



Revisiting the Visions of Christiana Morgan

What was left out of Jung's 'Visions Seminars'

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Image 1.

Portrait of Christiana Morgan 1926

Anima Mundi, a platonic cosmic principle was re-defined for our times by James Hillman when he called archetypal psychology “bringing the platonic vision down to earth.”¹ Christiana Morgan’s visions are bringing our attention down to the body, down to the earth, down to the archetypal feminine. Jung was attuned to the messages in Morgan’s visions and made them a centerpiece of his four-year-long teaching of seminars between 1930-34. In the seminars Jung pointed out that “We have seen how the unconscious of our patient has moved

from the Yang principle (platonic) down into the Yin principle (earthy); from the above to the below, and that the whole series of visions demonstrated the “extraordinary difficulty of the transition from one leading principle to another.”² We are living through this transition today and feel and experience how extraordinarily difficult it is to find respect for our individual body/soul, and a relationship to, and an awe for the earth and her creatures. Nietzsche, whose visions Jung also analyzed and taught in his Zarathustra Seminars, broke under the weight of those visions and the extreme difficulty of living them in the body. Yet, he urged us to return to the body, to the earth through the voice of Zarathustra:

Remain faithful to the earth, my brothers, with the power of your virtue! Let your bestowing love and your knowledge serve the meaning of the earth! Thus I beg and beseech you.

Do not let it fly away from earthly things and beat against the eternal walls with its wings! Like me, guide the virtue that has flown away back to the earth – yes, back to the body and life: so it may give the earth its meaning, a human meaning!

(Nietzsche, 2006, 57)

Christiana Morgan over the course of nine months recorded some hundred visions and paintings. She began in 1926 at Jung’s encouragement to use active imagination. Her opus grew beyond analysis with Jung and was completed post analysis in 1927. About a third of the visions were considered in the Visions

Seminars. Curiously Jung skipped volume two, which was actually part of their analytical discourse and went to volume three which remained marginally explored, incomplete. For a discussion of why volume two was left out please see Melker (2015).³

Morgan's work is much akin to Jung's Red Book, although Jung worked on the Red Book longer and with more conscious investment as to its outcome. Nevertheless if Jung's *Liber Novus* depicts the rebirth of God by integrating God's dark side, then Morgan's visions depict the rebirth of the Goddess to whose numinosity we had collectively lost connection. James Hillman said, "for psychology the issue is not that 'God is dead' but in what form this indestructible energy is now appearing in the psyche. What can the psyche tell us about the direction religion might take now? In what images will the major emotional idea of God be reborn. "

To fully appreciate the difficult journey back to matter and to locate spirit in matter Morgan's visions provide an excellent path. Although this presentation (from volumes 2 and 3) is very limited in scope I would urge us to study the visions in their entirety, because they are as relevant to us today as they were 100 years ago. Jung himself said to Morgan that her visions "held material for the next two-three hundred years" and that it is a great "document humaine". It is a rushing forth of all that has been hitherto unconscious".⁴ This presentation is an attempt to awaken interest in unveiling what still remains veiled in the visions. My hope is to publish the manuscripts, make them available for study, discussion and analysis for the insights contained in them.

The reason for doing so is that the visions were not only relevant to one woman's journey reclaiming her body/soul, her connection to her sexuality and moving to spirit, but a guide for us to find spirit in matter as it was before its split. In Morgan's visions she first encounters pagan gods and goddesses; Pan, Demeter, Kore, Inanna, Cybele, Kali etc. The main psychopomps in her journey are snakes and serpents. They are goddesses in their theriomorphic forms, sacred in many cultures and mythologies. Jung tells us that "paganism is not necessarily chthonic, it may be spiritual, but in [Morgan's] visions are experienced first as chthonic because spirit and matter are split for us" ⁵ As did Morgan we need to experience the chthonic body-earth, and include the yin principle so that a unification of yin and yang can be renewed. Jung believed that our Western consciousness has gone too far into the yang and said that, "soil is just matter, the absolute opposite of the spirit, yet it contains the spirit. Without encountering the soil one would never realize the spirit, it needs that resistance of matter in order to reveal itself". ⁶

In our exploration of the images and fragments from her visions we will follow Morgan's journey from earth to uniting earth and spirit as she struggles with earth first as body and sexuality. The first four images are discussed by Jung in the seminars.

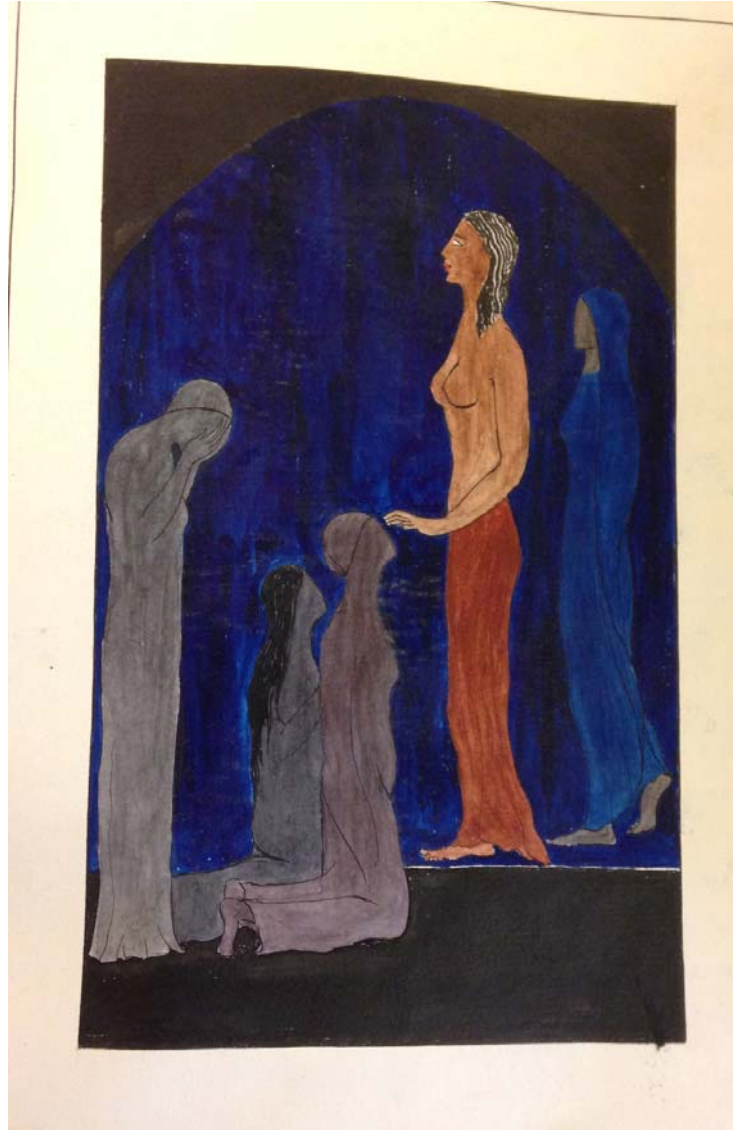


Image 2. Meeting the Great Mother

I beheld a laughing goat [Pan] which led me down many steps into a black cavern. There I saw two large white snakes and a small black snake with green eyes...then....I beheld a strong giant. When he saw me he put me on his head and we descended underneath the sea. There we came upon a woman surrounded by writhing snakes. The giant called to her: "Arise, the time has come." At this the snakes subsided. The woman arose, and walking over the

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quiet snakes, she came to me and kissed me. Her face was dark, her lips full and red. She seemed very strong. She took me by the hand and led me into a room where many young men were standing. I saw her go to one and embrace him. He called me and took us both into his arms. Then again she took me by the hand and led me to another room. There I saw many old men sitting with their eyes fixed upon the ground. She called out to the old men: "I bring you a gift, " and the old men stood up and lifted up their eyes while we passed by.

[In Jung's interpretation of the vision, the snake leads her to meet the Great Mother. I would suggest instead that she meets the Goddess, perhaps the Great Mother in her sexual form, a form more reminiscent of the great Sumerian goddess Inanna. Enheduanna, the Sumerian poetess and priestess in Inanna's temple 4500 years ago writes as Inanna is preparing her union with Dumuzi, a lover she chooses.]

Listen

I will scrub my skin with soap

I will rinse all over with water

I will dry myself with linen

I will spread out mighty love clothes

I know how exactly

I will look so fine

I will make you feel like a king ⁷

In Inanna's temples there were sexual offerings by the hierodules in the sacred marriage ritual which enacted regularly, and also at the new-year festivals between the king and priestesses.



