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Doaa Omran

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Female Protagonist Mega-archetypes: A Study in Medieval European Romances

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DISSERTATION

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to your soul, my beloved mother.

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**FEMALE PROTAGONIST MEGA-ARCHETYPES:
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ABSTRACT

Despite the claim that structuralism has sung its swan song, my research offers new insights in the field of structuralism through archetypal criticism by exploring four female hero mega-archetypes as narrative structures inspired by the Qur'an and the Bible. These scriptural narratives offer tenets, based on narratives and motifs, that, as structural units, create and identify mega-archetypes. This study posits how, rather than being extensions of existing structuralist taxonomies on the male hero monomyth, the female mega-archetypes enrich that monomythical narrative. This work details the structure of the mega-archetypes Zulaikhah (Potiphar's wife), Sarah and Hagar, the Virgin Mary, and Queen of Sheba,. A number of medieval European romances, specifically Arthurian, aptly illustrate each of these mega-archetypes and confirm how each crosses culture, time, and race.

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Introductory Chapter

In *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine*, Robert Moore and Daniel Gillette discuss the Lover archetype (Brett) as an addicted lover who is “eternally restless” as he falls in love with every woman he meets without having a real plan or purpose for his actions. Examples of this archetype are Jay Gatsby (Brett) who without purpose loves Daisy Buchanan. Other men who fall into this archetype are those in love with or addicted to multiple lovers, such as Casanova and Don Juan (Mullen). Outside of the western tradition, we witness this archetype in the Japanese Genji (Shikibu) and the Persian Shahrayar (Burton). The male lover is thus a transnational archetype; that is, an archetype that, in essence, cuts across space and time. Archetypes have mostly been studied in terms of maleness and the masculine. Perhaps, now, it is high time to look at what female archetypes are and how they can be reinterpreted as transnational. Before this investigation, we need to look at how archetypes were defined by other critics.

Archetypes

As Carl G. Jung posited,

My views about the ‘archaic remnants,’ which I call ‘archetypes’ or primordial images,’ have been constantly criticized by people who lack sufficient knowledge of the psychology of dreams and of mythology. The term ‘archetype’ is often misunderstood as meaning certain definite mythological images or motifs, but these are nothing more than conscious representations. Such variable representations cannot be inherited. The archetype is a tendency to form such representations—representations that

can vary a great deal without losing their basic pattern. (“Approaching the Unconscious” 57)

Jung further posits that archetypes are

an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic εἶδος. For our purposes this term is appositive and helpful, because it tells us that so far as the collective unconscious contents are concerned we are dealing with archaic or—I would say—primordial types, that is, with universal images that have existed since the remotest times. (“Archetypes and Collective Unconscious” 4-5)

Jung first considers archetypes in literary texts. That is, he applies his concept of *archetype* as a literary or a mythological paradigm that served as a recurring or a standard pattern around which literary narratives are built. Adolf Bastian introduces the term *Elementargedanke* (“elementary ideas” or “prevailing themes”) and argues that humans share the same ideas across different time periods and/or cultures due to common intrinsic human qualities (Balduis 23). From Bastian’s insights, Jung considers how the collective un-consciousness can generate similar stories across cultures (“Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious” 43). In other words, Jung takes Bastian’s ethnological concept of prevailing themes and ties it to psychological and, by extension, literary concepts. The more contemporary folklorist, Hasan El-Shamy, summarizes an archetype as “the first stamp, pattern, or model” (36) that cuts across gender, culture, and time; he takes much of his discussion of archetypes from Jung’s 1921 *Psychology of the Unconscious*.

Archetypes are not only mainstays in psychological and literary studies, they are also consistently tied to folklore and commonly found in the various approaches to the nationalism of folklore. Thus, archetypes are eventually recognized and acknowledged as universal. Philologist Theodor Benfey argues that all folktales—except for Greek myths—are Indian in origin (Jacobs 216), coming from the *Panchatantra* (Pūrṇabhadra and Hertel). The historical-geographical research method of the Finnish school initiated by Julius Krohn postulates that folktales had an origin (history) from which they spread throughout areas (geography). At the beginning of the twentieth century with the advent of the psychoanalytical school, Jung proposed the idea of the universality of archetypes due to what he called as the “collective unconscious.” Antii Aarne, Stith Thompson, and Hans-Jörg Uther compose motif indexes that focus on European folktales. More recently, El-Shamy numerically codes motifs based on Arabic and Islamic folkloric constituents; his work thus fills a gap in earlier scholarship. Jung had proposed a deeper understanding of human culture that is universal, and these subsequent scholars have reached similar conclusions about the various origins based on their studies exploring archetypes and motifs. These critics would agree that, just as different plants grow in different circumstances, so do different mentalities tell different folktales but with strikingly similar archetypes, most of which are centered on male figures and male-oriented pursuits.

While I will be discussing critics who have written on female archetypes, my dissertation posits a different set of terms to examine the feminine/female story that incorporates structural characteristics (herein called *tenets*) about a female protagonist that is archetypal and that comes from the Qur’an and from the Bible. I have labeled this

structure a *mega-archetype* because it is a motif cluster rather than a single motif, and it appears throughout literature. Furthermore, this study draws on approaches to structuralism and reading myth as ritual. While earlier researchers (e.g., Campbell, Raglan, Frazer) proposed descriptive taxonomies to define the myth or definitions that draw from rituals and myths to identify archetypes, I propose a newer, more complex and revealing system. My approach privileges female archetypes that exist beyond the chauvinistic stereotypes and that subsume male-based narratives into their definitions. As a practical application of my theories, I am examining medieval romances from the somewhat different angle of mega-archetypes. I propose to delineate four mega-archetypes that are female based rather than male dominated.

Structuralism

Among the different schools of reading myth are the archetypal or structuralist approach in which critics look for systems that work within a text and across various texts.¹ A structuralist considers a text as a system of motifs and archetypes and can analyze a text for its rituals or religious procedures. As a theory, structuralism has not only a long history but also varied applications and many secondary approaches connected to it. At its base, structuralism theorizes that human actions rest on underlying systems that give those actions meaning. All means of communication, therefore, have what amounts to two levels: the communication itself and the system underlying that communication by which individuals comprehend the system. In a larger sense

¹ Eric Capso's *Theories of Mythology* is a comprehensive guide to the history and theories of mythology.

“structuralism concerns the operation of signs within a structured system, how these signs reciprocally condition one another, and how an underlying ‘code’ (cf. Saussure's *langue*) determines the range of possibilities within which the signs operate.” (qtd. in Strauss 1)

In literary studies, structuralism challenges the idea that a work represents a particular reality. A structuralist would argue that a literary work is made up of conventions, systems connected with other systems, myths, symbols, archetypes, and the like that give the work its actual meaning. Claude Lévi-Strauss, for example, proposes a structural theory of myth that asserts how myths, like rituals and other anthropological events, are really variations of a basic story or theme; the narratives recorded in myths, no matter what the source, are constant, basic, and universal (de Almeida 629-30).

Structuralism as a theory is far from monolithic. In linguistics, for example, Noam Chomsky (1957) distinguishes the “surface structure” of an utterance from its “deep structure,” the area in which meaning is regulated and language competence displayed. Folklorist Vladimir Y. Propp consolidates all folktales to seven “spheres of action” (80-81) and thirty-one fixed elements or “functions” of narrative (25-65). Lévi-Strauss, a pivotal structuralist, rejects Propp’s system by labeling it *formalism* rather than *structuralism*. For Lévi-Strauss, *formalism* is “defined by opposition to content, an entity in its own right” whereas *structuralism* “has no distinct content: it is content itself, and the logical organization in which it is arrested is conceived as property of the real” (167).

Jonathan Culler is the theorist often associated with structuralism and the study of literary texts. Relying on the distinction between surface and deeper structure, between the work and the underlying systems, Culler argues that without some literary

competence—that is, a knowledge of the underlying system of literary conventions—readers will struggle to interpret a text. A sentence rearranged into a stanza, for instance, takes on additional meaning because of the underlying systems associated with poetry (Culler 133-135). By extension, readers unaware of underlying archetypes or patterns will likely either fail to interpret a literary text, will miss important interpretations, or will misinterpret elements of a text by reading it in light of impoverished systems.

This dissertation takes a structuralist approach to reading texts but through a decidedly feminist lens. As a starting point, I consider how previous structuralist scholarship has argued that male hero narratives follow standardized patterns (e.g., Barthes, Campbell, Frazer, Propp, Raglan). A more recent trend, sparked by feminist mythologists (e.g., de Beauvoir, Cixous, Clément, Sells), applies versions of these male archetypes and taxonomies to female protagonists. This project sets as background a selective history of male theorists who designed male taxonomies and how these underlying structures were adopted and adapted by feminist theorists. Feminist scholars attempted to give female protagonists a voice by tracing structural patterns for them; the scholars, however, fell into the trap of imposing male-inspired models on their heroines. In a binary view, the “marked” female is still assessed in terms of the “unmarked” male even in these feminist taxonomies (Shapiro 446-447). M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies in their *Female of the Species* argue that the fundamental differences between men and women are not biological as much as they are cultural. They look at different communities and conclude that matriarchal societies still exist in which women are warriors and in which men beautify themselves for the women. A purpose of feminism or feminist criticism is not to take a matter or text at surface value or for granted as it could

be a social construct. When feminists started questioning traditional gender roles, they changed perspectives and looked at anthropology and mythology from a feminist point of view that questioned ideas of heroism. Initially female critics did apply male paradigms to women who they thought fitted these hero patterns. However, these approaches soon morphed into far more sophisticated views of female roles as archetypes and models. Traditionally scholars have viewed the male hero and his journey as the “norm” and delegated any female versions of the journey as shadow versions of the accepted narrative. Women as heroines are the “Other,” the different, the exceptional. This project takes a radically different view of this structuralist, binary assessment.

Male Hero Archetypes

Studies delineating male heroes and archetypes are plentiful and long-lived. In the late nineteenth century, for instance, B. Edward Tylor posits a uniform plot that national hero pattern stories followed. According to Tylor, most heroes experience the threat of being killed but are saved by humans and animals (281-82). Johann Georg von Hahn gives a more detailed pattern than Tylor. Von Han analyzes fourteen case biographies and posited a hero taxonomy of Aryan hero types. Von Hahn’s hero patterns are all male, all based on Western literary figures, and would be all too familiar to contemporary readers and movie-going audiences:

1. The hero is of illegitimate birth.
2. His mother is the princess of the country.
3. His father is a god or a foreigner.
4. There are signs warning of his ascendance.
5. For this reason he is abandoned.

6. He is suckled by animals.
7. He is brought up by a childless shepherd couple.
8. He is a high-spirited youth.
9. He seeks service in a foreign country.
10. He returns victorious and goes back to the foreign land.
11. He slays his original persecutors, accedes to rule the country, and sets his mother free.
12. He founds cities.
13. The manner of his death is extraordinary (Segal vii).
14. He is reviled because of incest and he dies young.
15. He dies by an act of revenge at the hands of an insulted servant.
16. He murders his younger brother.² (Von Hahn 1-2)

Other anthropologists and psychoanalysts, such as Otto Rank, James Henry Somerset FitzRoy [Lord Raglan], and Jan De Vries, propose variations on this formula; however, each of these scholars basically argues that hero stories mostly follow a general version of Von Hahn's pattern. Codifications of this sort introduce models for male heroes who are endowed with privileges such as a prestigious birthright, a separation from the parents, and a special relationship with animals deities, etc. Rank, as a psychologist, focuses in his twelve-trait myth type on these Freudian aspects:

² A contemporary example shows how this characteristic continues into contemporary media. According to the *Wookieepedia: A Star Wars Wiki*, Sheev Palpatine, who first appears in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2008), became a Dark Lord of the Sith as Darth Sidious, Senator of Naboo, Supreme Chancellor of the Republic, and Emperor of the galaxy. Disfavored by his father, he held his younger brothers in contempt. When bodyguards take the eldest of the brothers away, Palpatine slaughtered his family, including his younger brothers.

The hero is the child of very distinguished parents, and usually the son of a king. His origin is preceded by difficulties, such as sexual abstinence, prolonged infertility, or secret intercourse of the parents due to external prohibition or obstacles. During or before the pregnancy, a prophecy, in the form of a dream or oracle, warns against his birth, usually threatening harm to the father. Therefore the newborn child, usually at the instigation of the father or his representative, is doomed to be killed or exposed. As a rule, he is surrendered to the water, in a box. He is then saved by animals, or by lowly people (herders), and suckled by a female animal or a lowly woman. After he has grown up, he finds his distinguished parents in a variety of ways. He takes revenge on his father, on the one hand, and is acknowledged, on the other, achieving greatness and fame. (*The Myth* 47)

According to Raglan, the hero who is being raised by foster humble parents but eventually takes revenge on the father/king who attempted to kill the hero as a newborn. Out of the fifteen heroes that Rank examines, only two are biblical figures, Moses and Jesus, each of whom took their revenges on Pharaoh and the Kingdom of the Roman pagan ruler, respectively (Rank et al 10-12 and 35-40).

In his initial characteristics, Lord Raglan echoes Rank's hero taxonomy and has clearly Oedipal undertones; it is only Oedipus who scores the twenty-two points in Raglan's taxonomy (Raglan 175). The later section of Raglan's taxonomy becomes more like Frazer's ritualistic approach as the hero becomes a vegetation god whose sacrificial death aids his community by bringing in food and wisdom to it (Segal xxiii):

1. Hero's mother is a royal virgin,

2. His father is a king, and
3. Often a near relative of his mother, but
4. The circumstances of his conception are unusual, and
5. He is also reputed to be the son of a god.
6. At birth an attempt is made, usually by his father or his maternal grandfather to kill him, but
7. He is spirited away, and
8. Reared by foster -parents in a far country.
9. We are told nothing of his childhood, but
10. On reaching manhood he returns or goes to his future Kingdom.
11. After a victory over the king and/or a giant, dragon, or wild beast,
12. He marries a princess, often the daughter of his predecessor and
13. Becomes king.
14. For a time he reigns uneventfully and
15. Prescribes laws, but
16. Later he loses favor with the gods and/or his subjects, and
17. Is driven from the throne and city, after which
18. He meets with a mysterious death,
19. Often at the top of a hill.
20. His children, if any do not succeed him.
21. His body is not buried, but nevertheless
22. He has one or more holy sepulchers. (Raglan 174-175)

This “symbiosis of myth and ritual” (Segal xxv) is evident in the Raglanian taxonomy that he applies to the biblical figures of Joseph, Elijah, and Moses. Joseph Campbell makes connections between Moses and Abraham in his hero pattern.

Unlike the more static heroes of Raglan and Rank, Campbell’s monomythical hero is dynamic as he goes on a journey and is often self-made. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell argues that every hero completes a journey, a “monomyth” (1-40), a term Campbell borrows from James Joyce (581). Campbell interprets the physical journey psychologically. The hero journeys because he lacks either experience or self-knowledge; hence, this journey is a symbolic rite of passage, an underlying system to illuminate the actual, textual journey. Complete with stages and substages in his journey, Campbell’s hero is called to the adventure, receives supernatural aid, crosses a threshold, meets the helper, goes through challenges and temptations, receives a revelation, goes into an abyss, is transformed, receives atonement and a gift from a goddess, and, finally, returns home. This sequence evidently applies to almost all the scriptural heroes as almost all of them went into such journeys. The abyss stage (*The Hero* 74-79), also referred to as the “belly of the whale,” is even named after Jonah’s traumatic experience in the whale’s belly. Campbell does not make the Jonah reference even though he names other heroes swallowed by other animals.

The one figure that scholars such as Raglan and Campbell avoid applying their taxonomies to is Jesus. In “The Hero Pattern and Life of Jesus,” Alan Dundes (Rank et al.) critiques how Raglan intentionally veers away from applying his taxonomy to Jesus. Dundes applies Raglan’s formula to Jesus who scores seventeen out of the twenty-two points of the taxonomy (Rank et al. 191). Dundes argues that Raglan avoided stating that

Jesus was a folkloric figure rather than a literary one. He proposes that as a figure Jesus continues to inspire literary works because many of the elements of a folk hero are present in his story, which also happens to be historical. Dundes also refers to Frazer who dedicates much of his seminal *Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion* to the sacrificed god who eventually revives. However, like Raglan, Frazer does not make the connection to Jesus. Despite the fact that he looks at myth from religious and ritual perspectives, Frazer does not look in the scriptures for taxonomical formulas. Instead, Frazer takes much for granted in *Golden Bough* when he privileges the uncultured over the civilized and males and their activities over females and their activities by insisting that those who hold superstitions, myths, or a reverence for ritual have power over those who, even with intellect, cannot recognize the flaws in their beliefs. He argues that primitive man tried magic, particularly fertility rites, to control the weather, rain, harvests, animals—in short, his natural world. As a pseudo-science, magic worked until it did not; then, man accepted fate, prayers, and sacrifice. Hence, myths are manifestations or representations of fertility rituals performed to a certain deity; however, despite this connection to sexuality and fertility myths, Frazer does not focus thoroughly on female deities as much as he does on their male counterparts.

The intermarriage of myth and ritual has always been pivotal to studying myth. The Bible, apart from being a religious text that inspires many rituals in the Christian faith, is alive with the stories of the patriarchs that the above mentioned folklorists refer to in their hero patterns. Robert Graves and Leonard Shlain dedicate whole books to mythology. Both *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* and *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict Between Word and Image* concentrate on the

goddess archetype; neither Graves nor Shlain, however, analyzes this goddess, or female archetypes in general, from a structural point of view, even though myth and archetypes, according to Jane Harrison and Walter Burkert, are ritualistic by default. Given this background in religion and ritual, clearly, Islamic and Judeo-Christian scriptures have played and must continue to play a role in the creation of myth and archetypes as all of the above mentioned scholars—and most others—refer often to the Bible and other religious texts as evidence for their systems.

Feminist Revisions of Male Hero Archetypes

Taxonomies and Patterns of Female Characters

Female heroines have been examined in the light of male hero taxonomies and not as entities of their own. Feminist mythologist critics have appropriated these male hero traits to female heroes. For example, Mary Ann Jezewski in “Traits of the Female Hero: The Application of Raglan’s Concept of Hero Trait Patterning” tweaks and adapts Raglan’s formula to female heroes. Jezewski’s taxonomy states that:

1. Her parents are royal and godlike and
2. They are often related.
3. There is a mystery surrounding her conception and/or birth.
4. Little is known of her childhood.
5. She herself is a ruler or a goddess.
6. She is charming and beautiful.
7. She uses men for political purposes.
8. She also controls men in matters of love and sex.
9. She is married and

10. She has a child or children.
11. She has lovers.
12. Her child succeeds her.
13. She does a man's job or deeds.
14. She prescribes law.
15. Her goodness is viewed in conflicting ways.
16. Her legend contains the Andromeda theme, and
17. The subsequent resolution of this theme by treacherous means resulting in untimely death, exile, or incarceration.
18. Her death is uneventful and may not be mentioned in her legend. (57-58)

Jezewski states that her

article emphasizes that Raglan's male hero traits do not 'fit' the female hero, that the female hero does display a pattern in her life story but one markedly different from Raglan's hero pattern and that a salient trait pattern can be developed that is characteristic of the life story of the female hero. (70)

Despite this claim, Jezewski, still relies on a male paradigm and applies it to her historical and mythological figures. Moreover, what makes a woman heroic according to Jezewski are the "masculine-like deeds that she accomplished" (58). In her proposed archetype, Tenet 13 posits that a heroine does a man's job or deeds. Even though the taxonomy is about a "female hero," this Andromedan female hero needs a man to rescue her (Trait 6). For example, Jezewski states, that in Arthurian texts Guinevere needs Lancelot to save her from Arthur's vengeance (10). This deliverance makes the term *hero* problematic in Jezewski's taxonomy as the woman still needs a man to rescue her. Given

this possible variation in terms, in my discussions of Guinevere as a heroic figure I use the term *protagonist* instead of *heroine*.

Remke Kruk in *The Warrior Women of Islam: Female Empowerment in Arabic Popular Literature* explores the female warrior archetype. She is indebted in this analysis to Peter Heath's application of Jan de Vries heroic cycle pattern to the Arabic folk hero 'Antar ibn Shaddād (Kruk xiv). Kruk applies this initially male hero formula to Princess Dhāt al-Himma and to 'Antar's warrior daughter 'Unaytira. As with de Vries' male hero,

there are her unusual birth and childhood: she is born after the his death, and, for a long time, she is not aware of the fact that she is 'Antar's daughter. She is unusually big and strong for her age. When she is five years old she wrestles down dogs and wolves and shoots arrows at the servants. She goes out with her head wrapped up in a turban and is generally taken for a boy. An opportunity arises for her to demonstrate her valor and strength when she joins an expedition and a huge lion approaches [. . .] She converts and at the instance of the Prophet, she gets married. To the end of her life, she bravely continues to fight for the cause of Islam, accompanied by her husband and their five sons. She is finally killed in battle, and the Prophet speaks words of mourning over her: a true heroic end. (Kruk 25-26)

Like Jezewski, Kruk adapts a male hero formula to female warriors. However, Kruk is more specific as she focuses on the warrior woman archetype, and, hence, the application becomes more convincing. Yet, Jezewski's pattern is too specific: First, the term *hero* does not apply to all the figures she has chosen to study, and, second, not all female "hero" stories are inclusive of an Andromeda theme.

Interestingly, the heroines studied by the above mentioned scholars are to some extent born heroic and not as self-made as are those in Joseph Campbell's investigations. Campbell claims that his pattern applies to heroines as well as to male ones because, as he writes,

the more one studies and learns, the more one sees the mythic journey as not one belonging to any gender per se, regardless of the gender of the heroes and heroines or the antagonists presented in tales. With enough story mileage on you, and with enough life lived in potholes as well as at pinnacles, and—without confusing the very real issues of parity and disparity between men and women in many cultures across the world—one begins to see that the mythic quest is the journey of the soul. It is one that has its yin and its yang, its hard and soft, its easy and challenging, its durable and its delicate—all the attributes, deficits, and more, portrayed by mythic persons and creatures in tales since time began. (*The Hero* lvii-lviii)

However true, Campbell does refer to the descent of the fertility goddess Inanna to the underworld (*The Hero* 87-9, 184-6), but he never fully applies the taxonomy to any heroine because he viewed female figures as passive; that is, female figures function as the “goal” of the quest for the male hero who is “knower and masterer” (*The Hero* 101). Relying on *The Cabalistic Teachings of 86 Amitayur-Dhyana Sutra*, Campbell further notes that “the masculine Yang and the feminine Yin” are

Tang, the light, active, masculine principle, and Yin, the dark, passive, and feminine, in their interaction underlie and constitute the whole world of forms

(‘the ten thousand things’). They proceed from and together make manifest Tao:
the source and law of being. (*The Hero* 131)

That is, heroines offer creativity and nurturing while heroes provide logic.

In *Pathways to Bliss: Mythology and Personal Transformation*, Campbell identifies three journeys in the *Odyssey*: Odysseus’ book-long quest, Telemachus’ quest for his father, and Penelope’s enduring ploys to avoid suitors (149, 159). Like Job’s wife, Penelope’s quest is stationary but clearly psychologically motivated. But, as a representative of Campbell’s hero taxonomy, Penelope fails to meet most of the tenets. She is not called to the adventure; instead, she endures her trials because her husband leaves. She does not receive supernatural aid nor the extensive help of anyone else; she undergoes challenges and temptations, but, by weaving and unweaving her cloth, she deters these trials. Arguably, Penelope is not transformed: She waits patiently and accepts Odysseus’ return even though she initially doubts he is her husband. Can she really be considered an equal to the male archetype Campbell proposes?

Taking this approach a step further, therapist Maureen Murdock in her handbook *The Heroine’s Journey* modifies Campbell’s monomyth to give insight to career women in male-oriented work environments who have split themselves from the feminine within them. Murdock writes that she interviewed Campbell in 1981 because she wants to understand how the woman’s journey is related to that of the male hero (2). Campbell surprised the author by claiming that women do not need to go on a journey:

In the whole mythological tradition the woman is there. All she has to do is to realize that she’s the place that people are trying to get to. When a woman realizes

what her wonderful character is, she's not going to get messed up with the notion of being pseudo-male. (*The Heroine's Journey 2*)

In response to this unsatisfactory answer, Murdock argues that women go through similar journeys but in different terms and advises these accomplished women to follow the feminine—in particular “feminine spirituality” (10) by searching for “the images of the Goddess [. . .] to understand modes of leadership” (10). Murdock, thus, focuses on real life examples that she recurrently adorns with examples from classical mythology. Murdock writes that women experience the following stages, the names of which mostly coincide with the chapter titles of her book:

- Separation from the feminine,
- Identification of the masculine,
- Road of trials,
- Finding boon,
- Death and awakening of feelings,
- Initiation and descent of the goddess,
- Yearning to connect with the feminine,
- Healing the mother-daughter split,
- Healing the wounded masculine, and
- The androgynous integration of the masculine with the feminine. (vii-ix).

While her categories give a clear guide to specific characteristics, Murdock relies directly on Campbell's formula and uses his male terms to define a heroine's journey. Rather than going through a journey, Murdock's archetype redefines the feminine through the “masculine.” The heroine's journey archetype starts with separating herself

from the feminine and becoming more masculine and concludes with her being “androgynous” (160) as if being only female is not fulfilling herself. That is, rather than being autonomous, the feminine is defined by default through the male. Campbell’s male hero, on the other hand, does not have to redefine himself in feminine terms. The male hero does not have to define himself in relation to the other “second sex”—as Simon de Beauvoir would have put it. This discrimination, also, further illustrates the Martin and Voorhies proposition that the anthropological bias sets mankind up as including women. Janice Moulton in “The Myth of the Neutral ‘Man’” argues that *he* and *man* used generically are really not gender-neutral terms that refer to humanity in general; more so, the terms *person* and *human* are gender-neutral (110-111). She uses linguistic examples to drive her point home. Murdock is aware of this distinction and deploys Campbell’s hero’s journey to discuss the everyday feminine struggle. If a man’s journey is to overcome the escalating psychological and mythological difficulties of his quest, a woman’s quest is to cope in a male-dominated world.

More recently, Valerie Estelle Frankel also uses Campbell’s monomyth among other archetypes in *From Girl to Goddess: The Heroine’s Journey through Myth and Legend*. However, unlike Murdock’s psychological undertakings, Frankel applies her adapted pattern to a number of female narratives. Both Murdock and Frankel though take a Freudian/Jungian stance in which their female figure initially has a complicated relationship with the mother but eventually is reconciled with her at the end of her journey. Frankel states that the stages of the heroine’s journey—again, roughly paralleling her chapter titles—are:

- The ordinary world

- The call to adventure
- Refusal to the call
- The ruthless mentor and the bladeless talisman
- The crossing of the first threshold – Opening one’s senses
- Sidekicks, trials and adversaries
- Wedding the Animus-Facing Bluebird- Finding the sensitive man-confronting the powerless father
- Descent into darkness- atonement with the mother- integration and apotheosis
- Reward: winning the family
- Torn desires-the magic flight-reinstating the family-return
- Power over life and death
- Ascension to the new mother.

Frankel summarizes how her approach differs from Campbell’s in the following Table:

Table 1: Comparison of Models Between Campbell's Hero's Journey and Frankel's Heroine's Journey (Frankel 5)

COMPANION OF MODELS THE STEPS OF THE JOURNEY		
<i>Campbell's Hero's Journey</i>	<i>The Heroine's Journey</i>	<i>Stages</i>
The Ordinary World	The Ordinary World	Innocence and Discovery
The Call to Adventure	The Call to Adventure	Innocence and Discovery
Refusal of the Call	Refusal of the Call	Innocence and Discovery
Supernatural Aid	The Ruthless Mentor and the Bladeless Talisman	Innocence and Discovery
The Crossing of the First Threshold The Belly of the Whale	The Crossing of the First Threshold Opening One's Senses	Journey through the Unconscious
The Road of Trials	Sidekicks, Trials, Adversaries	Journey through the Unconscious
The Meeting with the Goddess Woman as the Temptress	Wedding the Animas Facing Bluebeard Finding the Sensitive Man Confronting the Powerless Father	Meeting the Other
Atonement with the Father Apotheosis	Descent into Darkness Atonement with the Mother Integration and Apotheosis	Meeting the Self
The Ultimate Boon	Reward: Winning the Family	Meeting the Self
Refusal of the Return The Magic Flight Result from Without The Crossing of the Return Threshold	Torn Desires The Magic Flight Reinstating the Family Return	Meeting the Self
Master of the Two Worlds	Power over Life and Death	Goddesshood and Wholeness
Freedom to Live	Ascension of New Mother	Goddesshood and Wholeness

Feminist mythologists, such as Frankel, unconsciously appropriate male paradigms to women just as male pronouns are inclusive of women in the way our patriarchal-inclined societies use language. The irony of this borrowing is that even when these mythologists wanted to prove that women are not less heroic than men, they could not avoid falling into the trap of setting these heroines to masculine standards.

Feminine Archetypes

In addition to the above-mentioned structures, I also review various characteristics that do not adhere to a particular pattern. For example, in the second half of her book, Frankel discusses archetypes in terms of “anthropomorphic representations of the Goddess” (173) and even proposes her own list of archetypes, albeit from a dynamic rather than static perspective. For example, she accepts the archetypes of the maiden, mother, and crone; however, she argues such an archetype is a process rather than being three distinct archetypes (176). Likewise, other feminist writers, such as Merlin Stone and Patricia Monaghan, attempt to enrich female archetypes by focusing on women characters while using male images. Even Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* explores the figures of female deities: the Sumerian goddess of beauty and love, Ishtar; the Middle Eastern version of Astarte; and the Anatolian mother goddess, Cybele. However, none of these critics looks for ancient sources or for the narratives that define the archetypes.

Of the approaches to feminist archetypes, perhaps the most intriguing is that of Toni Wolff, Carl Jung’s student and long-time collaborator. Wolff in her discussions—and, at times, disagreements—with Jung posits that women are more conditioned by their souls than were men. She proposes *Anima* as a composite of four archetypes that are

mental forms rather than literary amalgamations: the Amazon (9-10), the mother (1-4), the Hetaira³ (7-9), and the medial or creative woman (5-12). In arguing that these archetypes were in opposition to each other and that in each opposition one or the other dominates, Wolff adds a dynamic and narrative element to the concept of female archetypes. For example, the mother archetype can be opposed to the Amazon archetype; moreover, this opposition can incorporate Hetaira, the companion to the male, as well as the medial woman, the seer or wise one who contributes perspective and context. Joined together these archetypes form an integrated Anima. Wolff argues that such an integration “is an approach to the Self” that

requires a whole life—whole both in respect of time as well as in the intrinsic meaning of a process of change which cannot be described here. The woman who can intelligently submit herself to it will . . . [gain] the inner security which is reached when one’s psychic contents—the Shadow, the Animus, the ‘Great Mother’, the ‘Wise Woman’ and even the Self—are no longer projected into the environment. (15)

Wolff’s unifying approach to archetype is one that I develop further in this study. Wolff’s four archetypes can be flushed out as Sheba (the warrior queen), Mary and Sarah-Hagar (the mother), and the Hetaira (Zulaikhah or Potiphar’s wife) archetypes. My research attempts to highlight, enrich, and explicate certain paradigms by placing these models in Qur’anic and biblical contexts and tracing how their narratives and those of surrounding figures create what I term *mega-archetypes*.

³ In ancient Greece, Hetaira were prostitutes, akin to modern day geishas, who were cultured, educated courtesans who could not become citizens because they were not born of Athenian parents (Aelius Stilo).

Terminology

Since this research approach is new, the existing theoretical vocabulary is insufficient to capture all the nuances of female structures that I introduce here. In short, new concepts require new terminology. Some concepts in this study are developed from existing ones; others have new prefixes to specify the concepts and their applications. For example, the existing term *archetype* (i.e., prototype) comes from Plato's concept of ideal forms versus reality (Ross) and, later, from Jung's theory that "'archetype' [. . .] is a tendency to form such representations of a motif—representations that can vary a great deal in detail without losing their basic pattern" (*Approaching* 57). This study examines archetypal structures inspired specifically by the Qur'an and by the Bible. Hence this project coins the terms *mega-archetype*, *mega-narrative*, *archetype conglomerate*, *narrative replica*, and *antithesis narrative replica* (see Table 2). Because motifs also contribute to archetypal tenets, this work uses the term *ambient motif* rather than *motif* or *theologeme*. The already existing term, *flip-characters*, is further developed.

Table 2: Traditional Terms and Coined Terms

Traditional Term	Definition	Coined Term	Definition
Archetype	A pattern or symbol shaped by cultural or psychological myths	<i>mega-archetype</i>	A trope derived from the qur’anic <i>surahs</i> (chapters) and <i>ayahs</i> (verses) that highlight a particular female character and the narrative steps (<i>tenets</i>) that define this character
Narrative	Story, history, report	<i>mega-narrative</i>	To the structural blueprint inspired by a particular qur’anic, biblical, or hadith versions of a narrative
Motif	Dominant idea or pattern in a literary work	<i>ambient motif</i>	A structural unit or block of the mega-narrative that can change its position and function in the narrative replica to attain a new meaning
Theologeme	“A basic unit of theological discourse that which can also function as a sign” (Netton, 1989, 79)		
Traits	Elements that constitute hero pattern	<i>tenets</i>	Structural characteristics of a mega-archetype
		<i>archetype conglomerate</i>	Characteristics of two archetypes (or more) that are amalgamated in one literary character
		<i>narrative replica</i>	literary works that use mega-archetypes and mega-narratives to replicate stories from the Qur’an and Bible
Binaries	One element of a culture is only understood in relationship to another element and in terms of the larger environment that includes both elements	<i>anti-thesis narrative replica</i>	Inversion of one or more, but not all, of a mega-archetype’s tenets in a representation of the mega-archetype
Double characters	Character mirroring	<i>split characters</i>	When a character of the mega-archetype or mega-narrative bifurcates into two separate characters
		<i>flip characters</i>	More than one complimentary characters, each of whom partially fulfills or opposes the characteristics of one of the tenets

Mega-archetypes

This dissertation investigates specifically female archetypes; and, more in-depth, it looks into further realizations of these female paradigms, how archetypes and motifs can overlap, and how motif clusters can form archetypal taxonomies. As Robert Graves outlines in *The White Goddess*, female archetypes fall into categories such as the White Goddess, the universal mother (246-250), and the Muse (374-399). But most current discussions of female archetypes (as reviewed above) fail to go beyond narrow characteristics and look at them as a structure. This investigation coins the terms *mega-archetype* and *mega-narrative* to illustrate how females found in various literary contexts go beyond the narrow characteristics typically attributed to their archetypes.

A *mega-archetype* derives in this study, in part, from the qur'anic or biblical narrative and is an integral part of these spiritual texts. Although a mega-archetype can apply to either males or females, this study focuses on female characters. Female mega-archetypes inspire the overall structure of the texts in which they appear. Nonetheless, to appreciate the female mega-archetypes' contribution to texts, it is also necessary to discuss the male figures and archetypes. Furthermore, the label *mega* is necessary because the archetypes under discussion are actually clusters of motifs and ambient motifs that both distinguish the mega-archetype and direct a narrative's overall structure. Thus, the argument pursued here connects women and narratology closely.

A mega-archetype is constituted of the qur'anic *ayahs* (verses) and biblical verses that highlight a particular female character. The Queen of Sheba, Zulaikhah (Potiphar's wife), Sarah and Hagar, and the Virgin Mary are all mega-archetypes described, investigated, and expanded in this study. The stories of the prophets found in the Qur'an

and the Bible are prototypes of male heroes. Campbell even sees prophets and examples of monomythical heroes because they fulfill the different stages of the heroic taxonomy he prefers. Structural tenets are extracted from these female-relevant *ayahs* and verses to form mega-archetypes that are often deployed by literary works. Thus, each mega-archetype is structured by a number of tenets that are manifest in scriptural works and from which the narrative replicas borrow. As is the case with male archetypes, some (but not necessarily all) tenets of a mega-archetype are obvious or fulfilled. What is most relevant is how these mega-archetypes can be traced in a number of stories across time periods and different cultures. This designation sets up a new trope not previously presented in archetypal studies.

Mega-narrative

A *mega-narrative* refers to the structural blueprint inspired by a particular qur'anic or biblical narrative about a certain prophet/patriarch. A mega-narrative can also include *hadith*⁴ versions that complement the mega-narrative blueprint. The mega-narrative is a *surah*⁵ (or the relevant parts of a *surah*) or a biblical chapter, minus the non-narrative elements that surround and inform it—such as the moral, the history, the language, the connections to other stories within the text and so forth. In other words, a mega-narrative is the pure narrative elements that constitute the story of specific prophet/patriarch. Mega-narratives take into consideration male and female personae.

⁴ Collections of the reports purporting to quote what the Islamic prophet Muhammad said verbatim on any matter. Also known as “Traditions,” *Hadith* within Islam is considered an authority source for religious law and moral guidance ranks second only to that of the Qur'an.

⁵ Roughly similar to a biblical chapter, a *surah* or several linked *surahs* typically narrate a certain prophet's story. Rarely does one *surah* tell the total of a prophet's story from beginning till end.

Mega-narratives are inclusive of mega-archetypes and ambient motifs. What makes the mega-narrative distinct from just the story of the particular prophet is the stories of the female mega-archetypes and the accompanying ambient motifs are inclusive in the mega-narrative. In this sense the mega-archetype is what adds the variation to the monomyth.

Motif and Ambient Motif

Whereas archetypes are universal, motifs can be more culturally specific because they often occur or have defined meaning within the confines of a certain community. This study uses previous scholarship (e.g., Propp, Aarne, El-Shamy) on motifs as a point of departure to suggest how mega-archetype aggregate motifs. The motif, the meticulous structural building block of a text, contributes to an overall structural blueprint: the mega-archetype.

An *ambient motif* is a structural unit or block of the mega-narrative that can change its position and function in the *narrative replica* to attain a new meaning. Ambient motifs are building blocks that can embellish a mega-archetypal borrowing but are not part of the basic tenets of the mega-archetype. When a narrative block of the mega-narrative changes its position, it is an ambient motif. For example, Abraham trying to slaughter his son who is ultimately saved by a ram is an ambient motif that is part of the Abraham mega-narrative. In the Greek myth, Phrixos being saved by the golden fleece emulates the son-slaughter scene in the Abraham mega-narrative. Like the polygamous Abraham of the mega-narrative, Athamas in the *Argonautica* was married to Nephele and Ino. The myth is a narrative replica of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and borrows the ambient motif of the son-slaughter scene from the mega-narrative of Abraham. (Apollonius of Rhodes xix). The Grimm fairytale “Hänsel and Gretel” also

highlights a similar attempt of the step-children being killed. The stepmothers in the mega-archetype have no hands in filicide; however, it is an ambient motif that is borrowed from the mega-narrative.

Instead of using the term *free-floating motif*, as it implies some sort of mimicry, I have coined the term *ambient motif* to distinguish it coming from a scriptural mega-narrative. Ian R. Netton refers to this concept as a *theologeme*, a basic unit of theological discourse that which can also function as a sign (79). Because *theologeme* is a building block in a scriptural text, a broader term, herein *ambient motif*, captures theological as well as literary structures. In literary texts, ambient motifs can but do not necessarily function as theologemes.

Visualizing the basics of the mega-archetype, mega-narrative, and ambient motifs helps in defining their relationships (see Figure 1). In the illustration, the blue background denotes the qur'anic or biblical narrative that privileges a certain male characters. Stories in both books are mostly named after male-characters. Considering only the pure narrative structure and setting aside story elements such as the historical background of the story, its moral, its connections and intertextuality with other stories, its language and style and so forth leaves the mega-narrative (represented in orange). The mega-narrative tells the story of a particular male patriarch; these patriarchal characters make up the taxonomies devised by Campbell, de Vries, Lord Raglan, and others. The mega-narrative, however, deserves the prefix *mega* because it also includes ambient motifs (beige circles). These ambient motifs are details relevant to the male story that *could be* included in (green arrows) the mega-archetypal structure. A mega-archetype itself is characterized by certain tenets (numbered items) or characteristics. Mega-

archetypes include all listed tenets—which is why I have termed them *mega-*archetypes—even though a literary work may highlight only certain tenets.

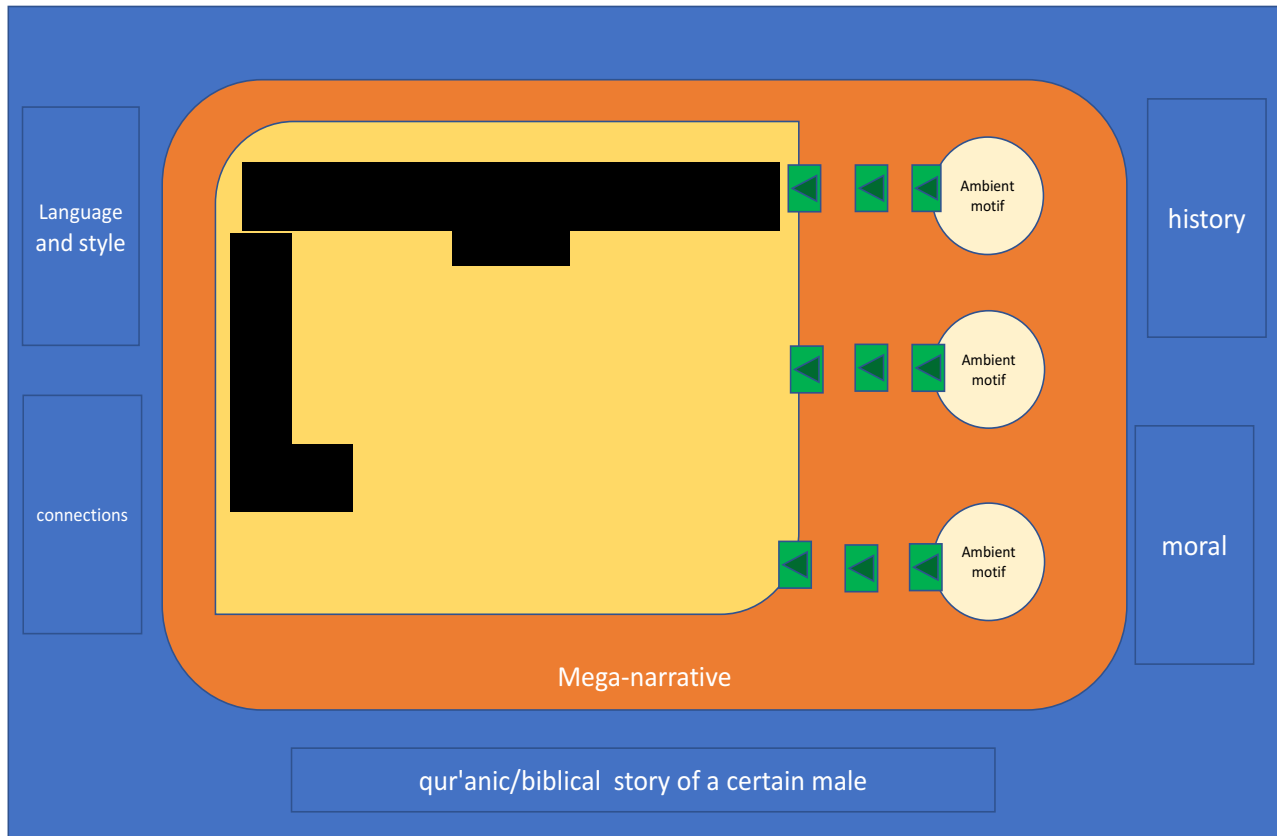


Figure 1 Description of Mega-archetype and Mega-narrative

Each of the female mega-archetypes in this study has structural elements and may include ambient motifs from the mega-narrative. Mega-archetypal structures inform other literary works. The Zulaikhah mega-archetype (Chapter 1) has its main structural elements but still relies on ambient motifs, such as the shirt and the well, that are relevant to the Joseph story. These concepts are illustrated in every chapter of this work in depth.

An Antithesis-Narrative Replica of the Mega-archetype

The mega-archetypes discussed in this study depend on *tenets*, which are defined as characteristics arising from a mega-narrative that identify a mega-archetype. However, mega-archetypes are not rigid; that is, some mega-archetypes can exhibit the opposite of a particular tenet attributed to that mega-archetype. The essential blueprint for the mega-narrative stays the same, but a particular tenet may vary to the point of being opposite of the model. This inversion of a mega-archetype's tenet is called in this study *an antithesis narrative replica of the mega-archetype*. Basically an imaginative negative sign is placed before some of the tenets, yet the essential blueprint can still be traced. This is what I define as an *antithesis-narrative replica* of the mega-archetype. For example, in Chapter Four, the queen of Sheba mega-archetype basically outlines a strong woman (Tenet 4) who has part of her possessions appropriated (Tenet 12). An antithesis narrative replica of the Sheba mega-archetype would be a strong woman who does not allow men to subjugate her by any means; in this hypothetical instance, Tenet 12 is an opposite. An example of antithesis narrative replicas of the Sheba mega-archetype would be the Walt Disney Pictures Film *Frozen* (based on Hans Christian Anderson's tale "The Snow Queen") in which Elsa is a strong woman (Tenet 4 of the Sheba mega-archetype) who does not let any man approach her (antithesis of Tenet 12 of the Sheba mega-archetype).

Split Characters and Flip Characters

Split and flip characters have generally been discussed in literary criticism as doubles or akin to doppelgänger (e.g., Bradley, Kennedy, Lecker, Rank *Double*, Vardoulakis). However, for the purposes of defining and exemplifying mega-archetypes, I have refined this definition to show how character traits branch out or split into more than one character. Such a *split character* breaks into more than one complimentary characters, each of whom partially fulfills the characteristics of one of the tenets. For example, the character of Solomon as found in the Sheba and Solomon mega-narrative (Chapter 4) bifurcates into the characters of King Arthur and the wizard Merlin in Arthurian literature. According to the Bible, Solomon is considered a ruler of great wisdom, wealth, and power who has sinned in many ways including abandoning his traditional god and in his choice of whom to marry. His transgressions eventually lead to his kingdom being torn in two. Solomon has the power of clairvoyance, but he asks for guidance to rule his kingdom well. He distributes his work to others but is observant and cautious that every task is completed. Likewise Arthur is portrayed as a beloved, respected leader whose authority stays intact despite his weaknesses. He uses the knights of the Round Table in much the same way Solomon delegates, and he seeks advice, often from Merlin who is clairvoyant and wise beyond normal individuals. Hence neither Arthur alone nor Merlin alone exemplifies the Solomon mega-narrative; instead, each character takes parts of the mega-narrative and splits it, so to speak.

In other cases, characters turn evil or assume the role of evil in an episode or two in a narrative. In other words, the characters become flip-sides of each other, branching

out from a main character in the mega-archetype.⁶ These flip characters conform with the main structure and keep the basic mega-archetypal tenets. For example, the two Ladies of the Lake in Malory's *Morte Darthur* branch from the Sheba mega-archetype (Chapter 4) as do the two Guineveres bifurcate from the Zulaikhah (Potiphar's wife) mega-archetype (Chapter 1).

The Qur'an and the Bible⁷

The mega-archetypes proposed in this study are extracted from the Qur'an and the Bible because most of these characters are discussed in both sources. By carefully assembling relevant verses that include and refer to a certain female character, the content of these verses reveal the tenets of the mega-archetypes that build my taxonomies. The Qur'an is an appropriate theoretical basis because the little more than a dozen female characters who are mentioned in the Qur'an offer a full archetypal structure for the mega-archetype. Even though some of the mega-archetypes are not presented in the Qur'an by their names, these female qur'anic characters include

- Eve [حواء],
- Noah's wife,
- Lot's wife and daughters,
- Abraham's wives (Sarah [ساره] and Hāgar [هاجر] and Keturah [كتوراه]),
- the adorer of Joseph (i.e., Zulaikhah (Arabic زليخة or Potiphar's wife,
- Moses' mother (e.g., Jochebed[يوكابد] or Musa [موسى]),

⁶ In his *Uṣṭūrāt Ūrīst wa-al-malāḥim al-‘Arabīyah (The Myth of Orestes and the Arabic Epics)*, Luwīs ‘Awad discusses how characters branch out.

⁷ All quotations are taken from the *Qur'anic Navigator* and the *New International Version of the Bible*. Qur'an sources are noted throughout this work by their *surah*: *ayah* numbers: Bible sources by their book and chapter: verse numbers.

- Pharaoh's wife (Asiyah [سيا]),
- Shuaib's daughters (Saffura [صفوره -سفرة], Moses' wife),
- the Queen of Sheba (Bilqīs [بَلْقِيس]),
- Job's wife,
- the Virgin Mary [مريم], and
- Abu Lahab's wife (Arwā Umm Jamīl bint Harb [اروه-أم جميل بنت حرب]).

This project investigates only four of these mega-archetypes and traces how they appear in later, European literary texts. Bilqis [بَلْقِيس], the Queen of Sheba, is the powerful challenging queen; Sarah [ساره] and Hagar [هاجر] form the love triangle of one man and two women; and Zulaikhah [زليخه] (or Potiphar's wife) forms the love triangle of two men one woman.

The broad similarities of the Judeo-Christian and the Islamic scriptures means the Bible relates incidents that might not be available in the Qur'an and, therefore, complement the mega-narrative theory. That is, the mega-narratives are constructed from the Qur'an and supported by the congruent stories of biblical female characters, thus completing the tenets particular to each mega-archetype. For example, even though the Bible contains numerous narratives of polygamous marriages, the two wives whose characters are explored most thoroughly and in depth in this study are Sarah and Hagar who are also Abraham's wives in the Qur'an. Consequently, both scriptural narratives contribute to the two-women-one-man mega-archetype (Chapter 2).

Mega-archetypal female characters, except for the Virgin Mary, are typically unnamed in the Qur'an; their names are known from the Islamic tradition of the *hadith* as well as the Bible. Female characters, as well as some male characters, are also typically

unnamed in the Qur'an as well as the Bible because their stories are presented as examples of universal models. This lack of identification makes these characters archetypal as they do not tell the story of only one character but, instead, become universal models that other narratives can borrow from.

The Qur'an and the Bible have been studied as literary texts but not for all of the archetypes that they can introduce. Particular attention has been given to reading the biblical stories as hermeneutics and exploring the literary techniques deployed in them. Among the pioneering studies in this field is Northrop Frye's *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*,⁸ in which he explores language, metaphor, and myth in the Bible. Claude Lévi-Strauss and the concept of structuralism inspired this trend of reading the Bible in such terms. Lévi-Strauss, however, did not combine the areas of myth and Bible and did not look for similar—or female—archetypes in both fields.

As for the studies on the Qur'an as literature, structuralist attempts as far as the structures of the surahs were concerned were done by Sayed Qutb in *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān (In the Shade of the Qur'ān)* and Amr Khalid's *Khawatir Quraniyah (Quranic Reflections)*. These scholars prioritized investigation of the language⁹; only later did a study of the structure of the qur'anic chapters come about. The focus of these Islamic scholars was to study the disparate stories in one qur'anic surah and explore the unifying theme in it. Also, like biblical scholarship, these studies never explored the archetypes that the text introduced.

⁸ Leland Ryken's *How to Read the Bible as Literature* is another example of such trend.

⁹ Mohammad Metwally Al-Shaa'rawi has published extensively on this topic.

