"I AM A FREE HUMAN BEING"

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Abstract: The paper focuses on Toni Wolff's (Jung's disciple) four-fold matrix of archetypal quaternity (Mother, Amazon, Hetaira and Medial Woman), as it intends to decipher, in terms of the third female archetype, the Amazon, the mysteries of a territory probably never fully and completely mapped, the female psyche as portrayed by Charlotte Brontë's most famous heroine, Jane Eyre. Applying the matrix of the Amazon, I focus on Jane's will to make her way into the world of the Patriarch and gain the right to use her voice and have her utterance heard, as an Amazon cultivates her heart in order to be able to master her strength and go beyond her known boundaries, constantly forcing her limits, stepping into mysterious nooks of her self.

Keywords: womanhood, feminist criticism, psychoanalysis, gender studies, women's writing

Our endeavour aims to explore, in a cartographic analysis of the self, the solitude and seclusion of a special femininity born on the moors of Yorkshire and wrapped in special pages of literature that bear the signature of the Brontë sisters. In this initiatic journey I will start from Carl Gustav Jung's school of analytical psychology, with a view to deciphering the mysteries of a territory probably never fully and completely mapped, the female psyche, by further expanding the slant of analysis with the equally four-fold perspective of Toni Wolff[1] namely the *Mother*, the *Amazon*, the *Hetaira* and the *Medial Woman*. Famous for the study she published in 1956, *Structural forms of the feminine psyche*, Toni Wolff speaks about four feminine archetypes which she organises in a quadrant perspective that emphasises the nature of the oppositional quality of relationship. She argues that *Mother* and *Hetaira*, the first two, embody *personal relationships*, whereas the *impersonally related types* are best represented by the other two feminine archetypes, *Amazon* and *Medial Woman*. Whereas the first two archetypes want to underline the fact that both *Mother* and *Hetaira* are personally related and definable through the relationships that offer consistency to their profile, as *Mother* will always exist through her offsprings, just as much as Hetaira will decline herself in intimate relationship with the masculine, complementing dimension of her *self*, the *Amazon* and *Medial Woman*, place their primary energies in manifestations of collective life, or the general public, *per se* (Molton, 2011, p. 27).

"*I am a free human being with an independent will…*" – with this line I initiate my approach towards interpreting Jane Eyre as a strong-minded, powerful, obstinate *Amazon*. I try to look at Charlotte Brontë's most famous heroine from Wolff's third archetypal perspective, in an attempt to portray Jane's will to make her way into the world of the Patriarch and gain the right to use her voice and have her utterance heard. The Amazon cultivates her heart in order to be able to master her strength and go beyond her known boundaries, constantly forcing her limits, stepping into mysterious nooks of her *self*. Like

[1] **Antonia Anna "Toni" Wolff** (18 September 1888 — 21 March 1953) was a Swiss Jungian analyst and a close associate of Carl Gustav Jung. During her analytic career Toni Wolff published relatively little under her own name, but she helped Jung identify, define, and name some of his best-known concepts including anima, animus, and persona. Her best-known paper, published in 1956, *Structural forms of the feminine psyche*, Zurich: C.G. Jung Institute, was an essay on four "types" or aspects of the feminine psyche: the Amazon, the Mother, the Hetaira, and the Medial Woman. *Source: Wikipedia*.

