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FROM SEXUAL PREJUDICE TO PATRIARCHY AND ITS AGENTS: THE
RADICALIZATION OF MARY DALY'S ANALYSIS OF SEXISM

by

Teresa Bellow-Stratton

A Thesis
Submitted to the
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Teresa Bellow-Stratton

FROM SEXUAL PREJUDICE TO PATRIARCHY AND ITS AGENTS: THE RADICALIZATION OF MARY DALY'S ANALYSIS OF SEXISM

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This thesis interprets key concepts in Mary Daly's analysis of sexism as they are developed in her first three books. It highlights the continuities more than the discontinuities in Daly's writing. The constant features of Daly's writing are her existentialist orientation and a complex synthesis of ideas that relates the subjective experience of individuals, the objective social circumstances of individuals, and socially constructed stereotypes, especially those stereotypes expressed in religious language.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen the development of feminist theologian Mary Daly's thought and writing as the topic of this paper. More specifically, I will examine and criticize the trajectory of ideas found in her early writing that finally leads her to a highly elaborated concept of patriarchy. Daly begins with the realization that the exclusion of women from social institutions is embedded in a tautological system that makes it resistant to change. It exists in a relationship of reciprocal reinforcement with the ideological level of reality, most notably with social definitions of generic female personality that make reference to women's natural inferiority. Even in her early work, Daly dimly senses that this system is embedded in yet another system, in another relationship of reciprocal reinforcement with women's psychological realities. This basic model of description, although not always explicit, seems to be present in all her work. As this model develops, Daly's perception of the problem, of the scope of patriarchy, deepens. This development is often stimulated by her own life experience. It is also a function of the heuristic power of her descriptive model.

In explicating the development of Daly's concept of patriarchy, the standard I have set for myself is to make Daly's work accessible to any intelligent

reader, regardless of her training. Before beginning this project, I shall explain briefly who Mary Daly is, along with my rationale for choosing the topic and limiting primary sources. I shall then give some indication of the manner in which I shall proceed.

Mary Daly is an author well-known for her consistent application of existentialist and radical feminist positions to the problem of women's status within patriarchal systems (Donovan, 1994). Daly's existentialism, whether or not it is explicit in her theory, represents her constructive position. It expresses an intense personal drive towards self-actualization, which is consistent with other existentialist work. But Daly places a high value on relationships, and she expects to be able to actualize her potential within the context of relationships. This differentiates her work from some of her existentialist predecessors, most notably Simone de Beauvoir, who seems to have taken a very dismal view of human relationships. This basic existentialist orientation has been constant in Daly's life. Daly's radical feminist position, on the other hand, develops gradually because it expresses her understanding of obstacles to her self-actualization and, by extension, to women's self-actualization generally.

Although trained as a philosopher and theologian, Daly is also heavily influenced by the phenomenology and sociology of religion. She characteristically brings influences from all these areas to bear upon the problem of sexism, which infuses her work with obvious relevance. Due to her radical position, the eclectic nature of her scholarship, and the social relevance of her work, she has been

widely influential.

This influence has been both popular and scholarly. Wanda Warren Berry (1988) says of Daly:

More than any other ontologist I know, her books have had unprecedented popular influence, making reflection on what it means "to be" relevant to the lives of persons normally inaccessible to new concepts of ultimacy. I believe that her powerful imagery and linguistic strategies have so shocked and delighted readers that they have opened radically new insights, for example, into envisioning reality as "process" rather than unchanging substance. This may not seem remarkable to those familiar with modern philosophy, theology, and science. But the unusual fact is that Daly's imagery has brought such a view into existential effectiveness for people formerly shaped by traditional assertions. (p. 213)

Among the community of scholars, Daly's work has influenced both non-feminist and feminist writers. For example, a petition urging Daly's promotion carried the signatures of several hundred male and female members of the American Academy of Religion. It contained excerpts from letters written and sent for the same purpose by such well-known authors as Thomas J. J. Altizer, Margaret R. Miles, John B. Cobb Jr., Judith Plaskow, and Carol Christ.

It is probably fair to say that neither general feminist theory nor feminist theology can be discussed as bodies of thought without including reference to Daly's work. She is a pioneer in feminist theology. Deane Fenn (1981), author of a well-known survey history of American theology, designates Daly's The Church and the Second Sex (1968) as "the first major widely publicised book on the role of women and the church that hints at the formulation of a specifically feminist theology" (p. 161). Feminist theologians surveying their field invariably

discuss Daly's writing (Carr, 1988; Fiorenza, 1989; Heschel, 1990; Ruether, 1983).

Although Daly has published six books, the most recent in 1992, I shall focus primarily on her first three books: The Church and the Second Sex (1968), Beyond God the Father (1973), and Gyn/ecology (1978). I have several reasons for limiting the scope of my inquiry. Daly is as well known for the dramatic changes in her point of view as she is for her individual works. These dramatic changes unfold primarily in her first three books. All three books have become extremely influential and are now regarded as classics in feminist theology. Taken together, these three books sufficiently illustrate the range of definitions and significance that feminists impute to the term "patriarchy."

In an influential introduction to feminist theology, Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow have described the field as bounded by two standpoints, which they designated as "reformist" and "revolutionary" (1979, p. 10). These standpoints correlate with their authors' assessments of the extent and the intractability of patriarchy. The reformist and revolutionary standpoints are exemplified, respectively, by Daly's first and third books. These books and the intervening essays not only reflect the progressive radicalization of Daly's theory, but also the development of her identity until she finally self-consciously proclaims her identification with radical feminism in Gyn/ecology.

While each book represents a standpoint significantly different from the other two, there are important points of continuity between them, which I shall

use as an organizing device. One point of continuity between the three books is that, at least tacitly, all three take limitation as the ultimate problem, meaning all artificial limitation of human potential, whether or not it is self-imposed. This is, of course, consonant with Daly's existentialist orientation. When I speak of the radicalization of Daly's thought, then, I am referring to the changes in her causal analysis of the artificial limits that impinge upon human potential, that block human development. At no point in her writing does she ever take anything less than this as her problem.

Another point of continuity between the three books is that, in their critical orientation, they share the model of description, which I referred to earlier. This model, which is only embryonic in The Church and the Second Sex, is fully developed by the time Daly writes Gyn/ecology. It can be seen as both a heuristic device and strategy for feminist advocacy, which I believe is Daly's primary project. Each book describes problematic phenomena at three levels of reality. I call these levels material, psychological and ideological. I often interchange the terms "material" and "sociological" as well as the terms "ideological" and "cultural."

Material reality is, of course, everything directly observable, all the on-the-ground circumstances existing apart from their ideological reflections. According to this definition, I would count something like ritual as material reality, whereas others would label it cultural. By ideological reality, I mean all forms of publicly expressed ideas: theology, mythology, theory, symbols,

method, and language.

By psychological reality, I mean individuals' internal states of mind or predispositions to particular patterns of behavior. Concepts like self-esteem, passivity, emotional dependence and confidence would fall under this rubric.

It seems to me that, in the social sciences, all of these levels of description are necessary to any explanatory effort. But they are also part of a general strategy used in forestalling resistance to feminists' calls for change. For example, if one calls for the remedy of women's disadvantage in language (cultural/ideological), the claim will be made that the issue is unimportant because language has no effect on material (social) reality. On the other hand, if one observes that women appear to be disadvantaged in terms of their roles within the church (material/sociological), the claim will be made that this apparent disadvantage does not translate to most women's subjective (psychological) reality. In other words, it doesn't bother most women and, therefore, cannot be considered a problem for women generally. The only way to forestall this type of resistance is to attack patriarchy on all three levels at once.

In order to make Daly's work easily accessible, I will need to contextualize it. Chapter I will contextualize her work both in terms of her early life history and her existentialist orientation because I believe the significance of her existentialism will be more easily grasped when it is revealed as a likely correlative of Daly's life history and the personality shaped by that life history. This approach is not meant to trivialize but rather to elucidate Daly's scholarship.

Daly herself often adds autobiographical explanations for her thought. I rely heavily on Daly's own autobiographical book, Outercourse: The Be-dazzling Voyage (1992).

It is not only the intellectual accessibility of Daly's work that I wish to address but also the emotional accessibility, and this is a second reason for including biographical information. In recent years, Daly's style has become so abrasive that even feminist women and pro-feminist men often cannot stand to read her work. Her anger so alienates people that it blocks access to the substance of her thought. It can have this effect even on highly developed minds. More than once I have heard brilliant and well-intentioned scholars describe Daly's scholarship using the word "angry" without further commentary, as if this was an adequate summary of her work. Younger scholars may be unaware of or uninterested in Daly's early work because they are likely to know her as the angry and abrasive person that comes through in her more recent writing. If Mary Daly's anger can be understood as a reasonable response to her life experience, as I believe it can, then perhaps some emotional barriers to giving her ideas a fair hearing can be removed.

In Chapter III, I will look at the antecedents of the concept of patriarchy that are found in The Church and the Second Sex. Rather than patriarchy, exclusion rooted in "sexual prejudice" is taken to be responsible for truncating women's development. Chapter IV will focus on Beyond God the Father, in which Daly arrives at the idea of patriarchy as a basis for social organization.

Chapter V will focus on Gyn\ecology, which represents the radicalization of Daly's thought. In this book she extends her causal analysis of patriarchy as the basis of social organization to include the concepts of agency and intentionality.

CHAPTER II

DALY'S BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION

From both her autobiographical and theoretical writings, it is apparent that Mary Daly is gifted with an extraordinary amount of self-confidence and an abiding thirst for adventure. From her recent autobiographical book, Outercourse: The Be-dazzling Voyage (1992), it is also clear that these gifts are the result of her rather atypical childhood and a very strong relationship with her mother. Both Daly's constructive and critical positions are easier to understand against this background. Her constructive position is, I believe, a direct result of this background.

Daly's parents were working-class Irish people who had an unusual attitude towards the world that they communicated to their daughter in various ways. Basically, it was an attitude of trust and wonder. Daly's father sold ice cream freezers, and his income was sporadic. But her parents were not given to saving money. Not only did they always give their daughter everything that they could afford but, in general, they always bought the best they could afford. For example, the family always had real butter. Daly's parents often bought her books, and she remembers a "World of Glowing Books" (Daly, 1992, p. 27) in her childhood. During the depression, her parents lost their house to the bank.

But the family continued to thrive, and Daly remembers her childhood as a magical, rather than a deprived, time. In spite of their hardships, both parents had a habit of asking the same rhetorical question, "Aren't we Lucky to be Irish?" (Daly, 1992, p. 29). Daly says that the basic idea she learned from all this was to "live for the day, because everything was bound to turn out all right eventually anyway." (Daly, 1992, p. 34).

In this unusual environment, Daly enjoyed an even more extraordinary relationship with her mother. It is important to know that Mary Daly is an only child, born to a thirty-eight year old mother who made it clear to her daughter that she only wanted one child and that she wanted that child to be a girl (Daly, 1992, p. 27). The intensity of the mother-daughter relationship that Daly describes is quite believable when one considers the deprivations of her mother's childhood. As a very young child, Mary Daly's mother, Anna, was sent to live with her grandmother among several aunts and uncles because her own mother was too poor to raise her. Although she loved her grandmother, Anna occupied a role somewhat similar to that of a servant in relationship to her aunts and uncles. Anna was a good student and loved school; however, at the age of sixteen, she was forced to drop out of school in order to go to work. Anna seems to have been determined to make up for the deprivation of her childhood through her mothering. All of this made for a very beautiful and intense mother-daughter relationship between Anna and Mary.

There are several poignant illustrations of this extraordinary relationship in

Outercourse. Daly tells her readers that her mother frequently said to her that "her home became 'like heaven when you came'" (1992, p. 28). But this was not the smothering sort of maternal adoration. Quite the contrary, Daly's mother nurtured the independent spirit in her daughter. For example, she allowed Mary to skip school occasionally in order that she might read whatever pleased her. She even provided special treats for her daughter on these days, thereby bestowing on them a special importance in her daughter's mind. Whenever Mary offered to help her mother around the house, her mother declined graciously, telling Mary that she should "go do her own work" (1992, p. 35). Anna tried to give her daughter everything that she herself had lacked. It is easy to imagine that she was the type of mother who did indeed make her daughter feel as though she was "the center of the universe." This early feeling seems to have evolved into the adult Mary Daly's extraordinary self-confidence, which undergirds her adventurous spirit.

It seems likely that, as a result of this early life history, Daly developed certain fundamental attitudes that she later found expressed in existentialist philosophy. For existentialists, the defining characteristic of human existence is possibility. Because of the human capacity for reflective thought, the individual is never fully defined. Instead, he (not generic) engages in a continuous process of self-creation by choosing among possibilities. To live as a subject, rather than an object, is to claim the possibility, which is constituted by the ability to make choices, as one's own. Alternatively, because possibility may be accompanied by

negative feelings, such as anxiety and dread, one may choose to disclaim it by bowing to social pressure. In this case, one internalizes a socially created role definition. This is acquiescence to "thinghood." The moral imperative, however, is to accept the personal responsibility, which is constituted by possibility. It is not difficult to see why such a philosophy would resonate for a woman who had been nurtured in her independence.

