

## LORCA'S *LA CASA DE BERNARDA ALBA* AND THE LACK OF PSYCHIC INTEGRATION

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Some critics have felt that a psychological analysis of Lorca's work is improper since it is not an appropriate form of literary criticism.<sup>1</sup> However, I agree with Rupert Allen that because of Lorca's intense interest in the personality of his characters, a psychological commentary is often required.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, I intend to study Lorca's last play, *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, from a Jungian perspective. As I do so, I am indebted to Richard Seybolt whose article, "*La casa de Bernarda Alba: a Jungian Analysis*," has provided a foundation for the present study. However, instead of using Seybolt's broad approach, I will give special attention to Jung's theory of psychological types, as well as what he has referred to as the "process of individuation." Before I look at the play itself, therefore, it will be necessary to give a brief introduction to some of the ideas that will provide a background for this study.

Jung's theory of psychological types is based on the notion that each individual can be categorized according to four psychological functions, which are **thinking**, **feeling**, **intuition** and **sensation**. These four functions are mutually exclusive; for example, if the predominant function is thinking, then feeling is always submerged in the unconscious, or else the situation is reversed. Likewise, if intuition predominates, then sensation is unconscious; or the opposite is true.

In addition to the four functions, Jung also distinguishes two basic attitudes—**extroversion** and **introversion**—one of which is conscious, while the other is relegated to the unconscious. According to Jung, extroversion is characterized by a strong relation to the exterior object, while introversion is a reaction that is mainly determined by subjective factors. Since the extrovert orientates himself predominantly by what lies outside himself, he is more likely to follow the external, collectively valid norms. For the introvert, the subject is the starting-point and the exterior object has at most a secondary or indirect value.

As she appears in Lorca's play, it is clear that Bernarda Alba is a woman who is preoccupied by the established values of her community and that her thinking function is repressed, while her feelings are predominant. Therefore, in the first part of this study I will examine the character of Bernarda Alba as an example of the extroverted feeling type whose thinking function is controlled by the unconscious.

In his study of psychological types, Jung has observed that "The extrovert's feeling is always in harmony with objective values" (*Psychological Types*, 207). However, in cases where the personality identifies with the object, feeling can become cold, arbitrary, egotistical and sterile. Jung says most examples of this type are women who are excellent mothers, as long as their children behave according to the norms of conventional values. We will see that all this fits the character of Bernarda Alba.

At the beginning of the play, Bernarda Alba is presented as a person who is so preoccupied with the outside world that she asks her servant, la Poncia, to spend hours spying on the neighbors. Underlying this obsession with the Other is her fanatical preoccupation with the concept of “decency” as it is determined by the centuries-old code of honor that has become a tradition in Spanish life. As Sumner Greenfield has expressed it, Bernarda Alba represents “a Spanish prototype whose sole motivation is an untarnished reputation. . . . Every attitude and every reaction of Bernarda Alba is directed by a fanatical adherence to an archaic principle of honor contingent upon unconditional submission to every extreme of conventional morality and social behavior that her indomitable will dictates in the name of Decency” (457).<sup>3</sup>

Jung has found that thinking is suppressed when feeling is predominant, because “this is the function that is most liable to disturb feeling” (*Psychological Types*, 211). When she and la Poncia are discussing the marriage of Angustias to Pepe el Romano, Bernarda declares emphatically: “Yo no pienso. Hay cosas que no se pueden ni se deben pensar. Yo ordeno” (168). When Bernarda orders everyone to be silent, which is her first and last action in this play, it is because she wants to repress the thoughts that could be stimulated by what they say. When Adela asks about falling stars, Bernarda responds: “es mejor no pensar en ellas” (185). On another occasion, Bernarda tells Angustias: “Cada uno sabe lo que piensa por dentro. Yo no me meto en los corazones, pero quiero buena fachada y armonía familiar” (182), meaning that she doesn’t want to know what other people are thinking, as long as external appearances are preserved.

We can therefore see that Bernarda Alba is a domineering tyrant *precisely because her thinking processes have been repressed*. Jung says that because a woman’s thinking is suppressed does not mean that she does not think at all; on the contrary, a woman of this type may think a great deal, but her thinking is an appendage to her feeling and, because it is repressed, it is controlled by the unconscious (*Psychological Types*, 200). When this happens, the unconscious thinking reaches the surface in the form of obsessive ideas which are always of a negative and damaging nature.