Significance and Contribution of this Study

Using the Qur'an and the Bible as bases, this research focuses on exploring four of the twelve female protagonist mega-archetypes I have identified: the Sheba mega-archetype, the Zulaikhah mega-archetype, Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype, and the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Each mega-archetype is composed of a number of structural tenets inspired by the Qur'an and the Bible, and each suggests a heroine in her right. The four models I explore are prominent in medieval European, mostly Arthurian, romances as well as in folklore and myths. This use in later literary texts supports the cross-cultural importance of the interlacing of the archetypes that the scriptures introduce with European literature.

Furthermore, these mega-archetypes are structures that inspired subsequent literary works rather than being derived from those works. As such, the mega-archetypes are enriched beyond the more stereotypical archetypes such as the evil stepmother, *femme fatale*, or other such suggested female roles. In addition, the archetypes add new angles that make the narrative of the Campbellian male hero's circular journey less monotonous from one text to another or that of the Raglanian taxonomy less rigid (see Figure 2). That is, when mega-archetypes are added to the basic monotype narrative, these mega-archetypes enrich that narrative with, among other things, variations, flavors, and new angles. Looking at these female figures and their mega-archetypal structures shows the conceivable structural variations that, when combined with male hero's monomyth, make a number of different narratives possible.

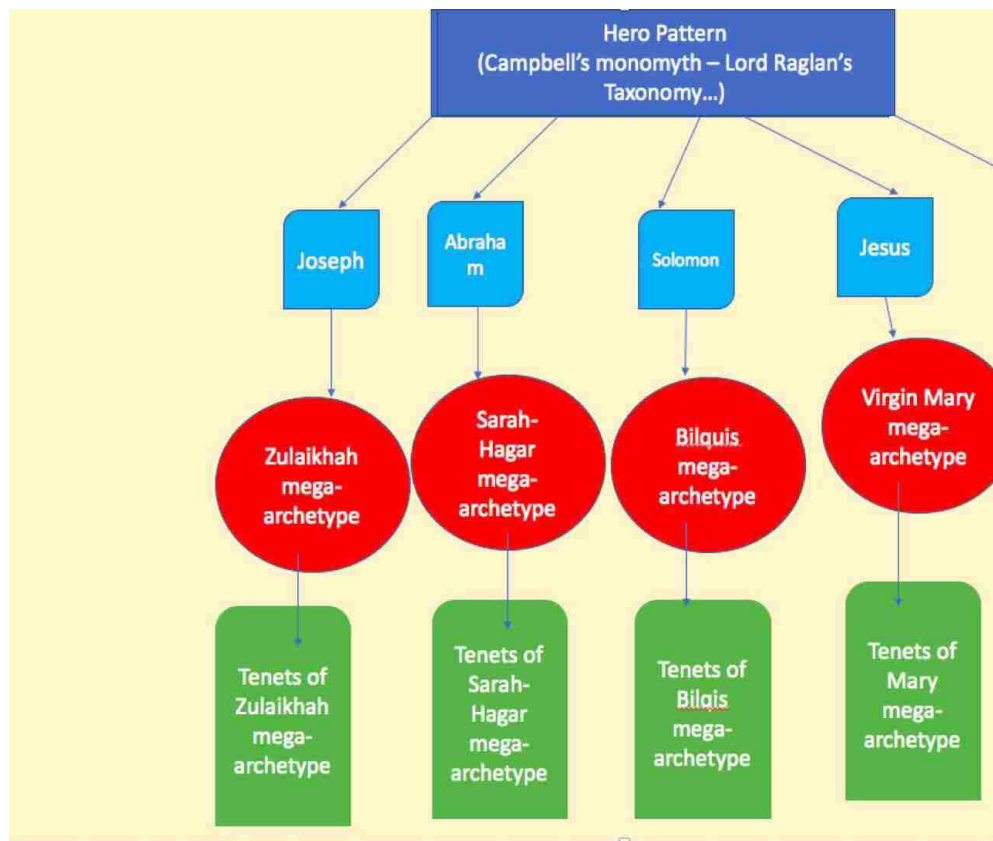


Figure 2: Overview of Chapters 1-5 Structural Elements

This approach is also distinct from that of feminist mythologists who have adapted male hero taxonomies to work with heroines. These mega-archetypes exist alongside the ideas of other taxonomies that focus on men without imposing male-inspired taxonomies on the women. Just as the Campbellian and the Raglanian patterns exist in a given story, so do the taxonomies that focus on women (see Figure 3). In other words, the taxonomic elements of a mega-archetype coexist within a myth and complement the male archetypes. In this sense women are heroines in their own right just as the taxonomies are fully female inspired by these qur'anic and biblical female mega-archetypes.

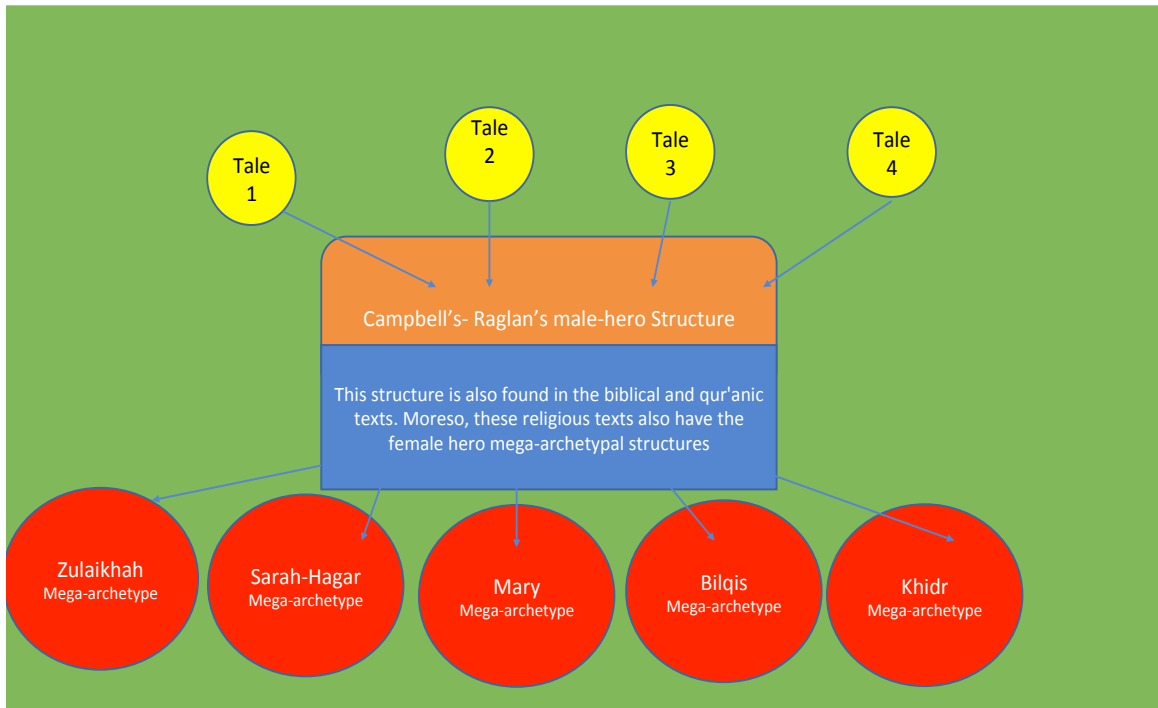


Figure 3: Mega-archetype Compared to Monomyth Archetype

Campbell reviewed many stories, tales, folklore, and other sources to propose the hero monomyth. The Qur'an and the Bible provide the characteristics and underlying narratives that identify these five mega-archetypes: Zulaikhah, Sarah-Hagar, Mary, Bilquis, and al-Khidr. Other possible mega-archetypes are discussion in the Conclusion to this study.

These mega-archetypes become even more interesting and persuasive when they are applied in this study to the European medieval romance because, before this study, critics have not acknowledged how the romance deploys these female protagonist mega-archetypes in fuller forms than do most folktales/fairytales and myths, even though these literary genres have been studied more closely in terms of structuralism and archetypes than has the medieval romance (e.g., Jackson). Folktales, for example, are more concise and generally are only able to emulate, at the most, one or two tenets of an mega-archetype. Folktales, thus, could be described as diluted versions of the mega-archetype that they reflect. Myths are also somewhat condensed versions of the mega-narrative, yet they fulfill more of the structural tenets than folk and fairy tales do. Romances could be more faithful versions of the mega-archetype as they follow a larger number of structural mega-archetypal tenets.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 presents the Zulaikhah (Potiphar's wife) mega-archetype; Zulaikhah is focal female in Joseph's betrayal, abandonment, slavery, and exile who is pivotal in the mega-narrative of Yūsef/Joseph. The Zulaikhah mega-archetype superficially focuses on a married woman who seduces a kitchen boy; however, more of a narrative structure is composed of a number of tenets. That is, a mega-archetype goes beyond the associated archetype that has been characterized as a *femme fatale*.

In the Abraham/Ishmael's mega-narrative, two of Abraham's wives, Sarah and Hagar, create mega-archetypes. In Ishmael's story the focal figure is his mother, Hagar, with whom he is left alone in the desert. These interrelated narratives form the bases for Chapter 2 of this work.

The Virgin Mary is the mega-archetype involved in the mega-narrative of Jesus and the subject of Chapter 3. This chapter explores how the Virgin Mary becomes the mega-archetypal mother for the national hero. A case in study is Arthur's mother, Igraine, and Merlin's anonymous mother who miraculously give birth to national heroes.

A fourth, intriguing mega-archetype—and the subject of Chapter 4—is Sheba, the rival queen, in the mega-narrative of Solomon. the Queen of Sheba mega-archetype seems outwardly to fit the strong queen blueprint; however, this mega-archetype is constituted by a number of structural tenets or building blocks that makes it transcend being merely a motif. These four chapters focus on female mega-archetypes and how they are enriched by the narratives and archetypes existing in the Qur'an and Bible.

To illustrate these mega-archetypes, I turn to selected medieval romances in which the mega-archetypes are used to drive the narrative and shape the structure of each literary work. I rely in these applications on the development of a mega-archetype over several versions of a work—for example, the Tristan and Isolde story as told by Thomas Chestre, Marie de France, Chrétien de Troyes, and Sir Thomas Malory.

Chapter One: The Zulaikhah Mega-archetype: The Ostensible Femme Fatale (Zulaikhah,
Isolde, and Guinevere)

*I said: "Francesca, what you suffer here
Melts me to tears of pity and of pain.
But tell me: in the time of your sweet sighs
By what appearances found love the way
To lure you to his perilous paradise?"
And she: "The double grief of a lost bliss
Is to recall its happy hour in pain.
Your Guide and Teacher knows the truth to
this.
But if there is indeed a soul in Hell
To ask of the beginning of our love
Out of his pity, I will weep and tell:
On a day for dalliance we read the rhyme
Of Lancelot, how love had mastered him.
We were alone with innocence and dim
time." (Inferno, Canto 5, circle 2)*

The Zulaikhah mega-archetype is the *mal-mariée*, the *femme fatale*, the desperate housewife mega-archetype—and much more. It is the mega-archetype of the love triangle of one woman and two men. In addition to inspiring the female protagonist archetypal traits, the Zulaikhah mega-archetype also prescribes the narrative structure of narrative replicas that deploy this mega-archetype. This mega-archetype is inspired by the qur'anic—and the biblical—version of the story of Joseph's seductress, Potiphar's wife, known as Zulaikhah in the Islamic and Jewish traditions. The Zulaikhah mega-archetype is constituted of fourteen tenets that are inspired by *ayahs* (verses) 21-35 and 49-51 of the twelfth qur'anic *surah* (chapter) entitled "Yūsuf" (*Qur'anic Navigator*) and by chapter 39, verses 1-23 of Genesis, the story of Joseph and Potiphar's Wife (New International

Version).¹⁰ These verses are the ones that mention or refer to Zulaikhah. These verses are the tenets (or the motif cluster) of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

The Joseph mega-narrative, on the other hand, refers to the story of Joseph/Yūsuf as a whole and to the literary and structuralist motifs that can be borrowed from the Qur'anic and the biblical¹¹ versions. Joseph is Zulaikhah's young, handsome would-be lover who works for her older, rather unattractive husband, called by his title Al-A'ziz in the Qur'an and as Potiphar in the Bible. Joseph's story indicts Potiphar's wife for her sexual aggression toward Joseph. When Joseph rejects her advances, she furiously accuses him of rape, and Potiphar/Al-A'ziz imprisons Joseph/Yūsuf.

Even with this narrative of forbidden love, Zulaikhah, as a mega-archetype, is more than just an unsophisticated, patriarchal view of an unchaste, man-eater, *femme fatale*. In fact, the Zulaikhah mega-archetype inspired many subsequent narrative replicas that borrow, build upon, and even emulate it in the superficial, albeit chauvinistic terms of the seductress wife, such as Guinevere and Isolde in central medieval Arthurian works. I argue, that Isolde in Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan and Iseult*, Isolde and Guinevere in the *French Vulgate Cycle (VC)* and in Malory's *Morte Darthur* as well as Guinevere in Marie de France's Breton Lay "Sir Lanval" and British verse romance by Thomas Chestre, *Sir Launfal*, are clear manifestations of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

The Zulaikhah mega-archetype that I am applying to these works is constituted of these tenets:

¹⁰ All quotations were taken from these sources. Qur'an sources are noted throughout this chapter by their surah and ayah numbers; Bible sources by their chapter and verse numbers.

¹¹ Genesis 37-50. Genesis 38, the story of Judah and Tamar, is excluded from this discussion because it is irrelevant to the Joseph mega-narrative.

1. Zulaikhah's is an inside-the-palace story
2. The female protagonist is a woman of high social status whose marriage is not very fulfilling and she is perhaps sexually frustrated
3. She tries to seduce the handsome kitchen boy/a young knight who grows up in her house
4. Woman hides/sieges the lover
5. Man unsuccessfully tempted by woman
6. Either he yields to the attempts of the queen or he suffers
7. Wife is caught red-handed by returning husband
8. The husband advises wife to be chaste
9. Women's tricks are better than men's
10. (Women) gossip about the affair
11. Hospitality where banqueting take place
12. Beauty of the beloved. There is a beauty test/contest
13. Because of the woman, the younger man goes through trial, punishment, imprisonment or banishment and is dismissed from court
14. Truth competes with secrecy. Truth is revealed through some sort of evidence (e.g., the beloved's shirt)

The Zulaikhah mega-archetype is, thus, composed of a motif cluster (tenets) that center on the seductress wife narrative extracted from the Qur'an and the Bible. These tenets happen to be also motifs that folklorists have examined. My contribution here is that, through examining the biblical and qur'anic stories, I am aggregating these motifs into a narrative structure that many literary works adopt.

Among folklorists who keyed in their motif indexes to include the seductress wife motif are Stith Thompson and, later, Hans-Jörg Uther. Thompson identifies the seductress wife motif as marking a “queen [who] commits adultery with foster son”¹² (P29.2; 149). The same index introduces a complementary motif, the “wife [who] seduces husband’s servant (pupil)” (T481.4. †T481.4; 1647). These folklore motifs inform the tenets of a Zulaikhah mega-archetype taxonomy. Moreover, Hasan El-Shamy expands on this concept in *Motific Constituents of Arab-Islamic Folk Traditions*, in which he lists Potiphar’s wife [and Joseph’s would-be lover], “Zulaikhah,” as the “temptress [who] seeks to seduce man” (P0029.4.1\$; 886). El-Shamy introduces other motifs relevant to a taxonomy of this mega-archetype: “temptress seeks to seduce service-man (laborer, vendor, etc.)” (T0404.4.3\$; 1623), “aggressor as accuser” (K2108.0.2\$; 885) and the “wife seduces husband’s servant (pupil)” (T0481.4; 1647). Further, El-Shamy argues that all three motifs are relevant to Potiphar’s wife (K2111; 886) [and Joseph]; it is in this motif that a woman makes vain overtures to a man (T0331; 1611) and then accuses him of attempting to force her (Type: 318, 910K1\$; 1533) into performing sex with him (T0071.2; 1533).

Unlike Uther or El-Shamy, who look at the motif as a more meticulous structural building block, the taxonomy proposed here uses not only motifs, but also other building blocks to enrich the mega-archetype with its formerly neglected narrative structure. Previous scholarship on motifs (e.g., El-Shamy; Uther) obviously offers a point of departure from which these specific motifs may be aggregated into a more encompassing

¹² Most folklorists list these motifs by a specialized numbering system. I have included the number assigned by the folklorist and the page number of the text on which a motif is recorded.

structure, that of the mega-archetype. With this background, the central tenets of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype become obvious. Tenets are motif clusters. While these motifs have already been flagged by authors, I am aggregating them into bigger structures. Also, these scholars examined these motifs separately and applied them to folktales and myths mostly. I demonstrate how these motif clusters constitute medieval romances. The following table illustrates how the tenets of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype are but an aggregate of motifs.

Table 3 Tenets of Zulaikhah Mega-Archetype

Designations in the right-hand column come from the various folklore sources for the motifs and are listed by the numbering system from the source: Uther = ATU; Aarne and Thompson = AT; El-Shamy = El-Shamy)

Tenets	Relevant Motifs and Their Titles	Motif Reference
1. Zulaikhah's is an inside-the-palace story.		
2. The female protagonist is a woman of high social status whose marriage is not very fulfilling and she is perhaps seeks other lover	Would-be beautiful unfaithful wife Do not go where an old man has a young wife Wife greedy for sex/man without a member	T92.1.2. †T92.1.2. (AT) †J21.3. (AT) 1543* (ATU 283-284 vol. 2)
3. She tries to seduce the handsome kitchen boy/a young knight who grows up in her house	Young wife of old man (king) loves (is loved by) younger man Wife seduces husband's servant (pupil) Polyandry. Woman with two husbands Old man married to young, unfaithful wife The blood brother's wife, the faithless wife Temptress seeks to seduce man Zulaikhah (Pharaoh's wife, Potiphar's wife as temptress) Sex hospitality	T92.1.1. †T92.1.1. (AT) T481.4. †T481.4. (AT) T146. †T146. (AT) T237. †T237. (AT) 1364, 1380 (ATU 169, 184 vol. 2) T0404.4\$ (El-Shamy 1622) P0029.4.1\$ (El-Shamy, 914) T281. †T281. (AT) (anti-tenet)
4. Woman hides/sieges the lover	No place secret enough for fornication Hiding the lover	T331.4. (AT) 1359A (ATU 163 vol.2)
5. Man unsuccessfully tempted by woman	Man unsuccessfully tempted by a woman Knight unsuccessfully tempted by host's wife Monk unsuccessfully tempted in nunnery	T331.1. †T331.1. (AT) T331.2. †T331.2. (AT) T331.1. †T331.1

	<p>Monk unsuccessfully tempted by woman he loved</p> <p>Saint exposes self to temptation but preserves chastity</p> <p>Virtuous man seduced by woman</p> <p>Escape from undesired lover</p> <p>Virtue preserved—(woman or man's)</p>	<p>T331.8. †T331.8. (AT)</p> <p>T335. †T335. (AT)</p> <p>T338. †T338. (AT)</p> <p>T320. †T320 (AT)</p> <p>T0320.1.2\$ (El-Shamy 1609)</p>
6. Either he yields to the attempts of the queen—or he suffers	<p>Aggressor as accuser</p> <p>Potiphar's wife [and Joseph]. A woman makes vain overtures to a man and then accuses him of attempting to force her</p> <p>The best defense is an offense</p>	<p>K2108.0.2\$ (El-Shamy, 885)</p> <p>K2111 (El-Shamy 886)</p> <p>J0675.0.2\$ (El-Shamy 645)</p>
7. Wife is caught by returning husband	<p>The returning husband hoodwinked</p> <p>Man hidden in the roof, husband unexpectedly returns home</p> <p>Husband witnesses wife's adultery, trickster surprises wife and lover</p>	<p>1419(ATU 207 vol. 2)</p> <p>1360C (ATU 165 vol. 2)</p> <p>1358 (ATU 160 vol. 2)</p>
8. The husband admonishes wife to be chaste	<p>Attempt to keep wife chaste by carrying her in a box</p> <p>Other futile attempts to keep wife chaste</p>	<p>T382. †T382. (AT)</p> <p>T383. †T383. (AT)</p>
9. Women's tricks are better than men's	<p>Women's tricks are better than men's tricks</p> <p>"Truly their wives are great!"</p> <p>A statement about women made by a courtier in Pharaoh's (Potiphar's) court</p>	<p>1406 A (ATU 199 vol.2)</p> <p>W0256.6.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1958)</p>
10. (Women) gossip about the affair	<p>Women as spreaders (source) of news (information, gossip)</p> <p>Rumors (preconceived notions affect perception)</p>	<p>P0611.3.1\$, (El-Shamy, 1286)</p> <p>U0194.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)</p>

	A bullet that misses the target will still shock (daze, stun)	U0194.0.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)
	Rumor may contain some truth	U0194.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)
	There is no smoke without fire	U0194.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)
	Rumors spread quickly	U0194.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)
	Rumors spread like fire in dry straw	U0194.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1717)
11. Hospitality where banqueting takes place	Hospitality. Relation of host and guest	P0320 (El-Shamy, 1189)
12. Beauty of the beloved. There is a beauty test/contest	Finger cut because of absorption in the charm of the beloved	T0026.1 (El-Shamy 1509)
	Crystal-like body organs (semi-transparent)	Z0062.5.5.1\$ (El-Shamy 2025)
	Wager on who (Whose) is the better (more powerful, beautiful, valuable, etc.)	T0005.1.3.1\$ (El-Shamy 1500) N0074\$ (El-Shamy, 986)
13. Because of the woman, the younger man goes through trial, punishment, imprisonment or banishment and is dismissed from court	Monk goes into desert to avoid temptation of women, the prime source of sin	T334.1. †T334.1 (AT)
	Being loved (liked) brings ill-luck to person	N0134.5\$ (El-Shamy 999)
	Innocent (chaste) man slandered as seducer	K2120\$, 888
14. Truth competes with secrecy. Truth is revealed through some sort of evidence (e.g., a shirt). The shirt of the beloved	The marked coat in the wife's room At betrothal maid makes shirt for her lover	1378 (ATU 181 vol.2) T61.3. †61.3 (AT) (anti-tenet)
	Absurd claims are to be dismissed by empirical evidence	J1990\$ (El-Shamy 732)

	<p>Man's torn garment as proof of his innocence of rape. If he were the assaulter, the torn garment would be the woman's. [(Joseph falsely accused)]</p> <p>Defensive as opposed to offensive damage (injury)</p>	<p>J1174.5 (El-Shamy 680)</p> <p>J1159.0.1\$ (El-Shamy 677)</p>
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Origins of the Zulaikhah Mega-archetype

The story of Potiphar's wife first appears in Genesis 39.1-23, in which Potiphar, "one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard" (Genesis 37.36), adopts young Joseph (Tenets 2, 3). Potiphar's wife sees Joseph growing into adulthood in her own household (Tenet 1), as her husband makes Joseph his personal attendant (Tenet 3). She speaks to him when he reaches adulthood, demanding he "Come to bed with me!" (Genesis 39.7), but he refuses to yield to her. When he is on the verge of losing his self-control, Joseph runs away (Tenet 5) leaving his tunic behind in her hands (Tenet 14). She uses the garment to frame him for attempted rape (Tenet 6). The Old Testament text paints Joseph as "well-built and handsome" (Genesis 39. 6) (Tenet 12). Because Potiphar and Joseph have benefitted from Joseph's management and because Joseph is a prophet, Joseph rebuffs her advances telling her, "My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" (Genesis 39. 8-9). As a result of this incident, Joseph's master "burned with anger. [. . . and] took [Joseph] and put him in prison [(Tenet 13)], the place where the king's prisoners were confined" (Genesis 39. 19-20). After Potiphar's wife has been instrumental in Joseph's (Tenet 13) unwarranted imprisonment, she then disappears from the text. She is not punished by any means.¹³ As evident, the biblical wife of Potiphar fulfills tenets 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14 of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

¹³ The punishment for "attempted" adultery in the Scriptures is considerably less when compared with the punishment of predator women in other contemporary texts of ancient Egyptian literature. Robert Graves (351) notes this parallel of the temptress wife in the Egyptian *Tale of Two Brothers*. These punishments manifest patriarchal social views vilifying the women. Later versions of the stories of Guinevere and Isolde are thus closer to the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

Like his biblical sibling, the qur'anic Joseph is adopted by a hospitable Egyptian lord Al-'Aziz and is raised in his household by his wife (Tenet 2) because her husband speculates Joseph "may well be of use to us, or we may adopt him as a son" (12.21). Yūsuf grows up in Zulaikhah's lush household (Tenets 1 and 2); when he reaches full manhood, she tries to seduce him (Tenet 3): "And [it so happened that] she in whose house he was living [conceived a passion for him and] sought to make him yield himself unto her; and she bolted the doors and said, "Come thou unto me! [. . .]" (12.23) (Tenet 4) Unlike the biblical version, the qur'anic version makes plain that "indeed, she desired him, and he desired her; [and he would have succumbed] had he not seen [in this temptation] an evidence of his Sustainer's truth" (12.24). This suggestion, of course, initially puts the woman in a more positive light as it is evident that Joseph was also attracted to her, but he turns away her offer because his "master [has] made my stay [in this house]! Verily, to no good end come they that do [such] wrong!" (12.22-24). When Joseph rushes to the door escaping from his desire—and her—in order to protect himself from falling into the sin of adultery (Tenet 5), "she [grasped and] rent his tunic from behind-and [lo!] they met her lord at the door!" (Tenets 7, 14). To protect herself as she's caught red-handed, she casts blame on Yūsuf: "What ought to be the punishment of one who had evil designs on [the virtue of] thy wife—[what] but imprisonment or a [yet more] grievous chastisement?" (12.25). This is illustrative of tenet 6 as the young man suffers from the woman's false accusation. Joseph exclaims his innocence, and, unlike in the biblical narrative, his shirt becomes the evidence of his innocence in the qur'anic one (Tenet 14).

In this qur'anic version, when the husband realizes that his wife was trying to

seduce Joseph, he instructs her to “Behold, this is [an instance] of your guile, O womankind! Verily, awesome is your guile! [But,] Joseph, let this pass! And thou, [O wife,] ask forgiveness for thy sin-for, verily, thou hast been greatly at fault!” (12.27-29). The husband advising his wife to stop seducing Joseph and accusing womankind of great guile is representative of Tenets 9 and 8. The husband also asks Joseph to set this incident aside: “[But,] Joseph, let this pass!” The Bible does not mention the wife being punished for her transgression; she simply disappears from the story. In the Qur’an, the husband resumes life with her.

The qur’anic version continues as the town rumor-mongers talk ill of Zulaikhah (Tenet 10) for “trying to induce her slave-boy to yield himself unto her! Her love for him has pierced her heart; verily, we see that she is undoubtedly suffering from an aberration!” (12.30). Nonetheless, the wife prepares a banquet (Tenet 11) for these gossipers in which a beauty contest takes place (Tenet 12). She arms them with knives to cut up the food at the banquet and calls for Joseph to “‘Come out and show thyself to them!’ And when the women saw him, they were greatly amazed at his beauty, and [so flustered were they that] they cut their hands [with their knives].” Justified for her passion, the wife exclaims, “God save us! This is no mortal man! This is nought but a noble angel! [. . .] And, indeed, I did try to make him yield himself unto me, but he remained chaste’ (12.31-32) (Tenet 5). Although, the major theme in this version is the wiles of women¹⁴ (Tenet 9), the nobleman’s wife is to be partially exonerated as she is just like the other women who are infatuated with Joseph’s good looks. In a sense, Zulaikhah is not depicted as sexually promiscuous.

¹⁴ For more details on this topic, see Goldman.

Because Joseph does not yield to Zulaikhah's attempts, she promises that he shall be imprisoned (Tenet 6) "and shall most certainly find himself among the despised!" (12.32). Joseph decides that prison (Tenet 13) is more desirable to him than sinning, and, as in the Bible, he is sent to prison where the skill of his dream interpretation becomes recognizable even to the king himself. After deciphering the king's dream, Joseph refuses to stand before the king unless his innocence is recognized. The king demands an explanation from the rumor mongers; they respond "God save us! We did not perceive the least evil [intention] on his part!" Zulaikhah confesses that "It was I who sought to make him yield himself unto me—whereas he, behold, was indeed speaking the truth!" (12.50-52). Zulaikhah asks God for forgiveness and eventually learns her lesson that the truth has to be acknowledged (Tenet 14). She also admits that she was the one who was trying to draw Joseph into having sex with her. The fact that her husband is not harsh with either of them as far as punishment is concerned and ambiguously advises her to ask her Lord for forgiveness makes us question his position and, hence, be more understanding of her sexual drives.

In addition to the biblical and qur'anic versions of Zulaikhah's narrative, P ter-Contesse cites old French translations of the Old Testament as seeing Potiphar as an eunuch (142). If so, the French translations bolster Tenet 2 that Zulaikhah has an unfulfilling marriage and would seek gratification with a handsome, younger man. The Qur'an refers to the Egyptian ruler in Moses's time as "Pharaoh." However, the distinction is set here as the ruler in *surah* Y suf is referred to as "King" and the nobleman is referred to as "al-A'ziz" (العزيز), or "the dear one". Historical records show that the story of Joseph takes place during the time of the Hyksos invasion (1650 B.C.E),

and that explains why the royalty in charge are not Egyptian—and hence not Pharaohs—and why some noble Egyptian women married elder foreign Hyksos men for social and political convenience in order to maintain their status (Bible Study Fellowship). This practice resulted in desperate women marrying below their socio-economic stations (Tenet 2).

The Joseph Mega-narrative

The *surah* of Yūsuf (يوسف; Arabic for *Joseph*), the 12th *surah* (chapter) of the Qur'an, tells Yūsuf's history in 111 *ayahs* (verses). Unlike the other stories of the prophets in the Qur'an, which are told by episodes to relevant chapters according to the theme, Yūsuf/Joseph's story is told in one chapter from beginning to end and, presumably, revealed in one setting (Khaled, *Reflections* 22). This concision comes, first, from the circular plot of the narrative, which begins with Joseph's vision and concludes with the fulfillment of that vision. Second, the concise tale benefits from the unifying motifs in the story such as Joseph's dreams, shirts, food, and vegetation imagery that recur and unite the *surah* (Khaled, "Yusuf 2B"). Moreover, because Zulaikhah's seduction tale is resolved in the second half of the narrative, Joseph's story had to be narrated in one chapter that starts with: "In the measure that We reveal this Qur'an unto thee, [O Prophet,] We explain it to thee in the best possible way, seeing that ere this thou wert indeed among those who are unaware [of what revelation is]" (12.3). Structurally speaking, like the Qur'an, the Bible unifies the motifs of Joseph's tunic and dreams, prompting some scholars to argue that this narrative can be read as a novelette.¹⁵

¹⁵ See the introduction to Gabel, et al. (15) for a discussion of this idea.

One ambient motif¹⁶ borrowed from the Yūsuf mega-narrative into the mega-archetype is his supernatural gift of deciphering dreams that frees him from prison, taking the function of the supernatural fairy that is found in later medieval narrative replicas. In the Qur'an, the shirt is also another warrantor (12.25-28); since the shirt was ripped from the back, it shows that it was the wife who was chasing him. Thus, Joseph's shirt is an ambient motif that gives evidence of his innocence. Moreover, Joseph's exceptional pulchritude inspires the ideas of handsome male protagonists seduced by married women.

In addition to these motifs, the story of Joseph inspires themes of sibling rivalry. Joseph's brethren threw him in a well. Putting false blood on his shirt, they claimed that the wolf ate him. Another ambient motif that the Yūsuf narrative inspires is Jacob's blindness and retrieval of sight through Joseph's shirt. In the Qur'an Joseph's father, Jacob, loses his sight in grief for Joseph's and Benjamin's absence (12.84). However, eventually Jacob gains his sight when he knows that Joseph is still alive after long years of absence (12.93-96). All these motifs are, strictly speaking, part of the Joseph mega-narrative but may function as ambient motifs and get incorporated in stories inspired by the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

Thus, when taken as a whole, the Zulaikhah mega-archetype is integrated with the Yūsuf /Joseph mega-narrative but excludes the additional elements typically brought forth for discussion when these characters, archetypes, and structures are evaluated (see Figure 1). The structural tenets that form the Zulaikhah mega-archetype arise, in part, from the Yūsuf /Joseph narrative; in other words, the narrative structure is needed to

¹⁶ Ambient motifs borrowed from the mega-narrative that infiltrate into the mega-archetype. For more on this, see the introduction of this dissertation.

identify the tenets and define the mega-archetype. The Zulaikhah mega-archetype is composed of motif clusters/tenets that inspire the structure of other literary narrative replicas. The story of this woman not only encompasses mega-archetypal tenets that inspire other female stories, but within its premises it also encompasses elements of the Joseph story as well that are not considered in the application of Lord Raglan's taxonomy to the story of Joseph (*The Hero* 180). That is why, when discussing female mega-archetypes, it becomes inevitable to refer to the men in their lives. The mega-archetype, thus, is primarily a narrative structure rather than being merely an archetype focusing only on the female figure it is named after.

Figure 4 illustrates the aspects of the narratives not included in the mega-archetype (i.e., language and style, connections, history, moral). The center of the figure illustrates the interchange between the mega-archetype tenets and the clusters of ambient motifs. The figure is intended to give a clearer representation of what must be included in mega-archetypes and what needs be excluded to focus on those mega-archetypes.

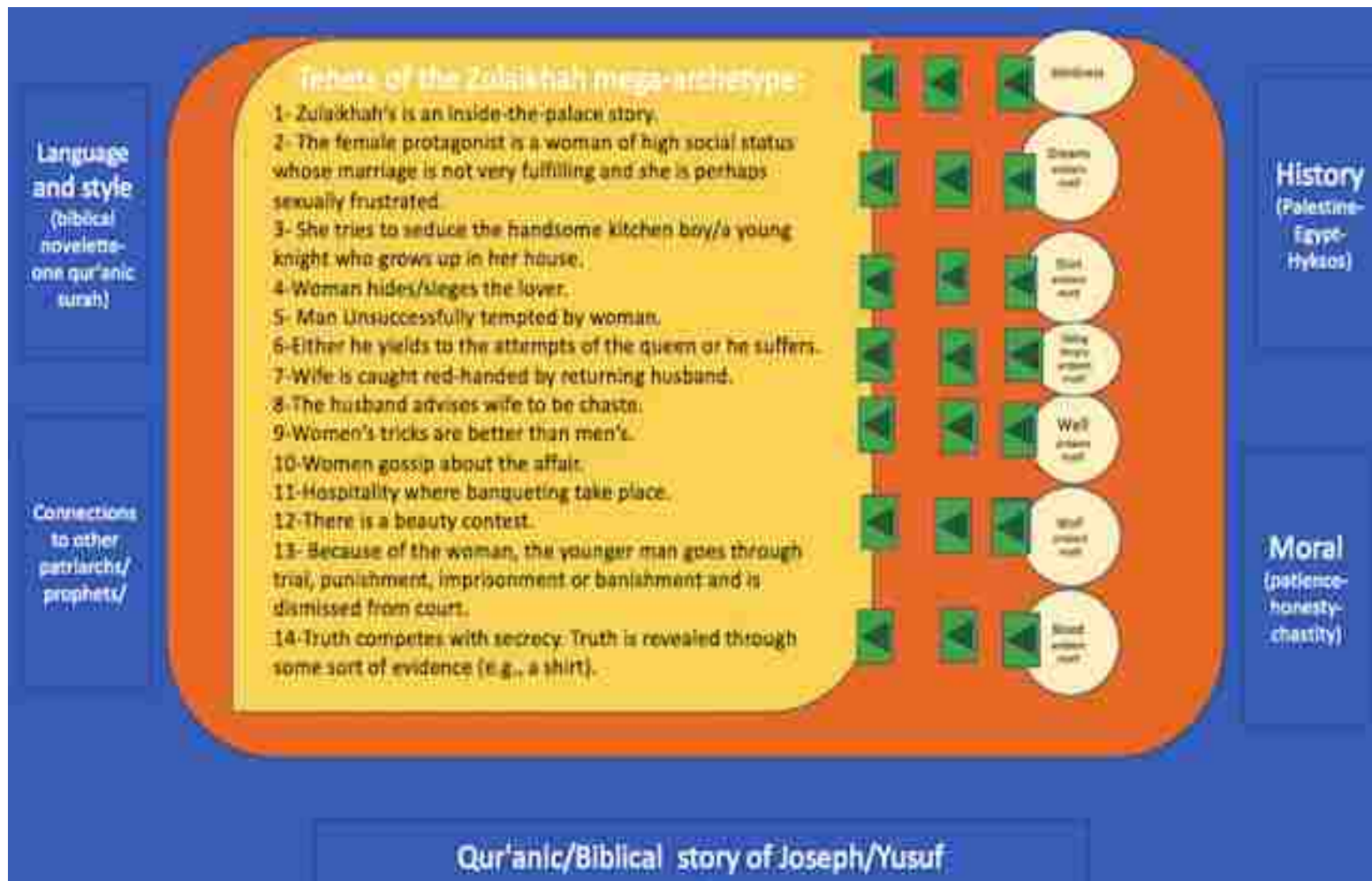


Figure 4: Qur'anic/Biblical Story of Yūsuf /Joseph

As discussed in the following sections, other elements in the story of Zulaikhah correspond to a number of myth complexes in the later medieval romances of the Arthurian legend. Malory connected the Tristan/Isolde and Lancelot/Guinevere stories in his *Le Morte Darthur*. Furthermore, Celticists, such as those collected in Grimbert's anthology, read stories of Tristan and Isolde and Lancelot and Guinevere as originating in the Irish legends of Deirdre and Naoise as well as Diarmuid Ua Duibhne and Gráinne. Viewing medieval romance narratives from the perspective of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype challenges the supposition that the Guinevere-Lancelot story was inspired only by the Tristan and Isolde legend. The origins for the legends on connections hitherto not made. Connecting these disparate myth complexes demonstrate the truly archetypal nature of humanity.

Zulaikhah Mega-archetype in Medieval Romances

The affinities between the stories of Tristan/Isolde and Lancelot/Guinevere are derived from a Zulaikhah mega-archetype as can be seen in a compilation some of the critical commentary linking Potiphar's wife, Guinevere, and Isolde. For example, in the introduction to *Arthurian Women: A Casebook*, Thelma Fenster not only compares Guinevere to Potiphar's wife, she also includes Marie de France's "Lanval," in which Guinevere tries to cheat on Arthur: "Arthur's queen, like Potiphar's wife (and who, like Potiphar's wife, is unnamed), importunes Lanval for his love" (Fenster xxxviii). Anne Berthelot argues that "Guinevere occupies the archetypal position of the bad queen, a Potiphar's wife, whose attempt at seduction this time has not only succeeded but even its sign to become the perfect incarnation of courtly love" (167). Shalom Goldman refers to the Potiphar's wife motif as being well known in European literature (xi-xiii). Larry D.

Benson suggests that Gawain's situation is related to the "Potiphar's Wife" tale in which the young man's rejection is motivated by loyalty to Lady Bertilak (44)¹⁷ from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. These in-passing connections between Potiphar's wife, Zulaikhah, and the "cheating" *mal-mariée* wives further the argument that the Arthurian stories of Tristan/Isolde and Lancelot/Guinevere manifest the Zulaikhah mega-archetype. The connections to Zulaikhah's story that appear in just a few lines of the Arthurian stories can be expanded into a mega-archetype that is all-encompassing when compared to the narrower archetype of the seductress *femme fatale*. Thus mega-archetypes go beyond simple, stereotypical descriptions and offer, instead, a narrative structure built from motifs of the mega-archetype.

Recent scholarship tends to view the development of the Tristan and Isolde legend and the stories of Lancelot and Guinevere as more inclusive of cosmopolitan origins, specifically oriental. Paul Kunitzsch in "Are There Oriental Elements in the Tristan Story?" assumes affinities between the Arthurian stories and the Arabic story of Qays and Lubnā, whereas Dick Davis in "From Fakhr Addin Gorgani's 'Vis and Ramin'" argues similarities between the Tristan and Isolde legend and the eleventh-century Persian love story, *Vis and Ramin*. W. J. McCann tries to reconcile the Orientalist and Celticist views and assumes a missing "presumed authorial archetype" (23) whose "free-floating motifs" (22) infiltrate the narratives that it engenders. While borrowing and mimesis are always possibilities, more likely a structural framework for these sibling stories and their resemblances are due to mega-archetypal and mega-narrative affinities. That is, these

¹⁷Alice E. Lasater argues that "a possible Oriental source for him [the Green Knight] is worth investigating"(180-181). However, Lasater does not make the connections to the Zulaikhah archetype.

Arthurian texts are but narrative replicas of the scriptural mega-archetypal tale of Zulaikhah, her *senex amans*, and Joseph.

The Tristan and Isolde Legend

Early Versions of a Love Story

A clear illustration of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype arises in the different versions of the legend of Tristan and Isolde from the *Vulgate Cycle (VC)* (Volumes 2 and 3 Lacy) and *Tristan and Iseult* by Gottfried von Strassburg and the corresponding section from “The Fyrste and the Secunde Boke of Syr Trystrams de Lyones” in Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur* (228-495). In *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*, Lacy and Ashe state that an “archetypal ur-Tristan [. . .] [was] composed ca. 1150” (464) and is assumed by some scholars as passing through Britany to France. Lacy provides a list of writers who followed this archetype (e.g., Thomas d’Angleterre, Gottfried von Strassburg, Brother Robert, and the anonymous English *Sir Tristrem*). In England, the stories of Tristan and Isolde flourished during the twelfth century and were certainly well known before Sir Thomas Malory included the tale in *Le Morte Darthur*.¹⁸ Among the earliest versions of the Tristan (Tristram) and Isolde (Isode, Yseut) legend are Thomas of Britain’s fragmentary poem in Old French (Lacy and Wilhelm) that becomes a source for Eilhart von Oberge’s late twelfth-century German *Tristrant*, Gottfried von Strassburg’s 12th century, unfinished *Tristan and Isolt* (Lacy 108), and Bérout’s twelfth-century Norman *Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult/ The Romance of Tristan and Iseult* (Bérout and Sargent-Bauer). In these earlier versions, the legend is essentially a personal love story of

¹⁸ Marie de France’s “Chevrefoil” was the earliest Tristan story in England.

a woman who is in love with her husband's nephew and knight, just as Zulaikhah is in love with Potiphar/ Al-'Aziz's younger and social inferior (Tenet 3)—one told without emphasis on Arthurian images or connections (Cooper 183). For example, von Oberg retells how Isolde's lover, Tristram, who is King Mark's nephew, drinks a love potion intended for Isolde and Mark whereupon the two fall hopelessly in love. Nonetheless, Tristram marries another woman and, after mortal battle with a dragon, is betrayed by his wife and dies. Isolde finds him dead and expires on his body. Geoffrey retains this older version but begins his tale with a frame story of Tristan's parents and their ill-fated love; this background foreshadows Tristan and Yseult's story. Béroul's retelling also has Tristan and Yseult falling hopelessly in love due to a magic potion; however, his tale explores the torment the lovers experience. Thus the basic story of forbidden love has a long mega-archetypal history even before it becomes a central part of the Arthurian tales.

Malory's Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones

Sir Thomas Malory's fifteenth-century version, "The Fyrste and the Secunde Boke of Syr Trystrams de Lyones," takes a substantial portion, around one-third, of full *Le Morte Darthur* to retell this legend (228-495). Malory refers to the unlucky couple throughout as a foil to their presumably archetypal younger siblings, Guinevere and Lancelot. In fact, the middle section of *Le Morte Darthur* is populated with intertwined tales drawn upon love triangles inspired by the Joseph-Zulaikhah mega-narrative. Much of their forbidden love story of Isolde and Tristan carries over from earlier versions, but Malory adds details that echo Lancelot and Guinevere's love story as well as that of Sir Segwarydes and his wayward wife, Lady Segwarydes (*Le Morte*). Most of the Tristan and Isolde versions confirm with tenets 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. However, one of

the major departures from the mega-archetype is that, unlike Yūsuf who desires his lady Zulaikhah (Qur'an 12:24) but stays loyal to his master, the young male protagonist here yields to the lady/ladies who are mega-archetypal Zulaikhah replicas.

In Malory's version of this legend, Tristram is a knight of the Round Table and Isolde, King Angwyssh's of Ireland daughter, heals Tristram of his wounds from battle with the Irish knight, Marhault. Lady Segwarydes and Isolde each represent aspects of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype; moreover, the overlap in their narratives strengthens the tenets of this mega-archetype. Lady Segwarydes is Tristram's first seductress in Gottfried von Strassburg's version of the story. Tristram is continually attracted to women who are appealing to his male hosts, including women who are his hostesses (Tenets 1, 2, and 3), such as the lady of his Cornish host, Sir Segwarydes. In Malory's version, Tristram seems to momentarily forget Isolde and consummates an affair with Lady Segwarides. This ungrateful, inhospitable gesture is compounded by the fact that Tristram's other host in Cornwall, his uncle Mark, also "loved [. . .] one lady, and she was an erlys wyff that hyght sir Segwarydes" (Malory 243). In return, Lady Segwarides "loved sir Trystrames passyngly well, and he loved hir agayne" (Malory 243); she solicits him to her bed. As Zulaikhah was presented in the qur'anic story, Sir Segwarydes's wife is presented as a lustful married temptress who seduces other knights (Tenet 3).

Isolde is the woman for whom Tristram competes with Mark and Palomedes. Isolde is already engaged to Sir Palomedes when Tristram goes to be cured by her healing hands; after her cure, Tristram stays with her father, Irish King Angwyshe, although, in Malory's version, Tristram is in disguise before Angwyshe. In von Strassburg's version, Tristram is healed by Isolde the Wise, Isolde's mother. The older mistress is a split double

of her eponymous daughter. In this sense, Tristan becomes another Joseph staying at his seductive mistress's house (Tenet 3), and both Isoldes, the mother and the daughter, become Zulaikhah replicas as they do not like their husbands (Tenet 2).

Isolde loves Tristram, just as Zulaikhah is enamored with Joseph, and he is in love with her, just as Joseph was attracted to Zulaikhah. Yet, despite this passion, he asks Isolde's father to marry her to his master and uncle, King Mark, instead because Tristram owes his loyalty to his king. Eventually, Isolde marries Mark (Malory 262) only to cuckold him with not only Tristram but other knights. Surprisingly, Tristram exerts no effort to stop the marriage and acts as his uncle's betrothal agent. The mega-archetype is fulfilled by Isolde becoming the master's wife; Mark is not only Tristram's uncle but also his master, thereby fulfilling another element in this archetypal role in which Zulaikhah falls in love with the young man who is younger and socially inferior to her husband. Like Joseph, Tristram is physically attractive (Malory 240); in fact, his hostess Isolde comments on his pulchritude after he kills the dragon to rescue her (von Strassburg 91), thus again fulfilling the tenet to show why her love is explicable.

When revealed (Tenet 7), these adulterous affairs mean either banishment or/and imprisonment for the knight because of the adulteress queen (Tenet 13). None of the Arthurian knights is imprisoned or banished as often as Tristram and Lancelot, specifically because of the actions of their female lovers. Mark imprisons Tristram twice; Percival delivers Tristram once, and, the second time, Isolde delivers him after Mark puts him in prison after a meal¹⁹ (Tenet 11) (Malory 401, 404, 407). Mark fails to convince his

¹⁹Likewise, Yūsuf in the qur'anic version is put in prison right after the banquet that Zulaikhah throws.

barons to execute Tristram, so he banishes him from Cornwall for ten years (Malory 305). When at sea with Sir Dinadan, Tristram promises his friend that he will eventually return to his home country. These themes of *nostos* following *exodus* are reminiscent of the mega-narrative in that Tristram is repeatedly imprisoned just as Joseph suffered imprisonment from his brothers' treachery and for his resistance to Zulaikhah.

In Malory's *Le Morte*, Tenet 12 is manifest when Sir Breunor le Noir (nicknamed Sir La Cote Male Tayle, French for "the badly tailored coat") starts a beauty contest (Tenet 12) with the imprisoned Tristram and Isolde in his Weeping Castle (256-7). Breunor tells Tristram that, if the latter's lady is fairer than his, he will cut the head off his own lady. Breunor asks his noblemen to vote for which woman is prettier and they vote for Isolde. The archetypal wounding or severing scene here is exaggerated as Breunor cuts his lady's head off just as the banqueting women cut their hands in Zulaikhah's beauty contest.

Isolde and Tristan and as Models for Guinevere and Lancelot

The Tristan and Isolde legend is retold in another ill-fated love affair, that of Lancelot and Guinevere. Malory melds these two myth cycles in his *Le Morte Darthur* where a focal figure in the retelling is Arthur's Guinevere who cheats on her husband. The fact that the legend of Tristram and Isolde precedes Malory's exploration of Lancelot and Guinevere's basic tragedies should prepare the audience for not only the sexual betrayal but also the reasons Guinevere and Lancelot suggest for their affair. After all, having followed Tristram's long path to his love and his separations from her, Malory's audience would expect tragedy with Lancelot and Guinevere's forbidden passion.

Guinevere and Lancelot

Early Versions of a Story of Betrayal: From the Vulgate Cycle to Malory's Le Morte

Darthur

In Thomas Chestre's version, Guinevere once tried to seduce Sir Launfal. In other Arthurian versions, such as Chrétien de Troyes, the *VC*, and Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, Guinevere takes Lancelot as her long-term lover. However, Guinevere appears in earlier Welsh sources such as "Culhwch and Olwen" (Davis), as Arthur's wife Gwenhwyfar, and she is briefly referred to as Guanhumara in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (Koch 861). Her romantic relationship with Lancelot does not evolve until Chrétien de Troyes's incomplete *Lancelot, le Chevalier de la Charrette* (Staines). Even though the *Post-Vulgate Cycle* (*Lacy, Lancelot-Grail*) omits the Guinevere-Lancelot affair, the *VC* celebrates it and expands it; in Malory's version, which is based on the *VC*, the affair and its aftermath on the kingdom becomes a major theme. The later narratives of the Guinevere story adhere to elements in the Zulaikhah mega-narrative that were non-existent in the earlier Celtic sources and that of Monmouth.

Again, as the Zulaikhah mega-archetype dictates, in the *VC*, Guinevere marries the older Arthur; and, when denied a healthy sex life, she cheats on him (Tenet 2). This makes her "the tragic heroine of romance, deserving of our pity for having been given in marriage to a man she must respect but cannot love, and fared to love a man she cannot marry" (Norris and Ashe 215). The political reasons for Guinevere's marriage fill out the mega-archetype by adding details and, therefore, depth. Neither the Qur'an nor Bible versions explain how Zulaikhah comes to marry although the Yūsuf /Joseph narrative suggests the marriage is without children. The *VC* gives readers a clear reason for the

unfortunate marriage, one arising from the Saxons' defeat and imprisonment of Léodagan, Guinevere's father. Under this great distress, Guinevere "nearly killed herself" (*VC* vol. 1, 246). But she can rescue her father by marrying Arthur, the king who conquers the Saxons. The victorious Arthur falls in love with Guinevere (*VC* vol. 1, 253) but for political reasons Merlin is the one who asks Léodagan to wed his daughter to Arthur (*VC* vol. 1, 286). Thus, Guinevere's marriage to Arthur from the early beginning is a political act engineered by the contriving mind of the empire, Merlin.