9 Small clay sculpture of a couple lying on a woven bed, perhaps depicting the ancient sacred sexual rituals of the Goddess religion. One of many similar pieces from the Old Babylonian Period (1900-1700 B.C.) found in the city of Ur in Sumer (Iraq). Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Image 3. Couple in Embrace (Sumerian)



Image 4. Woman in Wheat Fields

The next image that shows a woman in fields of wheat does take Christiana to the realm of the Great Mother, perhaps Demeter/Ceres and the mysteries performed at Eleusis. The vision says: *"After the old man had spoken, my robe became green, then turned white. About my head played white flames. I walked through the waving fields of wheat."*

Jung amplifies: “the wheat is ripe, it is the time of fulfillment, the time for rebirth, the mystical birth of Brimos,”. She goes from green, to white flames and to gold, moving from green vegetative matter to white flames to the promise of the alchemical gold.



20. "A snake with a black hood . . . wound itself upon the cross"

Image 5. The Crucified Snake

Morgan's vision takes her to a Gothic cathedral.

The priest ascended the steps to the altar and lifted on high the sacred chalice small animals and frogs leapt from the chalice.

The priest knelt, chanting: "Forgive us, oh Lord, for we have sinned." A snake with a black hood over its head silently glided up the steps to the altar and wound itself upon the cross. I went up to the snake and asked it why it was there. The snake answered: "I am he who has taken the place of Christ."

The chalice holds small animals and the cross the crucified snake.

The rejected is elevated to a sacred place. The Oneness with nature is in the next image.



Image 6. I had become a Tree.

Marion Woodman said: “If we take time to live with nature, see it, perceive it, we can have no doubt that we are inseparable from every living thing on the planet.”

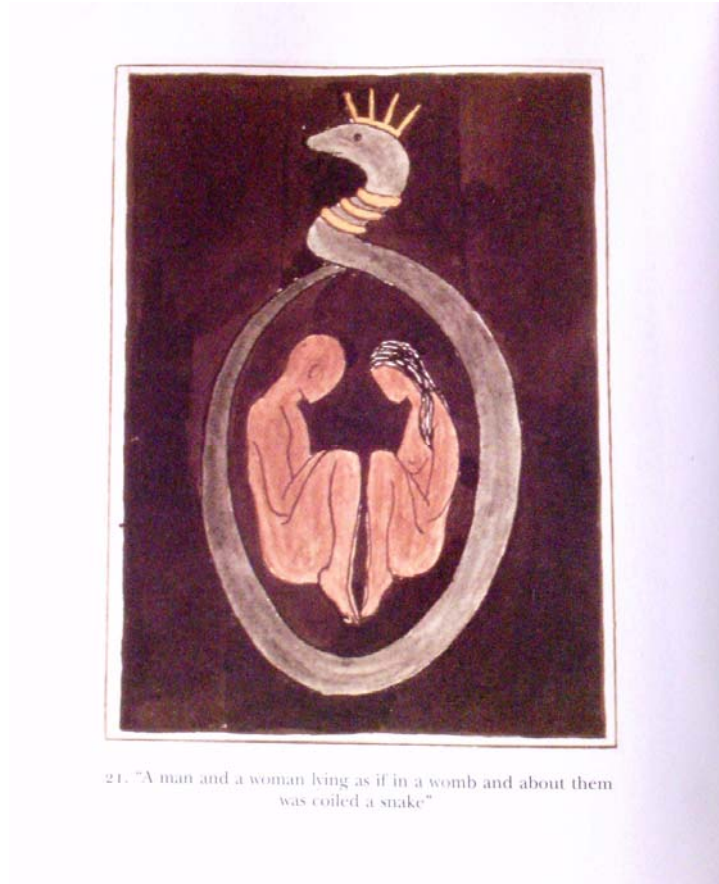


Image 7. Man and Woman in the Womb

I saw that it had a crown upon its head and rings of gold around its body. I said: "Serpent you are beautiful to me".

Jung interprets the vision that Morgan accepts and crowns the serpent, the earth, the body. In the Eleusinian mysteries kissing the serpent was part of the ritual, the serpent as theriomorphic form of Demeter, the goddess of the earth and her fertility.



Image 8. Snakes at Sunrise (From unpublished volume 2, in the possession of Morgan's heir, Jung does not discuss this volume in the seminars.)

We saw in the East the red light of Dawn. On the horizon where the sun was to rise there towered many great snakes reaching up to the sky. The sun slowly rose and all around me sprang up a rich vegetation.

This is an image of creation. It reminds us of the Amduat of ancient Egypt where the sunrise was greeted with a joy, as rebirth. Egypt held the laws of the goddess Maat, the goddess of justice. She declared:

1. No one should cause pain to others.
2. No one should make anyone sorrowful.
3. No one should steal, cheat, bear false witness, stir up strife
4. No one should harm animals.
5. No one should damage fertile land.
6. No one should befoul waters. ⁸

As we lost connection to the Goddess we have followed the decree of the Father-God where man is elevated above the other creatures: “Then God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Gen. 1:26). This guiding principle permits us to recklessly use, own and exploit all creatures of the earth. This attitude moves us towards ecological disaster. As we all observe we are living at a time of ecological crisis, deforestation, exploitation of the belly of the earth for her riches, especially of oil, and of global climate change and mass extinction of species. The planet will survive, but its creatures including humans may not if we do not transition to honor the laws of Maat, if we do not permit the return of the Goddess.

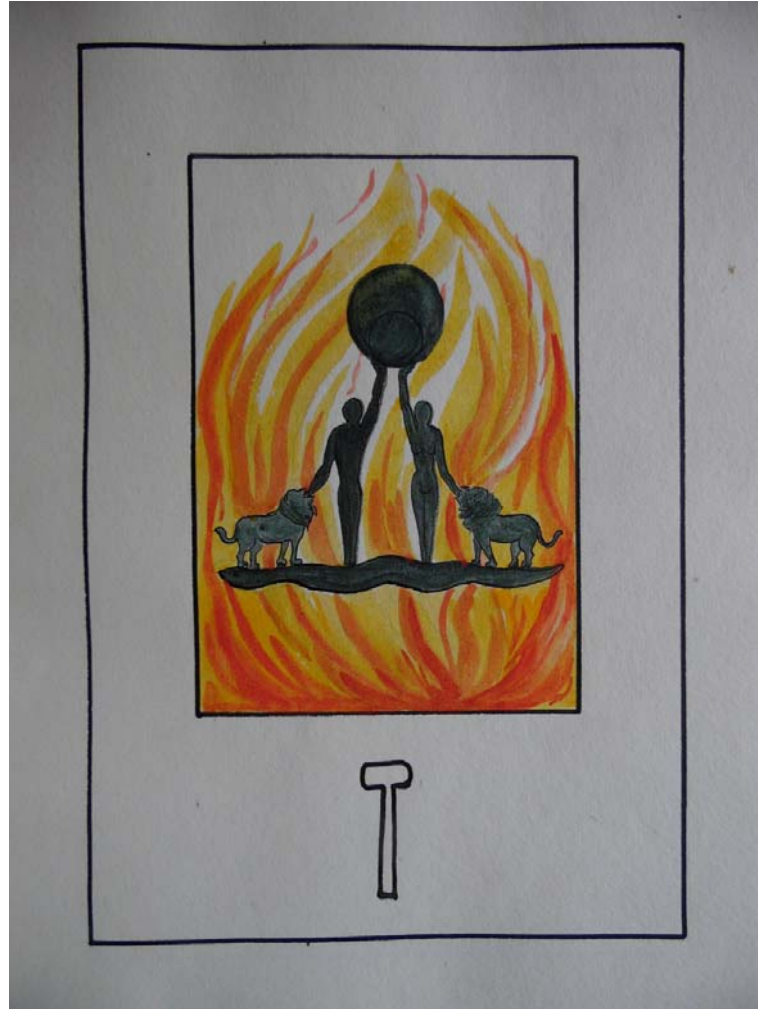


Image 9. Male and Female Standing on Snake

I saw that it was an amulet in the shape of a man and a woman: the left hand of the man and the right hand of the woman were merged into one and held up the sun. Their other hands were in the mouths of lions. They stood upon a snake.

This is a coniunctio, masculine and feminine united in the new creation myth. Morgan says: “This I shall wear,” the amulet becomes her symbol.