During the course of the play it becomes increasingly obvious that Bernarda Alba suffers from a serious psychic imbalance, and a basic tenet of Jungian psychology is that the unconscious tends to compensate for any lack of conscious equilibrium. As Jung explains: “The unconscious processes stand in a compensatory relation to the conscious mind. I expressly use the word ‘compensatory’ and not the word ‘contrary’ because conscious and unconscious are not necessarily in opposition to one another, but complement one another to form a totality, which is the self” (*Two essays*, 177). This lack of psychic equilibrium is not always a bad thing because it can lead to the establishment of a new equilibrium, providing that consciousness is able to assimilate and digest the contents produced by the unconscious. However, when these contents are repressed, they invariably take a destructive character.

In Lorca’s play, it could be said that la Poncia represents an effort of the unconscious to restore the balance caused by Bernarda’s repression of the thinking

function. For example, when Bernarda expresses her unwillingness to think about what is happening in her house, la Poncia tries to warn her: “Bernarda, aquí pasa una cosa muy grande. Yo no quiero echar la culpa, pero tú no has dejado tus hijas libres. . .” (169). She goes on to suggest that a reasonable option would be to permit Pepe to marry her youngest daughter, Adela. Bernarda’s only response is to boast: “Afortunadamente, mis hijas me respetan y jamás torcieron mi voluntad” (171). La Poncia warns her again that there will be negative consequences if she does not change her way of thinking, but Bernarda’s response only shows her rigidity: “Si las gentes del pueblo quieren levantar falsos testimonios se encontrarán con mi pedernal. No se hable de este asunto” (173).

Now, after this brief look at Bernarda Alba from the point of view of Jung’s psychological types, an examination of what Jung has said about the Process of Individuation will shed further light on the personality of Bernarda Alba, and it will also give us a better understanding of her daughters. Finally, using the process of individuation as a point of departure, we will examine the archetypal symbolism that is associated with Bernarda’s mother, María Josefa.

What Jung refers to as “individuation” is a process of psychological development that occurs as the contents of the unconscious are integrated into consciousness. Since this results in state of psychic wholeness, it is therefore equivalent to reaching a state of “self-knowledge,” or “self-realization.” In his book, *The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious*, Jung describes the importance of this process:

The more we become conscious of ourselves through self-knowledge, and act accordingly, the more the layer of the personal unconscious that is superimposed on the collective unconscious will be diminished. In this way there arises a consciousness which is no longer imprisoned in the petty, over-sensitive, personal world of the ego, but participates freely in the wider world of objective interests. This widened consciousness is no longer that touchy, egotistical bundle of personal wishes, fears, hopes, and ambitions which always has to be compensated or corrected by unconscious counter-tendencies; instead, it is a function of relationship to the world of objects, bringing the individual into absolute, binding, and indissoluble communion with the world at large (*Two Essays*, 178).

An important step in the individuation process is the assimilation of the “soul-image,” which is the *anima* in man, and the *animus* in woman. These archetypal figures stand for the contra-sexual portion of the psyche which must be integrated before self-realization can occur. Since all the characters of Lorca’s play are women, it is the animus which will be our main concern.

The function of the animus, like that of the anima, is to serve as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious. Just as the anima produces moods, so the animus produces opinions, and in order to come to terms with it, a woman must learn to criticize her opinions and hold them at a distance. M.-L. von Franz, explains that when this effort is unsuccessful, or when it is repeatedly repressed, the animus can have a negative aspect:

In this form the animus personifies all those semiconscious, cold, destructive reflections that invade a woman in the small hours, especially when she has failed to realize some obligation of feeling. It is then that she begins to think about family heritage and matters of that kind—a sort of web of calculating thoughts, filled with malice and intrigue, which get her into a state where she even wishes death to others. . . . By nursing secret destructive attitudes, a wife can drive her husband, and a mother her children, into illness, accident, or even death. Or she may decide to keep the children from marrying—a deeply hidden form of evil that rarely comes to the surface of the mother's conscious mind (191).