Artemis, goddesses of the wild animals, wilderness, and protector of young girls, the Amazon's journey is not only symbolic through pages that narrate the life of the wilderness, since she maps her journey through moors and fields, like an untamed creature, in search of the her true story. The double key of narration comes with the very beginning of the novel when we see Jane immersed in silent reading, and what is most interesting is the fact that she uses book-related terms in order to describe herself: "*A small breakfast-room adjoined the dining-room: I slipped in there. It contained a book-case: I soon possessed myself of a volume ... Folds of scarlet drapery shut in my view to the right hand; to the left were the clear panes of glass, protecting, but not separating me from the drear November day*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter I). Out of the sheltering confinement of what seems to be a metaphorical cover-to-cover embrace, marking the primordial records of the day – dawn and dusk - our Amazon focuses a new lens on what I believe comes with her progress towards the warm presence of speech. This Amazon's story begins with the enchantment of utterance, of uttering one's true self; it seems to be the story of a young woman who comes to taste the pleasure of discovering her 'voice' (Kaplan, 1996, p. 12). It is this 'voice' that is silenced at the very beginning of the novel, when Jane was excluded from a family speech reunion: ''*Eliza, John, and Georgiana were now clustered round their mama in the drawing-room… and… looked perfectly happy*'' (Brontë, 1975, chapter I) only to take refuge in her muteness and quite considerable pleasure in her reading Bewick's *History of British Birds*. The episode somehow finds symbolic correspondence in an anecdote that recounts the fact that Charlotte Brontë herself, having been invited by William Makepeace Thackeray to attend a party held in her honour, following the publication of *Jane Eyre,* the authoress, whom everyone present expected to hear talk as her heroine, rather than her less famous self, preferred instead to retire "*to the sofa in the study and murmured a low word now and then…*'' (Brontë, 1932, p. 49). The same 'double retirement', in oneself and in quietness, is what I would refer to as '*reverse utterance*'. It is this *reverse utterance* as both *echo of the self* and *journey of the logos* that I intend to trace back in my analysis of Charlotte Brontë's most celebrated novel. One of the clues of interpretation approaches the concept of *pneuma*, divine gift of mystery and magic that caresses and echoes the soul with its airy and secretive nuances. Pneuma and logos spin the story of Plato's *Symposium*, and so they will too in *Jane Eyre*. Referring to her good friend and companion, Helen Burns, Jane says: ''Then her soul sat on her lips, and language flowed, from what source I cannot tell'' (Brontë, 1975, chapter VIII).

The 'pouring out', the overflow of the self springs from the entrails of women's most secretive nooks, and on its way to the surface, very much like a stream that comes to 'speak' the various geological languages of the Earth, infusing itself with richness, bears, almost inevitably, the 'sign' of the fabulous tradition of patriarchal pen writing. Greeks would believe that God is *logos* and *pneuma*, *utterance* and or *reverse utterance*, and even the *Gospel According to John* dawns with this marriage of spirit and word, for "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (John, 1:1).

It is through a plenary assertion of her true self, "*Speak I must...*" she declares, that the Amazon archetype gains contour in Jane Eyre as an indomitable, unstoppable energy that flows its waters all the way from its springs to the sea. Plain and simple, this uncomplicated woman turns simplicity into complexity, since altruism, dedication, devotion, commitment, values she so majestically discreetly personifies, are far from the realm of the bustling roars of

common, ordinary life. These are extra-ordinary values that calmly breathe the air of peace and tranquillity, pouring shades of light into a mass of grey and shallow conventionalism. The beauty and uniqueness of Jane Eyre is close to that of stained glass of cathedral windows, whose apparent outer plainness is shattered by the frantic explosion of colours, message and divinity that awaits for the one who is able to hear the summon inside. Beauty is not to be discovered without searching and desire, whereas spirituality is not to be reached without purification, initiation and righteousness, or, if we are to link the idea to Jung's representation of Up Spirituality, we could invent, only for the sake of a better representation, the term *Uprighteousness*. As we have already seen, an Amazon is best defined not only by her will and determination to look for meaning and sense in her life, but also through her relationship with the opposite gender, for she will relate to men as friend, comrade, and equal: "*My bride is here*,"…Rochester said…"*because my equal is here, and my likeness*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXIV).