Several existentialist philosophers and theologians seem to have influenced Daly, especially Simone de Beauvoir, Paul Tillich, and Martin Buber. De Beauvoir, like all existentialists, emphasizes the particularity of individuals' existence, or subjectivity, as opposed to conformity to social roles. However, de Beauvoir's attitudes about relationships and about the world differ dramatically from Daly's, and this, too, makes sense in light of Daly's life history. De Beauvoir writes,

Things become clear . . . if, following Hegel, we find in consciousness itself a fundamental hostility toward every other consciousness; the subject can be posed only in being opposed--he sets himself up as the essential, as opposed to the other, the inessential, the object. (1961, p. xvii)

De Beauvoir believes that Hegel's Self-Other dialectic is the fundamental structure of human consciousness. Thus, intersubjectivity is impossible. As far as relationships are concerned, given this fundamentally hostile structure of consciousness, the best we can hope for is the recognition of "reciprocity," which is the equality of claims to Self and Otherness from different perspectives (Ruth, p. 119). This dismal view of relationships (which happens to be consonant with

de Beauvoir's life history) is extended to the world as a whole, particularly nature. The courageous struggle for self-definition is characterized as a struggle against nature, a struggle to transcend the limitations of not only the social environment but also the natural environment, including the body. De Beauvoir's brand of existential courage would probably be more accurately termed bravado. Daly's struggle is based on different strengths.

I have already implied that through her relationship with her mother, Daly must have developed a strong conviction of selfhood, of herself as subject, and an accompanying sense of entitlement very early in her life. However, I am emphatically not referring to any concept of infantile egoism, but rather to the expectation that, in the process of her own self-actualization, she would be supported through relationships. Daly places a high value on both self-actualization and relationship. Assuming that the relationship structure in one's first family, particularly the relationship between child and primary caregiver, provides a model for what relationships are like and, if accompanied by a sense of well-being, for what relationships should be like, Daly's values and the standpoint driven by those values makes perfect sense.

Daly's parents had a happy marriage in which neither seemed to dominate. More importantly, it was certainly safe for Daly to assume that she did not have to suppress her drive towards self-actualization in order to retain her mother's love. Unless one is autistic, this assumption, the conviction that others will respond favorably to one's honest self-presentation and striving towards

development, that the world is trustworthy in this regard, is the basis of self-confidence. This is the type of self-confidence that enables Daly. It is based not only on belief in her own competence, but also on belief in the trustworthiness of the world. Daly's righteous raging, abrasive though it may be, is a reaction to violations of this positive worldview. Further, she criticizes in a basic spirit of hopefulness, with the expectation that the community she speaks to will hear her and respond to her. As this hope is repeatedly betrayed, she becomes more abrasive.

Daly seems to have always been driven to expand and develop her full potential. She has a sense of this as her "work," and I have already alluded to the fact that her mother probably also gifted her with the conviction that she does have important work to do by repeatedly telling her to "go do her own work." This theme, the expansion and development of her potential as her "work," recurs in various forms throughout most of Daly's theoretical work. She extrapolates from her introspective knowledge of her own drive towards personal development to build her theology. The expansion and development of potential are absolute human needs. Whatever interferes with this, whatever puts limits on it, needs to be explained and criticized.

Throughout her life, Daly has experienced many different types of assaults on her drive towards personal development, which I have labeled her "work." Reading Outercourse, one gets the feeling that, in her early life, these assaults were probably so dissonant from her sense of reality that she was unable to

consciously process them very well. Although she could not adequately process these experiences at first, she did store them in her memory for future processing. They were violations of her and they begged to be explained. Her critical position develops gradually in relation to these assaults.

Up until the publication of The Church and the Second Sex, the assaults are generally related to some form of the exclusion of women, sometimes experienced through segregation of women and men. Whenever there is exclusion of women, it is quite likely that imposed definitions (stereotypes) are causally involved or at least offered as rationalizations. Exclusion reinforces the definitions. Exclusion puts limits on the development of female potential in very direct and concrete ways, as well as in indirect ways. Definitions, by definition, exclude. The imposed definitions that are the object of analysis in The Church and the Second Sex are prescriptive definitions for generic female "personality" that legitimate the exclusion of women. Daly's early experiences with exclusion are generally tied up with her pursuit of education.

Daly attended a Catholic co-educational high school, called St. Joseph's Academy, which was staffed by sisters. One of the sisters did not approve of girls studying physics. She harassed and humiliated Daly until she dropped the course. Daly does not appear to have developed a conscious awareness of sexism at this point. Nevertheless, she did feel hurt and angry. She did not dwell on these feelings; she merely chalked them up to "physics deprivation." She did not, at this point, possess a label that would more adequately categorize this experience

(sexism, misogyny, oppression, prejudice). This type of assault occurred with increasing frequency as she got older. However, for the most part, Daly found her high-school education stimulating and exciting. Upon graduation from St. Joseph's, Daly enrolled at the all-female College of Saint Rose.

The College of St. Rose was staffed by sisters from the same congregation as those who taught at St. Joseph's. Yet Daly felt her spirit dampened in the environment at St. Rose. She did not quite understand why. St. Rose had an "aura of dullness," which implied that something was missing. She decided "that the missing factor must have been the presence of boys" (Daly, 1992, p. 43). This experience led her to be an outspoken advocate of co-education in her early writings, especially The Church and the Second Sex. Daly remembers this experience vividly and with great sadness in 1992. She has come to understand her sadness as a reaction to a "hidden broken Promise" (1992, 44). The promise broken is the promise of female potential.

An all-pervasive subliminal message was that we were indeed finished, by definition. We were not destined for greatness. That message hung like a miasma over everything. If being there was not quite like living mentally in a straightjacket, I did sometimes feel as if my spirit was stuffed into a Victorian corset. I longed to be free. (Daly, 1992, p. 43)

Daly wanted to study philosophy, but there was no major in philosophy available at St. Rose. However, the college required an eighteen-credit-hour minor in philosophy of all its students. Although the regular college professors at St. Rose were all sisters, only priests taught the religion and philosophy courses, "which were considered subjects too exalted for the female mind but were

required of all students anyway" (Daly, 1992, p. 42). Daly obtained a B.A. in English from the College of St. Rose in 1950.

She felt that it was imperative for her to go to graduate school, and she still wanted desperately to study philosophy. However, there were obstacles thrown in her way. One of these is important because it was quite hurtful at the time. Eventually, in Daly's understanding, it would reveal itself as another instance of the extreme undervaluation of female potential, of Daly's potential.

Daly's father had died, and the parish priest told her that she should stay in Schenectady, N.Y. with her mother, where the only options for her were secretarial work or high school teaching. She writes:

I would have perished of alienation and despair. . . . I knew in my core that he was wrong. Although he made me feel confused and guilty by giving bad advice--*bad* in every sense of the word--I had no choice but to go. My mother's understanding and generous spirit were, as always, extraordinary. (1992, p. 47)

Since she was "an inhabitant of the spiritual, intellectual, and economic catholic ghetto," (Daly, 1992, p. 48) the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. was the only respectable school open to Daly. The university offered her a full scholarship. The only problem was that it only granted scholarships to students pursuing the same field of study that they had pursued as undergraduates. Since Daly's undergraduate major was English, her study of philosophy was further delayed. She obtained an M.A. in English from the Catholic University of America in 1952.

Following this, she entered the School of Sacred Theology at St. Mary's

College, Notre Dame, Indiana. St. Mary's was offering, for the first time, a Ph.D. in religion for women. In this program, Daly became thoroughly familiar with the writing of Thomas Aquinas. Daly considers Aquinas's Summa theologia mostly philosophy and recalls her delight in studying it with characteristic humor:

I was carried away with the theological doctrine of the "Blessed Trinity" as expounded by Aquinas. In fact I was so happy studying the stuff that I felt something like pity for people who did not understand the theology of the Trinity. (1992, p. 51)

In 1954, upon earning her Ph.D. in religion, Daly found that she still wanted to study philosophy. She applied to the University of Notre Dame but was refused because she is a woman. This, of course, was an unforgettable experience of exclusion.

In addition, she found it impossible to obtain a job teaching theology at any school with a challenging intellectual environment. She taught for about five years at Cardinal Cushing College in Brookline, Massachusetts but found it stifling. During this time, she took philosophy courses at various area colleges and universities, "including Notre Dame (which allowed females in during the summer session)" (Daly, 1992, p.54), and audited some of Paul Tillich's lectures at Harvard Divinity School. She also read Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex, which was a powerful experience. She recalls the experience of reading it vividly:

I remember standing there reading it--drinking in great gulps like a woman who had been deprived of water almost to a point beyond endurance. My gratitude to her was enormous. Still, there was no context, no movement, in which to Realize her message. (1992, p. 55)

Later, Daly would use de Beauvoir's book as the springboard for her own book, The Church and the Second Sex.

Daly continued to look for another doctoral program. She says, "I believed that what I needed was a 'better' doctorate as a ticket of access to an environment in which I could breathe and expand" (1992, p. 54). The highest degree available in theology was the doctorate from a Pontifical Faculty of Sacred Theology. In the United States, this degree was only available at the Catholic University of America. Daly applied and was treated shabbily. She wrote numerous letters and received no reply for a long time. Her application was eventually rejected. For the second time, Daly was refused admittance to a degree program merely because she is a woman.

I had studied Latin, Greek, Hebrew, as well as German and French. I had more than the equivalent of an M.A. in philosophy and a Ph.D. in religion, but they could not bring themselves to reply. The crude bigotry of that wretched institution was blatant in this case. The only "problem" was that I was a woman, and they didn't even have the courage to say that with minimal courtesy. (1992, p. 55)

Fueled by her indignation and armed with incredible determination, Daly enrolled at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, where the theological faculty was state-controlled, and, consequently, unable to exclude women. Even so, she was the first woman to ever obtain the S.T.D. at Fribourg (1963). Her graduation with this degree posed a dilemma, both for her and the faculty. The university required all recipients of this particular degree to take the Anti-Modernist Oath. Since she agreed with many of Modernism's premises, Daly did

not want to take the oath. The faculty members' dilemma was a direct result of their own blatant misogyny, but Daly recounts the story with some humor:

Since I was the first woman ever to earn this degree, they were faced with a unique situation. They decided that, although they could not bar me from the degree, they did not want a woman to be allowed to take the "Anti-Modernist Oath," because the implication of taking that oath was that she would be legitimated to teach in a Pontifical Faculty of Theology (for example, at The Catholic University of America). So they forbade me to take it. I almost exploded with relief and laughter in the face of the professor who pompously announced this solemn decision. As usual, I was very Lucky. (1992, p. 70)

She continued her education by also earning a Ph.D. in philosophy at Fribourg in 1965.

Daly loved Europe. When she recalls the time spent there, her language is often lyrical. When she was financially able, she had her mother join her in Europe. Since she was only allowed in Switzerland as a student, she had to leave when she graduated. She says that she and her mother both cried over this. This is significant for understanding Mary Daly because part of what made Europe magical for her is the fact that she was a foreigner there. From Daly's comments, it seems that one is less likely to be held hostage to sex-role stereotypes in such a situation: "during all this time in Europe, I was a free Alien, not caged in by the alienation of 'belonging'" (1992, p. 67). Daly and her mother returned to the United States.

In 1966, she accepted a job teaching honor students at Boston College. Her students were all male, since female students were not even allowed to enroll in the program in which she taught. Female students were admitted to the schools

of nursing and education at Boston College but denied access to its college of arts and sciences at this time.

While all of this is important background for Daly's standpoint in The Church and the Second Sex, there are two more immediate factors that account for the appearance of the book. First, Daly made a month-long visit to Rome during the Second Vatican Council. Vatican II, called by Pope John XXIII, was a time of momentous change for the Catholic church, and progressive Catholics, including Daly, felt encouraged. It seemed that the Church might even change its position on women.

In 1963, Pope John XXIII issued the encyclical Pacem in Terris in which he expressed attitudes concerning women that could probably be described as revolutionary within the context of Catholicism. He called for women's rights in both domestic and public life. He talked about inferiority and superiority complexes at a time when the psychological bases of oppression were not widely acknowledged, and he did not qualify his statements with any discussion of marital roles. He even said that human beings have the right to follow a vocation to the priesthood.

In contrast, the Vatican II documents cannot be considered revolutionary in their position on women by any stretch of the imagination. But, given the pope's progressive attitude, they were ambiguous enough to leave room for hope. They did not explicitly condemn coeducation or artificial birth control, and they did not make reference to reproduction as the primary purpose of marriage. They did,

however, make reference to special roles allotted to the sexes by divine providence, but the fact that the roles were left unspecified left room for optimists to hope (Daly, 1968, pp. 118-121).

Second, an article appeared in Commonweal, written by Rosemary Lauer, who was a Catholic philosopher but, nevertheless, critical of the Church's treatment of women. This reassured Daly that it was possible to do feminist writing and remain Catholic. In supportive response to the Lauer article, Daly published her own article on the subject of women and the Church in Commonweal. In the spring of 1965, she received an invitation from a British publisher to write a book developing the ideas in that article. This would be The Church and the Second Sex. In this book, Daly would begin to analyze and label some of the hurtful experiences stored in her memory.

