

Section 10 – Roman Christianity

Mary and the other Goddesses

All Christian sects use the Catholic canon of the New Testament with only minor textual differences. Within this, Mary is the Goddess. This is the reason the misogynists Luther, Calvin and Knox hated her. But the Romans did not invent Mary's identity with the Goddess, it was in the Gospels from the very beginning. God and Jesus are indivisible, as the Bible tells us, and since Jesus was born from her, Mary was the Mother of God.²⁹²¹

Mary's status as the mother of Jesus/Jahweh defines her not just as a goddess, but the Goddess. That Jesus is both God and the Son of God is made clear in John 14:10, when Jesus says 'Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.' Although in the Catholic tradition she has been forced to wear the robe of a chaste Roman matron, Mary is Asherah, Astarte, Isis, Ishtar, Inanna, Ki, Nammu and every other aspect of the Goddess that has ever existed.

From Isis, whose cult had spread throughout the Roman Empire, the early Christians imported the Madonna image of the nursing mother with the child-god on her lap and gave it to Mary. But Isis is no shrinking violet; she is the Goddess in all her glory. She outwitted and defeated the terrible power of evil, Set – the New Testament Devil – and gave birth to the resurrected god Horus. Once again, this fits the Roman conception of the ideal woman – the chaste but fiercely loyal wife and mother who will do everything for her husband and son. The patriarchal sentiments of Rome may have, as they had in Egypt and before, tempered the Goddess, made her subservient to men though her relationship to a male deity, but Mary remains the daughter of all the aspects of the Goddess that went before her.

Goddesses from all over the Empire were incorporated into Christianity and given feast-days and the title 'saint'. Since most of the deities in the Empire were strongly anthropomorphic, living in their home regions, the Christian priests were able to evangelise the new religion just as a

¹ John 1:1 states that 'the Word was God.' John 1:14 states that 'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' This confirms that Jesus is God made flesh; he is an anthropomorphic version of himself, but the two are nevertheless one. This is precisely the relationship of Inanna to the Great Goddess – the anthropomorphic, humanly comprehensible form of a transcendent deity.

repackaging of the one the people already knew, with the familiar characters.² They only made one major change: all these gods and goddesses were subservient to one god, just as all the peoples, local kings and temporal leaders were subject to one Caesar. It was a brilliant stroke, and it was phenomenally successful: the disparate peoples of the Empire, seeing their deities integrated in this way, adopted the new religion with almost no resistance.

² These were probably the very same priests as had been preaching to their people before. The Romans, being practical fellows, would have realised that the simplest way to convert the Empire would be to persuade the local priests to slightly modify their message, a spear in one hand, and a promise of reward in the other. This was, after all, the Roman way of doing things.