are props in the hero's drama or, as with Psyche and Atalanta, they are displaced souls in conflict with the restrictions of patriarchal culture who in myth learn lessons meant for all world."¹¹² Greek Myths also present women as victims in the recurrent images of rape, marriage and suicide and helplessness related to female.

Outlining the repeating patterns in Greek myths related to female images, Feminist Archetypal critics find out that the victimized image of female forms the gender roles in a society. In such a hero based culture, men become the hero and women are placed in a victimized situation in need of being rescued by a hero. As myth is presented as unchangeable and sacred, they form the social order and innate

¹¹⁰ Joseph Campbell (1949). A Hero with a Thousand Faces. (New York: Patheon), p. 40

¹¹¹ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 4.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 4.

conceptions in the human psyche. They also become an aspect in language system. However, Annis Pratt suggests that “masculine culture held no monopoly on archetypal patterns.”¹¹³ Agreeing with her several critics do not consider Greek mythology as the first and the fundamental mythology expressing female archetypes. In order to find the roots of the female archetypes, which are lost or shadowy in Greek myths, they trace the archetypes of the great goddess cult in Neolithic period. The buried female archetypes are excavated through archeological findings and studies on that period. Meredith Powers claims that in that period:

She was ancestress of the tribe, guardian of the newly dead, as well as succorer of women in childbirth. As such she was an awesome figure with the potential to be as suddenly capricious, suddenly volatile as is nature itself. She combined both good and bad aspects, and was remarkable for this syncretism, merging in a single deity the contradictions which are inherent in life: the ferocious and immutable with the loving and benign, the ominously chthonic with the nurturingly maternal[,] . . . she is regenerative, yet she is infernal. From these two connections came her initial power, a power so threatening, so potent and mysterious, that a large part of the energy of Western man has gone into process of reducing and disarming her.¹¹⁴

It is apparent that in early agricultural periods, the female emerges as a divine figure symbolizing wholeness or oneness. In those times, tribes were related by maternal connections. The woman was accepted as essentially by her maternal and nurturing qualities. Besides this, she was not subordinate to her father, husband and children. Meredith Powers asserts,

as propagators of the tribe the women of prehistory must have enjoyed sexual freedom; they were certainly not valued for virginity. As individuals, however, they would have had no more freedom than their male counterparts, for the structure of these early vegetal civilizations centered around group needs and obligations, thus

¹¹³ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.), p. 6.

¹¹⁴ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 24.

fostering rigid taboos and inflexible punishment which did not allow for extenuating circumstances.¹¹⁵

Powers continues to claim that in prehistoric tribes the human beings perceived the world with a different kind of consciousness than we now have. It was organic. A member in a group could not comprehend himself/herself separated from the group. S/he identified his/her consciousness with the consciousness of the group. This is what Lévy-Bruhl conceptualizes as participation mystique. In prehistoric tribes, the mother was at the center of the tribe. The mother gathers around herself, the infants and the older children which constitute blood ties. This centrality of the mother structures the basic patterns of religion. Rituals were based on the mysteries of the female body. Ritual practices for fertility of nature are related to the feminine body which symbolizes birth and death, renewal and fertility. The female body was thought of as divine, and the image of the “. . . Great Goddess is the incarnation of the Feminine Self that unfolds in the history of mankind as in the history of the every individual woman; its reality determines individual as well as collective life.”¹¹⁶

The early image of female as divine goddess is connected to the word “chthonic” by feminist critics. It is a Greek word meaning “earth” and it has been used to “describe the enigmatic religion that preceded the religion of the Olympians in Greece. Like the goddess religion which produced her, the chthonic heroine has been misunderstood partially because of her transformative energy and her use of irrational modes.”¹¹⁷ The word “chthonic” will be used in later chapters to describe archetypal characteristics of the female which are silenced and covered by patriarchal system. On analyzing the woman and goddess image in Greek myths, it becomes apparent that female image in general is not the same as her chthonic image. There is a gap between the representations of the women in Greek myths and the women in

¹¹⁵ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 15.

¹¹⁶ Erich Neumann (1955). “The Great Mother, An Analysis of the Archetype” in *Critical Notes* Vol. 47 <http://pt.wkhealth.com/pt/re/janp/abstract.00004536-200606000-00007.htm;jsessionid=KR0Y00bz43Wv1hM0VXDzFrGhJwSn3r1dvD0wrnt2ThNrNQr0lcTJ!1642465697!181195628!8091-1> p. 98

¹¹⁷ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 10.

the prehistoric religion. The chthonic qualities of women are revised by Greek myths. “[Women’s] drive towards growth as persons is thwarted by . . . society’s prescriptions concerning gender.”¹¹⁸ They are made “other” and they are enforced to secondary or “auxiliary status”¹¹⁹ in society.

Feminist critics studying on female archetypes are of the same idea that original female archetypes are lost in the culture we live in. They are revised, re-envisioned. However, focusing on several women’s fiction and evaluating female protagonists in them, critics say that chthonic female qualities are still discernable. In order to bind the female with the origins of her archetypal qualities, feminist critics believe that it is significant to know the process of this reconstruction. It is repeatedly attached to community in the second millennium B.C. called “Indo-Europeans.” They are told to be a warrior community. Pratt states that they invaded much of the world during these periods. They have “. . . a highly militarized, patriarchally structured culture, [they] worshipped a pantheon of gods led by Zeus, a thunder divinity, and impose their way of seeing things upon them.”¹²⁰ The other fundamental critic Meredith Powers states that “. . . Indo-Europeans was already an aristocratic order, including gender system, in which leadership and social prominence were determined by the ability to increase the tribes’ prominence through war and conquest.”¹²¹ As hunter and warrior groups were increased, women’s social status decreased. By the dominance and hierarchy brought by the groups of Indo-Europeans, a new cultural order was founded. The effects of agricultural life style in tribal groups lessened. For this reason, woman with her fertility conception became of secondary importance. New values were based on heroism and women were subjected to their male relatives. Powers emphasizes that “. . . subjugation of the women of their own tribes was the model from which men generated initial patterns of social hierarchy, that they learned to institute dominance

¹¹⁸ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.) p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 6.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 4.

¹²¹ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 48.

and hierarchy over other people by their earlier practice of dominance over women of their own group.”¹²²

Initiation of women having “auxiliary” status in a society, on the contrary, men’s high status related to heroism which also gives him divine implications enabled them to conceive women as subjects. They conceived themselves as having divine qualities and conceived women as mortal beings. By this view, they thought themselves to have the right to rule over women. Besides this, they still feared the chthonic female potentials. For this reason, they created polarized female image as Jung points out. This fragmentation represents women as mother virgin, maiden and with symbols of fertility, birth, nurturing, protection or as witch, dragon and with symbols of devouring animal and death. The wholeness she symbolizes in prehistoric religion fragmented into a polarized female image.

The culture that Indo-Europeans brought had strict cultural rules towards women. “As tribes merged and developed, agricultural system evolved; marriage became a vital social system which was controlled by men.”¹²³ In marriage, faithfulness, fidelity and virginity were a requirement for women. Tracing descend was began to be practiced from the father instead of mother.¹²⁴ However, in goddess centered prehistoric religion, virginity was not significant because every season mother gives birth to herself and emerges as a maiden again. Depreciation of female qualities became an aspect of that culture. Female images were altered, reevaluated and silenced. Powers thinks that mythology which has come down to us and which was thought to be cultural heritage of all humanity forms our “collective unconscious.” The triumph of Indo-European culture over Aegean tribal groups changed the status of goddess. Indo-European culture revises the fictional elements in stories to impose their values and serve to change the status quo. Maternal system changed to a patriarchal one and mother goddess was pushed to a process of giving birth and domestic works.¹²⁵

¹²² A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 48.

¹²³ *ibid*, p. 51.

¹²⁴ *ibid*, p. 50.

¹²⁵ *ibid*, pp. 58-59.

Critics divide the process of revision into two. The first revisionists founded a new gender-based social order and by this way they constitute a new psychology. The second revisionists created several literary works inspired from the oral mythological stories. By these classical works, new social order and psychology was established. Jung bases the contents of his “collective unconscious” to Greek myths formed by the patriarchal culture of Indo-Europeans and he accepts the beginning by that culture. However, feminist critics do not agree with the contents of the Jungian collective unconscious which was thought to be constituted by all humanity. By the rewritten myths, great goddess figure was changed with a divine man figure. Several god and goddess figures, who act under the dominion of one divine god, were created. Goddesses do not have sovereignty and they were silenced in the stories. Powers says that revised goddess or women figure is “self-loathing,” “self-depreciating.” They are presented with a diminished self-worth.¹²⁶ Powers continues to state that

in Homer the heroic values of the Indo-European conquerors have gained the fore; the epics present a world of heroes, of individual men bent on self-promotion, engaged in admirable acts of agonistic aggression, pursuing wealth and immortality through reputation. The women in his stories have been nearly shorn of their divine origins, the goddesses circumscribed, even the best among them has only secondary status; many have become merely the props of men; all are tokens in a system of exchange which men control.¹²⁷

In these mythic stories, dominant and free goddess figure is absent. She is represented as shadowy figure. The most obvious and remarkable one is Demeter. She is a vegetation goddess but her power is diminished and she is depicted under the rule of Zeus. On the other hand, some female figure are approved such as “Andromache and Penelope; [they] are approved because they obey the leadership of their husbands and do not challenge patriarchy.”¹²⁸

¹²⁶ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 60.

¹²⁷ *ibid*, p. 61.

¹²⁸ *ibid*, p. 63.

Within the Olympian social state, rape was initiated as motif of mythology. In mythic stories Zeus marries several goddesses and he also rapes them. Rape and chasing after a woman was accepted as normal. Powers asserts that

rape and possession of conquered woman was the prerogative of the victor whose superior strength was his license to power over weaker nations. The exchange if not the disposal of daughters was the prerogative of the father, a right bequeathed from his Paleolithic status to his subsequent membership in military elite.¹²⁹

It is obvious that women were seen as a property of men. Apart from the accepted violence, women were also seen as beings that should not be trusted. For instance, in *Odyssey*, Homer writes “Bring your ship back your homeland secretly, not openly, since women can never be trusted.”¹³⁰

Reconstructed female image is stripped of her chthonic qualities. Her manipulated characteristics are also presented and accepted as culturally ideal. She is fragmented into several goddess characters and they are engaged into a social conflict. Athena and Pandora are claimed to be reconstructed goddess. Powers states that Athena’s name comes from Pre-Hellenic period. Earlier she was the goddess of the wild things and she was symbolized by bird and serpent. She has her own temple. However, in *Odyssey* she was depicted to live in a palace of a prince and she was written to be the daughter of Zeus.¹³¹ The distortion of maternal qualities is apparent in the depiction of Athena because she was thought to be born out of Zeus’ head. By the depiction of this process, maternal reproductivity was applied to men. The other reconstructed divine being is Pandora. Her name means “all-gifts.” Originally, she was the earth-goddess and she was the giver of gifts. However, later she was

¹²⁹ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 70.

¹³⁰ (*Odyssey*, 11, 454-56) Quoted in A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 67.

¹³¹ *ibid*, p. 83.

depicted as receiver of gifts by Greek myths. Original female qualities were changed and revised. Powers points out that

Stripped of her archetypal accoutrements, the goddess is presented in her Olympian manifestation as idle, superfluous, mischievous, and laughable. Pandora contributes nothing of worth. She is a necessary evil, human only in form and completely without ethics, either feminine or masculine. Like Athena, she is stripped of the roots which gave women power, the chthonic, the maternal, the tribal, and then presented to be judged in a moral theatre where calumny obscures perspective and she is allowed no voice with which to defend or explain herself.¹³²

Evolving mythology, in ancient Greece, became a verbal construction and it became a part of language. During the process of revision, social anxieties entered into the culture and they became permanent because they were presented with a written collection of ancient times for this reason they were highly appreciated. Northrop Frye says that anxiety is a part of mythology. It is about a set of rules which are not written but which are known by everyone. It is about things that are always silenced and thought to be dangerous to speak about. In the classical period, governing elites composed by men committed themselves to assert moral correctness and necessities in gender system which is related to anxiety.

Women have limited social interaction in that period. They have nearly no political and legal rights. Their relation to politics is to bear legitimate heirs. Her value is measured by the sons she bore because they are the source of prestige. When she gets married, she is cut off from her relatives and it is only allowed to meet them when she is veiled. Girls are under the control of their fathers who have right to sell her. They are seen as the temporary members in the family and seen as dolls that show the wealth of their husbands. Women are not thought as a real parent. She is thought as an incubator. After epics, in ancient plays woman's place and value in the society was not changed. Generally, in most of the plays, women are not significant figures. In those plays there are redefined feminine figures. Women are represented

¹³² A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 85.

blind to their chthonic heritage and they began to see their grievances or problems from the man's point of view because there are fewer plays to depict their lives in plays. In the man-centered civilization, women are "muted" and they are made "blind" to their selves. In the traditional literary criticism, women are viewed as monsters or mothers. They are made blind to see their suffering, isolated and self-depreciated qualities applied to them by the patriarchy. These qualities are accepted as natural attributes of femininity. Their ties with the chthonic goddess were broken. Revised and redefined qualities were made innate in the psychology of the human.