Following the publication of The Church and the Second Sex, three factors converged to move Daly towards a more critical point of view in her second book, Beyond God the Father. First, she experienced a strong backlash from the administration at Jesuit-run Boston College. Although The Church and the Second Sex was extremely respectful of Catholicism, it was still too critical for Boston College administrators. They offered Daly a one-year terminal contract. Twenty-five hundred students, believing that academic freedom was at stake, signed a petition in protest. About fifteen hundred students (all male) demonstrated. All of this was ignored until the conflict escalated to the point where it generated a circus atmosphere. Further demonstrations were mounted,

including a "teach-in." Other professors who perceived that they too had been fired for political reasons took up Daly's cause. The case became the object of national and international media attention.

A faculty review committee was appointed to investigate Daly's case. This appeared to her as an insidious tactic for two reasons. Committee members were bound to confidentiality, which rendered their deliberations inscrutable. Additionally, they were merely advisory to the president of the college so that Daly could be fired regardless of the committee's decision. Yet the appearance of some sort of procedural form of justice, or due process, was created, which would tend to make Daly appear culpable if the president's decision did not go in her favor.

Under the insidious guise of "confidentiality" my teaching career was being destroyed. The university officials had refused to give any reasons publicly or to me privately for my firing, but the well-known phenomenon of grapevine innuendo would destroy my college teaching career. (Daly, 1975, p. 12)

These events are highly significant in the evolution of Daly's thought. She lost confidence in the idealism of both the Church and the academic world and in the power of reason to persuade bigots. Prior to this time, she had skillfully maneuvered around most of the obstacles that were thrown in her way, and her personal situation was a rare exception to the lot of most women. But this struggle, while loaded with gender meanings, was also intensely personal and very serious. Daly described her feelings at that time:

I recall having a strong intuition that there was some primary warfare

going on, whose dimensions could not be reduced to the "issue" of academic freedom. It was an archetypal battle between principalities and powers of which this "case" was a blatantly noticeable instance. In cruder and more immediate terms, I recognized that it was--and was more than--a war between "it" and me, and I willed to go all the way in this death battle. Perhaps the survival of "it" did not depend on the outcome, but mine did. (1975, p. 12)

The surface outcome of all this was that Boston College promoted Daly from assistant to associate professor, thereby granting her tenure. But Daly was permanently affected by the struggle. This struggle, more than any of her other encounters with sexism, motivated Daly to study sexism and to develop her concept of patriarchy. The second factor motivating the change in Daly's standpoint is that, on the heels of this professional struggle, the second wave of the women's movement emerged, providing communal support for a more radical point of view. Daly seized the feminist axiom that "the personal is political" to make sense of and extrapolate from her personal situation.

The third factor motivating the change in Daly's standpoint is that the lack of progress within the Church betrayed the promise of Vatican II. The illustrations Daly offers of the Church's manifest unwillingness to reform, despite Vatican II, are the organized resistance within Catholicism to the repeal of abortion laws and the motu proprio of Pope Paul VI, published in 1972, in which he closed even the ministries of lector and acolyte to women. So much for the idea that the Catholics would soon ordain women to the priesthood!

The publication of Beyond God the Father provoked further harassment from male colleagues at Boston College and disdain from administrators. This,

combined with the fact that her alternative feminist support system continued to grow, at least partly explains why her writing becomes even more abrasive in her third book, Gyn/ecology.

At a party given to honor her and a male colleague from a nearby school who had also published recently, Daly's colleagues from Boston College made a point of keeping their backs to her at all times. At about the same time, a meeting of senior faculty from the Theology Department took place that Daly remembers as a painful experience. One of her colleagues very pointedly looked around the table and then remarked that the department didn't seem to have anyone doing anything in philosophy. Since Daly was the only person in the room with a doctorate in philosophy (She was also the only woman in the room.) and had just published a book in the field that was receiving wide acclamation, this was obviously hostile, and she experienced it as such. She says, "I knew and they knew that I had no ally in that room. There was no one with whom I could even make eye contact and laugh. They were bonded solidly/stolidly in this ritual of erasure" (1992, p. 171).

In the fall of 1974, since Beyond God the Father had been well received and the second edition of The Church and the Second Sex was coming out, Daly felt that she was overdue for promotion to full professor. This normally required something like a nomination or endorsement from a full professor, but none of them chose to support her. So Daly was told that she could nominate herself. She was advised that the courses in Feminist Studies she had been teaching were

considered insignificant. She was also advised by the chair of the department that male students' evaluations were considered more credible than female students' evaluations; therefore, she should submit evaluations from 1970 because that was that last year in which her students were mostly men.

In January of 1975, Boston College announced that Daly's application for promotion was being denied, saying that Beyond God the Father was not a scholarly book. In light of Daly's own summary of her credentials at this time, the college's decision seems unbelievable.

I had published (in addition to dissertations) two major books--*The Church and the Second Sex* and *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*. By the fall of 1974 the latter was required as a text in universities and seminaries across the country and was excerpted in several publications. In addition I had made contributions to more than ten books and had published more than twenty articles in professional journals as well as in Feminist periodicals. I had done substantial committee work in a variety of areas, had given more than seventy public lectures, and had presented papers at learned [*sic*] societies. I was listed in a dozen or so *Who's Who* dictionaries and encyclopedias. I also had seven degrees, three of them doctorates. (1992, p. 206)

At the same time, Jan Raymond, a friend of Daly's who had been teaching medical ethics at Boston College on a part-time basis, was denied an interview for a full-time position that had opened up in the same area. When asked if this was because of Raymond's association with Daly, administrators replied that in a sense it was because Raymond also approached most things from a feminist standpoint. Daly attaches considerable significance to this.

By this time, Daly's name was known across the country. In addition, she had been teaching feminist ethics for a few years and had built up a sizable cadre

of intellectual feminist supporters in her immediate environment. Many of these supporters had been her students. Boston College's decision provoked a storm of protest. Several feminist academicians spoke at a forum protesting the decision. Robin Morgan, the moderator, opened the forum with a battle cry: "Sisters, we meet on bloody Jesuit ground!" (1992, p. 207). Nelle Morton and Adrienne Rich also spoke. From Daly's point of view, in addition to demonstrating impressive support for her, the forum revealed that, across the country, feminists were being purged from academia.

This combination, insult upon insult coming from the Church and from the mainstream academic world, increasing support in an alternative feminist community, and the connection between the personal and the political set Daly free, in a sense.

I was thrown into greater and greater freedom. Since Beyond God the Father had been super-scholarly and yet had been called "unscholarly" by the cynical and deceptive fathers of reversal, I was now liberated into the possibility of qualitatively Other Daring Deeds. (1992, p. 207).

It is a feminist slogan that "the personal is political." But what motivates a great deal of feminist anger and the very rational scholarship driven by that anger is the realization that the political is personal. For the most part, people just don't get upset about things that they perceive as unrelated to their personal status or well-being. For example, exclusion of women from the priesthood and other leadership positions does not even bother some women. Perhaps others experience it as an inconvenience but don't take it personally. Sexually prejudiced

policies are, of course, an insult to all women. Yet many women manage to avoid this realization.

It is not hard to imagine how Daly would have experienced the events described in this chapter. These insults and injuries piling up on top of one another would not be isolated incidents from the point of view of a woman experiencing them. Each would invest the other with more meaning. In Daly's case, the entire meaning structure must have become progressively more ominous with each incident. She managed to overcome the obstacles thrown in her way by exclusionary policies. These were insulting, but not so much so as to be emotionally urgent. The Boston College decision following the publication of The Church and the Second Sex, though ultimately reversed, was much more serious. The undeniably personal nature of that conflict invested the sexually prejudiced policies that Daly had already experienced, as well as those that she would become aware of, with much more personal meaning than they would have had otherwise. The harassment that Daly experienced after the publication of Beyond God the Father made everything that had gone before even worse. This came from colleagues, people who had been working with her for several years. This type of experience is not only personal, it is so serious for most people that we have a special word for it: betrayal.

To summarize, Daly is supported in her conviction of her own self worth and, by extension, her firm commitment to the equality of women with men by a rich store of memories and a rock solid early life. Even today, she imagines her

mother beckoning her on to more daring pursuits. She is motivated in her increasingly critical views of the church and society by rational anger, which has been occasioned by the repeated violations of these idealistic principles. She is emboldened and sustained in her expression of these views, despite the disdain they provoke, by a strong alternative community of feminists.

CHAPTER III

"SEXUAL PREJUDICE" IN THE CHURCH AND THE SECOND SEX

Writing The Church and the Second Sex gave Daly a chance to analyze some of her own experiences with sexism. In doing so, she begins the process of developing an elaborate concept of patriarchy. In The Church and the Second Sex, Daly does not refer to "patriarchy," but rather she understands her experiences as part of a less-serious phenomenon that she labels "sexual prejudice" (1968, p. 166). Yet, as Daly describes and explains "sexual prejudice," it carries many of the antecedents for her later concept of "patriarchy." Sexual prejudice is seen as pervasive, systematic, and institutionalized, just as patriarchy would be. Sexual prejudice is different from patriarchy in that it is not seen as foundational to either ecclesiastical or civil society. In fact, when Daly targets some element of Christianity as a source of misogyny, her general strategy is to try and prove that it is not integral to the tradition. She tries to criticize the tradition without jettisoning it and to defend the tradition without giving ammunition to those who would neutralize feminist criticisms of it.

As noted earlier, in her critical orientation, Daly tends to use a particular model of description, which consists of three levels: material, ideological, and

psychological. Although all three levels are explicitly present in The Church and the Second Sex, as a philosopher and a theologian, Daly's primary focus is on the ideological. Her main concern in this book is to demonstrate the systematic nature of sexual prejudice. The system of sexual prejudice is constituted by the relationship between the material, ideological, and psychological (intrapsychic) environments and, presumably, can be disrupted on any one of those levels. Daly calls upon the Church to help break the system at the ideological level.

At the material level, an important topic treated by Daly is the existence of exceptional women in all periods of the Church's history. These are women who managed to achieve high levels of responsibility and/or competence despite the norms embodied in the prevalent images of "Woman." Two points are important in these discussions. On the one hand, these women and their achievements are extremely important because they are counterexamples to teachings about women's inferior "natures." But pointing to these women as a way of neutralizing feminist criticisms of Catholicism is disingenuous because such women are exceptions and, more importantly, they are always perceived as anomalous. Their existence and achievements have had little impact on the Church's position concerning women in general. Daly also repeatedly voices her concern about women's enslavement in reproductive and purely domestic roles. But overall, the aspect of women's material situation that most concerns Daly in this book is their exclusion from the priesthood and other positions of authority, as well as from certain levels of education. She focuses on women's exclusion from the priesthood because it

makes an excellent "case study" in sexual prejudice. But all of these material circumstances contribute to female underdevelopment. Female underdevelopment then serves as evidence for the truth value of sexually prejudiced ideas.

At the level of ideology, The Church and the Second Sex focuses on particular images of "Woman" and the theories of female "nature" that attend such images. As feminists have long recognized, these can take either overtly negative or seemingly positive forms. Both forms are present in the Christian tradition, most notably in the images of Eve and Mary. A modern version of the Marian image, "The Eternal Woman," is also treated extensively. Denigrating ideas about female "nature" are made even more explicit in specific moral teachings affecting women. What Daly makes clear is that this entire ideology, billed as "the divine plan," rationalizes social arrangements as natural and inevitable, making them resistant to change.

The basic problematic, then, the "system" of sexual prejudice recognized by both de Beauvoir and Daly, is a pernicious feedback loop. One-dimensional images of "Woman" and their attendant theories of "female nature" make the degraded material circumstances of real women appear reasonable and inevitable, i.e. natural. The degraded material circumstances of real women make the images and theories of "Woman" seem plausible.

At the psychological level, all of this tends to result in women's conviction of their own inferiority, as well as female passivity. Thus women become complicit in their own oppression. Daly observes that even if individual women

manage to resist such conditioning, they still suffer anxiety from anticipation of disapproval and, further, that anxiety inhibits learning. In this way, women's psychological realities help to truncate women's development and thereby reinforce the ideology of natural female inferiority.

Daly does not spend more than a couple of paragraphs speculating about the origins of sexual prejudice. However, she thinks that it probably originated in material circumstances that were somehow dictated by biology. At some point in the very distant past, social arrangements that put women at a disadvantage may have been necessary for species survival. But these social arrangements then gave rise to unflattering ideas about women, which have hardened as prescriptive ideology. Another way of saying this is that while images and theories of "Woman" may appear to be merely reflective or explanatory, they operate in society as norms that carry determinative power. Thankfully, there have always been some women who manage to resist societal norms.

During the Patristic period, several exceptional women were honored in the Church. Widows, who were responsible for instructing female converts, are mentioned, as well as deaconesses. However, women who did manage to achieve any kind of respect were regarded as "honorary men." They were thought of as having transcended their sex. Daly summarizes: "No matter what praise the Fathers may have accorded to individuals, it is not possible to conclude that in their doctrine women are recognized as fully human" (1968, p. 89).

Several exceptions to the abject situation of women in the Middle Ages are

mentioned. The most important of these are powerful abbesses. According to Daly, contemporary theologians' and historians' attempts to explain the power of these women as "not really constituting spiritual jurisdiction" are unconvincing and sexist. She maintains that the abbesses were far more powerful in the Church than any woman today. They administered church affairs, even wielding the power to suspend clerics. They wore the mitre and cross and carried the staff. Examples mentioned are the abbesses of St. Cecilia in Cologne, the abbesses of Conversano in Italy, and the abbesses of Las Huelgas in Spain.

