

## **The Archaic Mother: Mythology and basic psychoanalytic concepts**

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It is beyond any doubt that the maternal role during the first stage (oral phase) of the child's development is not limited simply to the provision of food by the mother to the child but it is also crucial for the total process in the context of a mature psychosomatic development of any child. Indeed, as far as the infant is concerned its Mother constitutes the most archaic form of identification. In parallel with that, the "Archaic Mother" is one of the most fundamental psychoanalytical concepts because of its universal applicability. In particular, it is most evident and profound in the history of arts. Her main features include aspects like the "maternal breast", the "primary cavity", the "phallic mother", all of which attempt to throw light upon the "unknown", the "productive", or the "devastating" aspects of the human condition. The symbols of the Archaic Mother are met in the pre-Hellenic and ancient Greek deities of Mythology like, for example, Gaea with her prolific breast which remains eternal and unalterable. She is the universal mother, caring and inexhaustible. Other deities - like Jupiter, Ocean and the Amazons - either they give birth to Athena from the head or give birth to rivers or kill and castrate their sons, correspondingly. Also, Mermaids, Echidna, Nymphs, Sirenes, Hesperides are beautiful, erotic but dangerous creatures which resemble maternal morph idols standing instead of the figure of the Archaic Mother. In this paper, our effort has been to stress the importance and the extent to which the concept of the Archaic Mother has contributed to the process of the human civilization with the emphasis being in ancient Greek mythology as well as in the ancient and modern Tragedy.

**Key words:** *Archaic Mother, oral phase, genetic (developmental) psychology, mythology.*

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