Feminist archetypal critics are of the idea that "there is an irrefutable male monotheism."¹³³ It is thought that myth presents a chosen group and makes them sacred, divine beings. These divine beings are men in Greek culture. In fact, myth is seen as providing permanent and universal qualities in human nature. However, the mythology recorded by Aegeans presents the subjugation of feminine values to patriarchy and they became the building blocks of Western culture. In Archetypal/Mythical criticism, the presented female archetypes are not the originals. To reach the originals of these archetypes, one needs to go back.¹³⁴ Feminist critics think that these female archetypes should be introduced through myth-making process. Estella Lauter states that ". . . mythic thinking is continuing process and not a stage that human beings passed through thousands of years ago when the dominant religions of the world were formed."¹³⁵ By this view, it can be approved that myth-making is still a continuing process. Lauter relates myth-making with ". . . a tendency to form mental images in relation in relation to repeated experiences."¹³⁶ Mary Daly puts forward a hypothesis. In that hypothesis, she asserts that ". . . women live in two cultures at once; the dominant one and a 'muted' one that is not yet entirely known even to ourselves."¹³⁷

¹³³ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers),ip. 138.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 142.

¹³⁵ Estella Lauter (1984). Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.), p. 1.

¹³⁶ ibid, p. 4.

¹³⁷ Quoted in ¹³⁷ Estella Lauter (1984). Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.), p. 7.

At that point, feminist critic's aim is to establish a new and alternative mind-set which ". . . will allow us to make behind our cultural stage into the wings of female experience without claiming that we have found the essential nature of women."¹³⁸ To establish this new mind-set, archetypal criticism is viewed from the feminist perspective. The basic and fundamental aim in that theory is to "excavate" the images of women to discover female patterns of her original experience or nature. Lauter states that critics ". . . locat[e] images that seem unfamiliar in patriarchal usage, and [they] affirm their pertinence to female experience . . . repeated independently in works by other women."¹³⁹

Meredith Powers defines the attributes of original goddess which are still discernable in patriarchal mythic patterns. She defines her as

. . . both syncretistic and mysterious . . . irrational entities of the earliest myths, she was sometimes virginal, sometimes maternal, even androgynous, although created in the image of woman. She ran wild all alone in the forest, fearless and without protection, independent in her virginity, a metaphor which originally meant not tied by any bond to a male who must be acknowledged as master. Hers was the power of spontaneous life . . . Yet, she would die too, of grief perhaps, for sorrow was intricate to her wisdom . . . This goddess as a heroine has little interest in personal aggrandizement. She is not the wife of traditional marriages, permanently subject to a male overload, although she is often a mother . . . she functions beyond the restrictions of civilization instead adhering to a more primal, less code.¹⁴⁰

Goddess or heroine is represented with different attributes than that of the stated ones. Identified by hierarchy and classification, Western logic failed to comprehend the wholeness women represent. They are victimized by the hierarchy and classification obsessed Western logic and they try to survive in their own terms in that dominant culture.

¹³⁸ Estella Lauter (1984). Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.), p. 8

¹³⁹ *ibid*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁰ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), pp. 143-144.

Before the emergence of feminist archetypal theory, there are other theories related to archetypes. Jung and Frye's archetypal theories are significant ones among them. However, their points of view to archetypes are from a masculine perspective. Both of them failed to see the absence of female archetypes. They handled archetypes from the reconstructed perspective. Although, Jung gave importance to illuminate female psychology, he falls short to see female with her chthonic attributes. Her female image is also polarized because he evaluates her from the patriarchal lenses. Yet, some of his female archetypes acknowledge the woman in that cultural order. Northrop Frye's literary archetypal theory deals with the recurrent patterns in literature. His starting point to discern repeated patterns or plot construction is Greek myths. Consequently, his theory is not adequate to analyze female archetypes. In his four genre model, he outlines the plot order peculiar to Greek myths or stories. He did not question the absence or silence of women. Feminist critics see the gaps in these theories and they feel the need to uncover female archetypes. They claim that the voice of ancient goddess or women is discernable in women's fiction. Women are "muted" and "blinded" in that system, their finding their selves comes through the awakening of the chthonic female buried within them despite the internalization of the patriarchal values. Women's fiction is a guide for that theory because there are similar patterns representing woman's metaphoric journey through maturation. In these fictions generally ". . . the heroine come up against external antagonists which are connected to social institutions, but the conflict is rooted in the class of ethical system with the voice of feminine divine remaining distinct and tenacious."¹⁴¹

This theory enables to juxtapose the recurrent archetypal patterns, images themes, symbols of internalized patriarchal order with that of the recurrent archetypal patterns that women find within their selves and experience through their inner journey towards their selves. Annis Pratt outlines the recurrent archetypal patterns in her extensive study on women's fiction. Green world archetype; rape/trauma

¹⁴¹ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 185.

archetype; enclosure archetypes which are symbolized by the conception of marriage in patriarchy, prison and madhouses; Eros archetype as an expression of the self; archetype of singleness or solitude; transformation archetype are the significant archetypal patterns recurrent in women's fiction. In the following chapter Margaret Atwood's The Blind Assassin will be read in terms of these archetypes. Within that framework, Jungian archetypal theory, the applicable parts of it, will also be applied to characters to illuminate their psychology. Besides this, Northrop Frye's myth theory and his season based four genre model will also be used in terms of its appropriate parts to the novel.

CHAPTER THREE
FEMINIST ARCHETYPAL READING OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S
THE BLIND ASSASSIN

3.1. A Brief Introduction to the Novel

The Blind Assassin is Margaret Atwood's Booker-Prize winning novel. It is really a literary puzzle with a story interwoven with other two stories in it. It focuses on gender politics. An eighty-nine year old protagonist Iris Chase Griffen narrates her life story full of victimized and self-sacrificed female images including her own image throughout the novel. At the centre of the novel, Atwood illustrates the historical and cultural victimization of women under patriarchal system. The novel, not only depicts innate cultural blindness of women towards their own victimization, but also it illustrates their blindness to the victimization of other women. Being a classic Atwoodian novel, The Blind Assassin is ". . . thematically organized around the images of both cultural and individual issues of survival, as she has sought to portray the entrapment of women in patriarchy and of men on women in suffocating social-cultural imprisonment."¹⁴² Throughout the novel, Atwood uses elements mythology, folk tale and folklore to underscore their constraining effects on women's individual development. Not awake enough to their problems, "characters are shown having problems merely personal but always microcosms of larger, communal and social issues."¹⁴³

Being a second wave feminist and a post-modernist writer, besides writing novels, Atwood also writes short stories, poems and essays. It is possible to see her basic style towards language and narration in her novel The Blind Assassin as it is said to be one of the Atwoodian classics. As a writer, Atwood generally writes about entrapment of women within patriarchal system. She handles culture as masculine heritage and demonstrates the sacrificed role given to women in that system. Kathleen Wheeler states that Atwood uses journey metaphor for a quest of women

¹⁴² Kathleen Wheeler (1997-1998). A Critical Guide To Twentieth Century Women Novelists. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing), p. 276.

¹⁴³ *ibid*, p. 270.

protagonists for identity. She uses “recuperation of the past for present . . . to free us from the crippling effects of nostalgia and sentimentality and repossession of the unconscious for consciousness [to] gain control of material in order to survive and to develop into a person.”¹⁴⁴ She generally uses “memory,” as in The Blind Assassin, as a means to connect the past and present. By the use of memory, her protagonists excavate to find their lost selves. They come to understand memory as a means to change.¹⁴⁵ Her narrative is circular because she continually alters the narration between past and present because she wants to draw attention to the interaction between them. Atwood’s language matches her narration style. For her, language has the power to liberate or to entrap men or women. Control creates innovation and transformation experience. For this reason, she generally depicts her protagonists writing memory, diary or she depicts them dealing with writing in a way which helps them in their transformation period. She makes use of images, from mythology, folk-tale, fairy-tale especially archetypes related to female. Through these archetypes, she exposes the entrapment of women to traditional stereotypes.

The Blind Assassin has all the characteristics of Atwoodian language and narration style mentioned above. As it is stated, Atwood uses language and narration as a way of survival. She transforms or re-forms language and narration style to alter the myth of patriarchy. For this reason, it can be said that her writing presents a myth-making process. In The Blind Assassin, she creates a protagonist, named Iris Chase Griffen, who finds her true inner identity and chthonic qualities through process of writing. Not only does Atwood write to survive and to contribute to the myth-making process, but also she creates a female protagonist in The Blind Assassin who uses writing as a means to survive. Margaret Atwood offers typical female archetypes recurrent in myths and in traditional literary works of art in her novels. These archetypes are those identified by the Feminist Archetypal criticism. In patriarchal culture these archetypes are which give the women the role of the victimized. These archetypes are dominant through the experiences of female

¹⁴⁴ Kathleen Wheeler (1997-1998). A Critical Guide To Twentieth Century Women Novelists. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing), p. 268.

¹⁴⁵ Goyle Greene (Winter, 1991). “Feminist Fiction and the Uses of Memory”. in *Signs*, Vol. 16, No: 2. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0097-9740%28199124%2916%3A2%3C290%3AFFATUO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-7> p. 308.

characters in the novel. However, other female archetypes of original chthonic women are also discernable in the novel. They bind the female characters to life. They empower them against the pressures of the culture and lead the surviving ones to their own inner selves. It is possible to see these two kinds of female archetypes, the one shaped by the patriarchy and the other belonging to female chthonic self within The Blind Assassin. However, before applying these archetypes to the novel, the framework of the novel in which Atwood applies these archetypes will be analyzed.

The Blind Assassin is an intricately designed novel. J. B. Bouson defines it as “a story-within-a-story-within-a-story.”¹⁴⁶ It is a three-folded novel interwoven together. The first text becomes a framework for the other two texts in it. It is about the protagonist, eighty-two year old Iris Chase Griffen’s life. She writes it as confessional memorial in notebooks with a hope that they will be found by her grand-daughter Sabrina one day. By that memorial she offers Sabrina her own life story, consequently her roots and history. Throughout the memorial, she shifts between the past and the present. She begins the chapters commenting on passing time, her aging body, her health problems, her dreams which her doctor relates to her guilty conscience. Later, she shifts to the past and narrates the history of the Chase family, her childhood years in the Avilion, her marriage to Richard and the events leading to her sister Laura’s suicide. However, she implies that she is also assassinated and sacrificed by the patriarchal culture she lives in. She depicts the assassination of all the female characters in her life time. She directs the memory on the key points of “seeing” and “blindness.”

The second narrative is a novella. Although it is ostensibly written by Laura, in fact, it is a coded autobiography of Iris. It was said to be published in New York in 1947. In that narrative a relationship between an aristocratic woman, who is Iris, and a socialist man, who is Alex, is recounted. Names of them are never given

¹⁴⁶ J. Brooks Bouson (Spring , 2003). “A Commemoration of Wounds Endured and Resented: Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin* as Feminist Memoir” in *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Vol, 44, No: 3 <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-102793317.html> pp. 251- 269. p. 251.

throughout the novella and they are referred as “she” and “he.” Their identities are never given but clues about their appearances show that they are Iris and Alex. The man is recounted as hiding from the government. They always meet in different houses or hotel rooms. During their meetings, “he” narrates mythic and science-fiction stories to “she.” The stories highlight the different parts of the novel.

The third narrative involves the stories narrated during the meeting of “he” and “she.” This narrative can be defined as a “roman a clé” since it functions as a key to interpret the novel as a whole. The main story narrated is about the planet Zycron in which there is a hierarchical system based on gender. There is a sexist class division. In order to restore the order, maidens are muted and then sacrificed. There is also another group belonging to the under-class called “blind assassin.” This group is composed of children blinded by carpet weaving and after becoming blinded they are made assassins or they are sold to brothels.

Apart from these three narratives, newspaper and magazine extracts related to 1934-1999 are deployed throughout the novel. These clippings are about the political and social issues of the time and the death news of the family members of both Chase and Griffen families. Besides these clippings, there are photographs, but all of them are the different versions of the same photograph. These photos have different implications in Iris’ life.

Fundamentally, The Blind Assassin is defined as a “memorial reconstruction.”¹⁴⁷ However, it is impossible to base the novel on one genre. It includes several genres in it. It can be defined as a historical novel, the *Künstlerroman* or *Bildungsroman*, female Gothic novel, Romance, Pulp-Science Fiction.¹⁴⁸ Iris pieces together all of these elements and materials in her memorial-like piecing together her fragmented self in the patriarchal system. In addition to its

¹⁴⁷ Alan Robinson (April, 2006). “Alias Laura: representations of the past in Margaret Atwood’s *The Blind Assassin*” in *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 101. http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_0286-30172229_ITM p. 347.

¹⁴⁸ J. Brooks Bouson (Spring, 2003). “A Commemoration of Wounds Endured and Resented: Margaret Atwood’s *The Blind Assassin* as Feminist Memoir” in *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Vol. 44, No. 3 <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-102793317.html> pp. 251- 269. p. 252.

richness of genre, there is a deep historical dimension in the novel. Firstly, Iris presents Canadian history World War I, Depression years and World War II as a backdrop throughout the novel. As well as giving account of these years, she points out how women's life is shaped in these years. Secondly, Zycron planet also presents a mythic and historical dimension. Nathalie Cooke states that the historical context used for Zycron planet is also used as a backdrop. The social system in Zycron can be traced back to Indo-European civilizations around 1600-717 B.C.¹⁴⁹

Within the framework of the novel, Atwood uses several themes and images which contribute to reveal the sexist class system of the society. Nathalie Cooke says that there are three main themes in the novel. She links the theme with the excerpts from the first page of the book. "The first theme, of mass murder, emerges from a brief section of the English translation of Ryszard Kapunscinski's book, Shah of shahs, which describes the horrific treatment of the city of Kerman at the hands of Agha Muhammed Khan, when he orders every citizen blinded or executed."¹⁵⁰ This can be linked with the death series of Griffen and Chase family members. Iris can be thought as a murderer of them in a way. It can also be linked to the mass murder of maidens in Zycron. Hence, the murderer becomes the patriarchal system and the performers of it. The second theme is death as a means to escape. Cooke relates it to the inscription on a Carthaginian Funerary urn in which a boundless sea was described as an answer to speaker's prayers. The theme of death as an escape can be applied to characters especially to Laura who could not survive in that system. The last theme is power of the word. It is related to Atwood's last excerpt from Shelia Watson's Deep Hallow Creek. Power of word is linked to Iris' construction of her self through writing because she writes her life by her memorial.¹⁵¹

All of the themes described here are about the victimized women by the patriarchal culture. First of all, women are blinded to their inner selves as well as victimization of themselves. This means an execution in a way because original

¹⁴⁹ Nathalie Cooke (2004). Margaret Atwood: A Critical Companion. (London: Greenwood Press.) p. 149.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 150.