Powerful women rulers included Clotilde and Blanche of Castille. Eleanor of Aquitaine and Blanche of Navarre are mentioned as great learned women, and, of course, Catherine of Sienna and Joan of Arc are mentioned as great saints. But again, the analysis from the Patristic period applies. These women were exceptions and were regarded as such. Canon law fixed the status of the great majority of women at an abysmally low level (Daly, 1968, p. 97).

The second important topic treated extensively in The Church and The Second Sex, which also pertains to the material level, is the exclusion of women from the priesthood. However, it is impossible to discuss this ecclesiastical policy apart from its ideological bases and psychological impact. Therefore, it will be treated later in the chapter, when I discuss the psychological level of sexual prejudice.

Moving to the ideological level, the Church's teachings on birth control, co-education, marriage, and gainful employment for women denigrate women and

inhibit female development. Daly is clearly critical of these teachings, which directly impact the material situation of women in obvious ways. Such harmful teachings often derive, in one way or another, from the images of Eve and Mary.

The effect of the images of Eve and Mary upon the lives of real women can hardly be overstated. Most of Daly's important contributions in The Church and the Second Sex can be captured through a discussion of these two images and the theory (theology, mythology) surrounding them. The history of misogyny in the Christian tradition is largely treated through a discussion of Eve's image and her place in theology. The contemporary problem of misogyny in the Christian tradition is largely treated through a discussion of Mary's image, which is primarily encountered in a modern form referred to as the "Eternal Woman" or the "Eternal Feminine."

Many scholars have recognized that the image of Eve, as she appears in both the Creation and Fall stories, is a major source of misogyny in the Christian tradition. Feminist theologians tend to highlight three problematic aspects of the image. First, Eve is primarily portrayed as having been created from Adam, whereas it is generally emphasized that Adam was created in the image of God. Consequently, whether or not Eve was created in the image of God has been open for debate. The order of creation thereby reinforces both exclusively masculine imagery for God and women's subordination. Second, not only was Eve created from Adam, she was also created for Adam. This, of course, also reinforces women's subordination, as well as women's tendency to form exclusively

relational identities. Third, Eve is portrayed both as having sinned first and as being Adam's temptress. According to a long stream of Christian tradition, then, Eve is the weak link in creation through which sin entered the world, the "devil's gateway" (Tertullian). Thus, the subordination of women is in the best interest of creation as a whole. Eve, as the prototypical temptress, reinforces the three-way association between women, danger, and sexuality.

In her discussion of Eve's image, Daly's strategy for advocacy is to point out inconsistencies in Christian theology. This is her way of suggesting Christian, rather than atheistic (de Beauvoir), possibilities for reform. She discusses the scriptural stories of the Creation and Fall, the Pauline texts, the Patristic writings, and the Scholastic theology of Thomas Aquinas.

Daly points out that modern biblical scholars distinguish two creation stories. The earliest story is highly sexist. It is known as the J document and found in Genesis 2. This is the one that theologians have chosen to stress. There is a later story, known as the P document, found in Genesis 1, which contains no hint of sexism and even suggests that the "image of God" is androgynous.

For anyone even vaguely familiar with Daly's more recent writings, her treatment of the Fall story is rather shocking. Daly points out that the author of Genesis 3 sees women's subordination and the sexual division of labor as effects of the fall, rather than as part of the original divinely created order of nature. According to Daly, if women's subordination and the sexual division of labor are effects of the fall, it follows that Christians should strive to overcome both.

She does not seem concerned that this attempt to use the Fall story to counter assertions made by theologians about women's divinely ordained place in the order of the universe could be taken as tacit assent to the truth-value of the story.

Daly emphasizes the fact that Pauline texts, which are often cited in support of women's exclusion from the priesthood and other leadership positions, are directly related to the image of Eve. Paul's arguments for the exclusion of women from leadership positions rests upon arguments for the general subordination of women that are derived from the theology surrounding the image of Eve. Thus, Christians contradict themselves when they insist on women's subordination within the religious world but assent to women's emancipation within the secular world. It is obvious from the amount of attention Daly devotes to the Pauline texts that she recognizes them as the most problematic part of Scripture for women.

The Pauline injunctions are frequently cited in opposition to women's emancipation because they are very specific. According to Daly, this does not mean that Paul's intentions were misogynist. For two reasons that no longer apply to Christians, one practical and one theological, Paul's position could not have been other than it was. First, Paul's paramount concern was to protect the reputation of the new sect, which was already under attack. It could not afford to be conspicuously opposed to the prevailing sex roles. Second, Paul's injunctions against women are based upon the Hebrew Bible, yet he lacked the resources of modern biblical scholarship. Daly notes that in I Corinthians II, Paul refers to

Genesis 2 to establish his thesis that "man is the 'image and glory of God,' whereas woman is the glory of man'" (1968, p. 81).

Daly does refer to the modern distinction between Pauline texts and deuterio-Pauline texts in a brief discussion of I Timothy 2, but she does not make much of it. She merely notes that the text is another instance of using a then current, but no longer adequate, interpretation of Genesis to support the prevailing social conventions. In fact, the use of the text in this manner fits the general pattern of sexual prejudice.

In order to explain Paul's position, Daly makes reference to the feedback loop, which she sees as the basic dynamic of sexual prejudice. Paul looked to the Hebrew Bible in an effort to find an explanation for the inferior condition of women in his time, which was a social fact (material). This led him to an inadequate interpretation of Genesis, which he then used to support his injunctions against women (ideological).

Daly defends Christianity with two final observations regarding the Pauline tradition. First, she notes that in some places, Paul attempts to compensate for his more sexist statements. She sees this as evidence that he was aware of tension between the "essential personalist elements" of the Christian message and the social conventions of his day. Second, those who seek to use Pauline texts against women have had to do so selectively. This constitutes evidence that the harmful effects of these texts can be overcome and that social pressure is forcing an evolution in this direction.

Patristic writings are permeated by negative imagery of women, which also stems from the theology and symbolism surrounding Eve. The writings of the Fathers are characterized by: an emphasis on the late creation of Eve and her responsibility for the fall, the related reluctance to grant the image of God to women, bafflement over the fact of women's existence, and horror of sexuality, which is identified with women. Feebly balanced against these misogynist elements are the idea that, by faith, individual women may transcend their sex and the glorification of the Virgin Mary.

Daly's analysis of the Patristic writings follows the same lines as her analysis of Pauline texts. She traces a feedback loop. The Fathers were confronted with a situation in which women were kept in an inferior condition through denial of education, subordination to men, and other types of social conditioning. Their inferior condition was a fact.

Experience apparently supported the rib story, just as the myth itself helped "explain" the common experience of women as incomplete and lesser humans. The vicious circle persisted, for the very emancipation which would prove that women were not "naturally" defective was denied them in the name of that defectiveness which was claimed to be natural and divinely ordained. (Daly, p. 87)

According to Daly, then, the apparent misogyny of the Fathers must be seen in light of its historical context, rather than as normative for Christians today, who live in a different social environment and have the benefit of advanced biblical scholarship.

In the Middle Ages, Aristotelian biology was assimilated into Catholic

theology through the writings of Thomas Aquinas. This produced a major transformation in ideas about women's status. One of Daly's major contributions in The Church and the Second Sex is that she defines and highlights this transformation. As mentioned earlier, the Fathers generally saw women's inferior status as a result of Eve's sin, rather than of Eve's created nature. Aquinas, though his anti-female rhetoric is not as virulent as that of the Fathers, made the situation worse. Following Aristotle, Aquinas held that women, as regards their individual natures, are misbegotten males. Their sex is the result of something gone awry in the reproductive process. However, regarding human nature in general, women are part of nature's plan. They are intended for the work of reproduction. As if this theology isn't denigrating enough, Aquinas adds another layer of misogyny to it.

Though reproduction is the reason for the existence of women, they are seen by Aquinas as playing only a minor and passive role in the reproductive process. The female provides the matter in the reproductive process, but it is the male who disposes the matter to receive the form of the rational soul. Again, Daly tries to defend the Christian tradition by looking for inconsistency.

She finds much contradiction in Aquinas's writing. He explicitly held to the idea that women are naturally inferior and do not possess the image of God to the same extent as men. At the same time, he maintained that the intellectual soul, which constitutes the image of God in the person, is directly infused by God rather than being caused by the male. He also maintained that both the intellect

and the will function independently of bodily organs. Finally, he never claimed that there was any essential difference in the intellectual soul in men and women.

How, then, could Thomas teach such degrading things about women?

According to Daly, three factors account for the contradiction: "commonly accepted biblical exegesis, Aristotelian biology, and the prevailing image and social status of women" (1968, p. 95). Her analysis of Thomas's sexism, then, parallels her analysis of Paul's sexism. The "deep roots" of Thomas's thought, if separated from these factors, call for equality between men and women.

The image of the Virgin Mary, in Daly's view, does not function to elevate women's status. In fact it is as damaging to real women as Eve's image. Mary was especially glorified during the Patristic period, which, as previously mentioned, was characterized by virulent misogyny. Daly observes that pointing to the glorification of Mary as an apology for the misogyny of the Fathers "ignores the important point that it did not improve their doctrine about concrete, living women" (1968, p. 88). In fact, in her next book, Daly asserts that, in the minds of male theologians, real women, whom they despise, are identified with Eve. Despite the fact that most women are identified with Eve, Mary, an asexual fantasy figure impossible to emulate, is held up as the ideal model for all women.

Both de Beauvoir and Daly are highly critical of the Cult of the Virgin Mary. In de Beauvoir's analysis, which Daly builds upon, the cult has a triple function. First, as a symbolic glorification of "Woman," it functions to conceal the oppression of real women. Second, it relieves male guilt. According to de

Beauvoir, it is pseudo-equality bestowed upon women by men in order to relieve male guilt. Third, it glorifies "Woman" as man's possession, thereby enhancing his status, and simultaneously concealing the inferior status of real women.

Daly adds her own threefold critique of the cult to de Beauvoir's analysis. Regarding the idea of "Mary as the model of all women," the first thing Daly notes is that it has mainly been perpetuated by a celibate clergy, cut off from normal interaction with women. It is highly probable that compensation mechanisms are involved. In any case, Marian devotion does little to further real understanding between men and women. Second, it assumes that we have a great deal of historical knowledge about Mary. This is not so. Finally, and most disastrously, it inevitably involves the assumption that the relationship between Jesus and Mary should be the model for the male-female relationship, thereby relegating women to inferiority.

The modern version of the Marian image, which Daly refers to as the "Eternal Woman" or the "Eternal Feminine," is the most important image singled out for criticism in The Church and the Second Sex. Like the image of Eve, the Eternal Woman image embodies a theory of female "nature." She is presented as essentially good. The problem is that this essential virtue lies in her passivity. The Eternal Woman is defined only in relation to men. Like Eve, she is enshrined as essential female nature by an entire mythological complex.

The myth of the Eternal Feminine is an especially pervasive example of a problematic human thought process. Throughout The Church and the Second Sex,

Daly discusses the problem of confusing symbols with reality. This process has especially worked against women. Daly selects Gertrud von le Fort's book, The Eternal Woman, originally published in 1934, to serve as her primary example of this thought process. This enormously popular book was translated into several languages. Numerous works echoing its basis theses appeared in the 1960s. According to Daly, thinkers like Von le Fort select symbols from evolving situations, which they then present as "immutable" in an attempt to arrest change by forcing the evolving historical situation into the mold of the "immutable" symbol. In other words, the symbol becomes normative for society. This process is attractive to "a certain type of mentality which prefers easy metaphors to a critical examination of the facts of concrete experience" (Daly, 1968, p. 148).

Those attracted to the Eternal Woman often lack an Eternal Man symbol, since they tend to see men in personalist categories. Further, the Eternal Woman symbology flatters men by its tendency to limit its descriptions of women to the categories: virgin, bride, or mother. Daly writes, It would not occur to such writers to apply this reductive system to the male, compressing his whole being into the categories of 'virgin, husband, and father'" (1968, p. 153).

Repeatedly, Daly exposes the soft thinking of the writers who promote the Eternal Woman thesis. They tend to label what is human as "masculine." They claim that the Eternal Woman is an immutable essence, feminine "nature," yet they are concerned to preserve it from change. Why must what is naturally immutable be preserved from change? In addition, the symbols that they use to

support their arguments are so elastic that they can be stretched to serve any thesis (1968, p. 151).

Daly says that the dangers of "masculinizing" women are often referred to by those who use the Eternal Woman thesis to oppose women's emancipation. In their view, an emancipated woman represents a violation of the (divinely created) natural order and thereby exposes the world to great danger. Daly quotes Teilhard de Chardin, who favored "a certain emancipation" but did not wish to see it go so far as to "take away the character of illuminating and idealizing power which she exercises by the simple action of presence and as at rest" (1968, p. 151).

It seems obvious, then, that Teilhard basically reserves for himself and the male clerical elite the privilege of defining female "nature," and, in his mind, an essential component of this definition is some degree of passivity so that the relative social positions of men and women, which privilege him, remain unthreatened. He does not even have the integrity to own his hostility toward women.