And these words' value weigh further more than if they were uttered by a feminine psyche claiming equality with the mighty Patriarch himself. This time it is he who acknowledges likeness, the almost perfect, round completion of his self and Jane's. The identity of sign is ever more surprising, if we take into account the fact that Charlotte Brontë, in bringing together a plain, simple, governess of modest means and resources and a well-off, proud representative of the aristocracy broke some clichés and patterns of the time in an act that could almost be catalogued as 'social heresy'. Charlotte Brontë manages to introduce a most vocal feminist manifesto, articulating her personal ideas regarding the unjust and rigid gap between the two sexes in Victorian times, further enhancing the idea through the diametrically opposed origins of the two heroes. This time, the two main protagonists come to epitomise not the Moon and the Sun, but two Suns, of equally blazing passion, that come to burn together, melting their lights in a single fascicle, and this is another expression of Miss Brontë's feminist view. It is Jane now who comes to shine and keeps the fire still burning. In much the same manner like Catherine Earnshaw, who came to identify herself with Heathcliff, Jane Eyre, once reunited with the man she loved, admitted that: **'I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine**. *We talk, I believe, all day long, to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking. All my confidence is bestowed on him; all his confidence is devoted to me; we are precisely suited in character, perfect concord is the result*' (Brontë, 1975, chapter VIII) (bolds mine).

Susan VanZanten Gallagher suggests that although the Christianity professed by the powerful males in the novel is destructive to, and exploitative of women, the novel might embody a Christian feminism that sees God as both masculine and feminine and advocates the values of love, sexuality and a marriage of partnership (Gallagher VanZanten, 1993). Brontë's imaginative challenge is to make Victorian, Christian marriage a viable choice for her heroine by addressing the economic inequities and gender ideologies that support an imbalance of power and render the condition of married women, as Susan Meyer points out, metaphorically comparable to that of slaves (Meyer, 1996, pp. 60-95). It is not only the story of the feminine psyche that surfaces the pages of the Victorian literature, it is also the shadow of what we might call the *imperial self* that looms in the background. Slavery and mastership, industrialism and labour, Empire and colonies, centre and peripheries translate the same old story of dominance and power; nevertheless, the idea of subdual and ownership does not limit

itself to the geography of overseas territories, for it acquires symbolic nuances that go well beyond the royal sceptre, I argue, marking Charlotte Brontë's will to try to deconstruct hierarchies of gender and class. For instance, when talking about herself, Jane Eyre often uses the term '*slavery'*, and one of the earliest instances is when she compares her defiant anger toward the Reeds to '*the mood of the revolted slave*' (Brontë, 1975, chapter II). Later on in the novel, in a fierce argument with Edward Rochester, Jane comes to associate slavery, female slavery in particular, with one of its cruellest and classical dimensions, the 'imprisonment' of women behind veils and religious seclusions: "[Edward Rochester*] I would not exchange this one little English girl for the grand Turk's whole seraglio; gazelle eyes, and all!* [Jane Eyre] […] *If you have a fancy for anything in that line, away with you, sir, to the bazaars of Stamboul without delay; and lay out in extensive slave purchases some of that spare cash you seem at a loss to spend satisfactorily here*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXIV). Using her eponymous heroine as a mediatrix, Charlotte Brontë voices not only Jane's, but also her sullen resentful attitude towards women's condition in general, much too often perceived by the canons of the time as being nothing else but a form of imprisonment. The novelist, in an almost barrister-like attitude, firm, unequivocal, cuts deep with her words into the 'wounded flesh' of her time, denouncing its prejudices and obtuseness in what gender relations are concerned: "*It is in vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity: they* **must have action**; *and they will make it if they cannot find it. Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Nobody knows how many rebellions besides political rebellions ferment in the masses of life which people earth. Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XII) (bolds mine).