Image 10. Female Abraxas

I saw coming towards us a woman laughing. Snakes grew from her head, and in her arms she held two lion cubs. In the center of the image there is a blue spear of the emergent spirit from matter.

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Jung commented to Christiana about this image:

This is very good. Here is a woman in flames – which is earth or passion. Behind her is the wheel of Plato or the universe. From her head spring snakes which are evil but without which there could not be the spear of spirit. 9



Image 11. Promethean Valley

Image of the difficulties and suffering as we transition to the new.

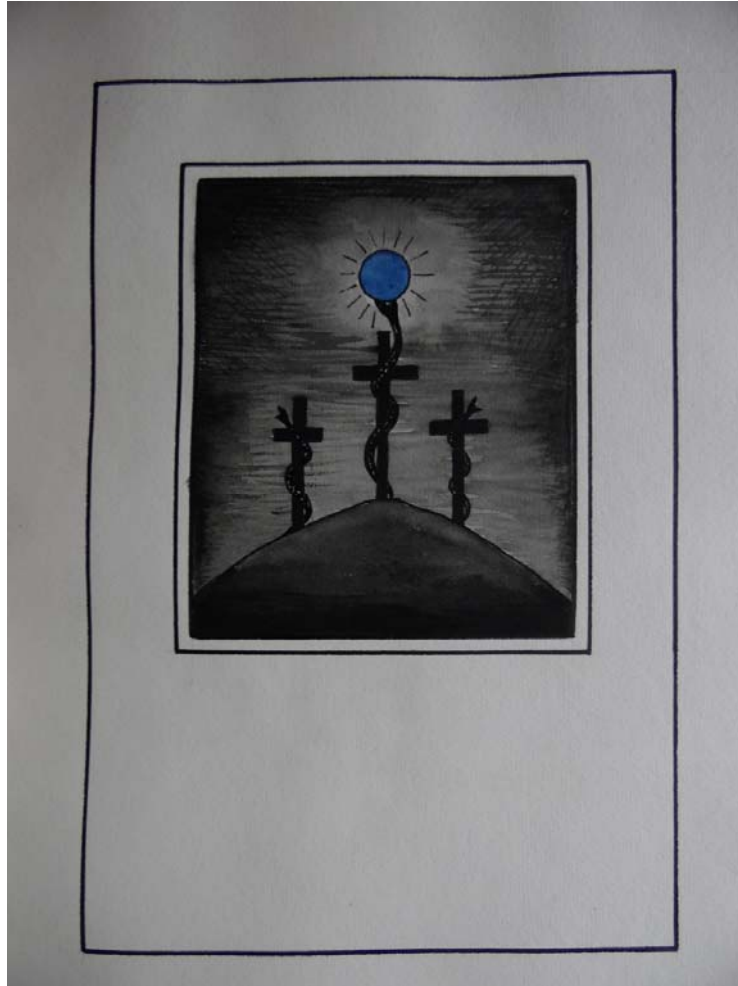


Image 12. Calvary

I saw the three crosses of calvary. On each cross was a snake. The snake upon the centre cross lifted up a great blue sun.

Jung's comment:

The acceptance of man as he is, is the psychological, or religious problem of today; that is exactly what we are up against now. When that happens the serpent will take the place of the redeemer on the cross.¹⁰



Image 13. Woman Coiled by Green Snake Holding Child up

On the horizon where the sun was to rise I saw a great snake. I said to the child – we will go forward to meet the snake. It was green and gave off a hideous green light. It coiled about my body. I held the child aloft that the snake might not harm it. Closer and closer the snake coiled and I gazed into its great mouth.

She was not afraid of the destructive power of the snake, the evil Apopis aspect and held the new, the child safely in her arms.



Image 14. The Face of Lapis Lazuli



Image 15. Revelation

Opposites of death, four skulls, 4 trees two white horses. Spirit rising out of death.

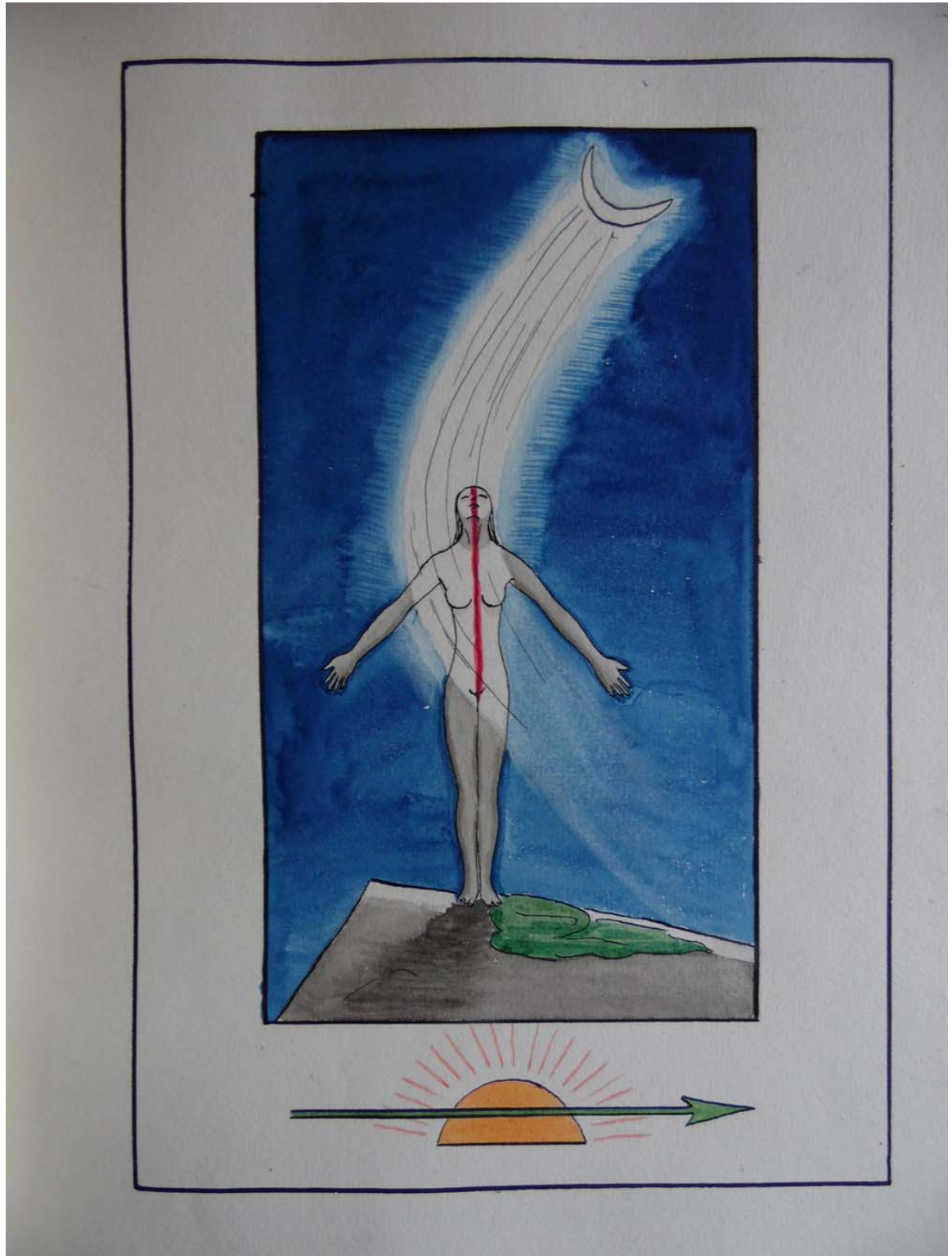


Image 16. Healed by Moonlight



Image17. Four Red Horses

Images 18-35. Mandala Images:



Image 18

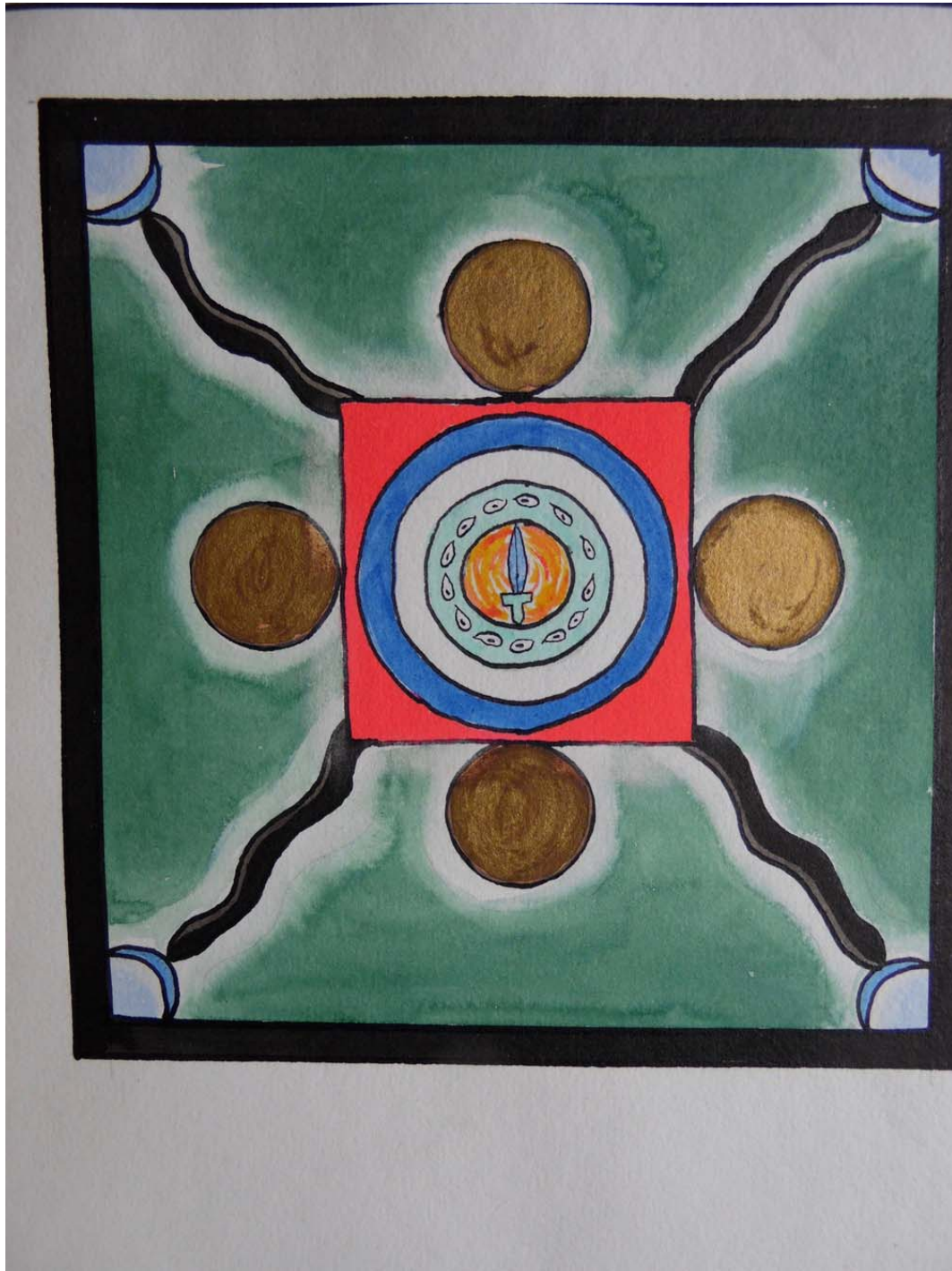


Image 19



Image 20



Image 21



Image 22



Image 23



Image 24



Image 25



Image 26



Image 27

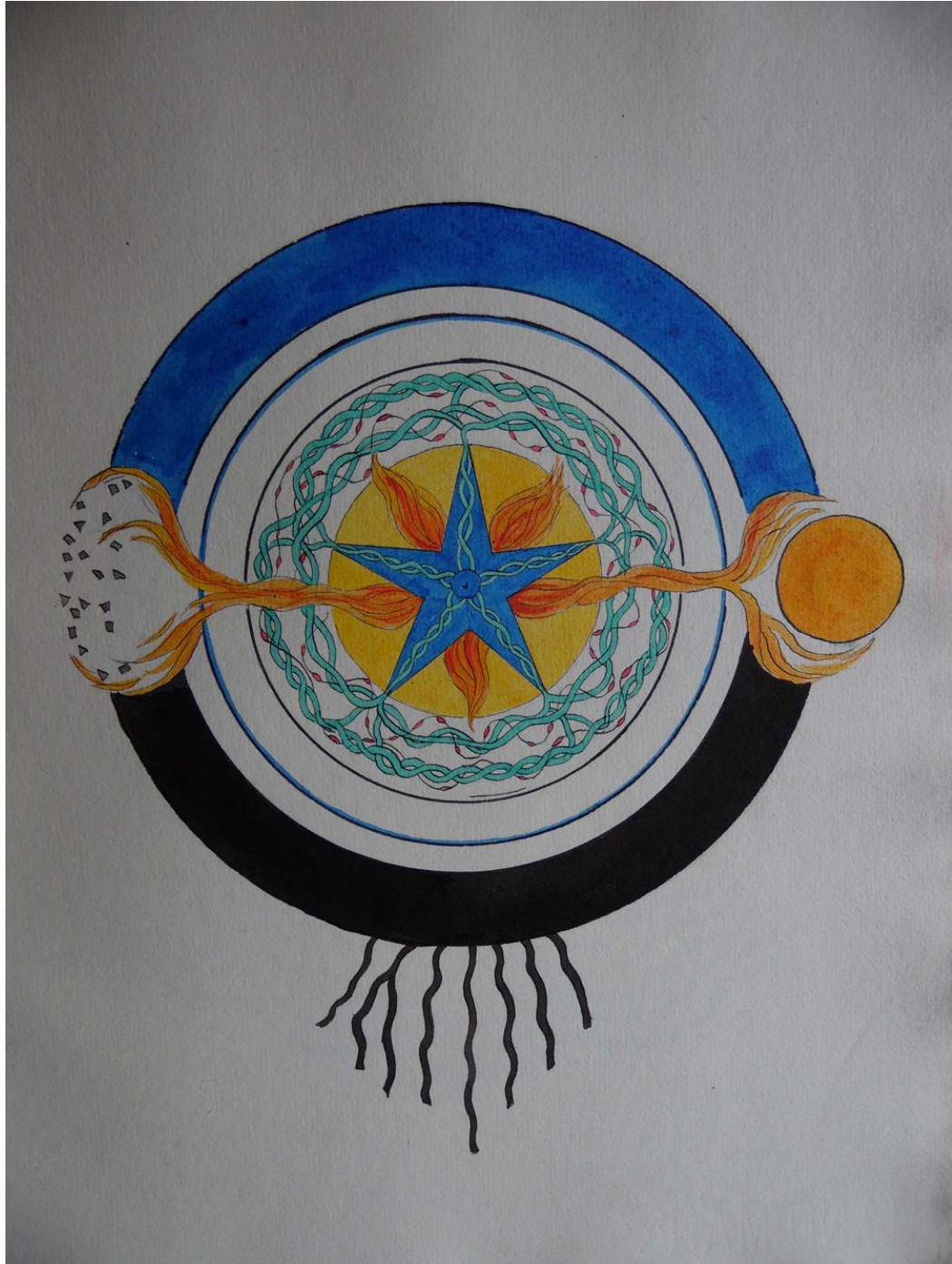


Image 28

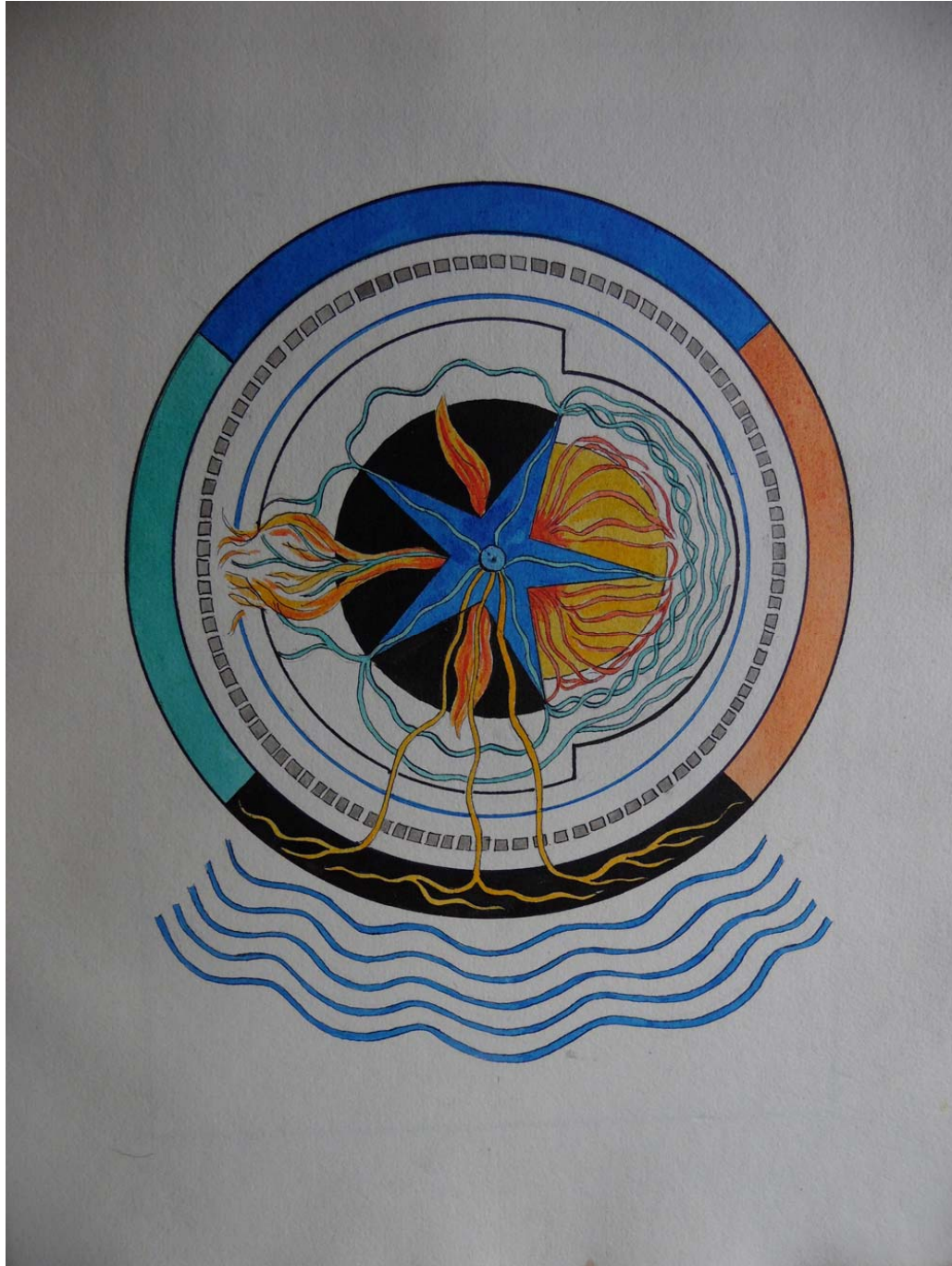


Image 29

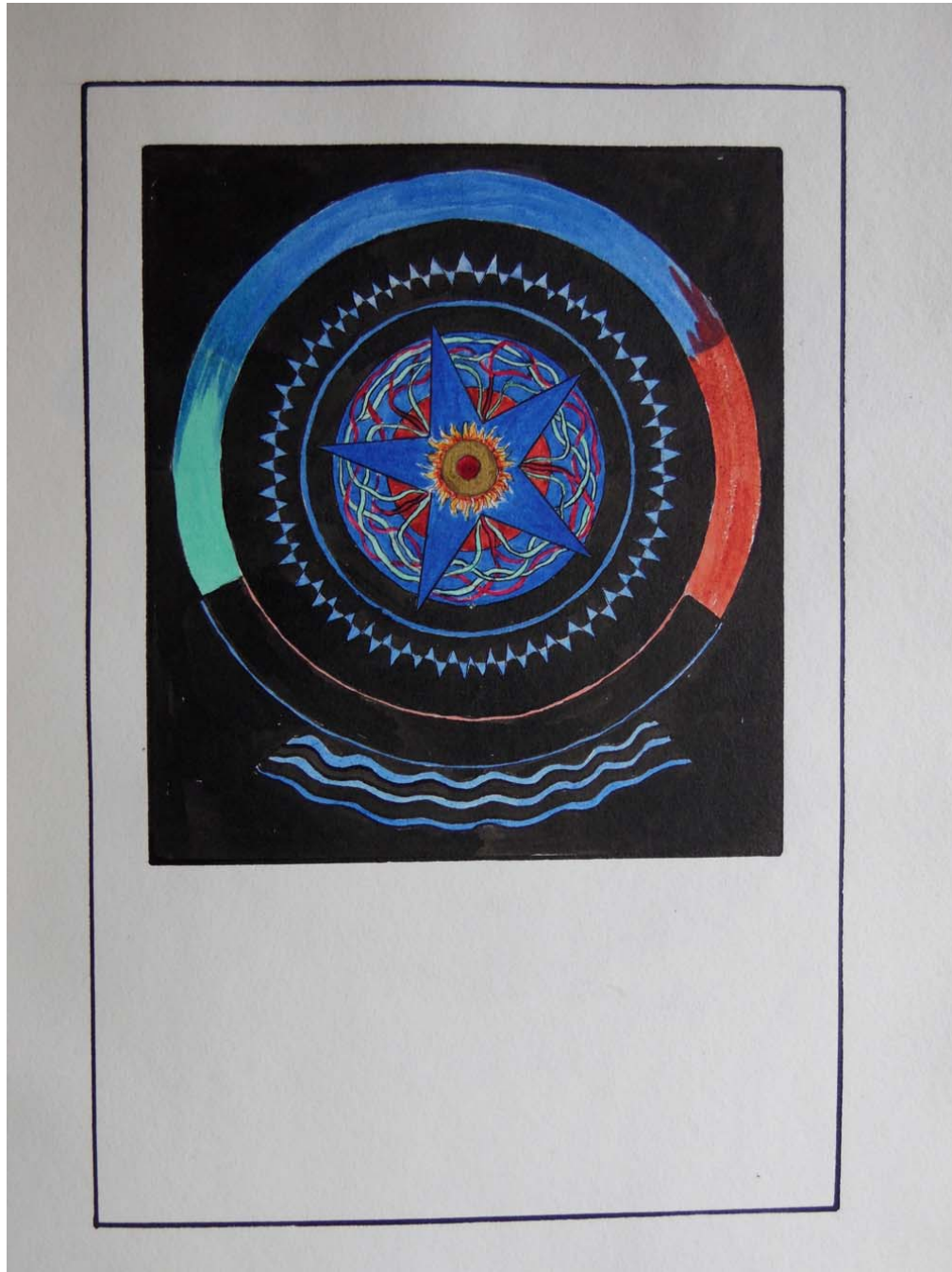


Image 30



Image 31

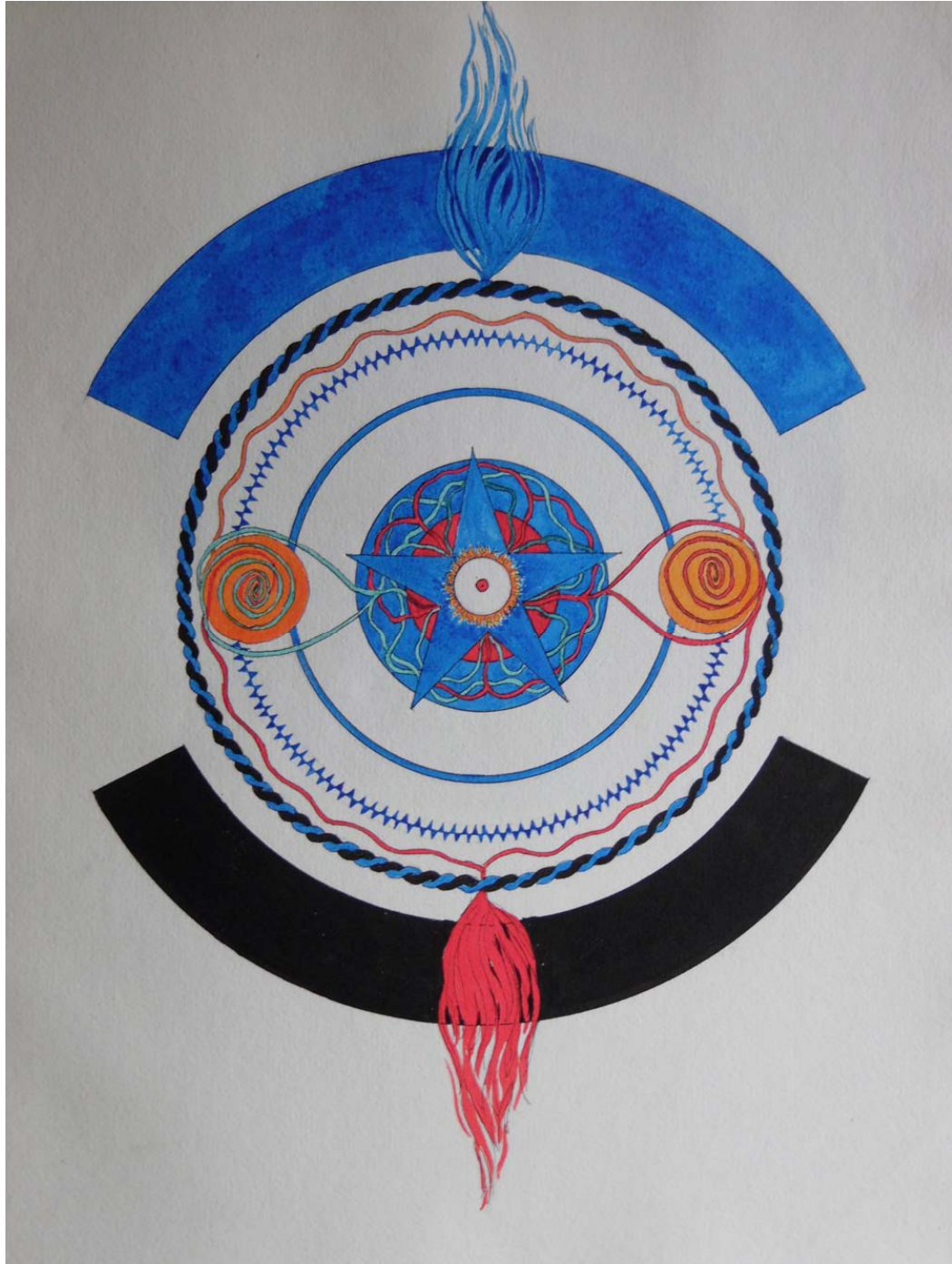


Image 32

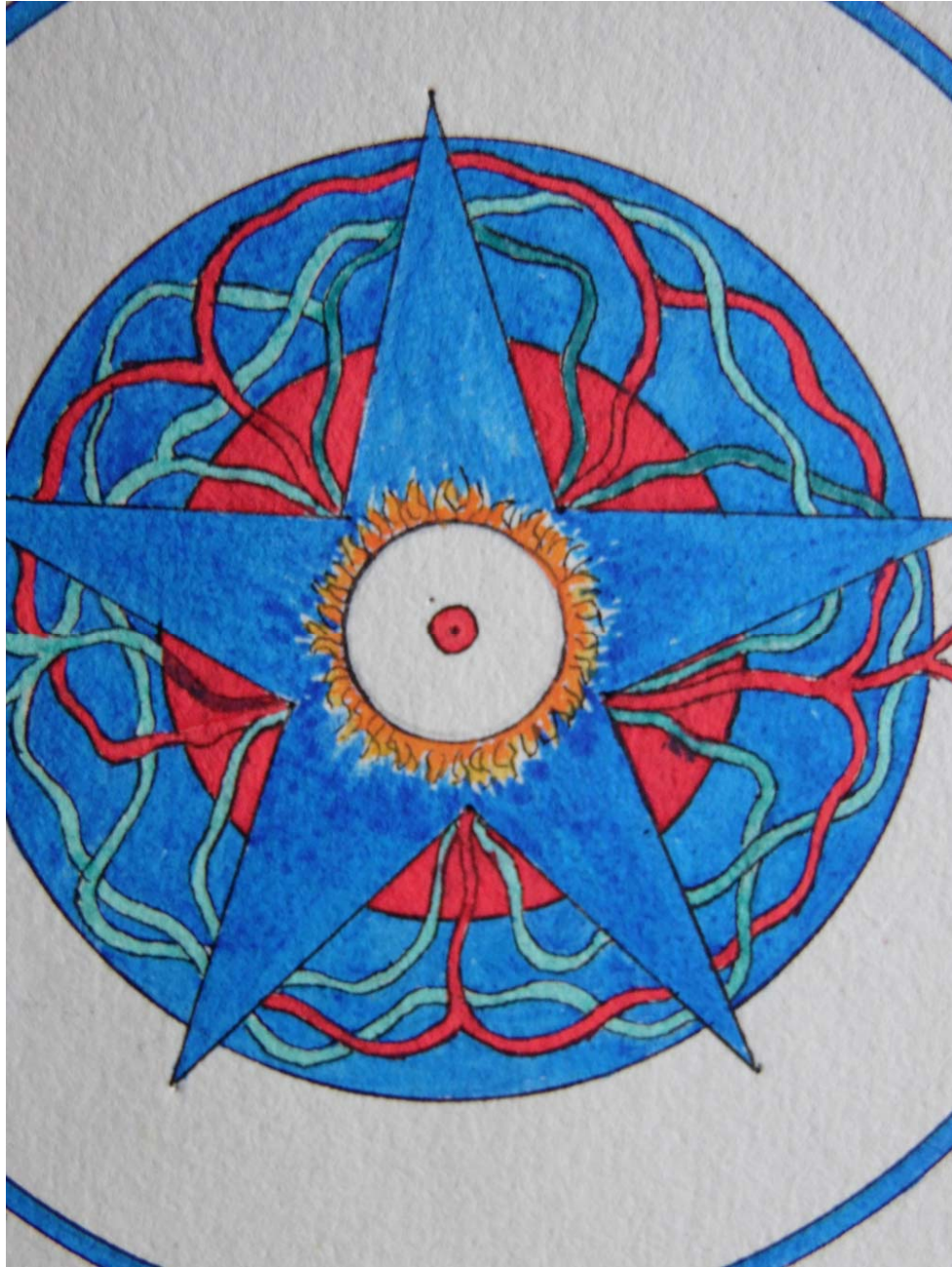


Image 33



Image 34



Image 35

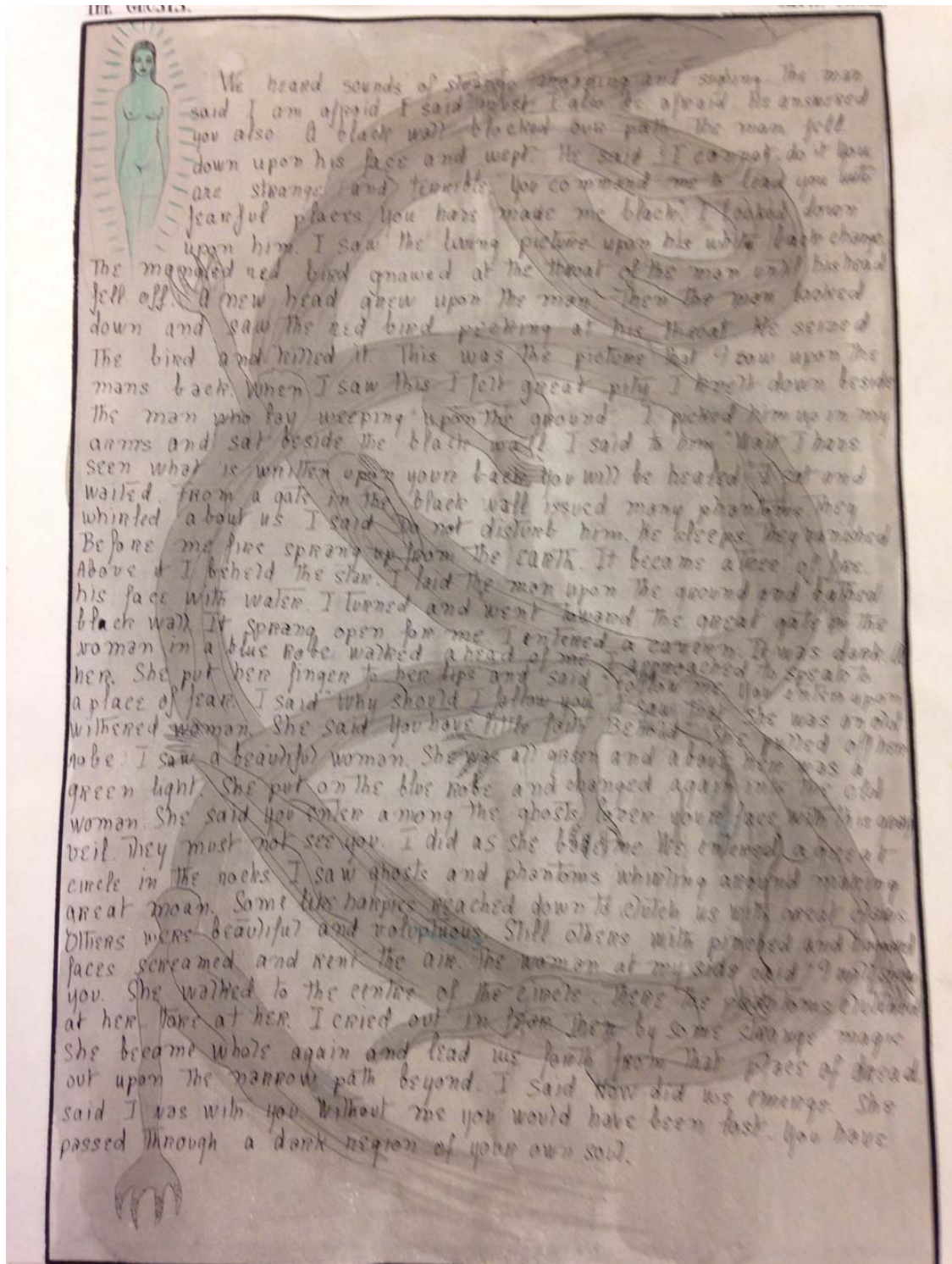


Image 36. Rising of the Serpent v.3

Now we let the snake rise up.

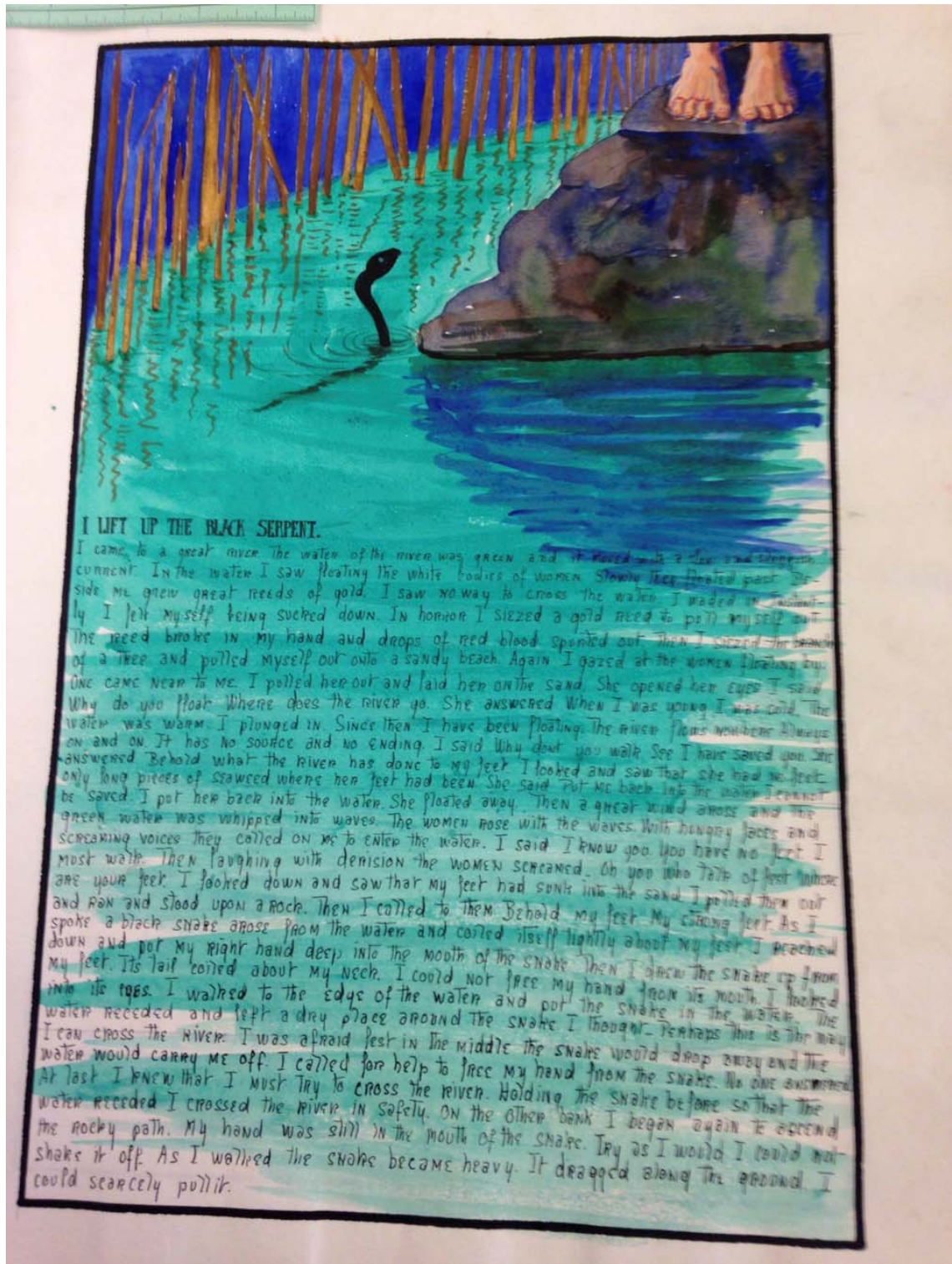


Image 37. I Lift up the Black Serpent