As Daly points out, the double talk represented by the phrase "a certain emancipation" and its subsequent negation is characteristic of such writing. I think it is interesting to note that double talk has at least one function in common with "symbol talk." Both facilitate the simultaneous indulgence and denial of sexism. People who send mixed messages do so in order that they may deny one or the other at a later time.

I imagine that if I could have a conversation with Teilhard de Chardin on the topic of "the status of women in Christianity," he would, while stubbornly clinging to a status quo that disadvantages women, simultaneously claim to be "pro-women" in virtue of his reverence for the symbol "Woman." He cannot have it both ways. He is consciously or unconsciously, hostile to real women as manifest in his opposition to their emancipation. In fact what he is proposing is that flesh-and-blood women be forced to conform to the symbols that he is comfortable with.

To summarize, then, the Church's ideology about women is both normative and distortive. It consists of theology and myths, which Daly refers to as "demonic." Yet it persists, which it could not do if it were not reinforced at both the material and psychological levels.

At the level of material reality, both civil and ecclesiastical institutions contribute to the problem by excluding women. Exclusion, especially in its educational and occupational forms, directly inhibits the development of women. Women's underdevelopment is then cited as "evidence" of their "natural" inferiority. The myths appear to be true. Exclusion also insulates demonic myths about women by depriving men of experientially based information that can challenge myths and stereotypes.

At the level of psychological reality, exclusion reinforces the myths by concretely, and often vividly, yet tacitly, communicating a theory of "natural" feminine inferiority, which women then internalize. In order to understand why

denigrating myths about "essential female nature" can persist for so long in the face of contradictory information, I think it is very important to realize that information received at this level is most difficult to refute. The exclusion of women from the priesthood provides the most dramatic illustration of this type of communication and also of the psychological impact of exclusive policies.

Both de Beauvoir and Daly recognize the exclusion of women from the church's hierarchy as a complex psychological issue. Daly devotes a great deal of attention to it. She says, "In the question of whether women can be ordained priests, the whole problem of the situation of women in the Church is reflected, symbolized, and crystallized" (1968, p. 196). Because of the ceremonial and symbolic nature of the priesthood, the exclusion of women from it is a powerful statement. It perpetuates confusion between maleness and divinity. In her discussion of the exclusion of women from the priesthood Daly uses a memorable phrase which seems to capture the problem nicely. The exclusion of women from the priesthood encourages feelings of irremediable inferiority in girls and women. No amount of virtue or training can overcome this natural inferiority. It seems obvious to me that this is, in fact, what is tacitly communicated to women and girls. Daly is most eloquent in her discussion of this point:

The point is not at all that a few women may have the desire to become priests which cannot be fulfilled; it is, rather, that Catholic women, by the fact of the exclusion of *all* women from such a role, are conditioned to believe that they have an irremediably inferior nature. This conditioning leads to a devastating mutilation. Seemingly to them the only way to triumph over this debased nature of theirs is docility before the male, who serves as the only intermediary between themselves and a masculine God.

(1968, p. 66)

In terms of female consciousness, then, the problem Daly focuses on in The Church and the Second Sex is women's conviction of their own inferiority. This is generated by cultural and social institutions, which both explicitly and tacitly communicate theories of "natural" female inferiority. It is reinforced in a dynamic known as "the self-fulfilling prophecy."

Passivity and anxiety are also problematic in female consciousness. At the ideological level, which carries normative force, passivity is idealized as feminine virtue in the images of the Virgin Mary and the Eternal Woman. Anxiety from anticipation of disapproval is occasioned when women eschew "passive virtue." All of these contribute to female underdevelopment. Female underdevelopment is then cited as evidence of the inferior "nature" of women.

Psychologists have, of course, studied the dynamic described above, but they generally refer to "sex-role stereotypes" or "gender identity" rather than the Eternal Woman symbol/syndrome. Daly reviews some of their findings in The Church and the Second Sex. Citing the work of Eleanor Maccoby, Daly notes that some psychologists believe that a child's personality traits at age six have predictive value as to whether the child's IQ will rise or fall during the next four years. Those traits predictive of declining IQ rates are those typically associated with femininity and encouraged in girls. If a girl is fortunate enough not to develop a "feminine" personality, she will suffer anxiety from her awareness that she is flouting convention. This is significant because, although anxiety may

enhance performance of well-learned tasks, it inhibits new learning. Thus, passivity and anxiety, as well as women's feelings of inferiority, are implicated in female underdevelopment.

The solution Daly proposes to all of this stereotyping is inspired by a passage from Von le Fort: "But when woman seeks herself, her metaphysical mystery is extinguished; for in raising up her own image she destroys the image that is eternal" (Daly 1968, p. 156). Women, then, must raise up their own images. Daly concludes The Church and the Second Sex by calling upon the Church to work to create the conditions under which it will be possible for women to do this. She suggests that the Church should begin by reforming both its exclusive practices and its theology.

Basic theological tenets that are not explicitly linked to demonic myths about "Woman" often lend implicit support to such myths. For example, the Eternal Woman thesis depends upon a static worldview, which the church calls the "divine plan." The divine plan is associated with classical theological teachings about the attributes of God.

For Daly, the teaching of divine omnipotence, the idea that God is all powerful, implies that the condition of the world is exactly as God wills it to be. If some people are oppressed by other people in the world, then, this must be God's will. The only other possible explanation would be that God's power is somehow limited, but this would contradict the teaching of divine omnipotence. Further, Daly believes, that the teaching of divine immutability, the idea that God

does not change, can easily be used to imply that God wills that the world remain exactly as it is, since he does not change his mind. Daly does not say that the conclusion that God wills oppression to exist follows from these divine attributes by logical necessity, but rather that the two attributes are easily used to paint a picture of a God who wills or permits oppression to exist. This sort of God discourages humans from attempting to rectify oppressive conditions. In fact, the static worldview associated with such divine attributes automatically sanctifies the status quo as part of a divine plan. This criticism of classical theology is greatly expanded in her next book.

Overall, Daly is optimistic regarding the future of women within Christianity. Christianity, especially in its Catholic version, which still excludes women from the priesthood, is permeated with sexual prejudice, but Daly does not believe that such prejudice is essential to Christianity. She sees no malicious intent undergirding sexual prejudice. It is a mere mistake, possibly rooted in some ancient biological necessity, which accidentally became encoded in Christian ideology. At this point, Daly appears confident that once the error and harmfulness of sexual prejudice are pointed out, the Church will work to eradicate it.

Sexual prejudice is discussed primarily as exclusion of women at the material level, which is rooted in theories of natural female inferiority and idealized passive virtue at the ideological level. Women internalize these ideas, which then become self-fulfilling prophecies. The separation of women and men

deprives men, who construct the theories that constitute religious doctrine, of experientially based information about women that could challenge theories of natural female inferiority. Women's exclusion from important arenas of life at the social level results in their underdevelopment for practical, as well as psychological, reasons. Female underdevelopment then lends plausibility to the ideological level of sexual prejudice, which exerts normative force at the social level. It is an infinite feedback loop, a never-ending circle.

CHAPTER IV

"IDOLATRY" IN BEYOND GOD THE FATHER

While the word "patriarchy" was not even used in the original text of The Church and the Second Sex, there are numerous references to it in the index of Beyond God the Father. The use of the word "patriarchy" to characterize a society implies that hierarchical order based on sexual differentiation is the very basis of social organization. In The Church and the Second Sex sexual prejudice was seen as pervasive. But it was a distortion--an historically conditioned error. Daly did not yet see sexual prejudice as foundational to either the social order or Christianity. She moves much closer to this point of view in Beyond God the Father.

The entrenched nature of what Daly had previously referred to as "sexual prejudice" becomes the problem in Beyond God the Father. Since sexual prejudice is not an ephemeral phenomena, it must exist as the result of some sort of equilibrium among social, ideological, and psychological forces. These forces themselves, then, appear to also be stable or motionless. Therefore, the ultimate target of her analysis in this book is stasis, or lack of any motion that would constitute a significant development away from patriarchy. This is visible at all three levels of description.

Daly begins Beyond God the Father by defining the social situation she sees as problematic. Although she does not explicitly link the problematic situation to the label "patriarchy," it is reasonable to take her definition as her description of patriarchy:

There exists a worldwide phenomenon of sexual caste, basically the same whether one lives in Saudi Arabia or in Sweden. This planetary sexual caste system involves birth-ascribed hierarchically ordered groups whose members have unequal access to goods, services, and prestige and to physical and mental well-being. (1973, p. 2)

Sex-role segregation and women's derivative status (status attending their relationships with men) serve to mask the low caste status of women. This is an important theme in Daly's work. The situation is difficult to change because it is difficult to see. Deception contributes to stasis. These masking phenomena, then, contribute to stasis at the material level.

At the ideological level, Daly introduces her concept of "naming," which has since become a very important part of general feminist theory. It would be hard to overstate the importance of the idea of naming in Daly's theory. It has both positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, naming is creative. Daly goes so far as to claim: "to exist humanly is to name the self, the world, and God" (1973, p. 8). On the other hand, male naming has been destructive by its exclusion of women.

According to Daly, the power of naming has been stolen from women. Naming is powerful because it is the way in which humans create the map of social reality to which they refer. "Naming" is a very broad rubric. It includes

words, symbols, myths, and entire theories of reality. Another way to look at this is to think of the socially constructed map of reality as a mirror. Since women have not participated in the social construction of reality, images reflecting women's experience, including their experience of themselves, are not visible in the mirror. Only male-constructed images of women, reflecting males' experience of women, are visible in the mirror. Women, then, according to the prevailing sense of reality, are consigned to "nonbeing." Male naming is false insofar as the male point of view is represented as the human point of view. Daly designates the myth of the Fall as the "prototypic case of false naming" (1973, p. 47).

Christianity is still Daly's primary focus of analysis, although she does mention that psychiatric ideology functions similarly. Christian ideology reinforces the entire sociological complex, sexual caste and well as its concomitant masking phenomena: "patriarchal religion has served to perpetuate all these dynamics of delusion, naming them 'natural' and bestowing its supernatural blessing on them. The system has been advertised as 'according to the divine plan'" (Daly, 1973, p. 3).

Related to the divine plan are the images of Eve, Mary, Jesus the Christ, and God the Father, as well as the divine attributes attending classical theism. Each of the images reinforces particular aspects of the social situation. As in her first book, Daly recognizes a relationship of reciprocal reinforcement between religion and the social world. Not only does religion reinforce the social world, but the social world also reinforces religious symbols and ideology by making

them seem plausible. Both are also embedded in a relationship with women's psychological realities.

The aspect of women's psychological situation that is important in this book is their divided consciousness, which results in psychological paralysis (intrapsychic stasis). Daly builds upon Paulo Freire's insight but castigates him for not recognizing its applicability to women's condition. She quotes Freire:

The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot live authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. (1973, p. 48)

The psychological paralysis resulting from divided consciousness centers on emotional dependence. It is manifest in many ways: women's disproportionate fear of disapproval; fear and avoidance of success, which the psychologist Matina Horner pointed out; feminine antifeminism, which can be seen as an extension of the divided self; and female preference for male-defined causes over their own liberation cause. "Women have been conditioned to see any act that affirms the worth of the female ego as blameworthy" (Daly, 1973, p. 54).

In The Church and the Second Sex, Daly took up Simone de Beauvoir's idea of the "otherness" of women, especially as it is reflected in their exclusion from the priesthood, which communicates to women that they are "irremediably inferior." In Beyond God the Father, the generally unarticulated but always operative cultural representation of women as irremediably inferior is highlighted in a more dramatic and memorable way through the use of the word "caste."

Aspects of women's sociological situation indicative of their otherness and their low caste status are their vulnerability to rape and their use as prostitutes, among others.

In Daly's view, since rape is the objectification and use another human being, it is the logical culmination of sexist logic. She sees it also as a behavioral model for all oppression. Sexist logic is the offspring of hierarchal dualism, which Daly believes is inherent in Christianity. (This will be elaborated upon later in the discussion of traditional theism.) Since it is well known that hierarchal dualism in its "we/they" form is associated with warfare, Daly uses graphic illustrations to highlight the connections between war and rape in order to demonstrate that they stem from the same source.

Rape is also the model for environmental exploitation. That woman and nature are often seen as analogous to each other is, of course, an observation that many other scholars have made. Where the attitude towards women is one of disrespect, of conquest and domination, the attitude towards nature is likely to be similar. The result is ecological crisis.

The use of women as prostitutes is very similar to their victimization as objects of rapist behavior. In Daly's view, it would be dysfunctional for society to define all women as completely evil. The logical consequence of such a position would be the total annihilation of women, which would be species suicide. The only solution is to divide women into two categories, good women and bad women. Men are partially identified with some women as their

possessions. These are the good women, the ones deserving of chivalrous protection in a patriarchal property system.

Again, this is a well-known thesis. The only way to have both sexual aggression and chivalry as normative social values is to have two classes of women. Daly's examination of the works of important early Christian writers on the subject of prostitutes bears this out. They frequently discuss prostitution as a necessary evil. Augustine saw prostitutes in this light. Prostitutes have often been referred to as guardians of virtue. Aquinas compares them to sewers, which are necessary to keep cities clean. In Daly's words, prostitutes have generally been seen as "venereal safety valves" (1973, p. 61). Daly asks whose virtue is it that prostitutes guard? Obviously, it is not their own nor their clients'.