An Amazon must be free, run wild and tame the sharp lines of the horizons. She is not to be contained in claustrophobic precincts, nor is she to be judged according to preconceived, prefabricated gender-biased ideas. There is even some bondage, I dare say, between the snooty *imperial self* and the Amazon, since one may regard and refer to them as proud, symbolic institutions of unquestionable authority and undeniable mightiness. The vastness of open spaces, the new geometries of unmapped territories, audacity and grandeur – infuse not only the profile of the politically and economically dominated self, but also continue to tell the story of the beautiful goddess Artemis. The Amazon rules over an empire, the empire of endless spaces whereas the imperial self breathes the air of infinite plenitude. Extrinsically forged, decisively permeated as it is by the values of what, at the time, one would refer to as the most important economic and colonial power of the world, the imperial self, otherwise a clearly marked symbol of the Patriarch's realm, is used by Miss Brontë to highlight her feminist manifesto, in that that she 'asks' Jane Eyre to look after the 'healthy heart of England'. Deidre David argues that Brontë's novel: "*is about a specific historical moment when women were called upon to be agents in the labour of both renovating and expanding*

Britannic rule" (Deidre, 1995, p. 97). Jane Eyre voices women's ambitions for greater freedom, work, and equality with men, though, at the same time, advocating the reforming and missionary ideals of the British Empire. The 'healthy heart' must be read in two ways – pointing at women's right to feel and be released from suffering, allowed to 'trespass' the artificially man-marked limits of their expansion, and, at the same time alluding at the core of the Universe, Queen Victoria's Empire, the most grandiose expression of wealth, progress and modernity of the nineteenth century. When Jane portrays St. John Rivers' heroism and devotion to his missionary cause, Charlotte Brontë praises the British Empire: "*A more resolute, indefatigable pioneer never wrought amidst rocks and dangers. Firm, faithful, and devoted; full of energy, and zeal, and truth, he labours for his race: he clears their painful way to improvement, he hews down like a giant the prejudices of creed and caste that encumber it. He may be stern; he may be exacting; he may be ambitious yet; but his is the sternness of the warrior Greatheart, who guards his pilgrim-convoy from the onslaught of Apollyon. His is the exaction of the apostle, who speaks but for Christ*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXXVIII).

Only an Amazon may have such a heart, and for that, she must be independent, self-sufficient and Jane seems to stand for all the determinism one needs to make things matter, to mark a difference and break away from the web of cliché-inclined traditionalism. This is why she will never be *Hetaira*, either in her relationship with Edward Rochester, or in that with St. John Rivers. True to herself in rejecting both Rochester and St. John, Jane is caught between her *need to feel* and her equally strong desire to maintain her independence. Independence and freedom come as an obsession for Jane who simply cannot perceive her life out of the mark of the obstinate quest for her real psyche, and since the two horizons intimately connect, Jane's spirit would have never been the same had it not be a free one. The novel abounds with hints towards freedom, or the lack of it, and since we have already commented upon Jane's repetitive use of the word 'slavery' it may be argued that slavery can also be interpreted in terms of sexual liberty. And this is where Jane's dread fear of declining her identity in terms of kept mistresshood: "*If I lived with you as you desire, I should then be your mistress—to say otherwise is sophistical—is false*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXVII). How could Jane forget Rochester's clearly expressed ideas about mistresshood, for he is the one who said that: "*Hiring a mistress is the next worst thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior; and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXVII). The repetition of the word 'mistress' must have a negative echo in Jane's mind, constantly reminding her of Rochester's liaison with the French Céline Varens. Jane argues that if she were to remain by his side, she would fall under dual slavery, since their relationship would be marked both by economic dependency and sexual relationship. She would lose any chance she might have of becoming independent; she would lose all her prospects of being once (re)united with her true nature. And this is something an Amazon will never do – give up her freedom for a shadowy world of love promises: "*Which is better?—To have surrendered to temptation; listened to passion; made no painful effort—no struggle;—but to have sunk down in the silken snare; fallen asleep on the flowers covering it; wakened in a southern clime, amongst the luxuries of a pleasure-villa; to have been now living in France, Mr Rochester's mistress. […] Whether is it better, I ask, to be a slave in a fool's paradise at Marseilles—fevered with delusive bliss one hour—suffocating with the*