In addition to the rejection of her thinking function, it is obvious that Bernarda Alba has repressed the masculine portion of her self and as a result has become possessed by the negative aspect of the animus. Lorca has called our attention to the rejection of the masculine psyche by not including any male characters in the cast of the play. To emphasize this point, on more than one occasion Bernarda tries to create a barrier between her family and the men of her town.<sup>4</sup> We also learn that she has driven away the only man who has expressed an interest in Martirio, and in a discussion with la Poncia, she insists that her daughters have no need of a man, “¡No ha tenido novio ninguna ni les hacía falta!” (134).

The irony of this situation is that, while Bernarda tries to create a barrier between her family and the men of the town, she herself has become increasingly masculine in her temperament. For example, when Martirio steals Angustias' portrait of Pepe el Romano, Bernarda gives orders like a drill sergeant—“Registra los cuartos, mira por las camas” (165)—and when she shouts directions to the servants who are trying to control the breeding stallion, her friend Prudencia affirms that she has been “bregando como un hombre” (179).

It is obvious, therefore, that Bernarda's actions correspond perfectly to what Jung has observed in women who have not come to terms with the animus. As he explains it:

A woman possessed by the animus is always in danger of losing her femininity, her adapted feminine persona. . . . These psychic changes of sex are due entirely to the fact that a function which belongs to the inside has been turned outside. The reason for this perversion is clearly the failure to give adequate recognition to an inner world which stands autonomously opposed to the outer world (*Two Essays*, 209).

In what follows, we will see that Bernarda's effort to distance herself from men has also has a negative effect on her daughters.

When the animus is repressed, it can reappear in many different forms which are relatively autonomous because they have not been recognized or dealt with by the conscious mind. In the case of Adela, we will see that the animus takes an active form; however, with all the other daughters it takes a form which is passive. For instance, when Amelia tells Magdalena that one of her shoes is untied, she does not bother to fix it, and when Amelia asks Martirio if she has taken her medicine, she responds dispiritedly:

“Yo hago las cosas sin fe, pero como un reloj” (135). This negative aspect of the animus has been described by one of Jung’s colleagues, M.-L. von Franz: “A strange passivity and paralysis of all feeling, or a deep insecurity that can lead to a sense of nullity, may sometimes be the result of an unconscious animus opinion. In the depths of the woman’s being, the animus whispers: ‘You are hopeless, what’s the use of trying? There’s no point in doing anything. Life will never change for the better’” (191).

This type of negative animus opinion is especially evident in Martirio who has been more strongly affected than her sisters by her mother’s rejection of men. In keeping with the lack of faith in herself, Martirio also fears any contact with men: “Es preferible no ver a un hombre nunca. Desde niña les tuve miedo. . . Dios me ha hecho débil y fea y los ha apartado definitivamente de mí” (136). In view of Martirio’s repression of the animus, it is no surprise that she later exclaims to Adela: “Tengo el corazón lleno de una fuerza tan mala, que sin quererlo yo, a mí mismo me ahoga” (196). La Poncia aptly symbolizes Martirio’s unconscious when she describes her state of mind as “un pozo de veneno” (189). When la Criada declares that all of Bernarda’s daughters are equally bad —“¡Es que son muy malas!”—la Poncia’s declares that this is only a natural reaction to the failure to assimilate the animus: “Son mujeres sin hombre, nada más” (190).

The animus, like the anima, is always unconsciously projected upon the person of the beloved, and in this case the receptor of the animus projection is Pepe el Romano. Adela’s relationship with the animus is more active than that of her sisters because she is the only one who makes an attempt to assimilate her male counterpart, as she seems to indicate when she says of Pepe: “Mirando sus ojos me parece que bebo su sangre lentamente” (156).

As an indication that she has already begun the process that leads to individuation, Adela tells her passive sister, Martirio: “He tenido fuerza para adelantarme. El brío y el mérito que tú no tienes” (194).<sup>5</sup> M.-L. von Franz describes this beneficial form that can be taken by the animus: “The positive side of the animus can personify an enterprising spirit, courage, truthfulness, and in the highest form, spiritual profundity. Through him a woman can experience the underlying processes of her cultural and personal situation, and can find her way to an intensified spiritual attitude to life” (195).

