



Woman in Culture and Arts

Anima Archetype in the Short Story “Sutra” by Simin Daneshvar

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article Article history: Received: 19 January 2025 Received in revised form: 24 August 2025 Accepted: 14 August 2026 Published online: 2 October 2026 Keywords: <i>Anima,</i> <i>Jungian Psychology,</i> <i>Simin Daneshvar, Sutra.</i>	Introduction The current investigation investigates the archetype of Anima in the short story “Sutra” by Simin Daneshvar. Archetypes are the living energies that exist in the psyche and subconscious consciousness of every human being. The anima archetype, which Carl Gustav Jung introduced to delineate the feminine side of the masculine psyche, is one of the most important archetypes. The prevalent instinctive behavioral patterns of human beings are known as archetypes. Despite Jung’s discussion of only a handful of archetypes, including Mother, Father, Wise Old Man, Self, Animus, and Anima, archetypes encompass all human experiences. Dreams and literature are two of the primary manifestations of the individual and collective unconscious, and as a result, all types of archetypes, including Anima, are present. Archetypes are particularly prevalent in dreams and dreamlike states, and their presence in a dream imbues it with a unique sense of mystique and significance. “Dreams contain a comprehensive list of archetypes” (Jung, 2022: 643), and important dreams typically contain multiple archetypes, which renders their images delightful and enigmatic. The life story of a commander of the waters of southern Iran is presented in the short story “Sutra” from the collection <i>Whom Shall I Greet?</i> by Simin Daneshvar. The story demonstrates the presence of the Anima archetype and its significant influence on the main character’s personal growth. To gain a more profound comprehension of the narrative, it is beneficial to analyze its archetypes in order to elucidate their significance and function, as the primary events of the narrative occur almost entirely in dreamlike states and therefore in the unconscious realm. The research’s context indicates that, despite Simin Daneshvar’s status as one of the most renowned Iranian writers and the numerous articles and dissertations that have been written about her work, there are relatively few works that focus on her short stories. Only one article, “Mythological analysis of Sutra story” by Musa Karami, 2015, deals with the mythological aspect of the Sutra story. Therefore, the current study, which endeavors to demonstrate the role of Anima in the transformation of the main character of the story, is unique and new due to the absence of any comprehensive examination of Sutra, particularly with a Jungian approach, and as a result, the absence of any investigation of the Anima archetype in this narrative. Methodology The objective of this research is to investigate the positive and inspiring role of the Anima archetype in the Sutra short story via a descriptive-analytical approach, which involves the collection of library data. The ultimate objective is to develop a more comprehensive and multifaceted comprehension of the story. The data collection tool consists of authentic literature in the field of Jungian psychology and archetypes, as well as libraries and documents. Results The collection <i>Whom Shall I Greet?</i> was published in 1980. Published for the first time, this collection comprises ten short stories, with “Sutra” serving as the concluding narrative. Daneshvar recounts the life narrative of Nakhoda Abdol in his own words in Sutra, which the author considers to be “the best story” she has ever written (Dehbashi, 2013: 1005). Sutra’s narrative is ingenious, following Nakhoda Abdol’s life from misery and ignorance to militancy and awareness. In this narrative, the liberating role of rituals such as “Zaar” is demonstrated in addition to the transformative influence of positive Anima on Nakhoda’s life following his encounter with a mermaid (Perizadeh). The events of Nakhoda’s life are used to illustrate the poverty and misery of the people of southern Iran under the rule of the British administrators and their local agents. This is the characteristic of the narrative. Nakhoda is depicted as a negative and fragile character at the outset of the narrative. He has

even sold his wife and daughter to seafarers as a result of his extreme poverty and ignorance. However, after being imprisoned twice and gaining the acquaintance of a militant man in prison, as well as being saved from drowning in the sea by a mermaid—a symbol of the Anima or the feminine side of the man’s psyche—who imparts a taste of positive and nurturing femininity and transforms him, he becomes a strong and brave man who resolves to oppose the foreign and domestic oppressors.

Jung regarded the Anima archetype as “the ethnic image of a woman in the man’s unconscious,” which enables a man to “understand a woman” through the nature of his feminine essence (Fordham, 2013: 86). In Sutra, the Anima archetype is depicted in a positive light as a woman who is both helpful and inspiring, effectively rescuing Nakhoda from the tumult of his life. Parizadeh is a representation of the virtues of femininity, such as compassion, gentleness, kindness, tenderness, and understanding. Not only has she saved Nakhoda’s life, but she has also paved the path for him and his people to achieve freedom. She is a positive character. Consequently, the author has employed the “Zaar” ritual, a custom of the southern region of Iran, as a means of articulating her thoughts and emotions regarding the bleak circumstances of the southern population under the control of both foreign and domestic oppressors and the potential solutions to these issues. Therefore, Sutra is not only Daneshvar’s manifesto for Iran and Iranians, but it also acknowledges the assistance of the feminine element in the process of ushering in a world devoid of oppression for all individuals.

Conclusion

The objective of this article was to develop a more comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of the Anima archetype in the short story “Sutra.” The analysis, which was conducted using the Jungian psychology approach, demonstrated the significant influence of this archetype. Anima, the archetype of life, symbolizes the feminine side of a male, and, like all archetypes, it can be either positive or negative. The results indicated that the author was able to demonstrate the transformation of the primary character, Nakhoda Abdul, through the significant impact of this archetype in conjunction with the other events by utilizing the positive aspects of Anima. The narrator, Nakhoda, recounts the bitter experiences of his life and also describes two transformative turning points: his companionship with a militant man in prison and his rescue by a mermaid, as well as his acquaintance with a mermaid. He accomplishes a rebirth and receives a revelation-like message, which is Simin Daneshvar’s manifesto for him and the future generations, during the ritual of “Zaar” and through a vision. He has now achieved self-esteem and self-worth amidst destitution and deprivation. Therefore, the Anima archetype, in its capacity as a benevolent and motivating woman, has facilitated the ascent of the Self archetype (as the organizing center) in Nakhoda’s psyche and the infiltration of the Rebirth archetype’s energy, thereby facilitating the transformation of his character from a vulnerable individual to a sturdy and unyielding warrior by the conclusion of the narrative.

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