

Section 9 – Patriarchal Monotheism

The Birth of Christianity

When the Jahwists rewrote their scriptures to excise the Goddess, they did something that would have far-reaching consequences, for their monotheism was adopted by two following, and numerically much greater, faiths. One of these was Christianity and the other was Islam. While the political focus of Judaism was the recovery of a fairly unimportant parcel of land, both Christianity and Islam had a different objective, the domination of the world; one through becoming the state religion of Rome, and the other through violent challenge to Rome and its successors.

The harmonious balance implicit in the polytheisms and expressed in the tetrads was upset by removing the feminine and leaving only the masculine. In particular, the focus of the religion changed from love, procreation, sharing, protection, forgiveness, fertility and above all resurrection, to possession, status, warfare, law (to be ruthlessly and pitilessly applied in all its force), the desire for property and material wealth, and the subservience of women to men and the family to the father.

By the beginning of the first century CE, the lot of women in Judah was execrable. Their only hope, the Goddess, had been outlawed, and both she and women were blamed for the political disasters that befell the state. Even the great King Solomon was regarded by the Jahwists as a 'bad' king because he 'set up high places' to the Goddess. The only parameter that qualified a ruler as 'good' in Hebrew Scripture was unquestioning obedience to Jahweh – and the Jahvist priests.

The cyclical conception of life, derived from the phases of the Moon, the waxing and waning of the tides, women's periodic cycles, the burgeoning and withering of the agricultural year, and the associated annual cycle of the sun, had been replaced with a linear understanding of one life leading to everlasting bliss or torture in the afterlife. The focus changed from fertility and the making of life to death and preparation for it. The cycle of resurrection was suppressed, to be replaced by terror of an angry, judgemental god. What remained was a death cult that was intolerant of any challenge to its doctrine.

Christianity is simultaneously a preservation of Goddess culture, through rehabilitating its central themes of resurrection and forgiveness, and a suppression of the Goddess by putting these themes under the control of a man. Throughout prior history the clerics of the

Goddess had been the priestesses who served her, either as shamans in the earliest times or, later, in her temples. To deliver the message of the Goddess through the medium of a man speaks to the social condition of women in the society at large.

We have no real idea who Jesus was, despite the Gospel writers' repeated attempts to contextualise him as a first-century Jew; indeed we have no solid evidence that he actually lived at all. Yet, paradoxically perhaps, whatever the reality or otherwise of Jesus' life, it is the message spread in his name – of the Goddess – that is pertinent here.

By the time that Jesus is said to have lived, patriarchal Judaism was not only stifling but had failed completely in its promise. The lands of the Jews were occupied by idolaters; their Jahweh publicly mocked and completely ineffectual. The last resort of a cleric who is unable to deliver the promises he has made in the name of his god is to denounce the people for their lack of piety. Women and the rural poor especially felt the opprobrium of a fanatical priesthood, as they were blamed for causing Jahweh to turn away from his people and allow the occupation of their land by infidels.

This was a culture ripe for revolution, especially after a whole dynasty of Kings, the Herods, became the agents of the Roman State, with priestly connivance.