The symbolic representation of Adela’s spiritual interest can be seen in her intense fascination with stars:

Adela:	Tiene el cielo una estrellas como puños.
Martirio:	Esta se puso a mirarlas de modo que se iba a tronchar el cuello (184).

Adela’s interest in falling stars is also indicative of a willingness to accept change that is the opposite of her mother’s regard for traditional values: “A mí me gusta ver correr lleno de lumbre lo que está quieto y quieto años enteros.”<sup>6</sup> Then, expressing a typical negative animus opinion Amelia exclaims: “Yo cierro los ojos para no verlas,” and Martirio agrees that “estas cosas nada tienen que ver con nosotros” (185). However, Adela’s interest in things that transcend her personal limits clearly represents the positive side of the animus.

Before we discuss the significance of María Josefa's relation to the unconscious, there are several other incidents whose symbolic implications can be related to the process of individuation. In many of Lorca's poems and in *Bodas de sangre* the horse appears as a symbol male sexuality, and it is clear that the same masculine symbolism is exemplified by "el caballo garañón" in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*.<sup>7</sup> In terms of the psychological development we have been discussing, it can be said that Bernarda's confinement of the breeding stallion is another example of her repression of the male element of the psyche, and when the stallion kicks against the walls of the stable where he has been imprisoned, this destructive behavior is representative of what always happens when the unconscious has been repressed.

Even more important for the present discussion is the fact that, due to the obvious parallel between the breeding stallion and Pepe el Romero,<sup>8</sup> the horse becomes the recipient of another projection of the animus. In the moment immediately before Adela begins to talk about the stars, there is a discussion of the stallion during which she proclaims that "El caballo garañón estaba en el centro del corral ¡blanco! Doble de grande, llenando todo lo oscuro" (184). In the same way that María Josefa says that "Pepe el Romano es un gigante" (193), the perception of the horse as "doble de grande" shows that we are dealing with a primordial image that is bigger than life. The fact that Adela ultimately fails to assimilate the animus does not change the fact that this archetypal figure represents the difficult and elusive goal which she is striving to reach.

Another parallel relationship is that of Adela and Martirio with Paca la Roseta and the sequin-clad woman who offers sexual favors to the reapers. However, instead of a relationship of similarity, as in the case of Pepe and the breeding stallion, here we have one of opposites. Just as Adela and Martirio are victims of a repression of sexual energy, Paca and the other woman represent its fulfillment.

When the men who accompany Paca la Roseta tie her husband to a manger—"ataron a su marido a un pesebre"—this represents a rejection of the traditional values that are so important to Bernarda Alba. Then, the image of Paca la Roseta—"con los pechos fuera" and with "el pelo suelto"(132)—suggests a complete lack of sexual inhibitions, as well as an openness to the male element of the psyche. Equally significant is the fact that Paca has "una corona de flores en la cabeza" (132). The crown is a positive image which suggests that her recognition of the animus has allowed her to reach a state of unity and perfection,<sup>9</sup> and the circular shape of the crown also suggests the idea of unity and wholeness (Cirlot, 47).

The woman who accompanies the reapers to the olive grove wears a dress made of *lentejuelas*. The fact that these sequins have a circular shape also represents the wholeness and perfection of another woman who has achieved a state of unity and balance between the two opposite poles of the psyche.

Finally, the daughter of Librada offers a parallel with Adela in that she is another victim of sexual repression. This unfortunate woman is not only similar to Adela, but can also be seen as representing all the women of the town who are forced to deny their need for sexual expression. As la Poncia puts it:

La hija de la Librada, la soltera, tuvo un hijo no se sabe con quien. . . Y para ocultar su vergüenza lo mató y lo metió debajo de unas piedras, pero unos perros con más corazón que muchas criaturas, lo sacaron y como llevados por la mano de Dios lo han puesto en el tranco de su puerta. Ahora la quieren matar (175).

This tragic situation described by la Poncia, can be seen as a symbolic description of a negative relation between the ego and the unconscious. The effort to hide the existence of her illegitimate child is an obvious act of repression, and burying it beneath the stones is equivalent to submerging her sexual need in the unconscious. This creates a lack of equilibrium that produces a compensatory reaction on the part of her unconscious which is symbolized by the dogs that disinter the dead child and return it to her doorstep where she is forced to deal with the repressed material. A positive solution would be for the ego to take some action to recognize the unconscious, but in this atmosphere of repression that is as impossible for the daughter of Librada, as it will finally be for Adela.