Then, seemingly, it is the "virtue" of the honest matrons, who of course had no such venereal outlet and whose "virtue" would seem to consist in being less likely to be called upon to function as sewers for men who were not their husbands (or fathers, in the case of virgins). Society as structured, then, has required this wretched caste. (Daly, 1973, p. 61)

The biblical story of Eve's creation and her role in the Fall, as well as the interpretations of the story offered by modern theologians, provides an illustration of several problems that Daly is trying to illuminate. The myth is an obvious justification of existing social arrangements. The subordination of women is "doubly justified" (1973, p. 46) by the myth because woman was created from man and for man, almost as an afterthought, and then tempted him, leaving herself open to the charge of being the cause of all the misery in the universe. The mythology surrounding Eve is largely responsible for punitive attitudes

towards female sexuality. Given the rabid, anti-body attitude of early Christianity,¹ the motif of Eve as temptress can also be considered a projection of the undesirable carnal aspects of existence onto women.

Theologians have tried to rationalize this myth,² but this has not helped. Another idea, which is central to many of Daly's analyses, especially in Beyond God the Father, is at work in her discussion of the Eve story: what is important about a symbol is the way it operates in the mind, not its theological rationalizations. In fact, while theological explanations of symbols or myths may become personally meaningful to those with theological training, they frequently have little or no impact upon the way a symbol functions in the minds of most believers. This is especially true when they fail to address the specific content of the myth. According to Daly, theologians who eschew biblical literalism, then, have done little to counteract the negative impact of the Fall story upon male-female relationships because their analyses are so abstract that they do not deal with the specific content of the myth.

Its meaning has been rendered by theologians into abstract and universal terms, such as "universal alienation" and "existential estrangement." One could get the impression that the vision of the man-woman relationship portrayed is unimportant for modern consciousness, religious or secular. (Daly, 1973, p. 44)

¹This myth is not regarded as the paradigm of sin in Judaism. Instead, rabbinic commentaries about the female figure Lillith provide the model for scapegoating women.

²They are generally embarrassed by its pre-scientific view of history, rather than offended by its sexism.

In other words, the fact that Eve sinned first and that she tempted Adam would be perceptually salient for most readers of the Fall story. Therefore, if theologians do not address this content specifically, then their analyses cannot be readily used to counteract its negative impact upon male-female relationships.

At a deeper level, the myth has "cultivated a backward-looking consciousness . . . [conveying] the idea that the best has already been" (1973, p. 46). Here again, one can see that Daly has come to view the basic cause of patriarchy's entrenchment as a generalized tendency towards stasis, which takes many specific forms within the Christian ideological system. Even when some image of change can be validated over against the status quo, the alternative vision, the model, is contained the past. Any possibility of real newness is foreclosed.

Daly's analysis of the image of Mary has become somewhat more complicated in this book. As Daly pointed out in The Church and the Second Sex, although Mary supposedly represents the "good woman" side of the good woman/bad woman dichotomy already discussed, real women can never imitate both her asexual aspect and her maternal aspect, and her glorification has had absolutely no effect upon the Church's teachings concerning real women.

While modern images of Mary are almost bovine in quality, history demonstrates that her image has an extremely powerful inspirational quality. The greatest cathedrals in Europe, which required incredible levels of sustained effort from the entire town to build, are dedicated to Mary. Daly, like many others,

believes that remnants of an ancient Mother Goddess survive in Mary's image. These are her prophetic dimensions, when they are perceived out of the context of Marian dogmas. However, according to Daly, these prophetic dimensions are actually dangerous to women because the Church has harnessed their power. Daly says, "for is it [the Church] not the owner of the Marionette that is so attractive to the masses, casting its spell upon them, luring them into the churchly fathers' suffocating embrace?" (1973, p. 90).

For Daly, the prophetic aspects of Mary's image are those aspects which could point to her independent power and/or her essential goodness. However, in the doctrines of the virgin birth, the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, Mary's prophetic aspects have been co-opted by the Church. According to Daly, these doctrines have been formulated in such a way as to keep Mary's image safely subordinated to male god imagery. Her point is simply that the same religious leaders who embrace Mariology fully intend that women be subordinate to men and, therefore, cannot be trusted, despite their glorification of Mary.

With regard to the virgin birth, Daly cites the work of Gordon Kaufman, John Macquarrie, and Karl Barth and notes that what all three seem to have in common is that they fail to see the significance of the virgin birth in terms of Mary's independent personhood:

The point of interest here is the fact that even what would seem to be the most nonrelational aspect of the symbol of Mary, the idea of her virginity, is comprehended by male theologians only in a relational way, having significance only as tied to the male savior and the male God. (1973, p. 84)

Instead, their discussions are focused on using the virgin birth to understand the divinity of Jesus, to understand Jesus as the son of God.

The Catholic doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception holds that Jesus redeemed Mary ahead of time in preparation for his own birth, not that Mary is essentially good, like Jesus. In a similar vein, Daly notes:

Catholic theologians have maintained that the use of the term "Assumption" for Mary, as opposed to "Ascension" for Jesus, is significant, for the latter term is active, suggesting that Jesus "went up" under his own power, whereas "assumption" is passive: Mary was "taken up." (1973, p. 87)

Daly attempts to make one further point regarding Mary, which cannot be discussed apart from her analysis of the Christian god images, Jesus the Christ and God the Father. Much has been made of the dramatic shift in Daly's thought between the writing of The Church and the Second Sex and Beyond God the Father. Christ and Plaskow point to two important changes discernible in Daly's intermediate essay "After the Death of God the Father," which appears in expanded form in Beyond God the Father. First, Daly speaks out of her identification with the women's movement, rather than the Church. Second, she now sees the core symbols of Christianity, Jesus the Christ and God the Father, as the locus of its oppression of women, rather than teachings about the nature and proper role of women.

Daly does not object to the idea of divine incarnation. She sees theological promise in the idea of human creation in the "image of God." She does not object to the idea that divine revelation took place through the personality of

Jesus. What she does object to is the idea of a unique incarnation of the divine in a male historical figure, which is held up as the final revelation of the divine. She objects to the idea that Jesus is the proper model for everyone and for all time.

Upon my first reading of Beyond God the Father, I did not quite understand how Daly could complain about the maleness of Jesus, since Jesus is said to have allowed himself to be sacrificed for the sins of the world. Wouldn't she also complain if the tradition held up a female model who was primarily a sacrificial victim? But the point Daly makes is that it is precisely the sacrificial victim aspect of Jesus that is best captured by the image of Mary. The problem is that it is only this aspect of Jesus which is captured by the Marian model. The model captures neither his innocent aspect nor his authoritative and active aspects.

Jesus, whom male priests (unlike women) may claim to represent, was essentially good and did not deserve his sacrificial sufferings. Mary, following the same path of sacrificial love as Jesus, is reputed to have said "let it be done unto me according to thy will" in response to the announcement of her pregnancy. But Mary, unlike Jesus, is not good in herself, and neither are women, even when they follow the path of sacrificial love. It is only the sacrificial victim aspect of Jesus, captured by the Marian model, that women are encouraged to imitate, never his authoritative or iconoclastic style.

Related to this is another of Daly's major points. In an important article, which Daly is familiar with, Valerie Saiving points out that the sacrificial model

might actually be liberating for men, who are socialized towards competitive individualism. But it is detrimental to women because it reinforces their socialization, rather than liberating them from it.

Finally, the very concept of a model is inherently problematic. It generates backward-looking consciousness in the same manner as the Fall story, foreclosing any possibility of real newness or human creativity. In effect, it practically guarantees the maintenance of the status quo. Here Daly is returning to what I have said is really the ultimate target of her criticisms in this book: stasis. She points out the obvious. Within the context of an already patriarchal system, a structural bias towards the maintenance of the status quo is bad for women. In Daly's view, then, the aspect of Jesus that Christians should imitate is his model-breaking, his freedom.

Mary Daly is probably most famous for the criticism that she makes of "God the Father" as a Christian symbol in Beyond God the Father: "If God in 'his' heaven is a father ruling 'his' people, then it is in the 'nature' of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male-dominated"(1973, p. 13). The symbol legitimates male domination by implying that it is divinely ordained. This dynamic is operative regardless of whether the implication is supported or contradicted by more specific and explicit moral teachings of the Church. The symbol of God the Father is not only bad for women, it is bad for society because male domination is bad for society.

Another frequently repeated thesis in Beyond God the Father is that male

domination is the root cause of all other forms of oppression. Although males of marginalized groups are, of course, oppressed, it is sexism that provides the model for their oppression and all other oppression. Accordingly, Daly points to the aggressive and intolerant nature of our society as evidence for the general destructiveness of father symbolism in the Christian god image. Christians characterize God the Father as a loving god, and he sometimes inspires loving behavior. But he is also jealous and inspires intolerance. To illustrate her point, Daly likens the image of God the Father to the character of Vito Corleone in The Godfather. Both reflect "the marriage of tenderness and violence so intricately blended in the patriarchal ideal" (1973, p. 16). The image of a Mafia godfather frequently recurs in Daly's later writing in connection with her ongoing commitment to the idea that patriarchy is the root of all oppression. Although this point is asserted many times in Beyond God the Father, it is difficult to find analysis explicitly connected to it. Daly observes that rape often accompanies warfare, but nowhere in the book does she explicate the supposed causal connection between patriarchy and other forms of oppression.

What Daly seems to be relying on to support the questionable premise is a structural resemblance between the ideological bases for patriarchy and other forms of oppression. Christ and Plaskow attribute the theoretical elaboration of this resemblance to Rosemary Radford Ruether, who argued that hierarchical dualism, inherited from the classical world, provides the basic model for oppression. This is so because it divides reality into two levels and then labels

them as superior and inferior. "Classical dualism . . . became the model for the oppression of women when the culture-creating males identified the positive sides of the dualism with themselves and identified the negative sides with the women over whom they claimed the right to rule" (Christ & Plaskow, 1979, p. 5). Daly offers the following:

It is also true that men are castrated by such a social system in which destructive competitiveness treats men who are low on the totem pole (e.g., black males, poor males, noncompetitive males, Third World males, etc.) *like women*. Yet all of these can still look down upon the primordially castrated beings--women. Now these primordial eunuchs are rising up to castrate not people but *the system* that castrates--that great "God-Father" of us all which indulges senselessly and universally in the politics of rape. (1973, p. 9)

It should be noted that Daly is not, at this point in her work, blaming men for the general destructiveness of society or "essentializing" masculinity as aggressive, which is a charge frequently made against her. No malicious intent is attributed to men in Beyond God the Father. The reference is to "the system that castrates." Although it almost appears as though fatherhood itself is under attack, the real target of the polemic is the concept of a god limited in benevolence, which Vito Corleone represents. This limited god is a consequence of the tendency to "hypostatize transcendence" (Daly, 1973, p. 19), which is the root cause of stasis at the ideological level.

To hypostatize or reify transcendence is to define and thereby limit god. Theologians generally see this as error. They would not, therefore, claim that god is literally a male. However, what is important is that the image of god as

male survives and operates in the imagination, regardless of intellectual claims to the contrary. There is a contradiction between theory and imagination.

I find that it is easiest to grasp Daly's point about the way male god symbolism functions in the imagination by comparing it to the way the generic masculine functions in the imagination. Daly coined the phrase "sisterhood of man" to illustrate. Although "man" is theoretically generic (includes women), the fact that its juxtaposition with "sisterhood" jars the listener is evidence that it does not operate as a generic in the imagination. Women are simply not included in the masculine "generic," regardless of grammarians' claims to the contrary.

Daly offers ample evidence of the same sort of contradiction between theory and imagination concerning male god symbolism. Admissions that God is not really male are often followed by compensatory references to the God-Man. The relevance of promising new theologies (Moltmann's theology of hope, Tillich's ontological theology, and process theology) to the condition of women's oppression is generally not developed, indicating that their authors do in fact image god as male.

While theologians may deny the maleness of God, they do insist upon the divine attributes of classical theism, the most problematic of these being divine omnipotence and divine immutability. Daly points out that, regardless of sexual imagery, these attributes uphold the status quo. Just as it was in The Church and the Second Sex, the idea of a "divine plan" is selected as the immediate, but not ultimate, problem in Christian ideology because of its obvious tendency to

sacralize existing reality. What Daly has seen, however, is that the idea of a "divine plan" would not be nearly so devastating if it were not linked to an objectified god--a god encased in a static definition. The problem is not only that Christians believe God is the author of a "divine plan" for society, but also that they do not imagine God changing his mind.

The focus on static definitions of transcendence can be understood as part of a strategy. Daly has named a problem in the current situation. Therefore, she needs to validate an image of something beyond what already is. In this context, transcendence is an important concept. However, it turns out that transcendence has been boxed in by definitions. Thus, its liberating potential is blocked. A purposive idea of transcendence would best serve the goal of women's liberation. To this end, Daly sets out to rescue "divine purpose" from its existing meaning structures.