Staying with the tenets of the mega-archetype, even before Arthur knights him, Lancelot asks if Guinevere would find Lancelot attractive and would seek to have his status elevated from lowly retainer to a lord. Anne Longley quotes Theodore Evergates' observation that women of noble birth occupied pivotal positions in "lordly families" (51). The case is quite similar here to Zulaikhah as the mistress of the house as well as being socially superior to Joseph—and perhaps to al-Aziz/Potiphar—as some women had to marry down the social ladder (Tenet 2). Thus the aging Arthur is degraded in favor of the younger group of retainers who might cheat (as Lancelot) or might not cheat (as Launfal) on their lord.

The Zulaikhah mega-archetype includes another reason for Zulaikhah's near treasonous attraction to a servant—namely, his physical attractiveness. Even the women who attend Zulaikhah's banquet, her previous naysayers, are silenced by Joseph's striking appearance. Lancelot shares this trait with Yūsuf /Joseph, thus making Guinevere's attraction to him somewhat more reasonable. Women are attracted to Lancelot just as they are attracted to Joseph (Tenet 12). For example, the young lady who approaches Yvain has a crush on Lancelot and enters the nunnery when he gets imprisoned by the slain

knight's mother (*VC* vol. 2 114). In the *VC*, the Lady of Nohaut, for whom Lancelot frees her castle, takes him as her knight and at some point has a crush on him too but she lets go when she gets the impression that it is futile (Lacy 130).

Furthermore, "The Damsel of the Well" is another Zulaikhah figure; Anne Berthelot's "From the Lake to the Fountain: Lancelot and the Fairy Lover" studies the episode of the Damsel of the Fountain. Berthelot centers the discussion on an episode with a third damsel, called the Damsel of the Well. The concept of women falling for Lancelot is reminiscent of Zulaikhah's beauty contest in the banquet scene (Tenet 12), a theme that is more highlighted in the case of Guinevere-Lancelot than it is in the Tristan-Isolde narrative, as more women swoon over Lancelot than they do for his predecessor Tristan. Malory states that "hit befelle that Sir Launcelot had many resortis of ladyes and damesels which dayly resorted unto him" (Malory 588). This indicates that the narrative replica of Guinevere and Lancelot story echoes the mega-archetype more than it echoes its alleged origin, Tristan and Isolde.

Quite illustrative of tenets 3, 5, and 6 is Morgan le Fay—Arthur's half-sister—seducing Lancelot, together with three other queens who fall in love with Lancelot whom they see laying under an apple tree (Malory 154)—a detail reminiscent of the women and the fruits in the banquet scene (Tenet 11) of the mega-archetype, Morgan le Fay desires Lancelot. The four queens suggest a love contest (Tenet 12) in which Lancelot has to choose one of them to be his lover. Like Joseph who avoids the women in the banquet scene, Lancelot evades being part of more amorous affairs. In retaliation, Morgan le Fay—a split double of Guinevere—makes Lancelot suffer (Tenet 4) from turning down this solicitous woman just as Zulaikhah makes Joseph suffer from turning her seductive

attempts down (Tenet 6); King Bagdemagus's daughter informs Lancelot that these four queens "sey youre name is Sir Launcelot du Lake, the floure of knyghtes—and they be passing wroth with you that ye have refused hem" (Malory 155).

The only woman in this retinue of female seducer's that grab's the young knight's heart is Guinevere. "Quene Gwennyvere had him in grete favoure aboven all other ladyes dayes of his lyff" (Malory 152). Like Zulaikhah, Guinevere is a queen who is in love with a social inferior (Tenet 2, 3). Most of the love incidents take place in court (Tenet 1). Like Potiphar and unlike the choleric King Mark, Arthur turns a blind eye to Guinevere's adultery (in Tenet 8 the husband advises wife to be chaste) even when warned by Morgan le Fay and King Mark. In a variation of Tenet 10, the jealous, gossipy Morgan le Fay betrays the truth of Guinevere's amorous affair with Lancelot by sending a warning to Arthur with one of her damsels. Morgan le Fay also sends Arthur proof (Tenet 14) which is Tristram's shield with engravings of Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot (Malory 336). Thus a representation of the love triangle is put forth in literalized form. King Mark's trick is of course less creative than Morgan Le Fay's (Tenet 9). In order to confirm Arthur's prior doubts about Guinevere further, a maiden delivers a letter from King Mark that tells him again that Guinevere is cheating on him (Tenet 10) (Malory 372). Guinevere is constantly reminding Lancelot that gossip might ruin their affair (Malory 155) and her lover "withdrew hym fro the company of Quene Gwennyvere for to eschew the sclaawndir and noyse" (Malory 588).

Another motif drawn from the mega-archetype relates to a garment that can prove the truth (Tenet 14). A fair maiden begs Lancelot to wear her sleeve on his shield because she is enamored by him (Malory 600). This sleeve becomes proof of Launcelot's betrayal

to Guinevere that she stops talking to him (Malory 608). The garment motif is also associated with Guinevere's adultery. In the Arthurian court, four women drink from the magic horn without spilling on their clothes because they are faithful to their husbands; the other 96 stain their garments (Malory 268-269). Of course, Guinevere is not one of them, and Morgan le Fay's gossip (Tenet 10) once more succeeds in circulating gossip about the Guinevere-Lancelot relationship by delivering this magic horn to Arthur (Malory 268-269). This event eventually leaves Arthur no choice but to imprison or banish Lancelot, a fate Lancelot suffers repeatedly—as did Joseph (Tenet 13).

Moreover, like other representatives of the mega-archetype, such as Tristram and Palomedes, Lancelot is repeatedly imprisoned (Tenet 13); for example, he slays a knight and the latter's mother imprisons Lancelot as a consequence (*VC* vol. 2, 113-14). It is true that Gawain is abducted, but counting the number of occurrences of Lancelot's and Tristram's imprisonment illustrates how this is an essential tenet of the mega-archetype and is not just a random occurrence. Lancelot, even, is banished by Guinevere after she finds out about his relationship with Elayne (Malory 485).

Guinevere displays a complex character as both a frustrated wife (Tenet 2) and passionate, illicit because she is married to an elderly, perhaps a sexually disabled man (Tenet 2). Yet she has the capacity to love (Tenet 3), a characteristic that supplies the bases for Arthurian writers to split and flip in her into two characters. Critics, such as Thelma Fenster, identify this change as the "Double Guinevere." According to Fenster, "doubling is a term widely used to denote the 'splitting' of a character into two characters, or the copying of traits from one character to another, sometimes in order to present the character's opposite face, or for other purposes" (xxii-xxiii). This doubling of

Guinevere into the False Guinevere happens in the *VC* text only when Guinevere's father, Léodagan, once raped his servant Cleodalis's wife and fathered a daughter with his wife in the same night. Léodagan's royal daughter and his illegitimate daughter were both baptized Guinevere and looked exactly alike except for a crown-shaped mark on the queen's daughter's back. The king locked up Cleodalis's wife for five years; yet the seneschal never stopped serving him (*VC* vol. 1, 248).

Multiple personas exist in Irish and Welsh folktales since deities could be portrayed in single or in triple forms. Critics, such as Barbara Fass Leavy, argue that splitting of women into Eve and Mary in Victorian times led Tennyson in his *Idylls of the King* to make Guinevere a fallen woman. Nina Auerbach in *Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth* reads this fracture not only as a personal fall but as a nationalistic one (157).

Other critics would view the sensual Guinevere who brings about the eventual destructiveness of the Round Table as another double—or contrasting double to pair/foil—of the selfless Elaine of Astolat who proposes to Lancelot (Malory 614) and eventually dies of unrequited love for Lancelot (Malory 616). Again drawing from the mega-narrative, Elaine nurtures Lancelot when he is injured, as Zulaikhah is instructed to nurture Yūsuf/Joseph. Elaine's selflessness and love for Lancelot mimic Enide's whose altruism leads to her engendering the Grail knight, Sir Galahad according to the *VC* (Lacy) and de Troyes' *Erec and Enide* (Staines 1-86).

Guinevere's selfishness and illicit love not only causes the suffering of Lancelot but the Round Table as a whole. These complex attractions and doublings lead to an antithesis residing in the mega-narrative. Lancelot promises to put an end to his

relationship with Guinevere despite their mutual attraction, but, unlike Joseph, Lancelot fails. Unable to control his desires, Lancelot stands as an anti-Joseph figure. It is because of his adulterous relationship with Guinevere that Lancelot can't find the Holy Grail. This is an example of an antithesis of Tenet 5 as Lancelot cannot turn down the overtures of his lady. This does not refute but adds a new layer of understanding to the work. These doublings and antithesis are manifestations of the complex suppositions of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype. The female protagonist of this mega-archetype is an unhappily married woman who happens to have in her house a younger, extremely handsome man. Can we put fire next to gas and still blame her?

Dame Triamour and Guinevere in Sir Lanval/ Sir Launfal

The premises of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype also operate in Marie de France's twelfth-century, aristocratic, "highly-crafted" Breton lay "Lanval"²⁰ (de France 73-82) as well as in the late-fourteenth-century, uncourtly, cruder Middle English version *Sir Launfal* by Thomas Chestre (202). Because the tale itself is assumed to have Celtic affinities (Cross; Martin), the images of fairy wealth and mystical elements are never questioned. More relevant to this discussion, however, Lanval/Launfal is also a manifestation of the scriptural Joseph of the mega-narrative who was endowed with a magical shirt as well as the gift of dream interpretation (Kane 33; Loomis 516) to be classified under the folktale type, "The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife" (Uther, ATU 400, 231). However, the Sir Lanval/Launfal tale is also a narrative of two conglomerated

²⁰ Similar Marie de France's cheating of wife lais are "Guigemar"(43-55) and "Yonec" (86-93). "Graelent" (Grimes) is considered by some scholars to be the ancestor story of "Sir Lanval" (Choi). In "Guigemar" the wife seduces him, and, just like Joseph, he has to leave the palace for a number of years. For lack of time and space, I do not include them in my analysis.

archetypes: (1) the Joseph mega-narrative in which Sir Lanval/Sir Launfal participates in a love-triangle²¹ tale akin to the Zulaikhah mega-archetype and (2) the Abraham mega-narrative, in which Abraham goes in search of his exiled wife Hagar in Mecca (see Chapter 2 of this work). In addition to borrowing ambient motifs from the Joseph mega-narrative (e.g., blindness), the characters of Guinevere and Dame Triamour—Lanval's/Launfal's fairy lover and Guinevere's flip double—embody tenets of the Zulaikhah mega-archetype.

Like Zulaikhah of the mega-narrative, Arthur's unnamed queen (whom we understand should be Guinevere) is a woman of high social status as she is the daughter of an Irish king (Chestre 40-42) (Tenet 2) in whose "household" the tale takes place (Tenet 1). In Chestre's version, Arthur is depicted as a "choleric cuckold" (Kane 34) who is unable to satisfy his wife's sexual desires; Arthur is physically disabled in Marie de France's version. The sexually frustrated Guinevere tries to seduce the vassal, Lanval/Launfal who has served Arthur for ten years (Chestre 33) (Tenet 3). Lanval "served the king for so long and don't want to betray [his] faith" (de France 76) and turns her promiscuous attempts down (Chestre 694-699) (Tenet 5). As a result of this Guinevere accuses him that he has "no desire for women. [He has] well trained young men and enjoys[s] [himself] with them" (de France 76) (Tenet 6). In the Chestre version, she vengefully implies in the trial scene (Tenet 13) that he might even be homosexual: "mysprowd lykyng" (Chestre 768). Her innuendo brings scorn to Launfal who, as a result of her mockery, suffers (Tenet 6). Guinevere does not stop there, but, like Zulaikhah, she falsely accuses Lanval/Launfal that he requested her love (de France 77;

²¹ For more on love triangles, see Sedgwick or Vines.

Chestre 715-720) (Tenet 9). As a result of the landlady's accusation, like Joseph, Lanval/Launfal is put to trial (de France 78; Chestre 715-732) (Tenet 13). However, the truth is eventually exposed and the vassal is released (Tenet 14).

The earlier version of Marie de France fulfills tenets 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, and 13 while, in addition to fulfilling these, the later version of Thomas Chestre borrows also tenets 10 and 12 from the Zulaikhah mega-archetype that are concerned with gossip and a beauty contest respectively. With the queen being the focal female protagonist, gossip ensues around her (Tenet 10). However, in *Sir Launfal*, Guinevere is the one who gossips about herself. Without shame, she tells her company of "syxty ladyes and mo" (Chestre 643) that she loves the handsome Launfal; "of alle the knyghtes that y se there, / He ys the fayreste bachelere" (Chestre 649-650). This gossip eventually leads to the trial of the hero and his punishment (Tenet 13) as Guinevere spreads the rumor that Lanval/Launfal tried to seduce her (712-720). Drawing from the mega-archetype—rather than from the older version by Marie de France—a banquet and beauty contest (Tenets 11,12) also take place in Chestre's *Launfal*. In the Qur'an Zulaikha invites the local women who were gossiping about her and Yūsuf to a banquet to see the young man she is accused of seducing. The guests are so awed by Yūsuf's beauty that they cry out "This is no mortal man! This is nought but a noble angel!" (Qur'an 12.31). So taken are they by Yūsuf that cut their own hands with the knives they were given to cut the fruit. In Chestre's *Launfal*, this tenet is reversed but still relevant to the Zulaikha mega-archetype. In *Launfal* a beauty contest takes place between Guinevere and Launfal's fairy lover, Dame Triamour, instead of having the male protagonist as its focus. What initially sparks Guinevere's fury against Launfal is that he underestimates her beauty. Launfal tells Guinevere that "hyr

lothlokest mayde, wythoute wene, / Myghte bet be a Quene” (Chestre 697-698). When Dame Triamour walks in court, awed at the elegance of her attire and beauty, Arthur describes her as shining or beautiful maiden:

Wyth clothes and wyth ryche palles,

Ayens my lady Tryamour.

The kyng answerede bedene,

“Well come, ye maydenes schene,

Be Our Lord the Savyour!” (Chestre 905-909)

Dame Triamour is acknowledged as prettier than Guinevere, and, in Chestre’s version, it is none other than Arthur himself who gives the verdict: “And he answerede her and seyde / That hys lemmannes lothlokest mayde / Was fayryre than was sche” (1000-1003). First Guinevere admits that Launfal/Lanval is handsome, and later on the audience contests that Triamour is definitely the prettiest, thus confirming Tenet 12 of the mega-archetype. Tenets 10 and 12 are slightly altered from their original form in the mega-archetype, but their essence still proves that even later borrowings of an original tale can adhere closer to the mega-archetype even when the original version does not.

Not only does Dame Triamour excel Guinevere in beauty but also in hospitality (Tenet 11). Zulaikhah is hospitable to Joseph who grows up in her house (Tenet 3). The Qur’anic al-Aziz tells his wife to be hospitable to Joseph and to “Make his residence comfortable” (Qur’an 12.21). In Genesis 39, the word “household” is repeated five times and “house” appears nine times, each reference clearly one to Potiphar and his wife’s house. Such emphasis on the home and its grandeur supports Tenet 1 as it is inside the palace story that takes place in the lady’s house. Dame Triamour of Chestre’s version

gives the shabbily-dressed Launfal new clothes after the mayor refuses to invite him to the banquet (Chestre 490-498). Even when cultural elements and folklore borrowings, such as fairy wealth, infiltrate regional narratives, one can still trace the tenets of the larger mega-archetype that originates in the story of Zulaikhah.

In a sense, Dame Triamour can be viewed as an incomplete version, a split double, of Guinevere or as a character that demonstrates part of Guinevere's character traits—her beauty, her allure, her mystery—but lacks others. Thus Dame Triamour splits the character traits with Guinevere. Further, what Dame Triamour lacks, in fact, makes her in some ways an antithesis to Guinevere. Dame Triamour, as an antithetical split character, is added to the tale to give the core mega-archetype extra dimension. In other versions of the Arthurian tales (e.g., de Troyes), Guinevere's character becomes more complex as writers become less pejorative and more sympathetic towards her. This generic shift makes the antithetical Dame Triamour unnecessary as development for Guinevere's character; hence, Dame Triamour vanishes from the Arthurian literary scene. Guinevere becomes a more humane figure, even if she has an out-of-wedlock paramour.

The parallels that appear between Dame Triamour and Guinevere, however, do not fill the Zulaikhah mega-archetype fully. Ambient motifs found in the medieval romances replicate elements from the Joseph mega-narrative and, thereby, fill out the mega-archetype. Blindness is one such ambient motif, borrowed from the Joseph mega-narrative into the *Sir Launfal* narrative as a replica. An ambient motif walks freely from the mega-narrative and can take any form in the subsequent narrative replica. Here, Dame Triamour turns Guinevere blind (Chestre 1006-1008) to exact her revenge on the lascivious queen.

Furthermore, the Zulaikhah mega-archetype draws on the Joseph mega-narrative by using the ambient motif of the shunned Joseph who exhibits loyalty, rather inexplicitly, to his slave master. In the medieval romance, Launfal becomes a manifestation of the Joseph of the mega-narrative. This borrowing from the mega-narrative into the medieval romance strengthens the Zulaikhah mega-archetype by adding not only narrative information but also some ambient motifs that are reworked in the Lanval/Launfal stories. In the tales, Lanval/Launfal is treated poorly by Arthur and the other knights without obvious reason. Gawain tells the other knights, ““In God’s name, lords, we treat our companion Lanval ill, for he is generous and courtly, and his father is a rich king, yet we have not brought him with us”” (de France 76). The homosocial bond of the knights at Arthur’s court (Lu) can be viewed as a symbolic manifestation of Joseph’s brethren ostracizing him from their company in the mega-narrative from the Qur’an (12.8-9). Like the chaste Joseph, Lanval/Launfal enjoys the chivalric value of *mesure* (Crosland); that is, Launfal demonstrates an equilibrium that prevents him from betraying his master. As in the scriptural versions of Joseph’s story (Qur’an 12.23; Genesis 39.9), Launfal allegiance to his generous master prevents him from betraying his master and flirting with or seducing the king’s wife just as Joseph’s forbade him from succumbing to his desires.

Another connection between the Joseph mega-narrative and Chestre’s *Launfal* taps into medieval history. *Sir Launfal* was probably written in the late fourteenth century, likely during the 1381 Peasants’ Revolt. This probability may explain why Chestre clearly gives Lanufal *largesse* and lets readers know that this quality benefits Launfal’s status. In the Qur’an, Joseph’s ability to correctly interpret dreams saved

ancient Egypt during the seven years of famine (12.47-49). When his brothers came from Palestine asking for grain (12.58), Joseph could feed them, a nourishing, societal act. Chestre's poem uses these premises, unconsciously, to offer a blunt critique of the feudal system. That is, just as Joseph feeds his people coming from an impoverished land, Chestre's Launfal helps the needy through his *largesse*, much as Joseph helps his master's people and, without merit, his duplicitous brothers:

He gaf gyftys largelyche,
Gold and sylver and clothes ryche,
To squyer and to knyght.
For hys largesse and hys bounté
The kynges stuward made was he
Ten yer, I you plyght; (28-33).

Unlike the lay of Marie de France, which is more sympathetic to her heroine, Chestre names his queen variously, Gwennere/Gwenore (42; 157) directly says Launfal does not like this new consort (44), and depicts her as an adulteress who favors her husband's knights (46-48). Chestre's representation of her as a debaucher harks back to an earlier tradition in Arthurian romance when she was frequently looked down upon as a licentious man-monger and, hence, an obstacle to the patriarchal order (Kaufman 77).

Guinevere morphs into a more complex character over time in the Arthurian tradition (Kopřivová). Earlier less sympathetic Arthurian writers added Dame Triamour in order to reconcile for such empty narrative blocks. The result was that Guinevere was depicted as a flat character: an evil seductress. We should be aware of the kernel and the core structure and not mistake the binaries as a structural part of the mega-archetype.

Later, more sympathetic writers, such as Malory, dedicate a considerable chunk of their narratives to Guinevere. Malory is to be thanked for exploring the mega-archetype in a deeper fictional way. By doing this, he makes us sympathize more with Guinevere and Isolde. In the same way, Zulaikhah is a figure to sympathize with through the passage of time as Gregg argues in his *Shared Stories, Rival Traditions*. But even in the earlier de France's and Chestre's versions of her, Guinevere is not just an evil cheating wife but more of a *mal-mariée* with whom we sympathize, just as we sympathize with Zulaikhah of the mega-archetype.²² Part of that sympatric reading arises from Zulaikhah's and Guinevere's childless marriages. Whether Potiphar or Arthur are unable to procreate, we know the marriages lack heirs.

In the Qur'an, when he brings in the slave Joseph, the husband instructs his wife to "make his stay [with us] honorable; he may well be of use to us, or we may adopt him as a son [. . .]" (12:21). Her husband was yearning for a child, and Joseph could be the son he will never have. We see that side to the childless Guinevere too in later Arthurian literature (Knoepfmacher 346) when Arthur fails to kill Guinevere for her betrayal but, instead, mitigates his punishment of her adultery.

Chapter Conclusion

Most of the versions of the Tristan and Isolde love story confirm to tenets 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14; more importantly, the Guinevere and Lancelot story also represents such a confirmation. However, the story of Guinevere and Lancelot borrows details from the Zulaikhah mega-archetype that do not exist in the supposed original of

²²Asma Lamrabet argues how the *surah* of Joseph makes readers sympathize with Zulaikhah (50).

Tristan and Isolde as is detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 Zulaikhah Tenets Found in Arthurian Tales

Zulaikhah Mega-archetype Tenets	Illustration of tenets in Arthurian texts
1. Zulaikhah's is an inside-the-palace story.	Applies to Guinevere and Isolde
2. The female protagonist is a woman of high social status whose marriage is not very fulfilling and she is perhaps sexually frustrated.	Applies to Guinevere and Isolde
3. She tries to seduce the handsome kitchen boy/a young knight who grows up in her house.	Guinevere and Isolde are in love with Lancelot and Tristan and both lovers yield. Launfal/Lanval doesn't yield to Guinevere. Lancelot doesn't yield to Morgan le Fay.
4. Woman hides/sieges the lover.	Morgan le Fay enchants Lancelot.
5. Man unsuccessfully tempted by woman.	Sir Launfal/ Lanval doesn't yield to Guinevere and Lancelot doesn't yield to Morgan le Fay and thus they suffers.
6. Either he yields to the attempts of the queen or he suffers.	Lancelot doesn't yield to Morgan le Fay and thus they suffers.
7. Wife caught by returning husband.	Isolde's bed drenched in Lancelot's blood.
8. Husband advises wife to be chaste.	
9. Women's tricks are better than men's.	Morgan le Fay sends King Mark's shield to Arthur. Guinevere accuses Launfal/Lanval of seducing her.
10. (Women) gossip about the affair.	The Court gossips about Isolde and Guinevere.
11. Hospitality and banqueting take place.	Yes
12. There is a beauty contest. The beauty of the beloved.	Le Cote Mal Tayle Dame Triamour
13. Because of the woman, the younger man goes through trial, punishment, imprisonment, banishment and is dismissed from court.	Tristan and Lancelot and Launfal undergo trials and imprisonment/banishment because of their ladies.
14. Truth competes with secrecy. Truth gets revealed through some sort of evidence (e.g., a shirt). The beloved's shirt.	The maiden of Astalot's sleeve, Tristan's shield, Tristan's blood.

To sum up, I have proposed a structural framework for the sibling stories, arguing that in these stories there is an archetypal pattern because even the borrowings echo archetypal motifs and tenets that are not available in the claimed literary source texts whether they be Celtic, English, Arabic, or Persian. Even though Zulaikhah is not “heroic” in the sense that she, unlike the other female heroes, is unchaste, yet this archetype is definitely a prominent one in European romances. Guinevere and Lancelot and the legend of Tristan and Isolde become an embedded episode of the larger Arthurian corpus. When the focus of the narrative is the hero’s dilemma, we see Lancelot, Tristram, and the Saracen Palomedes arriving at new places whose occupants are prejudiced against outsiders. We find a plot that follows the hero taxonomies that folklorists came up with earlier. The female mega-archetypes are what gives these “monomyths” different flavors.

These motifs and tenets, however, resonate in the mega-archetypal narrative of Zulaikhah and Joseph. Even though the scriptures whether Islamic or Judeo-Christian come later, these stories were already prevalent in folklore or oral tale. Myths such as those of Leda, an Aetolian princess who became a Spartan queen, or Helen of Troy are ones of married women who seduce or are seduced by younger good-looking men and who, thusly, fulfill the first few tenets of the mega-archetype. Deploying the Zulaikhah mega-archetype adds the different twist that narrative replicas take. Writers can sympathize with her or not. Joseph’s chastity can be flipped, at other scenarios, and we get instead Lancelot’s debauchery. Thus, mythemes can be turned upside down, and tenets can be totally or partially fulfilled giving us infinite narrative possibilities.

Chapter Two: The Sarah–Hagar Mega-archetype:

The Love Triangle of Two Women and One Man

In the old days, when men were allowed to have many wives a middle-aged Man had one wife that was old and one that was young; each loved him very much, and desired to see him like herself. Now the Man's hair was turning grey, which the young Wife did not like, as it made him look too old for her husband. So every night she used to comb his hair and pick out the white ones. But the elder Wife saw her husband growing grey with great pleasure, for she did not like to be mistaken for his mother. So every morning she used to arrange his hair and pick out as many of the black ones as she could. The consequence was the Man soon found himself entirely bald. (Aesop, "The Man With Two Wives")

Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!—I have as much soul as you,—and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you! (Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre)

"I am in a condition to prove my allegation: an insuperable impediment to this marriage exists." Mr. Rochester heard, but heeded not: he stood stubborn and rigid, making no movement but to possess himself of my hand. What a hot and strong grasp he had! and how like quarried marble was his pale, firm, massive front at this moment! How his eye shone, still watchful, and yet wild beneath! Mr. Wood seemed at a loss. "What is the nature of the impediment?" he asked. "Perhaps it may be got over-- explained away?" "Hardly," was the answer. "I have called it insuperable, and I speak advisedly." The speaker came forward and leaned on the rails. He continued, uttering each word distinctly, calmly, steadily, but not loudly – "It simply consists in the existence of a previous marriage. Mr. Rochester has a wife now living." (Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre)

Aesop's fable tells of a man who had two wives of whom one was old and the other young. Similarly, *Jane Eyre* explores the narrative structure in more depth as Edward Rochester has had an older and rich, but infertile wife, Bertha Mason. Rochester wants to co-marry the younger underprivileged Jane Eyre who eventually gives him two

sons. These two narratives, among many others, I argue, fall in the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype category. The two wives of Abraham are the main female characters that feature in the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype—and its narrative replicas. The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is not just about more than one wife involved in a polygamous marriage, but these rival spouses are also mothers. These two mothers—or, specifically, two matrarchs—inspire the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The motif of the co-wives has been studied Hassan El-Shamy in his *Motivic Constituents of Arab-Islamic Folk Traditions: A Cognitive Systemic Approach*. The co-wives archetype was not given much attention by western scholarship perhaps because most Western culture is monogamous in nature. Even when another woman is involved she is a mistress—often in secret.

The mother as an archetype, on the other hand, was of more considerable scholarly interest. For instance, Carl Jung investigated the mother-archetype in *Von den Wurzeln des Bewusstseins (From the Roots of Consciousness)*, as did Toni Wolff in her *Structural Forms in the Feminine Psyche*. Jung details a study of this universally recurrent motif in his discussions on dreams. For Jung one part of the archetype, the ‘loving’ mother, embodies nurturing, wisdom, fertility, growth, and rebirth (82). Conversely, the ‘terrible’ mother destroys her children through poisoning, burning, suffocating, and drowning (82). Wolff explores among her four forms of the female psyche the mother who is “cherishing and nursing, helping, charitable, teaching” (5). Erich Neumann in *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* explores the mother archetype in depth and categorises it, as it arises from the world’s religions under six branches: first, the Virgin Mary followed by the second tier Isis, the Egyptian the benevolent mother who associated with fecundity, fruit, and birth; and Sophia, a figure

central in Hellenistic philosophy and religion, Platonism, Gnosticism, and Christianity. After Isis and Sophia, Neumann lists Lilith, the sexually wanton demon of Jewish mythology, and Kali, the Hindu evil mother who is correlated with infertility and extinction. Lastly Neumann presents the category “the Erinyes, Furies, and lamias, the Empusae, witches, and so on” (80). The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is inclusive of these opposing mother archetypes.

Instead of studying mythological mothers, I focus on two human women who are mothers and co-wives who become involved in a complex and difficult relationship that leads to an irreconcilable mix of human feelings including love, hatred, and jealousy that these above scholars explore. These two mother archetypes are bucketed together in one scriptural narrative, that of the triangle of Sarah, Hagar, and Abraham. This mega-archetype focuses on a barren wife who, though agedly, finally conceives, and a younger fertile one. One matriarch is abandoned with her son on the margins of society at one point with her offspring. The offspring of these two rival matriarchs feature as national heroes and play distinctive roles in the history of their peoples. This relationship could be read as a further development of the positions of their mothers; the father is a common factor to both sons, whereas the status of the mother is what distinguishes the rank of the son and his clan. I purposefully leave undefined which matriarch is which for interpretative flexibility.

Derived from the biblical and qur’anic stories of the two wives whom Abraham/Ibrahim married, I call this archetype the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is constituted of eight tenets and eight ambient motifs that are found in the hadith, *surahs* 11, 14, 15, and 37 of the Qur’an, and chapters 12-21 of

Genesis. Sarah and Hagar are referred to directly in the Qur'an in verses 11:14 and 11:71-2, respectively, and the rest of their story is constructed from the hadith and the Bible.

The Abraham/Ibrahim mega-narrative, on the other hand, refers to the story of Abraham/Ibrahim as a whole and to the literary and structuralist motifs that can be borrowed from the qur'anic and the biblical versions. Abraham/Ibrahim has to take a younger, more fertile wife (Hagar) since his first wife (Sarah) is old and sterile. Hagar gives birth to Ishmael who, as an adult, becomes father of the Arabs. Sarah gives birth to Isaac from whose branch springs the Israelites. Not only do these matriarchs advance the Abrahamic mega-narrative, but they also play important roles in the lives of their sons.

The importance of these Sarah and Hagar is not only crucial in history and religion, but their mega-archetype also inspires other literary works. The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is manifest in rather a limited number of European texts when compared to Arabic literature, probably because bigamy is not a preferred or celebrated feature of the former culture. Nevertheless, we can still find it in medieval romances such as the Flemish Belgian romance *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies: Chivalry and Romance in the Medieval East* (Morrison and Stahuljak) and the German Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*. In fact, Marie and Gracienne in *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies* and Herzelayde, Ampflise, and Belkane in *Parzival* are clear manifestations of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. Marie de France's Breton lai "Eliduc" and earlier Celtic stories such as "Áed Sláine, son of Diarmaid" (O'Grady) are proposed to have inspired *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies*, just as the Irish "Peredur son of Efracw" (Roberts) in the *Mabinogion* and Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal* (*The Roman de Perceval or The Tale of the Grail*) are the origin

stories of *Parzival*. While not trying to discredit origin theories, this chapter illustrates though how these later, supposedly, more polished versions contain tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype that their earlier literary predecessors did not include. Hence, a narrative mega-archetypal structure inspires these stories. Furthermore, one of the reasons that makes *Parzival* and *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies* more sophisticated texts than the earlier narrative replicas is their inclusion of more tenets of the original mega-archetype. The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is constituted of these tenets:

1. Two wives married to the same man
2. One wife²³ is infertile (if even temporarily)
3. One wife² is fertile
4. One Wife is abandoned by the husband in the margins of society
5. Takes responsibility of rearing children—on her own—at the margins of society
6. The barren wife miraculously becomes pregnant
7. Hospitality is apparent
8. The offspring and the lineage of the wives are set in contrast to each other

These eight tenets are inspired by the Qur'anic verses that refer to Sarah and Hagar—the two wives of Abraham. The biblical verses as well as the hadith are in agreement with the Qur'an information and expand upon it.

Over forty important characters in the Bible have more than one wife, including Lamech (Gen. 4:19), who married Adah and Zillah; Esau (Gen. 26:34; 28:6–9) who married Judith, the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Jacob, who married Leah and Rachel (Gen. 29); Elkanah, who married Hannah

²³ Purposefully undefined or ambiguous for interpretative flexibility.

and Penninah (1 Samuel 1:1–8); and Solomon, who had multiple wives (1 Kings 11:1–3). Moses had three wives: Zipporah (Exodus 2: 21), the daughter of Hobab (Numbers 10: 29), and the Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1). However, these marriages differ significantly from that of Abraham/Ibrahim’s three attachments—first Sarah, then Hagar, then Keturah (Gen. 25); however, only Sarah and Hagar are relevant here as Keturah is little more than a name in the scriptures. Sarah and Hagar, unlike the other matriarchs mentioned above, take action, and through them the plot advances. Their functional role in the narrative is what brings the Sarah and Hagar story into the arena of mega-archetypes whereas the narratively inactive wives do not.

In addition to the theme of polygamy, the Bible addresses the trope of the “barren matriarch.” Mary Callaway’s *Sing, O Barren One: A Study in Comparative Midrash* discusses what she refers to as the “barren matriarch tradition” (59) According to Callaway, it is the son born in his parents’ old age who gives hope to his parents as well as being an iconic figure to his nation (72). In this way, the aged Sarah who miraculously gives birth to Isaac (Qur’an 37:100) definitely exemplifies Tenets 2 and 6. The story is one of hope for Israel in exile according to Callaway. Other barren mothers whose stories can turn into fertile-sterile wife competition from Genesis to Kings are Rebekah, Rachel, Samson’s mother, Hannah, and Shunammite woman. Perhaps the most iconic mother figure among these barren matriarchs is St. Anne,²⁴ the apocryphal mother of the Virgin Mary, who gives birth to a daughter rather than a son and, thus, departs from the standard barren matriarch tradition.

²⁴ Abraham is identified as Joachim, an identification explored in more detail in the following chapter. For additional discussion of Joachim, see Anita Obermeier’s “Joachim’s Infertility in the St. Anne’s Legend.”

In addition to encompassing the barren matriarch theme (Tenet 6) and addressing the somewhat controversial practice of polygamy (Tenet 1), the Sarah-Hagar story includes tenets such as the theme of exile, the single-mother rearing a child of her own in the desert, and clan rivalry. All these narrative tenets constitute the motif cluster of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. In other words, their story encompasses the barren matriarch archetype as well as the second wife trope—among other motifs—and, hence, it qualifies as a mega-archetype

Origins of the Sarah-Hagar Mega-archetype

Biblical Sources

According to the Bible, Sarah (Sarai) leaves Haran with her 75-year old spouse, Abraham, for Canaan (Gen. 12). When Sarai arrives to Egypt with Abraham, the Egyptians find her so beautiful that they shower her—and Abraham—with gifts of “sheep, cattle, donkeys, male and female slaves, and camels” and move her into the Pharaoh’s palace (Gen. 12:16). Initially, Abraham claims Sarai is his sister; however, when his kingdom is struck with plague, the Pharaoh blames Sarai, condemns Abraham’s lie about their relationship, and banishes both of them. Abraham will tell the same lie later in his and Sarai’s journey. His reason for the twice-told lie is self-serving. As he tells Abimelek, King of Gere,

I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. And when God had me wander from my father’s household, I said to her, “This is how you can show

your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, ‘He is my brother.’” (Gen. 20: 10-13)

Even though extremely pretty, Sarai was infertile (Tenet 2). Sarai owned an Egyptian slave, Hagar (Hajara) whom she suggests Abraham sleep with in order to conceive an heir (Gen. 16:2) (Tenet 3). Abraham obliges Sarai’s request although by now he was 86 years old; thus, Hagar becomes his concubine, a wife with fewer rights under the law. When pregnant, Hagar becomes cocky, rebellious, and disobedient. She flees Sarai but is ordered by the Lord to return to Abraham; shortly thereafter, she bore his son, Ismael/Ishmael (Gen. 16: 5-16). The jealous Sarah makes Abraham exile Hagar and Ismael to the Desert of Beersheba (Gen. 21: 14-21) (Tenets 4 and 5). But the heavens were not through with Abraham. At 99 years old, Abraham is told his 90-year-old wife Sarai, now called Sarah [Princess], will bear him a son whom he must name Isaac (Gen. 17: 15-22). Though skeptical she can give birth at her age, Sarah does bear Isaac (Gen. 21: 1-3) (Tenet 6). Thus, Sarah definitely fits into the “barren matriarch tradition” (Callaway 59). Depending on the lineage of both mothers (Tenet 8) the relationship between the stepbrothers is quite difficult.

Qur’anic Sources

By not mentioning the names of Abraham’s two wives, the Qur’an emphasizes the universality of the story. Therefore, Islamic scholarship depends on knowing their names from what came in the hadith and the Bible. Even though the references to Hagar and Sarah are limited and Sarah’s jealousy of Hagar is not mentioned, by re-constructing the story from a number of *surahs*, we understand that Abraham has an older, infertile consort and that he later married a younger, fertile one who gives him his elder son. His

younger son is later conceived by the older wife (37: 69-73). Abraham gives praise “to God, who has bestowed upon me, in my old age, Ishmael and Isaac!” (14: 39). His second wife, with his first son, reside in the arid Mecca (14: 37). We know that Hagar is left alone with Ishmael (14: 37), but the Qur’an text does not explain why. Islamic tradition, however, conveys that Abraham sees a vision in which he must take his wife and son to Mecca where the Ka’aba²⁵ is to be rebuilt later on (2:127).

The young mother abandoned in a desert place with her son corresponds to Tenets 4 and 5 of the mega-archetype. According to both the Bible and the Qur’an, Hagar has already given birth to Ishmael when Abraham receives a command from his God to travel with Hagar and Ishmael to Mecca and leave them there. Abraham is aware of the difficult situation his family is facing and he calls to his Lord:

Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful. (Qur’an 14: 37)

According to Barbara Freyer Stowasser, “this woman then is image of the submitting and also the active aspects of being Muslim” (49). During their five years of banishment, Hagar struggles to help her son survive in the arid desert of Mecca and to integrate him into the Arab environment of their banishment. Staying with her infant in a waterless desert and a parched valley; Hagar has the faith that gives her the stamina to go through the ordeal of running to get water (Sahih al-Bukhari).

²⁵ Also called “The Cube,” the Ka’aba is a shrine built at the center of Islam’s most important mosque, Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām.

Water imagery is a motif that combines the qur'anic women explored in this dissertation. Searching for water, Hagar runs anguished between the two hills of Al-Şafah and Al-Marwah seven times²⁶ and, eventually, the Zamzam Well erupts (Gregg) as Ishmael stamps the land with his feet. Ibn Abbas further notes that Hagar had to quickly fill her water-skin; otherwise, "Zamzam would have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth" (Sahih al-Bukhari). Being associated with water, Hagar is not only the wife who gives Abraham his first born, she also becomes a fertility figure who, by inducing the Well of Zamzam to erupt, brings fertility to the arid land of Mecca. Like the other matriarchs who inspire any mega-archetype, water is crucial. The biblical version of the story still includes a well in the Desert of Beersheba to which Hagar goes with her son, even though it had already been there welling with water even before her arrival (Gen. 21: 14-21).

The Qur'an also refers to Sarah's barrenness (Tenet 2). We can infer from the *surahs* 11, 15 and 37 that Abraham had a barren wife who becomes fertile (Tenet 6). Three "heavenly messengers" (11: 69) visit the expecting couple who are hospitable to them (Tenet 7). When offered a roasted calf, the angels decline to eat. But when Abraham "saw that their hands did not reach out towards it, he deemed their conduct strange and became apprehensive of them. [But] they said: 'Fear not! Behold, we are sent to the people of Lot'" (11: 69-70). Their purpose is not to eat but to deliver tidings of Isaac who

²⁶ Jogging between these two hills is a tradition in the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca (Adamec 391) that is inspired by this female figure. Hagar, and her history become symbolically intertwined with God's shrine in Mecca after Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the Kaaba and purified it for pilgrimage and prayer (Qur'an 2: 124-9).

would be the progenitor of Jacob and his line. Sarah understands the message. As an old woman being told she is pregnant, she responds with incredulous laughter:

[. . .] And his wife, standing [nearby], laughed [with happiness]; whereupon We gave her the glad tiding of [the birth of] Isaac and, after Isaac, of [his son] Jacob. Said she: “Oh, woe is me! Shall I bear a child, now that I am an old woman and this husband of mine is an old man? Verily, that would be a strange thing indeed!”

(11: 71-2)

Sarah laughs because she and her husband are old and cannot believe that they can bear children at their age. Some qur’anic commentators, such as al-Ṭabary, construe the ambiguous use of the word *daḥikat* (i.e., laughed) as a substitute for her menstruating again. Not only is Sarah given news about her pregnancy despite her old age (Tenet 6), she is also given glad tidings about her grandson, Jacob.

Tenet 8 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype states that the offspring and the lineage of these wives contrast each other. The mothers are mentioned minimally and disappear from the qur’anic scene shortly. But the comparisons between their sons and their lineage illuminate more of their mothers’ characters. In the Qur’an, Abraham receives divine knowledge that Ishmael, Hagar’s son, will be born “a boy-child gentle” (37: 101). When the angels enlighten Abraham about Isaac, Sarah’s son, they tell him his child “will be endowed with deep knowledge” (15: 53). However, Isaac is the son younger endowed with “deep knowledge,” while Ishmael is the older “gentle” one who is exonerated from the great slaughter (37: 102-112). Ishmael, Hagar’s son, grows in the arid valley of Mecca, raises the foundations of the sanctified Ka’ba with his father (2: 127-9), and becomes the father of the Arabs whereas Isaac, Sarah’s son, becomes the

father of the Israelites. From Hagar's and Abraham's son Ishmael and his lineage descends the Prophet Mohammed too. As Stowasser points out, Sarah and Hagar become the founding matriarchs of different tribes,

that is, religions, where Sara[h] and Isaac provide the Abrahamic lineage of Judaism while Hagar and Ishmael (through their descendant Muhammad) provide that of Islam. Yet both female figures conjoin in symbolizing the strength and courage of God's chosen agents, here in the role of matriarchs in God's sacred history. (43)

Thus, the role of the matriarch is relevant to the construction of the headquarters of the religious tradition that her son later establishes. During the wife's abandonment in Mecca on the margins of society (Tenets 4 and 5), she establishes the path her progeny to follow. Even before Ishmael co-builds the Ka'ba with his father for Muslims to circumambulate, Hagar establishes the ritual of travelling between the hills of Al-Şafah and Al-Marwah—a tradition that Muslims follow until nowadays during pilgrimage. Despite confirming with Tenet 8, the Bible and the Qur'an take different emphases. Unlike the biblical account that reads the conflict in the story in terms of female jealousy, of "female rivals in a patriarchal household" (Darr 92-3), the Islamic account reads it in terms of a divine plan to which the genealogy of the prophet Mohamed was posited centuries earlier: Islamic interpretation past and present has seen this drama not in a personal but a genealogical and spiritual light; when two strong mothers clash over the position of their sons and lineage in the eyes of God, female domestic tensions are absorbed into the greater scheme of things. Thus, Islamic interpretation has not seen Hagar's expulsion from Abraham's household at Sara's hands as an occurrence of female oppression but as

part of the divine plan to re-establish God's true sanctuary and its pure rituals in the wilds of barren valley far away (Stowasser 44-45). Thus, the Qur'an contrasts Ishmael and Isaac rather than shaping their relationship as one of antagonism.

Ambient Motifs from the Abraham Mega-Narrative

The Abraham/ Ibrahim mega-narrative, inclusive of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype, structures the narrative replicas. In addition, this mega-narrative includes ambient motifs from the story of Abraham from the Bible, the Qur'an, and the hadith.

These ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative infiltrate the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and its narrative replicas. Since Ishmael and Isaac are Abraham's sons, ambient motifs from their stories also are included in the mega-narrative. When borrowed in narrative replicas, ambient motifs do not have to exist in relevance to the main characters associated with them in the mega-narrative or the mega-archetype. They are floating motifs that exist in the narrative replicas without always having a clear reason for their appearance. With the mega-archetype, the reason for their deployment becomes apparent.

Ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative are:

1. Wondering who the Creator is
2. Throwing into fire
3. Wifely jealousy
4. Social/racial hierarchy of wives; taking a foreign wife
5. Sheep imagery and slaughter
6. Building a holy shrine, association with holy objects and rituals
7. Horses
8. Angels as guests

Two of these motifs, wifely jealousy and social/racial hierarchy of wives, are not mentioned in the Qur'an. More accurately they are considered ambient motifs that infiltrate into the mega-archetype from the biblical narrative as well as the hadith (see table 1). El-Shamy broadly indexes the motif of Jealousy (W018) without subcategorizing it extensively. Wifely jealousy in specific is keyed in motif indexes by Thompson, Uther, and El-Shamy, respectively, as "jealousy of rival wives" (T257.2. †T257.2), "the outcast queen and the ogress queen" (462), and "bad relations between co-wives" (one *durrah* and another) (P0268.1\$"). Variations of the jealousy motif can include stepsisters and sisters-in-law too. For example, Uther denotes "the orphan girl and her cruel sisters-in-law" as [897] in his index.

Table 5 Abraham Mega-narrative Ambient Motifs from the Hadith and Bible

Designations in the right-hand column come from the various folklore sources for the motifs and are listed by the numbering system from the source: Uther = ATU; Aarne and Thompson = AT; El-Shamy = El-Shamy)

Ambient Motif from Bible and hadith	Motifs and Their Titles from Folklorists	Motif Reference
Wifely jealousy	Jealousy of rival wives Woman jealous of a fair maid in her house. Fears her attraction for her husband Competition in ale-brewing between king's two wives Man's two wives each claim part of his body: they torment him Man pulled down stairs by his two wives Polygamist must love all his wives Jealousy of rival wives Wife exposes bald head of second wife to disgrace her Jealous wife (mistress) transforms rival to hound Trickster sends jealous wife after husband: steals food Jealous wife ties husband to her so that he cannot get away to meet another woman Brother and sister The orphan girl and her cruel sisters-in-law	T257.2. †T257.2. (AT) T257.1. †T257.1. (AT) T145.3. †T145.3. (AT) T145.4. †T145.4. (AT) T145.5. †T145.5. (AT) T145.6. †T145.6. (AT) T257.2. †T257.2. (AT) T257.2.1. †T257.2.1. (AT) T257.2.2. †T257.2.2 (AT) T257.10. †T257.10. (AT) T257.11. †T257.11. (AT) 872*(ATU vol.1, 492) 897 (ATU vol.1,521)

	The outcast queen and the ogress queen	462 (ATU vol.1, 273)
	The three golden children	707 (ATU vol.1, 381-2)
	Bad relations between co-wives (one <i>durrah</i> and another)	P0268.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1168)
	Jealousy	W0181 (El-Shamy, 1494)
	First wife orders husband to persecute second	S0423.3\$ (El-Shamy, 1494)
	Offspring (having children) envied	W0195.8\$ (El-Shamy, 1937)
One wife is socially-racially above the other (ambient motif from the Bible and the hadith)	Man weds his bondmaid	T121.6. †T121.6. (AT)
	Woman jealous of a fair maid in her house. Fears her attraction for her husband	T257.1. †T257.1. (AT)
	The woman marries the prince	870-879 (ATU vol. 1, 489-502)
	The black and white bride	403 (ATU vol.1, 236)
	Man weds his bondmaid	T0121.6 (El-Shamy, 1556)

Abraham travels from Jerusalem to Egypt with his first wife, Sarah, and meets the Egyptian pharaoh who gives him Hagar as a present. Abraham marries a foreign wife who is the social inferior of Sarah. The social hierarchy of both wives is also another ambient motif borrowed from Islamic heritage and the Bible as it is not denoted in the Qur'an. Part of a Qur'anic verse combines both themes together: “[. . .] and no women [shall deride other] women: it may well be that those [whom they deride] are better than themselves. And neither shall you defame one another, nor insult one another by [opprobrious] epithets [. . .] (49: 11).

Wondering Who the Creator Is and Throwing into Fire

Abraham's story is told in Genesis (Gen. 11:27–25:10) and throughout the Qur'an. Born in Ur, Abraham, son of Terah, is considered one of the most important patriarchs of the Bible because he is the individual from whom Jews trace their lineage. Since his youth, Abraham thought about the Creator because Abraham is curious to know about God and His godly contributions to the heavens. Many of the heroes in narrative replicas of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype ponder about what God is like. Similarly, according to the Qur'an, God

[. . .] gave Abraham [his first] insight into [God's] mighty dominion over the heavens and the earth—and [this] to the end that he might become one of those who are inwardly sure. Then, when the night overshadowed him with its darkness, he beheld a star; [and] he exclaimed, ‘This is my Sustainer!’—but when it went down, he said, ‘I love not the things that go down.’ Then, when he beheld the moon rising, he said, ‘This is my Sustainer!’—but when it went down, he said, ‘Indeed, if my Sustainer guide me not. I will most certainly become one of the

people who go astray!’ Then, when he beheld the sun rising, he said, ‘This is my Sustainer! This one is the greatest [of all]!’—but when it [too] went down, he exclaimed: ‘O my people! Behold, far be it from me to ascribe divinity, as you do, to aught beside God! Behold, unto Him who brought into being the heavens and the earth have I turned my face, having turned away from all that is false; and I am not of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside Him. (Qur’an 6:75-9)

Living among a group of idolaters, eventually the iconoclastic Abraham demolishes the idols. In response his people “exclaimed: ‘Burn him, and [thereby] succor your gods, if you are going to do [anything]!’” (Qur’an 21:68), but he survives the experience. In many of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype narrative replicas, the burning episode becomes an ambient motif. For example, according to the Brothers Grimm version of “Hänsel and Gretel,” the children are kidnapped by a hag/witch whom Gretel forces into the oven.

Wifely Jealousy and Social/Racial Privilege—Taking a Foreign Wife

Wifely jealousy and the social or racial privilege of one wife over the other are ambient motifs from the Bible and the hadith. As is true of the above motifs, the Qur’an has no actual reference to them. However the Qur’an does provide a part of a verse that combines the jealousy and privilege themes: “[. . .] and no women [shall deride other] women: it may well be that those [whom they deride] are better than themselves. And neither shall you defame one another, nor insult one another by [opprobrious] epithets...” (Qur’an 49: 11). Hence these themes are not included in the list of tenets but are, more accurately, considered as ambient motifs that infiltrate the mega-archetype from the biblical narrative as well as the hadith.

Sheep Imagery and Slaughter

Another ambient motif that is drawn from religious texts and that also appears in the narrative replicas of Peredur and Perceval stories is that of slaughter. This ambient motif is inspired by the Qur'an's retelling of slaughter episode of Abraham sacrificing his own son that is ransomed by a ram (Qur'an 37:102-7). In many of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype narrative replicas, the offspring slaughter episode becomes an ambient motif. For example, in Greek mythology, Ino is jealous of her husband's offspring from a previous marriage. Ino takes vengeance by attempting to slaughter Jason's children, Phrixus and Helle. The children are rescued by a golden fleece.

Building a Holy Shrine in Association with Holy Objects and Rituals

The Abraham mega-narrative inspires the motifs of having sacred symbols and sacred buildings in narrative replicas. Ishmael re-builds the Ka'ba with Abraham; and when they "were raising the foundations of the Temple, [they prayed:] 'O our Sustainer! Accept Thou this from us: for, verily, Thou alone art all-hearing, all-knowing!'" (Qur'an 2:127). Such stories were inspirations for Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* in which the title character finds the Holy Grail, becomes the bearer of it, and thereby revives its tradition to the Round Table. Similarly, it is Hagar's son who gives the Muslims their holy shrine.