There is no doubt that María Josefa has an important psychological relationship to the other characters in the play. She has been described in negative terms as an octogenarian whose mind is “weakened by age” (Greenfield, 457), or as “a poor, demented thing who represents what all these females will become” (Cobb, 138). On the other hand, she has also been seen more positively as “the representative of spiritual freedom” (Newberry, 807), or as an example of “love, charity and generosity of spirit” who is “too lucid to be classed as mad” (Morris, 99-100). Ricardo Doménech describes María Josefa’s madness as “conocimiento de la verdad” (208), and J. Rubia Barcía agrees that “En las letras españoles. . . los locos son los portavoces por antonomasia de aquellas grandes verdades que la intuición entreve con frecuencia, y la razón normalmente desconoce” (394-395).

Because she is associated with the principles of liberty and fecundation, and because her name is both masculine and feminine, Richard A. Seybolt feels that María Josefa represents the “primal uroboric state” (129). This is a concept based on the theories of Erich Neumann, another follower of Jung, which states that “the uroboros is mankind’s psychic beginning in which all opposites are united simultaneously: heaven and earth, light and dark, male and female, birth and death, active and passive, etc.” (126). C. B. Morris correctly states that the emphasis on María Josefa’s age is significant (90), and the fact that she is described as “viejísima” (144), along with the evidence of her strength and vitality—“A pesar de sus ochenta años, tu madre es fuerte como un roble” (130)—suggests that she represents an ageless, female element, or as Rubia Barcía puts it she is “la reafirmación de lo eterno femenino, como raíz de vida, al margen de los accidentes del tiempo” (397).

The wealth of archetypal imagery used by María Josefa makes it clear that she is speaking from the perspective of the collective unconscious. One important indication of this fact is her statement that she wishes to get married on the shore of the ocean:

quiero casarme con un varón hermoso de la orilla del mar. . . yo quiero ir a mi pueblo. Bernarda, yo quiero un varón para casarme y para tener alegría. . . ¡A casarme a la orilla del mar, a la orilla del mar! (145-146).

Her repeated reference to the ocean is significant since, like the collective unconscious, the ocean can be seen as the source of all life. In his book *The Symbolic World of Federico García Lorca*, Rupert Allen says that “Insofar as the question can be answered, we must say that Lorca chose the ocean because it was for him the ultimate genesis-symbol. It was a symbol which he grasped and with which he lived in all its primal genetic significance” (175). Cirlot says that the ocean is also a symbol of woman or the mother, as well as a symbol of the collective unconscious (242). The fact that María Josefa wants to marry a handsome male on the shore of the ocean can be seen as an effort to unite with the male element—the animus—in order to achieve a state of equilibrium and unity. When she asks Bernarda for her necklace of pearls—“Bernarda, dame mi gargantilla de perlas” (145)—this reinforces the previous interpretation in two different ways. Beside the fact that the necklace has the shape of a circle which is an archetypal symbol of unity and wholeness,<sup>10</sup> the spherical shape of the pearl can also be seen as a symbol of balance and perfection.

Several critics have felt that María Josefa has a relation to Christianity, and they base this on her name, as well as the image of the sheep she is carrying in Act Three which can be seen as a representation of Christ as the *agnus dei*.<sup>11</sup> However, in terms of our study of the process of individuation it could also be said that María Josefa represents the Great Mother or the *Magna Mater* who, along with the anima and the animus, helps the individual move forward in his or her psychic development. Jolande Jacobi states that the *Magna Mater* is one of those figures that stand in closest relation to the Self (115n), which is the final goal of the individuation process.<sup>12</sup>

If María Josefa is the Great Mother, it would be possible to see the ocean, which is her goal, as a symbol of the Self. This would explain why she wishes to go only as far as the shore of the ocean—“a la orilla del mar”—since the self is an entity which can never be encompassed in its totality. As Jung explains: “There is little hope of our ever being able to reach even approximate consciousness of the self, since however much we may make conscious there will always exist an indeterminate and indeterminable amount of unconscious material which belongs to the totality of the self. Hence the self will always remain a supraordinate quality” (*Two Essays*, 177).