¹⁵¹ *ibid*, p. 150.

female archetypes are torn from women and they are buried within the history. This can be defined as mass murder. Secondly, several victimized women choose to commit suicide because of not finding a way out of the patriarchal circle that entraps them. As a matter of fact, they are already made prone to self-loathing and suicide. Thirdly, some women choose writing as a means to survive. As Cixous says that “women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will wreck partitions, classes and rhetorics, regulations and codes.”¹⁵²

Throughout the novel, Atwood employs several elements from classics. Traces from Ovid’s Metamorphoses helps to emphasize the enduring victimized and sexually abused female images in history. During the literature classes with Mr. Erskine, Iris and Laura are thought rape of Europe by the bull, Leda by the swan and Danae by a shower of gold. Cookie points out that a parallel with Wordsworth’s concept of “the inner eye that is the bliss of solitude.”¹⁵³ Since characters, especially female characters, are depicted as “blind”, they lack the inner solitude. “Xanadu” is used as a subtitle in the book. The name is taken from Coleridge’s poem “Kubla Khan.” It is used in the book to imply Iris’ blind condition. Another classic used in the novel is Virgil’s Aeneid. The section used in the novel is about the Iris’ blindness to her sister’s agony in life.

The long and short of it is that within the framework of her novel, Atwood, by her choice of narration style, themes, images and classical elements composes a unity through which she demonstrates the re-constructed and fragmented female image. Within that framework, Iris narrates journey of all women who gathers their shattered selves in order to be whole again. The Blind Assassin emerges as one of the novels which shared similar female archetypes with other women’s fiction. It is a significant source in terms of recurrent archetypes which are bound to woman by the patriarchy and the archetypes of the chthonic women. In the following chapters The

¹⁵² Helene Cixous (2003). “The Laugh of The Medusa”. (K. P. Cohen, Trans.) M. B. Garber, N. J. Vickers (Eds.) *The Medusa Reader*. (New York: Routledge), p. 134.

¹⁵³ Nathalie Cooke (2004). Margaret Atwood: A Critical Companion. (London: Greenwood Press.), p. 152.

Blind Assassin will be analyzed in the light of the recurrent archetypes in women's fiction.

3.2. Enclosure Archetypes in the Patriarchy:

It is appropriate to begin with "the Enclosure Archetype" among other recurrent archetypes in women's fiction because enclosure has implication of narrowness, pressure, reducing and it can be related to the situation of women in the patriarchal system. Annis Pratt means by enclosure "marriage," "prisons" or "mad houses." However, when women's growth of self or their ways to maturation are conceived, it is not difficult to see that there is a general wall, or in other words enclosure built against their maturation. It is true that women are enclosed by marriages and madhouses in general. Their search for their self is prevented by patriarchal institutions. For this reason, before analyzing The Blind Assassin in terms of "marriage" and "other enclosure archetypes," the female characters will be overviewed from the general perspective of enclosure.

Enclosure is a typical framework used in myths, novels, poems and other literary works of art in general to characterize female characters. It is a traditional way of life assigned to women that is to live in an enclosed society. Northrop Frye says that conventions, genres and archetypes of literature develop from historical origins. He thinks that a society forms a framework mythology, out of which all "verbal culture" grows out. He continues to say that myths are permanent and they affect language, reference, allusion, belief and tradition.¹⁵⁴ When the role of the victimized given to women in myths are considered, it is not surprising to see that the enclosure archetype becomes a typical framework for women growing out of myth, and by extension, all verbal culture. Annis Pratt says that generally women's fiction includes "Bildungsroman" genre or pattern of "novel of development" in contrast to the actual situation of women held in enclosed spaces. Writers of women's fiction use "Bildungsroman genre" to juxtapose it with the enclosure framework. In Bildungsroman, the protagonists develop themselves from an enclosed narrow point

¹⁵⁴ Northrop Frye (1973). The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism. (Canada: Indiana University Press.) p. 35.

of view to a wide view of self. With the coming of events, they understand their position in society and the things they fail to see. They experience a metaphoric journey into their inner selves. Bildungsroman is used as a way for a protagonist to go out of the enclosure in which she is trapped with other women. Bildungsroman genre is also employed to juxtapose the female archetypes redefined by patriarchy with the chthonic female archetypes of wholeness or oneness. Via the use of Bildungsroman genre, it is depicted that the protagonist reaches herself by uncovering the buried archetypes in her. She tries to get out of her sacrificed or victimized position and tries to survive; sometimes by accepting her “otherness” in society, which gives her a novel vision. However, throughout the protagonist’s metaphoric journey, several victimized and “self-sacrificed” women, who are not aware of their “auxiliary” positions or who are aware of their journey, are also depicted in the novel.

Pratt states that in the Bildungsroman genre “we find a genre that pursues the opposite of its generic intent; it provides models for” growing down” rather than for “growing up.”¹⁵⁵ This opposite element to Bildungsroman genre cannot be totally applied to the protagonist Iris in The Blind Assassin who finally finishes her metaphoric journey. It can partly be applied to her adolescent period during which, in normal conditions, she is expected to grow as a human being both physically and mentally. In her adolescent period, Iris “grows down” mentally instead of “growing up.” Her growing down is juxtaposed with her younger sister Laura’s “growing up.” Laura’s “growing up” is found “odd” in the novel because according to social values women’s growing up mentally is seen as a threat; for this reason, an idea is generated that women are not capable of growing mentally. As it is said that Laura’s growing up is seen as “awkward.” Iris says that:

Laura was different. Different means strange, I knew that, but I would pester Reenie. “What do you mean, different?” “Not the same as other people,” Reenie would say. But perhaps Laura wasn’t very different from other people after all. Perhaps she was the same as some odd, skewed element in them that most people keep hidden but that Laura

¹⁵⁵ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.) p. 14.

did not, and this was why she frightened them. Because she did frighten them or if not frightened, then alarm them in some way; though more, of course, as she got older.¹⁵⁶

Even being six year old, she has her own truths and she acts according to them. For this reason, Iris thinks that “She’s stubborn as a pig.”¹⁵⁷ From Jungian point of view, Laura can be evaluated as Iris’ shadow self from the two perspectives. Firstly, although Laura is victimized by Richard Griffen and she is sacrificed herself for the sake of Alex, she leads her life according to her own truths. Her manners and attributes are thought as awkward and she is not let to behave according to her own values. At last, she finds the ease by committing suicide. In her later life, while writing her memorial between the years 1998-1999, Iris admits that in one of her monologues:

who cares what people think, I told myself. If they want to listen in they’re welcome. *Who cares, who cares.* The perennial adolescent riposte. I cared, of course. I cared what people thought. I always did care. Unlike Laura, I have never had the courage of my convictions.”¹⁵⁸

In most of her life, Iris lives according to cultural prescriptions. As she admits, she cared these prescriptions although she has her own ideas about her life. On the other hand, Laura acts as her will in spite of being always under pressure. Two sisters are dialectical. By representing the repressed, denied, undeveloped things in Iris, Laura becomes Iris’ shadow in other words the part she ignores to see. According to Jung, shadow symbolizes wishes and feelings that are inconvenient with the social ideals and the standards. Laura represents that image because her ideas and acts are thought as “odd” with the social ideals. Since Iris is blind to see her shadow side given flesh and blood by the image of Laura, in most of her life she fails to reach her “self.”

¹⁵⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 110-111.

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*, p. 108.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid*, p. 247.

Secondly, Laura is the shadow of the narration of Iris' memorial. Barbara Dancygier states that "the novel is a fragmented narrative."¹⁵⁹ Iris' memorial is fragmented as stated in the aspect that it skips most of the parts related to Laura. Laura is represented as the shadow and the ghost figure of the narration. Iris does not give full account of Laura throughout the novel. Undertaking the role of the "trickster," she ignores and covers the parts about Laura. She recounts all her family members' lives in detail except Laura's. Iris' narration is also fragmented since it ignores to see the part Laura has in the story. Always motivated by duty, Iris fails to conceive her personality and fails to accept her shadow represented by Laura in most of her life like ignoring Laura in most of the novel.

During her adolescence period, Iris sometimes mentions about her own wishes which are, she says, never possible to do. Because of her mother's death, she has the role of the mother for Laura since her mother wished Iris to keep an eye on Laura in her dying bed. With the pressure of this, in her eighteen, she says;

I was tried of keeping an eye on Laura, who didn't appreciate it. I was tried of being held accountable for her lapses, her failures to comply. I was tried of being held accountable, period. I wanted to go to Europe, or to New York, or even to Montreal –to nightclubs, to soirées, to all the exciting places mentioned in Reenie's social magazines– I was needed at home. *Needed at home, needed at home* – it sounded like a life sentence. Worse, like a dirge . . . I wanted to be elsewhere, but I saw no way to get there. Once in a while I found myself hoping that I would be abducted by white slavers, even though I didn't believe in them. At least it would be a change.¹⁶⁰

Enclosure archetype is obvious here and it becomes the house, Avilion. In her eighteen, she is not let to have autonomy to do what she wishes. She likens her life to a "dirge" which is not irrelevant to Adelia's life; Iris' grand mother gives the name "Avilion" to the house. The name was taken from a poem of Alfred Tennyson but it was also the name of the place where King Arthur went to die. Iris also adds that in the year 1998, Avilion becomes an old age asylum and its name is changed to

¹⁵⁹ Barbara Dancygier, (Summer, 2007). "Narrative Anchors and the Processes of Story Construction: The Case of Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin*" in *Style*, Vol. 41, No: 2 <http://www.engl.niu.edu/style/vol41n2.html#Barbara%20Dancygier> p. 138.

¹⁶⁰ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 211.

“Valhalla” which means the place when you went after your death, Iris says that “surely Adelia’s choice of name signifies how hopelessly she considered herself to be: she might be able to call into being by sheer force of will some shady facsimile of a happy isle, but it would never be the real thing.”¹⁶¹ Two names given to the house have implications of death. Hence, it is not surprising that she resembles her life to a dirge. The second name “Valhalla” has also the implications of the “coffin” which can also be evaluated as an enclosure. Iris is not let to “grow up” in her own will.

In her adolescence, Iris does not encounter with an independent women image. Even her mother Liliana, who is thought to be role model for her daughters, is represented within enclosure. She is also one of the blind characters in the novel. Under patriarchy, she is motivated by determined and appreciated values of masculine system. For this reason, she has nothing to pass on her daughters. She lacks the real maternal qualities related to wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcends reason which defined by Jungian mother archetype. Liliana is portrayed as a silenced character. There are fewer dialogues passed between Liliana and her daughters. Iris mentions about the absence of mother image in her life:

It was an effort for me now to recall the details of my grief –the exact forms it had taken– although at will I could summon up an echo of it, like a small whining dog locked in the cellar. What had I done on the day mother died? I could hardly remember that, or what she’d really looked like: now she looked only like her photographs, I did remember the wrongness of her bed when she was suddenly no longer in it; how empty it had seemed . . . I could remember her absence, now better than her presence.¹⁶²

Liliana sacrificed herself to her marriage which will be analyzed in the following section. She devotes herself to her husband and doing morally good things. However, she fails to do any good thing to develop her self. She is the image of the classic sacrificed woman. Even, her own daughter remembers her absence.

The absence of Liliana is filled with Reenie, Reenie is the housekeeper and the nurse of Iris and Laura. Her arrival to the Avilion is recounted as

¹⁶¹Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 77.

¹⁶² *ibid*, pp. 173-174.

She'd been less than seventeen when she'd come to Avilion full-time, from a row house on the southeast bank of Jouges, where the factory workers lived . . . She'd started out as a nursemaid for me, but as a result of turnover and attribution she was now our mainstay."¹⁶³

Her role in girls' lives is akin to the role of the mother. Because of Liliana's absence, even while she is living, Reenie becomes a significant character for Iris and Laura. Iris' adolescent mind is shaped by Reenie. She is one of the blind characters in the novel. As well as being blind to her own self, Reenie is the applicator of patriarchal values on Iris. Pratt says that adolescence is a period ". . . in which young person learns the roles s/he must play in society. It is recent for girls than for boys."¹⁶⁴ Reenie also shapes the "persona" of Iris. Jung points out that "persona" defines and includes the approved way of life and excludes the denied and repressed thoughts and conducts disapproved by the society. Reenie dictates Iris the approved way of living. She defines Iris' "persona." She draws borders for her. Unfortunately, Iris internalizes her persona to an extent that she looks herself and the world from the "eyes" of her persona. Reenie recounts what was right and wrong to do. During the button factory picnic, Iris and Laura were talking to Alex Thomas. This was their first meeting with Alex. However, it was thought to be improper for a girl to be seen with a man alone. During their conversation, Iris recounts that Reenie comes and says "'your father's been looking all over for you,' she said. I knew this to be untrue. Nevertheless Laura and I had to get up from the shade of tree and brush our skirts down and go with her, like ducklings being herded."¹⁶⁵ Reenie is the one who herds Iris. This behavior adapts Iris with a set of patriarchal values that she feels she must obey. According to Reenie,

. . . a girl alone with a man should be able to have a dime between her knees. She was always afraid that people –men– would see our legs, the part above the knee. Of women who allowed this to happen, she would say: *Curtain's up, where's the show? or, might as well hang out a sign, or, more balefully she's asking for it, she'll get what's*

¹⁶³ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 83.

