

THE HEROINE'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE MAJOR ARCANA OF THE TAROT

What follows is based on a Heroine's Journey workshop presented for women through the Tarot Guild of Australia in August 2004, and again at the International Tarot Conference held in Melbourne in July 2005.

Introduction

We are all travellers through life and take many journeys. On a macro scale our very life - from crib to coffin - can be viewed as one heroic journey. But within our lifetime, each of us takes many smaller journeys of significance. Some journeys are inevitable, like those related to our age; some we choose or feel called to take; others we begin rather more reluctantly. Most journeys are - at least potentially - character-building; some are life changing. All journeys, be they great or small, form a big part of our learning and growth as human beings.

Mythology is a natural and I think necessary aspect of our existence as human beings. Myths provide individuals and societies with explanations for their existence. They form the foundation for codes of social and religious behaviour. They offer profound insight into the human condition.

Myths affect us at a conscious level. Who doesn't enjoy a good yarn, is not moved by a tragic tale? They also have deeper, psychological significance. For, as Robert Johnson notes, 'they represent in story fashion "archetypes", that is, patterns of life that are universally valid.' So myths feed the soul.

The Hero's Journey

Within mythology, heroes and the epic quests they take seem to hold special appeal, inspiring us with courage, and reassuring us of the huge potential seed within each individual. And there does appear to be a common formula that applies to all heroic journeys, across cultures and time - certainly according to Joseph Campbell. He calls this the *monomyth* and suggests that its prevailing theme is that of transformation - death (of the old self) and rebirth.¹

In summary, the 'monomyth' sees the hero leaving his *ordinary world*, having been *called to adventure*. He takes a daring journey, encountering many *tests and trials* on his way, but also gaining assistance and support from *helpers* in one guise or another. He must then face the *supreme ordeal* (such as rescuing the maiden, or slaying the dragon). His victory brings a *reward* (like a magical elixir) with which he returns triumphantly to his *ordinary world* - which usually also benefits from his bounty.

In psycho/spiritual terms, this outer quest inspires a parallel inner journey by the hero, to get in touch with his repressed feminine side that resides deep in his unconscious. In this personal unification process, the hero gains a realisation of the divine creative force, god and goddess as one, and of the inter-connectedness of all creation. The journey thus sees the hero transformed and reborn, enlightened. Carl Jung defined

¹ Refer his book, 'The Hero of a Thousand Faces'

this process, of peeling off the layers of ego and exploring the personal, feminine, unconscious realms of our being, as a journey towards oneness, wholeness. He called this process individuation.

The Problem for Women

These theories highlight several problems for women. The first I would describe as the universalisation of the male perspective. It has been - and to some extent still remains - a pattern for men to write from a male perspective then universalise their theories. And so, for instance, although Joseph Campbell's monomyth is said to be relevant to heroes of both genders, it is essentially a male model. Similar criticisms can be justifiably directed to Jung's description of the individuation process². (Though this is not the forum to delve further into these complex philosophical matters. Nor does such criticism take away the essential, even inspirational, power and thrust of these two great thinkers and their theories.)

Another problem stems from the consistent pattern - adopted by society in general and by theorists in particular - of equating the masculine principle or yang (active, rational, lightness, etc) with men's conscious being, and the feminine principle, the yin (passive, emotional, darkness, etc) with women's. Pigeon-holing each gender in this way leads to general assumptions about what is 'normal' or 'appropriate' for each sex. And this, in turn, legitimises opinions such as: that women would either not wish to take, or would be less 'naturally' equipped for, adventurous outer heroic journeys.

And yet Western women today can and do! Not only are they 'called to adventure' in the same manner as men, they now have the freedom to answer the call in much the same way as their male counterparts. But most myths - which see the hero bravely venturing forth into the unknown - involve only males. This is not surprising given the gender assumptions previously referred to. And, in most *documented* ancient cultures, women's roles in society precluded them from the possibility of living out their adventurous spirit in such a manner. Passive, nurturing, selfless, home-maker roles were prescribed, and were indeed reinforced by the mythology of the culture.

But, if mythology feeds the soul, if the mythical heroes and their quests somehow satisfy the appetites of modern men, women surely need similar heroines to satisfy theirs. And I believe it could be inspiring and therapeutic - for both sexes - to expose a much broader spectrum of female mythological characters; to reveal - for instance - that not all feisty and assertive women of old were man-hating gorgons!