Horses

The horse is an ambient motif found in the Abraham mega-narrative and closely associated with Ishmael. Ishmael is the first to mount chargers as well as to tame them. Ishmael's acts will lead his descendants to become warriors skilled at horsemanship. As Prophet Muhammad in the hadith says, "O Sons of Ismail! Shoot arrows! Your ancestor

was a skilled archer” (Bukhari, al-Anbiya 12). Muhammad also commands his followers, “Get horses! Inherit and leave horses as inheritance because it is the inheritance of your ancestor, Ismail, to you” (Abu’l-Fida, al-Bidaya wa’n-Nihaya, I, 192). Similarly, Ibn Abbas states that horses are beasts that God made yield to Ishmael, and he was the first one to tame the horses. In his interpretation of the Qur’an, al-Qurtūbi, quotes Ibn Abbas through al-Tirmizy that, when God asks Abraham and Ishmael to build the Ka’ba, He instructs them that

I have a treasure that I have been saving for you both, then He inspired Ishmael: to leave and to supplicate for getting this treasure, so he went to Ajyaad²⁷ not knowing what the supplication nor what the treasure were! God revealed the supplication to Ishmael. Not a single horse in Arabia, but has responded and yielded to him.²⁸ (Al-Jazā’irī 5)

That is why Prophet Muhammed advises Muslims to “mount horses because they are the heritage of your father Ishmael” (Al-Jazā’irī 5). Also because Ishmael is the first to ride horses, the animals were called *irāb* “العراب”, a term that shares the same linguistic root with the word *Arab* (Majlisī 153). In numerous ways, the Perceval versions echo this ambient motif.

Thus, when taken as a whole, the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is integrated with the Abraham mega-narrative but excludes the additional elements typically brought forth for discussion when these characters, archetypes, and structures are evaluated (see Figure 1). In other words, the narrative structure is needed to identify the tenets and define the

²⁷ A place in alignment with the area of where the ka’ba is in Mecca. The word “Ajyād” is the plural of *jawād*, which means *horse*.

²⁸ My translation.

mega-archetype.

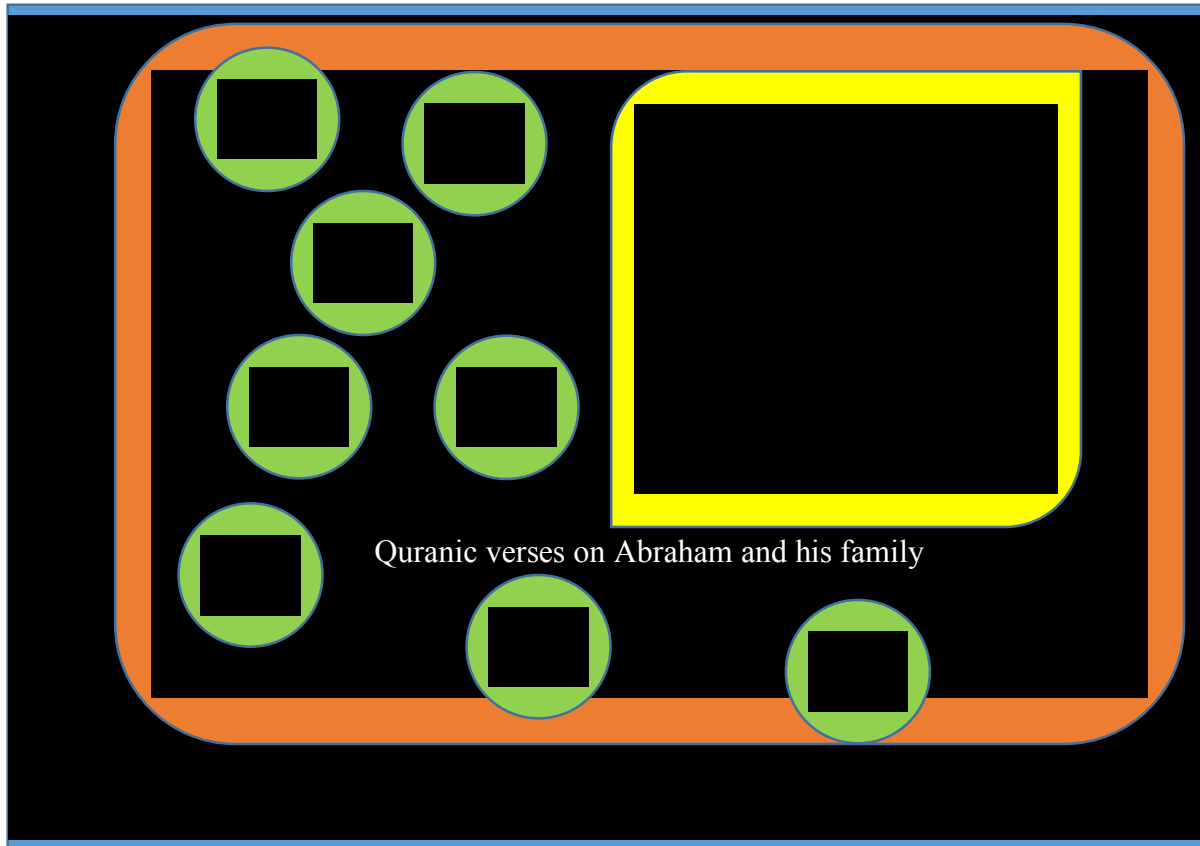


Figure 5 Qur'anic/Biblical Story of Abraham

Figure 6 illustrates the aspects of the narratives not included in the mega-archetype (i.e., language and style, connections, history, moral). The center of the figure illustrates the interchange between the mega-archetype tenets and the clusters of ambient motifs.

Relevant Motifs in the Tenets of the Sarah-Hagar Mega-Archetype

Comprised of tenets and motif clusters, the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is a narrative structure that inspires literary replicas and the structure of literary works. These narrative replicas do not necessarily deploy all the tenets of the mega-archetype. Romances, however, implement more tenets than myths, folktales, and fairytales do. Additionally, the motifs that constitute the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype are identified separately rather than as a unified structure in motif indexes of folklorists such as Aarne, Thompson, Uther, and El-Shamy. Uther, for instance, argues that motifs exist within certain combinations, a situation no different from how mega-archetypes function because mega-archetypes are constituted of structural motif-clusters. The following discussion delves into why these particular motifs taken from the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and the Abraham mega-narrative cluster together. I illustrate how the tenets correspond to some selected motifs that folklorists keyed in their motif-indexes. A more comprehensive view/list of the motifs is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6 Tenets of Sara-Hagar Mega-archetype

Designations in the right-hand column come from the various folklore sources for the motifs and are listed by the numbering system from the source: Uther = ATU; Aarne and Thompson = AT; El-Shamy = El-Shamy).

Tenets	Relevant Motifs and their Titles	Motif Reference
1- Two wives married to the same man	Polygyny The triangle plot and its solutions. Two men in love with the same woman; two women with the same man First (barren) wife insists her husband should take second wife Marriage to five women, each with separate duties Man requires seven women Seven wives each to have the husband one day a week Man married to several sisters Girl will marry on condition she is to be only wife Marriage to four wives	T145.0.1. †T145.0.1. (AT) T92.1. †T92.1. (AT) T282.1. †T282.1. (AT) T145.1. †T145.1. (AT) T145.1.1. †T145.1.1. (AT) T145.1.2. †T145.1.2. (AT) T145.1.3. †T145.1.3. (AT) T131.6. †T131.6. (AT) 856 (ATU vol. 1, 484)
2- One wife is infertile (even if temporarily)	Misery of childlessness (person weeps) First (barren) wife insists her husband should take second wife	P0230.0.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1133) T0282.1 (El-Shamy, 1600)
3- The other wife is fertile.	Second wife taken because first is barren Second wife taken because first is barren	T145.2. †T145.2. (AT) T0145.2 (El-Shamy,1568)
4- Wife is abandoned by the husband in the margins of civilization	The man on a quest for his lost wife The banished wife The princess confined in the mound The princess who goes to seek trouble	(400, ATU vol.1, 231) 705A*(ATU vol.1, 378) 870 (ATU vol.1, 489) 871 (ATU vol.1,492)

	The abandoned bride disguised as a man The man who deserted his wife (previously the man who deserts his wife and sets her the task of bearing him a child) The vanished husband Abandonment in desert	881A (ATU vol.1, 504) 891 (ATU vol.1,516) 425 (ATU vol.1, 253) S0144 (El-Shamy, 1478)
5- Wife takes responsibility for rearing children—on her own—at the margins of society.	Mother and son. The King discovers his unknown son The faithful wife Origin of springs spring breaks forth at primitive [primeval] hero's need Sacred well: ground bursts open and water gushes from it Spring breaks forth through power of saint [(prophet)] Spring breaks forth where saint smites rock. Zamzam as sacred well	P231. †P231. (AT) 873 (ATU vol.1, 492) 888 (ATU vol.1, 512) A0941 (El-Shamy,86-7) A0941.4.2 (El-Shamy,86-7) A0992.4\$ (El-Shamy,86-7) A0941.5(El-Shamy,86-7) A0941.5.1(El-Shamy,86-7) V0134.5\$, (El-Shamy, 1794)
6- The barren wife miraculously gets pregnant.	Conception because of prayer Born from fish or fruit ²⁹ Thumbling (previously Tom Thumb) ³⁰ The artificial child ³¹ Unusual conception in old age	T526. †T526. (AT) 705A (ATU vol.1, 377) 700 (ATU vol.1, 374) 703* (ATU vol.1, 376) T0538 (El-Shamy, 1652)
7- Hospitality	Hospitality A man invites God to his house Inhospitability to saint (god) punished	P320. †P320. (AT) 751* (ATU vol.1,403) Q0292.1 (El-Shamy, 1388)
8- The offspring and the lineage of these wives are set in comparison against each other.	Stepbrother The four skillful brothers The twins or blood-brothers The three golden children	P283. †P283. (AT) 653 (ATU vol.1, 358) 303 (ATU vol.1, 183) 707 (ATU vol.1, 381-2)

²⁹ Also referred to under “barrenness magically cured in ATU vol. 3, 140.

³⁰ Also referred to under “childlessness” in ATU vol.3, 154.

³¹ Also referred to under “childlessness” in ATU vol.3, 154.

Treatment of slave's children in relationship to master's	P0180.5\$ (El-Shamy, 1109)
Quasi twin brothers: born at the same time to same father from different mothers	T0587.5.2\$, (El-Shamy, 1663)
Seating according to rank (post)	P0632.6.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1288)

In his motif index, Thompson keys polygyny as motif T145.0.1. †T145.0.1. He also identifies “the love triangle plot and its solutions. Two men in love with the same woman; two women with the same man” [T. 92.1. †T92.1], which is indicative of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and Zulaikhah mega-archetype, respectively. As barrenness (Tenet 2) is one of the reasons behind these polygamous relationships (Tenet 1), the combined motif index of Aarne and Thompson present and El-Shamy’s motif index connect both motifs by categorizing a “second wife taken because first is barren” as T145.2. †T145.2. and T0145.2 (El-Shamy 1568), respectively. These motifs correspond with Tenets 1, 2, and 3 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype that state that the husband takes two wives (Tenet 1); because the first wife is barren (Tenet 2), the husband takes a second wife (Tenet 3).

Tenet 4 of the Sarah-Hagar archetype states that the second fertile wife (and her offspring, a son) are abandoned by the husband in a faraway place, just as Abraham does with Hagar and Ishmael after he sees a vision. This theme of abandonment is identified by Uther in a number of motifs. Among them are “the banished wife” (705 A*), “the vanished husband” (425), and “the man on a quest for his lost wife (400).

El-Shamy introduces a more specific tenet of abandonment in the desert (S0144). During the abandonment in the desert or on the margins of society, the wife must take the responsibility of rearing her child on her own (Tenet 5). Whereas Aarne and Thompson present a more general motif entitled “mother and son” (P231. †P231), Uther explores more detailed elements of the story and identifies them as “The King discovers his unknown son” (873 (ATU vol.1, 492) just as Abraham returns after a period of time to find Ishmael a young boy. Tenet 5 also suggests that the mother rears the child on her

own, which by necessity also means that she nurtures the child in such an arid land. El-Shamy introduces a number of motifs that are related to water and springs gushing through the power of saintly figures [(A0941.4.2), (A0941.5), and (V0134.5\$)]. These allusions, of course, recall Hagar going between the two hills searching for water, Ishmael prodding the land with his feet, and the Zamzam well gushing. All these motifs are but parts of Tenet 5 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype.

As posited in the tenets of this study, a few years later, the older wife miraculously becomes pregnant (Tenet 6), a motif signaled as “unusual conception in old age” (T0538) by El-Shamy. Three angels visit Abraham who hosts them to a roasted calf, an act of hospitality (Tenet 6). The angels abstain from food to deliver happy tidings to the old couple: the wife will give birth to Isaac who will later engender Jacob (Qur’an15:53 and 11:71). The barren matriarch laughs and wonders about this marvel (Qur’an11:71). A number of folk and fairy tales deploy this motif of a child miraculously born to aged parents. Among the variations of this motif that Uther catalogs are “the artificial child” (703*), “born from fish or fruit” (705A), and Thumbling, Tom Thumb, Thumbelina (700), in which a child pigmy is rewarded to an aged couple.

Since the both mothers are rewarded sons whose progeny branches into two distinct tribes, a contrast between them is inevitable (Tenet 8). Aarne and Thompson distinguish a “stepbrother” motif (P283. †P283). Uther and El-Shamy investigate this motif in more detail by giving further sub-divisions. Uther identifies motifs such as “the four skillful brothers” (653), “the twins or blood-brothers” (303), and “the three golden children” (707). According to Uther, the latter two motifs often exist in combination (381-2). In other words, stories with multiple wives will have stepbrothers contrasted to

each other. This observation, of course, further supports the idea that a mega-archetype is constituted of tenets/motifs that complement each other.

Unlike Uther or El-Shamy, who look at the motif as a more meticulous structural building block, the taxonomy proposed here uses not only motifs, but also other building blocks, such as formerly neglected narrative structures, to enrich the mega-archetype. Previous scholarship on motifs (e.g., El-Shamy; Uther) obviously offers a point of departure from which these specific motifs may be aggregated into a more encompassing structure: the mega-archetype. With this background, the central tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype become obvious. Also, these scholars examine these motifs separately, rather than as clusters, and apply them to folktales and myths mostly. My study probes how these motif clusters constitute medieval romances.

Compiling of these above-mentioned tenets provides a motif cluster that constitutes the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. While these motifs have already been listed separately by other authors, here I aggregate them into more comprehensive structures. This background leads to the assessment that the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is not only constituted on tenets that happen to be motifs, but also that these motifs happen to exist in combinations. Uther introduces a distantly similar idea in his motif index when he cites the tale of “The three golden children” (707):

Three girls boast that if they marry the king [N201] they will have triplets with golden hair [H71.2, H71.3], a chain around the neck [H71.7], and a star on the forehead [H71.1]. The king overhears the youngest and marries her [L162, N455.4]. When she gives birth to three marvelous children, the elder sisters substitute animals (dogs) [K2115]. She is imprisoned (banished) [K2110.1, S410],

her children are exposed [S142, S301] but are rescued by a miller [R131.2] (fisherman [R131.4]).

When they have grown up, the eldest son sets out to find his father [H1381.2.2.1], to seek a speaking bird [H1331.1.1], a singing tree [H1333.1.1], or the water of life [H1320, H1321.1, H1321.4, H1321.5]. (Uther vol.1, 381-2)

Even though polygamy (Tenet 1) does not happen in this tale, this story is a clear illustration of Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The hint that the king is thinking at a particular moment of which of the three girls/sisters could be his potential wife ties the story to the mega-archetype of multiple marriages. Jealousy between the sisters/potential wives arises after the youngest sister gives birth (ambient motif). In substituting animals for the children, the narrative recalls the ambient motif of slaughter in the Abraham and Ishmael mega-narrative in which Ismael is ransomed by a ram. Because of this deed, the elder sister is banished (Tenet 4). The children's separation from their father echoes Tenet 5. Seeking the "water of life" and other fertility symbols also recalls Tenet 5.

According to Uther, "The Three Golden Children" [707] co-exists with motif combinations. Among these potential combinations are "the twins or blood brothers" [30] (Uther 182, 183) and "Cinderella"/"Peau d'Âne" [510] (Uther, 182, 293). These sibling rivalry stories are manifestations of Tenet 8. Another ambient motif combination with "The Three Golden Children" [707] is "The water of life" [551] (Uther 182, 320-1). "The Three Golden Children" [707] also can be combined the jealous stepmother that appears in "Snow White" [709] (Uther, 182, 383). These stories are variations of the two-wives motif (Tenet 1), abandoned child (Tenet 5), and the jealous stepmother (ambient motif). In addition to these three motifs, "The Golden Children" also includes motif

variations relevant to Tenet 4: “the man on a quest of his lost wife” [400] (Uther, 231, 282) and “the search for the lost husband” [425] (Uther, 247, 282). All these motifs are variations of the tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype.

This cross-fertilization explains why some scholars, such as Ann Trindade, hold the opinion that de France’s “Eliduc” corresponds to Type [400], the “Man on a Quest of his Lost Wife,” and to Type [425], “Woman on a Quest of her Lost Husband,” respectively. These connections could be considered part of the mega-narrative as Abraham eventually seeks Hagar and Ishmael after abandoning them in the arid valley of Mecca (Qur’an 14: 37). However, it is not a tale type as it is not based on slaying the dragon as Trindade argues. The second woman in “Eliduc” is not about doubling—as Trindade also posits—but it is a structural part of the archetype. Similarly, Alfred Nutt argues that both de France’s “Eliduc” and the German “Schneewittchen” (“Snow White”) originated in the Scottish tale “Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree” that later became civilized and Christianized.³² Nutt refers to these similarities as “the Schneewittchen formula” (31). In examining “Eliduc” and “Le Fresne” (de France), among others such as *Ille et Galeron* and *King Horn*, John Matzke refers to the “theme of exile,” (17) which is also Tenet 4 of the proposed mega-archetype.

Aggregating these motifs into a narrative structure that many literary works adopt calls into question the earlier scholarly suppositions. In the following section, I examine in two sub-sections the connections between Parzival and earlier Parcival and Peredur stories. I also illustrate connections between the *Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies*

³² Nutt observes that storyologist Reinhold Köhler examines both Eliduc and Sicilian versions of “Snow White” without connecting the stories (31).

and its proposed origins, “Áed Sláine, son of Diarmaid,” “Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree,” “Eliduc” and “Le Fresne” (de France). These texts are variations of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. Contrariwise, the *Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies* includes motifs from the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype that its assumed earlier literary ancestors did not.

The Sarah-Hagar Mega-archetype in the *Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies* and Its Suggested Earlier Versions

The first tenet of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype has been alluded to by a number of medieval scholars who disagree about whether the two wives in these polygamous narratives is a doubling or not. Among the scholars who view that second woman episode as a double are not only Matzke and Trindade but also Gertrude Schoepperle and Anthime Fourrier. Their position is understandable because these texts as well as these scholars come from monogamous cultures. Looking at these texts from a Sarah-Hagar mega-archetypal perspective opens new insights.

For example, Gaston Paris refers to the bigamous husband in de France’s “Eliduc” as “le mari aux deux femmes” (“the man with two wives”) (571). Paris attributes these polygamous stories to have “une origine oriental” and posits that “Eliduc” and *Le Roman de Gilliou de Trazegnies* were born in polygamous oriental cultures. Christians interacting with Muslims in the Crusades were introduced to such polygamous themes and modified them to suit Europe’s monogamous culture (Paris 583). Alphonse Bayot in *Le Roman de Gillion de Trazegnies* also argues that “Eliduc” is the primary source of *Gillion de Trazegnies* (65-75) while adding that de France’s “Le Fresne” a subsidiary source (76-79).

While Paris and Bayot researched whether “the man with two wives” motif was an oriental or an occidental one, Nutt assumes a Gaelic origin. Nutt, in “The Lai of Eliduc and the Märchen of Little Snow-White,” examines a number of tales³³ that have the two wives’ theme and claims that these tales are Gaelic in origin. Nutt argues that Marie de France’s “Eliduc” is of Gaelic story-stock and “is a civilized and Christianized version of that found in ‘Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree’” (34). According to Nutt these stories have no archetypal “prototype.” He posits that “a story involving the same essential elements as those of the prototype of ‘Eliduc’ and ‘Gold-tree’ was one of the most famous of Gaelic legends. If the race could fashion the one story it could fashion the other” (42). Nutt also considers the “principal elements in the hypothetical original of Eliduc and of the Gaelic Tales [to be] the situation of the hero between two heroines, the death-in-life condition” (31). As well, he suggests these are aspects of the seventh-century tale, “The Sick Bed of Cuchulainn” (42). These two elements are, in fact, Tenet 1 and the slaughter ambient motif of the mega-archetype and the mega-narrative.

Trindade analyzes the structural elements (467) of “Eliduc” and its Irish analogues and posits an “Ur Eliduc,” a position “which most critics hold” (469). Trindade, like her predecessor Roger S. Loomis, assumes that the origin should be the Irish tale “The Wooing of Fithir and Darine” (Murphy 24-30) because it is an analogue to “Eliduc” (472-8). Neither Nutt nor Trindade, of course, read these Celtic tales in Sarah-Hagar mega-archetypal terms. These Celtic stories, I argue, are manifestations of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and of the Abraham mega-narrative. This chronological

³³ Nutt also includes the Amleth (Hamlet) story in which the Danish prince has two wives (37). The story is told by Saxo Grammaticus in the fourth book of his *The Danish History, Books I-IX*.

table illustrates the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype tenets and the ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative in the assumed origin stories.

The above-mentioned Celtic stories are considered to be origins of “Eliduc,” and both are the assumed origins of the fifteenth-century *Gillion de Trazegenies*. A more illustrative reading of these earlier versions should include tenets and motifs from the archetypal triangle of Sarah, Hagar, and Abraham. While the earlier versions fulfill more ambient motifs and fewer tenets, the later *Gillion de Trazegenies* fulfills more tenets that do not exist in the supposed Celtic origins. This association demonstrates how there is a mega-archetypal structure that narrative replicas emulate.

Table 7 Origin Stories for *Gillion de Trazegnies* by Tenet and Motif

Supposed origin stories of <i>Gillion de Trazegnies</i>	Century the text was written/circulating	Tenets fulfilled	Ambient motifs fulfilled
“The Sick Bed of Cuchulainn”	Seventh	1	Wifely jealousy Death-in-life (slaughter)
“Áed Sláine, son of Diarmaid”	Sixth-Seventh	1,2,3,6, and 8	Lamb-three angels- Water/Wells
“Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree”	Tenth	1, 2, 3, and 4	Well- slaughter- step wifely jealousy
“Le Fresne”	Twelfth	Faint allusions to 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8.	
“Eliduc”	Twelfth	1 and 4	Slaughter (and revival)
<i>Gillion de Trazegnies</i>	Fifteenth	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and alludes to 8	Slaughter
Grimm’s “Snow White”	Nineteenth	2, 4	Slaughter – step-wife Jealousy

Irish Versions

“The Sick Bed of Cuchulainn”

Nutt argues that “The Sick Bed of Cuchulainn,” an Irish tale, is an origin for “Eliduc” and “Snow White” (42). In this story, the hero has a mortal wife, Emer, and a Faery consort, Fand. In a semi-death episode, Fand throws Cuchulainn into magic sleep sending him in a death-in-life trance that emulates the death/slaughter ambient motif from which Ishmael is eventually saved. Cuchulainn revives, and Fand ultimately returns to the underworld so that the mortal couple can live happily ever after.

“Áed Sláine, son of Diarmaid”

Another Gaelic story, “Áed Sláine, son of Diarmaid” (Nutt, Meyer), centers on two wives (Tenet 1), Mairend the Bald and Mugain of Munster. Because she is jealous of Mairend the Bald, Mugain casts a spell on her rendering Mairend barren (Tenet 2). The other wives of Diarmaid were fertile (Tenet 3). These incidents are, of course, reminiscent of the first three tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The saints intervene and give Mairend water that makes her fertile (Tenet 6)—an allusion to the ambient motif of the three angels who inform Sarah that she will become pregnant. Mairend gives birth to Áed Sláine. However, this human birth happens after she conceives a lamb (ambient motif) and a salmon or fish (Uther [705A]). Áed Sláine becomes high king of Ireland from 549 to 600; this is also reminiscent of the two lines that branch from Abraham’s line (Tenet 8).

“Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree”

Nutt considers the tenth century north Scottish “Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree” (Jacobs) another “Eliduc” origin; Aarne and Thompson classify the story as “the wicked

stepmother [S31. †S31]. In this tale, a widowed father/king re-marries, an element reminiscent of Tenet 1. Since there is no contemporaneous polygamous marriage, the wifely jealousy ambient motif is adjusted in the tale to stepmother (Silver-tree) and stepdaughter (Gold-tree). Silver-tree is apparently barren (Tenet 2) as it is the king's first wife who bears Gold-tree (Tenet 3). Silver-tree takes Gold-tree to a well (ambient motif) in a glen. From the trout in the well, Silver-tree knows that her daughter excels her in beauty. Enraged, Silver-tree retreats to her house, vowing to never appear again until she has eaten Gold-tree's heart and liver. The step-mother replaces the second wife tenet of the mega-archetype and the ambient motif of wifely jealousy.

This plot element also echoes the slaughter ambient motif of the mega-narrative because it suggests the husband must attempt to sacrifice his offspring. However, in this story, a he-goat's heart saves the victim (ambient motif from the Abraham mega-narrative in which a ram saves the former's son). Gold-Tree marries a prince who takes her to a distant kingdom abandoning her home (Tenet 4). Nevertheless, Silver-tree continues to try to murder her stepdaughter. Tenet 4 is further emphasized when Gold-tree is stabbed by a poisoned thorn by her mother (ambient motif that emulates the parent trying to slaughter the offspring in the Abraham mega-narrative) and locked in a room during her vegetative state.

In the second half of the tale, a doubling happens when the prince, thinking Gold-tree is dead, marries again (Tenet 1). Gold-tree eventually revives from her slumber, but her danger is not over. When Silver-tree comes to poison Gold-tree, the prince's second wife tricks Silver-tree. Silver-tree dies, and Gold-tree is thus saved. Apart of the evident borrowing of tenets and ambient motifs of the Abraham mega-narrative, such as

glen/well, sacrifice, exile and remarrying, how would one explain the addition of the more focus on the two wives' tenet, which will be highlighted in the later "Eliduc"?

Thus, the pseudo-historic "Áed Sláine" or the fairytale "Gold-Tree and Silver-tree," include some, but far from all, details from the mega-narrative. Later versions of "Eliduc" (de France) and "Sun, Moon, and Talia" (Basile) are richer sources for these details. Nutt repeats a trope found in medieval adaptation of these tales when he posits that the writers care little for the logical consistency. While quite likely, despite these inconsistencies, the tales echo tenets of the mega-narrative even when these tenets are not present in assumed original, often Celtic stories.

British Versions

Building further on earlier scholarship, Frances Horgan posits the impossibility of determining whether Marie de France's "Eliduc"³⁴ inspired the later *The Adventures of*

³⁴ De France's lai "Eliduc" introduces a narrative replica along the lines of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. Eliduc's wife, Guildeluec, is "noble and wise, of good family and [is] high born" (de France 111) (ambient motif). But Eliduc abandons Guildeluec in Brittany (Tenet 4) when he falls out of favor with its king; as a result, he goes on search of paid military service in Logres. His movement to Logres parallels the mega-narrative of Abraham who quits Mesopotamia as he cannot deliver his religious message to Nimrod. In Logres, Eliduc falls in love with the beautiful—and perhaps younger, and, thus, more fertile—maiden, Guilliadon. Eliduc faces a dilemma: He must choose between being faithful to Guildeluec or being with his new beloved Guilliadon (Tenet 1). Eliduc first abandons Guildeluec but returns to her and leaves Guilliadon (Tenet 4). But upon seeing Eliduc's great love for Guilliadon, Guildeluec asks Eliduc to end their marriage so she can enter a religious order. Eventually, she founds a proud order on his land. Eliduc and Guilliadon marry; ultimately, he builds a great church to which he devotes most of his land and wealth. Again, the narrative stops at these first four tenets.

The mega-archetype is obviously Christianized and adapts monogamous undertones. Eliduc hides his first marriage from Guillidon who, nonetheless, has learned of the marriage from one of the sailors on board a ship taking them away from her homeland. She faints and appears, for some time after, to have died. This episode aggregates two archetypes. First, Eliduc casts the betraying sailor into the stormy sea, an action reminiscent of the Jonah story but that does not appear in the structure of other

Gillion de Trazegnies (Morrison and Stahuljak) even if both narratives use the “man with two wives” (213) theme. If “Eliduc,” as well as “Ille et Galeron” (Fourrier), are considered sources for *Gillion de Trazegnies*, the tales borrow from an Ur Eliduc. However, the possibility of a lost version is just as likely. Marie de France admits the absence of a source for her lai and says the tale was named after the man involved with two female protagonists: Guildeluc and Guilliadun (111). Whatever is the case, the main structure of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype underlies the similarities of these tales. Were there an Ur-Eliduc, it would still comply with the mega-archetype even closer than its progeny. *Gillion de Trazegnies* is, I posit, closer in structural terms to the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype than it is to “Eliduc” or “Ille et Galeron.” This connection becomes evident when studying the structure of *Gillion de Trazegnies*’s “supposed” origins: de France’s “Le Fresne” and “Eliduc.”

“Le Fresne”

“Le Fresne,” the only de France’s lai named after a female heroine, is a narrative replica of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. Twin sisters of noble birth, Le Fresne (modern French *frêne*, “ash tree”) and La Codre (modern French *coudrier*, “hazelnut tree”) are alienated at birth. Separating and juxtaposing the names of both girls suggests a

analogues as well as the Sarah-Hagar one. Second, when Guildeluc visits the sleeping Guilliadun in the chapel, two weasels run into the chapel, and Guildeluc’s servant kills the female. The other weasel runs into the forest to find a magical flower that revives the deceased partner. Seeing this act of love, Guildeluc takes the flower from the weasel and uses it to revive Guilliadun. The slaughter of a family member is echoed here; although the weasel is slaughtered, its soul is revived. The archetype is deployed in a text whose heroes are Christians; thus, it must be adjusted to fit this non-polygamous system. Hence, Guildeluc petitions her husband so that she can “set him free completely and [she shall] take the veil” (125).

metaphor of the fertile hazel tree and the barren ash. As young women, they become rival brides for the noble Gurun (Tenet 1). In “Gold-tree and Silver-tree,” the fierce hatred of the stepmother toward the stepdaughter emulates the wifely-jealousy motif. In “Le Fresne,” the mild rivalry between two sisters sets them in contrast as potential brides. Fellow knights tell Gurun that “in exchange for Le Fresne, whom you will give up, you will have La Codre. On the hazel there are nuts to be enjoyed, but the ash never bears fruit” (de France 65). This proposition echoes the theme of fertility versus infertility in Tenets 2 and 3 of the mega-archetype. The mother takes the role of Abraham in the mega-narrative and exiles Le Fresne (Tenet 4) to be reared in an abbey. But the mother attaches to the baby’s hand a ribbon that holds a large gold ring and a brocade that will, later on, betray the foundling’s noble lineage.

Hearing about Le Fresne’s beauty, Gurun woos her; his knights, however, convince him that, for the sake of carrying on his noble lineage, he has to marry a noble girl. Being pressured, Gurun relents and asks his fellow knights to find him a wife. The knights advise him that he should marry La Codre instead, because “it would be a grievous loss if he didn’t have a child by a wife on account of his concubine” (de France 65). This warning resonates with Tenet 8 of the mega-archetype in which the lineage through the wife is taken into consideration. While the twins’ mother knows that Le Fresne is her daughter and is La Codre’s sister, she seeks to solve the dilemma by having the archbishop, in a *deus ex machina*, propose that he will “unjoin” Gurun and La Codre, “those he had married” (de France 67).

To suppress the implied incest of the two sisters marrying the same man, the archbishop separates La Codre from her husband. Although Gurun does not marry both

sisters at the same time, at some point he is betrothed to both. This double engagement approximates Tenet 1. Also, since the story comes from a monogamous culture, this solution makes the lovers unite in a satisfactory manner to the audience. Their union, however, does not rule out the tenets of the mega-archetype; those tenets are simply re-organized in a different, more creative manner. Gurun marries Le Fresne, the ash tree girl, the prettier girl who did not grow up in a palace. “Le Fresne” thus closely fulfills Tenets 1, 2, 3, and 4 while referring obliquely to Tenet 8 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. “Le Fresne” also deploys the ambient motif of the hierarchy of wife’s social class.

“Ur-Eliduc,” Doubling of Sarah-Hagar Mega-archetype?

Matzke proposes that “Le Fresne” and “Eliduc” deploy “doubling” (22) to emphasize the hero winning the maiden rather than sinning with two women. Thus, the second wife/maiden for Matzke is but a doubling of the first episode in which the hero has already won a maiden. Schoepperle also explores the two Isoldes in Eilhart von Oberge’s *Tristrant*. Schoepperle studies Isolt (spelling variation of Isolde) and Isolt the White-hand as well as the two women motif in “Eliduc,” “Le Fresne,” “Ille et Galleron,” *Le Roman De Galerent Comte De Bretagne* (Boucherie and Renart), and *King Horn* (Herzman, Drake, and Salisbury) under what she calls “the psychological problem” (Schoepperle 158-77). Schoepperle also argues that the role of the second wife in these romances is reduced to that “of a mere foil for [the] main heroine” (172). That may be the case for the Tristan and Isolde legend, the main focus of Schoepperle’s study; however, the second Isolde is an addition to rather than a part of the main mega-archetype. The kernel of the story is Isolde being loved by two men—a Zulaikhah mega-archetype

narrative replica as illustrated in chapter one of this work. The second woman/wife, however, in “Eliduc” and “Le Fresne” is a focal figure as the plot revolves around the theme or the motif of “the man with two wives.” The text limits the theme of the second wife to the trope of doubling and, hence, in these texts, deters us from looking at their broader mega-archetypal structure.

Trindade also favors the doubling opinion, even when she focuses her discussion more on the Aarne-Thompson motif types ([400] “the Man on a Quest of his Lost Wife” and [425] “Woman on a Quest of her Lost Husband”) around which “Le Fresne” and “Eliduc” revolve. These motifs could be considered part of the mega-narrative as Abraham eventually seeks Hagar and Ishmael after abandoning them in the arid valley of Mecca (Qur’an 14:37) (Tenet 4). Trindade argues that the motifs are not elements that define tale type because the second woman in these narrative replicas is a doubling. However, Trindade errs here in arguing that a “tale TYPE” is based exclusively on doubling and repetition (477) and in stating that the tale is a version of either the dragon slayer or the late tenth-century or early eleventh-century Irish tale, “Fethir and Darine.” Ironically, Trindade comments that the parental reluctance of giving the younger daughter before the elder is reminiscent of the biblical story of Jacob and Rachel (473), which is itself a less developed manifestation of the two-wife archetype from Sarah and Hagar mega-archetype.

The offshoots and replica imitations of the mega-narrative present in the *lais* highlight the first four tenets of the mega-archetype and emphasize Tenet 1. Tenets 2 and 3 and the question of the fertility of the women are still distantly raised as in ash tree versus a hazel one in “Le Fresne,” a gold-tree versus a silver-one, a weasel in “Eliduc,”

or a barren woman who is healed with holy water in “Áed Sláine.” The wife is exiled by being distanced from this world, as Tenet 4 proposes. Inclusions of ambient motifs from the mega-narrative fill the void of the missing tenets. None of these fairy tales individually focuses on a handful of tenets, and that is why these fairy tales and folktales are not get promoted to the genre of romances that deploys a larger number of motifs of the mega-archetype.

Marie d’Ostrevant/Garcienne as Sarah/Hagar Figures in Gillion de Trazegnies

“Le Fresne” and “Eliduc” incorporate a few of the tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies: Chivalry and Romance in the Medieval East*, on the other hand, adds Tenet 8 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. *Gillion de Trazegnies* (Morrison and Stahuljak) is a Belgian-Flemish romance that retells the legend of Guillon de Trazegnies who, by mistake, marries two women (Tenet 1). His first wife, Marie d’Ostrevant, is a Christian noble woman who, like Sarah, has been for long barren (Tenet 2). His second wife, Gracienne, is a Muslim. The adventure is replete with barren images of the sterile couple contrasted to the nature images of fecundity around them. Eventually, after a period of infertility, Marie miraculously becomes pregnant (Tenet 6); this happens when her husband prays to God that, if He lets him engender an heir onto her, he will set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem (Morrison and Stahuljak 12). Guillon’s proclamation is reminiscent of Abraham’s prayer in the mega-narrative: “All praise is due to God, who has bestowed upon me, in my old age, Ishmael and Isaac! Behold, my Sustainer hears indeed all prayer” (Qur’an 14:39). As a sign of gratitude and fulfilling his vow to his Lord, Guillon leaves before Marie gives birth of two sons, Jean and Gerard. As Tenets 4 and 5 of the

mega-archetype suggest, Marie brings her sons up by herself and refuses to take another husband despite another suitor, Amury des Maries, incessantly proposing to her.

Marie, the first wife, is a European noble woman whereas Gillion's second wife is an exotic Egyptian princess, Gracienne, who belongs to a racially less privileged race than does the privileged Marie (ambient motif). In order for Gracienne to marry Guillon, she has to convert to Christianity, a trope that is repeated in a number of other medieval conversion narratives such as "Floris and Blanchefleur" (Kooper) or *King Horn*. Gracienne yields to the religion of her husband just as Hagar follows Abraham's faith. Because Amury wants to marry Marie, he fraudulently tells Guillon that Marie has died. This falsehood makes the second wife scenario a possibility in Gracienne's case and exonerates the husband from the Christian guilt of polygamy. This manipulation shows how the narrative replica stays within the confines of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype even when it is a text that evolves in a non-polygamous culture that needs to come up with a "legitimate bigamy" (Paris 585).

The romance does not strictly fulfil Tenet 3 as it does not mention that Gracienne gives Guillon an heir. If Gracienne has children, they do not appear in the tale—we are not even sure if she even begets children. Marie's two sons, on the other hand, establish themselves as men of worth in their hometown, Hainut; they accomplish noteworthy feats in the East. In contrast, the second wife, Gracienne, is not only without children but is also the one in need of help from her Christian spouse because her people are at perpetual war. Thus, the Christian West needs to save the Muslim East from the Muslim East. Like the self-consuming place that she comes from, Gracienne does not give her husband children and has to hybridize and dissolve in the latter's religion and culture.

An ambient motif employed from Abraham's mega-narrative is Guillon's non-implemented sacrifice. Awed by the courage of Guillon, the Egyptian Sultan finds him a fit sacrifice in Muhammad's honor. However, Gracienne is taken by his masculinity and vigor; she devises a stratagem and convinces her father to postpone Guillon's sacrifice until the next major religious feast day. This narrative element is reminiscent of the scriptural sacrifice scene, a ritual continued even today by Muslims. Instead of being sacrificed, Guillon is promoted commander of Muslim troops through his second wife's wiles. In sum, *The Adventures of Gillion de Trazegnies* follows Tenets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The non-qur'anic ambient motif concerning wife jealousy, however, is not incorporated in the text. The text also tweaks Tenet 8 in favor of presenting two harmonious European twins, Jean and Gerard, instead of an infertile, war-torn East.

The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype in *Parzival* and its earlier versions in Wolfram von Eschenbach's thirteenth-century *Parzival*, we see the contrast between two sons from different mothers deployed more in the way the mega-archetype presents this tenet. More so, as opposed to the previously discussed texts, *Parzival* introduces additional tenets from the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype that the assumed earlier versions did not include. Before turning to von Eschenbach's text, let me first discuss how the earlier versions of the story contain fewer tenets of the mega-archetype than the later versions. Also, I will show how the various, earlier Percival versions confirm to different ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative. Table 4 illustrates, in a chronological sequence, the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype tenets and the ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative in the assumed origin stories.

Table 8 Origin Stories for *Parzival* with Tenets and Motifs

Versions of Percival stories	Century the text was written/ circulating	Language	Tenets fulfilled	Ambient motifs fulfilled
“Peredur Son of Efracw”	Sixth-seventh	Welsh	4 and 5	Well, Angels, Marrying a foreign woman
<i>Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal</i>	Late eleventh	Old French	4,5 and alludes to 8	Well
<i>Parzival</i>	Thirteenth	Middle High German	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8	
<i>Sir Perceval de Galles</i>	Fourteenth	Middle English	4 and 5	Well

Earlier Origins for Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*

Among the earlier sources for von Eschenbach’s *Parzival* are “Peredur Son of Efracw” in the *Mabinogion* (Jones and Jones), Chrétien de Troyes’ *The Roman de Perceval or The Tale of the Grail* (*Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*), and Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *The History of the Kings of Britain*. The early fourteenth-century verse romance *Sir Perceval de Galles* (Braswell) is a later source that does not include the two mothers’ episode and is closer to the earlier Perceval versions. Even though compiled between 1300 to 1350, the tales of the *Mabinogion* are thought to have been circulating before these earlier recorded versions (Breeze 72; Lewis).

Reginald Harvey Griffith argues that a Welsh prose romance, entitled “Peredur Son of Efracw,” from the *Mabinogion* and preserved in the late fourteenth-century

manuscript, *Welsh Red Book of Hergest*, is the original tale that inspired the tales of Perceval (3), a reasonable suggestion. However, the later versions of “Peredur Son of Efwarg” (Jones and Jones) in which Peredur acquires the name Perceval—or variations such as Parcival or Parzival—betray affinities to the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and the Abraham mega-narrative that the supposed Celtic original does not. The later, more polished *Parzival* by von Eschenbach is closer to the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype whereas the earlier versions borrow ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative.

“Peredur Son of Efwarg”

Slain at war, Earl Efwarg leaves sons behind. The youngest of Efwarg’s sons, Peredur, the original Perceval, is reared by his sagacious mother without intervention from Efwarg. Like Hagar, Peredur’s mother brings him up on her own into “a desert and a wilderness” (Jones and Jones 152) quitting inhabited parts. Wales, the presumed location for this narrative, has no deserts; nonetheless, like Hagar’s son, Peredur grows on an arid land. This image echoes Tenets 4 and 5 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype as the mother brings the offspring on her own on the margins of society. Also, like Hagar and Ishmael who are saved by an unexpected event of the eruption of the well feed Mecca and its neighboring parts, Peredur also brings meat and drink to the uninhabited parts of the desert when he accompanies the three knights (Jones and Jones 153) whom he mistakes for angels (ambient motif).

Chrétien de Troyes’s Perceval or The Story of the Grail and the Anonymous

“Sir Perceval de Galles”

In the one description that he associates with Perceval, Geoffrey Chaucer states in “Sir Thopas” of *Canterbury Tales* that “Hymself drank water of the wel / As dide the

knyght sire Percyvell” (lines 915-6). In the later English romance, “Sir Perceval de Galles” (Braswell), the mother is Arthur’s sister, Acheflour, who becomes another Hagar figure in part because she finds the well that nourishes the neighboring lands. Thus, Acheflour is identified with symbols of life and bounteous nature. As a child, Sir Perceval de Galles lives with his mother by a well (7); he remembers his mother lives by the well (54), and he drinks from the well when they are reunited (66). This connection to water is reminiscent of Tenets 4 and 5 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype as well as the ambient motif of the water sprouting from the well. The well motif does not appear in the original story of Sir Peredur. Sarah-Hagar narrative replicas borrow from the source mega-archetype and the source mega-narrative even when the literary source they should be borrowing from does not.

In de Troyes’s version entitled, “The Story of the Grail” (339-449), Perceval is reared on the margins of society (Tenet 5) by his mother (Tenet 4) who is widowed and lives in the wild. Consequently, Perceval, grows up socially isolated; he does not even know his own name. In one incident when asked about his name, Perceval says, “My name is darling son” (344). The worthy knight Perceval is engendered by a good mother whose kindness/fertility spreads to the land (Tenet 5). The fertility of the hero’s mother does not merely extend to pregnancy and motherhood, but also to her land as, we can see in other Perceval texts. De Troyes states that Perceval tells a knight that his mother’s plowmen are “plowing and harrowing the fields” (343). This ploughing reference imitates Tenet 5 in which Hagar rears Ishmael on her own and runs between the two hills in search of water.

In addition to Tenets 4 and 5, de Troyes introduces Tenet 8 in which the goodness and the worthiness of Perceval and Gawain are compared by having the characters of the mothers of both loom in the background. In the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype, the progeny of both matriarchs is contrasted (Tenet 8). As long as the divergence of the half-brothers is not feasible here, de Troyes introduces another contrast between Perceval the Welshman, who is the nephew of the Fisher King, and the Knight Gawain, who is Arthur's nephew and son. According to Malory, Gawain is the product of an incestuous relation between Arthur and his half-sister, Morgan le Fay (i.e., Morgause) (18). Through the comparisons between Gawain and Perceval, the concept of what makes a worthier knight is raised.³⁵ Thus Tenet 8 is adapted in de Troyes' text to replace the sibling comparison between Ishmael and Isaac from the mega-archetype. De Troyes's version basically covers only Tenets 4 and 5 and omits the two-wives' motif (Tenets 1, 2, and 3). The later, more polished version by von Eschenbach is based on de Troyes's and adheres more closely to the tenets of the mega-archetype.

Even though the *Mabinogion* is credited as an original source of the Perceval story, the Celtic text does not mention the possibility of Efracw having a second wife. Von Eschenbach adds the detail of the mega-narrative of the two wives, Herzeloide and Belkane, that never existed in the supposedly original Welsh text nor in de Troyes's version. The later, presumably more modified drafts of von Eschenbach echo the Sarah-

³⁵ Whereas Perceval stands for *caritas* as he achieves knighthood in the Castle of the Fisher King, Gawain represents *cupiditas* as his tasks are limited to rescuing imprisoned maidens in a castle and achieving more amorous adventures there.

Hagar mega-archetype more closely, making von Eschenbach's version more mega-archetypal than the earlier French version of de Troyes or "Peredur son of Efwarg."

Herzeloide and Belkane in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*

Among the less researched Arthurian female characters are Belkane (Gahmuret's first wife and Feirefiz's mother) and Herzeloide³⁶ (Gahmuret's second wife and Parzival's mother). Thelma Fenster's *Arthurian Women* and Bonnie Wheeler's and Fiona Tolhurst's *On Arthurian Women: Essays in Memory of Maureen Fries*, for instance, do not include any essays on these less researched Arthurian female characters. Scholarly books that focus on *Parzival*, focus marginally on Herzeloide. *Perceval/Parzival: A Casebook* (Groos and Lacy) does not dedicate any chapters either to Herzeloide or Belkane. *A Companion to Wolfram's Parzival* (Hasty), however, dedicates the first two chapters to female characters in *Parzival*. In "Gahmuret and Herzeloide: Gone But Not Forgotten," Francis G. Gentry explores the precise purposes of Books I and II, the books about Herzeloide and Gahmuret, and how these characters function in the rest of the tale. Of course, the female characters should be essential to the narrative because, in these two books, the readers are introduced to the two-wife episode that is an essential structural part of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. With this addition, *Parzival* is thus made more polished than the earlier versions.

Some scholars, however, try to place Herzeloide in a biblical mold. Patricia Ann Quattrin in "The Milk of Christ: Herzeloide as Spiritual Symbol in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*" argues that, despite Herzeloide's brief appearance in *Parzival*,

³⁶ In "Sir Perceval de Galles" (Braswell), Perceval's mother is King Arthur's sister and is named Ache flour instead. She, also, has not been researched by far or by near.

Herzeloyde is an important mother figure in her son's life because she spreads Christ-like love that eventually allows Parzival to attain the Grail. Karl Bartsch in *Parzival und Titurel* refutes the comparison of Herzeloyde to the Virgin Mary (133). Jutta Ann Kleber in *Die Frucht der Eva und die Liebe in der Zivilisation* argues that Herzeloyde is more a sinful Eve than a Virgin Mary (193-5). Even when compared to Herzeloyde, less scholarship has been done on Belkane, and, what has been published favors an orientalist perspective. Examples of such scholarly endeavors are Susan Samples's "Belacane: Other as Another in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*" (Wheeler and Tolhurst). This scholarship is essential when taking Tenet 8 into consideration and applying it to Belkane's mottled-skinned son, Feirefiz.

Earlier scholarship has also focused on connections to *The Aeneid* and the medieval *Eneas* by Heinrich von Veldeke (Fisher) in an effort to discover whether *Eneas* could be a source for *Parzival*. Aeneas almost marries the foreigner, Dido, but then takes a Roman wife, Lavinia. The analogy to Gahmuret, to Gillion, and to Abraham seems obvious. However, these scholarly attempts were touching unawares on the various tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype.

In the early thirteenth century, Wolfram von Eschenbach in *Parzival* re-introduces a tale that some of his earlier peers wrote about. However, von Eschenbach adheres more closely to the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype as he introduces the second wife episode (Tenet 1). Further, von Eschenbach switches Tenets 2 and 3 of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype in terms of chronological order; the foreign, exogamous wife is the first wife, and the European, endogamous wife is the second. The comparison between both sons from different mothers (Tenet 8) is also introduced in this narrative replica. Von

Eschenbach's version deploys Tenets 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 in addition to multiple ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative.

According to the Abraham mega-narrative, the adventurous father undertakes a journey to foreign lands where he meets his soon-to-be wife. Parzival's father, Gahmuret, likewise travels to Africa. At first he is attracted to Ampflise, the Christian Queen of France during Uther's time, but Gahmuret marries Belakane, non-Christian, Moorish Queen of Zazamanz. Thus through these two women, the text doubles the foreign wife episode. Gahmuret then takes the Christian European Herzeloide as his second legitimate wife.

Herzeloide, the maiden Queen of Waleis (perhaps Wales), is the more fortunate wife of Gahmuret in *Parzival* who actually "urge[s] her love on" Gahmuret (von Eschenbach 55).³⁷ In the von Eschenbach version, Gahmuret initially resists Herzeloide because he is still in love with his Moorish queen. This complexity nullifies the existence of a marriage contract with Belakane making the narrative more apt for a European audience while having echoes of the mega-archetype in which the Egyptian Hagar and the Hebrew Sarah share the same man (Tenet 1).

A product of Belakane's and Gahmuret's interracial marriage is Feirefiz whose skin is mottled pied black and white. Even though Feirefiz belongs to the House of Anjou, he is an *other* who has a foreign mother (rhyming intentional here) and is somehow not quite as legitimate as Gahmuret's other son, Parzival, who has a European

³⁷ That is similar to "Sir Perceval of Galles" where even though it is only one unnamed wife who is Welsh but seem geographically within France or Logres; the text is not totally clear.

mother. Gahmuret, however, sneaks away leaving the less-privileged son to be brought up by his less-privileged mother on her own. The mother brings her son on her own to rear him in a foreign land as in Tenets 4 and 5.

Like Belkane, Herzeloide also rears Parzival (i.e., “Herzeloide’s child”) on her own after Gahmuret’s death. Parzival becomes another Ishmael whose mother brings him up single-handedly on the margins of society (Tenet 5). Because his father and two elder brothers die from battle wounds, his mother wants to protect him from the world of chivalry. Parzival cannot even recognize knights when he sees them (von Eschenbach 344). He lacks knowledge about what a church and what a minister are (von Eschenbach 346). Because his mother brings him up in such a secluded way, even when she gives him advice on chivalry, courtesy, and travel, he can only follow her strictures clumsily.