¹⁶⁴ Annis Pratt (1981). *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 13.

¹⁶⁵ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 217.

*coming to her, or in the worst cases, she's an accident waiting to happen.*¹⁶⁶

Reenie is the dictator of the patriarchy. As it is clarified, there is no autonomous female role model for Iris during her “grow[ing]-up” period. Laura is the one who has her own ideas but Iris, motivated with a duty, is unable to be like her sister. Along with Iris, female characters are represented as enclosed by patriarchy in general.

3.2.1. Marriage as an Enclosure Archetype

Enclosure is dealt with a general view in the previous part. However, there are specific institutions which are thought of as enclosures in women's fiction. Marriage, prison and mad houses are the most frequent archetypes accepted as enclosures for women. In *The Blind Assassin*, marriage and mad house emerge as enclosures for female characters. Marriage as a concept emerges in the female's adolescence period. Annis Pratt says that in a girl's adolescence, the supreme goal is to prepare the girl for marriage.¹⁶⁷ Reenie does this with a great perfection. When Iris becomes sixteen and finishes her formal education, she thinks to herself that “I was hanging around, but for what? What would become of me next?”¹⁶⁸ Then she adds that

Reenie had her preferences. She'd taken to reading. *Mayfair* magazine, with its descriptions of society festivities, and the social pages in the newspapers- the weddings, the charity balls, the luxury vacations. She memorized lists of names- names of the prominent, of cruise ships, of good hotels. I ought to be given a *début*, she said, with all the proper trimmings- teas to meet the important society mothers, receptions and fashionable outings, a formal dance with eligible young men invited.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), pp. 217-18.

¹⁶⁷Annis Pratt (1981). *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press) p. 14.

¹⁶⁸Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 204.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid*, p. 204.

It is apparent that the next step would be marriage for Iris. Pratt states that in marriage archetype, the tension is between desires and social dictates. They are presented by submission on the part of women and pursuit on the part of men. Pratt adds that marriage is seen as a decision made by the family or kinship groups in favor of an economic and social benefit.¹⁷⁰ This analysis by Pratt perfectly explains the marriages in The Blind Assassin. In the novel Iris' marriage to Richard Chase Griffen is in the foreground among the other marriages in the novel. However, when other marriages in the family are taken into consideration, it becomes obvious that their reason for marriage is identical.

To begin with Adelia's marriage to Benjamin Chase is said to be a typical marriage in the novel according to Pratt's definition. Adelia was coming from an established society in Canada. Benjamin Chase was the founder of a button factory. He developed his factory into a big industrial one. When Adelia is thought to be run out her time of marriage, her marriage is "arranged." Iris narrated Adelia's marriage like this:

so when time had begun to run out on Adelia with no really acceptable husband in sight, she'd married money- crude money, button money. She was expected to refine this money, like oil. (She wasn't married; she was married off, said Reenie, rolling out the gingersnaps. The family arranged it. That's what was done in such families, and who is to say it was any worse or better than choosing for your self? In any case, Adelia Montfort did her duty, and lucky to have to chance, as she was getting long in the tooth by then- she must have been twenty-three, which was counted over the hill in those days.)¹⁷¹

This constitutes a model marriage for other marriages in the novel since all of them are done for business relations.

Iris' parents' marriage is also similar to Adelia and Benjamin. Liliana's father is responsible for the law department in Chase Industry therefore; their marriage is under the category of social benefit. Their marriage is basically shaped by Liliana's

¹⁷⁰ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 41.

¹⁷¹ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 74.

submission and Norval's aggressiveness. Norval's joining the army in the First World War and his coming with one eye and one leg shows that, in fact, patriarchy not only fragments women, but also men physically and mentally. Norval's return with a mutilated body from the war makes him a difficult person and in return makes Liliana more passive. After war, Norval is not the same person as he was so is Liliana. Iris recounts that;

After some months my father began his disreputable rambles. Not in our town though, or not at first. He'd take train in to Toronto, 'on business,' and go drinking, and also tomcatting, as it was then called. Word got around, surprisingly quickly as a scandal is likely to do. Oddly enough, both my mother and my father were more respected in town because of it. Who could blame him, considering? As for her, despite what she had to put up with, not one word of complaint was ever heard to cross her lips. Which was entirely as it should be.¹⁷²

The other thing overt in their marriages is wish of having man-child. As Meredith Powers states about marriages in ancient Greece, in Norval and Liliana's marriage, man-child is a wish of Norval, he thinks that having man-child is important and it is the source of prestige as it was in ancient Greek.¹⁷³ Although he has no man-child, he changed the name of Chase Industry to Chase and Sons. "Also he felt he had an obligation, if not to the memory of his father, then to those of his dead brothers. He had the lettered changed to Chase and Sons, even though there was only son left. He wanted to have sons of his, two of them preferable, to place the lost ones."¹⁷⁴ In order to persevere, to be permanent, it is thought to be vital to have man-child. Girls are totally left out of sight. As in the ancient Greek they are only significant for economic purpose of the family and they are thought as temporary members. It is obvious that archetypes of ancient Greek are still discernable in the twentieth century marriages.

Liliana's death also stems from Norval's passion of having man-child. Her body is highly damaged by her last birth giving and she lost her child. Women's

¹⁷² Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 98.

¹⁷³ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 98.

¹⁷⁴ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 98.

health problems during their birth giving are undermined in the novel. Mrs. Hillcoate says that “oh dear, well, she can always have another.”¹⁷⁵ Pratt says that Matrimony is a tool for dulling women’s initiative and blocking her maturation. It is true and not surprising that under these conditions; women already could not have any initiative, since they are seen as means of procreation.

The foreground marriage in the novel is Iris and Richard’s marriage, like her grand mother Adelia, Iris is also married of to Richard. As Pratt says that Iris is the submissive since she is motivated by duty, Richard is the pursuer not of Iris, but money. When Norval’s alias Chase and Sons Industry is on the way of bankrupt, he decides to make business associate with Richard’s factories. Richard is the owner of the Royal Classic Knitwear in Toronto and he is the chief competitor of Norval. Iris defines her marriage as a “. . . put-up job between the two of them.”¹⁷⁶ Richard and Norval make a deal between them and they guise the deal within a package called marriage. It is obvious that her father sees Iris as an object of deal. The dialogue between them shows this:

“I think he may be asking you to marry him,” he said.

. . .

“What should I do?”

“I’ve already given my consent.” said father. “So it’s up to you.

“Then he added: ‘A certain amount depends on it.’

“A certain amount?”

“I have to consider the factories as well”, he said. “I have to consider the business.” . . . “I don’t want it all to have been for nothing. Your grandfather, and then . . . Fifty, sixty years of hard work, down the drain.” . . . looking past me with his good eye, frowning a little, as if an object of great significance.”¹⁷⁷

It is clear that Norval was marrying Iris off for the sake of his Chase and Sons Industries. He sacrificed her daughter which is a typical example in ancient Greek traditions. Iris does not reject the marriage proposal. Motivated by duty, she is a self sacrificer of her own like Adelia and Liliana. Ironically, Norval thinks that with that

¹⁷⁵ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 113.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid*, p. 276.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid*, pp. 276-277.

marriage “[Iris]’d be in good hands and Laura too, of course.”¹⁷⁸ However, Laura will be raped by Richard which will be dealt in Rape/Trauma Archetype. Her marriage is also shaped by Richard’s sister Winifred. She is in the role of “auxiliary” to Richard. She behaves like she is the wife of Richard. She decides and plans Richard’s life. She intentionally becomes the planner for Richard’s life. Throughout her marriage, Winifred sees Iris as a competitor. With her dominant planner personality, she tries to prepare Iris like a doll to Richard. In Henric Ibsen’s play A Doll’s House, Nora shouts to her husband “. . . I’m your dolly wife, just as I used to be Dady’s dolly-baby.”¹⁷⁹ Like Nora, Iris feels that she is behaved as a child and she is expected to be Richard’s doll to show his wealth. She is given sermons by Winifred on how to behave, eat and drink, what to wear and how to make up. For Iris, Winifred “. . . was a sort of madame, really she was pimp.”¹⁸⁰ In all of this re-construction on Iris, she says that “I seemed myself erased, featureless, like an oval of used soap, or the moon on the wane.”¹⁸¹ Women are re-shaped and re-constructed in order to make them adapt to that system. Laura tries to awake her about the marriage. She thinks that they can survive together by working and Iris does not have to sacrifice herself. She says that “It’s not right at all. You could break it off, it’s not too late. You could run away tonight and leave a note. I’d come with you.”¹⁸² In fact, Iris does not know what it costs. Her soul and body is redefined and re-constructed, they are pruned off their excess. In fact, this is the cost of marrying that she will understand later when she begins to see.

Pratt says that during marriage, wives are neglected and there is no room for them to grow. They are always monitored and their movements are limited.¹⁸³ Iris says that “my job was to open my legs and shut my mouth.”¹⁸⁴ During her marriage she feels that “I myself however was taking shape –the shape intended for me, by

¹⁷⁸ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 277.

¹⁷⁹ *ibid*, pp. 520-525.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid*, p. 286.

¹⁸¹ *ibid*, p. 288.

¹⁸² *ibid*, p. 290.

¹⁸³ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 45.

¹⁸⁴ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 407.

him. Each time I looked in the mirror a little more of me had been colored in.”¹⁸⁵ Although, she realizes all of these, she thinks it is what it meant to be from earlier times. She does not believe that she can shape her life by herself. Apart from all others, she also conceives herself like a doll to be herded by others.

3.2.2. Other Enclosure Archetypes

Locked rooms, enclosed places, narrow sizes, corridors and stifled places are the concrete examples of enclosure archetype. The person who is sentenced to these places are generally women and the persons or person who keep/s them are the representations of the patriarchal system. Women are generally victimized by the polarization between developing her selfhood and attempting to live by her own decisions, the rules and the values of the patriarchy which do not let her to be her own master.¹⁸⁶ Enclosure creates feeling of suffocation, struggles to breath and breathlessness.¹⁸⁷

In The Blind Assassin, these kinds of enclosure archetypes have great significance, since it is possible to see them in the form of locked rooms, houses or rooms in the house and at last in the form of mad houses. As being a “roman a clef” in the novel, the story told by Alex during his meeting Iris has examples of enclosure archetypes and it functions as a key to illustrate the situation of women in the novel. To begin with the story of Sakiel-Norn city within Zycron planet, it can be said that, although being a science-fiction story, it exemplifies the traditions in the ancient period and the desperate situations of female characters within the novel. In Sakiel-Norn city, nine maidens were sacrificed for the sake of moon goddess who symbolizes “night, mist and shadows, famine, caves, childbirth, exists and silences.”¹⁸⁸ Girls, who will be sacrificed, should come from noble families. It is told that “the dedicated girls were shut up inside the temple compound, fed the best of

¹⁸⁵ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 370.

¹⁸⁶ Ayşe L. Kirtunç. Sözcükler Melegi: Marge Piercy ve İlkörneksel Eleştiri. (İzmir: İleri Kitabevi), p. 64.

¹⁸⁷ Annis Pratt(1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press) p. 69.

¹⁸⁸ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 34.

everything to keep them sleek and healthy and rigorously trained so they would be ready for the great day, able to fulfill their duties with decorum and without quailing.”¹⁸⁹ By illuminating Iris’ life, the story is obviously taking a symbolic state. Married at the age of eighteen to thirty-five year old Richard, Iris is kept under control. Her life is invaded and she is supposed to sacrifice herself to Richard and for his political career. She is like the sacrificial girl of Sakiel-Norn city.

Laura’s situation is not different. After Norval’s death Laura has to live with Iris and Laura. Laura has her own truths and she thinks that she can live by herself by working. She is tried to be re-constructed by Winifred. The plans of her future were already established without her knowledge. Laura does not want to live the life they planned for her and she has other reasons to go away from the house which the reader later learns about. Iris narrates that

Richard said he was tired of this hysterical nonsense and so for a job, he didn’t want to learn anything about it. Laura was far too young to be out on her own; she would get involved in something unsavory, because the woods were full of those who made a business of preying on silly young girls like her. If she didn’t like her school, she could be sent to another one, far away, in a different city, and if she ran away from that one he would put her into home for Wayward girls along with all the other moral delinquents, and if that didn’t do the trick there was always a clinic. A private clinic, with bars on the windows: if it was sackcloth and ashes she wanted, that would certainly fill the bill. She was a minor, he was in authority.¹⁹⁰

Enclosure archetype is most obviously seen in Laura’s life because as she more tries to be herself, the more she is enclosed.

In fact, Laura is also a self sacrificed figure in the novel, she is raped by Richard and she does not say a word about that because they make a deal between them. According to the deal, Richard would help Alex and in return, Laura sacrifices her body to Richard. For this reason, Laura is always under the control of Richard. By physical and mental pressures on her, Laura becomes more aggressive to the

¹⁸⁹ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p 36

¹⁹⁰ *ibid*, p. 406

outer world, she becomes more rebellious. But this time she was said to be insane. Iris narrates the dialogue with Winfred about that:

Laura had finally snapped, snapped, she said, as if Laura was a bean... However, today at the hospital where she'd been doing her charity visiting, she had gone out of control. Luckily there was a doctor present, and another one – a specialist – had been summoned. The upshot of it was that Laura had been declared a danger to herself and to others, and unfortunately Richard had been forced to commit to the care of an institution.¹⁹¹

Later, what Laura says is thought to be a lie, and she is sent to a clinic on the reasons that she lost her mind and she went mad.