My task then was to find a number of myths in which women rather than men set out on these heroic outer quests.³ I wanted to find several, for I believe we need a variety of female models to guide and inspire women. But such heroines are not common - for many reasons, some of which have been alluded to previously. Perhaps not surprisingly, it proved to be mythological goddesses rather than mere mortal women, who I found had taken heroic journeys of this ilk.

² Jung made some limited allowances for gender differences, deduced from his original male model. These are very briefly touched upon under "Heroic Journeys Compared".

³ Several female authors have written of the heroine's **inner** journey, such as Maureen Murdock, 'The Heroine's Journey', and Silvia Brinton Perera, 'Descent to the Goddess'.

Mythology and the Tarot

I also wanted to incorporate the Tarot. For, if mythology allows these archetypal understandings to inculcate our psyche through the power of the imaginative, written word, then the Major Arcana of the Tarot offers a similarly meaningful representation of the archetypal heroic journey in a visual, pictorial manner. Like mythology, the Tarot Major Arcana can be seen to reveal significant psycho-spiritual revelations about the nature and significance of the heroic journey. And mythology and Tarot work well together in offering us wisdom, guidance and understanding. In adding the Tarot dimension, we can gain foresight and hindsight regarding the various stages of the journey, and greater insight into the inner and outer archetypal characters and experiences of the heroic quest.

The Heroine's Journey

I wish now to present you with the stories of two goddess-heroines – Isis of Egypt and Hi'iaka from Hawaii.⁴ Their journeys can then be analysed using a Heroine's Journey Tarot spread I have designed. As I've already mentioned, mythology and Tarot, when combined, can prove most insightful. My hope is that this process will help women to more fully appreciate these heroines' journeys. This in turn should enhance their understandings when applying the spread to their own journeys.

The Heroic Journey of Isis

The great Egyptian goddess, Isis, was worshipped far and wide for over 3000 years as an accomplished magician, as devoted wife and mother and also as high priestess, guardian of the veil. Perhaps the most famous myths surrounding Isis concern her journey in search of her beloved brother and husband, Osiris.

Osiris was the first ruler of Egypt, 'civilising the people' through teachings related to cultivation, the law and honouring of the gods. Isis was his sister, wife and consort. When Osiris travelled abroad to spread these teachings – using only charm, persuasive discourse and music – Isis is said to have governed Egypt in his absence with strength and wisdom.

Their evil brother, Seth, wished to usurp his brother's position as ruler of Egypt. To this end, he contrived a treacherous plot with seventy-two co-conspirators. Osiris was tricked into testing his size in a specially made sarcophagus. But once he lay down in it, his enemies, led by Seth, fastened down the lid with nails and molten lead and set it adrift on the Nile. The coffer ultimately floated out to sea and was carried by the tides to the Phoenician coast, near the city of Byblos. It came to rest on the shore at the base of a tamarisk tree that quickly grew at an astonishing rate, soon completely enclosing the chest within its trunk. Malcandre, the King of Byblos, so

⁴ *Another candidate was the Greek goddess, Demeter. Her journey shares some common themes with that of Isis, though in her case, it is her daughter, Persephone, for whom she searches.

*In his book, 'She', Robert Johnson cites Psyche's story to exemplify the heroine's journey. But to me Psyche is very much a passive victim. And although she is required to undergo a number of tests and trials on her 'journey', it tends to be others who solve these challenges for her. I do not see her as a particularly inspirational role model for women.

admired the magnificent trunk that he had it cut down to form a supporting pillar for the roof of his palace.

Upon learning of her husband's demise, Isis was overcome with grief. She cut off her hair, donned simple mourning garments and veil, and went in search of the coffer containing her beloved. She wandered everywhere seeking clues of its whereabouts. When almost at her wit's end she heard about the tamarisk tree, and how it gave off an exquisite scent when lopped by the king's men. She knew instantly then where to seek the body of her deceased husband.

Having made her way to the kingdom of Byblos, she soon endeared herself to the queen, Astarte, and became carer of the queen's newly born son. It is said that she nursed the child by giving it her finger to suck rather than her breast and 'in the night she would turn into a swallow and flit about the pillar with a wailing lament'. She would have conferred immortality on the boy had his mother not disturbed her in the process of subjecting him to the purifying flames. Now forced to reveal her true identity and purpose, the king gladly permitted Isis to extract the coffin from his pillar. A combination of relief and sorrow saw her throwing herself on the coffer, wailing mournfully and bathing it in tears.