However true that Tenet 3 (i.e., wife fertility) is not brought up in the earlier Perceval versions, undertones of this tenet run through the deployment of Tenet 5, Hagar’s rearing the child on her own and the eruption of water. In Wolfram’s text, the fertility of the mother is extended to her offspring in the sense that the text depicts how the son brings fertility to the land. For example, after Parzival marries Condwiramurs, her lands no longer face famine (von Eschenbach 111). Moreover, after Trevizent tells Parzival about the wounded Anfortas, Trevizent talks about food and fodder for Parzival’s horse (von Eschenbach 24). Food, necessary for fertility and fecundity, is a characteristic of Parzival’s chastity and piety that his mother instilled in him.

Parzival fulfills Tenets 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 but eschews Tenets 2, 3, and 6 that exploit the fertility competition between the wives. *Parzival* is the only existing text of the Perceval stories that introduces the two-wife tenet and connects it to the notion of

genealogy pertinent to nation formation. This is a premise similar to the Isaac being the progenitor of biblical patriarchs in both the Qur'an and the Bible as well as Ishmael being the father of the Arabs in the Islamic tradition. In both cases, the hierarchy is arises from the mother. Von Eschenbach's text makes the association between the lineage of the hero's mother and the future of the empire an important point as Parzival and his mottled half-brother Feirefiz are contrasted throughout (Tenet 8).

In conclusion, while the earlier versions of Perceval emulate the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype distantly, the later *Parzival* is definitely mega-archetypal. The earlier narrative replicas of this mega-archetype sever some of the tenets without exploring them further, thus leading critics to suggest that some episodes are illogical. Moreover, von Eschenbach's text is more faithful to the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype and ends with a more optimistic tone on the future of the Round Table than does Malory's pessimistic view; Malory's Grail hero is an illegitimate son of Lancelot who is conceived through Elaine's treachery (465); von Eschenbach's hero, on the other hand, is born to a married couple (57) attains worldly as well as afterworldly bliss (395).

Ambient Motifs from the Abraham Mega-narrative in the Perceval Stories

Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* is the version that complies closest with the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype as it introduces the two-wife motif (Tenet 1) and the contrast between their offspring (Tenet 8). Other versions of Perceval, however, such as "Perdur Son of Efracg," de Troyes' *The Roman de Perceval or the Grail's Tale*, and "Sir Perceval of Galles" deploy a considerable number of ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative. Scholars who studied the different versions of these stories commented on these elements as irrelevant episodes. For example, Brynley Roberts in "Peredur Son

of Efwarg” and Roger S Loomis in *The Grail: From Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol* consider the foreign wife episode in “Peredur Son of Erfawg” an incoherent addition (Roberts 65; 69; Loomis 92-6). Griffith assumes the horses to be only a “metonymy for knight” (25). However, these dismissed episodes are, in fact, ambient motifs deployed from the Abraham mega-narrative. The ambient motifs from the Abraham mega-narrative that embellish the Perceval versions are displayed in the following table with their relevant Perceval texts:

Table 9 Ambient Motifs in Perceval

Ambient Motif	Perceval versions that include it
Sheep and slaughter	<i>Sir Perceval de Galles</i> “Peredur Son of Efwarg”
Horses	<i>Sir Perceval de Galles</i> Chrétien de Troyes’ “Perceval”
Building a holy shrine, association with holy objects and rituals.	Chrétien de Troyes’ “Perceval” <i>Parzival</i>
Wondering who the Creator is	<i>Parzival</i>
Angels as guests	“Peredur Son of Efwarg”
Social/racial heirachy of wives- Taking a foreign wife	“Peredur Son of Efwarg” <i>Parzival</i>

Ishmael features in the Qur’an as an obedient son listening to a father who is about to slaughter him:

And [one day,] when [the child] had become old enough to share in his [father’s] endeavours, the latter said: ‘O my dear son! I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee: consider, then, what would be thy view!’ [Ishmael] answered: ‘O my father! Do as thou art bidden: thou wilt find me, if God so wills, among those who are patient in adversity!’ (37:102)

Similarly, Perceval, like his archetypal predecessor Ishmael is associated with sheep, cattle, and slaughter. He is the Arthurian knight who can also be labelled as a cattle herder. For example, In “Sir Perceval de Galles,” when Ache flour flees to the woods with “Percyvell the Yonge,” she takes goats with her. The writer highlights that when Perceval leaves he leaves goats and mother together (Griffith 12). He wears goatskin throughout (Griffith 15, 24, 29). When he is united with his mother he is wearing goatskin (Griffith 66). Even the comic manifestation of Sir Perceval, Chaucer’s Sir Thopas, is associated with a form of cattle, the ram “Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer, / Ther any ram shal stoned” (Griffith 740-741). In “Peredur son of Efrwag” when the eponymous hero sees a flock of goats and two of which are without horns and he thinks they went wild (Jones and Jones 152). Peredur sees:

a flock of white sheep, and on the other side he could see a flock of black sheep. And as one of the white sheep bleated, one of the black sheep would come across, and would be white; and as one of the black sheep bleated, one of the white sheep would come across, and would be black. (175)

He also slays a stag with one horn in its forehead (Jones and Jones 186), an ambient motif reminiscent of Abraham’s attempt to slaughter his son. Peredur’s second uncle³⁸ shows Peredur a severed head (Jones and Jones 159); later, he knows it belongs to his cousin. He severs Addanc’s head and gives it to the other squires (Jones and Jones 176) as well as smiting the head of the collateral witch into two (187).

³⁸ In the later Perceval versions, this uncle is replaced by the Fisher king who introduces Perceval to the Holy Grail.

Perceval is associated with the horse ambient motif, just as Ishmael has been associated with it. In de Troye's version, Perceval knows how to ride. In *Parzival* and "Peredur Son of Erfawg," although work horses are part of the mother's establishment, the hero knows nothing of riding; when about to leave home, the protagonist starts learning about riding. Peredur has to make a saddle, and Parzival asks his mother to give him a horse. In "Sir Perceval of Galles," when Perceval is on his way home after meeting the knights, he captures a wild mare, rides it home, and later rides it when he leaves home (Braswell lines 69-72). Moreover, like his mega archetypal predecessor Ishmael, a good archer and hunter who used to go out of the haram area of Makkah and hunt there, Sir Perceval de Galles hunts deer (Griffith 12, 33). However, the connection of Perceval with horses is a subject of ridicule in the Middle English "Sir Perceval de Galles" in which the protagonist mistakes his pregnant mare for a stallion. He does not know what it is called until he finds one and takes it home so that his mother can tell him the name. Regardless of the writer's purpose, like his archetypal ancestor, Perceval is associated with horses. Chaucer's Flemish emulation of Perceval, "Sir Thopas," is no exception as "by hym baiteth his dextrer" (Line 913). An even clearer evidence to this point is what Griffith states: "The Great Fool sees a wild horse, hears then for the first time of knighthood, catches the horse, and rides away from home on it" (33-34).

Another ambient motif from the mega-narrative is the piety of the son that leads him to renown. Parzival wonders who God is and thinks about this question so often in von Eschenbach's work that he even mistakes knights for being God (73). This is reminiscent of Abraham being curious to know about God in the mega-narrative. Parzival wants to be a knight and to become part of the order of chivalry. Hence, he

searches for Arthur, but this search initiates him for his Grail quest. Knighthood in medieval texts is intricately related to religion (see Keen 44-63). Parzival becomes the retainer of the Christian icon of the Holy Grail, a prophet-like figure in a sense. Just like Ishmael who re-builds Ka'ba with Abraham giving Muslims their holiest shrine, Parzival attains the Christian symbol of the Holy Grail. Like the kind Peredur and the pious Parzival, Ishmael is also described in the Qur'an as *ḥalīm* or "gentle boy-child" (Qur'an 37:101). A miller tells the simpleton Peredur that "it is one of two things: either thou art a man afar or thou art a fool" (Jones and Jones 178).

If sheep, slaughter, horses, and religious symbols are ambient motifs associated with Ishmael in the Abraham mega-narrative that feature in the Perceval versions, marrying a foreign wife and angels are ambient motifs associated initially with Abraham. But, since they are ambient, they can be transferred to other characters in the narrative replicas. The foreign wife and mistaking the identity of angels are motifs that arise from the father figure to his son in the narrative replicas pertaining to the narrative kernel of the mega-narrative. For instance, Peredur mistakes the Knights Gwalchmei, Gweir, and Owein (Jones and Jones 153) for angels and follows them. This is an ambient motif reminiscent of Abraham's three angels who come to visit him after visiting Lot, and he does not know who they really are (Qur'an 11: 69-70).

As Abraham of the mega-narrative travels from Jerusalem to Egypt with his first wife Sarah and meets the Egyptian pharaoh, who gives him Hagar as a present. Peredur travels and marries a foreigner (ambient motif), the empress of Constantinople (Jones and Jones 178) and rules with her for 14 years (Jones and Jones 180). This particular episode was subject of critical curiosity. Roberts reads the tale of Peredur in terms of a tripartite

structure as a way of understanding the middle section in which Peredur travels to Constantinople and stays with the queen for fourteen years. Von Eschenbach's version has the father marry the foreign queen, Belakane, instead of the son, thus following the mega-narrative more closely. While the writer of "Peredur Son of Efracg" borrowed the foreign wife ambient motif episode from the mega-narrative having the son marry the Queen of Constantinople instead of the father, von Eschenbach emulates that ambient motif more closely. In *Parzival* the father Gahmuret (the Abraham figure) is the one who marries the African queen. Reading "Peredur" in conjunction with the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype gives a better reason for the inclusion of the Queen of Constantinople episode, an incident that has made this "original" Celtic story sound "incoherent" to Loomis (Groos and Lacy 112).

Chapter Conclusion

The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is composed of motif clusters/tenets that inspire the structure of other literary narrative replicas. The story of these two women not only encompasses mega-archetypal tenets that inspire other female stories, but within its premises their story also encompasses elements of the Abraham story. Further the melding of the wives' story and Abraham's conforms with Lord Raglan's taxonomy's first premise, that the hero's mother is a royal virgin (212). In more general terms and based on evidence from the Bible and Qur'an, she is a pious woman who does not yield even to a Pharaoh (Gen. 12 : 17). That is why, when discussing female mega-archetypes, it becomes inevitable to refer to the men in their lives. The mega-archetype is primarily a narrative structure rather than a focus narrowly on the female figure it is named after.

Parzival and *Gillion de Trazegnies* are narrative replicas of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. Whereas von Eschenbach's *Parzival* includes Tenets, 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8, *Gillion de Trazegnies* focuses on 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and alludes to 8. The later versions are considered by most scholars to be more polished than the earlier ones. One of the main reasons is that the later versions echo the mega-archetype more closely. Many of the earlier versions, however, depend more on ambient motifs than tenets and are thus less cohesive. An important point to take into consideration is that narrative replicas do not have to deploy all the tenets of the mega-archetype; romances, however, implement more tenets than myths, folktales and fairytales do.

Whereas Gaston Paris and Alphonse Bayot argued that *Guillion de Trazegnies* and its sources and variations fall under the man with two wives category (Tenet 1) (572; 97-98), Matzke argues that these versions focus on the exile formula (Tenets 4 and 5) (17) The themes that have been discussed as the backbone of these texts are, in fact, tenets of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype. The same things apply to the Perceval versions. The racial differences between Herzeloide and Belakane and their offspring were studied; this is a comment on the ambient motif of the hierarchy of the wives. The worthiness of Parzival being the Grail knight harkens too on the ambient motif of Ishmael being the co-builder of the Ka'aba.

Critics have been grappling with the origins of the texts discussed in this chapter. Marie de France herself concludes her "Eliduc" with "from the story of these three the ancient courtly Bretons imposed a lay to be remembered, so that it should not be forgotten" (126). Likewise, the story of Abraham and his two wives, Sarah and Hagar, inspires the mega-archetype, and the ambient motifs and tenets extend to later versions

even when missed in earlier literary versions claimed being the origins. Last but not least, ironically, Nutt argues that all stories “radiat[ed] from a particular center” (47) and that of course has to be the “original stock” (33) that inspires the Arian Snow White. In another ambiguous statement, Nutt postulates that narratives should have evolved from the East and moved to the West (43). He never clearly explains that assertion. Similarly, according to Griffith Perceval’s source is not French as he postulates Celtic origins depending on variations of the tale that Joseph Campbell introduces in his *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*. Would it thus be safe to consider the origin as mega-archetypal?

Chapter Three: The Virgin Mary Mega-archetype

*When Jove assum'd a soaring eagle's shape:
And shew'd how Leda lay supinely press'd,
Whilst the soft snowy swan sate hov'ring o'er her
breast,
How in a satyr's form the God beguil'd (Ovid,
Metamorphoses)*

*You prepare a **table** before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my **cup** overflows. (Psalm 23)*

Whereas the previous chapter discusses the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype—an archetype of two mothers to two half-brothers, this chapter explores the mega-archetype of the virgin mother. The status of the mother is what gives renown to the male offspring. If the offspring of Sarah and Hagar are men of rivalry and renown in their community,³⁹ the son of the virgin mother is the national hero—as this chapter elucidates. The prototypical virgin mother is the Virgin Mary. The expression “virgin mother” is, of course, oxymoronic as the two traits of virginity and motherhood are mutually exclusive. However, the Virgin Mary is the epitomical product of these two paradoxical terms; she is not just a virgin, but one “who guarded her chastity” (Qur’an 21:91, 66:12)—the Arabic word used in the original for “guarded” is “aḥṣanat” which means fortified. In addition to “fortifying her virginity,” the Virgin Mary is no ordinary mother as she is impregnated miraculously giving birth to “a word from God” (Qur’an 3:45). Tenets 2 and

³⁹ Such as Parzival and Feirefiz in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*. This was discussed in detail in the previous chapter.

12 of the mega-archetype conform with these two mutually exclusive attributes of virginity and motherhood.

In addition to virginity and motherhood (Tenets 2, 12), the Virgin Mary mega-archetype advocates that this virgin mother gives birth to a national hero (Tenets 10, 21). Tenets 2, 12, 20 and 21 of the Mary mega-archetype have been discussed in earlier scholarship (Raglan, Aarne–Thompson (AT), El-Shamy). However, direct relationships among these motifs have not necessarily been highlighted as a motif cluster inspired by the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Among the other motifs that I posit as constituting elements of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype—and have not been identified in conjunction with it—are food and water imagery, speech fasting, and child with miraculous abilities. Instead of just focusing on the character traits of the (virgin) mother archetype—as earlier scholarship has done, this chapter delineates the Virgin Mary Mega-archetype as a narrative structure constituted of 21 tenets and four ambient motifs.

Medieval narrative replicas such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanae* and *Vita Merlini*, Wace's *Roman de Brut*, Robert de Boron's *Merlin*, the *Vulgate Cycle (VC)*, and the *Post-Vulgate Cycle (PVC)* emulate elements of the Mary mega-archetype, in which virgin mothers such as Elaine of Corbenic, Igerne, or Adhan gives birth to a national/political hero such as Galahad, the Grail finalist, King Arthur, and his political advisor Merlin. These romances address the themes of the conception and accomplishments of the offspring along the lines of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. However, before examining the Virgin Mary as a mega-archetype, let us first see how earlier scholarship looked at her as an archetype.

Among the earliest who studied the Virgin Mary as an archetype is Carl Jung. In his *Four Archetypes: Mother/Rebirth/ Spirit/ Trickster*, he studies four major archetypes, including the mother. Jung states that in “a place beyond the skies,” there is a prototype or primordial image of the mother that is pre-existent and superordinate to all phenomena in which the; maternal,’ in the broadest sense of the term, is manifest” (9). The image, category of our imagination or the archetype of the mother is something universal to the human species (Jung 12) and our collective unconscious experiences the mother in our psyche, through the mother archetype. The mother archetype according to Jung can be divided into two sub-categories: personal real life mothers (such as one’s own mother, grandmother, step-mother, nurse, etc.) and the mother in the figurative sense (such as mythological goddesses, Sophia, and the Virgin Mary) (15). Jung’s study focuses on exploring different kinds of mother complexes. Jung also explores another archetype that is precisely relevant to the Virgin Mary: “Rebirth.” In the rebirth archetype, Christ is an identification of the reborn cult-hero (62). Two archetypes of the four Jungian ones are, thus, related to the Mary archetype.

Jung’s partner, Toni Wolff, in her *Structural Forms of the Feminine Psyche* explores four figures of the feminine psyche, among them is the mother archetype. As in Jung, the Virgin Mary also features as an important symbol in the human psyche. Wolff states that:

in the symbol of Mary, the cult of the feminine principle as such has not only been associated since ages with the male godhead and not only has this association recently been proclaimed a dogma (as foreseen by Goethe in

the finale of “Faust”), but its various aspects are symbolic representations of essentially feminine ways of existence: maid of the Lord, virgin, bride of the Holy Spirit, mother of God, fighter against the infidel, mediatrix, queen of heaven, etc. From an historical viewpoint the insecurity of the protestant (and the Jewish) woman is due to the absence of her own principle within the exclusively male godhead—the metaphysical parallel to the patriarchal-masculine civilization.

(Structural Forms of the Feminine Psyche 6)

The Virgin Mary is the epitome of the feminine: the virgin and the mother. Since according to Wolff the mother archetype, like other forms of psyche, can “be traced back in the history of culture” (5). I posit here that Wolff is suggesting that the virgin and the mother archetypes are inspired by the figure of the Virgin Mary.

Depending on previous Western scholarship and combining it with Islamic tradition, I argue that the Virgin Mary is not only an archetype but a mega-archetype. That is to say it is not merely character traits—which could be disputed among different religious traditions—that inspire other narrative replicas. The Virgin Mary mega-archetype is a narrative structure that is constituted of 21 tenets. Four ambient motifs from the Jesus mega-narrative are also deployed into narrative replicas emulating the Mary mega-archetype. The Mary mega-archetype is constituted of the following tenets:

1. The virgin mother herself is miraculously born
2. The virgin mother is a chaste
3. The virgin has supportive and pious/distinguished relatives
4. The virgin worships God in seclusion
5. The virgin is endowed with miraculous food

6. A prophecy is revealed to the virgin mother through
7. An angel visits the virgin
8. The visitor looks like a human being—a shape shifting image
9. The prophecy states that the mother will conceive
10. Prophecy that child conceived will be a great hero
11. The Virgin defends her virginity
12. The virgin mother is impregnated
13. Labor pains
14. Labor takes place in the margins
15. Labor takes place under a tree
16. Identity of the son is always a big question
17. Patience of the mother during ongoing gossiping
18. Speech fasting
19. Baby speaks
20. Food or banquet imagery (fertility)
21. The son is a figure of renown

This chapter establishes the tenets of the Mary mega-archetype and demonstrates how these tenets are manifest in a number of medieval female characters such as Adhan,⁴⁰ Merlin's mother, Igerne, Arthur's mother, and Galahad's mother Elaine. It is

⁴⁰ The name of Merlin's mother is not usually stated, but is given as Adhan in *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle* (Marvin, 140 - 41). I will be referring to her as Adhan even in the texts that do not name her for the sake of laying more focus on her than by referring to her through her son.

the higher-status that the Virgin Mary mega-archetype attains that heroes in narrative replicas such as Arthur, Merlin, and Galahad gain more prominence in romances than do the offspring of other female characters that follow other mega-archetypes such as the Sarah-Hagar archetype.

Biblical and Qur'anic Sources of the Virgin Mary Mega-archetype

The word *Mary* is mentioned 34 times in the Qur'an while Jesus and Mohamed are mentioned 25 and four times, respectively. *Surah* 3 of the Qur'an entitled "The Family of Imran"—the Arabic equivalent of Joachim—talks about the Jesus and his lineage, while *surah* 19 entitled "Mariam" or "Mary" focuses more on Mary and her ordeal. The Tenets of the Mary mega-archetype are thus extracted from *Surah* 19—and 3.⁴¹ Out of the four canonical gospels, it is in Matthew and Luke that Mary's pregnancy is mentioned, however, not in much detail. The two apocryphal gospels—*Protevangelium Jacobi* (the Infancy Gospel of James) (Hock) and the *Barnabas Gospel* (Ragg) tell the story of Mary in greater detail sharing more in common with the Qur'an and hence conform with more of the twenty-one tenets of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype.

The Virgin Mary is the only Qur'anic female character that is seen to be interaction with other family members. Mary's mother, St. Anna is referred to in the Qur'an as the wife of Imran (Qur'an 3:35). Like Sarah, Abraham's wife, St. Anna is another barren matriarch (Stowasser, 43) who gets impregnated when old. She prays to

⁴¹ It is worth noting that the it is only with Anna, the Virgin Mary, Zachariah, Jesus, and John the Baptist, that we have a Qur'anic chapter named with the word "family". The third chapter of the Qur'an is called the "Family of Imran"; the family of the Virgin Mary.

her Sustainer that the child in her “womb, [. . .] be devoted to Thy service. Accept it, then, from me: verily, Thou alone art all-hearing, all-knowing!” (Qur’an 3:35). Anita Obermeier argues in her “Joachim’s Infertility in the St. Anne’s Legend,” that unlike other barren matriarchs whose barrenness has been presented as a punishment, it is due to Joachim’s barrenness that the couple have a child in their older age. This makes St. Anna, according to Obermeier, “become the medieval icon for fecundity” In the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, the story of Mary is also traced back to her birth to an elderly couple; Joachim and Anna. Her mother—just as in the Qur’an—is given focal roles. It is actually Anna who calls her daughter Mary. She says “no male child [she might have hoped for] could ever have been like this female—‘and I have named her Mary. And, verily, I seek Thy protection for her and her offspring against Satan, the accursed’” (Tenet 1). These words highlight the importance of women in the family not found in the more canonical gospels. The *Protevangelium Jacobi* tells us that Anna cleansed her menstrual flow and gave her breast to the child and gave her the name Mary (Kirby, *Protevangelium Jacobi* 5:8-9). Like the Qur’an, the *Protevangelium Jacobi* puts Anna in more fertile light than medieval accounts. Examples of medieval accounts of Anna can be found in de Voragine’s *The Golden Legend* and in Bokenham’s *Legends of Holy Women*. De Voragine refers to St. Anna as the “unfruitful mother” (152) and in Bokenham’s version the matriarch has less autonomy since it is to Joachim—not to his wife—that an angel prophesies Mary’s seed (130-145). The *Protevangelium Jacobi* and the Qur’an explicitly foreground Anna as a barren matriarch who gives birth to another significant one—the Virgin Mary who is miraculously born despite the old age of her mother (Tenet 1).

It is through St. Anna that we are introduced to Mary's pious family, which in turn instills in her devoutness and piety (Tenets 2, 3). God accepts Anna's supplication and Mary "grow[s] up in goodly growth, and [He] placed her in the care of Zachariah (Qur'an 3:43). Mary is a devout worshipper (Tenet 4). Similarly, in the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, Mary is raised in piety and her parents take her to the temple. It is in the temple that she receives heavenly food for "she was fed like a dove and received food from the hand of an angel" (8:2). And she is always abundantly endowed with food from God (Tenets 5 and 20). This bounty witnessed at Mary's inspires Zachariah, her guardian uncle, to supplicate for offspring despite his old age (Qur'an 3:38).

Tenets 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are relevant motifs to the virgin's impregnation that are in the Qur'an. All four gospels of Luke, Matthew, Baranabas⁴², and the *Protevangelium Jacobi* agree with tenets 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 as well. The Qur'anic account states that Mary withdraws from her family to worship God, and, in her seclusion, she receives an "angel of revelation, who appears to her in the shape of a well-made human being" (Qur'an 19:17) (Tenets 7, 8). Mary is frightful of the visitor thinking

⁴² *The Barnabas Gospel* states that:

this virgin, living in all holiness without any offense, being blameless, and abiding in prayer with fastings, being one day alone, there entered into her chamber the angel Gabriel, and he saluted her, saying: 'God be with thee, O Mary.' (Ragg 1)

The virgin in *Barnabas* also is affrighted at the appearance of the angel; but the angel comforted her, saying:

'Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God, who hath chosen thee to be mother of the prophet, whom we will send to the people of Israel in order that they may walk in his laws with truth of heart.'

The virgin answered: 'Now how shall I bring forth sons, seeing I know not a man?' The angel answered: 'O Mary, God who made man without a man is able to generate in thee man without a man, because with him nothing is impossible.'

She answers back how come she can get pregnant when she "knows[s] not a man." (Ragg

he is a human man and exclaims “Verily, ‘I seek refuge from thee with the Most Gracious! [Approach me not] if thou art conscious of Him!’” (Qur’an 19:18). The angel responds “I am but a messenger of thy Sustainer, [who says,] ‘I shall bestow upon thee the gift of a son endowed with purity’” (Qur’an 19:19) (Tenets 9 and 10). Mary defends her virginity saying “How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me?—for, never have I been a loose woman!” (Qur’an 19:20) (Tenet 11). Chapter 11 of the *Protevangelium Jacobi* mentions extensively that while Mary is holding a cup to drink she receives the archangel Gabriel who praises her piety and delivers to her the good news that she will be pregnant and she will call her son Jesus (Tenets 6, 7, 9, and 10).⁴³ We understand that Mary’s piety and chastity (Tenets 1, 2 and 3) lead to this miraculous conception (Tenet 12). Luke gives Mary some agency; she even sings an eponymous song—Mary’s song (Luke 46-55). Matthew, however, depicts Mary as a voiceless character. As readers, we do not hear Mary’s voice at all. The gospel of Matthew dedicates a few lines to Mary as the Tenets of the mega-archetype are partially fulfilled.

⁴³ The *Gospel of Barnabas* offers a similar account in its first chapter as well:

In these last years a virgin called Mary, of the lineage of David, of the tribe of Judah, was visited by the angel Gabriel from god. This virgin, living in all This virgin, living in all holiness without any offense, being blameless, and abiding in prayer with fastings, being one day alone, there entered into her chamber the angel Gabriel, and he saluted her, saying: ‘God be with thee, O Mary.’ (Ragg 1)

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She answers back how come she can get pregnant when she “knows[s] not a man” (Ragg 1).

The story of Mary's pregnancy is told not from Mary's perspective, but from Joseph's who considered divorcing Mary when he found she was pregnant (Matthew 1:18-19). Tenets 6, 7, 9, and 10 that assume respectively that "a prophecy is revealed to the virgin mother that she will conceive an extraordinary son" and that "the virgin mother is impregnated miraculously as she is a chaste virgin" are only partially fulfilled. Mary does not receive the prophecy in person, but it is Joseph who does and even doubts Mary's chastity. Tenet 11 is overlooked in the gospel of Matthew as Mary is not given a voice to defend her chastity as she did in the gospels of Luke, Barnabas, the *Protevangelium Jacobi* and the Qur'an.

The Christian gospels, however, overlook that the angel shapeshifts into a human image (Tenet 8) as Mary seems to be talking to the angel in his divine form. The angel's shifting into human form is a motif that is heavily borrowed in the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. The impregnation of Adnan is attributed to an incubus, while that of Igerne is credited to a shapeshifting motif; both cases emulate Tenet 12 of the mega-archetype.

Labor is no easy experience as it takes place on the margins of society (Tenets 13, 14 and 15). The qur'anic narrative states that Mary "in time she conceived him, and then she withdrew with him to a far-off place [as . . .] the throes of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree, she exclaimed: 'Oh, would that I had died ere this, and had become a thing forgotten, utterly forgotten!'" (19:22- 23). Similarly, according to Luke, Mary delivers in a manger outside her home town in Judea (2:7).

The Virgin Mary is always associated with heavenly food (Tenets 5 and 20) and fertility images and her labor is no exception as she gives birth under a palm tree (Tenet

15). Thus, she becomes concomitant with further water and food imagery even during her labor as:

[. . . a voice] called out to her from beneath that [palm-tree]: “Grieve not! Thy Sustainer has provided a rivulet [running] beneath thee; and shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards thee: it will drop fresh, ripe dates upon thee. Eat, then, and drink, and let thine eye be gladdened! And if thou shouldst see any human being, convey this unto him: ‘Behold, abstinence from speech have I vowed unto the Most Gracious; hence, I may not speak today to any mortal’” (Qur’an 19:22-26).

Similarly, in the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, Mary drinks from a cup when she receives the news of her conception of Jesus. All these food-related details make her feature as a fertility being that is rewarded for her chastity. As I will be discussing later in the chapter, Elaine of Corbenic, daughter of the Fisher King and Galahad’s mother, is a Grail (another cup image) maiden that is in many aspects reminiscent of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype.

Ongoing gossip follows Mary as a single mother (Tenet 17). When she returns back her people question her about the paternity of her newborn because the gossipers know her “father was not a wicked man, nor was thy mother a loose woman!” (Qur’an 19:27-30). Similarly, the *Barnabas Gospel* suggests that Mary has great concern about ongoing chatter: “Mary having known the will of God, fearing the people, lest they should take offense at her being great with child, and should stone her as guilty of fornication, chose a companion of her own lineage, a man named Joseph, of blameless life” (Ragg 5). In the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, Annas the scribe tells on Mary to the priest using the oxymoronic structure of “pregnant virgin” (14:8).

Counteracting the gossip against his mother, Jesus speaks in the cot (Tenet 19). Baby Jesus first tells his mother when in labor that God made a rivulet beneath her and that she should “shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards thee: it will drop fresh, ripe dates” (Qur’an 19: 23-4). The baby also defends his mother telling her accusers, “Behold, I am a servant of God. He has vouchsafed unto me revelation and made me a prophet” (Qur’an 19:27-30). The Qur’an tells us she does not respond but points to the baby who defends his mother.⁴⁴ Gabriel tells Mary earlier that her son “[. . .] shall speak unto men in his cradle, and as a grown man, and shall be of the righteous” (Qur’an 3:46).⁴⁵ The baby speaking in the cot (Tenet 19) counteracts the one of speech fasting (Tenet 18) that Mary is advised to undertake when meeting her people (Qur’an 19:29) and that which Zachariah goes through as well when his wife, Elizabeth, becomes pregnant (Qur’an 3:41).

Using the qur’anic verses relevant to Mary, I was able to construct the tenets of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. The two apocryphal gospels—*Protevangelium Jacobi* (the Infancy Gospel of James) and the *Barnabas Gospel*—give more, but not complete, details about Mary and, thus, can be used interchangeably to trace the archetypal tenets of this mega-archetype. Using these gospels in conjunction with Luke and Matthew—which even say less about the Virgin Mary—fills out more of the mega-archetype.

Ambient Motifs from the Jesus Mega-narrative

Whereas the twenty-one tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype are inspired by the qur’anic verses that refer to the Virgin Mary, the Jesus mega-narrative is inspired by the

⁴⁴ “and for their refusal to acknowledge the truth, and the awesome calumny which they utter against Mary” (Qur’an 4:156).

⁴⁵ See Qur’an 5: 110 for further details.

surahs and the biblical passages that refer to Jesus even if not referring to Mary. The Jesus mega-narrative inspires the ambient motifs that infiltrate the narrative replicas emulating the structure of the Mary mega-archetype narrative structure. Among these ambient motifs are:

1. Chastity of John the Baptist
2. Medical miracles of Jesus
3. Table
4. Chalice

As mentioned above, what distinguishes the Virgin Mary Mega-archetype is the tenets related to over-emphasized *virginity and fertility*. In conjunction with Mary's over-emphasized fertility, two barren matriarchs become fertile in their later years: her mother Anna and Elizabeth (Zachariah's wife). In antithesis to these women who are impregnated by extraordinary ways, a chaste male character is related to them: Mary's cousin and Elizabeth's son. John the Baptist who is referred to in the Qur'an as someone who ". . . shall confirm the truth of a word from God, and [shall be] outstanding among men, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous" (3:39). The celibacy—and in some cases the virginity—of such characters leads to unexpected over-emphasized fertility narratives or the lack of thereof. The verses relevant to John the Baptist, thus, are part of the Jesus mega-narrative, as they are not part of the verses directly relevant to the Virgin Mary.

Another ambient motif pertinent to Jesus himself is his ability to perform numerous medical miracles. Jesus conveys to his people that:

I shall create for you out of clay, as it were, the shape of [your] destiny, and then breathe into it, so that it might become [your] destiny by God's leave; and I shall heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead back to life by God's leave; and I shall let you know what you may eat and what you should store up in your houses. (Qur'an 3:49)

In Arthurian legend, Merlin and Galahad who have such miraculous births can perform some of these miracles as I illustrate below.

Another ambient motif that is extracted from the Jesus mega-narrative is Jesus's banquet table. The Qur'an does not state the Last Supper episode; however, it narrates another table-related story in its fifth *surah*, entitled al-Mā'idah (or a Table that specifically has a food on it). Al-Mā'idah is one of the *surahs* that talk about Jesus when his disciples ask him for a repast that God descends from heaven so that they can believe in Him:

[And,] lo, the white-garbed ones said: "O Jesus, son of Mary! Could thy Sustainer send down unto us a repast from heaven?"

[Jesus] answered: "Be conscious of God, if you are [truly] believers!" Said they: "We desire to partake thereof, so that our hearts might be set fully at rest, and that we might know that thou hast spoken the truth to us, and that we might be of those who bear witness thereto!" Said Jesus, the son of Mary: "O God, our Sustainer! Send down upon us a repast from heaven: it shall be an ever-recurring feast for us - for the first and the last of us -and a sign from Thee. And provide us our sustenance, for Thou art the best of providers!" God answered: "Verily, I [always] do send it down unto you: and so, if any of you should henceforth deny

[this] truth, on him, behold, will I inflict suffering the like of which I have never [yet] inflicted upon anyone in the world!” (Qur’an 5:112-115)

The bounteous table that the disciples ask for becomes one of sustenance as well as a means for testing them; if they do not believe in God after it descends from heaven then they become punished. The Bible also mentions another prominent table of Jesus: that of the Last Supper. The Bible of Matthew states that: “When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve” (Matthew 26:20). Whether in its biblical or qur’anic, the table becomes Arthur’s iconic round table.⁴⁶

Another ambient motif that is also related to the table motif, is the chalice or the Holy Grail that is found abundantly in many Arthurian texts. The Bible of Luke tells us that:

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” (Luke 22:15-21).

⁴⁶ The three tables of the *Vulgate Cycle* are discussed below.

The Virgin Mary's fecundity is evident in terms of food abundance and in her miraculously conceiving Jesus. Mary's womb is a chalice in a sense. This explains why there are contested imaginings of the Holy Grail; is it a platter, a chalice or a stone?

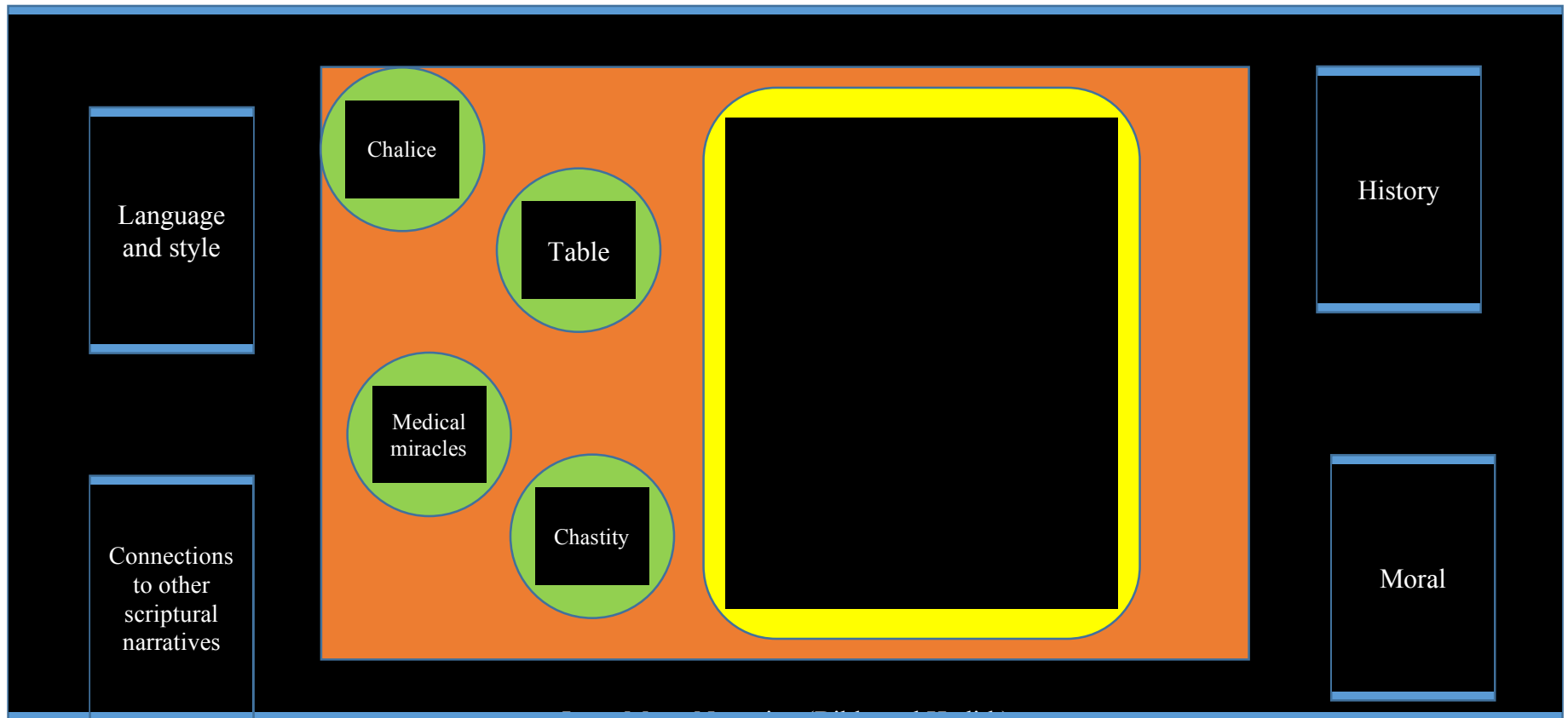


Figure 6: Qur'anic/Biblical Story of Jesus

Figure illustrates the aspects of the Jesus mega-narrative and the Mary the mega-archetype (i.e., language and style, connections, history, moral). The center of the figure illustrates the interchange between the mega-archetype tenets and the clusters of ambient motifs.

Even though the Bible contains examples of barren women who are miraculously fertilized, the story of the Virgin Mary becomes a mega-archetype while that of Manoah's wife, for example, does not. The book of Judges states that:

A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth. The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, "You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son [. . .] He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines. (Judges 13:2-5).

The woman is Samson's mother. However, she does not make it to the arena of the mega-archetype as Mary does. Obermeier argues in her "Joachim's Infertility in the St. Anne's Legend" that Samson's angelic annunciation (291) pre-figures that of Jesus by Gabriel. Adding to that, I posit that the Manoah's wife conforms only with tenets 7, 9 10 and 21 of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Emulating the Mary mega-archetype, an angel visits the woman—who is not a virgin, tells her she will conceive a man of renown. Manoah's wife's story can be at face value taken to overshadow that of the Virgin Mary. However, it does not develop to be a mega-archetype as it fulfils a limited number of structural tenets related to the female protagonist of the story.

The Virgin Mary, on the other hand, is the basic blueprint for other biblical stories—even if they historically preceded it—as well as being the inspirer of medieval narrative replicas. Moreover, within the paraphernalia of the Jesus mega-narrative, other barren women such as Elizabeth and Anna are associated. Since the theme of miraculous fertility/infertility is in the orbit of this mega-archetype and the mega-narrative, a satellite of chaste and even virgin figures are associated.

The Virgin Mother in Earlier Scholarship:

Comprised of tenets and motif clusters, the Virgin Mary mega-archetype is a narrative structure that inspires literary replicas and the structure of literary works. These narrative replicas do not necessarily deploy all the tenets of the mega-archetype. The motifs that constitute the Virgin Mary mega-archetype are identified separately rather than as a unified structure in motif indexes of folklorists such as Aarne, Thompson, Uther, and El-Shamy. Uther, for instance, argues that motifs exist within certain combinations, a situation no different from how mega-archetypes function because mega-archetypes are constituted of structural motif-clusters. The following discussion delves into why these particular motifs taken from the Virgin Mary mega-archetype and the Jesus mega-narrative cluster together. I illustrate how the tenets correspond to some selected motifs that folklorists keyed in their motif-indexes. A more comprehensive view/list of the motifs is displayed in Table 1.

Table 10: Tenets of Mary Mega-Archetype

Designations in the right-hand column come from the various folklore sources for the motifs and are listed by the numbering system from the source: Uther = ATU; Aarne and Thompson = AT; El-Shamy = El-Shamy)

Tenets	Relevant Motifs and Their Titles	Motif Reference
15. The mother herself is miraculously born ⁴⁷	Unborn child (fetus) promised (pledged) to God The Virgin's mother	V0452.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1850) V0288.1.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1828)
16. The virgin mother is chaste	Chastity and celibacy Woman averse to marriage Maturation (sexual) First menses (menstruation) Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (the bright blooming, i.e., the virgin)	†T300--†T399. (AT) T311. †T311. (AT) T0610.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1671) T0610.2.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1672) V0250.0.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1828)
17. The virgin has supportive and pious/distinguished relatives	The family Foster relatives Foster father Foster father as constant helper Mother's brother as foster father Mother's brother as helper Children take after their mother's brothers Niece Virgin Mary's Family (Christ's relatives) The Virgin's parents The Virgin's father (·Imrān) The Virgin's sibling(s) The Virgin's brother	†P200--P299. (AT) P270. †P270. (AT) P271. †P271. (AT) P271.5. †P271.5. (AT) P293.1. †P293.1. (AT) P293.2. †P293.2. (AT) P293.2.1. †P293.2.1. (AT) P298. †P298. (AT) V0288\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1828)

⁴⁷ The Immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary that is to say the view that she is born without the intervention of a male; Joachim [. . .] According to the Qur'an When Mary's mother gives birth to her she asks God to protect her and her offspring from Satan (3:36) i.e. that is flipped in Merlin's mother case.

	Virgin Mary: “Aaron’s-Sister” The Virgin’s paternal uncle The Virgin’s ‘ibn- ‘amm (paternal-cousin Joseph the Carpenter) Saint’s genealogy (lineage)	V0288.2.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0288.3.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1828) V0220.0.11\$ (El-Shamy, 1808)
18. The virgin worships God in seclusion ⁴⁸	The repression of lust Repression of lust through sitting in water Repression of lust through prayer Repression of lust through preaching Repression of lust through fasting Repression of lust	T317. †T317. (AT) T317.1. †T317.1. (AT) T317.2. †T317.2. (AT) T317.3. †T317.3. (AT) T317.4. †T317.4 (AT) T0317 (El-Shamy, 1608)
19. The virgin is endowed with miraculous food	Magic food Magic drink Blessedness (of a person) restores a garden to bloom	†D1030. (AT) †D1040. (AT) V0222.12.1\$ (El-Shamy,1810)
20. A prophecy is revealed to the virgin mother through	Magic power of prophecy Power of prophecy from fairy Power of prophecy from God Power of prophecy induced Deity ascertains destiny of newborn babe and inscribes it upon his forehead Magic power of prophecy Power of prophecy from God	D1812. †D1812. (AT) D1812.1.1. †D1812.1.1. (AT) D1812.1.2. †D1812.1.2. (AT) D1812.2. †D1812.2. (AT) A0189.7 (El-Shamy, 43) D1812 (El-Shamy, 307) D1812.1.2 (El-Shamy, 307)
21. An angel visits the virgin	Man beholds angels Appearance of angel Angel in the form of an old man Angel as helper Archangel Gibril (Gabriel) as God’s messenger	V230.1. †V230.1. (AT) V231. †V231. (AT) V231.6. †V231.6. (AT) V232. †V232. (AT) A0165.2.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 37)

⁴⁸ Echo’s Raglan’s taxonomy here

22. The angel looks like a human being—a shapeshifting image	<p>Reasons for voluntary transformation Transformation: man to angel Power of self-transformation received from an angel Angels change size at will Transformation by angel (God) Ability to see angel of God Lover as bird visits mistress. *Type 432 Angel in human form (shape) Type: 332 Spirit in human form Deity disguised as human Angel carries message from heaven to creature (man) Fairy (spirit) assumes human form and substitutes for man The devil in human form. Type: 332 Angels (regardless of class) can go anywhere in the universe Appearance of angels Angel [Y in] form of cleric Angel in human form (shape)--general. Type: 332 Angel [Y in] form of cleric. [“Angel as form of cleric” Angel in human form induces mortal to decide wisely</p>	<p>D640. †D640. (AT) D44.1. †D44.1. (AT) D630.2.1. †D630.2.1. (AT) D631.4.2. †D631.4.2. (AT) D683.8. †D683.8. (AT) D1825.3.4.1 (AT) †D1825.3.4.1. (AT) D641.1. †D641.1. (AT) V0231.9.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1819) F0401.6 (El-Shamy, 388) A0125.6\$, (El-Shamy, 28) A0165.2.3.2\$ (El-Shamy, 37) F0234.0.4\$ (El-Shamy, 374) G0303.3.1 (El-Shamy, 500) V0231.9\$ (El-Shamy, 1819) V0230.5.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1818) V0231 (El-Shamy, 1818) V0231.4 (El-Shamy, 1819) V0246.4.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1825)</p>
23. The prophecy states that the mother will conceive	<p>Dream by a (pregnant) woman about fate of her unborn child. Exposure of pregnant woman to avoid fulfillment of prophecy concerning future child Prophecy: child to be born Prophecy: child to be born to childless couple</p>	<p>D1812.3.3.8. (AT) †D1812.3.3.8. (AT) M376.1. †M376.1. (AT) M311.0.3. †M311.0.3. (AT) M311.0.3.1. †M311.0.3.1. (AT)</p>
24. Prophecy that child conceived will be a great hero	<p>Heroic career prophesied for (new-born) child Prophecy: birth of hero at certain time (in certain place) Prophecy: conception of hero at certain time Prophecy: conception of hero at certain time Heavenly voices proclaim birth of future child hero Prophecy: king’s grandson will dethrone him Prophecy: child born at certain time will build religious edifice</p>	<p>M311.0.1. †M311.0.1 (AT) M311.0.2. †M311.0.2 (AT) M311.0.2.1. †M311.0.2.1. (AT) M311.0.2.1. †M311.0.2.1. (AT) M311.0.4. †M311.0.4. (AT) M311.1. †M311.1. (AT) M311.2. †M311.2. (AT)</p>

	<p>Prophecy: unborn child to be a saint Prophecy: unborn child to become king Unborn child will become nation's deliverer Prophecy: unborn child will be prophet. Dream about light issuing out of person: birth of great leader (hero, prophet, savior, etc.) Veneration of martyred mortal (prophet, saint) Angel names child</p>	<p>M311.3. †M311.3. (AT) M311.4. †M311.4. (AT) M311.5. †M311.5. (AT) M311.6. †M311.6. (AT) M0311.0.4.2\$ (El-Shamy, 960) V0001.1.3.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1756) T0596.1 (El-Shamy, 1666)</p>
25. The Virgin defends her virginity	<p>Girl named Mary has virginity spared by knight who has bought her. The Virgin appears to her Girl's virginity spared by knight when he sees her surrounded by the Virgin and her train. In her straits the girl has prayed for help Girl prays to Virgin to spare her virginity. Two soldiers quarrel over possessing her. Captain slays her, thus "saving" her</p>	<p>T321.2. †T321.2. (AT) T321.3. †T321.3. (AT) T321.4. †T321.4. (AT)</p>
26. The virgin mother is impregnated miraculously by breath as she is a chaste virgin	<p>Birth from virgin Seven-year-old girl has child Fantastic marriage Miraculous conception *Type 516 Conception through dream Conception from divine impregnation Abnormally born child has unusual powers Impregnation by 'blowing' (breathing) into pocket of (woman's) coat Symbolism: breeze ('air')—gentleness Counter-belief: Miraculous Conception (immaculate conception) through God's command Immaculate conception of culture-hero Immaculate conception of culture-heroine Creator's command: "Be!"—it becomes</p>	<p>T547. †T547. (AT) T579.3. †T579.3. (AT) T126. †T126. (AT) T510. †T510. (AT) T516. †T516. (AT) T518. †T518. (AT) T550.2. †T550.2. (AT) T0519.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1651) Z0158.1.4\$ (El-Shamy, 2086) V0312.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1833) A0511.1.3.3. (El-Shamy, 53) A0511.1.3.3.1\$ El-Shamy, 53) A0611.0.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 63) E0703.2\$ (El-Shamy, 352) V0312 (El-Shamy, 1833)</p>

	<p>Jesus created in Virgin Mary's womb from divine breath (Gabriel's)</p> <p>Belief in Immaculate Conception</p> <p>Miraculous [(supernatural)] conception</p> <p>Counter-belief: Miraculous Conception (immaculate conception) through God's command</p> <p>God begets not, nor is God begotten</p> <p>Deity conceived (by his mother) after his father's death</p> <p>The perfected embryo: conception of Hatshepsut. Fetus created (formed, fashioned, designed) apriori, and then implanted into woman's womb for completion of pregnancy</p> <p>Who is the male created from female? (Christ from Mary)</p> <p>Female miraculously becomes pregnant (granted child) without any contact with male</p> <p>Task: bringing pregnant virgins. Countertask: bringing a 'male radish' grown in rock</p> <p>"As God created plants without seeds and caused them to grow without water, so was Christ's conception and Birth", said The Virgin to her accusers</p> <p>Christ born from crown of Virgin's head</p> <p>Virginitly supernaturally preserved: childbirth by Caesarian section, or from unusual organ</p> <p>Virginitly supernaturally preserved: childbirth by Caesarian section, or from unusual organ</p> <p>Birth through the mother's side--[(Caesarean)]</p>	<p>T0510 (El-Shamy, 1649)</p> <p>V0312.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1833)</p> <p>A0111.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 25)</p> <p>A0112.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 25)</p> <p>A1214.1\$ (El-Shamy, 96)</p> <p>H0816.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1649-1650)</p> <p>T0510.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1649)</p> <p>H1049.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 567)</p> <p>V0312.0.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1834)</p> <p>V0211.0.1 (El-Shamy, 1799)</p> <p>T0547.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1653)</p> <p>T0547.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1653)</p> <p>T0584.1 (El-Shamy, 1661)</p>
27. Labor pains	<p>Childbirth</p> <p>Labor-pains (labor pangs)</p> <p>Birth through the mother's side--[(Caesarean)]</p> <p>Hero is born by splitting mother's womb.</p> <p>Caesarean birth (from mother's side) as source of pride for child (usually culture-hero)</p>	<p>T580. †T580. (AT)</p> <p>T0583.0.1.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1660)</p> <p>T0584.1 (El-Shamy, 1661)</p> <p>T0584.7 (El-Shamy, 1661)</p> <p>W0251.5.4\$ (El-Shamy, 1952)</p>

	Birth of Christ celebration	P0952.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1354)
28. Labor takes place on the margins	Place and conditions of childbirth Birth of child in forest Child born of woman abandoned in pit Child born in tree Child born in stable Pregnant abbess secretly delivered of her child by Virgin Mary The Nativity of Christ The Holy Family (Joseph, Mary, infant Jesus) seeks refuge in Egypt	T581. †T581. (AT) T581.1. †T581.1. (AT) T581.2. †T581.2. (AT) T581.3. †T581.3. (AT) T581.4. †T581.4. (AT) T401.1. †T401.1. (AT) V0211.1 (El-Shamy, 1799) R0230.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1449)
29. Labor takes place under a tree	While saint's mother was giving birth to the child, she grasps a stout rod which roots and becomes a sturdy tree Mother of saint has healing spittle during pregnancy	T584.0.5. †T584.0.5. (AT) T579.4. †T579.4. (AT)
30. Identity of the son is always a big question	God begets not, nor is God begotten Christ as son of God Angels do not procreate (marry) Counter-belief: Miraculous Conception (immaculate conception) through God's command "Jesus son of Mary" Christ Jesus as materialization of "God's word (kalimatu Allāh)" Christ (Jesus) as "The Word of God" Mary as mother of "Son of God" (Jesus) Christ as son of God "Jesus son of Mary" Mary as mother of "Son of God" (Jesus) Belief in Immaculate Conception	A0111.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 25) A0512.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 57) V0230.0.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1817) V0312.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1833) T0148.1.6\$ (El-Shamy, 1571) V0211 (El-Shamy, 1799) V0312.0.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1834) A0611.0.1.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 64) A0111.1.2\$ (El-Shamy, 25) A0512.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 57) T0148.1.6\$ (El-Shamy, 1571) A0111.1.2\$ (El-Shamy, 25) V0312 (El-Shamy, 1833)
31. Patience of the mother during ongoing gossiping	Innocent (chaste) maiden slandered "As God created plants without seeds and caused them to grow without water, so was Christ's Conception and Birth", said The Virgin to her accusers"	K2112.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 886) V0312.0.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1834)

	Testament of Virgin Mary	V0283 (El-Shamy, 1828)
32. Speech fasting		
33. Baby Speaks	Child speaks before birth Child speaks in mother's womb Child in mother's belly guides her Saint performs miracles while yet unborn Woman talks to her child before it is conceived Child speaks before birth. [Speaking fetus] Fetus inside (or just out of) mother's womb reveals real father. Man falsely accused thus vindicated Child speaks at birth. [Speaking infant] Infant (fetus) gives wise counsel (advice) Miracles by Christ Child speaks in mother's womb Task contrary to the nature of humans (children) Child in mother's womb reveals murder Child in mother's womb reveals adultery Infant picks out his unknown father Child in mother's womb reveals unjust judgment Task: bringing newborn baby that can speak Three persons who spoke immediately after birth [as infants] Wisdom learned from children Miracles by Christ	T575. †T575. (AT) 575.1. †T575.1. (AT) T575.1.6. †T575.1.6. (AT) T579.5. †T579.5. (AT) T575.2. †T575.2. (AT) T0575 (El-Shamy, 1658) T0575.1.1.2.1\$, (1658) T0585.2 (El-Shamy, 1662) T0615.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1673) V0210.0.2.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1798) T0575.1 (El-Shamy, 1658) H1024.9\$ (El-Shamy, 566) T0575.1.1.1 (El-Shamy, 1658) T0575.1.1.2 (El-Shamy, 1658) H0481 (El-Shamy, 534) T0575.1.1.3 (El-Shamy, 1659) H1024.9.1\$ (El-Shamy, 566) Z0071.1.13 (El-Shamy, 2039) J0120, (El-Shamy, 606) V0210.0.2.2\$, (El-Shamy, 1798)
34. Food or banquet imagery (fertility)	Rock (stone, bad earth): barrenness (sterility)	Z0103.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 2060))
35. The son is a figure of renown	Christ as prophet [(founder)] Birth of culture hero	V0211.0.4 (El-Shamy, 1799) A0511.1 (El-Shamy, 56)

In her “Mothers in the Grail Quest: Desire, Pleasure and Conception,” Peggy McCracken argues that the ideal mother is a virgin who is absolved of sin. It appears that McCracken is talking in terms of Tenet 2 of the Virgin Mary without referencing it. In fact, this is no different from the first tenet of Lord Raglan’s hero pattern taxonomy. The first tenet states that the “hero’s mother is a royal virgin” (Raglan, 174). In his motif index, Thompson lists a number of motifs related to virginity in his T motif section. Examples of these virginity motifs are [†T300--†T399] and [T311. †T311.].