bitterest tears of remorse and shame the next—or to be a village-schoolmistress, free and honest ?" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXXI). Jane contrasts her two options playing with a nuanced semantics – thus she could be either 'a ***slave*** in a fool's paradise' or a 'village-school mistress, free and honest'. Brontë managed thus to portray the gloomy picture of a state of affairs most middle-class Victorian ladies confronted themselves with, subjected as they were, both economically and sexually. Jane is determined to be Rochester's rightful equal before marrying him, organically resenting the idea of being elevated to his status through marriage. In an epoch when women were forced into a lifetime of dependency, the financial autonomy Jane Eyre insists on before the nuptial agreement is both uncommon and highly important for the bride-to-be. As Maurianne Adams reasons: "*Jane reaches the threshold of marriage three times in the novel. She cannot cross it until she can meet her 'master' as his partner and equal, his equal by virtue of her inheritance and family solidarity, his partner by virtue of their interdependence*" (Adams, 1977, p. 152). Once again we run into the same Yin and Yang game of completion and rejection, a permanent balance between masculinity and femininity, with a peculiar stress on the fight for self-assertion of the feminine facet. Even after her promotion to the position of teacher at Lowood, in her confronting the 'demons' of her past there is a constant oscillation between Yin and Yang that hides the 'key' of the quest of her real, true, uncensored and unmasked self. This is the moment that sends Jane back to her roots only to discover, as Mrs Reed told her, that there is another '*side'* to Jane's family and to Jane's social identity, the '*healthy heart*' represented by her uncle, John Eyre. It is at Moor House where Jane will become a true Amazon, through a traditional transfer of values that marks one of the oldest, gender-oriented, 'economic' exercises – namely the transfer of financial *in*dependence from the Patriarch to the Woman, in a gesture that annihilated women's *dependence* on the material status of men. Symbolically enough, Jane's 'right' to hope for and finally reach self-fulfilment is restored, in a kind of divine justice, by the patriarchal symbol, thus offering her a social status, a rank and identity: "*I told you I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress*" (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXXVII).

Let us dwell for a few lines on the heroine's choice of words, when it comes to her self-presentation as her own *mistress.* Towards the end of the novel, when the circle closes in its ultimate embrace, it is not surprising that Jane thus redefines the connotation of the word 'mistress'. She has travelled the long journey that separates her from one of the most frequently used connotations of the word – *kept mistress*, at the same time approaching her to the idea of *female superior*, future *wife* of her former *master*, a *reverse utterance* of some of the most powerful canons of the age. The word no longer refers to the surrender of economic and sexual power over oneself, for it comes to point at the independence and power of the Charlotte Brontë's heroine. Nevertheless, I argue that, despite this desperate need of independence, this thirst for free will, the shadows of the Patriarch have not been torn away completely. Furthermore, there are voices supporting the idea that Jane's return to Rochester and her total and unconditional acceptance of the part she had to play thereupon (wives were considered inferior to their husbands, and economic inferiority and dependence, in their case, accentuated even further the state of affairs) is not much a rebellion against the previous condition as a humble Victorian woman. Freedom, an independent self, symbols of a time when women started to (re)discover the path towards their inner world, and most importantly, began their fight for recognition, as part of this world, as vital element of this universe's most

sensitive core. And if women fought for freedom, it was because of their need to share – to share their love, thorough healing and education, to share their love as equals of their husbands, no longer perceived as mere 'life-companions' of their wives, and, essentially, to share their life in utmost resonance with the society of their time. Women wanted to show to themselves, and to the others, that they can be more, they can actually achieve something, and in doing so they put a lot of effort, energy and passion; if the game in itself was complicated the only way to master it was by simply pulling down the masks. And yet, when time came and the self demanded for a voice of its own, Jane admits she is her "*husband's life*…".