Isis now returned to Egypt by boat with the coffin, hiding it in swamplands she hoped would keep it out of the reach of brother Seth until she could revitalise the corpse. This was essential for she was intent on conceiving Osiris's son, who would be the rightful heir to the throne. Only this could prevent Seth from becoming ruler of Egypt.

But, quite by accident, Seth came upon the body of Osiris and this time he determined to annihilate his brother and rival once and for all. He cut the body into fourteen parts and scattered the parts far and wide. Yet Isis was not daunted. The great goddess began a patient search, systematically retrieving each part, one by one. Here she was assisted by her sister, Nephthys who, though wife of Seth, abhorred his actions. Isis also took counsel from Osiris's mentor, Thoth, the God of Wisdom.

As Isis retrieved each body part, she created a shrine and performed a ritual. Some say this was done purely to confuse Seth about thirteen possible sites at which Osiris might have been buried. It may also have been a ritual act of gratitude and reverence for the hidden Intuitive Knowledge that had led her to each body part. I mention thirteen sites only, for the fourteenth part, the phallus, could not be retrieved. Alas it had been thrown into the Nile and devoured by a Nile crab. So Isis moulded a replacement out of clay.

And now, with all his parts before her, Isis carefully rejoined them to re-form the body of Osiris. Then, adopting the wings of a kite, she breathed life back into Osiris's body long enough for a sexual union to be enacted. From this union she conceived the boy child, Horus.

Osiris now peacefully journeyed to the Underworld, there to reign as king. But he was able to see Isis from time to time, as she and Nephthys often guided souls into these nether regions. And it is said Osiris came to Horus on occasions to prepare the

boy for the battle he would inevitably have to fight upon reaching adulthood, the battle to avenge his father's death and take his rightful place on the throne.

Throughout his childhood, Isis nursed and guided her dearest offspring, thwarting many attempts by Seth to exterminate his nephew and rival. And Horus did eventually become ruler of Egypt...but that's another story

The Heroic Journey of Hi'iaka

From Hawaiian mythology comes the remarkable heroic quest of Hi'iaka, the youngest and favourite sister of the great volcano goddess, Pele. Both are daughters of the creator god Kane. Pele is the principal deity of Hawaiian mythology, worshipped both as Pele-honua-mea - creator of the land, and as Pele-ai-houa - eater of land, something she is inclined to do when her terrible temper takes over! When Pele originally travelled from Tahiti to the Hawaiian archipelago, it is said she carried her youngest sister, as an unhatched egg, incubating it in her armpit. So Hi'iaka was born, hatched, in Hawaii and therefore has a special bond with Hawaiians.

Our story begins on the big island, Hawaii, where Pele and her 'family' reside. One day, Pele falls into a deep sleep and, as she sleeps her soul travels to the far distant island of Kauai. where she sees a handsome young chief named Lohiau. She takes the form of a beautiful maiden, woos him and they make passionate love for three days and nights. When Pele is finally and reluctantly awakened from sleep she yearns for Lohiau and calls for a volunteer to bring him to her. But this would be a long and arduous journey for which none of her entourage of sisters, gods and demigods are prepared to volunteer - except the young Hi'iaka, who does so reluctantly out of love for, and loyalty to, her elder sister, Pele.

Hi'iaka is beautiful, young, innocent, and fun-loving. Until this time she has spent her days surfing, dancing the hula and tending her beloved lehua trees with her friend, the nature spirit, Hopoe.

When Hi'iaka volunteers for the journey, Pele offers her this inducement: "(W)hen you have brought our lover here, for five nights and five days he shall be mine; after that, the taboo shall be off and he shall be yours." She also adds this warning: "but while on the way, you must not kiss him, fondle him, nor touch him. If you do it will be the death of you." In return Hi'iaka asks that Pele promise not to destroy her sacred lehua groves or her friend, Hopoe. Hi'iaka also asks for a travelling companion, and - at her other sisters' insistence - the gift of spiritual power called mana. Because, at that time, the Hawaiian islands were filled with mo'o - dangerous, violent, evil spirits, who could present in many forms.