In a word, mad house is the last circle of the enclosure. It is the place where the pressure on women is the most violent. As it was analyzed, there are different forms of enclosure. In patriarchy, there is a general enclosure against women's development. They are enclosed within an invisible web of traditions and patriarchal values. Within that web marriages become an enclosure for women that are not done on love, but on economic and social reasons. Besides that, concrete forms are also enclosures where women kept under control and they are forced to "grow down."

3.3. Rape \ Trauma Archetype

Rape emerges one of the already accepted things in patriarchy. When we look at the foundations of the patriarchal system, it is not surprising to see "rape" as a force to invade. Rape was one of the elements Indo-European groups used to invade territories belonging to chthonic goddess cult. In time, it emerges as a vital element in myths and later in verbal culture. In Greek mythology, there are several examples of rape archetype. Daphne chooses to be a tree to escape from Apollo. In Hades and Persephone story; Persephone is captured and raped by Hades and enclosed in the Underworld. By these stories feminine Eros is discouraged and masculine Eros is flattered. Pratt stated that "The event of rape" in that it involves the violation of the

¹⁹¹ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 523.

self in its psychological and physical integrity, thus becomes central to the young women's experience even if she is to be bedded down legally within a marriage."¹⁹²

In The Blind Assassin, rape and trauma are central in women's lives. First of all "rape" archetype emerges as a lesson subject in their lives. Mr. Erskine is engaged by Norval as a teacher. After he has done some tests, he undervalues girls mental capacity. He says that "... [they] had the brains of insects or marmots. [They] were nothing short of deplorable, and it was a wonder [they] were not cretins."¹⁹³ This is an assault to their mental capacity. Every kind of attack can be evaluated in this category. Mr. Erskine also applies violence on girls. Iris states that

He was a hair puller, on ear twister. He would whack the desks beside our fingers with his ruler and the actual fingers too, or cuff us across the book of the head when exasperated, or, as a last resort, hurl books at us or hit us across the backs of our legs. His sarcasm was withering, at least to me. . .¹⁹⁴

Mr. Erskine's acts are a kind of violence and masculine pressure on girls and he likes the pain the girls feel.

Northrop Frye says that verbal culture grows out of myths. Rape stories within mythology also continue in verbal culture. Mr. Erskine chooses purposefully parts related to rape from classics to teach girls. Iris says that

from Virgil's Aeneid- he was fond of the suicide of Dido- or from Ovid's metamorphoses, the parts where unpleasant things were done by the gods to various young women. The rape of Europa by a large white bull, of Leda by a swan, of Dana by a shower of gold. These would at least hold our attention he said with his ironic smile.¹⁹⁵

Mr. Erskine symbolizes the classic masculine pursuer image. He undermines Iris and Laura mentally and he teaches the parts related to rape as an ordinary and accepted thing. He teaches the words "Rapio, rapere, raphi, raptum." meaning "to seize and

¹⁹² Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 24.

¹⁹³ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 196.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid*, p.197.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid*, p.199.

carry of . . . decline.”¹⁹⁶ This is the role of the women, to be seized, to be carried of and decline in the patriarchal system.

In the allegorical story within the book that takes place in the city of Sakiel-Norn there are rape images with a great significance. Already having hierarchical and patriarchal system, Sakiel-Norn becomes a place of rape and assault. First of all Sakiel-Norn is a city famous with its carpets woven by children. In the underground in shadowy places, children are made to weave carpets until they are blinded. The values of the carpets are measured by the number of the blinded children who become blind weaving it. According to the story “once they were blind, the children would be sold off to brothel keepers, the girls and the boys alike.”¹⁹⁷ Successful ones who managed to escape are hired as “blind assassins.” The stories of these children are an allegory for women images in masculine order. Just like children assassins women are primarily blinded and then they become their own assassin. They assassinate their own lives or their relatives sacrificing themselves for nothing.

Within story again, there is another example rape archetype. It is about the girls who are sacrificed to the mean goddess. Noble families do not want to sacrifice their girls. Hence they mutilate their daughters’ body since blemished or flawed girls means an insult for the goddess. Whether sacrificed or not, mutilation is inescapable for women. The girls who are to be sacrificed are kept in temples.

They spent long hours in prayer, getting into the right frame of mind; they where taught to. . . sing the songs of the goddess, which were about absence and silences, about unfulfilled love and unexpressed regret and wordlessness- songs about the impossibility of singing.¹⁹⁸

Besides that, in order to avoid their screaming in the sacrificial ceremony their tongues are cut off before three months. Since it is thought that “such outbursts could spoil the festivities: everyone enjoyed the sacrifices. . .”¹⁹⁹ These girls are also raped by the master of underworld, which is an allegory to Hades, before the night they are

¹⁹⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 199.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁸ *ibid*, p. 36.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid*, p. 36.

sacrificed since “the Zycronians are afraid of virgins, dead ones especially. Women betrayed in love who have died unmarried are driven to seek in death what they’ve so unfortunately missed out in life.”²⁰⁰ This allegory is a part of the roman a clef within the book. It illuminates the situation of women in the novel as well as being similar to mythic stories in Greek mythology. This story reveals the silenced, passive, violated and victimized roles given to women within both stories and in real life. These roles are so recurrent in verbal culture that they are inherent to female experience in a patriarchal culture.

Laura and Iris’ situations are not different. Laura is raped and silenced by Richard and she is told to be mad. Even she transforms her message to Iris in a coded form through tinted pictures. Besides her raping by Richard in the asylum called “Bella Vista” meaning beautiful view is exposed to curetting. She is materialized in that place. New treatment methods are tested on her. One of them is “electroshock therapy.” All of these methods are to dominate women and apply power on them

Regarding Iris during her marriage their sexual relationship is one sided. She was taught by Reenie that whatever unpleasant thing happens, “grin and bear it”²⁰¹ Iris says that

I didn’t yet know my lack of enjoyment – my distaste, my suffering even – would be considered normal and even desirable by my husband. He was one of those man who felt that if a women did not experience sexual pleasure this was all to the good, because than she would not be liable to wander of seeking it elsewhere.²⁰²

Rape image is involved also in marriages because female sexuality is seen as a threat to the patriarchy. Women’s sexuality is seen as inappropriate sexual principle. For this reason it is undermined and prohibited by tradition. It is one of the recurrent archetype as well as being one of the ways to make women submit to masculine system. It is employed in the novel to represent the yielded, victimized position of women in the system.

²⁰⁰ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 143.

²⁰¹ *ibid*, p. 294.

²⁰² *ibid*, p. 295.

3.4. Green World Archetype

The relation between women and nature is known and accepted since pre-historic periods. In those periods, women are thought to represent the cycle in nature. They were seen as entities symbolizing fecund, fertile, nurturing, embracing, sheltering aspects of nature. The bond between women and nature is identified with Gaia and Demeter mother cults in the agricultural period. In those periods Meredith Powers asserts that these cults embody “prerational prelogical essences [associated with] birth, death, illness, recovery, accident, and old age but also, with good harvest, plentiful rain, blight and drought.”²⁰³ They denote the wholeness within nature. However, in Greek culture they are cast aside and replaced with male gods. Their wholeness arising from nature is fractured, polarized and reconstructed by Greek myths. In women’s fiction, nature emerges as an element which helps women heal by gathering her fragmented self. It relieves the pains in her soul wounded by patriarchy. It is a medium where she turns for renewal. Women find companionship, independence and solace in nature. In addition to this, Annis Pratt states that “in most women’s novels the green world is present in retrospect, something left behind or about to be left behind as one backs into the enclosure.”²⁰⁴

In The Blind Assassin, green world archetype is employed to juxtapose the lost wholeness of female left behind and enclosed state of her in patriarchy. In the allegoric story within the novella, Sakiel-Norn is illustrated as a desert. There is not any naturalistic element in that city. Even, the sun does not show up. Zycronians sacrifice nine maidens to the sun god in order to entreat him. There is not an imagery of wholeness represented by nature. On the contrary, there is a hierarchical system in which every class has a place in the ladder of that system. Women and children are thought as marketable objects. The fragmentation brought by patriarchy is obvious by this setting. Female wholeness, her qualities transcending between female and

²⁰³ A. Meredith Powers (1991). The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose. (London: McFarland&Company Publishers), p. 23.

²⁰⁴ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 22.

male embracing both of them does not exist. Women become an object in the fragmented society. This allegorical story also symbolizes the changing state of nature represented within the memorial. Iris describes a period nearly comprising a hundred years. Reader witnesses the changing descriptions of nature throughout the mentioned period. While narrating her childhood period, Iris describes the rivers, the mountains, the forests in other words the landscape embraces Port Ticonderoga. However, as time moves on, nature becomes a decaying element. Nature is returning into a concrete desert. Moreover, Iris sometimes mentions about the global warming as a made-thing. All these descriptions about decaying and destructed nature symbolize the lost wholeness of chthonic female. Women goddess' embracing individual as a whole is juxtaposed with the fragmenting and decaying elements of patriarchy. Through wars, nature is raped and destroyed. Furthermore, as eighty-two year old woman, Iris comments on destruction of earth through wars and she presents them in a dystopian way. She narrates that "Last night I watched the television news

. . . There is another war somewhere, what they call a minor one, though of course it isn't minor for anyone who happens to get caught up in it . . . Endless mothers, carrying endless limp children, their faces splotched with blood; endless bewildered old men. They cart the young men off and murder them, intending to forestall revenge, as the Greek did at Troy. Houses cracked open like eggs, their contents torched or stolen or stamped vindictively under foot; refugees strafed from airplanes. In the wake of invasion, any invasion, the ditches fill up with raped women. To be fair, raped men as well. Raped children, raped dogs and cats.²⁰⁵

Iris begins to be interested in rock gardening within the framework of this decaying nature descriptions and fragmented female images. Firstly, she is motivated to do it by Winifred as a popular and high-fashion hobby among high class society. Iris was not aware formerly that she would be healed by means of her garden and nature. Symbolically, her sowed seeds do not grow or the grown ones rot easily since she is blind to her self, her capabilities, and her fertile body and to her chthonic root. She narrates her failure as:

²⁰⁵ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 582.

I was not fond of garden my rock garden, which was mine in name only, like so much else . . . The rock garden was similarly resistant to my ministrations, nothing I did to it pleased it at all. Its rocks make a good show –there was a lot of pink granite, along with the limestone – but I couldn't get anything to grow in it . . . I went through . . . books, making lists –lists of what I might plant, or else lists of what I had indeed already planted; what ought to have been growing, but was not.²⁰⁶

In this period of her life, Iris is not aware of her unique self and she is also blind to Laura's condition, in other words, her rape by Richard. She is indifferent under the masculine system that undermine female in all aspects. She does not question the desperate situation she is in, although feeling the pressure and undermining. However, when she begins questioning the system and becomes aware of her power within, her garden symbolically answers her. She recounts that: "I occupied my time; I'd learned how to do that. I had taken up gardening in earnest now, I was getting some results. Not everything died. I had plans for a perennial shade garden."²⁰⁷ Reconciliation with her self brings her reconciliation with the garden and nature.

Nature brings Iris a kind of transformation. Learning the reality about Laura and finding the hidden documents about Bella Vista propel Iris to leave the house and to divorce Richard. She hires a small house with a garden. There, she re-expresses her self, regains the buried power within her. She feels no pressures of patriarchy on herself and she learns how to handle the problems. In return, her garden embraces her. Most of her time is spent in the garden watering, sowing, reading books in it. She purifies herself from the re-defined patriarchal elements. Nature gives her vision and wisdom. Green-world is a turning point her life. In the patriarchal system, her expression of herself is blocked. She is blinded and muted. Even, her sexual expression is blocked with patriarchal pressures. However, expressing herself through nature gives her the oldest power buried in history regarding chthonic female qualities.

²⁰⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 540.

²⁰⁷ *ibid*, p. 585.

3.5. Eros as an Expression of the Self

Annis Pratt states that in Bildungsroman of women's fiction, patriarchal expectations limit and thwart women's quest for a total self; in other words, her Eros.²⁰⁸ Essentially, Eros was a vital quality of women in pre-historic period. It means being whole with her nature, tribe and children. It is a state of being by which women had all the qualities, which are now polarized by patriarchy as good and evil. However, patriarchal system fragmented Eros related to woman by thwarting and undermining her physically and mentally. In spite of this, an attempt to attaining Eros is visible in women's fiction. This attempt is juxtaposed with patriarchal norms throughout narrative.

Initially, Eros is handled as expression of feminine sexuality. Pratt says that

in considering the history of marriage I have taken account of the social insistence that potential wives be totally chaste lest be "ruined" for the marriage market; that wives limit themselves not only to monogamy but, through much of our history, eunuchry; that adulterous wives are especially cursed; and that women engaging in sexuality outside of marriage are 'fallen', or 'whores.'²⁰⁹

It is obvious that female sexuality is seen as something to be feared and prohibited. In The Blind Assassin, female sexuality also emerges as something to be pressured and forbidden. It emerges in Iris and Laura's adolescent period. When Iris becomes thirteen and her body grows up, her father begins pressures about her growing body. He re-constructs Iris about her outfit, posture and other things related to her body. This makes her conceive her body as "other." Iris recounts this situation as:

when I became thirteen. I'd been growing, in ways that were not my fault, although they seemed to annoy Father as much as if they had been. He began to take an interest in my posture, in my speech, in my deportment generally. My clothing should be simple and plain, with white blouses and dark pleated skirt, and dark velvet dresses for church. Clothes that looked like uniforms –that looked like sailor

²⁰⁸ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press) p. 73.