As the Virgin Mary mega-archetype states, motifs related to virginity are piety (Tenet 4) and fertility (Tenet 5). El-Shamy and Thompson talk about corresponding motifs in their indexes such as: “repression of lust” [T317. †T317.] (AT and T0317 (El-Shamy, 1608), “magic food” [†D1030.] (AT) and “blessedness (of a person) restores a garden to bloom” [V0222.12.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1810)]. The Virgin Mary is fertile in terms of food as well as in terms of reproduction.

Mary’s miraculous impregnation (Tenet 12) is heralded by Tenets 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. As a mother of the national hero, the birth of the son is prophesized through an angel (Tenet 6). Thompson lists motifs [D1812. †D1812.], [D1812.1.1. †D1812.1.1] that are pertinent to prophecy and so does El-Shamy too with [D1812] and [D1812.1.2]. According to the Qur’an the Archangel Gabriel shape shifts into human form (Tenet 8) – an image that is absent in the gospels. An angel acquiring human form has been indexed by Thompson and El-Shamy. Thompson lists motifs such as “reasons for voluntary transformation” [D640. †D640.] and “transformation: man to angel” [D44.1. †D44.1]. Similarly, El-Shamy explores motifs such as “spirit in human form” [A0125.6\$, (El-Shamy, 28)] and “Angel in human form (shape)—general” [V0231 (El-Shamy, 1818)].

The role of the Archangel Gabriel which is limited to prophesizing to the Virgin Mary her conception of Jesus becomes hyperbolized in narrative replicas. The visiting angel of the mega-archetype becomes the incubus in medieval romances. An incubus is a male demon believed to have sexual intercourse with sleeping women. The product of this intercourse in medieval legend, is a cambion—the half-human offspring of the union between an incubus and a human female.⁴⁹ Perhaps one of the earliest mentions of incubi comes from Mesopotamia on the Sumerian King List, ca. 2400 BC, where the hero Gilgamesh’s father is listed as Lilu (Patai, 221). Lilins⁵⁰ are hostile male night spirits that have less power than gods and the medieval incubi are from the same category. In connection to Merlin’s mother and his paternity, the King’s men refer the later to “Apuleius [who] asserts in the *De deo Socratis*, between the moon and the earth live spirits which we call incubus demons. It is possible that one of these appeared to this woman and begot the lad in her.” (Monmouth, 168).

In her “Merlin’s Conception by Devil in William Rowley’s Play *The Birth of Merlin*,” Anita Obermeier further examines Merlin’s mother pregnancy by an incubus stating that “in a mock-Immaculate Conception of Jesus, the devil crew plans to create a counterpart to Jesus that echoes some medieval notions of how the Antichrist will appear: ‘born of the Devil and a virgin’ (54). William Rowley’s early modern play, according to Obermeier, amalgamates both the medieval Galfridian-based and Francophone narratives

⁴⁹ The cambion can also be a product of a human male and a succubus (female demon). Obermeier discusses this in depth in her “Merlin’s Conception by Devil in William Rowley’s Play *The Birth of Merlin*”

⁵⁰ Lilitu, a female demon, appears to men in their erotic dreams.

of Merlin's conception by daemon, incubus (49).⁵¹ Taking this idea as a departure point for the Mary mega-archetype: the motif of the visiting angel taking human form, I argue, becomes conflated into that of the devil defiling the maiden during intercourse or an incubus.

As I have illustrated extensively in the above table, motif variations of the tenets 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are identified in different motif indexes showing how certain tenets become conflated. The Virgin Mary mega-archetype delineates her as the mother of the national hero (Tenets 9 and 22). The angel prophesizes the greatness of the to-be-conceived son to the virgin mother. El-Shamy indexes relevant motifs such as [V0211.0.4] (El-Shamy, 1799) and [A0511.1] (El-Shamy, 56). The greatness of the son is also part of the noble lineage that he descends from (Tenet 3) as well as the greatness and piety of his mother. The tenets of the story of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, thus, correspond with many tenets of Lord Raglan's taxonomy—who by the way evades applying his twenty-two hero traits to Jesus.

However, among the heroes that Lord Raglan applies his taxonomy to is King Arthur; he states that King Arthur is a typical hero because:

his mother, Igraine, is (1) a princess, and his father is (2) the Duke of Cornwall.

He is, however, (5) reputed to be the son of Uther Pendragon, who (6) visited (7)

Igraine in the Duke's likeness. At birth he is apparently in no danger, yet he is (7)

⁵¹ According to Obermeier, in Wace the fertilizer of Arthur's mother is an apparition or a fantasmare. Later on, the incubus becomes a rapist in Robert Manning of Byrne's chronicle (52). The devil then becomes the father or some sort of an anti-Christ (born of a devil and a mother). The mother is no longer a royal version but of woman of a lowly social class who willingly sleeps with the devil in Wynkyn de Worde's "A Lytel treatise of ye byrth and propheccye of Marlyn" that inspires Rowley's play according to Obermeier.

spirited away, and (8) nothing of his childhood, but on reaching manhood he (10) travels to London, (11) wins a magical victory, and (13) is chosen king. After other victories he (12) marries Guinevere, heiress of the Round Table. After this he (14) reigns uneventfully, and (15) prescribes the laws of chivalry, but later there is (16) a successful conspiracy against him, while (17) he is abroad. he meets with (18) a mysterious death, and his children do not (20) succeed him, His body is (21) not buried, but nevertheless he has (22) a holy sepulcher at Glastonbury.⁵² (183-4)

These details definitely make Arthur a Raglanian hero, but what makes the whole narrative stand out is the first tenet about the mother being a “royal virgin.” Arthur is “reputed to be the son of Uther Pendragon, who (6) visited (7) Igraine in the Duke’s likeness.” Like Gabriel visiting the Virgin Mary in the likeness of a human, Utherpendragon visits Igerne in the likeness of her husband, Duke Gorlois. Igerne gives birth to a national hero who brings about iconoclastic changes to the British Isles. Lord Raglan—like most earlier structuralists—focuses on the male hero. The woman is only one element out of his twenty-two. I extend this one incident of the virgin mother to the

⁵² I assume that Lord Raglan based his formula on Malory’s text. However, the earlier version of Robert de Boron’s offers more details such as Merlin asking Uther Pendragon to take the child (100). As a baby, Arthur is taken from his mother and reared by a knight called Entor in exchange for his child. Meanwhile Entor has raised the child, nursed with no milk but his wife’s, until he was a fine and handsome youth; and Entor did not know which he loved the more, his own son or the king’s. (106-7) Entor’s biological son is Kay. This explains all the venom Kay has towards everyone. Kay’s own father can not believe that his own can even pull the sword off the anvil of the stone. It is upon Arthur’s request that Kay is appointed seneschal.

broader arena of the mega-archetype arguing that the Virgin Mary is aligned with the typical Raglanian virgin mother of an epic hero.

Unlike Thompson or El-Shamy, who look at the motif as a more meticulous structural building block, the taxonomy proposed here uses not only motifs, but also other building blocks, such as formerly neglected narrative structures, to enrich the mega-archetype. Previous scholarship on motifs (e.g., El-Shamy; Thompson) obviously offers a point of departure from which these specific motifs may be aggregated into a more encompassing structure: the mega-archetype. With this background, the central tenets of the Mary mega-archetype become obvious. Also, these scholars examine these motifs separately, rather than as clusters, and apply them to folktales and myths mostly. My study probes how these motif clusters constitute medieval romances.

Compiling of these above-mentioned tenets provides a motif cluster that constitutes the Mary mega-archetype. While these motifs have already been listed separately by other authors, here I aggregate them into more comprehensive structures. This background leads to the assessment that the Mary mega-archetype is not only constituted on tenets that happen to be motifs, but also that these motifs happen to exist in combinations. I have illustrated how these motifs exist in the combination of the Mary mega-archetype. In the following part of this chapter I demonstrate how these motifs also exist in similar structures in the stories of national heroes that were born out of intercourses in which one of the parents was not particularly aware that they will conceive. This chapter explores the Virgin Mary mega-archetype⁵³ of the Arthurian

⁵³ Chrétien de Troyes wrote his Grail version first, but Robert de Boron was the one to Christianize the Grail since the mega-archetype of the hero who is born to the virgin mother imposes itself through multiple figures in the narrative.

romances not only in Grail terms, but also in hero conception terms through a virgin undefiled mother. I apply this mega-archetypal construct to a number of texts that adopt the concept of the hero's virgin mother. I apply this mega-archetypal construct to a number of texts that tackle the concept of the hero's virgin mother.

The Mary Mega-archetype in Medieval Romances: The Impregnation of Adhan, Igerne and Ellen of Corbonic

In medieval romances a few mothers who give birth to national heroes are impregnated in ways that emulate the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Examples of these women are Adhan, Igerne and Ellen of Corbonic. Adhan conceives the prophet Merlin who is also an advisor to multiple British kings. Merlin's kingly instructions and magical skills contribute to the formation of the British nation, the establishment of the Round Table and Stonehenge, and the birth of Arthur. Igerne conceives Arthur, king of the Round Table who has a strong kingdom and whose knights fare the land in search of the Holy Grail. Elaine of Corbenic conceives Galahad—a later addition to the Arthurian stories—a Grail finalist in many Arthurian versions such as in the *Vulgate Cycle (VC)* and Malory's *Morte Darthur*.

The earlier the hero is in the Arthurian tradition, the closer is his mother to the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Adhan's child-bearing of Merlin is closer to the Virgin Mary mega-archetype than is Igerne's of Arthur. Elaine of Corbenic conceives Galahad—a knight that is a later addition—in a way that adheres less to the mega-archetype.

Adhan's Conception of Merlin

Adhan's conception of Merlin has been narrated in a number of medieval texts. Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first medieval writer to provide an account of Merlin's

conception and birth in his twelfth century *Historia Regum Britanniae* (Thorpe). In the *Vita Merlini* (Clarke), Geoffrey of Monmouth draws deeply on Welsh traditions of Merlin as inspired by Myrddin Wyllt or Myrddin the wild in the Mabinogion (Jones and Jones). Adhan's conception of Merlin is rewritten in *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British*.⁵⁴ Wace's translation is inspired by the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the details of Adhan's impregnation are exactly the same as in Monmouth's original. Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace cover tenets 2, 3, 8, 11 and 21 of the Mary mega-archetype. The thirteenth-century re-writing by Robert de Boron, *Merlin* (Bryant), complements the Merlin narrative with tenets 17, 18, and 19.

In the *Historia*, Geoffrey of Monmouth relates that King Vortigern's immensely strong tower that protects himself from the Saxons keeps crumbling. The magicians tell Vortigern to find "a lad without a father" and sprinkle his blood on the tower. This lad is naturally Merlin, as the tidings of his supernatural conception are narrated to Vortigern by his royal virgin mother who is a nun (Tenet 4). The *Historia* identifies Merlin's mother as "daughter of a king of Demetia and that she lived in that same town, in St Peter's Church, along with some nuns" (Monmouth and Thorpe 167). Thus the idea of the virginity of the mother and her distinguished lineage is stressed (Tenets 2, 3). Defending her chastity (Tenet 11), the mother talks about Merlin's supernatural fertilization by "a human-angel hybrid" (Obermeier, 50) (Tenet 12):

"By my living soul, Lord King," she said, "and by your living soul, too, I did not have relations with any man to make me bear this child. I know only this: that,

⁵⁴ Layamon translates Wace's text into the thirteenth-century English *Brut* (Marvin). The stories of Merlin's conception and Arthur's conception are retold in pages (141, 143) and (153, 155) respectively.

when I was in our private apartments with my sister nuns, some one used to come to me in the form of a most handsome young man. He would often hold me tightly in his arms and kiss me. When he had been some little time with me he would disappear, so that I could no longer see him. Many times, too, when I was sitting alone, he would talk with me, without becoming visible; and when he came to see me in this way he would often make love with me, as a man would do, and in that he made me pregnant. You must decide in your wisdom, my Lord, who was the father of this lad, for apart from what I have told, I have never had relations with a man.” (Monmouth and Thorpe 167-168)

The young man who visits the maiden in her place is a succubus and manifestation of Tenet 7 of the mega-archetype.

However true that Monmouth does not mention a prophecy of the son’s supernatural abilities (Tenet 10), these extra-ordinary abilities are manifest in Merlin’s paranormal talents in deciphering that there is a pool beneath the earth that is making the ground unsteady to bear the tower as well as the two dragons underneath. Moreover, Merlin is capable of revealing the treachery of the magicians.⁵⁵ Monmouth states that: “all those present were equally amazed at his knowledge, and they realized that there was something supernatural about him” (169). Geoffrey of Monmouth dedicates Part V of *Historia* to Merlin’s supernatural ability of prophesizing the future.

⁵⁵ I have discussed in chapter four that Merlin and Arthur are flip sides of the same character and that they have some King Solomon undertones especially with construction and magic. The pool and Solomon’s pool too. Robert de Boron suggests that Merlin inspires Utherpendragon to construct Stonehenge: ‘Listen, then,’ said Merlin. ‘Send men to fetch the great stones that are in Ireland.’ (91) Then, by magic, Merlin brought the stones from Ireland to the cemetery at Salisbury.

Robert de Boron's *Merlin* adds further tenets from the Mary mega-archetype. Adhan's impregnation with Merlin is traced back to the harrowing of hell. In retaliation of the creation of Christ, the demons decide to create Merlin to be an anti-Christ figure. One of the demons suggests that he knows a woman in his power and suggests that they "let the one who can take the shape of a man" (46) impregnate her with a being who can challenge Christ's effect.⁵⁶ The woman they have in mind is a virgin whom the devils trick most of her family into adultery. Like a typical virgin Mary mega-archetype, the soon to be Merlin's mother is stressed out about her chastity (Tenet 2). An elderly "good man" called Blaise,⁵⁷ a Zachariah figure, supports the virgin mother throughout (Tenet 3) and teaches her about piety. However, going through a fit of anger with her younger sister, the virgin becomes vulnerable to the devil who enters her bed and makes her conceive (Tenets 7, 8, and 12):

"this was the demon who had the power to have relations with women and lie with them, he made himself ready, came to her chamber, lay with her, and conceived." Consequently, the women in town address her pregnancy: They looked at her belly and said: "Dear friend, are you with child?" "Truly, ladies," she replied, "I am." "God!" they cried. "Who was it made you so? You're round and full-bellied indeed!"

"I know I am, truly," she said.

"Who is responsible?" they asked.

⁵⁶ Obermeier states in her "Merlin's Conception by Devil in William Rowley's Play *The Birth of Merlin*" that this "passage problematizes incubus and succubus involvement" (54).

⁵⁷ Not mentioned in the earlier Geoffrey of Monmouth version.

“May God comfort me,” she replied, “I’ve no idea at all.”

“Have you had so many men?” they said.

“So help me God,” she answered, “no man has ever done anything to me to cause me to be with child.” (de Boron 53)

De Boron adds a detailed episode of gossip and the inquisition of the women in town about Adhan’s pregnancy (Tenet 17). This incident does not exist in the Galfridian text, proving that that narrative replicas can have narrative structures that emulate the mega-archetype and that are autonomous of the literary text that has been assumed to inspire them.

Furthermore, like the Virgin Mary, the mega-archetypal predecessor, Adhan, gives birth in seclusion—in a tower (Tenets 14, 15). Beyond normal expectations, the child speaks (Tenet 19) when he is only eighteen months old and promises his mother that she will not die on his account (55). Baby Merlin even tells the women who accompany his mother in her imprisonment in the tower that they are “wilder sinners than his mother” (56). Merlin responds to the accusations of Adhan:

“They’re lying, mother. You’ll never be brought to shame as long as I live, and no one will dare touch you or determine your death but God.”

Hearing this, the mother and two women were stricken with awe and said:

“This child has remarkable powers and will be a great man, if he can make such pronouncements!” (de Boron 56).

The baby speaking in the cot when only eighteen months old to exonerate his mother from adultery accusations (de Boron 56, 61) (Tenet 19), is borrowed verbatim from the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. This is another example of tenets and ambient

motifs adhering to the mega-narrative even though not available in the assumed original literary text by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The following table illustrates how tenets from the Mary mega-archetype have been deployed in Adhan’s impregnation of Merlin across the time.

Table 11: Adhan’s Conception of Merlin

Writer	Date	Tenets
Geoffrey of Monmouth’s <i>Historia Regum Britanae</i> and <i>Vita Merlini</i>	First half of the twelfth century	2, 3, 4, 8, 11, and 21
Wace’s <i>Roman de Brut</i>	1155	2, 3, 8, 11, 17, and 21
Robert de Boron’s <i>Merlin</i>	Late twelfth, early thirteenth century	2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 17, 19, and 21

Igerne’s Conception of Arthur

Igerne’s conception of Arthur has been narrated in a number of medieval texts. Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first medieval writer to provide an account of Igerne’s impregnation. Wace’s *Roman de Brut* does not depart from the Galfridian tradition as far as Igerne’s impregnation is concerned. Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace cover 7, 8, and 21 of the Mary mega-archetype while Robert de Boron narration of the same incident in his *Merlin* (Bryant) complements the original narrative with tenets 2, 3, 18, and 21; thus adding extra tenets to Geoffrey of Monmouth’s original three motifs.

According to the two identical versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace, Merlin engineers the conception of Arthur (Geoffrey of Monmouth, Thorpe 205- 207, and Wace, Weiss 217- 221) in a way that is to a great extent similar to that of his own. However, emulating the Virgin Mary mega-archetype in the *Historia* becomes a more diluted version as Arthur’s mother, Igerne does not follow the archetypal tenets as closely

as Adhan does. Igerne is married to Gorlois, count of Tintagel and is seduced by Utherpendragon. According to Wace, “Ygrene behaved in such a way as neither to consent nor refuse” (217). Merlin tells Utherpendragon who wants to seduce her that she is “a wise lady and very loyal both to God” (Tenet 3) “and to her husband.” However, in order to help Utherpendragon approach her, Merlin suggests that by the skill of his magic he will make Utherpendragon take the semblance of the husband Gorlois (Wace 219, 221). In his nocturnal visitation to Igerne, Utherpendragon is transformed by Merlin to look like Gorlois. Thinking it is her husband, Igerne sleeps with Utherpendragon and gets pregnant (Tenet 7, 8). In the versions of Monmouth and Wace, there is no prophecy, but we are told that Arthur will be a great king (Tenet 21). The Galfridian version and its emulations cover tenets 7, 8, and 21 of the Virgin Mary Mega-archetype.

Robert de Boron’s *Merlin* also narrates the episode of Igerne’s impregnation, but adds more tenets from the Mary mega-archetype—just as it did with Adhan. Like the typical chaste virgin mother, Igerne turns down the sassy attempts of Uther to seduce her; she even tells her husband (*Merlin* 100) about Uther’s attempts. In the more recent version of de Boron, however, she is depicted as a chaste woman who is “a wise lady and very loyal both to God and to her husband” (100) (Tenets 2, 3). As in the previous versions, Merlin shapeshifts Arthur by making Utherpendragon rub his face with a magical herb that makes him take the semblance of the duke (100) (Tenet 8). Merlin tells Arthur:

“Sire, I’m going to give you the appearance of the duke: she won’t be able to tell you apart. The duke has two knights especially close to him – one named Bretel and the other Jordan. I’m going to give Ulfin the appearance of Jordan and I’ll

take the shape of Bretel, and I'll have the gate of Igerne's castle opened and you shall lie with her. But you'll have to leave very early, for the morning will bring chilling news. And make sure you don't tell anyone where you're going." [. . .] Utherpendragon and Igerne lay together that night. And he begat an heir who was later to be called King Arthur. (de Boron 100)

A prophecy is made by Merlin to Uther even before the birth of his son, Arthur, who will be a person of high renown: "I can tell you that your son Arthur will be lord of this kingdom after you, and will complete the Round Table that you have begun" (106) (Tenet 9). Merlin prophesizes the birth of Arthur who actually becomes a figure of renown (Tenet 21). Moreover, Tenet 18 is evident when Uther does not speak for three days and his people think he is dead (106). The prophecy (Tenet 10), however, is announced to the siring father—not the mother as the mega-archetype strictly suggests.

The following table illustrates how de Boron sticks more closely to the Virgin Mary mega-archetype than the earlier versions.

Table 12: Igerne's Impregnation

Writer	Date	Tenets
Geoffrey of Monmouth's <i>Historia Regum Britanae</i>	First half of the twelfth century	7, 8, and 21
Wace's <i>Roman de Brut</i>	1155	7, 8, and 21
Layamon's <i>Brut</i>	1200	7, 8, and 21
Robert de Boron's <i>Merlin</i>	Late twelfth, early thirteenth century	2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, and 21

Elaine of Corbenic's Impregnation of Galahad

Elaine of Corbenic is the Grail maiden who seduces Lancelot and conceives Galahad who later becomes the Grail winner. She is called Amite or "the rich Fisher

King's daughter" in the *VC*. The figure of Elaine as the mother of the Grail winner is in fact a later addition to the Arthurian legend just as her son (Sir Galahad) relatively is. Both characters do not appear in the earlier Arthurian texts such as those of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chrétien de Troyes or Robert de Boron. In fact, in the earlier versions of the legend, Elaine features as the Grail bearer, and her character develops and metamorphoses as a virgin mother of the Grail hero in the thirteenth-century *Estoire del Saint Graal* of the *VC* and later on in "The Noble Tale of Sankgraal" in Malory's *Morte Darthur*. With this metamorphosis comes in an emulation of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype tenets.

Typically, Elaine is a virgin (Tenet 2). Her prestigious holy lineage (Tenet 3) is highlighted in the *VC* as she is a descendant of Joseph of Arimathea who brings the Grail and thus Christianity to England. Her father is portrayed as a descendant of Bron, Joseph of Arimathea's brother-in-law, whose line was entrusted with the Grail by Joseph. King Pelles is the son of the maimed king, Galahad's maternal grandfather, is portrayed as a descendant of Bron, Joseph of Arimathea's brother-in-law, whose line was entrusted with the Grail by Joseph. out.

The theme of semblance (Tenet 8) is tweaked in the *VC* as it is Elaine who takes the semblance of Lancelot's beloved, Guinevere, in order to seduce him (*VC* vol. 3, 164-5) Elaine conceives (Tenet 12) Galahad. Even though Elaine conceives extra-martially from Lancelot, her father King Pelles cherishes his virgin daughter more when he realizes that she is pregnant from Lancelot. This virgin mother knows that she will conceive an extraordinary son (Tenets 6, 21). In the opening part of the *VC*, the *Estoire del saint Graal*, first mentions Galahad; it predicts his birth and his eventual achievement of the

Grail. This explains why the people of the land rejoice when they know of this pregnancy (*VC* vol. 3, 165) as it is known that the fertility of the land will be restored through Elaine's son. Sir Galahad is the only Knight in the *VC*, *PVC*, and Malory's *Morte* that can redeem King Arthur and his knights, just as he is the one knight alone who is worthy of achieving the quest for the Holy Grail and restore the fertility of the land.

In these three cases, regardless of how the impregnation and the birth of the national hero happens, these three mothers follow the Virgin Mary mega-archetype in varying degrees. Elaine follows the tenets of the Mary mega-archetype. Unlike Adnan who is impregnated by an incubus, both Igerne and Elaine are impregnated by humans. Not only is Elaine a bearer of the Holy Grail, but she conceives in her womb the Grail Knight too. The symbolism turns him eventually into being a Christ figure that can be traced back to the problematic circumstances of his conception that are borrowed from the Virgin-Mary mega-archetype and this creeps in the character of the miraculously conceived son.

Elaine and Galahad: Ambient Motifs from the Jesus Mega-narrative

In addition to emulating the Virgin Mary mega-archetype, the stories of Elaine of Corbenic and her son Galahad, we see the ambient motifs of the chastity of John the Baptist, the medical miracles of Jesus, the table and the Holy Chalice extensively deployed. Arthurian romances borrow these motifs from the story of the Holy Family.

Chastity of the national hero who can attain the Grail is a focal. When Galahad meets Josephus, the latter tells him "you witnessed the mysteries of the Holy Grail, as I did, and you are a virgin as I am. It is thus fitting that we be together" (*VC* vol. 4, 87). Moreover, when Master Elias talks with Galahad about Lancelot: "he cannot regain the

qualities needed by the one who will complete the Adventure of the Grail. Above all, that man must be from birth to death, so utterly virginal and chaste as never to feel love for a woman, married or not. For your companion it is too late” (*VC* vol. 2, 252-3). Unlike, his adulterous father, Lancelot, Galahad keeps seeing the mysteries of the Grail because he is a pious person. He tells Lancelot that he wants to die soon so that he keeps seeing them (*VC* vol. 4, 86). The people can no longer see the Grail because they are sinful. Thus, it is the chastity of Galahad that distinguishes him from the other Grail finalists such as Bors and Perceval.

Furthermore, like his archetypal predecessor; Jesus, Galahad can perform healing miracles—a trope in hagiographic literature that is not without Jesus-like undertones. Galahad is the only knight who can heal the Fisher King (de Boron 113). Medical capabilities of the chaste hero are, thus, an ambient motif of the Jesus mega-narrative as illustrated above.

Among the other ambient motifs that Arthurian romances borrow from the story of the Holy Family is Christ’s cup in the Last Supper aka the Holy Grail. In “The Magic Horn and Cup in Celtic and Grail Tradition,” Loomis and Stirling Lindsay argue that the origins of the Grail as a horn/platter of plenty can be traced to the Welsh tradition. This could be a valid point, yet the Christian undertones of the Holy Grail as an ambient motif cannot be denied either. The first recorded addition of the Grail to the Arthurian legend can be found in Chrétien de Troyes’ *Perceval*. In this version the vessel is not yet described as holy, it is only a golden serving dish which only a chaste knight can attain. Moreover, it is a serving utensil for bounteous food. The actual earliest connection of the Grail Legend to the Holy Family is in Robert de Boron’s trilogy. De Boron historicizes

the Grail as being brought to England by Joseph of Arimathea while in prison and he gets guidance through this vessel. De Boron says that:

some while ago the Grail was given to Joseph while he was in prison: it was brought to him by Our Lord Himself. And when he was set free Joseph journeyed into the desert with a great many of the people of Judaea. For as long as they held to a good life Our Lord granted them grace, but when they ceased to do so, that grace was denied them. The people asked Joseph if it was through their sin or his that they had fallen from grace, and Joseph grieved deeply and went to his vessel and prayed to Our Lord to send him a sign to guide him. (de Boron 113)

De Boron also tells us that when Joseph dies he bequeaths the Grail to his brother-in-law Bron, the Fisher King (113) who will only be healed when the most renowned knight can attain the Grail and have the blood of Christ in his possession:

When that knight has attained such heights that he's worthy to come to the court of the rich Fisher King, and has asked what purpose the Grail served, and serves now, the Fisher King will at once be healed. Then he will tell him the secret words of Our Lord before passing from life to death. And that knight will have the blood of Jesus Christ in his keeping. With that the enchantments of the land of Britain will vanish, and the prophecy will be fulfilled. (de Boron 113)

Robert de Boron's trilogy (Joseph of Aramathea, Merlin, and Perceval) provides a Christian prehistory of the story; an aspect lacking in Chrétien's identification of the Grail. Thus, there is a gradual shift in Grail symbolism. Obermeier argues in her "The Rhetoric of Symbolism: the Grail of Fertility and Sterility" that Grail symbolism changes meaning (195); whereas Chrétien's Grail is "vague" (196), de Boron's Grail is more

“Christianised” (206) and hence a vehicle for fertility. Chastity, fertility and attaining the Grail are correlated, just as the Mary’s chastity (Tenet 2), fertility (Tenets 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15) and food abundance (Tenet 5, 6, and 20) form a motif cluster in the Virgin Mary mega-archetype.

The above mentioned tenets are manifest in the *VC*, Joseph of Arimathea brings his father’s (Josephus) lineage to England. Josephus asks the three Grail knights to sit at the table and enjoy “the celestial food” this is the “very reason for [their] plunged quest” and he shows them the Holy Grail which is “the platter which Jesus Christ ate the lamb with his disciples on Easter” (*VC* 357). This grail of plenty is no different from the plentiful rewards that Mary receives in the temple. Furthermore, the chalice is a symbol for the womb that is why we see all these maidens carrying vessels in the Arthurian legend. If the Holy Grail as a horn of plenty becomes the epitome of heroism for Arthur’s knights and is the main talisman that gives Arthurian romances Christian undertones, the reverence of it results in tables covered in the finest food.

Another ambient motif that Arthurian legends borrow in general from the Jesus mega-narrative is that of the holy table. The Round Table becomes a token for the success for the success of the British Kingdom. Merlin tells Utherpendragon that:

there have been two kings of Britain before you who have been king of France and emperor of Rome; and be assured of this: there will be a third king of Britain who’ll be king and emperor likewise, and he will conquer the Romans by force of arms. And I tell you, as one to whom Our Lord gave the power to know the future, that two hundred years before you were born, your fate was fixed and prophesied. But first you must be sufficiently worthy and valiant to enhance the

glory of the Round Table. I assure you that you will not be emperor until such time as the Round Table is exalted in the way I shall now say. (de Boron, 112)

This table will relieve Utherpendragon's people from the inflections they are going through. Merlin inspires Utherpendragon to construct the Round Table in Carduel in Wales in the honor of the Trinity and in commemoration of the former two precious tables. this third table is related to two prominent tables; that of the Last Supper and the one constructed by Joseph of Arimathea in the memory of the Last Supper. Like the scriptural table, it is one of bounty. Joseph of Arimathea places the Holy Grail on it:

They implored this knight, as their leader, to ask God why they were suffering such misfortune; and Our Lord bade him make a table in memory of the Last Supper [. . .] Anyone who was able to sit at this table found the fulfilment of his heart's desires. But there was always an empty seat at the table, sire, signifying the place where Judas had sat at the Last Supper when he realized that Our Lord's words referred to him. This place was left symbolically empty at the knight's table, until such time as Our Lord should seat another man there to make up the number of the twelve apostles. And so Our Lord fulfilled men's hearts; and at the second table they called the vessel which bestowed this grace the Grail. If you'll trust in my advice, you'll establish a third table in the name of the Trinity, which these three tables will signify. And if you do this, I promise you it will greatly benefit your body and your soul, and such things will happen in your time as will astound you. (de Boron, *Merlin* 92).

If Joseph of Arimathea placed the Grail on his table and Jesus's table had an empty seat at his, the Arthurian table borrows these two ambient Christian motifs verbatim as there

is an empty seat in Arthur's Table as well as the connections made to the Holy Grail. Merlin informs Uther that: "The one who will fill the empty seat needs to have been in the presence of the Grail" (*Merlin* 94). Merlin advises Arthur to continue his father's mission and to give orders to set up the table right away:

Your father Uther was a most worthy man, and in his time the Round Table was established, which was made to symbolize the table at which Our Lord sat on the Thursday when He said that Judas would betray Him. It was made, too, as a reference to the table of Joseph of Arimathea, which was established for the Grail, when the good were separated from the wicked. (de Boron 112)

Utherpendragon's table is not just a borrowed ambient motif from the Jesus mega-narrative, but like the Grail, becomes a symbol of the superiority of the British Empire that is the lawful inheritor of its Roman predecessor only when he constructs the Round Table.

De Boron obviously adds⁵⁸ the ambient motif of the Table that does not exist in the supposedly earlier texts that he was borrowing from—that of Chrétien's. Thus the structure of the mega-narrative imposes itself sometimes even more than the source text. Later on the *Vulgate Cycle* tells us that as Galahad and his companions leave they see the silver table that they left at the maimed king's palace with the Holy Grail on it. Galahad hears a voice that tells him to carry the silver table from the ship to the city of Sarras until the place to where Jesus Christ consecrated Josephus as bishop. When they get there they see the throne the Lord prepared for Josephus. The table motif is connected to that of the

⁵⁸ Percival's aunt recounts the story of the three tables in the *Vulgate Cycle* (330)

Holy Grail. The purpose of these two motifs is to show the abundance or lack of bounty depending on people's behavior.

Perhaps, the most striking Christian similarity here is Galahad's ascension to heaven. After seeing the Grail in its earthly home Sarras,⁵⁹ Galahad wishes of this world are entirely fulfilled and is visited by his distant great-grand father Joseph of Arimathea and makes his request to die. He is accompanied by the angels and makes his *ascension* to the heavens. The *VC* narrates that at the moment of Galahad's death a hand comes from heaven and takes the lance together with the Holy Grail and takes them up to heaven. Nobody has seen the Holy Grail since then.

Anti-virgins in Mary Mega-archetype Narrative Replicas:

The theme of the hero's chastity is lacking in Chrétien's earlier text. Robert de Boron later adds chastity elements that echo the Jesus mega-narrative; chastity leads to fertility. Just as the chaste Virgin Mary gives birth to Christ, the Virgin Elaine gives birth to the chaste "holy bastard" Galahad who achieves the Holy Grail.

Antithetical to the chastity trope resulting in fertility leading to finding the Holy Grail, is the cuckolding Arthur and his adulterous wife Guinevere. Obermeier states in her Grail article that in the *Perlesvaus/ High book of the Grail*, Guinevere gives birth to Loholt who gets decapitated which is symbolic of Arthur's castration. The heirless Arthur, according to Obermeier is denied fertility as "the Arthurian realm is sterile." (207). As far as Zulaikhah mega-archetype is concerned, Potiphar's wife cannot be pregnant. The same applies to Guinevere.

⁵⁹ Sarras is where Saracens were believed to come from (*VC* abridged 357).

Gawain acts as another cuckold of these romances as he tries to make Arthur more accepting of Guinevere's relationship with Lancelot (*VC* vol. 2, 275). Gawain, like Lancelot and Arthur, never really attains (celestial) heroism. The idea of chastity is, thus, a prerequisite for heroism whether male or female especially in narrative replicas of the Virgin Mary mega-archetype. Similarly, Lancelot is compared to a "leopard does not have weak kidneys he will surpass all other earthly beasts, lions [. . .] I know that his prophecy concerned your companion and that if he kept himself pure, the whole world would have marveled at his feats" (*VC* vol. 2, 253). Neither Gawain nor Lancelot attain the elevated royal or spiritual positions that Arthur or Galahad (and Percival) as their mothers don't fall into the categories of the mega-archetypes inspired by the scriptures. Gawain (and his retinue of younger knights) and Lancelot can be identified as Campbellian heroes, but miss the allure that accompanies the achievements of Arthur, and Galahad. The latter group are better manifestations of being offspring of a mother who is a "royal virgin"⁶⁰ to put it in the context of Lord Raglan's taxonomy and if Arthur is the King of the Round Table, Galahad is the Knight of the Holy Grail.

Since chastity is a major concern here, the Grail can only be attained by a chaste knight (even if not virgin); in this case it is Percival/ Galahad who have distinguished mothers.⁶¹ The addition of the Grail Cycle to the Arthurian narrative whose eponymous hero is associated with a miraculous birth as well as a table and it is through one of his

⁶⁰ The story of the holy family focuses on a number of chaste even virgin figures such as the Virgin Mary herself and John the Baptist.

⁶¹ It is interesting that wendy moonkin poem "guinevere prays for a child" 1999 she prays to St. Anna mary's mother. Lancelot gets a child quiet similar to archetypal structure from a woman who comes from a holy family. The unchaste Guinevere can not engender an heir. When she does it dies.

knights that the Grail can be attained. The aggregation of these motifs leads me to conclude that they are inspired by the mega-narrative of the Holy Family and its as usual it is deciphering the character of the female mega-archetype that the threads to the mega-narrative can be entangled in the maze of motifs. Hence the room of the maze/ secret can be deciphered. It is through the female character mega-archetype that the sands can be cleared off the blueprint which the narrative is constructed around.

Chapter Four: Bilqīs/Queen of Sheba Mega-archetype:

More than Just a Warrior Queen

Bathsheba loved Troy in the way that only self-reliant women love when they abandon their self-reliance. When a strong woman recklessly throws away her strength she is worse than a weak woman who has never any strength to throw away. One source of her inadequacy is the novelty of the occasion. She has never had practice in making the best of such a condition. Weakness is doubly weak by being new.” Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd

*Myrddin went— his gifts were great
Into glass to please his mate Ieuan Dyfi
(Patrick Ford, trans.)*

The strong, independent woman archetype has been explored by a number of scholars. For example, when discussing two female structural archetypes in contrast to each other: the “consort,” Penelope, and the “free woman,” Calypso, Wolff also explores the independent free woman as an Amazonian woman. She postulates that the time she is living in

offers plenty of scope [. . . that] is favorable for the Amazon who is independent and self-contained in the positive meaning of the term. She is independent of the male, because her development is not based upon a psychological relationship to him [. . .] she strives to win the laurels herself. (9)

Wolff further notes that, although she can be a comrade to a male, the Amazon is also a “competitor and a rival who deserves to be taken seriously, who incites his ambitions and inspires his best male achievements” (9-10). Kruk, likewise, studies the Amazons as warriors but falls short in using a male hero taxonomy and putting the female warrior

hero—the Amazon—in its mold (20-23).

This chapter interprets the strong independent warrior woman archetype inspired by the Queen of Sheba as a mega-archetype is constituted of seventeen tenets that form a narrative structure. The Sheba mega-archetype goes beyond the character archetype of the strong woman and can be found in medieval romances especially those about the European Lady of the Lake and the Arabic Princess of High Resolve .

The Queen of Sheba/Bilqīs Mega-archetype Overview

Known as Bilqīs in Islamic tradition, the Biblical Queen of Sheba constitutes much of the Solomon, the king of Israel, mega-narrative.⁶² This mega-archetype suggests a queen distinguished by her armaments, military prowess, character, and knowledge/magic.

Not only the right of her “royal-birth” (Raglan 212) but also her self-made character make her knowledgeable and powerful. This wise, politically powerful queen rules over a parliament or a group of knights. Her opposition is a king who is also knowledgeable and powerful and who may or may not be interested in marrying the queen. However, the queen’s power challenges and provokes him. Her affluent kingdom raises the king’s curiosity and prompts the ensuing narrative. In other words, the Bilqīs mega-archetype is a narrative structure that functions in terms of a power differential between a powerful woman/queen and a powerful man/king who attempts to subjugate this feminine power. Whether this binary of power is oppositional or complementary, this oscillating relationship is the crux of the mega-archetype.

⁶² I use both terms “Sheba” and “Bilqīs” interchangeably to refer to the strong, independent woman mega-archetype as well as the Amazon archetype.

The Bilqīs mega-archetype suggests possible scenarios of whether the queen and her body are subjugated by a male figure. This partial or metaphorical appropriation of the female body is deployed in narrative replicas as themes of rape or sacking a woman's territory. Thus, the body of the female and her territory become subjects of the male gaze that tries to take control (Mulvey 837). Appropriation, a prominent motif in this mega-archetype, could be full appropriation, as in rape, or partial, as in losing her possessions or her land being occupied by a king. Thus, themes such as virginity, exposure of the female body, and attempts to transgress are found in narrative replicas. At least one side of this queen-king dichotomy imposes some sort of impending threat on the other. The question of whose is the more powerful empire is prominent. In order to alleviate the anger of the superior party, the other side must yield through giving gifts to the stronger side. One side hybridizes into the other and converts to its beliefs, making the Queen of Sheba tale apt material in nationalistic narratives. Crossing of boundaries between two powerful realms is also one of the tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype.

My taxonomy is applicable to the portrayal of the Lady of the Lake in the *Vulgate Cycle* and elucidates why the *Cycle* frequently connects the Lady of the Lake and the Roman goddess Diana. I examine this relationship as it illustrates the archetypal connections between Diana, her Greek predecessor Artemis, and the Lady of the Lake. I then correlate these findings with the medieval Arabic text *Al-Amira Dhāt al Himma* and examine whether Dhāt al-Himma is a female warrior, as Kruk suggests. In an attempt to remedy the academic lack in scholarship on royal warrior heroines, I combine a number of different Sheba mega-archetype narrative replicas with literary works and examine

them in conjunction with literary works from both the European and the Arabic. The structure of the Bilqīs mega-archetype is constituted of these tenets:

Table 13 Tenets for Bilqīs Mega-archetype

1. The King is informed about a Queen who lives on the margins of his kingdom
2. Talking animals
3. The Queen belongs to a different tradition/religion
4. The Queen is powerful (in terms of money, political power and wisdom)
5. The King is powerful
6. The King approaches/challenges/tests/educates the Queen
7. The Queen is fair/democratic and seeks advice from her parliament/people
8. Gifts: peaceful political relations preferred to war
9. Queen travels to meet the King
10. Supernatural crossing boundaries and moving between two realms
11. Magic: Jinn and supernatural beings (as helpers)
12. Appropriating the Queen's throne
13. King tests the Queen again (test of faith)
14. Magical glass palace
15. The King sees the Queen's legs when she lifts her frock
16. Water (or glass) palace
17. Power dialectic: Queen saved through conversion: renouncing older traditions. Hybridity-Disenchantment. New education.

The Bilqīs a mega-archetype is a narrative structure constituted of tenets that are extracted from the verses in the Qur'an that refer to the female figure, Bilqīs. The Qur'an tells the Bilqīs story in *surah* 27, entitled *al-Naml* or, eponymously, "The Ants," verses 15-44. The Qur'an tells of Solomon and Sheba's kingdom in *surah* 34 entitled "Saba"—Arabic for "Sheba"; however, *surah* 34 primarily retells the wisdom and affluence of David and Solomon rather than contributing to the mega-archetype; thus contributing to the Solomon mega-narrative instead.

Supporting evidence and ambient motifs are found in the Solomon mega-narrative, the hadith, and the Bible. The Bible mentions the story of Sheba and Solomon in Kings I (verses 1-13), 2 Chronicles 9 (verses 1-12), Luke (11:31), and in Matthew (12:42) where Sheba is referred to as the "Queen of the South" who will rise in the Day of Judgment in. The Solomon mega-narrative, on the other hand, refers to the story of Solomon as a whole and to the literary and structuralist motifs that can be borrowed from the qur'anic non-Sheba verses and the biblical Sheba and Solomon verses.

Another text that contributes to this discussion, but does not provide tenets for the mega-archetype, is the thirteenth-century Ethiopian national saga entitled the *Kēbra Nagast (The Glory of Kings)* (Budge 15-47). Borrowing from Coptic and Muslim folklore, this text combines tales from the Bible and the Qur'an and, thereby, adds ambient motifs to the mega-archetype. This medieval work retells, from an Ethiopian perspective, the days from Adam to the Ascension of Christ. The work's core tale covers Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, named Queen Mākēdā in this text, and it concludes with the Ethiopian-Roman relationships. *The Glory* traces the Solomonic line of Kings and narrates a similar version of the biblical and qur'anic stories of the Queen of Sheba.

The Glory traces Mâkĕdâ's (Yemenite Bathsheba) conversion; in addition, it retells how the Ethiopians converted from venerating the sun, moons, and stars to worshipping the Lord of Israel and the lawful ancestry of the kings of Ethiopia. Sheba was not only a queen but also a representation of a matriarchal tradition that sustained in Ethiopia "from the earliest times, the kingdom of Abyssinia was ruled over by royal princesses" (Budge xxxiv). Thus, *The Glory* adds texture to the discussion of the Sheba mega-archetype.

Bilqīs is not only crucial in history and religion, but also her mega-archetype is deployed extensively in medieval tales as an image of the strong woman and the hero's foster mother. Examples of her mega-archetype can be traced in the protagonist of the Arabic medieval saga of *Sīrat Al-Amira Dhat al Himma (The Princess of High Resolve and her Son A'bdel-Wahāb)* (Shawqī), in the most royal female character of Arthurian literature, the Lady of the Lake, and in the Greek/Roman mythological figure Artemis/Diana, with whom the Lady of the Lake is often associated in the *Vulgate Cycle*. In addition, the Bilqīs mega-archetype is also manifest in the character of Morgan La Fay, who is the flip side of the Lady of the Lake. Just as Solomon and Sheba are political rivals, the Lady of the Lake and Morgan La Fay threaten Merlin's magical capabilities by impinging on his domain of magic. In this sense, the Lady of the Lake, Morgan La Fay, and The Princess of High Resolve illustrate Bilqīs mega-archetype as all are cautionary female sovereigns. Moreover, just as the Lady of the Lake is Lancelot's foster mother, the Princess of High Resolve is the mother of Prince A'bdel-Wahāb. Hence, these heroes have mothers who belong to the Bilqīs mega-archetype.

Origins of the Bilqīs Mega-archetype: Qur’anic and Biblical sources

The story of Sheba is narrated in the Qur’an in *surah 27*, where Solomon’s interest is piqued when the hoopoe, an Afro-Eurasian bird noted for its crown of feathers, tells him of a pagan female monarch, Bilqīs, who rules Sheba (27:22-23) (Tenet 1). The queen belongs to another religion/tradition (Tenet 3) as she and her subjects adore “the sun instead of God; and Satan has made these doings of theirs seem goodly to them, and [thus] has barred them from the path [of God], so that they cannot find the right way” (17:24).

Solomon is told in the Bible that this queen rules an opulent land filled with an abundance of all good things. The queen’s expansive power and wealth (Tenet 4) are inferred from the detailed biblical descriptions of her “arriving with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones” (1 Kings 10:2; 2 Chronicles 9:2). She transports to Jerusalem elaborately loaded caravans of gifts (Tenet 7) from her opulent kingdom for Solomon (Tenet 8) . Extravagantly,

[she] gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. (Hiram’s ships brought gold from Ophir; and from there they brought great cargoes of almuġwood and precious stones. The king used the almuġwood to make supports for the temple of the LORD and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. So much almuġwood has never been imported or seen since that day.) (1 Kings 10:10-13)

Whereas in the Bible, we infer Sheba’s wealth from the gifts she bestows on Solomon, such as materials to build his temple, the Qur’an states clearly that Bilqīs is “[. . .] a

woman ruling over [her people]; and she has been given [abundance] of all [good] things, and hers is a mighty throne” (27:23) (Tenet 4).

Sheba, is also referred to as the “Queen of the South” in Matthew (12:42) and Luke (11:31). Her political skill and astuteness put her in par with Solomon, and she “will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here” (Matthew 12:42). Jesus preaches to the people of Nineveh, a “wicked generation,” that “The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here” (Luke 11:31).

Solomon, as the king, is also powerful, if not even more powerful, more affluent, and more knowledgeable than the queen (Tenet 5). He exceeds Sheba both in wisdom and in wealth, is recorded as having six hundred mighty thrones (Altorki 159), and rules over an affluent kingdom, as the Qur’an, the Bible, and the *Kēbra Nagast* state. In the Bible, Sheba visits Solomon in order to test him with riddles, but “Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her” (1 Kings 10:3). In 1 Kings 4:33-34, Solomon “spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He spoke about plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also spoke about animals and birds, reptiles and fish.” Similarly, qur’anic *surahs* attest to Solomon’s exceptional faculties and, thereby, contribute to the ambient motifs of this mega-archetype.

Not only does Solomon hear about Bilqīs’ great kingdom from the hoopoe (Qur’an 27:20), but he can also understand and talk to ants and jinns (invisible, intelligent

spirits (27:17-19; 38:36). Solomon overhears the animals' conversation, which he understands. He understands the language of the ant who warns her army to flee saying:

O you ants! Get into your dwellings, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you without [even] being aware [of you]!; Thereupon [Solomon] smiled joyously at her words, and said: 'O my Sustainer! Inspire me so that I may forever be grateful for those blessings of Thine with which Thou hast graced me and my parents, and that I may do what is right [in a manner] that will please Thee; and include me, by Thy grace, among Thy righteous servants!;' And [one day] he looked in vain for [a particular one of] the birds; and so he said: 'How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or could he be among the absent?' (27:17-19).