Since Daly had been steeped in Aquinas's Scholasticism, it is not surprising that she begins with Aristotle's concept of "final cause," which is embedded in a model distinguishing four types of causation, although they sometimes shade into one another. Daly offers a simplified definition of Aristotle's four causes in order to bring the final cause into bold relief for her readers. The material cause of an object is the physical substance that it consists of. The formal cause is the shape of the material that makes it what it is. The efficient cause is the agent that/who produces the effect that is the object. The final cause is the goal or purpose that begins the whole chain of causation by

inspiring the action of the agent. Thus, the final cause is also the first cause. However, Daly sees the entire conceptual system as closed because the agent (efficient cause) only actualizes some pre-existing potential.

The final cause has the capacity to inspire action because it is apprehended as good. Thus, the final cause also became known as "the good." Daly likes the idea of the good as attracting action and wants to save it. The basic problem is the closed nature of the system in which the concept is embedded. She tracks this to two sources. First, Greek philosophers identified the good with "being," a concept which had been constructed over against "becoming," or change. Early Greek philosophers (before Socrates) wanted to construct a theory of reality that would explain all the change and diversity (motion and form) of the phenomenal world. As they saw it, only that which does not change is real, rather than illusory. So being, which is identified with the good, which is identified with the final cause, or goal, is changeless already in pre-Socratic philosophy. This seems to be the root of hierarchal dualism in the classical world and source of stasis in the divine plan. In Daly's words, "the goal of every action, therefore, already is. The future is essentially closed" (1973, p. 182).

When Greek philosophy and Christianity were blended, the situation did not improve. The idea of creation necessitated a distinction between finite being and infinite being, which the Scholastics made. God, as creator, is infinite being. Humans, as creatures, are finite beings. Finite beings are characterized by a discrepancy between "essence" and "existence," meaning that it is not the nature

(essence) of any finite thing to exist. This seemed obvious, given that they all pass away. On the other hand, it is the nature, or essence, of infinite being (God) to exist (Harvey, 1964). In Aquinas's thought, this distinction was accompanied by a corresponding distinction between creatures' causality and God's causality that could have moved theology away from static categories but failed (Daly, 1973). In Daly's view, it could have opened theology to the future because God was said to be able to create out of nothing and was, therefore, not limited by the potentiality of pre-existing matter. This brings us to the second source of closure in the conceptual system.

The opening created in the conceptual system by the introduction of the idea of God's creativity was closed when Scholastic theologians elaborated the attributes of God. Having distinguished finite being from infinite Being (God), Scholastic theologians continued by setting up the characteristics of each as mutually exclusive. They believed that the essence of finite being was change, change from potentiality to actuality. Therefore, infinite being or God would be changeless, having no potentiality or receptivity (Harvey, 1964). Translated, this means that "god does not change his mind." Herein lies Daly's frustration with traditional theism.³ This aspect of traditional theism should also be recognized as the theological consequence of the classical dualism that Ruether has seen as so pernicious.

³In her earlier writing, Daly mentions that this problem would not be an insurmountable barrier to change if Christians would only image their knowledge of God as evolving. But she seems to have dismissed this as a realistic possibility.

Within Protestantism (with the important exception of Paul Tillich), there has been vigorous protest against the identification of God with Being and against speculative metaphysics as a vehicle for theology (Harvey, 1964). However, this is not terribly helpful for would-be feminist reformers because the protest has been associated with a powerful commitment to Bible-based theology. Biblicism may well present more obstacles to feminist reform than Greek metaphysics.

According to Daly, of the popular theologies, the one presenting the most promise is process theology because it goes the farthest in transcending dualism. Process theology argues that rather than being the exception to the basic structures of human experience, God, or Being itself, is the perfect exemplification of them. Being embodies both activity and receptivity, which are also universal characteristics of human experience (Harvey, 1964). Becoming is no longer excluded from Being, which is identified with final cause. Process and goal can be one and the same. Daly uses process theology to assert that, in the current environment, the becoming of women is the final cause.

Nevertheless, Daly is not overly optimistic about process theology. It is, after all, a pre-fabricated (before feminist consciousness) model constructed by men and cannot be assumed to adequately represent women's experienced reality (Daly, 1973). A further cause for doubting its adequacy is that its liberal male proponents have never explicitly developed its relevance to women's oppression. A more adequate theology will have to be constructed out of the experience of women-identified women.

In Beyond God the Father, Daly introduces this idea in a constructive vision linked directly to the problem of stasis by drawing upon Piaget:

It has been argued cogently by Piaget that structure is maintained by an interplay of transformation laws that never yield results beyond the system and never tend to employ elements external to the system. This is indicative of what *can* effect basic alteration in the system, that is, a potent influence *from without*. (1973, p. 14)

For this reason, the women's movement represents the best hope for spiritual development. Only women-identified women are far enough outside patriarchy to change it. Using Tillich as a springboard, Daly claims that women-identified women are uniquely qualified to be the bearers of existential courage and perhaps even to rescue life on this planet.

Tillich claimed that humans derive their "courage to be" from an affirmation of their participation in Being, which is called forth in an encounter with "nonbeing," or "nothingness." This is Tillich's theory of existential courage.

Daly basically concurs with Tillich. She says that the intuition of Being that enables the affirmation of participation in Being is available in the experience of facing nothingness. In the male-constructed social map of reality women are consigned to nonbeing. As subjects, they are outside cultural meaning structures. Feminist consciousness is constituted by the recognition of this--by facing nothingness within patriarchy. Women who have the "courage to see" this are the bearers of Daly's existential courage. Therefore, it is the consciousness raising available through the women's movement that represents the best hope for life on this planet.

To summarize, for women within patriarchy, Christian god imagery is inherently oppressive. Regardless of how sophisticated and abstract its theological rationalizations may be, the images do not function as generics, and women will never be able to see their dignity as persons reflected in such images. Women will only see themselves reflected as objects in such images. As models, then, the images do not pertain to women. At bottom, they are metaphors for the hierarchal dualism of the classical world, constructed by an elite male population with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Thus, they are inherently conservative. Such images, structurally biased towards stasis, can never serve to liberate women from their enslavement within the existing patriarchy. Nor can they liberate the world from the general destructiveness of patriarchy.

CHAPTER V

"PATRIARCHY" AND ITS AGENTS IN GYN/ECOLOGY

Most of the major themes in Gyn/ecology were present, at least in germinal form, in Daly's earlier books. Some important ideas from earlier books have been dropped. In particular, the idea that the patriarchal organization of society has destructive consequences for men, as well as women, has faded from Daly's writing, although it occasionally surfaces in some incidental form.

Daly both deepens and expands her analysis of ideology in Gyn/ecology. She deepens her analysis by including an extended discussion of the English language itself as an ideological system supporting other ideological systems. She also assumes a much wider focus than in previous writing. In Gyn/ecology, Daly's asserts that Christianity is one version of a super religion that she explicitly names as "patriarchy." All religions and ideologies, including academic theories and professional methodologies, are patriarchal "religions." However, her analyses of these other ideological systems are usually formed as analogies to her analysis of Christian ideology.

Patriarchy is itself the prevailing religion of the entire planet, and its essential message is necrophilia. All of the so-called religions legitimating patriarchy are mere sects subsumed under its vast umbrella/canopy. They are essentially similar, despite the variations. All--from buddhism and hinduism to islam, judaism, christianity, to secular derivatives such as freudianism, jungianism, marxism, and maoism--are infrastructures of the

edifice of patriarchy. All are erected as parts of the male's structure against anomie. And the symbolic message of all the sects of the religion which is patriarchy is this: Women are the dreaded anomie. Consequently, women are the objects of male terror, the projected personifications of "The Enemy," the real objects under attack in all the wars of patriarchy. (39)

The blaming that is apparent from the quote is related to a new topic of discussion in Gyn/ecology.

In Gyn/ecology, Daly attempts to pinpoint the root cause of patriarchal ideology. For the most part, Daly avoided speculation about the origins of patriarchy in earlier writing. When she did address the subject, she speculated briefly that perhaps patriarchy had its origins in women's generative function together with the need to perpetuate the human species. A conciliatory tone was discernible in this earlier speculation about origins. In Gyn/ecology, however, Daly is much more interested in accountability than conciliation. This leads her to a discussion of male psychology that is absent from her earlier writings.

Daly's discussion of male psychology is centered on the ideas of male agency and malicious intention in the oppression of women as important causal aspects of patriarchy. Agency and intention are often used almost interchangeably. Because she interchanges agency and intention, Daly goes to great lengths to distinguish between male agents and female instruments of violence against women. Male agency/intention is motivated by the male view of women as anomie. Male agency and the male view of women as anomie are closely tied to a discussion of male bonding against women, especially as manifest

in male scholars' identification with male perpetrators of violence against women, as an important modus operandi of patriarchy. Here are echoes of her earlier emphasis on the exclusion of women.

Daly's discussion of female psychology retains the same theoretical substance as before. Women's divided consciousness is at the root of their complicity in the oppression of women. She both reinterprets existing mythology and creates new symbols and mythology to dramatize her point of view. There is a new urgency to this discussion. Women with divided consciousness are referred to as "male-identified" or "fembots." They have been victims of "mind-rape," and, thus, carry implants in their heads through which they are manipulated by the true agents of patriarchy.

Daly's discussion of the material level of patriarchy is focussed on the most dramatic aspects of it, systematic atrocities committed against women. But this is thoroughly interwoven with her discussion of ideology, since the atrocities are seen as ritual reenactments of mythological models.

For Daly, just as formal religious traditions, academic theories, and professional methodologies are male-constructed systems that serve the patriarchy and are, by definition, hostile to women, so also is language such a system. This view was evident throughout Beyond God the Father in Daly's discussion of naming. In fact, Cheris Kramarae, a well-known scholar doing feminist work in sociolinguistics, credits Daly with calling attention to the relationship between women and language in 1973 (Beyond God the Father). Daly's discussion on this

point is extended much farther in Gyn/ecology.

Women must not only deconstruct mainstream language, which, in the language of Beyond God the Father, means facing their nothingness in a male-constructed system and thereby gaining access to the intuition of Being, but they must also invent a language capable of expressing their experience.

Mainstream language is designed to express only men's experience of women. Language seduces women into seeing themselves and the world through men's eyes. They can recognize neither their oppression nor their authentic selves within a male-defined language system. The underlying thesis is known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which is open to a range of interpretation. The strong version holds that language determines thought. The weak version is that language constrains, even if it does not determine, thought.

It was already clear in Beyond God the Father that Daly is closer to the strong version. For Daly, naming is creating. To get an idea of the importance of naming for Daly, one must consider that she is an existentialist, and, for existentialists, creativity is the very stuff of "authentic existence" (Donovan). Daly believes new language is needed because mainstream language conceals both female virtue and male sin. That is, it both denigrates women and glorifies men. Before discussing Daly's linguistic innovations, it will be helpful to elaborate upon some of the various forms of linguistic sexism.

Henley (1987) reduces sexism in language to three forms. English ignores, defines, and deprecates women. Women and girls can be ignored

through the use of generics and also by not being the topics of discourse, as studies of children's schoolbooks have demonstrated. Women are also far more likely to be defined in relational terms than men, which tends to obscure their subjectivity. The deprecation of women comes through most vividly in the lexical structure of English.

Adams and Ware (1995) review research which indicates that semantic derogation of women is likely to either sexualize or trivialize women. For example, in sex-specific pairs of nouns the female form often carries sexual connotations that the male form does not (e.g., mistress/master, madam/sir). One study reported over five hundred synonyms for "prostitute," but only sixty-five synonyms for "whoremonger." In general, both standard English and slang have an abundance of terms describing women in sexually specific ways, often pejorative.

Although older women are less likely to be described in sexual terms, they are especially likely to be described in pejorative terms. Nilsen (1977) looks at animal terms in relation to people to illustrate this. When the animal and woman are young the connotation is positive (but still sexual). If they are old, the connotation is negative. Compare "sex kitten" to "catty" or "filly" to "old nag."

In the chicken metaphors, a young girl is a *chick*. When she gets old enough she marries and soon begins feeling *cooped up*. To relieve the boredom she goes to *hen parties* and *cackles* with her friends. Eventually she has her *brood*, begins to *henpeck* her husband, and finally turns into an *old biddy*. (29)

Linguistic sexism is fairly easy to describe in terms of vocabulary, but other

forms are more subtle. Daly's bibliography reveals that her own view of linguistic sexism has probably been heavily influenced by two writers in particular: Julia Stanley and Monique Wittig.

Julia Stanley criticizes passive and generic linguistic constructions. The passive voice is not problematic if the agent is readily apparent from the context surrounding a particular statement. However, as Stanley points out, the agent is often deleted from the context. In this case, the passive voice is problematic in two ways. It lends the weight of consensus or objectivity to subjective statements, and it protects agents from accountability. Passive adjectives and nominalized passives function similarly.

Linguists have shown, through a variety of methods, that the masculine generic does not operate in people's minds as a generic, and Daly illustrated this in Beyond God the Father when she coined the expression "sisterhood of man." In Gyn/ecology, Daly criticizes all generic nouns. Again, she is following Stanley, who argues that there are no true generics in English. Generics conceal both the absence and presence of women:

Terms such as *people, persons, individuals, children, workers, officers*, et cetera, are used to cover the absence of women as agents and our all too frequent presence as patients. Thus we hear that "faculty members and their wives attended the conference," and that "people were burned as witches." (Daly, 1978, p. 326)

Daly is also critical of inclusive pronouns. She contends that male writers' use of "we" seduces women into passive inclusion. This seems feasible to me, but she goes on to even criticize the pronoun "I." In this, she is following the

French feminist Monique Wittig. Wittig uses j/e rather than je (I) in order to represent the split consciousness of a woman writer using a male-constructed language or, in Daly's terms, "to display the woman-breaking effects of language" (p. 327).