²⁰⁹ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 73.

suits, but were not. My shoulders should be straight, with no slouching. I should not be sprawl, chew gum, fidget, or chatter. The values he required were those of the army: neatness, obedience, silence, and no evident sexuality. Sexuality, although it was never spoken of, was to be nipped in the bud. He had let me run wild for too long. It was time for me to be taken in hand.²¹⁰

Her father sees Iris' growing body and sexuality as something "to be taken in hand", or reconstructed. Throughout the novel, Iris' sexuality is also repressed by her husband. Not only Norval reconstructs Iris' body, but also Reenie dictates patriarchal values on Iris and Laura. When Iris' menstruation period begins, Reenie expresses it to Iris as "'it's a curse' she said. She stopped short of saying that it was yet one more peculiar arrangement of God's, devised to make life disagreeable: it was just the way things were, she said. As for the blood, you tore up rags. (She did not say blood, she said mess)."²¹¹ Iris' wholeness with her body is shaped by masculine norms. Menstruation which was celebrated as fertility in pre-historic period now comes to be a "mess", even a "curse" in patriarchal culture. These patriarchal values imposed on women prevent them from expressing themselves sexually.

Although Iris' sexual expression of herself is fragmented by Norval and Reenie during her adolescence; and later by Richard during her marriage, she expresses herself as a sexual being through her relationship with Alex. When she meets Alex, she tells about her feelings: ". . . there's no use resisting. She goes to him for amnesia, for oblivion. She renders herself up, is blotted out; enters the darkness of her won body, forgets her name. Immolation is what she wants, however briefly. To exist without boundaries."²¹² Alex is the one near whom she feels that she expresses herself as a whole with her body. However, she thinks that her feelings about Alex are seen as inferior by the patriarchy. She considers that "such extreme pleasure is also a humiliation. It is like being hauled along by a shameful rope, a leash around the neck."²¹³ She feels herself as a whole when she is with Alex, but she feels the pressures of masculine system heavily. This dichotomous feeling makes her

²¹⁰ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 193.

²¹¹ *ibid*, p. 194.

²¹² *ibid*, p. 319.

²¹³ *ibid*, p. 318.

write the novella which also named The Blind Assassin in third person narration. As it is obvious from the quotation above, Iris does not use names while she is writing. She codes the names as “she” and “he” since patriarchal system does not permit such a kind of female sexuality included stories to be published. Pratt says that “the women author and her hero have internalized the social dictates against erotic authenticity to the extent that they experience Eros as a ‘shadow’ . . . Self-censorship both conscious and unconscious, drowns the revolutionary powers of Eros.”²¹⁴ Iris motivated by self-censorship not only writes her novel in third person narration, but also published it as Laura’s novel after her death. Pratt calls this situation “puzzlement.” She asserts that “the socially unacceptable status of Eros as a natural force in the human personality automatically places woman in a puzzling double bind. On the other hand she experiences Eros as an aspect after natural maturation; on the other hand such an experience for a woman is considered ‘unnatural’”²¹⁵ Iris’s novella The Blind Assassin within her memoir creates in the reader such a puzzlement. Their identities are detectable by clues related to their outlook but, names are covered. It is written with a “shadowed” narration. When Iris published the book, it was also ignored by the society. She tells that

. . . nothing about the, which most of them surely thought would be best forgotten. Although it isn’t, not here: even after fifty years it retains its own aura of brimstone and taboo. Hard to fathom, in my opinion: as carnality goes it’s old hat, the foul language nothing you can’t hear any day on the street corners, the sex as decorous as fan dancers –whimsical almost, like garter belts. Then of course it was a different story. What people remember isn’t the book itself, so many furors: ministers in church denounced it as obscene, not only here; the public library was forced remove it from the shelves, the one bookstore in town refused to stock it. There was a word of censoring it.²¹⁶

This shows not only Iris’ innate self-censorship but also, patriarchal intuitions’ censoring on feminine sexuality. The book emerges as a threat, as a fist raised over.

²¹⁴ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 89.

²¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 82.

²¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 48.

Eros is handled as a concept related to physical, mental and psychological wholeness of women at the same time. However, again there is no representation of wholeness related to women in that respect. On the contrary, woman is represented as physically, mentally and psychologically fractured. Meredith Powers related Eros to chthonic female self. According to her, Eros is the experience to identify oneself with the life of another, to participate in something which is larger than the self. She states that “this Eros is the love which is celebrated in fusion and intensifies with the blurring of the ego borders between individuals.”²¹⁷ Powers means by Eros something intensive and extensive than the bond of tribal mother experiencing with her children. Yet, it is inseparable from the tribal relation of mother with children and with her power to give birth to herself as well as her children. This kind of Eros is unusual in “phallogocentric goals” of patriarchy. Powers states that

attachment behavior itself, that merging of selves which is most intense in the participation mystique of the mother-child bond, is theoretically dangerous to the social balance in that it contradicts the priority of individuation; it challenges prevailing polarities; it threatens both the social hierarchy and the metaphoric centrality of the male.”²¹⁸

In The Blind Assassin, there are representations of fragmented female Eros. Iris is blind to her chthonic self most of her life. Even, she is not permitted to experience the primary bond of mother with her children. Her daughter, Amiee is taken away from him and she ends her life waiting for her grand-daughter, Sabrina. She longs for the primary step of Eros, that is, to have bond with her children. She is undermined and blinded to her “self.” Her bond with her chthonic self is broken so she is unable to embrace others with a whole self.

Jung states that mother archetype has a vital role in a woman’s life since it functions as a determinant in a daughter’s life. A daughter constructs her life according to the maternal elements she experiences. In his concept of “hypertrophy of the maternal element”, he claims that “women of this type, though continually living for others, are as a matter of fact, unable to make any real sacrifice . . . Her life

²¹⁷ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 168

²¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 168

is lived in and through others, in more or less complete identification with all the objects of her care.”²¹⁹Hypertrophy of maternal quality in a daughter stems from the role given to her by the patriarchy. Women are solely allowed to have fractured maternal characteristics. For this reason, their Eros is not developed. In The Blind Assassin, Iris can be categorized in this group. Because of her mother’s early death, she is expected to look after Laura. Motivated by duty, Iris lives her self through others. She allows others to re-define and entrap her. Hypertrophy of maternal element emerges as one of the ways of fragmenting Eros.

To put it succinctly, Eros becomes a fragmented element for women in the patriarchal system. Women are unable to experience their buried Eros and the attempts to be whole again is prevented and censored. Fragmenting Eros firstly begins by breaking women’s relation with their body. It is made “other” and its vital cycle is seen as a “mess” or “curse.” Alienated with her body, women are not permit to have sexuality. They are psychologically made “eunuch.” One who experiences Eros partly through her sexuality is also censored and labeled. Internalized the patriarchal norms, women are blinded to regain their Eros. Women are pruned of their qualities related to Eros in phallogocentric culture. Hence, they are unable to express themselves through Eros.

3.6. Archetypes of Singleness and Solitude:

Archetypes of “singleness” and “solitude” of women is generally identified with “being a spinster” of being “odd” according to the patriarch norms. The reason of this labeling stems from these women’s not included in marriage institution. Since, their being unmarried is regarded as a rebellion to patriarch.²²⁰According to masculine system; women should be guided under patriarchal power. For this reason, women are to be under the drive of their fathers, husbands and sons. When a woman is not married or divorced, patriarchy is apt to label her because they are redeemed as

²¹⁹ Carl Gustav Jung (1998) Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), p. 22.

²²⁰ A. Lahur Kırtunç. Sözcükler Melegi: Marge Piercy ve İlkörneksel Eleştiri. (İzmir: İleri Kitabevi), p. 46.

sexually threat.²²¹ Woman's sexual potential is feared and it is always made eunuch psychologically. Single women's sexuality is regarded as something to be pressured. They are needed to be labeled outcast.

Margaret Atwood employs this archetype primarily through Laura. She is represented as an "odd" character according to patriarchal norms in novel. Contrasted with other female characters of the novel, Laura emerges a figure who denies masculine values and who wishes to have her own "autonomy." She rejects to marry. During her conversation with Reenie she says that: "God pity her husband", said Reenie as Laura laid her bread men out in a neat row. "She's stubborn as a pig." "I'm not going to have a husband anyway." Said Laura" I'm going to live by myself in the garage."²²²Laura's ideas on marriage do not change in her later life. Winifred is planning a début for Laura without her knowledge. She is planning to ". . . marry her off to some nice man who does not know which end is up."²²³Laura's wish of being single or not marrying to some one is juxtaposed with Winifred's imposing her to marry. Laura is the only figure with a vision. She learns what marriage means in patriarchy. She thinks that marriage is an economic bond without love. In her dialogue with Iris, she tells that "I only said marriage was an outgrown institution. I said it had nothing to do with love, that's all. Love is giving, marriage is buying and selling. You can't put love into a contract. Then I said there was no marriage in heaven."²²⁴Because of her ideas of singleness and difference of love and marriage, she is seen as an "odd" or "outcast." Winifred thinks that ". . . Laura is more than a little odd." Laura's wishing to have own autonomy on her own life is regarded as "odd." It is thought that women are not capable of leading their own lives. In a dialogue between Winifred and Iris, Iris says that "May be it will be enough for Laura. May be she just wants to lead her own life," I said "her own life" said Winifred. "Just think what she'd do with it."²²⁵Patriarchal values wants to see women guided by men, since women's autonomy is regarded as a threat and her

²²¹ A. Lahur Kırtunç. *Sözcükler Melegi: Marge Piercy ve İlkörneksel Eleştiri*. (İzmir: İleri Kitabevi), p. 46

²²² Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 108.

²²³ *ibid*, p. 517.

²²⁴ *ibid*, p. 518.

²²⁵ *ibid*, pp. 517-518.

capability to lead her own life means men and women are equals. This equality destructs the vision of man as a single divine being.

Miss Violet Graham is another obvious example in the novel related to singleness as an “outcast.” She is referred as miss “Violence” by Iris because she thinks that “Violence” is an odd combination with her personality. Miss Violet is a weak and wretched figure. In fact she conceives herself as weak and wretched. This is the definition ascribed to her by the patriarchy because of her single status. Reenie defines her as a “. . . poor thing had come down in the world and deserved our pity. Because she was an old maid . . . she has been doomed to a life of single blessedness . . . with a trace of contempt.”²²⁶ Re-constructed with, masculine values, women label and define each other in terms of patriarchal values. Since they are blinded themselves, they identify their power with the power of men. When she is single, it means that she is poor and wretched.

“Singleness” and “solitude” archetypes are also employed as a positive aspect for a woman. These archetypes are related to transformation of the women. Annis Pratt asserts that through solitude period, women clear out an archetypal part in her psyche associated to “. . . a patriarchal, contains once-forgotten possibilities of personal development.”²²⁷ Discovery of this part helps her transform herself with “rekindling old images, buried archetypes, and discarded choices.”²²⁸ In single women images, it is frequent that those women transcends beyond gender roles. They gain a new upper-identity above genders. It represents that they transcend beyond their female gender and “being human” becomes primary significance for them. These kinds of women transcend a position of an object to be obtained. They get rid of the patriarchal boundaries and enclosures assigned on gender roles.²²⁹ Regaining their chthonic self through nature and solitude, they become free and feel the vividness of their body.

²²⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 188.

²²⁷ Annis Pratt (1981). *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 127.

²²⁸ *ibid*, p. 127.

²²⁹ A. Lahur Kirtunç. *Sözcükler Melegi: Marge Piercy ve İlkörneksel Eleştiri*. (İzmir: İleri Kitabevi), p.48

In The Blind Assassin, Iris embodies transformational solitude. Already having learned to express her self through nature; singleness and solitude help her complete her transformation. She achieves this when she is not a daughter or wife. Being freed from patriarchal definitions, constructions and pressures, she defines and created herself again. Solitude and singleness gives her the power to recreate herself again and again in accordance with her will.

Single and lonely period gives Iris a chance to redeem past and present. She spends her time in her garden and reads a lot. Besides this, she has to market her jewelry given by Richard to survive economically. This makes her an active and independent being. She contemplates over her past and finds out how blind she was. During that period, she has to face with her blinded “self and what she assassinated in those times. She admits that “. . . unshed tears can turn you rancid. So can memory. So can biting your tongue. My bad bights were beginning. I couldn’t sleep.”²³⁰ During her sleepless and lonely nights, Iris recreates herself and her past which helps her to gather the fragments of her life and complete her transformation as a whole human being through singleness and solitude.

3.6. Transformation Archetype of the Self

Rebirth and transformation archetypes are fundamental cornerstones in women’s fiction. Process of transformation allows women to break through the “persona” assigned by patriarchy. Transcending beyond the internal mask enables women to declare their genuine voice that have been silenced. As it is pointed in the first part of that chapter, Bildungsroman is the essential genre employed in women’s fiction. Transformation occurs as an expected outcome within the framework of that genre. It is the conclusion of the personal quest guided the protagonists to rebirth. Carol Christ divides “quest” into two concepts. First is the “social quest.” She defines it as a “search for self in which the protagonist begins in alienation and seeks

²³⁰Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 620.

integration into a human community where s/he can develop more fully.”²³¹Pratt states that “social quest is younger hero’s quest. It stems from her need to define herself in terms of social roles. Second type of quest is “spiritual quest.” It is related to a “self’s journey in relation to cosmic power or powers. Often interior it may also have communal dimensions.”²³²“Spiritual quest” is commonly embodied with older woman in search of her self.²³³Social and spiritual quests are often juxtaposed in women’s fiction. The period of social quest identifies hero’s efforts to construct her self in regard to gender roles without realizing that she is being victimized by patriarchy. Spiritual quest covers the second phase in hero’s life. It emerges after the recognition of her victimization and self-sacrificed role assigned to her by society. It becomes the chief quest dominating her life and also the narration. Transformation s obtained after this quest.