Both sisters agree to the conditions. In fact for parts of the journey Hi'iaka has two or three female companions; but the principal and most abiding one is Wahine-oma-o. She is in Hi'iaka's service throughout the journey - ever loyal, at times brave and sometimes offering Hi'iaka wise counsel.

Hi'iaka chooses to make this a two-fold journey: firstly to fulfil Pele's wishes for the lover, Lohiau, but also to rid the islands of the many mo'o who harm the land and its

human inhabitants. For Hi'iaka has a great appreciation of and passion for the land and its people.

It is indeed a long and perilous journey – trekking and boating from island to island, confronting and overcoming many evil spirits, sometimes almost impenetrable landscape and, on occasions, inhospitable locals upon whom Hi'iaka and her party are dependant for food, shelter and boat transportation.

Hi'iaka may certainly have been given some assistance from the gods through the power of mana, but she has many natural attributes that prove equally valuable on the journey, particularly her powers of premonition and foresight. These frequently warn her of impending danger, enable her to suss out deceptions and, as she nears her destination, tell her that Lohiau is in fact dead. It seems that his demise is the result of a romantic encounter he has - in the meantime - conducted with two beautiful women who turned out to be mo'o in disguise! (There are many examples like this of Lohiau's philandering tendencies. Unlike Osiris, he is not painted in pure and glowing terms. Hi'iaka is never naïve or unrealistic in assessing Lohiau's character, though she grows to love him despite his limitations. In the extended version of the myth, we see his strength of character develop in the latter part of the story, at the time when he is subjected to the most serious afflictions.)

Hi'iaka's magic skills enable her to revive Lohiau. They are used to perform many other miraculous deeds during the journey, the return part of which involves fewer threats from evil spirits since she disposed of so many on the way. But the environment remains wild and hostile. In addition, Hi'iaka has to restrain herself from succumbing to Lohiau's sexual advances and deal with his wandering eyes that even dare to gaze lustfully on the handmaiden, Wahine-oma-o.

For much of the story Hi'iaka demonstrates a strong commitment to family, to tradition, to social mores and social etiquette. She deals harshly with those who display a lack of respect for the gods, especially for her sister, Pele. Nor is Hi'iaka averse to using physical violence against evil mo'os. On one occasion the goddess is described as “wielding a flaming battle-axe and hurling missiles of burning sulphurs.”

It is her strong commitment to convention that makes the concluding phases of Hi'iaka's journey so interesting. On the return trip Hi'iaka feels a growing sense of unease that Pele may have broken her pledges. As Hi'iaka gains a vantage point close to home, her eyes sadly confirm the destruction of her sacred lehuas and her dear friend, Hopoe. Hi'iaka's journey has taken two months to complete. During that time Pele has become increasingly jealous and suspicious that Hi'iaka has succumbed to Lohiau and is perhaps not even going to deliver him at all. In a fit of rage and out of a desire for revenge, Pele has performed these destructive and heartless deeds.

And how does Hi'iaka respond to this realisation? She is completely - and justifiably - devastated and enraged. Until this point, she has always put her sister and her sense of duty above everything else. But from this point onwards we find her far more driven by her emotions. Hi'iaka resolves now to take Lohiau as her lover, but to do so right in front of Pele's eyes, despite the perils associated with such a course of

action. As the couple reach the crest of Pele's crater, Hi'iaka draws Lohiau to her in a passionate embrace. Of course Pele's wrath is unleashed and knows no bounds. Lohiau is lost under a torrent of molten lava. Hi'iaka, however, is physically untouched - either because her deity status prevents it, or because it is Lohiau whom Pele blames for the couple's seeming indiscretion.

Hi'iaka's reaction to Lohiau's demise is one of extraordinary grief. It is said, 'a swarm of emotions buzzed in the chambers of Hi'iaka's mind, of love, of self-destruction, of revenge. In an agony of indecision she strides this way and that, wringing her hands and wailing in a strictly human fashion. The master passion comes to the front and has sway: she will find Lohiau, and with him renew the bond of friendliness which had grown up in the midst of the innocent joys and toils of travel shared by them in common.'

An access of divine power comes to her. She immediately begins to tear up the strata of the land. When she reaches the tenth stratum, she intends to break it up also 'and thus open the flood-gates of the great deep and submerge Pele and her whole domain in a flood of waters.' This would have been the ruin of all things. But then the voice of Wahine-oma-o comes to her, delivering the words of Kane who now feels he must intervene. Wahine-oma-o persuades Hi'aka to go with her before Pele and try there to gain some restitution.