Solomon owns a mighty throne, a ring (Budge xxviii), and flying carpet (Budge xlvi), and has dominion over the devils (Budge 22). Solomon's wisdom and his extraordinary skills are intricately related to his wealth. Hence, this powerful figure (Tenet 4) rejects Bilqīs' gift (Tenet 7) in favor of her conversion.

Upon hearing of Bilqīs from the bird (Tenet 2), Solomon challenges Bilqīs and her people (Tenet 6) to worship his one God and to quit heliolatry. True to his nature, Solomon writes a letter that is direct, serious, and, in Sheba's words, "truly distinguished" (Qur'an 27:28). Solomon quotes God who wants all unbelievers, like Bilqīs to "Exalt not yourselves against Me, but come unto Me in willing surrender!" (27:29). When reading it, she fears what Solomon might do to her people. In response to Solomon's entreaty (Tenet 6), the queen turns to her noblemen (Tenet 7) for advice (27:32). In response to the Queen's plea, the noblemen at first defer because "the command is thine" (27:33), but they then tepidly counsel her to wage war. Bilqīs, more

level-headed than the men in her retinue, responds that she fears Solomon because “whenever kings enter a country they corrupt it” (27:34). Ultimately, she must decide their course. In a gesture of feminine politics and to test his conviction, Bilqīs sends Solomon a present (12:35), thus enacting Tenet 8 of the mega-archetype. She erroneously thinks Solomon favors riches; however, the powerful Solomon (Tenet 5) wants her to convert for otherworldly reasons. Offended, he refuses her gift (27:36) and threatens her envoys that he will drive her people from their lands, leaving them “despicable and humbled!” (27:37).

The Bible, however, states that after hearing of the glamour of Solomon’s kingdom and admiring his wisdom when meeting him, Sheba approaches him shrewdly through a gesture of bounty. Sheba’s wisdom inspires her caution; she gives Solomon gifts, including almugwood, so he can build his temple. And Solomon spends seven years building his shrine (1 Kings, 10:11-12; 2 Chronicles 9:10-11). On her return to her country, Sheba accepts gifts from the biblical Solomon in return for the ones she has given him (Kings I, 10:13; 2 Chronicles 9:12). This exchange of gifts is another manifestation of Tenet 7. Furthermore, Tenets 4 and 5 which focus on the power of both monarchs, are reconciled through the political gesture of gifting (Tenet 8).

Tension exists in the relationship as the queen is challenged by the king (Tenet 6). As the qur’anic Solomon turns down Bilqīs’ gift, the religious-political situation escalates so Bilqīs eventually visits Solomon (Tenet 9). The female protagonist of this mega-archetype sets herself up as a distinguished entity through the space that she occupies. Sheba/Bilqīs/Mâkēdâ all have kingdoms and live within the confines of civilized societies, but their kingdoms are pictured as distinct tropes from that of the king’s. These

feminine kingdoms are situated in liminal spaces, so the queen must undertake a long journey from her home kingdom to that of the king. Bilqīs's kingdom is far from that of Solomon, as the hoopoe's roundtrip journey to her kingdom takes a few days. Before her arrival, Solomon attempts to show Bilqīs a sign of his divinely-endowed strength by obtaining and altering Bilqīs' throne (Tenet 10),⁶³ and one of the jinns who serves Solomon obtains it (27:38) (Tenets 11 and 12). When Bilqīs recognizes the throne as hers, Solomon sees she has guided herself "[to the truth]" (12:40).

Solomon is testing Bilqīs (Tenet 13) with the altered throne. Because she doesn't want to lie, the sagacious (Tenet 3) Bilqīs uses the term "seems" to identify it (12:42). Unlike Sheba who tests Solomon with riddles in the Bible, Solomon tests Bilqīs by seeing how she reacts to his letter (Tenet 6 and 13) and then by investigating whether she recognizes her throne (Tenet 12). Instead of the King testing the Queen (Tenet 11), it is Sheba who tests Solomon. Thus, Tenet 11 is flipped.

Solomon also shows Bilqīs another miracle when he invites her to enter a pavilion constructed from glass over a water plane (Tenet 16). When Bilqīs enters, she thinks she sees a fathomless expanse of water and lifts her gown, exposing her legs (Tenet 15). When she exposes her legs, Solomon tells her it is built of thinly spread crystal, thus

⁶³ According to the Qur'an, one genie suggests that he can bring him her throne before Solomon raises from his place while another says that he can get him Bilqīs's throne before his glance returns to him (27:39-40). Likewise, Stuart Munro-Hay states in his *The Quest for the Ark of the Covenant: The True History of the Tablets of Moses* that in a Coptic source fragment published by Erman in 1879, an unnamed queen informs Solomon that there is a pillar in her homeland that contains the wisdom of the earth (70-1). The fragment hints that Solomon orders his spirit subjects to bring the pillar from her land. One jinn goes to Ethiopia to fetch the pillar, and it arrives instantly. The motif employed in this episode is closely reminiscent of Bilqīs's throne being transferred to Jerusalem in no time. It is a trope in the queen of Sheba narratives that her possessions are transposed.

showing her the miraculous wisdom that is endowed on him by his God. She confirms her conversion (Tenet 17) by crying, “O my Sustainer! I have been sinning against myself thy worshipping aught but Thee]: but [now] I have surrendered myself, with Solomon, unto the Sustainer of all the worlds!” (Qur’an 27:44).

Whereas the biblical story stops at Tenet 9 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype, the thirteenth-century Ethiopian saga, *Kēbra Nagast: The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek*, also known as *The Glory of Kings* (Budge), deploys fifteen tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype.

Kēbra Nagast rewrites the Queen of Sheba story as a chronicle of the Ethiopian nation since the time of Adam; it is a history of the transmission of the Tabernacle from Israel to Abyssinia. The text makes Solomon and Mākēdâ, the Queen of Sheba, the foci of that pseudo-chronological account. In the *Kēbra Nagast*, Solomon receives Mākēdâ in a nighttime that “was illuminated as by day, for in his wisdom he had made shining pearls which were like unto the sun, and moon, and stars [and had set them] in the roof of his house” (Tenet 5) (Budge 30). Solomon’s palace echoes the glass palace on water in the Qur’anic version (Tenet 14) (27:44). The queen becomes desirable to the king who seeks to fully appropriate her (Tenet 12). The Qur’anic version admits to a partial appropriation, that is, taking possession of Bilqīs’s throne. In the *Kēbra Nagast*, Solomon rapes and impregnates Mākēdâ (Budge 27). He justifies his sexual act by deceiving Mākēdâ into breaking an oath to take nothing by force from his palace (Budge 30-1). Solomon feeds her food designed to heighten her desire for water but will only allow her to drink after their sexual liaison. As Bilqīs is undone by stepping on what she assumes is water, so Mākēdâ is seduced by the want of drink. Thus, the *Kēbra Nagast* fulfills an

echo of Tenet 15. The Mâkědâ story deploys fifteen tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype leaving out motifs of talking animals and supernatural crossing of boundaries (Tenets 2 and 10).

Solomon Mega-narrative Ambient Motifs

Whereas the seventeen tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype are inspired by the qur'anic verses that refer to the queen of Sheba, the Solomon mega-narrative is inspired by the *surahs* and the biblical passages that refer to Solomon even if not referring to Bilqīs. The Solomon mega-narrative inspires the ambient motifs that infiltrate the narrative replicas emulating the structure of the Bilqīs mega-archetype narrative structure. Among the ambient motifs of the Solomon mega-narrative are Solomon's wisdom and metaphysical knowledge, his masonry capabilities, his division of a person's body for legal purposes and Bilqīs as a single queen. These ambient motifs are present in medieval texts that have Merlin stories. Merlin, more often than not, is associated with the Lady of the Lake.

A single queen, sexual abstinence, and the female ruler's virginity are constants in Bilqīs narrative replicas. Both the Bible and the Qur'an mention no consort spouse of Queen Bilqīs. Solomon comes across a people who are ruled by a woman but finds no personal details. However, Mâkědâ tells Solomon that she is a virgin, comes from a line of matriarchal queens, and is prophesied to alter the matriarchal line into a patriarchy (Budge 32-37). The Ethiopian text suggests that her virginity might not have been a matter of choice, after all.

Monstrous Threatening Queen

Islamic and Jewish folklore hyperbolizes Sheba's power by circulating that she possessed hairy legs, a signifier of masculinity. Islamic and Jewish folklore tell multiple stories about this menacing male trait. Solomon tells Sheba, "you are a beautiful woman but hairiness is for men" (Lassner 16-17). Her deformity prevents her from getting married, and she, thus, stays a virgin who focuses on her empire. Female power despite being a frightening trope that intrigues Solomon. The marital status of the strong female monarch and curiosity about her body showcase how an ambient motif infiltrates the mega-narrative from folklore.

Solomon's Metaphysical Knowledge

The Qur'an discusses Solomon's wisdom and metaphysical knowledge (27:15-16). For example, Solomon was able to understand the speech of birds (27:16) as well as that of ants (27:18-19). Moreover Solomon was able to control

the wind: its morning course [covered the distance of] a month's journey, and its evening course, a month's journey. And We caused a fountain of molten copper to flow at his behest; and [even] among the invisible beings there were some that had [been constrained] to labor for him by his Sustainer's leave and whichever of them deviated from Our command, him would We let taste suffering through a blazing flame. (34:12)

Not only is the stormy wind speeding at Solomon's behest (34:12 and 21:81), but also jinns follow his command (38:36). This power is reminiscent of Tenet 10 that is concerned with the magical crossing of boundaries in the Bilqīs mega-archetype. Even the rebellious jinns labor for Solomon as builders and divers (38:37). Some of them are

also fettered by him (38: 38). Others work as builders making “for him whatever he wished of sanctuaries, and statues, and basins as [large as] great watering—troughs, and cauldrons firmly anchored” (34:13).⁶⁴ These masonry magical capabilities of Solomon inspire the glass palace motif that fools Bilqīs. Similarly, Merlin, the Solomon-like figure of Arthurian romances, is a skilled mason who builds Stonehenge and other prominent buildings.

⁶⁴ Solomon’s command over the Jinns sustains a little after his death. The Qur’an states that the jinns, who, by God’s command, were working on construction projects for Solomon, discovered Solomon’s death when the earthworm gnawed his staff (Qur’an 34:14)

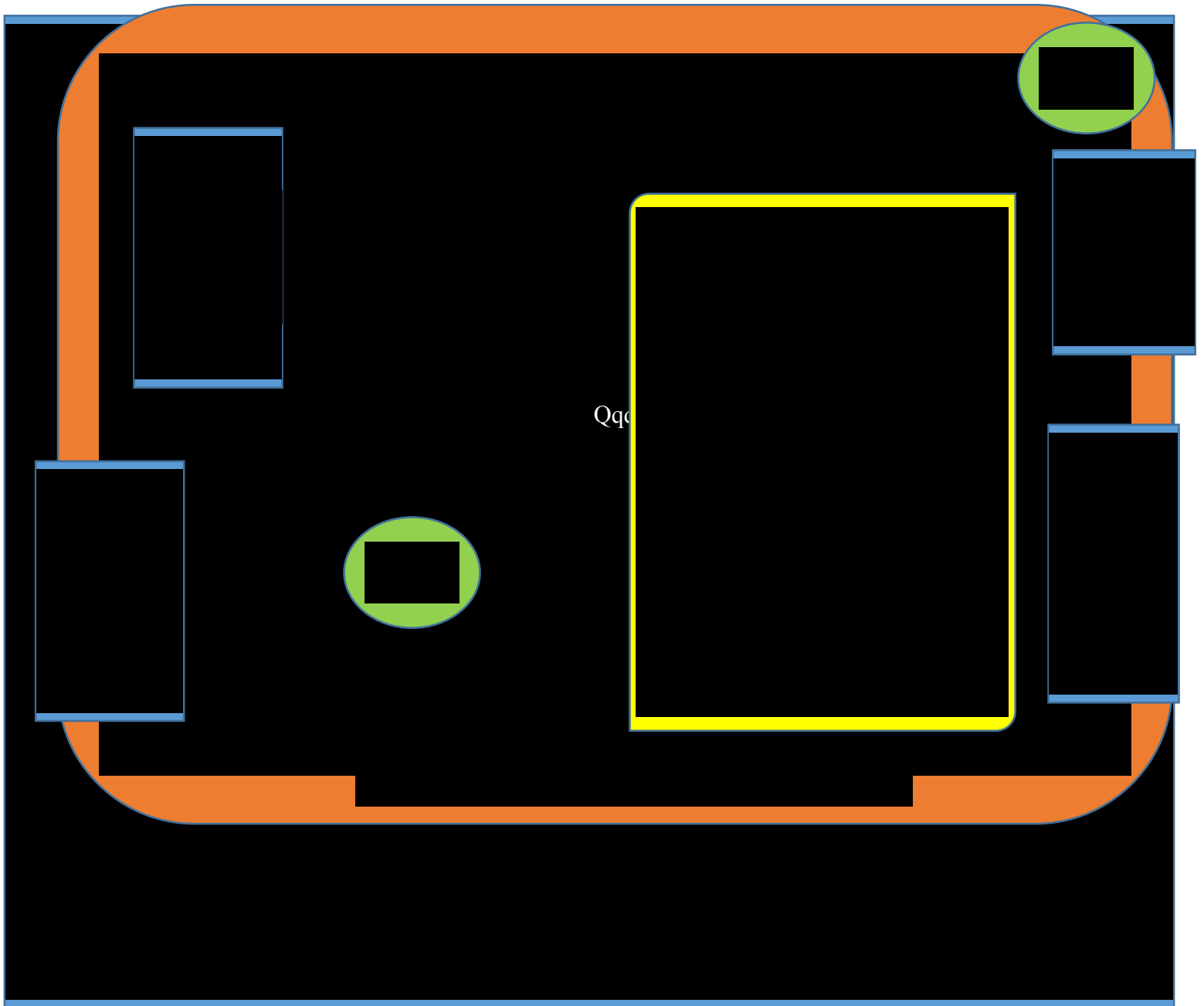


Figure 7 Qur'anic/Biblical Story of Solomon

Figure 7 illustrates the aspects of the Solomon mega-narrative and the Bilqīs the mega-archetype (i.e., language and style, connections, history, moral). The center of the figure illustrates the interchange between the mega-archetype tenets and the clusters of ambient motifs.

Tenets of the Bilqīs Mega-archetype in Earlier Scholarship

I have identified the seventeen tenets/motifs that constitute the Bilqīs mega-archetype narrative structure (see Table 2) are delineated separately rather than a unified structure in motif indexes of various folklorists (Aarne, Thompson, El-Shamy). Uther, on the other hand, argues that motifs exist within certain combinations, a situation no different from how mega-archetypes function because mega-archetypes are constituted of structural motif-clusters. The following discussion delves into why these particular motifs taken from the Bilqīs mega-archetype and the Solomon mega-narrative, cluster together. I illustrate how the tenets correspond to some selected motifs that folklorists keyed in their motif-indexes without examining them as a narrative structure.

Table 14 Tenets and Motifs of Bilqīs Mega-archetype

Designations in the right-hand column come from the various folklore sources for the motifs and are listed by the numbering system from the source: Uther = ATU; Aarne and Thompson = AT; El-Shamy = El-Shamy)

Tenets of Sheba Mega-archetype	Relevant Motifs and their Titles	Motif Reference
1-The King is informed about a Queen who lives on the margins of his kingdom.	Hoopoe reports wondrous sights (to Solomon).	B0122.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 161)
2- Speaking animals	Speaking animals	B210. †B210. (AT)
3- The Queen belongs to a different tradition/religion	Tabu: marrying queen of certain race.	C162.1. †C162.1. (AT)
4- The Queen is powerful (in terms of money, political power and wisdom)	Queens. ----- Clever queen. Queen as intercessor with king -Queen meddles in state affairs Queen as head of government. (Female as sovereign) Extraordinary throne Solomon’s golden throne. Thirty-three steps high. Golden animals on all sides and on steps Tabu: female (queen) heading government (female as sovereign). Supreme goddess: all-powerful female deity Why a woman may not ‘top’ a man (in government, coition): punishment for sin (rebellion) of Adam's first mate. Tabu: woman ‘topping’ man during coition. Tabu: woman riding war-horse (sign before Doomsday). \ Ambitious queen. Queen as head of government. (Female as sovereign). Government by women. Bilqīs (Queen of Sheba) objects to marrying:	P20. †P20. (AT) P20.1. †P20.1. (AT) P21.1. †P21.1. (AT) P25. †P25. (AT) P0020.5\$ (El-Shamy, F0785 (El-Shamy, 439) F0785.1 (El-Shamy, 439) C0181.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 219) A0101.0.1\$(El-Shamy, 19) A1352.4\$ (El-Shamy, 106) C0119.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 215) C0181.10.1\$ (El-Shamy, 219)

	<p>but if she must, she will marry only a king. Magic knowledge from queen of other world. Culture-heroine: female as culture-hero. <i>As-sayyidah</i> Zaynab: supreme saint (culture-heroine, ‘The Lady\$, The Chieftainess\$, etc.). Heroines of <i>siyar</i> (CUnaytirah/’)Inaitrah\$, Dhât al-Himmah, al-Jâziyah, etc.).</p>	<p>P0025.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1087) P0020.5\$ (El-Shamy, 1086)</p> <p>P0020.6\$ (El-Shamy, 1087) T0131.11.1.2.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1561)</p> <p>D1810.1. †D1810.1. (AT) A0507\$ (El-Shamy, 55) V0250.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1827)</p> <p>Z0205\$ (El-Shamy, 2128)</p>
<p>5- The King is powerful in terms of wealth- knowledge- magic-</p>	<p>Magic powers and manifestations Solomon, offered any gift from God, chooses wisdom. Granted wisdom and wealth. Three thousand parables of Solomon. “Forty-nine gates of wisdom” open to Moses (and Solomon). Solomon as wise man. Solomon, permitted by God to make any request, asks wisdom. Granted wisdom and wealth. Solomon refuses water of immortality for himself when he cannot have it for his possessions also. Solomon able to detect truth without evidence of witnesses. The Irish Solomon (Cormac mac Airt). Famed for his clever decisions. Solomon’s judgment: the divided child. Two women claim a child. Judge offers to cut it in two. Real mother refuses.</p>	<p>†D1700--D2199 (AT) L212.2. †L212.2. (AT)</p> <p>J182.1. †J182.1. (AT)</p> <p>J191.1. †J191.1. (AT) J231.1. †J231.1. (AT)</p> <p>J369.1. †J369.1. (AT)</p> <p>J1140.1. †J1140.1. (AT)</p> <p>J1170.2. †J1170.2. (AT)</p> <p>J1171.1. †J1171.1. (AT)</p>

	<p>Solomon's judgment: the divided bride. Three suitors dispute over a woman. When it is proposed to divide her, true lover is discovered. Solomon's power to hold kingdom dependent on ring; drops it in water.</p> <p>Biblical worthy as magician.</p> <p>Solomon as master of magicians.</p> <p>Magic knowledge (wisdom) of Solomon.</p> <p>Solomon's golden throne. Thirty-three steps high. Golden animals on all sides and on steps.</p> <p>Wind serves Solomon as horse and carries him everywhere.</p> <p>Culture-hero as ruler of the entire world (cosmocrator)—(Alexander, Solomon, etc.).</p> <p>Solomon as master of magicians.</p> <p>Supernatural knowledge of jinn (fairies, demons, Satan).</p> <p>Three thousand parables of Solomon.</p> <p>Solomon as wise man.</p> <p>Solomon, permitted by God to make nay [sic] request, asks wisdom. Granted wisdom and wealth.</p> <p>Health chosen as the most precious thing.</p>	<p>J1171.2. †J1171.2. (AT)</p> <p>D1335.5.2. †D1335.5.2. (AT)</p> <p>D1711.1. †D1711.1. (AT)</p> <p>D1711.1.1. †D1711.1.1. (AT)</p> <p>D1810.0.10. †D1810.0.10. (AT)</p> <p>F785.1. †F785.1. (AT)</p> <p>F963.1. †F963.1 (AT)</p> <p>A0517\$ (El-Shamy, 58)</p> <p>D1711.1.1, (El-Shamy, 298)⁶⁵</p> <p>D1810.0.4.1\$ (El-Shamy, 306)</p> <p>J0080.1(El-Shamy, 605)</p> <p>J0191.1 (El-Shamy, 618)</p> <p>J0231.1 (El-Shamy, 625)</p> <p>J0232 (El-Shamy, 625)</p> <p>J0369.1 (El-Shamy, 630-1)</p>
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⁶⁵ Link related motifs in El-Shamy such as D2198, Magic control over spirits (angels), F0200.0.1.1\$, Solomon puts jinn to industrious work (forced labor), F0254.2.1\$, Jinn not omniscient: they have no knowledge of future (destiny) and R0181.3\$, Demons (jinn) escape forced labor through accidental knowledge of captor's (Solomon's) death.

	<p>Solomon refuses water of immortality for himself when he cannot have it for his possessions also.</p> <p>Solomon's judgment: the divided child. Type: 926.</p> <p>Solomon as prophet. Type: 908\$, 920, 926, 926C. Link: P0507.4.1.1.1\$</p> <p>Conquering ruler (king).</p> <p>King (ruler) as conqueror.</p> <p>Solomon as prophet-king--(the first). Type: 774S\$, 930F\$.</p> <p>Money (gold) is all powerful</p>	<p>J1171.1 (El-Shamy, 679)</p> <p>M0301.7.5\$ (El-Shamy, 956-7)</p> <p>P0012.5.0.2\$ (El-Shamy, 1072)</p> <p>P0019.6\$ (El-Shamy, 1086)</p> <p>P0507.4.1.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1239)</p> <p>U0069\$ (El-Shamy, 1693)</p>
6- The King approaches/challenges/tests/educates the Queen	<p>Tests of cleverness. Propounding of riddles. King propounds riddles.</p> <p>Queen of Sheba propounds riddles to Solomon</p> <p>Riddles sent to Solomon by King Hiram.</p> <p>Person remembers all he has ever learned.</p> <p>Queen of Sheba propounds riddle to Solomon.</p> <p>Queen banished when she defeats king in argument.</p> <p>Maiden queen prefers to fight instead of marrying, but is at last conquered and married.</p>	<p>†H500--†H899. (AT)</p> <p>H0540 (AT)</p> <p>H540.3. †H540.3. (AT)</p> <p>H540.2.1. †H540.2.1. (AT)</p> <p>H540.3.1. †H540.3.1. (AT)</p> <p>D1911 (El-Shamy, 316)</p> <p>H0540.2.1 (El-Shamy, 541)</p> <p>S416. †S416. (AT)</p> <p>T311.4. †T311.4. (AT)</p>
7- The Queen is fair/democratic and seeks advice from her parliament/people	<p>Female as deliverer of a nation.</p> <p>Queen intervenes for condemned courtiers.</p>	<p>P0710.6\$ (El-Shamy, 1279)</p> <p>P21. †P21. (AT)</p>
8- Gifts: peaceful political relations preferred to war	<p>Wisdom lost by accepting bribes and gifts.</p> <p>Enemies reconciled by gifts which the one's son tells are sent from the other.</p> <p>Feudal tribute. Specified interchange of aid and gifts.</p> <p>Gift-giving (exchange of presents) as farsighted</p>	<p>J186. †J186. (AT)</p> <p>K2373. †K2373. (AT)</p> <p>P533. †P533. (AT)</p> <p>J0708.5\$ (El-Shamy, 649)</p>

	<p>economy. Goods exchanged. Gifts as rewards for gifts. Intent behind gift received by person of opposite sex questioned. Bribe claimed to be a gift (charity). Type: 516A. Kings exchange presents (gifts). Type: cf. 725. Bribery (rashwah, ‘burtail’). Dumb barter. Goods exchanged without owners meeting or directly communicating: buyer leaves own commodity next to seller’s, deal completed if seller takes buyer’s article. </p>	<p>P0771.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1321) Q0114.2 (El-Shamy, 1368) T0041.7.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1514) K2096.6\$ (El-Shamy, 883) P0014.12.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1077) P0503.7\$ (El-Shamy, 1235) P0774.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1324)</p>
9- Queen travels to meet the King	Female (maiden, woman) as suitor: she proposes marriage to man.	T0055.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1523-4)
10-Supernatural crossing boundaries and moving between two realms	<p>Journey to terrestrial other worlds Man carried by bird. Magic journey: man carried by spirit or devil. Person carried to upper world by deity (spirit). Man (Sindbad) fastens himself to giant bird (roc) and is carried by it. Type: 936A\$. Magic air journey. Type: 306, 325.</p>	<p>†F110. B0552 (El-Shamy, 189) D2121.5 (El-Shamy, 325) F0063, (El-Shamy, 365) B0552.1.2\$ (El-Shamy, 189) D2135 (El-Shamy, 325)</p>
11- Magic: Jinn and supernatural beings (as helpers)	<p>Supernatural helpers Chief with three supernatural ogre helpers. Helpful genie (spirit). Helpful angel. Fairy as helper Man carried through air by angel. Magic control over spirits (angels).</p>	<p>†N810. (AT) N812.7. †N812.7. (AT) N813. †N813. (AT) N814. †N814. (AT) N815. †N815. (AT) N814.1. †N814.1.(AT) D2198 (El, Shamy, 330)</p>
12- Appropriating the Queen’s throne	<p>Task: stealing belt from queen. Jinni brings Bilqīs’s (Queen of Sheba's) throne to Solomon.</p>	<p>H1151.5. †H1151.5. (AT) D2198.2\$ (El-Shamy, 331)</p>

	Theft by ‘controlled’ spirit (demon, jinni, fairy, or the like)—spirit commanded to steal for master. Theft by trickster’s trained animal.	K0367\$ (El-Shamy, 788) K0366 (El-Shamy, 788)
13-King tests the Queen again	See Tenet 5 motifs	
14- Magical glass palace	Solomon disturbed by seeing demons’ grimacing faces at bottom of metal drinking cups: God teaches him glass-making so as to escape seeing them. Palace appears to be floating on water—actually glass. Holy men (saints, prophets) as workmen (craftsmen, tradesmen, laborers). Mandal (‘magic liquid-mirror’): knowledge from jinn shown on surface of ink (or oil) in cup.	A1450.1\$ (El-Shamy, 112) K1889.6 (El-Shamy, 865) V0223.10\$ (El-Shamy, 1812) D1810.0.4.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 306)
15- The King sees the Queen’s legs when she lifts her frock	Tabu: looking at certain person or thing. Garment must be removed in presence of certain high chiefs. Extraordinary occurrences connected with shoes. Shoes miraculously worn out. The danced-out shoes. Every morning girl’s shoes are danced to pieces. Woman has worn out carriage-load of shoes with walking. Wearing shoes only when crossing river. Magician makes people lift their garments to avoid wetting in imaginary river.	C310. †C310. (AT) P94. †P94. (AT) F1015. †F1015. (AT) F1015.1. †F1015.1. (AT) F1015.1.1. †F1015.1.1. (AT) F1015.1.2. †F1015.1.2. (AT) F1015.2. †F1015.2. D2031.1 (El-Shamy, 319)

	<p>Betrothal of the veiled female (unseen). Satan helps Bilqīs (Queen of Sheba) camouflage her hairy legs; hence, women's beautician, the bathhouse, wax (for removal of body hair). Woman with hairy legs. Jinn monger rumor that Bilqīs suffers from mental instability, and that she has ass's legs. Girl said to be possessed by demons: suitors frightened away. People who remove their body hair (armpit, pubic, etc.). Marvelous hair removing potion (drug). Betrothal of the veiled female (unseen). Tabu: woman going (seen) unveiled in public—(sufūr). Queen of Sheba (Bilqīs) tricked into exposing her ugly legs. Arranging for maiden's (woman's) beauty to be 'accidentally' displayed so as to coax suitor-to-be. Man deceived into marrying an ugly woman: the veiled (bashful) female. Girl secluded (veiled) at puberty. Boy asked to spy on happenings in women's quarters. Person looks into unknown object and thinks it contains ugly creature (demon, Satan, etc.): it is a mirror (cup with liquid). Humor of ugliness. "The Snake Bridegroom" (Previously Bathing Girls Garments Kept)</p>	<p>T0061.9\$ (El-Shamy, 1530) A1597.2.1.1\$ (El-Shamy, 122)</p> <p>F0517.0.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 398) K2107.3.3.1\$ (El-Shamy, 885)</p> <p>K2125.1 (El-Shamy, 888)</p> <p>P0717.1.4\$ (El-Shamy, 1300)</p> <p>F0959.9.1\$ (El-Shamy, 466) T0061.9\$, (El-Shamy, 1530-1) C0106\$ (El-Shamy, 214)</p> <p>K1294.1\$ (El-Shamy)</p> <p>K1304\$ (El-Shamy)</p> <p>K1305.2\$ (El-Shamy)</p> <p>T0380.2\$ (El-Shamy) T0380.3.2.1.1\$,</p> <p>J1791.7.2\$ (El-Shamy 112)</p> <p>X0137 (El-Shamy) 425 ATU</p>
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	<p>“The King and the Lamia”⁶⁶</p> <p>“The Stolen Clothing (Previously Marriage be Stealing Clothing)</p> <p>“The Enchanted Husband Sings Lullaby”⁶⁷</p>	<p>411 (ATU 411 vol.1)</p> <p>413 (ATU 247 vol. 1)</p>
16- Water (or glass) palace?	<p>Disenchantment -</p> <p>Disenchantment by liquid. Disenchantment by bathing (immersing) in water.</p> <p>Disenchantment by water and command.</p> <p>Disenchantment by touching water.</p> <p>Disenchantment by pouring water into ear.</p>	<p>†D700--D799. (AT)</p> <p>D766. †D766. (AT)</p> <p>D766.1. †D766.1. (AT)⁶⁸</p> <p>D766.1.1. †D766.1.1. (AT)</p> <p>D766.1.2. †D766.1.2. (AT)</p> <p>D766.1.3. †D766.1.3.⁶⁹ (AT)</p>
17- Power dialectic: Queen saved through conversion: renouncing older traditions. Hybridity-Disenchantment. New education	<p>Maiden queen prefers to fight instead of marrying, but is at last conquered and married.</p> <p>Downfall of kingdom (state).</p>	<p>T311.4. †T311.4. (AT)</p> <p>P0016.0.1\$ (El-Shamy, 1081)</p>

⁶⁶ In this tale the king sees the woman’s snake legs. The snake gets into water.

⁶⁷ The woman follows the husband to an enchanted underworld castle (Tenet 12). She is not allowed to peek at his body (Tenet 13).

⁶⁸ Type 433B; Taylor Washington Univ. Studies IV (2) (1917) 176 n. 8; Wimberly 388; Child I 308, 338 n., II 505, III 505, V 39f.--India: *Thompson-Balys.

⁶⁹ Here are further El-Shamy connections: D766.2. †D766.2. Disenchantment by application of blood. (Cf. †D712.4, †D712.4.1).--*Type 516; *Rösch FFC LXXVII 138; *Fb “blod” IV 46b, 47a; Child I 337 n.; Penzer I 97; Wesselski Mönchslatein 148 No. 119.--Irish myth: *Cross; Spanish: Boggs FFC XC 53 No. 400A*; India: *Thompson-Balys. D766.2.1. †D766.2.1. Disenchantment by rubbing with pig’s blood. Irish myth: Cross. D766.3. †D766.3. Disenchantment by tears. *Type 425.--Africa (Angola): Chatelain 35 No. 1. D766.4. †D766.4. Disenchantment by bathing in milk. Wimberly 372; Type 433B and 507 (Danish forms); India: Thompson-Balys. D771. †D771. Disenchantment by use of magic object.

Tenets of the Bilqīs Mega-archetype as Motifs in Folklore Scholarship

El-Shamy also finds motifs from the story of Solomon and Sheba in the Islamic tradition by using, mainly, Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nīsābūrī al-Tha‘labī *‘Arā’is al-madjālis fī kīṣaṣ al-anbiyā’* to extract the Sheba motifs that also are congruent with the Bilqīs mega-archetype tenets. Aarne and Thompson’s (AT) motif index explores motifs of the Bilqīs mega-archetype (see Table 2). Uther examines folktales such as “The Danced-out Shoes,” “The Princess in the Coffin,” and “The Grateful Dead” that have motif clusters similar to each other. These above-mentioned folktales, I posit, also exist in motif clusters deploying tenets from the Bilqīs mega-archetype. The seventeen tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype have been studied as separate motifs by AT without necessarily attributing them to the Bible or to the Qur’an.

The first three tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype were studied by Thompson. Without necessarily making direct references to Solomon, Thompson introduces the motif of speaking animals (B 210) and dedicates all of section F to study marvels and marvelous creatures. Thompson’s motifs are indicative of the speaking hoopoe that inspires the first and second tenets of the Sheba mega-archetype, as well as Solomon’s abilities to understand the language of ants (Qur’an 34:12).

The fourth tenet of the Bilqīs mega-archetype postulates that a wise queen rules over an opulent kingdom. Section P in the AT motif-index explores this concept in depth. El-Shamy later adds more detailed motifs about the challenges of being a female monarch. Examples of such are “tabu: female (queen) heading the government” (P0020.5\$) and “why a woman may not ‘top’ a man (in government, coition)” (A 1352.4\$, 106). El-Shamy posits that the Queen of Sheba is emblematic of the “tabu ” of a

female queen heading the government. The female queen heading the government becomes associated in our subconscious of the supreme goddess, the threatening all-powerful female deity. By extension this connection may signify that undesirable even foreboding act that “a woman may not ‘top’ a man in government, coition [similar to that is] a woman riding war-horse” (C0119.3.1, 215 and C0181.10.1, 219). El-Shamy makes connections to the character in Jewish folklore Lilith, Adam’s first wife, who was created from the same dirt he was created from but who refuses becoming subservient to Adam (A 1352.4\$, 106). Hence, in folklore Sheba becomes associated with Lilith and evil.

However, being wise with expansive knowledge, Sheba also invited metaphorical reference of her being a Sibyl. Singer and Adler cite how Byzantine historians such as Georgius Monachus, Cedrenus, and Glycas turned the biblical queen of Sheba into a sibyl (323)).⁷⁰ Thus, as a female political figure both wise and strong, Bilqīs’s mega-archetype invited a wide spectrum of speculations ranging from her being an evil figure, such as Morgan le Fay in Arthurian romances, to her being a wise sibyl or a wise woman, like the Lady of the Lake, who rules over a council of younger knights (Tenet 7). Similarly, Sheba is democratic ruler who heads a parliament (Tenet 7) (“Female as deliverer of a nation” [P0710.6\$, 1279]) is also presented as an evil monstrous abject figure with hairy legs.

The fifth tenet of the mega-archetype states that the King is also powerful in terms of wealth, knowledge, magic and wisdom. AT indexes Solomon related wisdom motifs

⁷⁰ See Krauss, in “Byzantinische Zeit,” xi, 120 and Arnaldo Momigliano and?? Emilio Suarez de la Torre (2005), “Sibylline Oracles,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 12 (2nd ed.), Gale, 8382-8386.

such as (J182.1. , J191.1. , J231.1. , J369.1. †J369.1. , J1140.1. , J1170.2. , and J1171.1.). El-Shamy uses similar motifs to Solomon’s wisdom such as J0080.1 (El-Shamy 605) J0191.1 (El-Shamy, 618), J0231.1 (El-Shamy, 625), J0232 (El-Shamy 625) J0369.1 (El-Shamy 630-1), J1171.1 (El-Shamy 679). In addition to wisdom, Solomon is also master of magicians [D1711.1.1. †D1711.1.1. (AT) and D1711.1.1, (El-Shamy 298)] and is served and carried by the wind [F963.1. †F963.1 (AT)]. What makes Solomon even more powerful and wise is that he is a prophet [M0301.7.5\$ (El-Shamy 956-7)]. Even more he is a “prophet-king” [P0507.4.1.1.1\$ (El-Shamy 1239)].

Tenet 5 stands in antithesis to Tenet 4, which is also relevant to the queen’s power. This bipolarity of male-female power leads to confrontation. Bilqīs and Solomon, thus, are opposites. In the Qur’an, the king challenges the queen; however, the Bible takes a different stance in that the Queen of Sheba propounds riddles to Solomon. Testing is indexed in sections H of AT and El-Shamy motif indexes. These references reinforce Tenets 6. An aspect of being in such a challenging relationship is exchanging gifts (manifest in Tenet 8).

AT’s motif index specifies that exchanging of gifts is a characteristic motif in feudal and tribal societies (P533. †P533). El-Shamy indexes that gift exchange in his motif index as a “farsighted economy” [J0708.5\$, 649] . Sometimes acceptance of gifts can lead to loss of wisdom as AT indexes [J186. †J186.], and, at other times, enemies are reconciled through acts of gifting as indexed in AT (K2373. †K2373).

In response to Solomon’s turning her gift down, Bilqīs goes to visit the king (Tenet 9), a semi-proposal motif [T0055.0.1\$ (El-Shamy 1523-4)]. Her visit is a token of her yielding to the king. Before Bilqīs arrives, the jinns have transferred her throne to

Solomon's court (Tenets 10, 11 and 12). Thus, not only does the queen move, but some of her belongings also move between these two worlds. AT's index dedicates section F to "marvels" and (†F110 to "journey to terrestrial other worlds." El-Shamy delves also into this crossing of boundaries as "magic air journ[ies]" [D2135, 325]. In addition to the hoopoe's magical journey from Jerusalem to the kingdom of Sheba, jinns cross boundaries. Transferring objects at rapid speed becomes thus a common trope in this mega-archetype .

Folklore indices also address the motif of supernatural helpers (Tenet 11). AT's index includes "supernatural helpers" (†N810), the "helpful genie" (N813. †N813), "fairy as helper" (N815. †N815), and the "helpful angel" (N814. †N814). El-Shamy indexes "magic control over spirits (angels) (D2198, 330). Similar motifs have been studied by AT as "task: stealing belt from queen" (H1151.5). El-Shamy records motifs such as "theft by controlled spirit" and "theft by trickster's trained animal" as (K0367\$,788) and (K0366, 788), respectively.

The throne appropriation motif (Tenet 12), hyperbolized in Islamic folklore, is minimally twisted with Solomon wanting to appropriate Bilqīs' body. Islamic folklore writings, such as those of al-Tha'laby, describe Bilqīs' "foot. . .an ass's foot, and she has hairy legs, because her mother was a jinn. Solomon wanted to know the truth, and to see her feet and her legs— so he built the pavilion" (Brimmer 534). Presumably, Solomon actually tricked Bilqīs into lifting her garment in order to see her legs (Tenet 15); his deception is a partial appropriation as is the queen's throne being arrogated (Tenet 12). The throne, a metonymy symbolizing its possessor, stands for Sheba's power and, by

extension, symbolizes her female body.⁷¹ By appropriating her throne, Solomon is transgressing on Sheba's power and person and objectifying her. This objectification appears violently in the Ethiopian text in which Mâkêdâ was actually raped by Solomon. Sexual transgression is a major structural component in this mega-archetype as it becomes a basic structural component in narrative replicas of the mega-archetype.

The motif of partial appropriation of the throne (Tenet 12) morphs into the appropriation of the queen's body even if it is through gazing. In fact, Sheba's legs become a matter of considerable interest in motif indexes. A number of folkloric allegations state that Bilqīs had ugly hairy legs. Jalâl ad-Dîn Al-Suyūṭy claims that the jinns who attend Solomon aid him in introducing a depilatory cream to Bilqīs because she has beautiful but mannish hairy legs (Brinner 352). El-Shamy agrees as he catalogues this part of the Sheba narrative under the "woman with hairy legs" (F0517.0.3.1) (Tenet 15). This threatening hairy woman understandably seems the female warrior. Sheba's masculine legs suggest that she verges on being diabolical as she has a goat leg and a human leg. El-Shamy offers an explanation for this motivic cluster:

K1294.1\$, Queen of Sheba (Bilqīs) tricked into exposing her ugly legs. Link:
|D2031.1, Magician makes people lift their garments to avoid wetting in
imaginary river. |K1889.6, Palace appears to be floating on water—actually glass.
|K2107.3.3.1\$, Jinn monger rumor that Bilqīs suffers from mental instability, and
that she has ass's legs. |T0061.9\$, Betrothal of the veiled female (unseen). Ref.:
Tha'labî 178. (El-Shamy 830-1)

⁷¹ This is evident in the Melusine myth. Melusine is a strong woman with fish fins for legs, who again, like Bilqīs, is associated with water plains.

Since the lifting of the garment and exposing the legs of Sheba (Tenet 15) are a matter of interest in motif indexes, AT refers to motifs that are relevant to it. Examples of these motifs are: “Garment must be removed in presence of certain high chiefs” (C310. †C310), “Magician makes people lift their garments to avoid wetting in imaginary river” (F1015.1.1. †F1015.1.1.) and “Betrothal of the veiled female (unseen)” (F1015.2. †F1015.2.). The queen’s body becomes an almost sacred shrine that male figures cannot access except by some sort of magic. Folklore and literature, therefore, conflate this male curiosity about the strong woman’s body. Similarly, the Arabic medieval al-Amira Dhāt al-Himma dresses like men.

Uther’s Motif Clusters as Tenets of the Bilqīs Mega-archetype

Whereas Aarne, Thompson, and El-Shamy look at separate motifs, Uther examines how motif clusters exist in combinations that are mini-structures of mega-archetypes. In other words, these motif clusters are tenets that already exist in the Bilqīs mega-archetype. According to Uther, tales are formed of motif clusters that “belong to narrative cycles, or form combinations and contaminations” (13). These combinations also include tenets of mega-archetype in question. For example, in “The Monster’s Bride” (“Tale 507” Uther 291-2), a man’s corpse rests without burial for some time. This image echoes the ambient motif of Solomon’s dead body. A young man buries the body, but the corpse later crosses to the boundaries (Tenet 10) of the living to become the young man’s supernatural helper (Tenet 11). The young man loves a princess who is enamored of a magician or an ogre, a love triangle that emulates the relationship between Sheba and Solomon (Tenet 6). The princess tests her suitors (Tenets 6 and 13 flipped) and all fail except for the young man. With the help of the magical objects (Tenets 14 and

16), the supernatural helper invisibly follows (Tenet 11) the enchanted princess who nonetheless honors the competition and marries the young man. To gain her love, the young husband submerges his princess bride in water three times on their wedding night, an act that mirrors Bilqīs' thinking that she was stepping in water (Tenets 14 and 16). After this semi-submersion in the water act, Bilqīs is disillusioned about her heliolatry and the princess in "The Monster's Bride" becomes disenchanting.

Another tale that has motif combinations relevant to the Solomon mega-narrative and the Sheba mega-archetype is the "The Danced-out Shoes." This tale combines with tales 307, 505, 507, and 518 (Uther 188) and replicates the motifs of an enchanted princess (Tenet 3). This princess' enchanted shoes (reminiscent of Tenet 15) allow her cross boundaries into the supernatural realm of the underworld (Tenet 10). Through magic (Tenets 10, 14 and 15), a youth acquires a magic object (i.e., shoes, cap, overcoat or stick) that makes himself invisible and so he can accompany the princess in her otherworldly journey (Tenet 10). The prince is able to remove the enchantment from the princess (Tenet 17).

Uther refers to Tale 518, "Men Fight over Magic Objects," (306) in which men/giants/ogres fight over the division (ambient motif) of magic objects (Tenets 14 and 16). Among these objects is a flying carpet, an ambient motif reminiscent of that of Solomon's (El-Shamy, D1532.15\$, 286). A young man tricks the disputers and acquires the magical objects to accomplish difficult tasks, just as Solomon did with his magical carpet and ring. The tales in this cluster follow tenets 3, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Uther combines them thus supporting the premise that they emulate motifs from the

Bilqīs mega-archetype.⁷² Unlike El-Shamy, who bases his study on Islamic sources, Aarne, Thompson, and Uther mention these motifs without clearly connecting them to religious texts. These three western scholars were still able to identify the tenets that compromise the Queen of Sheba mega-archetype.

The Bilqīs Mega-archetype in Selected Medieval Works

The seventeen main tenets of the Bilqīs or the queen of Sheba mega-archetype, inspired by the Qur'an and supported with similar episodes from the Bible and the *Kebrā Nagast*, underlie the Lady of the Lake, which, with her flipped character Morgan la Fay, suggests a narrative replica of the Bilqīs mega-archetype (Malory). The Lady of the Lake, also referred to as Nimiane, Ninianne, and Viviane, shares characteristics with the Roman goddess Diana and the Celtic counterpart of Lugh (Tolstoy 97). In addition to these European connections, the Bilqīs mega-archetype is also manifest in the medieval Arabic work *Amira Dhāt al-Himma (The Princess of High Resolve)*. This Arabic work more obviously illustrates the warrior aspect (Tenet 4) than does the figure of the Lady of the Lake and proves the universality of the mega-archetype.

The tenets of the Queen of Sheba mega-archetype are evident in the depiction of the Lady of the Lake in most Arthurian versions including Chrétien de Troyes's *The*

⁷² In "The Princess in the Coffin" ("Tale 307" 189), a diabolic daughter (Tenet 11) rises every night from her coffin; moving from the realm of the dead to the realm of the living; thus crossing boundaries (Tenet 10). The princess is freed from witchcraft (Tenet 17) by saying a Paternoster. The dead princess echoes the theme of Solomon's undiscovered death of the mega-narrative. In "The Grateful Dead" ("Tale 505" 289), a man sees the corpse (Ambient motif). The copse supernaturally helps the traveler (Tenet 10) on the condition that they divide their winnings [M241 AT] (Ambient Motif). The man wins a wife who is abducted (Tenet 12 and 15) by robbers. The man rescues her by the help of the dead man. The husband is recognized by his wife a ring (Ambient motif). The dead man asks for his half of the reward; that is half (Ambient motif) of the rescued wife. The grateful dead man says that this demand was only "a test of faith" (Tenets 6 and 13).

Knight of the Cart (Staines), Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* (Kerth), the Old French *Vulgate Cycle* (*VC*) (Lacy), the *Post-Vulgate Cycle* (*PVC*) (Lacy), the *Prose Merlin* (Conlee), and Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* (Shepherd). *Le Morte Darthur* and the *Prose Merlin* rely for their tales on the *VC* and *Lanzelet* since these works offer more detailed accounts of the story of the Lady of the Lake. Hence, the *VC* and *Lanzelet* better represent the Bilqīs mega-archetype. Just as the relationship between Bilqīs and Solomon is indispensable in the narrative structure of the Bilqīs mega-archetype, so is the relationship of the Lady of the Lake and Merlin. Since the Bilqīs mega-archetype is both a narrative structure and a character archetype, referring to the male protagonist is an inevitable part when explicating the narrative replicas of the mega-archetype.

Interestingly, Merlin, who is a narrative replica of Solomon, appears in works that do not necessarily feature the Lady of the Lake such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini* and Elis Gruffydd's *Chronicle of Six Ages of the World*. However, these works focus on the magical Solomon-like abilities of Merlin. Further, de Troyes' *The Knight of the Cart* and von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* refer to the Lady of the Lake without bringing up details about her relationship with Merlin. *The Knight of the Cart* mentions her fleetingly as Lancelot's mother; *Lanzelet* casts her as a foster mother to the Knight Lanzelet who "is abducted by a fairy in early childhood and brought up in a magical 'otherworld' on an island inhabited only by women" (Gibbs and Johnson 328).

The later Malory's *Morte Darthur*, the *VC*, and the *Prose Merlin* make the mega-archetypal connections of the dialectical relationship between the Lady of the Lake and Merlin (see Table 3). Except for *Chronicle of Six Ages of the World*, the later versions such as *Estoire de Merlin* (*History of Merlin*) in the *VC*, the *PVC*, the *Prose Merlin* and

Morte Darthur connect the Lady of the Lake and Merlin, while the earlier works such as the *Vita Merlini*, *Merlin*, *Lancelot, le Chevalier de la Charrette* and *Lanzelet* focus only on the individual characters. Hence, the later the versions, the closer to the mega-archetypal structure. As with the Zulaikhah and Sarah-Hagar mega-archetypes, the earlier narrative replicas seem like earlier drafts that implement only a few mega-archetype tenets whereas later versions deploy more tenets.

Table 15 Origin Stories for Lady of the Lake with Tenets and Motifs

Text	Author	Refers to relationship between Lady of Lake and Merlin	Century the text was written/ circulating	Language	Tenets fulfilled
<i>Vita Merlini</i>	Geoffrey of Monmouth	No	Mid twelfth century	Latin	5, 10, 11, 14, 16
<i>Merlin</i>	Robert de Boron	No	Late 12 th or early 13 th century	French	5, 10, 11, 14, 16
<i>Lancelot, le Chevalier de la Charrette</i>	Chrétien de Troyes	No	Late twelfth century	French	11, 14, 15, 16
<i>Lanzelet</i>	Ulrich von Zatzikhoven	No	Late twelfth century	German	3, 4 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16
<i>Estoire de Merlin (History of Merlin) i.e Vulgate Cycle</i>		Yes	Early thirteenth century	French	1, 4, 5 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15,16
<i>Prose Merlin</i>		Yes	Near middle of fifteenth century	English	1, 4, 5 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15,16

The Lady of the Lake sans Merlin: de Troyes's *The Knight of the Cart* and von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet*

Chrétien de Troyes's *The Knight of the Cart* and Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* reference the Lady of the Lake as being Lancelot's foster-mother without making connections between her and Merlin. While von Zatzikhoven deploys Tenets 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 16 in this "earliest known biography" of Lancelot (Loomis 5), de Troyes refers to Tenets 11, 14, 15, and 16 only in his brief account of the Lady in *Cligès* where he refers to "Lancelot of the Lake" (145) who was brought up by a lake (113). De Troyes makes another, little more detailed allusion in *The Knight of the Cart* to the Lady of the Lake as Lancelot's foster-mother who is "a fairy, who had raised him in his infancy. So great was his trust in her that he never doubted she would bring him aid and relief wherever he was" (199). This association with magic appears in other ways and in related works. For example, the Lady of the Lake's association with a vast water plain is reminiscent of the image Bilqīs raising her frock to step on what she thought was a lake (Tenets 14, 15, and 16). Further, just as the Ethiopian Sheba gives her son Solomon's magical ring, so the Lady of the Lake gives Lancelot a magic ring that he "had on his finger, its stone had such power that anyone looking at it could not be subject to enchantments. Holding the ring before his eyes, he gazed on the stone and said: "Lady, lady, so help me God, I have great need for your aid now" (198-199). This is also an ambient motif emulating Solomon's magical ring and suggestive of Solomon's magical abilities (Tenets 11 and 14). Here a tenet becomes an ambient motif in that an attribute associated with a character (e.g., Solomon's magic) ambulates to another character.

Von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet*, on the other hand, expands the Lady of the Lake by adding details that are reminiscent of tenets. *Lanzelet*'s Lady is openly identified as a water "fairy" (30) (Tenet 16) "as in mist, driven by the wind" (29). She definitely has fairy characters that make her move swiftly just as the jinns of Solomon could (Tenets 10 and 11). She is "a wise mermaid" (29), just as the wise Bilqīs (Tenet 4), who is also a prosperous royal figure ruling over an affluent island that "all year around was abloom as in May" (30) (Tenet 4). The Lady of the Lake rules over a whole land of 10,000 subjects (Tenet 7), just as Sheba ruled over a strong parliament of men. However, the Lay belongs to a strange tradition as all her 10,000 are females with no single male in her aquatic kingdom. Evident of the impenetrable nature of her rule, the maidens the queen rules over cannot be subjected to the male gaze as not one of her subjects "had ever seen a man nor even man's apparel" (29-30). If these ladies never have seen a man nor men seen them, then they are not subjected to male gaze and, consequently,

feared no foreign foe nor any king's army. All around the land lay the sea and a wall so strong that no one could be cunning enough, even if he might entertain the thought, to go over it, except where the gate stood; and that was a hard diamond. (30).