“Spiritual quest” is akin to Jungian “individuation process.” It is the procedure explained by Jungian “Rebirth” archetype. According to Jung, self is attained by reconciliation of ego with the “persona” and “shadow.” Jung describes it as a “total personality.” During the process through a total personality, undeveloped parts and functions within the personality gain resistance and they begin to function properly. An individual solve the conflicts in the consciousness and the repressed intent within the unconscious. Hence, s/he reborns into a new whole self. Jungian concept of whole self is “. . . androgynous, nonsexist, in tune with both inner being and the natural world in the same manner.”²³⁴ (137p four)

Northrop Frye’s romance genre also includes this kind journey. Frye defines it as a “wish-fulfillment dream”²³⁵According to his model of romance; socially ascendant class imposes ideals onto hero because hero’s ideals are seen as threat to the ascendants. In this framework, hero tries to attain his/her quest assisted by his/her

²³¹ Quoted in Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 135-136.

²³² Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 136.

²³³ Ibid, p. 136.

²³⁴ Carl Gustav Jung (1998) Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), p. 137.

²³⁵ Northrop Frye (1957). Anatomy of Criticism. Helenae Uxori (Ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University), p. 172.

shadow. At the end of the journey, s/he advances to “experience world” from the “innocence world.”

Jungian “individuation process” and his” concept of self in collaboration with Northrop Frye’s notion of “journey” in his romance model is similar to the metaphoric journey of the protagonist in women’s fiction. However, the protagonist in women’s fiction attempts to get out of the assigned gender role imposed on him by the patriarchy. Besides this, she tries to reconcile with her buried female archetypes. Annis Pratt states that women’s journey is divided into five recurrent phases.²³⁶ These phases have parallel figures and sequences in Jung’s concept of individuation process along with Frye’s model of “romance.”

Women hero’s journey begins with the phase of “splitting off from family, husbands, lovers.” In this phase protagonist’s consciousness takes a new form. She turns away from patriarchal values detailed throughout the narrative and drives in to inward plunge. Second phase is “green world guide or token.” This phase clarifies protagonist quest to a whole self. It functions as a refuge against patriarchal pressures. It also guides the protagonist through her buried archetypes in her inner experience. Third phase is named “confrontation with parental figures.” Woman hero confronts with her past and the figures in her memory in order to come to terms with her subconscious or personal memories in this phase. She has to reconcile with her past and her fragmented self in the past. This phase braces her for rebirth. The final phase is “plunge into the unconscious.” After confrontation with the figures in the past and in the subconscious, the protagonist moves into her unconscious. In this phase, there is a guide which Jung describes as wise old man or maid, leading her to her unconscious. According to Jung, this guide is the personal shadow rebelling against societal norms and gender roles. According to Pratt, “women’s rebirth journey . . . creates transformed, androgynous, and powerful human personalities out of socially devalued beings.”²³⁷

²³⁶ Annis Pratt (1981). Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 138.

²³⁷ *ibid*, p. 142.

Transformation of the self as an archetype is the central dominating pattern in The Blind Assassin. Atwood illustrates this archetype through Iris. She breaks through the entrapment of the patriarchy and plunges into a metaphoric journey at the end of which she transcends beyond victimized and sacrificed gender role assigned to her. Iris proceeds phases leading her rebirth. Annis Pratt's phases of transformation are in parallel with the phases Iris goes beyond throughout her transformation.

As the first two phases described by Annis Pratt are already studied in the previous parts, they will only be reviewed here. The first phase "splitting off from family, husband, lovers" is examined in the part of "archetypes of singleness and solitude." Iris' singleness begins when she breaks her ties with Richard upon conveying him in broad sense. She realizes how blind she was to Richard's violation of Laura's autonomy and his sexual violation of her body. This awakening is turning point in her life since it marks the beginning of her transformation upon this awakening, she splits from Richard. She retreats into her solitude. She defines her time as: "time passed. I gardened, I read, and so on." This makes her plunge into her inward.

The second phase "the green world or token" is the phase in Iris' transformative journey. It is examined by "the green-world archetype" in the previous parts. Already taken up gardening as a hobby, she continues gardening after her splitting from Richard. She purchased a house with a garden and it becomes a refuge for her in which she feels freed from patriarchal construction and pressures. As women are believed to have the oldest bond with nature, Iris reconciles with that bond in her garden. When she uncovered the bond of nature within herself, it gives her power to shatter "internalized persona" she has been wearing. Hence, she gains the potential to rebirth her self.

"Confrontation with the potential figures" is the longest and the domineering phase in The Blind Assassin. Confrontation with her constructed past and the dead

figures left behind is essential part in her transformation. In this phase of her journey, Iris decides on writing a memorial as a means of transformation. Since, writing, in other words, “story-telling is her way to revision, understands, and justifies her life; to gain power, to avenge herself on those who have betrayed her and to see her life in order.”²³⁸ Besides this, Iris essentially uses writing to confront with her past and the dead members of her family. Deaths of the family members are announced by news clipping throughout the novel. They are scattered between the chapters. Hence, at intervals readers also confronts with the dead which makes them aware of the Iris’ encountering them in her conscience. Iris continually encounters the dead in her dreams within Avilion or other places they spent time together. Her sleep is distorted with dreams. In a dialogue with her doctor:

‘I can’t sleep,’ I told him. ‘I dream too much.’
 ‘Then if you’re dreaming, you must be sleeping,’ he said, integrating a witticism.
 ‘You know what I mean,’ I said sharply. ‘It’s not the same. The dreams wake me up.’
 “Must be a bad conscience.” He was writing out a prescription, no doubt for sugar pills . . . We put on innocence with advancing age, at least in the minds of others. What the doctor sees when he looks at me is an ineffectual and therefore blameless and biddy.²³⁹

Iris has a “bad conscience” and her way of overcoming it comes from confrontation with the dead of Laura because she was blind to the consequences which lead her death.

Iris first confrontation with Laura’s dead comes only after her committing suicide and found dead. Laura leaves five old school notebooks purposely left for Iris. She confronts with the notebooks, she hesitates, and she acknowledges her feelings as:

I could have stopped there. I could have chosen ignorance, but I did what you would have done –what you’ve already done, if you’ve already read this far. I choose knowledge instead. Most of us will.

²³⁸ F. Karen Stein “A Left-Handed Story: *The Blind Assassin*” Wilson, S. Rose (Ed.) *Margaret Atwood’s Textual Assassinations: Recent Poetry and Fiction*. (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press), p. 135.

²³⁹ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 465.

We'll choose knowledge no matter what we'll maim ourselves in the process . . . Curiosity is not our only motive: love or grief or despair or hatred is what drives us on. We'll spy relentlessly on the dead: we'll open their letters, we'll read their journals, we'll go through their trash, hoping for a hint, a final word, an explanation from those who have deserted us –who've left us holding the bag.²⁴⁰

Iris faces with what Laura left behind and she interprets the coded messages Laura wrote. This interpreting brings her a vision. She knows Richard's rape of Laura and his lies about it. Iris bursts out of her blind "persona" with this confrontation. By this new vision, she also interprets the photos Laura tinted and left before being sent to the madhouse in order to wake her. However, Iris was unable to interpret the message given with the tints, by then. There are two tinted photos. The first one is a group photo taken in Iris' wedding party. Laura covers the bridesmaids and bestmen with a thick color Iris narrates that about the photo: "Winifred had been colored a lurid green, as had Richard. I had been given a wash of aqua blue. Laura herself was a brilliant yellow, not only her dress, but her face and hands as well . . . Laura was glowing within . . ." ²⁴¹In the second photo, there are only Richard and Iris.

Richard's face had been painted grey, such a dark grey that features were all but obliterated. The hands were red, as were the flames that shot up from around and somehow from inside the head, as if the skull itself were burning. She'd dealt with my face, however –bleached it so that eyes and the nose and mouth looked fogged over, like a window on a cold, wet day.²⁴²

Iris decodes the messages within the photo. She understands that Laura reveals the souls by tinting. In the first photo, Winifred and Richard colored green. Bouson states that green is related to obsession, desire of upper class, and money.²⁴³ These notions cover Winifred and Richard's souls. Laura's glowing yellow represents the wisdom, autonomy, uniqueness. Iris is coded by blue which shows that Iris is asleep. When Laura first takes up tinting as a hobby, she paints Iris blue in those times. The dialogue between them clarifies what Laura means by "blue."

²⁴⁰ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 603.

²⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 551.

²⁴² *ibid*, p. 552.

²⁴³ J. Brooks Bouson (Sping , 2003). "A Commemoration of Wounds Endured and Resented: Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin* as Feminist Memoir" in *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Vol, 44, No: 3 <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-102793317.html> pp. 251- 269. p. 265.

“I picked up the photographs of the two of us. Why am I blue?”
“Because you’re asleep,” said Laura.²⁴⁴

Iris understands that she has been sleeping which indicates her blindness to her own life and to her surrounding. The second photo also clarifies Iris’ absence in her soul, her nullity in her life. Laura bleaches out Iris’ face which symbolizes Iris’ erasure in her marriage. Richard’s face is tinted grey which shows him as a statute, as without soul. Her hands are tinted red and his skull is tinted in flames. By this coloring, Laura depicts Richard as evil or tyrant. Norval’s sight in Santa Claus costume with flames of the fire places at the back of Norval’s skull resembles Richard’s tinted photo. Both of the patriarchal figures resemble tyrants in Iris’ life. They silenced her and blinded her. Iris becomes a victim in their hands. She also causes Laura’s victimization because of her blindness.

Jung believes that in the “individuation process”, a “spirit” guides the individual. According to Jung, spirit is an entity between life and death and it is represented by a “shadowy image.” It is a “wise old man” illustrated with a father image. He shows up when a hero feels desperate. He advises the hero. Jung states that spirit figures are the representatives of wisdom, knowledge, insight.²⁴⁵ In Iris’ rebirth process, spirit who guides her is Laura. Essentially, Laura leads Iris from the beginning, she represents her shadow self and she collaborates her spiritually. However, Iris is in sleep and her self denies its shadow, represses and ignores it in those times.

As it is pointed out, Iris writes in her transformation period. Her rebirth comes through writing. During her one year writing period, from 1998-1999, Laura also assists Iris as a spirit figure. Their fundamental confrontation is in this writing period. During her writing process, Iris sees Laura frequently in her dreams. Besides this, she brings Laura’s dead back through writing. Margaret Atwood thinks that “. . . *all* writing of the narration kind, and perhaps all writing, is motivated, deep down, by

²⁴⁴ Margaret Atwood (2001). The Blind Assassin. (London: Virago Press), p. 347.

²⁴⁵ Carl Gustav Jung(1998) Four Archetypes . (London: Routledge), p. 100.

a fear of and a fascination with mortality –by a desire to make the risky trip to the underworld, and to bring something or someone back from the dead.”²⁴⁶ Iris confronts and negotiates with Laura’s dead through writing. Fundamentally, she denies Laura in the great deal of her memorial. Laura is illustrated as a shadowy figure. However, through the end, and upon Laura’s death and Iris’ gaining vision, she travels to bring Laura back in her unconscious because she still persists in the mind of Iris. She narrates that “when you’re young, you think everything you do is disposable . . . You think you can get rid of things, and people too –leave them behind. You don’t yet know about the habit they have, of coming back.”²⁴⁷

Atwood meditates on what the dead wants in return, she tells that “. . . what all of them want, in one word –a word that encompasses life, sacrifice, food, and death –that word would be ‘blood’. And this is what the dead most often want, and it is why the food of the dead is often, though not always, round, and also red.”²⁴⁸ Laura, as the dead, wants from Iris to empty her body from its pains. Iris thinks that “[her body] ache like history: things long done with, that still reverberate as pain.”²⁴⁹ Because of her rejection of her shadow self that gives pain to her body as well as to her soul. Her denial to understand Laura, in other words, her shadow makes her victimized. Iris empties her body, her soul by writing. At the beginning of the novel she admits that “. . . the old wound has split open, the invisible blood pours forth. Soon I’ll be emptied.”²⁵⁰ Throughout her memorial, Iris sometimes suggests that she is writing with a hand independent of her and she is writing in red letters. Hence, in this phase of her life, Iris metaphorically gives what the dead wants through her body.

In the last phase named “plunge into the unconscious”, as the title refers Iris plunges into her unconscious. Assisted by Laura and negotiated with her, Iris comes to terms with her shadow. On comparing her blind period with her transformed self, she ponders that: “[h]ow could I have been so ignorant?”. . . So stupid, so unseeing,

²⁴⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 140.

²⁴⁷ *ibid*, p. 485.

²⁴⁸ *ibid*, p.147.

²⁴⁹ *ibid*, p. 87.

²⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 51.

so given over to selflessness.”²⁵¹ According to Frye’s romance model, Iris completes her journey from the “world of innocence” to the “world of experience.” Being an eight-two year-old woman, Iris spends her one year, before her death, on writing her memorial and through which confronting and reconciliation with the dead of Laura, or to put in other words, with her shadow. She also waits for her grand daughter Sabrina who is supposed to be abroad. She plans to give her memorial as a heritage which she hides in a steamer trunk. Iris says about the memorial: Laura was my left hand, and I was hers. We wrote the book together. It’s a left handed book. That’s why one of us is always out of sight, whichever way you look at it.”²⁵² She defines it as a “left handed book” because she admits that “left hands are supposed to be bad . . .”²⁵³ She is the left hand of Laura because she does not see Laura’s autonomy, her struggles, her sexually violation by Richard, her sacrificing, herself because of her blindness. She does not do any “goodness” to her. Likewise, Laura is also Iris’ left hand because she symbolizes her shadow. She represents the denied, repressed, ignored part in Iris’ self. For this reason, this memorial is the embodiment of a total self, a whole self of Iris. In addition, it also represents the re-integrated self of the chthonic female which is fragmented a long time ago. Iris completes her rebirth on the threshold “between our world and their world”²⁵⁴ Waiting for and longing for Sabrina who is said to come in a newspaper clipping after Iris’ death.