This Hi'iaka reluctantly, though proudly does. Pele learns that Hi'iaka had never in fact broken her pledge to Pele until after her elder sister had broken hers to Hi'iaka. What shocks and disgusts Hi'iaka most is Pele's seeming lack of remorse at the physical and emotional devastation the volcano goddess has reeked on both land and people, let alone on her supposedly favourite little sister.

In fact Pele is somewhat disinterested in the discussion, for she is now preoccupied with a new dalliance, a handsome new would-be lover. It is said, 'Hi'iaka's sense of outrage touches every fibre of her being and stirs such indignation against her sister that she cannot again take her former place as a member of Pele's court. Hawaii is the largest island of the group, but it is not large enough to hold herself and Pele. Of all the islands, Kauai is the one most remote from the scene of her troubles; it is also the land which Lohiau had claimed as his own - and his is a name that calls up only the most tender emotions.'

And so begins another journey into the unknown for Hi'iaka. Again she sets forth for Kauai, this time in a very different frame of mind. She is accompanied by the faithful Wahine-oma-o, and also by those sympathisers from Pele's court who are brave enough to risk the wrath of the volatile fire goddess.

In the meantime, Kane-milo-hai, an older brother of the quarrelling sisters, manages to capture the distracted spirit of Lohiau. He returns it to its stony body and then uses his magical power to restore the body and reintroduce Lohiau's soul into it.

Many moons later, and seemingly by chance - though surely thanks to the intervention of the God of Destiny - Hi'iaka and the twice physically reborn Lohiau again behold each other, this time across a crowded room. They fall into an embrace touched with both passion and relief.

One may reasonably assume that, re-united at last, the couple continue the journey together to Kauai where Lohiau is warmly welcomed back to his chiefdom with his beloved partner, Hi'iaka, there to live 'happily ever after'.

Heroic Journeys Compared

- 1) There are a number of obvious similarities and differences between the journeys of our two heroines. I'll mention just a few.
 - Isis was motivated to set out on her journey out of grief and personal longing to find her beloved husband; Hi'iaka, on the other hand, had no particular emotional pull to take her journey and came to it somewhat reluctantly, mainly out of a sense of duty.
 - Both goddesses, however, were steadfast and stoic throughout their journeys - except in the latter stages of Hi'iaka's quest, when she saw that Pele had broken her promises. Then Hi'iaka became steadfastly defiant!
 - Hi'iaka's journey involved her in a certain amount of physical violence, while Isis' did not. (Of course, this could reflect cultural differences.)
 - Both heroines gained that which they had sought, but for both the journey proved far more complex than they probably anticipated when seemingly at the halfway mark. Interesting to note, however, that their subsequent 'complications' were feared or suspected by both. Hiding Osiris's coffin in the marshes suggests Isis feared further attack by Seth. And we are told that Hi'iaka's sense of foreboding about her lehua grove and her friend, Hopoe, increased with almost every step of the return journey.

- 2) How do our heroine's journeys compare to their male counterparts and fit in to Campbell's monomyth model? On the surface at least, the goddesses' journeys are quite similar to those of typical male heroes. Both of our heroines encounter enemies and helpers along the way, and face many trials that test their courage and endurance. Both ultimately obtain that which they sought, and return to their 'ordinary worlds' wiser and stronger as a result of their ordeals.

- 3) But what about from a psycho/spiritual perspective? As mentioned earlier, it is theorised that man is transformed, becomes a more complete individual because, in the course of his testing outer journey, he finds his feminine side (High Priestess and Empress) that has been previously hidden from consciousness. In the process, particularly through the High Priestess, he comes to understand the Divine Feminine as an equal part - indeed a mirror - of God. And so he is reborn, with a true understanding of unification - the balance of yin and yang - both at the personal and transpersonal levels of existence..

Personally I have serious misgivings that this is a typical outcome in many heroic myths, with some notable exceptions - such as the journey of Gautama Buddha, or even Parsival's search for the Holy Grail. It is all too apparent in most heroic tales, that the hero - and his society - are not in touch with, let alone reverent of, most aspects of the feminine, even after the hero's return.