Unlike Sheba whose throne is appropriated by Solomon and whose legs are exposed, and unlike Mākēdā who is raped by Solomon, this queen and her female subjects are not as vulnerable. Tenets 12 and 15 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype are flipped here to emphasize the impermeability of these women and the power of their leader. Similarly, in order to train Lancelot in warfare, the Lady of the Lake "sent for mermen and had them teach him to defend himself in combat" (30). To further his knightly education, Lancelot must leave

the land to win glory but goes with “a mermaid was his steersman. The queen too made the journey with him” (32). These war-training episodes correspond to Tenets 4 and 7.⁷³

In addition to the tenets identifying her as a strong political figure, the Lady of the Lake borrows the magic motifs of the mega-archetype and, thus, these tenets become ambient motifs. Like Solomon who can build a castle of fine glass on water, the Lady of the Lake can construct a pavilion that can be folded in a box (Tenet 14). It is a gift the queen gives Lanzelet and his beloved Iblis in a box which

contains a precious pavilion. [. . .] There in the middle [of the meadow] the goodhearted Lanzelet pitched his pavilion. The workmanship was so extraordinary that Solomon and Darius, and the rich king Augustus whom all the earth served, would never have been able to pay the price of such a pavilion [. . .] When the pavilion was taken down it weighted nothing at all, but when one set it up, it was just as it should be, just as its possessor wished it, both as tall and as wide. (82-4)

Magically constructing a building of fine material is reminiscent of Tenet 11 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype; thus, *Lanzelet* fulfills tenets 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 16 of the mega-archetype while de Troyes’ earlier version fulfills 11, 14, 15, and 16 only. Neither of these versions associate the Lady of the Lake with Merlin. However, in later versions, the Lady of the Lake and Merlin are two poles in a challenging relationship between male leadership and female authority.

⁷³ Similarly, Bilqīs rules over “[. . .] lords of might and lords of great prowess [. . .]” (Qur’an 27:33) Al-Ḥamzaway Al-Hanafy in his *Durr al-asrār fī Tafṣīr al-Qur’ān bi-al-ḥurūf al-muḥmalah* quotes Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘the strength of [these men] was to the extent that when one’s horse speed got out of control, he would tighten his thighs to hold it tight with his strength’ (178) (my translation).

The Lady of the Lake and Merlin in the *Vulgate Cycle* and the *Post-Vulgate Cycle*

Whereas earlier Arthurian texts such as the *Vita Merlini*, Robert de Boron's *Merlin*, de Troyes' *Lancelot*, *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* and von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* discuss the Lady of the Lake and Merlin without mentioning a relationship between them, later texts posit that both were involved in an amorous affair. Generally speaking, later Arthurian texts deploy more tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype because these stories develop as they are written and re-written. Hence, the thirteenth-century *Vulgate Cycle* adheres to Tenets 1, 4, 5 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 15 and more closely to the Bilqīs mega-archetype than twelfth-century texts such as the *Vita Merlini* or *Lanzelet*. What the later versions add enriches not only the tales but also strengthens the mega-archetype argument.

Merlin hears about Viviane, the Lady of the Lake, (*VC* vol. 1, 281) (Tenet 1) and first approaches her (Tenet 6) on the brink of a spring at the edge of the forest. Here the knowledgeable Merlin (Tenet 5) teaches her necromancy. Like the clever Bilqīs (Tenet 4), Viviane is already “well steeped in clerkly learning, so she remembered all the more easily what Merlin taught her (*VC* vol. 1, 400). Her wisdom is also highlighted in the *Prose Merlin*; when Merlin greets her at the brink of the fountain that she always visits, “she ansuerde wisely” (184). Viviane is a strong, powerful, wise and an extremely learned “fairy.”

Like Bilqīs ruling over a parliament of mighty men, the Lady of the Lake rules over a court (Tenet 7). As Patrick K. Ford notes, “the Lady of the Lake was provided with a court and attendant ladies” (382-3). In addition, in the *VC* version of the tale, the

Lady of the Lake cares for a retinue of Knights,⁷⁴ such as Lancelot and Galahad, educating them in the arts of war and chivalry. She also is Arthur's savior and gives him sound political advice. Her flipside, Morgan la Fay, intervenes to save Arthur's life when he is battling with Accolon and stops the latter from taking Excalibur and its scabbard (*PVC*, vol .4, 258). The Lady promises to support the king because he is a defender of chivalry. She helps the English forces in their war against the Roman King, Claudas, and warns Bors of an impending attack (*VC*, vol. 3, 309). In a sense she is a fairy godmother qua shrewd political figure who plays a significant role in the politics of the Round Table (Tenet 4) and helps a multitude of characters (Tenet 7). Lastly, the Lady is associated with political gifting as she bestows the sword Excalibur on Arthur (*PVC*, vol. 4, 181). (Tenet 8) .

As the mega-archetype suggests, Bilqīs has her own monarchy apart from Solomon's (Tenet 1). Similarly, the Lady of the Lake lives in her own realm on the fringes of the Arthurian Avalon where Merlin is also an influential political figure. She has unruly and uncontrollable traits in her character, as she is a fairy, nymph, or goddess living in a wooded fairyland. That is, she becomes another "Diana of the Woods" and lives in her Diana-like grove (Frazer). As the queen of an outside kingdom, she parallels the water nymph Ageria who ruled with Diana in her grove. Thus, in the spirit of the archetype that the *VC* relies on, the Lady (Viviane) is shown the Lake of Diana by Merlin who then agrees to help build a castle for her on the marginal space of this eponymous

⁷⁴ Eugène Vinaver in his index of proper names distinguishes Ladies of the Lake: the one who comes to court to seek Balin's head, the one who christens Lancelot and Galahad. These ladies of the lake I illustrate below are but manifestations of Tenets 4 and 7 as of the mega-archetype that feature the political prowess of the queen.

lake. Again, Merlin's agreement aligns with Tenets 14 and 16 in that Merlin, like Solomon, is a clever mason with magical capabilities who "could raise a castle right here and have a great many people take refuge inside and others fall upon it from without" (*VC* vol. 1, 282). Once the fort is built, Merlin conceals it from Viviane through his magic, so that it appears to be part of the lake, an image reminiscent of the magical glass palace to which Solomon invites Bilqīs.

Unlike Bilqīs, who accepts monotheism and adopts Solomon's religious teachings (Tenet 17), the Lady of the Lake reverses this tenet using the magic she learns from Merlin against him. Merlin teaches her magical deeds during his numerous visits (*VC* vol. 1, 232, 393-400, 282). In one instance, Viviane asks Merlin to teach her how to imprison a man through wizardry. Merlin complies but also moves to appropriate her being through rape. The Lady later uses Merlin's lesson to incarcerate him for the rest of his life (*VC* vol. 1, 415-17).

In the *VC*, tenets 12 (partial appropriation) and 15 (ogling the female body) are hyperbolized in the Lady of the Lake's story. While Solomon sees Sheba's exposed legs and appropriates her throne, Merlin actually rapes the Lady. Jean Markale discusses the erotic tenor of Viviane in the *Prose Merlin*, in which Viviane is sitting on a hollow stone lifting her skirts on a monolith seducing Merlin (220). Corinne J. Saunders argues that Merlin's forest is transformed into a "landscape of abduction" (168-169). According to Caitlin and John Matthews, water is an organizing image for nine Arthurian women, each of whom reflects major aspects of the goddess (xxxii). According to Sue Ellen, fairy women of romance evanesce from water deities. Thus there are associations between strong women figures from the Qur'an, Bible, and water imagery.

The archetypal resemblances between the Lady of the Lake and Celtic goddesses have been studied. These similarities are not without echoes to the Bilqīs mega-archetype. Instead of viewing her as an archetypal scriptural character, scholars have pinned the Lady of the Lake to the mold of a Celtic pagan goddess. Norma Lorre Goodrich posits that Niniane/Viviane is a Scottish moon goddess who is educated by Merlin (*Merlin* 270, 217, 275); this is a manifestation of Tenet 17. Holbrook argues for affinities between the Lady of the Lake and her other Celtic sisters. According to Holbrook, the Lady of the Lake in Malory's *Morte* is an "intermediary being" that is, particular goddesses and their human avatars" (72). For Caitlin Matthews she is a pre-Celtic Deer goddess ("Ladies of the Lake" 125-6) who has huntress associations. Nikolai Tolstoy posits the Lady of the Lake as protector of birds and guardian of animals (151) with the ability to speak to animals—an ambient motif borrowed from the Solomon mega-narrative that is reminiscent of Tenet 2. John Darrah clusters three tenets; he hypothesizes that as far as the Lady of the Lake and Merlin are concerned, there is a conflict between megalithic sites and water sites; between celestial, particularly sun, worship and water worship; between masculine and feminine divine principles" (Holbrook 80). These "conflicts" are closely associated with tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype. Bilqīs is a sun worshipper (Qur'an 27:28) who belongs to a different tradition (Tenet 3). The conflict between the "megalithic sites and water sites" is evident in the Bilqīs's confusion between whether she was stepping on water or was entering a glass palace (Tenets 14 and 16). The story of Bilqīs and Solomon, as stated earlier, is one of the feminine challenging masculine politics (Tenet 17). Other motifs or attributes according to Holbrook that are associated with the Lady of the Lake are water,

stones, towers, and dragons. Dragons replace the jinns (Tenet 11), towers and stones are associated with buildings just as the glass palace which Bilqīs enters. Water is associated with Bilqīs mistakenly thinking that she has been treading on water. These motifs, I argue, have their origins in the Bilqīs mega-archetype.

Like Sheba and Solomon, male and female protagonists in these medieval narratives are involved in power relationships (Tenet 17). What really establishes the Lady of the Lake as an exemplification of the mega-archetype is her complex relationship with Merlin, whom she vanquishes in many texts. She is a threat to Merlin, as she does encroach on his domain. In that sense, both the Lady of the Lake and Sheba are threatening female sovereigns. Since Bilqīs is a narrative structure, we need to evaluate her narrative counterpart, the Solomon figure, Merlin.

Merlin as a Solomon Mega-narrative Figure

The Bilqīs mega-archetype is a narrative structure, so it requires a reciprocal archetype, a male rival to this strong woman. Her mega-archetype includes tenets that refer to Bilqīs's relationship to Solomon. Tenets 5, 10, 11, 14, and 16 are found in a number of earlier Merlin stories, such as Geoffrey's *The Vita Merlini* and de Boron's *Merlin*, but these earlier versions refer to Merlin without mentioning any relationship that existed between him and the Lady of the Lake or her flipside Morgan La Fay. However, many of the Bilqīs tenets are associated with Merlin even before the later Arthurian texts make his relationship with the Lady of the Lake or Morgan la Fay obvious. For example, as a magician prototype, Solomon does lend Merlin many traits. Among the few emendating from Solomon's prototype are, of course, power, knowledge, magical abilities (Tenet 5), dominion over supernatural beings (Tenets 10 and 11), and

architecture (Tenets 14 and 16). Later versions of Merlin use his connection to the Lady of the Lake as a way to add the tenet of appropriating a strong female's essence (Tenets 12 and 15) These additions further an understanding of these characters in later versions such as the *VC*, the *PVC*, and even Malory's retelling of the legends.

Split characters breaks into more than one complimentary characters, each of whom partially fulfills the characteristics of one of the tenets. For example, the character of Solomon bifurcates into the characters of King Arthur and the wizard Merlin in Arthurian literature. According to the Bible, Solomon is considered a ruler of great wisdom, wealth, and power who has sinned in many ways including abandoning his traditional god and in his choice of whom to marry. His transgressions eventually lead to his kingdom's being torn in two. Solomon has the power of clairvoyance, but he asks for guidance to rule his kingdom well. He distributes his work to others but is observant and cautious that every task is completed. Likewise Arthur is portrayed as a beloved, respected leader whose authority stays intact despite his weaknesses. He uses the knights of the Round Table in much the same way Solomon delegates, and he seeks advice, often from Merlin who is clairvoyant and wise beyond normal individuals. Hence neither Arthur alone nor Merlin alone exemplifies the Solomon mega-narrative; instead, each character takes parts of the mega-narrative and splits it, so to speak.

The "merveille Merlin," as Berthelot refers to him, descends from a Welsh prototype, Myrddin Wyllt (Knight 5) and exhibits unusual competence despite his apparent youth. De Boron's Merlin confidently tells the king: "You must understand, sire, [. . .] that I have knowledge of all things past, both word and deed, inherited from the Enemy. But Our Lord omnipotent gave me knowledge of things to come" (de Boron 92).

Thus, like Solomon, Merlin is a clever, powerful, (Tenet 5) and wise magician (Tenets 11, 14). Merlin rapidly moves between the human and the supernatural realms (Tenets 10 and 11) and is sagacious in terms of predicting future happenings. For example, Merlin predicts the defeat of Ban's enemy, Claudas and Lancelot's greatness (*PVC* Vol. 4, 246).

As the Bilqīs mega-archetype suggests, magic plays a significant role in its narrative structure (Tenets 10, 11, 12, 14, 16). Merlin's supernatural capabilities are an archetypal strain of Solomon's preternatural faculties. These faculties are conflated with magical skills as he can not only shape-shift (Tenets 10 and 11), he can also live in the present time, knows secrets of the past, and can predict the future. Merlin's ability to journey quickly across the Arthurian landscape is denied to Gawain, Lancelot, and the other knights who must spend days travelling to reach their destination. Just this skill ties Merlin to Islamic and Hebrew folklore (not in the Qur'an) wherein Solomon supposedly has a flying board that transferred him from one place to another (Brinner; Ish-Kishor).

Merlin incorporates Solomon's wisdom as well as his metaphysical ability to speak to the devils even though this latter ability is often interpreted archetypally as madness. In Geoffrey's *Vita Merlini*, Merlin becomes "a man of the woods" (57) who is so well-versed in orthography, as is Solomon, that he tells chieftains why birds fly as they do (122-7). These super-natural abilities suggest a Merlin who is wise but who verges on the boundaries of madness—a *homo sylvestris* or Wild Man who is a shapeshifter. And as a shape-shifter, Merlin turns himself into a stag and can thus disguise himself and seemingly disappear (de Boron 78). These episodes are manifestations Tenets 10 and 11 that center on Solomon's magical abilities of crossing boundaries and employing jinns.

Merlin and the Lady of the Lake emulate Solomon's magical masonry abilities (Tenets 14 and 16) by deciphering magical, unseen buildings. In Geoffrey's *Historia*, Merlin reveals to Vortigern why his tower will not stand. In de Boron's retelling, Merlin helps Vortigern understand the tower's instability as Merlin can see a red and white dragons fight and kill each other in a water channel underneath the tower (74-75). Like Solomon's jinns, these dragons destabilize the tower's foundation because Merlin's magical capabilities direct them to do so. Moreover, Merlin advises Uther Pendragon to "Undertake the building of something [Pendragon's monument] unheard of [. . .] and it will be talked of for evermore!" (de Boron 91). Massive stones had to be transferred from Ireland, a work that no human can fulfill. However, on his own and "by magic, Merlin brought the stones from Ireland to the cemetery at Salisbury" (91). In gratitude, Uther Pendragon later constructs the round table at Merlin's request (92-3).

In the Welsh tradition, Merlin even comes closer to Solomon as he lives in a glass house (Tenets 14 and 16) on Bardsey Island. As Ford notes, in Elis Gruffydd's *Chronicle*, Merlin builds a House of Glass that

turns up elsewhere in Welsh tradition. In a version of the *Brenin-Dlysau Ynys Prydain* ('Royal Treasures' or 'Treasures of the Kings of the Isle of Britain') we are informed that 'Myrddin Wyllt aeth a'r rhain I gyd o'r ddinas a elwid Caerlleon ar Wysg, i'r Ty Gwydr yn Ynys Enlli' (Mad Merlin took all these from the city called Caerlleon-on-Usk to the House of Glass in Bardsey Island). But an alternative view holds that 'Merddin Emrys a aeth i'r mor i Enlli mewn ty gwydr, am ei gariad, lle y mae eto' (Myrllin Ambrosius went to the sea, to Bardsey, in a house of Glass, for the sake of his beloved, where he still is). (384)

Merlin builds this glass house for his love, who we infer is an unnamed version of the Lady of the Lake (Ford 383). Ford dedicates a considerable part of his discussion of this residence to the architectural capabilities of Merlin:

From then on, he set to work to make a house of glass for them to live in eternally, as well as to teach his art to his love perfectly; this he did hastily. After the chamber—or the house—was ready, he showed his love that he had fulfilled the condition completely, teaching her as well as constructing the chamber. This, according to some of the books, he built in the place called *Ynys Wydrin* [‘Glassy Isle’], which is in a mill-dam beside the Perilous Bridge in Gloucestershire.

Much later in the story, he brought his love to the place, and he opened the door and desired her to go in. But the story shows that she had learned that the door was of such marvelous work that none could open it were it once closed. Because of that it was difficult for her to enter, even though she had heard that the chamber was so heavenly wrought within that they would need neither food nor drink but live there like angels throughout eternity. (389)

The glass palace that Merlin builds for the damsel and the hesitancy that controls her when she enters it is reminiscent of tenets 11, 14, and 16 of the mega-archetype when Bilqīs mistakes Solomon’s glass floor water. Other Arthurian texts, deploy this archetypal detail and conflate it. In the *PVC*’s *Suite du Merlin*, also known as the *Huth Merlin* (1:201), Merlin informs Arthur that a damsel can pass on a wooden bridge that no one can see and can be mistaken for water. Like Sheba lifting her frock to avoid wetting or a reference in *Lanzelet* to wetting feet (von Zatzikhoven 219), only the enchanter’s will creates the apparition (Tenet 15). The Lady of the Lake can construct an enchanted

tower by drawing a circle in the field (*VC* vol. 1, 416). As the Tenets of the mega-archetype suggest, “Myrddin went—his gifts were great (Tenet 8) / Into glass to please his mate. (Tenets 14 and 16) (Ford 384).

Tolstoy makes connections with how the *Historia* associates Merlin and springs. the still water of Loch Maben—Lug’s avatar (209-110). From the connections between lug and Merlin and lakes, Tolstoy makes connections between Merlin/Lug and their association with water planes and how the Lady of the Lake fits in with this. The same association happens when Bilqīs steps on the water plane.

Tenets 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 14, and 16 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype are directly associated with Solomon. They are tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype that intersect with motifs from the Solomon mega-narrative as certain episodes of it narrate more details about these particular tenets.

Remarkably, the *VC* often connects the Roman goddess Diana and the Lady of the Lake. Looking at the traits of Diana and her Greek counterpart Artemis, we see unmistakable similarities among the three figures—a matter not very different from the illustrations above between the Lady of the Lake and her Celtic predecessor, Lugh (Tolstoy 97). Among the motivic similarities between the Bilqīs/Solomon mega-archetypes and these legendary deities from classical lore are the power of the female deity; female body exposure; the skill to communicate with animals; liminality and crossing of boundaries, and the staff of power.

Not only does the Lady of the Lake live on the Lake of Diana, but also her birth is prophesized to her father Dionas by the goddess Diana, who tells him that his daughter will be:

moche coveyted of the wisest man that ever was ertly [. . .] he shall hit teche the moste parte of his witte and connyng by force of nygremauncye in soche manere that he shall be so desirouse after the tyme that hehath hir seyn that he shall have no power to do nothings agein hir volunte. (*Prose Merlin* 182).

Moreover, both the Lady and the goddess Diana are celibate and virgins as is the single Bilqīs of the different scriptural versions.

The exposure of Diana's body becomes a major theme in the literature. Tenet 15 becomes hyperbolized in the Artemis-Diana myth as any voyeuristic corporeal male invaders caught peering at the goddess are severely punished (See Callimachus and Lombardo 11). Roman goddess Diana was closely associated with nature, with the moon (a crescent moon is often shown as a diadem), with fertility and seasons, with hares because they tend to be present by night under the moonlight and are highly fertile, and with bow and arrow as the goddess of hunting. Artemis, the Olympian goddess of the hunt, the moon, and chastity, was portrayed in hunting attire with a bow in her hands and a quiver on her shoulders. These formidable representations could suggest an attempt to push away the gaze of male predators as well and the attempt of "hunting" the goddess with the male gaze. Both Diana and Bilqīs had their bodies covertly gazed upon (Tenet 15) perhaps because the inapproachability in terms of feminine space challenges a male protagonist to transgress these boundaries. For example, when the hunter Alphius sees her naked, Diana transforms him into the eponymous river in retaliation (Beeton 18, Lemprière [entry for "Alpeia"]). In another Diana myth, when Acteon sees the doe goddess and gifted virgin huntress, Artemis, bathing naked, she transforms him into a

stag (Baring and Cashford 331-2) and sets his own hunting dogs on him. Baring and Cashford argue that:

the union of doe and stag [. . .] recalls the Minoan festival of the sacred marriage between bull god and cow goddess, celebrated by the king and queen or priestess at the reunion of the sun and moon. The bathing of Artemis has resonances of the ritual of the goddess, which Tacitus tells, in Germania could be seen only by 'men doomed to die' (331-2).

The fertile yet virgin goddess, through her magical powers (an ambient motif borrowed from the super-human abilities of Solomon in the mega-narrative), can transform any curious male into a fertile non-human being, thus ridiculing the futility of his masculine "powers" and sustaining her reign in her exclusively feminine realm. Thus, the associations of the Lady of the Lake with the goddess Diana become more understandable when viewed in archetypal terms.

In addition to partial appropriation tenets, what also makes Diana come closest to the Sheba mega-archetype, are Tenets 4 and 7 that is to say that she is a powerful ruler over her sylvestrian terrain. According to classical lore, like Sheba being surrounded by a retinue of noblemen in her parliament (Tenets 4 and 7), Artemis and Diana similarly ensure the progression of kings and their preservation. For example, Artemis insures the safe delivery of offspring during labor (Baring and Cashford 325). Both fecundity goddesses preserved mankind through birth and through maintaining the flow of kingship.

As far as Tenet 10 (supernatural crossing of boundaries) is concerned, Diana's consort is the god Janus, whose name, as Sir James Frazer argues, is but a corruption of

Dianus (XVI). Janus was the Roman god of the gateways, the protector of passages, movements and transitions (Littleton 770-4). The dual nature is hence symbolized in his two-headed image, such as Janus from Ovid's *Fasti*, Bk. 1, that was often placed at the top of Roman gates to protect travelers passing in and out of town. The Grove of Diana was her sylvestrian dwelling place, where she lived on the margins of city life. Not only was she living in that state of liminality, but so too was her consort Janus/Dianus who represents the liminal space between barbarism and civilization, between rural and urban space. Thus, Janus is the god of transitions and it is his nature to combine two worlds and the boundaries between two communities (harvest-planting, beginnings-deaths, rural-urban) is but a manifestation of the Qur'anic Solomon's dominion over the two worlds of the human and the jinns (Tenets 10 and 11). Like Solomon of the mega-narrative, Janus had a stick (Ovid *Fasti* I 254-5) which enabled him to keep an eye on spiritual foes as well as surrounding villages. Janus's staff is nothing but a demonstration of Solomon's staff that is consumed by his death after his magical powers cease to exist (Qur'an 34:14). Janus's extraordinary powers are resonant with Solomon's metaphysical ones, for Janus was associated with omens and auspices, and as well he had control of beginnings and thus was knowledgeable of what was to come (Tenet 2), even though the *VC* makes Diana seem as the predecessor of the Lady of the Lake. Both characters, however, actually belong to the same archetypal strain.

As I have argued earlier in the introduction, myths are not as faithful in following the tenets of the mega-archetype as the way romances/national epics are. Myths emulate fewer tenets of the mega-archetype than romances do. The structure of this archetype is manifest also in the Arabic *sira* of *Dhāt al-Himma* or *The Princess of High Resolve*. Like

the Lady of the Lake who is knowledgeable of the seven arts and is so good “at clerk learning” and is skilled in administrating the laws and in all aspects of governing her land that she is an advisor of King Arthur (*VC* vol. 1, 416) the Princess of High Resolve occupies high posts in the political life. Both are no different from Bilqīs who inspires the mega-archetype.

The Princess of High Resolve (Dhāt al-Himma)

Remke Kruk studies female warriors such as the Princess of High Resolve (Dhāt al-Himma). She posits that the warrior queen archetype in the Islamic tradition is borrowed from the Greek Amazons (20-23). Kruk adapts and applies Jan de Vries’s male warrior hero formula (de Vries 210-226) to the female warrior Dhāt al-Himma whose:

childhood and youth are indeed unusual: she is rejected by her father because she is a girl and raised outside the family. At the age of five, she is abducted and cut off from her family. Already at a very young age she is remarkable for her pride and physical strength, and trains herself in the art of war [. . .] when she is about seven years old she kills a man who threatens her honor [. . .] Marriage and more specifically, motherhood are thus particularly feminine elements in her career, the equivalent of winning a maiden in that of a male hero. (Kruk 24-25)

Thus, Dhāt al-Himma, according to Kruk, follows the “feminine type of heroic cycle.” Similarly, Melanie Magidow in her “Epic of the Commander Dhāt al-Himma” seconds Kruk’s opinion about the application of de Vries’s heroic cycle (11-12). In order to make Dhāt al-Himma fit in the male hero formula, Kruk replaces the seventh element in de Vries’s formula which states that the hero “wins a maiden” with the “particularly feminine elements” of “marriage” and “motherhood.” Kruk focuses merely on Dhāt al-

Himma as a warrior without looking at her story as a narrative structure that explores other aspects of her as a woman. Despite the applicability of de Vries's theory to Dhāt al-Himma, I argue, it puts the female in the mold of the male without coming up with a taxonomy that is purely feminine and more inclusive of the tenets and ambient motifs suggested above.

In addition to deploying de Vries's taxonomy, Kruk also argues for other motifs present in the structural layout of Dhāt al-Himma—and other warrior queen stories. She posits that warrior “women of sound Arab stock” include eight motifs (23-4). They are:

1. Free women
2. Educated as boys [Tomboy childhood she becomes a *mujahida* (war martyr) (Kruk 54)]
3. Defeat men in combat
4. Reveal their female charms (after being disguised in male attire), unsettling their opponent.
5. Have fascination for a famous hero
6. Visit their beloved in prison
7. Ask him questions boasting about their own marital prowess
8. Desert their own people.

Over and above the these eight motifs, Kruk posits other miscellaneous attributes of the female warrior such as chastity (45), Piety (45), female is dressed in male attire (47), and men looking to her for guidance (42). These traits and motifs have counterparts in the Bilqīs mega-archetype tenet and Solomon mega-narrative ambient motifs (see Table 4).

Table 11 Kruk’s suggested motifs of warrior female hero formula

Motifs	Bilqīs mega-archetype tenet or Solomon mega-narrative ambient motif
Free women	The Queen is powerful (in terms of money, political power and wisdom) (Tenet 4)
Educated as boys [Tomboy childhood she becomes a <i>mujahida</i> (war martyr) (54)	The Queen is fair/democratic and seeks advice from her parliament/people Gifts: peaceful political (Tenet 7)
Defeat men in combat	The King approaches/challenges/tests/educates the Queen (Tenet 6)
Reveal their female charms (after being disguised in male attire) unsettling their male opponent.	The King sees the queen’s legs when she lifts her frock (Tenet 15)
Have fascination for a famous hero	Ambient Motif of the biblical Sheba and the Ethiopian Mâkědâ interest piqued about Solomon
Visit him in prison	Queen travels to meet the King (Tenet 9)
Ask him questions boasting about their own marital prowess	Ambient Motif of the biblical Sheba and the Ethiopian Mâkědâ posing riddles on Solomon
Desert their own people.	Queen saved through conversion: renouncing older traditions. Hybridity-Disenchantment. New education (Tenet 17)

For instance, Kruk posits that the warrior queen has to be a strong “free woman” who “defeats men in combat”; so is Bilqīs—this is in line with Tenet 4 of the mega-archetype. According to Kruk, she is a “war martyr” who defeats men in combat; this agrees with Tenets 6 and 7 of the mega-archetype. Moreover, Kruk’s heroines go visit their beloved in prison just as Bilqīs initiates the visit to Solomon (Tenet 9). At the end of the visit Bilqīs shows Solomon her legs (Tenet 15). Similarly, Kruk’s female warrior shows her feminine charms at the end of the combat. Furthermore, Kruk’s protagonist eventually denounces her people for her prince just as Bilqīs leaves her old pagan customs and converts to Solomon’s religion (Tenet 17). Kruk’s suggested female warrior hero traits are in fact also tenets of the Bilqīs mega-archetype.

Another aspect that Kruk explores is the importance of chastity to the warrior queen narrative. Kruk argues that a prerequisite for female heroism in the Arabic *sira* is

the chastity/virginity of the female warrior: sexual relations are only allowed on a very restricted basis and only as a means of procreation. Kruk contends that virginity is an evident trait in the feminine communities of the Amazon warriors—a theme that Hippocrates discusses in his *Airs, Waters and Place*.⁷⁵ Since Hippocrates was circulating at the time and Muslims were familiar with this book, Kruk contends, that the Amazon archetype infiltrated into the Arabic tradition through the Greek text (20). I dispute this opinion though. Unlike the Greek Amazons who live in secluded and segregated societies of women, the Queen of Sheba, the Lady of the Lake, and Dhāt al-Himma live in open societies that include men. Not only do these women live in non-segregated societies, but they also rule over their communal men. These women, like the archetypal Sheba, are depicted as single women without a regular daily male consort (ambient motif).

I have illustrated that Kruk's female warrior traits are constituted of:

- (a) de Vries' taxonomy⁷⁶ and
- (b) the female warrior characteristics (chastity, piety, sound political opinion and vulnerability to the male gaze) that Kruk herself discerns.

⁷⁵ Furthermore, Larwazl, a physician who lived around 1100 CE, wrote a book on various kinds of living beings, including 'Amazonians,' in his Book on the *Natures of Living Beings*.

⁷⁶ 1. The hero is begotten
2. He is born
3. His youth is threatened
4. He is brought up
5. He often acquires invulnerability
6. He fights with the dragon or other monster
7. He wins a maiden, usually after overcoming great dangers
8. He makes an expedition to the underworld
9. He returns to the land from which he was once banished and conquers his enemies
10. He dies. (De Vries 210-26)

These traits, I posit, are actually Tenets 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, and 17 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype. That is to say, chastity is the ambient motif of the single queen, piety is reminiscent of Bilqīs’s conversion (Tenet 17), dressing in male attire in order to avoid the male gaze is the anti-motif of Bilqīs lifting her frock (Tenet 15), and the female warrior who gives sound political guidance is congruent with Bilqīs’ democratic parliament (Tenet 7). Motifs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10 of de Vries are pretty general as they are about the birth and the death of the hero.

The Bilqīs mega-archetype is applicable to Dhāt al-Himma whom the text establishes as a pragmatic, knowledgeable, unflappable character, and an unsurpassed warrior (Tenet 4). She possesses many maps and documents and creates her own weapons from tree branches. Her exceptional martial abilities make Kruk believe that Dhāt-al Himma falls into the warrior queen category and make Magidow call her “commander” as she is one of the greatest consultants of the Caliph. Like Sheba running her parliament (Tenet 7), Dhāt al-Himma is also adept in handling the judicial and administrative matters of her kingdom that she runs a war council. Moreover, she is “skilled in administrating the laws and in all aspects of governing her land.” She studies maps and comes up with clever stratagems against her enemy in Constantinople, whom she vanquishes. She is crowned first princess of the capital of the Roman Byzantium by Harun al-Rashid (186) and “becomes the first Arabic empress on the Roman throne.” Her rule over Constantinople even extends to include Andalusia (197). She loots treasure from the castle of the Roman princess Bagha (ruler of Malta and Loen’s III daughter) (61). Moreover, Dhāt al Himma actually chops off the head of the ruler of Malta and Bagha (148). She is placed on the throne of Manuel III when Constantinople with all its

riches and the riches of the neighboring nations (194) fell into the hands of the Muslims. Like Bilqīs, she rules over a group of men. Not only does Dhāt al-Himma, raise her warrior son A’bdel-Wahāb and three grandsons who also become warriors (207), but she also takes care of an army of knights. This earns her the title of “Umm al-Mujahideen” (or “the mother of warriors/martyrs”). She is also the first one to teach Harun al-Rashid the art of war and combat (227) and it is actually him that gives her the title Umm al-Mujahideen (or the mother of warriors/martyrs). All these details that I have illustrated of Dhāt al-Himma conform with Tenets 4 and 7 of the mega-archetype.

Men are attracted to Dhāt al Himma and try to challenge her (Tenet 6). This female combatant is more martially-abled than her cousin and soon-to-be husband, al-Ḥārith that she defeats him again and again in combat (al-Hakim 64-5). She refuses his marriage proposal as she doesn’t want to be distracted from her nationalistic mission. Al-Ḥārith feels intimidated by her because she is more respected than he, and so he tries to compensate for this by an ostentatious display of wealth and offering her gifts (Tenet 8). She accepts the gifts of her cousin, but gives them away to her *jawary* and cousins because she cherishes her armor more (51).

Unlike Sheba, whose throne is appropriated (Tenet 12) and whose legs are glanced at (Tenet 15), Dhāt al-Himma’s body is fully appropriated by rape. Dhāt al Himma has shunned marriage and is not interested in sexual relations; the loss of her virginity will put an end to her martial prowess and make her more tractable. She does not view herself merely as a wife who breeds children and cooks (30). Rather, she prefers “to sleep with her sword and her war equipment and the kohl for war dust is her quest” (30). There is no place for marriage in the midst of the Roman threat to the Islamic

empire due to the complicated political situation. However, the Caliph makes her marry her cousin al-Ḥārith with whom she has a tense relationship. She keeps the marriage celibate until al-Ḥārith puts a potion in her lemonade and consummates the marriage without her consent, thus performing a full appropriation of her (Tenets 12 and 15). al-Ḥārith, who holds a grudge against her, and there exists a “mingling of love with hatred” (87), rapes her. Instead of the partial appropriation motif in the mega-archetype, it becomes conflated here into a full rape episode.

If the al-Ḥārith episode fulfills Tenets 12 and 15 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype, there are two other men who fulfill Tenets 5, 6 and 10 of the Bilqīs mega-archetype. The Solomon prototype of the mega-narrative breaking up into three distinct, but complementary characters. These three complementary split characters are: al-Ḥārith, Harun al-Rashid, and Battāl, her *‘ayyar*⁷⁷ (traditional helper and companion). Harun al-Rashid is the powerful King whose kingdom is definitely bigger than hers (Tenet 5). Battāl can easily cross geographical boundaries—both natural and practical (Tenet 10). Like Solomon, who understands the language of birds and jinns (Tenet 2; ambient motif), Battāl speaks a number of languages, which of course is an extraordinary power.

To sum up, looking at Dhāt al-Himma from a mega-archetypal perspective enables us to view this story in a different light. The Sheba Mega-Archetype has been circulating in the Mediterranean region since the kingdom of King Solomon, and Dhāt al-Himma follows most of the tenets of the Sheba mega-archetype. The *sira* is not simply a

⁷⁷ According to Malcolm Lyons, an *‘ayyar* is a man of wiles whose figure is inspired by the devil who seduces Eve and Job’s wife. Early in his life the hero usually acquires a faithful companion and helper, who, in Arabic popular epic, is generally a trickster figure, the “man of wiles.” The *ayyar* is a creature of marginality and is not bound by convention.

borrowing of Greek Amazonian tales as Kruk looks at the Arabic narrative from a western perspective and traces the indebtedness of the text to Greek works (20). Not only does Kruk impose a Western reading on Dhāt al-Himma, but she also forces a male taxonomical reading of it—as she applies Jan de Vries’s³³ male hero formula to her reading of warrior queens. My tenets, I would contend, are more inclusive and broader than Kruk’s more limited “*macho-western*” taxonomy.

Conclusion

Sheba is a monarch who is not as domesticated as Zulaikhah, Sarah, or Hagar are. We see her ruling over men instead. Unlike the Virgin Mary mega-archetype who gives birth to the ultimate hero, the Sheba mega-archetype is associated more distantly with her off-spring: she either rules over a group of knights, is a foster mother, or is a biological mother who forsakes her son at an earlier stage. Both Lancelot and A’bdel-Wahāb are brought up away from their biological parents. This of course is reminiscent of Lord Raglan’s taxonomy of the hero and his mother. According to scholars such as Raglan and de Vries, the taxonomy of a typical male hero story entails that the hero is brought up away from the parents. My theory, that I discussed at length in the introduction of this dissertation, holds that male taxonomies work hand in hand with female-hero mega-archetypes; when both structures are in one narrative, each complements the other. It is, thus, unfair and limiting to apply male taxonomies to female figures. Female heroes have their own taxonomies, and this is what the Sheba mega-archetype—among the other mega-archetypes—elucidates.

Being both a warrior queen and a surrogate mother could at conflict at face value. The rape scenes in Bilqīs narrative replicas can be read as forced fertility that is linked to

the unifying mytheme in all these stories: water and vegetation. Furthermore, the associations between the Lady of the Lake and Diana/Artemis gives further proof of the structure of the archetype. Like all other female protagonist mega-archetypes, all of these figures are associated with water. Even when Sheba is on the glass pavilion she mistakes it for water! Diana and Artemis were allied with other water creatures such as nymphs and woodland gods because both figures were associated with rivers and lakes. The Lady of the Lake becomes a perfect embodiment of this element in the archetype as we see how her name is constructed. That depiction of Lady of the Lake makes us see how she and Diana can be categorized together leading to a better understanding of the structure and premises of the archetype.

To sum up, the Bilqīs mega-archetype is a narrative structure, comprised of 17 tenets and ambient motifs—that I have identified—that inspire narrative replicas. Narrative replicas do not necessarily deploy all the tenets of the mega-archetype. As a general remark, romances implement more tenets than myths, folktales, and fairytales do. Hence romances are the focus of this dissertation as they emulate a greater number of tenets of the mega-archetypes more closely than myths and fairytales do. These tenets that romances emulate can be conflated. For example, when Solomon gets Sheba's throne from Yemen to Jerusalem and peeks onto her legs (Tenets 12, 15) are inflated into themes of rape in the narrative replicas of the Lady of the Lake and the Princess of High Resolve. Thus, even though the tenets of the mega-archetype do not basically suggest rape as such, literature—representative of culture—perceives and conflates tenets to express communal fears. Similarly, Islamic and Jewish exegesis exaggerate the patriarchal anxiety of the strong female politician by portraying her as a threatening hairy

woman with a goat's leg. She becomes another Lilith, or a devil's daughter. Muslim scholars deploy Bilqīs as a threatening female monarch figure to explain the weakly documented hadith of “a people who make a woman their ruler will never be successful.” Similarly, biblical folklore places Sheba as Solomon's seducer and the direct reason behind the fall of his kingdom. It is only when we weed out these exaggerations of archetypal tenets and character flipsides that we can discover the crux of the mega-archetype better. It is only then, when we reread the narrative with fresh eyes and give it a chance to deconstruct older stories and tell newer ones through a feminist epiphanic lens: a female monarch can be just and fair, she can admire someone like Solomon and be his equal. Her curious mind allows her to learn from him and teach what she has learnt to her kingdom. Male and female monarchs can exist side by side—this is what the Bilqīs mega-archetype plainly says.

Conclusion

Descendants and Nations from Noah

These are the records[a] of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, to whom descendants[b] were born after the flood. Japheth's descendants included[c] Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. Gomer's descendants included Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. Javan's descendants included Elisha, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim,[d] 5 from whom the coastal nations[e] spread into their own lands and nations, each with their own language and family groups.

Ham's Descendants

Ham's descendants included Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. Cush's descendants included Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. Raamah's descendants included Sheba and Dedan. Cush fathered Nimrod, who became the first fearless[f] leader throughout the land. 9 He became a fearless[g] hunter in defiance of[h] the Lord. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a fearless hunter in defiance of[i] the Lord." 10 His kingdom began in the region[j] of Shinar[k] with the cities of[l] Babylon, Erech,[m] Akkad, and Calneh. 11 From there[n] he went north[o] to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, and Calah, 12 along with Resen, which was located between Nineveh and the great city of Calah. Egypt fathered the Ludites, the Anamites, the Lehabites, the Naphtuhites, 14 the Pathrusites, the Casluhites (from which came the Philistines), and the Caphtorites. Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn, along with the Hittites, 16 the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, 17 the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, 18 the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Later, the Canaanite families were widely scattered. 19 The Canaanite border extended south[p] from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and east[q] toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. These are Ham's descendants, listed by their families, each with their own lands, language, and family groups.

Shem's Descendants

Shem, Japheth's older brother, also had descendants.[r] Shem was the father of the descendants of Eber. 22 Shem's sons included Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. Aram's descendants included Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Arpachshad fathered Cainan, Cainan fathered Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber.[s] 25 To Eber were born two sons. One was named Peleg,[t] because the earth was divided during his lifetime. His brother was named Joktan. Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28 Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were Joktan's descendants. 30 Their settlements extended from Mesha towards Sephar, the eastern hill country. These are Shem's descendants, listed by their families, each with their own lands, language, and family groups. These are the families of Noah's sons, according to their records, by their nations. From these people, the nations on the earth spread out after the flood. (Genesis 10)

The above “table of nations” in the Book of Genesis gives a genealogy of Noah’s sons spreading across the earth. This is not the only instance in the Bible though. The Quran gives us a piece of information that God “[. . .] have bestowed this divine writ as a heritage unto such of Our servants as We chose [. . .]” (Qur’an 35:32) and He “[. . .] sent forth Noah and Abraham [as Our message-bearers], and established prophethood and revelation among their descendants; and some of them were on the right way, but many were iniquitous” (Quran 57:26). Thus, the sons of Noah spread all over the earth and in addition to that there was a “Writ” or a “revelation” that has thus been circulating with them. According to extensive studies done by Omm Nour, 84% of the Quran was revealed in earlier scriptures⁷⁸. Figure (7) is a map⁷⁹ that illustrates the spread of Noah’s sons across the globe. Thus, the scriptural stories were already circulating before they had even took place. This is in alignment of why some of the Greek myths, I have been referring to, have narrative structures similar to scriptural stories, even before the Bible or the Quran were recorded. Moreover, the assumption that mega-archetypes and mega-narratives were circulating earlier than the narrative replicas problematizes Jung’s theory that archetypes are primeval since the mega-archetypes that inspired these stories were circulating since the time of the deluge. For example, Sarah-Hagar and Mary mega-archetypes inspire the mother archetype that Jung studies.

Throughout this dissertation, I have illustrated how the Zulaikhah, Sarah-Hagar, Mary and Bilqīs mega-archetypes are constituted of structural tenets. In addition to these

⁷⁸ Quran Code Study Copyright: TXU 1-608-767 Perkin Coie LLP

⁷⁹ Omm Nour shared this map with me from her upcoming book titled *The Divulge*.

tenets, ambient motifs inspired by mega-narratives infiltrate into narrative replicas emulating the mega-archetypes. Tenets and ambient motifs are extracted from the

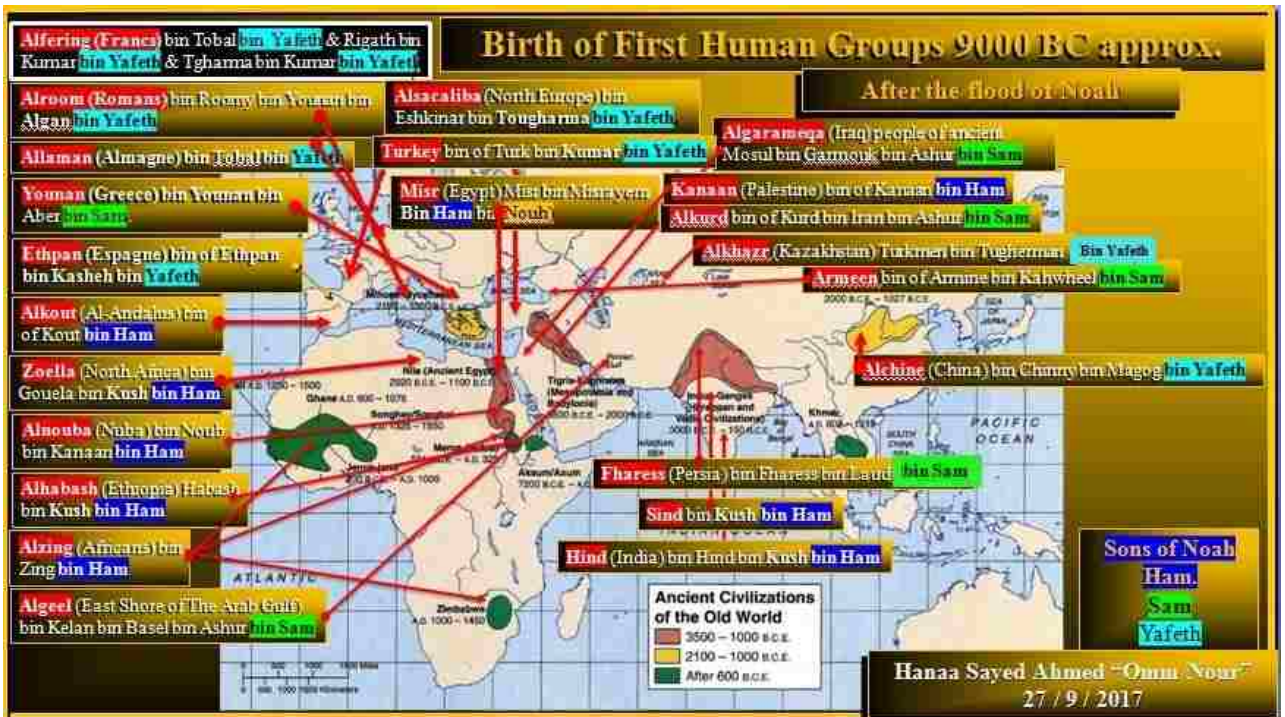


Figure 7: Noah's Descendants Map (Credit to Omm Nour)

Qur'an—and the Bible. The narratives in Bible and Qur'an are structural mega-archetypes that inspire a myriad of medieval romances.

Romances are a good medium for deploying tenets and ambient motifs of mega-archetypes and mega-narratives. Myths and folktales are brief narrations that include just a few tenets or a few ambient motifs. Novels on the other hand, explore characters in more depth and focus more on psychological and historical exploration of a certain character rather than being more faithful for the tenets. It is the deployment of a reasonable number of tenets and ambient motifs from a mega-archetype or a mega-narrative that give romances this particular flavor that we do not always find in other literary genres.

Having said that, we can still find emulations of mega-archetypes in other genres of literary texts. The Zulaikhah mega-archetype, for instance, is manifest in novels such as *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Bridges Over Madison's County*. In these novels, the female protagonists are involved in complex relationships in which they are married to a man from a prestigious family, while being in love with someone from a lowly social class. Perhaps, among the novels in which a considerable number of the Zulaikhah tenets are fulfilled is *The Bridges Over Madison's County*. In this novel, the female protagonist is married to an established man in the community (Tenet 2) while falling in love with a bohemian photographer whom she invites for dinner (Tenet 11). The photographer goes to the lady's house (Tenet 1) where they have an affair (Tenet 3, 5). There is this threat of gossip (Tenet 10). The cloth motif (ambient motif) is replaced by the white dress that the lover buys to celebrate her romantic night with the photographer.

The Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype is manifest is manifest in narrative replicas. In Arabic works such as *Love that doesn't See the Sun* by Mahmoud Abou Zayd or the adaptation of Eduardo De Filippo's *Filomena Marturano* as *Counterfeiting in Official Papers*, there is a rivalry between a first infertile wife and a second one whom the husband takes to give him an heir. In both movies the first wife is more socially privileged than the second (ambient motif). Offspring (Tenet 8) feature in these narrative replicas. European adaptations of the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetype feature in works such as *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *A Month by the Lake* where there is rivalry between women belonging to different age groups and social classes. It is true that the theme of polygamy doesn't exist as it does in Arabic works, but two women catalyze these plots. In *Under the Tuscan Sun*, the female protagonist leaves her house after she finds that her husband is cheating on her with a younger woman. In *A Month by the Lake* the older Miss Bentley meets a bachelor whom he admires, however he prefers the younger Miss Beaumont to her. Similarly, in *Jane Eyre*, Edward Rochester prefers the younger and poorer Jane Eyre to the older and more affluent Bertha Mason. He almost marries them at the same time and it is the younger fertile Jane who gives him two heirs.

The Virgin Mary mega-archetype is a least common mega-archetype in more recent works of art. However, many mythical heroes have virgin mother, or have mothers who get impregnated in ways that they are unprepared for. Mythical heroes born to a virgin mother (Tenet 2) are: Zoroaster, Romulus and Remus, Melchizedek and Karna. A number of heroes are conceived when shapeshifting takes place (Tenet 8) such as Quetzalcoatl, Helen and Polydeuces. Horus gets conceived by Isis blowing her breath unto him (Tenet 12). Isis is a fertility symbol in ancient Egyptian mythology.

The Bilqīs mega-archetype is one of the more common ones. She is manifest in the figure of Melusine: the strong-willed water fairy who hides her legs (anti-Tenet 15) from men. Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* portrays a strong woman Bathsheba who refuses to relent to Farmer Joseph. In more recent works such as *You've Got Mail*, Kathleen Kelly is a strong independent woman (Tenet 4) whose business is appropriated (Tenet 12) by that an even stronger more powerful businessman (Tenet 5). Even though, on the surface the movie seems to be intertextual, or parodying Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen's novel is in fact about strong female protagonist, Elizabeth Bennet who challenges (Tenet 6) the more potent Mr. Darcy. In the more recent narrative replicas, such as *When Harry Met Sally*, the female protagonist keeps resisting her admirer until she given in to him in bed. In *Fifty Shades of Gray*, the independent Ana Steele in the beginning resists the ambitious male protagonist (Tenet 6), but is fully appropriated by him (Tenet 12). The Bilqīs mega archetype has a narrative structure of # Tenets, but it focuses mainly on the female-male power relations.

Some plots deploy, what I have referred to as, mega-archetype aggregate. That is to say two mega-archetypes are aggregated together. In example of this is *Two Weeks Notice* starred by Sandra Bullock in which bothe the Bilquis and the Sarah-Hagar mega-archetypes are deployed. As for The bilqis part of the stoty, Bullock is an intelligent lawyer who is set in contrast with the wealthy Hugh Grant (Tenet 3, 4, 5). Bullock works in preserving historic—a pseudo-masonry motif (Tenet 14). Grant want to “appropriate” the community center from her (Tenet 12). The Sarah Hagar part of the story is introduced when a blonde younger lawyer threatens Bullock's position in Grant's firm.

mega-archetypes are still prevalent in post-medieval literary works. When compared to medieval works, even when less mega-archetypal tenets and ambient motifs are deployed in these works, one can still trace these mega-archetypal strains. It is always through the woman protagonist that we can decide the mega-archetype and the mega-narrative that the narrative replica is following. Male protagonists would be misleading in this aspect; in other words: if one wants to trace which mega-archetype a certain narrative replica is following, fetch the women.

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