Therefore, the mighty Patriarch is still there, crippled, insecure, but nonetheless present.

But much more present is Jane's love, the one that demanded and longed for the endless horizons of the territories of the self, the other possible alternative to the *Amazon*, the Lover. 'Socially rescued' by the agency of the male element, she rescued the man she loved, in an allegoric closing of the circle that melts both Yin and Yang. No longer psychologically dependent on Jane, Edward Rochester is finally ready to meet Jane, who, in turn, is no longer financially dependent on him. They have reached the stage where they complement each other, and not play the other's part. The equality of sign comes to define the relationship between the two sides of the now 'round' Androgynous. Jane learnt to become 'Mother', she was taught the meaning of humility, she was offered the bliss of a warm, human touch even in the harshest of times, and she started her journey into the world with this mission, of healing, of offering her unconditional, loving touch. Her complementing the Amazon archetype with the oldest of the four annihilates the danger of remaining caught in one main self-image, and thus Jane is twice as free as a psyche can be, once she avoided a slow death and fall into discouragement. Even her relationship with Edward Rochester dawned in the same keynote, for when they first met, Jane put her body into service for him, as a prop for his foot injury that initiated their bondage. This is where I introduce the idea of circularity of the novel in what Jane and Edward's relationship is concerned. It started with Edward's temporary lameness and it ended with his permanent crippleness, and in all these equations, temporary or permanent as they may be, Jane, with her rock-solid conviction, and love, be it Christian, be it passionate, seemed to be *the* constant, the pulsing heart and enduring shoulder. Victorianism, especially when it comes to women, can be described as a time that initiated the demolition of prejudices, of arbitrary conventions and rigid frame of mind. Women metamorphose from 'silences' into 'utterances', from 'absences' into 'presences'. This is what Jane did. She 'allowed' herself the privilege *to be* someone, to be herself, to follow the call of love, the only thing that could take her from the confined realm of an inarticulate existence to the summit of feeling and emotional commitment. Love offered her freedom, love *was* her freedom, as much as the voice of her true self, the one that she discovered the moment she had that 'epiphany' of the heart. Jane is, no doubt about it, in my opinion, the little, fragile *servant* who came to *master* her master through the prevailing and unwavering command of her true self – *love* itself. Jane is nothing but love, endless, unconditional, purifying love. It is her love, nothing else but her true self and nature that stands for Edward Rochester's epiphanic moment of self-redemption. Analysing things symbolically, this purifying love was itself *purified* by the cathartic flames of the big fire that burnt Thornfield Hall to ashes, and with it, the whole gloomy past of the master of the place. Huge flames with hungry tongues of incandescent

light melt the secrets of a former, shallow and carnal passion in the dense fabric of the night. Thick as the night was the mystery behind a long-consumed love affair, and fresh as the coming dawn was the almost invisible thread of hope that 'embraced' place and protagonists altogether. Thorns died, perished forever, allowing roses to bloom. And bloomed they have. Jane's love bloomed roses and mastered what seemed, at that time, almost impossible – the heart of a governess' master, causing the downfall of the common order of things and social conventions. This makes us believe that Jane Eyre is not at all the story of a woman who merely accepted a condition of inferiority, as all the women of her time and rank did, for I do think that she overthrew the status-quo of the age and proved that women's self is a land of unexplored emotions. Jane found the way towards her inner, hidden self through love, just like Dorothea Brooke did through wits and Lucy Snow through determination. We shall always see Jane Eyre as the Amazon who found her true self and nature, who consequently found love and turned into one of the most extraordinary and fascinating female figures of world literature. Plain beauty, rough and authentic for a simple, genuine lady and a blooming love. Where else, if not amid the green of nature, into the very heart of the wild, among the ferns could an Amazon encounter the peace and tranquillity of her ***self***, and who else but a '*green and vigorous*' (Brontë, 1975, chapter XXXVII) companion could become a lifetime partner?

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