Sumner Greenfield has suggested that the waves topped with white foam which María Josefa describes in Act Three can be related to the male sperm which the female needs in order to bring to fruition her creative potential (457). Since the color white has also been associated with the breeding stallion and with Adela—“No quiero perder mi blancura en estas habitaciones” (142)—María Josefa’s words suggest that, in Lorca’s drama, whiteness represents some sort of universal, creative principle:

Como tengo el pelo blanco crees que no puedo tener crías, y sí crías y crías y crías. Este niño tendrá el pelo blanco y tendrá otro niño, y éste, otro, y todos con el pelo de nieve, seremos como las olas, una y otra y otra. Luego nos sentaremos todos y todos tendremos el cabello blanco y seremos espuma (192).



This white foam as a symbol of the creative principle, conflicts with the white sterility of Bernarda's house which is, as Sumner Greenfield expresses it, "a conflict of white against white" (457).

As far as I have been able to determine, no other critic has mentioned the archetypal significance of the number *three* in María Josefa's words. In the passage where she describes the children who are like the waves of the ocean, she mentions three groups of three:

- 1) "crías y crías y crías;
- 2) "Este niño tendrá otro niño, y éste, otro";
- 3) "seremos como las olas, una y otra y otra,"

Cirlot points out that the number three represents "the harmonic product of the action of unity on duality," that is, the combination of the male and female principles which results in a synthesis, or as Cirlot summarizes it: "Three symbolizes spiritual synthesis. . ." (232). These repetitions of the number three, therefore, serve to emphasize the continuous creative process which is referred to by María Josefa, who also represents the archetypal figure of the Great Mother.

As María Josefa continues speaking, she uses the word "siempre" three times in order to reinforce the idea of synthesis which exists outside of time as we know it: "Cuando mi vecina tenía un niño yo le llevaba chocolate y luego ella me lo traía a mí así **siempre, siempre, siempre**" (193). Then, after speaking of the act of creation, María Josefa adds: "Luego nos sentaremos todos" and she later goes on to say: "Yo quiero casas, pero casas abiertas y las vecinas acostadas en sus camas con sus niños chiquitos y los hombres fuera sentados en sus sillas" (193). These enigmatic references to the idea of being seated, or lying down—which are also mentioned three times—suggest that the act of union with the animus leads to a state of repose and tranquility.

The fact that Bernarda tries to keep her mother locked up is symptomatic of her effort to repress the unconscious, but I do not agree with Seybolt that María Josefa has been "rendered impotent by Bernarda's tyranny" (129), nor with Greenfield that her creative potential is "doomed to stagnation" (461). Since she personifies the eternal feminine aspect of creation and is associated with the ocean which is the source of life, it is clear that she represents a continuity that extends beyond the death of the individual.<sup>13</sup> Reed Anderson has pointed to the succession of white-haired children referred to by María Josefa as a "symbolic suggestion of rebirth," and I agree with his assertion that "the drama projects the spectator's mind and spirit toward the promise of renewal, of triumph over sterility" (227). Although Adela's tragic death represents the failure of one individual, Lorca's use of archetypal symbolism helps us see her struggle from a universal perspective which transcends the state of repression represented by the house of Bernarda Alba.

Toward the end of the play it becomes clear that Adela's contact with the animus has caused her to move in two different directions: one which is positive, and another which is negative. While on the one hand she strives to move forward in her quest for

individuation, on the other, she becomes over-confident and egotistical, for example, when she rejects la Poncia's advice to be patient, and again when she boasts to Martirio about her relations with Pepe.<sup>14</sup> Jung gives us an explanation for what has happened to Adela when he says that the process of assimilating the unconscious (which Adela has begun to accomplish through her recognition of the animus) can cause a state of "psychic inflation" resulting in an expansion of the personality beyond its proper limits.<sup>15</sup> This explains why Adela refuses to wait for events to take their natural course and, instead, challenges her mother's authority by breaking the cane which is the symbol of her power:

¡Aquí se acabaron las voces de presidio! (Adela arrebató un bastón a su madre y lo parte en dos.) Esto hago yo con la vara de la dominadora. No de usted un paso más. En mí no manda nadie más que Pepe (197).