I came to a great river. The water of the river was green and moved with a slow and sluggish current. In the water I saw floating white bodies of women. Slowly they floated past. Beside me grew great reeds of gold. I saw no way to cross the water. I waded in. Instantly I felt myself being sucked down. In horror I seized a gold reed to pull myself out. The reed broke in my hand and drops of red blood spurted out. Then I seized the branch of a tree and pulled myself out onto a sandy beach. Again I gazed at the women floating by. One came near to me. ...I said why do you float. She answered. When I was young

I was cold. The water was warm. I plunged in. Since then I have been floating. The river flows nowhere. It has no source and no ending. I said: Why don't you walk. She said Behold what the river has done to my feet. I looked and saw that she had no feet only long pieces of seaweed where her feet had been. She said Put me back in the water I cannot be saved. I put her back in the water. She floated away.... With hungry faces and screaming voices they called on me to enter the water. I said I know you. You have no feet. I must walk. Then laughing with derision the women screamed. Oh you who talk of feet where are your feet? I looked down and saw that my feet sank into the sand. I pulled them out and ran and stood upon a rock. Then I called to them. Behold my feet. My strong feet. As I spoke a black snake arose from the water and coiled itself tightly about my feet. I reached down and put my right hand deep into the mouth of the snake. Then I drew the snake up from my feet. Its tail coiled around my neck. I could not free my hand from its mouth. I looked into its eyes. I walked to the edge of the water and put the snake in the water. The water receded and left a dry place around the snake. I thought perhaps this is the way

to cross the river. Holding the snake before so that the water receded I crossed the river in safety. On the other bank I began again to ascend the rocky path.

