



The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype

Erich Neumann

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Loving or nurturing or hostile and devouring, The Great Mother is explored as a primordial image of the human psyche in this landmark book by the renowned analytical psychologist Erich Neumann. Here he examines how this archetype has been outwardly expressed in many cultures and periods since prehistory drawing on ritual, mythology, art, and records of dreams and fantasies.

Through a wealth of descriptive passages and reproductions of artistic works ranging from Paleolithic stone carvings to the sculptures of Epstein and Moore, Neumann shows how the feminine has been represented: as goddess, monster, gate, pillar, tree, moon, sun, vessel, and every animal from snake to bird. In studying this array of both static and transformative images, Neumann discerns a universal experience of the Maternal as a dual source of life support and fear: an experience rooted in the dialectical relation of growing consciousness, symbolized by the child, to the unconscious and the unknown, symbolized by The Great Mother.

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