Remember, the feminine principle is traditionally represented by women. Yet for the most part, women in such mythological tales are presented as one-dimensional characters - as either 'virgins' or 'whores'. They are depicted as either unrealistically pure and docile maidens/wives, or as fearful characters whose sole purpose is to tempt and destroy the hero – be it more covertly, as femme fatale (like biblical Eve), or overtly, as wicked, murderous witch (like Eve's predecessor, Lilith). In Tarot terms, one could say female characters in these stories are aligned far more closely to the Devil archetype than either the High Priestess or the Empress!

By contrast, the various female characters in our two myths are far more diverse, interesting and credible than these one-dimensional women. And our two heroines, Isis and Hi'iaka, demonstrate strong High Priestess and Empress energy. They display faith in, and reverence toward that inner High Priestess archetype who, amongst other things, teaches us to trust our intuition, even when it leads us to thoughts or actions which others might deem improbable or irrational. Isis presents many archetypal Empress traits, as the loving and loyal wife with strong maternal instincts. Hi'iaka's strong Empress energy is especially reflected in her passion for the land, its creatures and its people.

I suppose, if we take Jung's model, it could be argued that, of course our heroines are in touch with their feminine side (the anima). Jung deduced that woman's journey is a reverse of man's. So woman's goal is to find her inner masculine (the animus). Yet neither heroine appears to lack a strong masculine side. From the start both demonstrate well developed Magician and Emperor archetypes. They strongly support, even defend, the laws and institutions (Hierophant) of the essentially patriarchal societies to which they belong. They are also both able to rein in their powers, and use them skilfully with willpower and determination (Chariot). Furthermore, like most of her male counterparts, Hi'iaka is even prepared to resort to physical coercion when she deems it to be justified.

These brief comparisons of heroes' and heroines' journeys suggest many things to me. But for the purpose of this paper, suffice to say that they serve to reinforce my belief that women need strong, courageous hero-figures *of their own gender* – that is, heroines with whom they can truly identify - to provide reassurance and inspiration.