Here we have reached the psychological climax of the play when Adela's quest for individuation comes in direct contact with Bernarda's effort to repress the unconscious. At this point both Adela and Bernarda are in a state of psychic disequilibrium which should lead to a conscious effort to recognize the cause of this imbalance, followed by a course of action which will correct it. As so often happens in real life, however, neither of Lorca's characters recognize the importance of taking this action and, as a result, their lack of equilibrium reaches violent proportions.

Adela's suicide is the tragic result of a state of mind which is also reflected in the psychological symbolism of Bernarda's words at the end of the play:

Nos hundiremos todos en un mar de luto. Ella, la hija menor de Bernarda Alba, ha muerto virgen. ¿Me habéis oído? ¡Silencio, silencio he dicho! ¡Silencio! (199).

First Bernarda refused to recognize the importance of la Poncia's warning that her conscious attitude must change, and with these words she shows that she has not changed even after the death of her daughter. Like the daughter of Librada who tries to repress the evidence of her lack of sexual inhibitions, Bernarda tries to hide the real reason for Adela's death. And there is no doubt that Bernarda's unwillingness to change will result in a continuation of her psychic imbalance, and that she will continue to be unhappy and frustrated in the future. Furthermore, when Bernarda says: "Nos hundiremos todas en un mar de luto," this suggests that her continued acts of repression will cause both herself and her daughters to be immersed in a flood of negative unconscious reactions. Until the need for positive action is recognized, we can see that no progress will be made.

In Lorca's play, the psychological conflict does not have a satisfactory resolution. In spite of the tragic outcome, however, there are several indications of a type of behavior which would have produced a more positive conclusion. First we have Paca la Roseta and the sequin-clad woman of the reapers who represent Lorca's concept of wholeness and fulfillment. Then, we hear la Poncia talk, first to Adela, and then to Bernarda, about

the need to act in a way which would result in an outcome of balance and equilibrium. And then we have María Josefa, the Great Mother figure who, in spite of her apparent madness, personifies the final goal of individuation, or self-realization. Like the compensatory reaction of the unconscious that shows us the path to self-realization, Lorca's play can be seen as a product of the collective psyche which serves both as a warning, and as a promise. It gives us a warning of the unhappy results which await us if we ignore the unconscious. But it also offers the promise of fulfillment which is possible when we recognize its importance and correctly interpret the guidance that the collective unconscious can offer.

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### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In the Introduction to their edition of *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, Allen Josephs and Juan Caballero say that Rafael Martínez Nadal has rejected what they characterize as "explicaciones fáciles de tipo freudiano o jungiano" which in their words are "arbitrarias y erróneas" (21). This statement is misleading, however, since Martínez Nadal is only referring to those who have used Lorca's works for an analysis of his homosexuality: "La obsesión pro o anti homosexual, unida a una crítica literaria que pretende valerse de la técnica del psicoanálisis. . . puede llegar a producir curiosas deformaciones" (138).

<sup>2</sup> As Allen puts it: "The critic who sets himself the difficult task of characterizing Lorca's poetic world view will not get very far until he has come to terms with the manifold questions of psychology which confront him at every turn, for it is a fact that the complex dynamics of the human psyche are simultaneously the source and the goal of Lorca's creative activity" (3).

<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the play la Poncia refers to Bernarda sarcastically as "ella la más decente" (120), and on several occasions Bernarda herself mentions this concept. For example, when Angustias watches the men at her father's funeral, her mother asks: "¿Es decente que una mujer de su clase vaya con el anzuelo detrás de un hombre el día de la misa de su padre?" (131). Then, when Bernarda learns that Angustias has overheard the men discuss the sexual exploits of Paca la Roseta, she exclaims: "¡Cuánto hay que sufrir y luchar para hacer que las personas sean decentes!" (133). Shortly after this, Bernarda insists that Angustias show proper respect for her dead father by not leaving the house with makeup, "Aunque fuera por decencia" (144). Finally, at the end of Act Two Bernarda wants to punish the daughter of Librada who has tried to hide the reality of her illegitimate child: "Y que pague la que pisotea la decencia" (176).

