

A detailed medieval manuscript illustration depicting King Arthur and his knights on horseback. Arthur, in a red surcoat and chainmail, is the central figure. He is surrounded by other knights in various armor and surcoats. In the foreground, several women in long, flowing dresses and hennins are looking towards the knights. The scene is set in a lush, green forest with various plants and flowers. The overall style is characteristic of a medieval manuscript illumination.

THE GRAIL,
ARTHUR AND
HIS KNIGHTS
A JUNGIAN SYMBOLIC
READING

MARIA ZELIA DE
ALVARENGA

ROUTLEDGE



THE GRAIL, ARTHUR AND
HIS KNIGHTS



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THE GRAIL, ARTHUR
AND HIS KNIGHTS

A Symbolic Jungian Reading

Maria Zelia de Alvarenga

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2013 by Karnac Books Ltd.

Published 2018 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A C.I.P. for this book is available from the British Library

Susan Carol Albert translated the Portuguese text into English

ISBN-13: 9781780491417 (pbk)

Typeset by V Publishing Solutions Pvt Ltd., Chennai, India

To
John and Shari Whatley



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my son, Thomas Souza Lima, for making my dream come true:

The Grail, Arthur and his Knights now published in English.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maria Zelia de Alvarenga (1940–) is a medical psychiatrist. She graduated from the Medicine School of São Paulo University (FMUSP) and is accredited as a Jungian analyst by the *Sociedade Brasileira de Psicologia Analítica* (SBPA) and the International Association for Analytical Psychology (IAAP). She also has a passion for mythology. As editor of the *Jungian Magazine*, she has published numerous articles, and she is the author of *O Graal, Arthur e seus Cavaleiros*, now translated into English as *The Grail, Arthur and his Knights*. She has also written *Édipo, o herói sem proteção divina—uma saga dos Labdácidas* (*Oedipus, the Hero Without Divine Protection—the Labdacidas Saga*); and “*Ulisses—o herói da Astúcia*” (*Odysseus—the Hero of Cunning*) with co-author Sylvia Baptista. Maria is also an author and the editor of the book *Mitologia Simbólica: Estruturas da Psique e Regências Míticas* (*Symbolic Mythology, Structures of Psyche and Mythical Regencies*)—second edition, published in Portuguese and Spanish. All of these books were published by Editora Casa do Psicólogo in São Paulo, Brazil. She took part in Latin American Congress of Jungian Psychology held in Punta Del Este, Uruguay in 1997; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2000; Salvador, Bahia, Brazil in 2003; Punta Del Este, Uruguay in 2006; Santiago, Chile in 2009. President of SBPA from 1995 to

1997, she remains with the institute as a collaborative teacher. She was married, has six children and, currently, nine grandchildren. She also keeps an analyst's office in São Paulo, but lives on the "Great Paineira" ranch in São José dos Campos, near São Paulo.

FOREWORD

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to write the preface of this book written by Maria Zelia, my mother.

The idea of translating this book into English dates back to 1999 when I came back to England to visit my host family in Andover. As an exchange student in the UK in 1995–96, I had the pleasure of meeting and living with John and Shari Whatley, an extraordinary couple in their late 70s and survivors from World War II.

John, with his exceptional education, seemed curious and disappointed when I gave him the first edition of *The Grail* in Portuguese since there was no English version then. Every time I had the chance to meet or to talk to John, he used to ask for the translation of this book. Unfortunately we could not get it translated before his death in 2005.

Five years later, I had the chance to return to England to study for a Masters at Cambridge University. It was then that my mother, John and Shari's daughter, and I went to Tintagel, Cornwall, to visit King Arthur's ruins. Our magical experience there reinforced the desire to publish *The Grail* in English.

By that time, we already had a translated version of this book and I started to look for editors interested in its publication. Just before returning home, my mother got an email from

Karnac Books saying that they were interested in publishing it. What a great surprise...!

Indeed this new conquest of my mother makes me very proud of her. The soul of this book is related to the English world and there was no sense in not having it published in English. Everyone has a Grail to look for and for this reason I recommend the reading of this book to everyone.

Thomas Souza Lima
"Great Paineira" ranch
São José dos Campos

INTRODUCTION

Life holds all moments and also the time
for each moment to occur for all of us.

—Maria Zelia de Alvarenga

Story telling is magical by nature, and transforms and fascinates those who listen as much as those who tell the stories. Transformation and fascination are movements that heal the soul. Therefore, when two or more people meet to tell and listen to stories, divinity is present and a miracle happens.

The mystical traditions of different races have, over the centuries, developed into a series of narratives, considered to be sacred texts, and often refer to a hero, his tasks and quests and the transformations that happen (Mathews, 1987, p. 3). These narratives, consecrated as ecclesiastical, have, more often than not, become the only valid sources to understand the phenomena of life and death. When these narratives were validated by the sacerdotal class as having a divine origin, all of the beauty of living myth present in the tales and popular sayings, in fairy tales and folklore worldwide, and in all of the creatures from the collective imagination, produced by the inexhaustible fountainhead of the archetypal universe, was excluded.