To sum up, Iris completes her transformation cycle on the threshold. She re-expresses, re-creates her self with her own free will by writing. Writing becomes the sole ground through which she finds the independence and autonomy. By this way, she opposes the victimized female images which are present in myths. Through writing, she rejects the passive role assigned to her. She burst out of her muted and blind identity into an authentic and powerful being. By her memorial heritage which she intends to leave Sabrina, Iris suggests to guide her like Laura guides her. She proposes Sabrina power of integrity and wholeness which passes hand in hand from Laura to Iris and to her in order to survive in the patriarchy. In transforming herself,

²⁵¹ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 632.

²⁵² *ibid*, p. 627.

²⁵³ *ibid*, p. 627.

²⁵⁴ Margaret Atwood (2003). *Negotiating With The Dead: A Writer on Writing*. (London: Virago Press), p. 149.

Iris like Pandora gives Sabrina her steamer trunk as a gift filled with the notebook of her memorial.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵In pre-historic period. Pandora was known as all gifts which means giver of gifts but later with the initiation of patriarchy she is re-defined as a curious receiver of gifts goddess.

CONCLUSION

Archetypes emerge as the oldest building blocks of human psychology. Despite being used and termed under different names by a great deal of philosophers and writers, they are formalized by Carl Gustav Jung for the first time. Jung, as a psychoanalyst, encounters repeated patterns in the individual's psyche during his studies. For him, these patterns differ from the contents of the personal unconscious since they are more or less the same in the psyche of every individual. For this reason, Jung formalized a wider and deeper layer beneath the personal unconscious which he named the "collective unconscious." According to Jung, collective unconscious is identical in all man and constitutes a common psychic structure which emerges as ideas and modes of behavior in the individuals' minds. Jung defines it as a "universal" ground in which recurrent patterns, in other words, archetypes undergo inconsiderable modification in time. This view of archetypes as universal and eternal recurrent patterns forms the base of this study assisted by the feminist modifications on it.

Jung's studies on archetypes lead him to analyze myths and literary works of art in terms of recurrent patterns. In the course of his studies, he found similar patterns and similar meanings attributed to specific entities and objects which characterize the person's psychology. In the long run of his studies, he formalized a distinct literary criticism based on archetypes. His archetypal theory includes myths since Jung conceives myths as a ground which indicates the essential archetypal patterns forming the human mind. In the light of the myths, Jung suggests specific archetypes related to different aspects of the human psychology.

A distinguished woman writer, Margaret Atwood makes use of the Jungian archetypes in her works in order to depict the structure of the female psychology defined by patriarchy. She handles them in a feminist framework. Particularly, Jungian archetypes of "Persona", "Shadow" and, "Self" are some of the basic archetypes which are employed to illuminate primarily the psychology of the protagonist, Iris as well as the other female characters in "The Blind Assassin."

“Persona” archetype is employed to depict the ascertained role and defined modes of behavior assigned to woman by the patriarchal society. Moreover, it is also used to reveal that “persona” emerges in the psyche of the female images as an internalized pattern which estranges them from their “selves.” “Shadow and “self” are other two significant Jungian archetypes which are made use of with an interwoven point of view. Atwood employs “shadow” archetype to depict the uncorrupted, unmodified female archetypes related to pre-historic goddess which are repressed and buried by the patriarchy. These archetypes are embodied in the Laura character. She appears as “shadow” primarily of the protagonist, Iris, along with the other female characters included in the novel. She represents a part in the female psyche “shadowed” by the masculine system. This part is exemplified with a “shadow” archetype since it indicates the part women are “blinded” to see and “silenced” to talk about by the masculine system. “Shadow” archetype has a fundamental role in the novel because Atwood includes it to show the contemporary women’s blindness to behold the authentic and uncorrupted self within their selves. As it is pointed out, “self” archetype is employed interwoven with the “shadow” archetype. Since, as women remain blind to their “shadow”, they could not attain integrity within their selves. As Jung denotes, in order to reach “self” which he also names “total personality”; confrontation with “shadow” and reconciliation of it with the conscious mind is vital for an individual. This conception of Jung is used by Margaret Atwood to acknowledge that it is only possible for women to attain an integrated self by opposing the constructed female archetypes by patriarchy and seeing the “shadow” buried in deep in them.

In addition, Jung suggests other archetypes which he related to the different phases in human psychology. “Mother”, “Spirit”, “Rebirth” and “Trickster” are the four main archetypes which he believes to have importance in individuals’ psychology. “Mother” archetype is used in “The Blind Assassin” to illuminate the secondary and lifeless role given to mother images in the novel. Mother figures included to the novel are represented as devoid of power and autonomy to shape her life as well as her daughters’ lives. She is made insufficient by the patriarchy to be role model for her daughter. “Spirit” and “rebirth” archetypes are other archetypes

included to the novel. “Spirit” archetype is functioned as a guide in the “rebirth” process of the protagonist, Iris. Laura, again, emerges as the embodiment of this archetype. She leads Iris to confront with her “shadow”, which is again embodied with Laura, to get out of the roles defined by the patriarchy. Iris’ “rebirth” happens on her reconciliation with her “shadow” part to which she was blinded.

Northrop Frye is the other literary critic of Archetypal/Myth criticism. His ideas on archetype differ from Carl Gustav Jung. Frye examines archetypes from literary perspective. According to him, archetypes are recurrent narrative patterns. His theory is based on four genre model in which he determines specific archetypes peculiar to those genres. The patterns in his “romance” genre, in other words, mythoi of summer, are used by Atwood in “The Blind Assassin.” The dichotomous world structure in “romance” is experienced by Iris. Through her transformation, she passes from the “world of innocence” to the “world of experienced.” Moreover, Atwood applies the quest theme in “romance” genre as one of the themes to the novel. Iris is depicted with a quest to re-define her self exclusive of the roles defined by the patriarchy.

Furthermore, Atwood makes use of Northrop Frye’s ideas on archetypes and myths to the framework of the novel. Frye thinks that archetypes emerging as frequent patterns in myths determine religion, culture, language and literature all of which are the essential structures shaping human lives. Atwood uses this idea to demonstrate that archetypes are exclusive possessions of the patriarchy. They are re-defined and re-constructed for the women giving them secondary and domestic roles. Atwood illustrates this idea by her use of myth and science-fiction molded stories interspersed in the novel. In these stories, she depicts the victimized and sexually traumatized female images presented by Greek myths. They are used to mirror the lives of the female characters in contemporary period which means that victimization and sexual traumatization is still performing on women. Atwood also employs encompassing nature of archetypes constructed by patriarchy by means of symbolizing enclosure confining women’s lives.

Feminist critics need to handle archetypes in terms of feminist criticism since they are of the idea that archetypes are examined from patriarchal perspectives by Jung and Northrop Frye. Feminist approach to archetypes reveals that archetypes are re-defined and re-constructed by the Indo-European tribes which are known to be the masculine tribes. According to them, these tribes re-shape archetypes giving the heroic dimension to men and undermine female attributes. Since their redefining come to the fore with the initiation of writing, these re-constructed archetypes become permanent in myths and literary works of art. They are accepted as the original archetypes originating in history. However, according to feminist critics before the invasion of the Indo-European tribes, there were female goddesses and women had powerful and autonomous archetypes related to fertility of the earth and cycle of nature. Women represented wholeness and integration by then. However, these archetypes are buried to the depths of history changed by re-defined ones. Constructed versions of archetypes depict women as fragmented, victimized, and sexually traumatized; despises female qualities and gives women self-depreciated, self-sacrificed roles. Besides, they are made “blind” to their uncorrupted female archetypes as well as being “silenced”, “muted” and “other.”

Feminist critics suggest that in women’s fiction, the uncorrupted archetypes are still discernable which lead women to their authentic and autonomous selves through transformation period. For this reason, they aim to excavate these original female archetypes belong to the periods of female goddess and reunite them with the victimized female images in order to give them autonomy by means of Feminist Archetypal criticism. Margaret Atwood applies this approach to her novel in a context of survival against victimization. Atwood juxtaposes the redefined archetypes by patriarchy with the archetypes of her original nature in “The Blind Assassin.”

There are several archetypes in women’s fiction which feminist critics identify to juxtapose women’s victimization by the internalized patriarchal archetypes and women’s need of re-expressing their selves through the buried archetypes of their own nature. One of these archetypes is the “enclosure archetype.”

Atwood employs it in a wider context that surrounds the women's lives in the novel. Essentially, enclosure archetype symbolizes the confinement of women within reconstructed selves since they are given no chance to grow their selves into mature and autonomous selves. Enclosure archetype is also included by Atwood to represent the concrete enclosures functioning as confinements within women's lives. Marriage is one of the institutions handled as an enclosure archetype. In the novel, it is used as a medium by means of which women are seen as marketable objects. All the marriages within the novel are founded on economic reasons. Wives are seen as the "dolls" that are expected to represent the wealth of their husbands. Women are made "props" of their husbands. "Houses" or "Madhouses" are other enclosure archetypes employed within the novel. Female characters are usually represented within the houses. The main building where most of the female characters spend their lives is named "Avilion" which means the place where King Arthur came to die.²⁵⁶ Atwood uses this name on purpose to symbolize women's lives as lifeless or to illustrate them as they are in a deep sleep. "Madhouse" is the last enclosure Atwood includes to her novel. She uses it to show as a place where women claiming their autonomy are put to be enclosed and named "mad." It emerges as a place by which patriarchy label women as "mad" who wish to live outside the patriarchal boundaries defined for them.

In addition, "rape/trauma" is the other archetype included to "The Blind Assassin." Rape emerges as the oldest archetype in Greek myths since a great deal of goddess is illustrated raped physically and psychologically in those myths. Atwood uses raped female image in "The Blinds Assassin" in order to demonstrate that it is a still persisting archetype used to prune women's growth psychically, sexually and psychologically.

Furthermore, "green-world" archetype is also employed by Atwood to the novel. However, Atwood uses it essentially as a medium in which women characters feel themselves free from the constrictions and pressures of patriarchal culture. "Green-world" archetype emerges as a means by which Iris, finds ease and perceives

²⁵⁶ Margaret Atwood (2001). *The Blind Assassin*. (London: Virago Press), p. 89.

her original peculiarities belonging to her own nature. Iris' transformation is also completed within her garden that symbolizes green world archetype. Her garden becomes a place where she gets out of patriarchal restrictions and finds ease within the mother earth.

“Eros” archetype is generally used as an expression of the self. It is the archetype which belongs to women in pre-historic periods. It symbolizes women's wholeness with nature and representing its cycles within their bodies. It is included to “The Blind Assassin” from two points of view. Firstly, Atwood makes use of it to demonstrate that there is no expression of the self in terms of women in the novel. Women's characters' expression of themselves sexually is restricted by the patriarchy since women sexuality is seen as a threat to the power of masculine system. Secondly, the protagonist Iris is represented as a single woman. Her relation to her child and grand-child is broken; she is illustrated as she loses her family and relatives by one by which prunes her off her original mother attributes of embracing and being whole with others.

Moreover, archetype of “singleness and solitude” is also used by Atwood. Atwood uses this archetype to demonstrate that single woman image is still alienated and undermined in the present time. Having power to survive alone for a woman is despised and this desire is punished by patriarchy. On the contrary, Atwood also uses this archetype as a healer to the corrupted selves of women. She demonstrates this transformative solitude idea through Iris character. Iris reaches her self being in solitude in her garden. Living single and in solitude enables Iris to unite with the characteristics of her own nature, she attains an authentic identity through her single period.

Transformation is the last archetype Atwood employs in her novel. It is the completion of the quest of having an authentic identity against the internalized constructions of women by patriarchy. She demonstrates this archetype through Iris. Iris passes four phases to attain her wholeness which is fragmented by patriarchy. She confronts with her genuine female archetypes which are embodied with Laura.

Her confrontation with Laura's death reveals her blindness her own victimization as well as Laura's victimization and sexual violation. By this confrontation, Iris reconciles with her "shadow" and she solves the conflicts in her conscious mind. Iris also excavates the hidden archetypes buried in her by the patriarchy. Her revealing them gives her a "total personality."

In conclusion, all the examined archetypes serve to indicate that victimized female images defined in myths are still present in the contemporary female images in "The Blind Assassin." Patriarchal re-construction on women is still persisting from ancient times to the time in present as conveyed by Margaret Atwood through female images within the novel. While demonstrating victimized women images and persistence of the victimization and sexual traumatization of women, on the other hand, Atwood employs authentic female archetypes in terms of survival in the patriarchy. Although, Atwood represents female images as entrapped by society, at the same time she shows them a way out by means of the "shadowed" parts within their selves. Through Iris character, she offers a female image that reconciles her "shadowed" part and re-expresses, re-creates her identity through writing. By this way, Atwood indicates writing as a powerful potential for women to survive. Atwood, by Iris character, gives a message to women who are confined in stereotypes, assigned to live by defined roles, given no freedom to choose, victimized and sacrificed concerning endurance of the patriarchal system that there is a hope of survival as an autonomous being through writing. Iris both re-defines her identity and Sabrina's identity through writing. She gives her a freedom to re-invent herself according to her will. By this way, she offers female images who determinedly re-invent their selves by re-writing their own versions of myths. Even if she is victimized, blinded and muted, this powerful woman image offered by Atwood is resilient to "survive", to "see" and "conceive" as well as "having voice".

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