<sup>4</sup> Referring to the men who have attended her husband's funeral, Bernarda insists: "Qué salgan por donde han entrado. No quiero que pasen por aquí" (125), and when someone questions whether Pepe el Romano has been present during the funeral mass, she declares that: "Las mujeres en la iglesia no deben de mirar más hombre que al oficiante y ése porque tiene faldas" (125).

<sup>5</sup> Luis González del Valle has based himself on these words of Adela to comment on the significance of her name: "Adela, su nombre es un apócope de 'adelante,' siendo esto lo que ella les hace a sus hermanas cuando se adelanta a los deseos de ellas por Pepe y tiene relaciones con él" (163). Gwynne Edwards has also mentioned Adela's desire for self-improvement: "Ella posee todas las cualidades que hacen valiosa la vida: juventud, belleza, coraje y resolución; y las posee hasta el punto de verse impulsada a vivir una vida de acuerdo con sus atributos naturales" (354).

<sup>6</sup> After commenting on Adela's interest in the stars, J. Rubia Barcía states: "A Adela le gusta sentirse en el centro del torbellino vital, viviendo y viviéndose, con los ojos siempre abiertos al milagro, y la voluntad siempre dispuesta a la experiencia nueva y gozosa" (397).

<sup>7</sup>As Rafael Martínez Nadal has stated: “El caballo aparece asociado a la alegría del vivir, al vigor sexual, al instinto, domeñado o no, aunque a menudo su propia fuerza lleve al drama y a la muerte” (205).

<sup>8</sup>Martínez Nadal has also commented that “Ese buen semental, al que echarán al amanecer las potras nuevas, es doble del Romano que antes de amanecer llenará de paja de trigo las enaguas de Adela” (219).

<sup>9</sup>J. E. Cirlot states that the crown symbolizes “the very idea of pre-eminence,” and he also says that Jung sees the crown as a symbol of the “highest goal in evolution” (72).

<sup>10</sup>Cirlot says that when it is regarded as a string, “the necklace becomes a cosmic and social symbol of ties and bonds” and “Since the neck has an astrological association with sex, the necklace also betokens an erotic link” (227).

<sup>11</sup>In his study of Christian symbolism in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, Reed Anderson sees a relation between María Josefa and the birth and passion of Christ: “Clearly, María Josefa (Mary and Joseph fused into a single symbolic character) takes on the role of the earthly parents of Christ, and the lamb in her arms suggests the figure of the infant Christ himself, the *agnus dei*” (227). Likewise, Wilma Newberry states that “María Josefa’s name suggests a combination of the female and male principles in the birth of Christ, and the lamb which she says is her baby signifies the *agnus dei*” (806). For Luis González del Valle, the name María Josefa “sugiere la encarnación de los padres perfectos en el cristianismo: María y José” (160); and Ricardo Doménech says that when María Josefa comes on stage with a sheep in her arms, “comprendemos que esa oveja se presenta ante nosotros con toda su aura cristológica y ritual” (200).

<sup>12</sup>Jung defines the self in the following way: “Intellectually the self is no more than a psychological concept, a construct that serves to express an unknowable essence which we cannot grasp as such, since by definition it transcends our powers of comprehension. It might equally well be called the ‘God within us.’ The beginnings of our whole psychic life seem to be inextricably rooted in this point, and all our highest and intimate purposes seem to be striving toward it” (*Two Essays*, 238).

<sup>13</sup>Rubia Barcía offers a similar interpretation when he states that “La especie no corre el menor riesgo, se salvará siempre, pero no así la persona aislada” (397).

<sup>14</sup>After rejecting la Poncia’s advice to wait for Angustias’ death so that she can marry Pepe, Adela boasts: “¡Soy más lista que tú! Mira a ver se puedes agarrar la liebre con tus manos” (156), and later when Martirio objects to her relations with Pepe, she boasts again: “A un caballo encabritado soy capaz de poner de rodillas con la fuerza de mi dedo meñique” (196).

<sup>15</sup>In Jung’s words, “The process of assimilating the unconscious leads to some very remarkable phenomena. It produces in some patients an unmistakable and often unpleasant increase of self-confidence and conceit; they are full of themselves, they know everything” (*Two Essays*, 139).