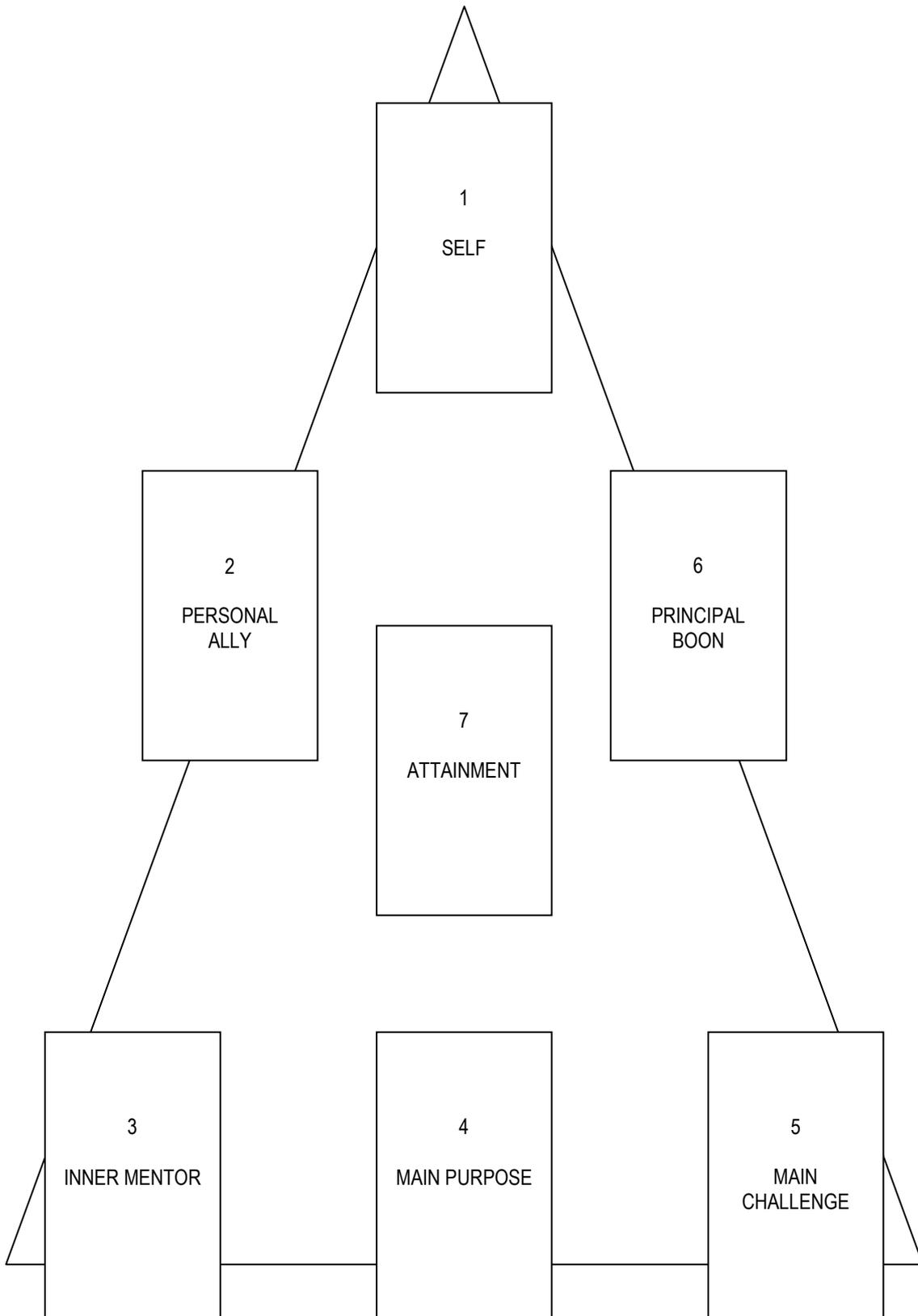
The Heroine's Journey Tarot Spread

Having studied these goddess-heroine's journeys, I felt compelled to devise a spread that might help women, through the Major Arcana cards of the Tarot, gain greater personal insight about their own heroic journeys. This Heroine's journey spread is set out in Figure 1.

- **Position 1, Self**, describes the archetypal energy consciously initiating the journey
- **Position 2, Personal Ally**, represents the archetypal energy that the heroine is most easily able to access, at a conscious level, on her journey
- **Position 3, Inner Mentor**, shows the archetypal energy that will provide inner wisdom and guidance on her journey
- **Position 4, Main Purpose**, demonstrates the main purpose of the journey, not so much in physical terms, but in terms of the heroine's personal development

- **Position 5, Main Challenge**, reveals the main challenge to her personal growth that the heroine will experience
- **Position 6, Principal Boon**, shows the main benefit/reward which the heroine will gain from the journey
- **Position 7, Attainment**, reveals the overall personal growth resulting from the journey

FIGURE 1



Application of the Heroine's Journey Spread to the Goddess-Heroines' Journeys

In order to demonstrate how this spread can be meaningfully used, I meditated and then applied the spread to the journeys of first Isis and then Hi'iaka. The cards that presented are represented in Figures 2 and 3 respectively. With the input of workshop participants, some possible interpretations are offered, in brief, below:

FIGURE 2 - ISIS



1



2



7



6



3



4



5

Isis.

- With the Tower in Position 1, we see that it was the sudden and violent murder of her beloved, Osiris, that caused Isis to set off on her epic quest.
- She was principally driven - Position 2, Personal Ally - by her Empress archetype, her love and devotion for her husband, and also the need to satisfy her maternal longings.
- It was surely the High Priestess, - as Inner Mentor, Position 3 - speaking to Isis through her senses and emotions, who first guided the goddess to the dead body of her beloved in Byblos, and later as she systematically retrieved his bodily parts from far and wide.
- Having the Chariot in Position 4 suggests that the Main Purpose of Isis's journey, in terms of personal growth, was to demonstrate to herself that she could maintain willpower, drive and determination in the face of overwhelming grief, the likes of which she had never before experienced.
- Isis' Main Challenge, the Sun - Position 5 - was that she might lose the optimism which this card offers, and as a result, her passionate desire for the rebirth of Osiris and the birth of a son, would dissipate.
- The Principal Boon she received - Position 6 - was in learning to move through the emotional, unclear, sometimes depressing world of the Moon, a more challenging aspect of the feminine for her than the familiar High Priestess.
- The World in Position 7, Attainment, affirms the overall success, unity and wholeness her journey provided on a number of levels.