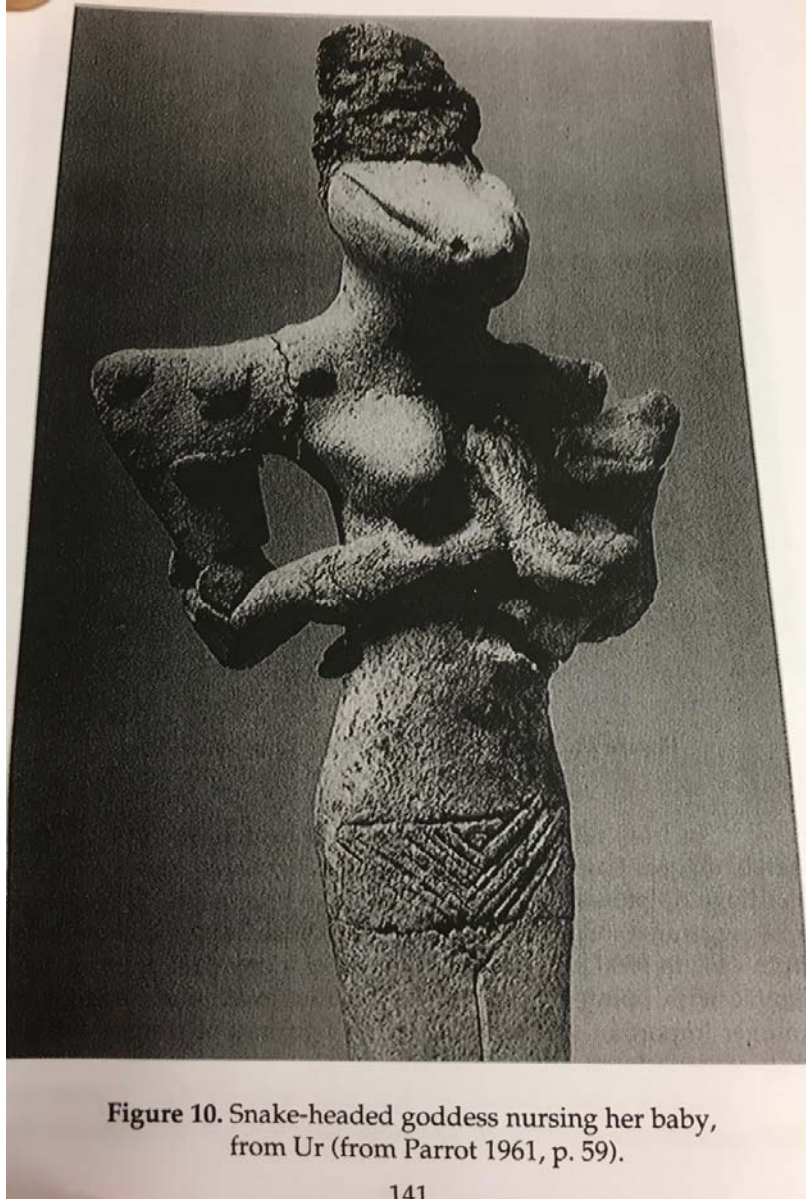


Image 38. Meeting a Dragon

I walked along the road. Suddenly a great yellow and black dragon blocked my path. The dragon caught me with fearful claws. I turned to steel.

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Only by my star beating in my chest I did know that I was alive. When I turned to steel the dragon dropped me. I picked up a white pebble and threw it into his mouth. He spoke. Woman of many breasts, now you have found me. Day after day have I sought you to destroy you. Day after day you sought me to conquer me. Now we met. You have turned to steel. You have conquered. Step now upon my back and reach for the ball above my head...I saw that...the top of the plant opened out like a great flower. I set the plant upon the ground. The halo of green fire descended and lay in a circle about it. The white ball also descended upon the open petals of the great red flower. I took the star from my breast and laid it against the white ball. Then my star sent down a ray into the earth. I wept in ecstasy.

In an earlier vision she denied the vision of the woman of many breasts as “loathsome”. After a long journey the goddess integrated, she becomes steel.



Image 39. Red Flower White Globe



Image 40. My Star above Me

It became dark. I could not move. My star rose far into the sky. I was utterly alone... I raised my hands into the sky to call upon my star.

Upon the goblet was written these words. HOLD THEREFORE AND REMEMBER THE DARK SAYINGS. THE WAY IS BLACK. THE HEART IS RED. THE STAR IS WHITE. THE BLACK AND RED SHALL BECOME MIXED. THE WHITE SHALL REMAIN PURE. I arose. I drank the blood in the goblet. I saw a light on the horizon. I stood and beheld the sun rise. The world was utterly

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silent. A strange joy filled me. I lay down upon the earth and felt the earth breathing beneath me.



Image 41. Blue Mountain

I walked again to the stone. By the light from my hand I could behold the writing on the stone. HE WHO CARRIES ME SHALL WALK TOWARD THE BLUE MOUNTAIN.Then my star appeared before me. I saw that it was all white.

Kur in Sumerian means Great Mountain, sometimes it also means world under the world (The opposites: Inanna and Ereshkigal). In one myth the slaying of the great serpent Kur results in the flooding of the World. ¹¹

We see the blue lapis lazuli, Inanna's color again.

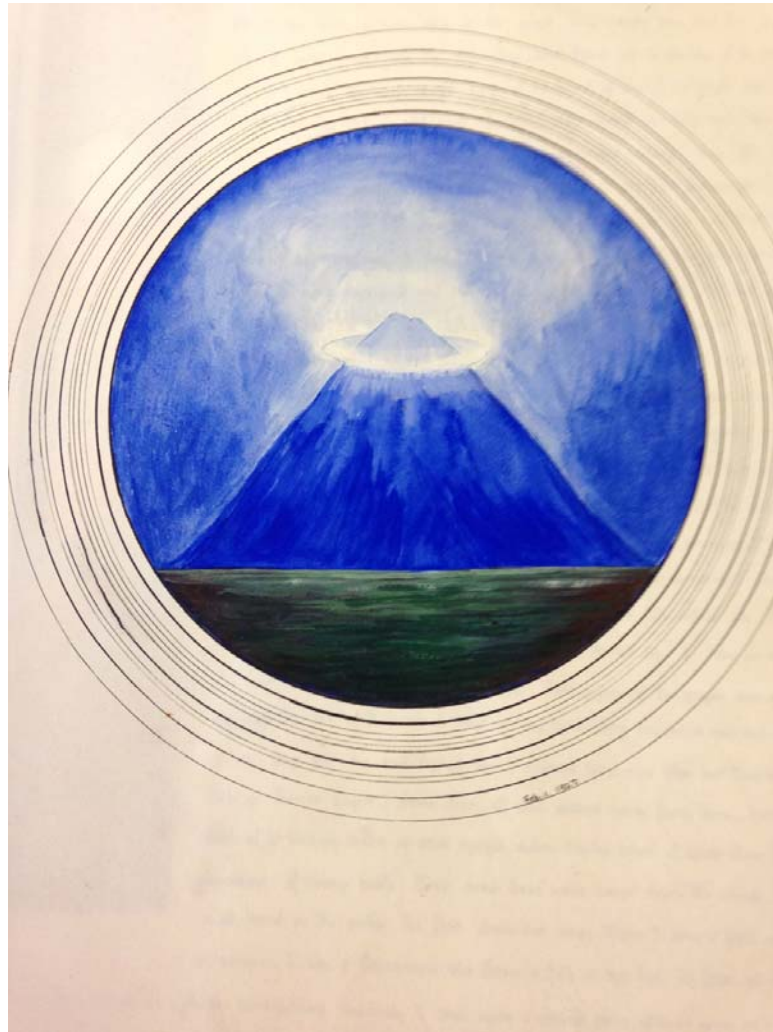


Image 42. Blue Mountain White Diamond Eye in Center

Jung says to Morgan:

You always have a brilliant blue background for the picture of Mother because the Mother is cosmos-spirit – heaven and earth. ¹²



Image 43. Woman held, Woman released (Final image)

I lay at the foot of the mountain. The halo of light on top of the mountain sent down white rays, which pierced my breast and seemed to hold me to the earth. I lay upon the ground with my arms outstretched.

At my feet appeared the old man. I could dimly see him through the white rays of light. Suddenly a man sprang forth from each of my hands. A child sprang forth from my head. The child rose into the sky and changed to a blue flame.

The blue flame changed to a wheel of blue fire, which rotated swiftly and hung in the sky above me. From my head came a blue light, from each hand yellow light, and from my feet come red light.

The old man approached me. He looked fierce and strong. His white hair stood out about his face like a lion's mane. He took hold of my hands. I cried out in pain saying that my hands were suffering. He said: "Rise up" I answered – I cannot, the white light from the mountain holds me to the ground.

The old man stood beside me, and raising his eyes to the mountain he called out in a loud voice. – Oh Mountain, withdraw your light from this woman that she may rise."

The light which had pierced my breast was withdrawn. It formed into a circle of white light around me. It touched my outstretched hands and healed them. I arose and began to ascend the mountain.

References

¹ Hillman, 2004, p.73

² Jung, VS, 1997, p.659

- ³ Melker, 2015, pp.9-30
- ⁴ Douglas, 1993, p.161
- ⁵ Jung, VS 1997, p.545
- ⁶ ibid, p.1046
- ⁷ Meador, 2000, p.60
- ⁸ Woodman 1997, p.54
- ⁹ Morgan, 1926. no p.
- ¹⁰ Jung, 1997,VS, p 550
- ¹¹ Kramer, p.112
- ¹² Morgan, 1926, no p.

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