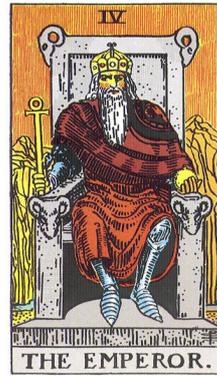
FIGURE 2 HI'IAKA



1



2



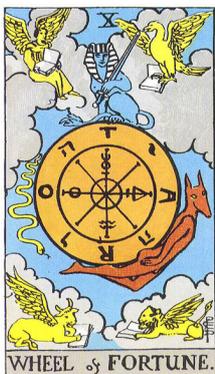
6



7



3



4



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Hi'iaka

- The Star was an interesting card to present in Position 1. It suggests the desire to rid the Hawaiian islands of the polluting mo'o was perhaps more than a secondary reason Hi'iaka volunteered for the mission. There is also a sense – with this card - of a certain purity of spirit on the part of the young Hi'iaka, a faith that the unknown world beyond the horizon would essentially be as serene and pure as the life she had led up until that time.
- Hi'iaka's approach to the quest was certainly that of the archetypal Fool, her Personal Ally - Position 2. So prepared was she to 'leap into the void' without too much thought, it took her sisters to press her to demand the power of mana to help ensure her safety on the journey.
- Matters of justice and rightness were an important part of Hi'iaka's story. And ultimately, she made significant, life-changing decisions based on assessments she weighed up internally, about the rightness or otherwise of Pele's violent actions towards her and all she cherished. Not surprising then that the Justice card appeared in Position 3, Inner Mentor.
- If we take on board the second interpretation of why the Star appeared in Position 1, then the Wheel of Fortune - Position 4 - seems fitting in terms of her personal development. It suggests that the Main Purpose of the journey for Hi'iaka was to test her ability to experience the ups and downs, the highs and lows that are an inevitable part of life's journeys, and come to understand them as a natural and character-building aspect of our existence.
- The Main Challenge to her personal growth - Position 5 - was shown in the spread to be the Empress. Hi'iaka saw Pele more or less as a mother figure. (Remember she had carried Hi'iaka to Hawaii as an unhatched egg, incubating it under her armpit.) Yet Hi'iaka had powerful maternal instincts of her own - towards the land and its people. And Pele's behaviour towards both had been wantonly destructive. Ultimately Hi'iaka's challenge was a choice between loyalty to Pele's negative Empress and her own Empress energy. As we know she ultimately chose the latter.
- The Principal Boon she gained from her journey, Position 6, was the application of her Emperor energy. She led, organised, and took responsibility for the lives of her companions throughout the journey. It was also her archetypal Emperor that ultimately led her to leave Pele's court, and set out to somehow establish a new, more just order elsewhere.
- In Position 7, Attainment, the Moon card appeared. The overall personal growth Hi'iaka attained from her journey was an understanding of certain painful aspects of the feminine principle: the dark emotional discomfort of the time preceding rebirth to a new life, when the future is not known to us yet we must journey on even so.

Personal Application of the Heroine's Journey Spread

In this workshop, I ask all participants to make a list of their significant journeys - past, present and future. Here are some examples:

- Marriage break-down and divorce
- Overcoming a serious illness
- Taking an overseas trip for the first time
- 'Surviving' menopause
- Renovating a house
- Changing careers
- Writing a book (then) getting it published
- Moving to the country

Just in this short list we can see much variation in the types of quests that may be categorised as potentially heroic - in that they involve a testing journey in the hope of a significant reward; and there is the probability that personal transformation will transpire in the process.

The Heroine's Journey spread specifically uses the Major Arcana, because it is designed to put us in touch with those archetypal energies especially relevant to a particular journey. It should assist the user in gaining insight and foresight about the broader issues of personal development associated with the quest. The spread can also be an insightful tool, providing hindsight into past journeys taken - as has been demonstrated above with the journeys of Isis and Hi'iaka.⁵

And speaking of heroines, I would encourage all women reading this paper to seek out inspirational female heroic characters in today's - as well as yesterday's - literature and film. For, like Isis and Hi'iaka, such heroines can have a very positive effect on the female psyche, be it at the conscious or unconscious level. Such role models serve to remind women of their enormous character potential, inspiring the strength and fortitude needed for their many heroic journeys.

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⁵ Cards from the Minor Arcana can be subsequently added to Positions 2 and 4 – 6, to provide guidance of a more physical/material nature

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