Daly's discussion of Wittig degenerates to the point of absurdity when she complains that the publishers of the English edition of The Lesbian Body did not split "I" because they thought it was typographically impossible. Her ire over this was aroused in a conversation with Emily Culpepper who suggested that the publishers should have used a crossed "I," which would have resembled a broken phallus. The logic by which a symbol resembling a broken phallus should be used to represent a woman's split consciousness escapes me.

In Gyn/ecology, Daly actually begins the language project that is suggested by her analysis. This can make the book maddeningly difficult to read. Van Den Bergh enumerates four linguistic processes that feminists use to rename themselves and their experiences. In Gyn/ecology, Daly uses all of these processes. They are:

[First], creating new terms [which] includes using words seemingly nonexistent before feminism's resurgence (e.g., *sisterhood*, *sexism*, and *Ms.*). . . . [Second], altering the format of words [which] entails changing meaning through hyphenation and using slashes. This allows for the dispelling of sexist deception within language, as well as for the creation of more inclusive terms (e.g., *s/he*). . . . [Third], reclaiming archaic meanings. By uncovering original intent, images of strength and power can replace those of ugliness and evil. . . . [Fourth], the expansion of the conceptual boundaries of words. (Van Den Bergh, 1987, p. 135)

"Gynocide" is a word created by Daly to name the intention behind

patriarchy. In response to linguistic agent deletion, Daly coins other new words using hyphens, such as "Male-factors" and "Male-functions," which she believes expose the agents of patriarchy and, by implication, the "original intent" that Van Den Bergh speaks of.

Daly sees the semantic derogation of older women as related to their unsuitability or unavailability for male sexual purposes. She often responds by using some combination of the third and fourth processes to valorize derogatory terms. Her treatment of the word "hag" is an example:

Webster's gives as the first and "archaic" meaning of *hag*: "a female demon: FURY, HARPY" It also formerly meant: "an evil or frightening spirit." (Lest this sound too negative, we should ask the relevant questions: "Evil" by whose definition? "Frightening" to whom?). . . *Hag* is also defined as an "ugly or evil-looking woman." But this, considering the source, may be considered a compliment. For the beauty of strong, creative women, is "ugly" by misogynistic standards of "beauty." (p. 14)

Daly expands the conceptual boundaries of words, not only by such analyses, but also by repeatedly using them in entirely new contexts. A spinster, for instance, is not an unlucky single woman, but rather a woman who participates in some "spinning" work of creativity. By using the word frequently in such contexts, Daly does change its conceptual boundaries for some people.

For Daly, myth is another form of language, which she criticizes in Gyn/ecology. Through her discussion of mythology, Daly dramatizes both women's material and psychological relationships to patriarchal society, as well as her theory about the modus operandi of patriarchy.

The most basic content of patriarchal myth is an image of transcendence

that Daly discussed and targeted as problematic in Beyond God the Father: a circular pattern of separation from and return to an immutable source, a father god. Circular movement goes nowhere; it represents stasis. Daly names this movement "procession." She adopts this sense of the term from Virginia Woolf's Three Guineas. Woolf associated ceremonialized processions with professions as contexts for male bonding.

Daly applies Woolf's intuition to Christian Trinitarian dogma (The Son proceeds from the Father; the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son together.) and comes up with a symbol that represents stasis, male bonding, and exclusion of women. Daly says,

This naming of "the three Divine Persons" is the paradigmatic model for the pseudogeneric term *person*, excluding all female mythic presence, denying female reality in the cosmos. . . .[It] is the product of christian culture, but it is expressive of *all* patriarchal patterning of society. . . .Human males are eternally putting on the masks and playing the roles of the Divine Persons. (p.38)

This basic mythological model, representing male bonding and pseudogeneric naming (exclusion manifesting as false inclusion), reveals a twofold problematic in women's relationship to patriarchal society, which is also reflected in other myths of patriarchy. First, women are excluded from participation on their own terms. This is imaged as killing and dismemberment or elimination of women. The mythological precedent Daly highlights in this regard is the creation account from the Enuma elish that recounts the killing and dismemberment of the marine goddess Tiamat by the Babylonian god Marduk.

Second, women participate in society on male terms. For Daly, this is the more pressing problem, and there are several aspects to the way she images it. It is often imaged as rape or boundary violation. The story of the impregnation of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost is one mythological precedent. The abduction and rape of Persephone by Hades is another, which also represents the devaluation of the mother-daughter relationship (Demeter-Persephone) and male bonding against women (Zeus-Hades).

Female participation in society on male terms may also be imaged as the assimilation or absorption of token women. This involves their fragmentation or dismemberment, which renders them digestible. The token woman is fragmented because she is at least partially male-identified. She is absorbed or digested by the patriarchy. Daly refers to this as male vampirism or cannibalism. The story of Zeus and Metis is a mythological reflection of it. Zeus swallowed Metis when she was pregnant with Athena thereby absorbing them both and usurping, or feeding off, female creative power. Fragmentation of women is imaged as "fixation" and "fetishism."

Daly's psychological analysis of women's situation is discernible in this imagery. It is substantially the same as it was in Beyond God the Father. The fragmented female represents the divided consciousness that Paulo Freire wrote about. The idea is that the male image of woman is a fragmental image because it only encompasses that part of her being which is functionally related to him. He does not see her as a subject. He instrumentalizes or objectifies her. In various

ways, women are seduced into internalizing these fragmental images of themselves.

Male psychology, in its aspect of intentionality, is dramatized in Daly's discussion of women's material circumstances, both historical and contemporary. This discussion is directly tied to her view of patriarchal myth. Daly sees the gruesome myths discussed above as being acted out in ritualized atrocities committed against women.

In a controversial section of Gyn/ecology, entitled "The Second Passage," Daly looks for patterns of similarity among such historically and geographically disparate phenomena as Indian suttee, Chinese footbinding, European witch hunts, African clitoridectomy and infibulation, American gynecology, psychotherapy, and Nazi medicine. These are all seen as ritualized reenactments of goddess murder. Daly describes these practices in graphic detail and attempts to delineate a sado-ritual pattern common to all of them. It is within this discussion that the idea of intention as a primary form of causation assumes its urgency. The concept of agency raises the issue of intention. Such graphic horrors simply cannot be attributed to abstractions. There must be an agent, which, for Daly, implies intention.

Daly no longer sees patriarchy as a historical accident perpetuated by a system, but rather as a system deliberately created and perpetuated by men:

The courage to be logical--the courage to name--would require that we admit to ourselves that males and males only are the originators, planners, controllers, and legitimators of patriarchy. Patriarchy is the homeland of

males; it is Father Land; and men are its agents. (Daly, p. 28)

Daly is obviously correct in her insistence that it is logically necessary to include the concept of agency in any explanation of human behavior. The empirical facts of the present day situation, however, include more powerful women (often older) discriminating against and inflicting cruelties upon less powerful women. Daly says that women acting in this way are "token torturers." They are instruments rather than agents (p.29). This is a distinction that is difficult to support logically. Daly attempts to do so from several angles.

Women in power do not constitute a critical mass. They are tokens. Their numbers are too small for them to do anything but assimilate to the male-defined system. A logical question then arises: would women behave differently if they had power equal to that of men? This leads Daly to draw upon discredited historical accounts that postulate the existence of an ancient matriarchy.

In the late nineteenth century, J.J. Bachofen popularized a theory of primitive matriarchy. It was picked up by Marxist theorists, especially Friedrich Engels, who idealized the primitive matriarchy as something like a lost paradise, a time of original egalitarianism (Ruether, 1992, p. 145). Matilda Joselyn Gage also built upon the theory of ancient matriarchy, portraying it as a time of high culture and linking it to the worship of a benevolent mother goddess.

The theory of original matriarchy lost credibility in the 1920s with the new wave of anthropology initiated by Franz Boas, but it was picked up again in the

early 1970s by Merlin Stone and Elizabeth Gould Davis. Daly, who refers repeatedly to the work of both Matilda Joselyn Gage and Elizabeth Gould Davis, accepts this idea of original matriarchy as a lost paradise and uses it to imply that history has shown us that when women have real power, rather than derivative or token power, they do not oppress others. This lends support to her distinction between male agents and female instruments of oppression.

Drawing upon these historical analyses also allows Daly to distinguish between ultimate causes (agents) and proximate causes (instruments) of oppression in the sense of temporal priority. In other words, she draws upon historical analyses to claim that men, as the initiators of the patriarchy, are the true agents of oppression, whereas women are only instruments of oppression.

Daly is most convincing in her distinction between male agents and female instruments of violence against women when she points out that the most hideous examples of ritualized violence against women, such as footbinding, and clitoridectomy and infibulation, are male-oriented. Men will not marry women who have not undergone these ordeals, and marriage is required in the male-dominated society for female survival. It is deceptive, then, to claim that women choose to do these things to themselves.

Through her discussion of various atrocities committed against women, Daly manages to draw analogies between patriarchal myth and academic work. Daly delineates a sado-masochistic ritual pattern, consisting of seven elements, which she sees as common to suttee, footbinding, witch hunts, clitoridectomy and

infibulation, gynecology, and psychotherapy. The seventh element is by far the most disturbing. It is the legitimation of ritualized violence by "objective" scholarship--despite appearances of disapproval. Academic work is seen as the product of a second-order religion legitimating patriarchal religion and its attendant violence against women, just as patriarchal religions legitimate patriarchal societies.

Daly is often criticized for comparing seemingly disparate phenomena and for generalizing from what some people contend were really small-scale occurrences. These criticisms of Daly do not, however, vitiate her insightful analysis of academic legitimation of violence against women.

"Scholarly" work legitimates violence against women by masking it. Sometimes this takes the form of ignoring the context that supports the violent practice, which makes it appear voluntary. Scholarly masking may also take the form of linguistic abstraction or deceptive word choice.

The writing done on Indian suttee, regardless of how widespread the practice is or was, provides graphic examples of this "scholarly objectivity." Such writing generally conveys the impression that widows choose to immolate themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres out of devotion. This is misleading, rather than objective, because context is ignored when suttee is discussed apart from its alternative--widowhood.

Daly provides graphic descriptions of the misery of a widow's life in India. They are thought to be worthy of contempt because according to religious

teachings, through their lack of virtue, either in this life or a past life, they are somehow responsible for the death of their husbands. Add to this the fact that girls are often married to much older men and a picture the "no-win" nature of the situation for women begins to emerge. Daly quotes Katherine Mayo (Mother India, 1927) to try and convey an impression of widowhood in India:

She has seen the fate of other widows. She is about to become a drudge, a slave, starved, tyrannized over, abused--and this is the sacred way out--"following the divine law." Committing a pious and meritorious act, in spite of all foreign made interdicts, she escapes a present hell and may hope for a happier birth in the next incarnation. (Daly, 127).

If this analysis seems anachronistic, Daly notes that, although suttee was legally banned in 1829, surveys indicate that a large percentage of the Indian population still approves of the oppression of widows.

These conditions alone should cast doubt in the mind of a scholar as to the voluntariness of suttee. But even leaving aside any consideration of the conditions discussed above, it is widely known that widows have often been forced onto their husband's funeral pyres. When this information is not reported, academic legitimization is even more obvious and culpable than when it fails to consider context. For example, Benjamin Walker describes the desperate escape attempt of a widow who was caught, bound, and thrown into the fire and then refers to the very same woman as "adopting the practice." With full knowledge that widows are often coerced into suttee, He continues to describe them as burning themselves. Daly provides ample evidence that he is not alone in such deliberate obtuseness.

In addition, when Katherine Mayo wrote about suttee in Mother India (1927), putting the practice into context and showing some sensitivity towards the female victims, her work provoked a storm of protest, not on behalf of the victims but rather on behalf of India. David and Vera Mace, writing in 1960, claimed that although Mayo did have her facts straight, her book was unfair to "India" and presented a distorted picture of "an aspect" of Indian life by taking it out of context. Daly responds: "one must ask how it is possible to do injustice to a social construct, for example, India, by exposing its atrocities" (p. 129). Certainly, Daly is correct in asserting that it makes more sense to speak of injustice to human beings, as Mayo did, than to social constructs. What is implied by referring to suttee, which is literally a life and death matter for widows, as "an aspect" of Indian life? Whose life is suttee "an aspect" of?

Academic legitimization of violence against women is also abundant in scholarly discussions of Chinese footbinding. The title of one book by Howard S. Levy, Chinese Footbinding: The History of a Curious Erotic Custom (1966), provides several examples of deceptive word choice. According to Daly, footbinding was a widespread practice that persisted for a thousand years in China. It was extremely painful for women since their feet were reduced to "three-inch stumps," which required breaking at least one of the bones in the foot. The use of the word "curious" reveals the author's detachment from women's suffering. "Erotic" is deceptive. It sounds innocuous. The word "custom" is often used by scholars to describe horrific practices. The problem is that it calls

up associations with harmless practices, such as handshaking and table manners.

Most disturbing is Daly's assessment of the reason behind such so-called "objectivity." She feels that male writers simply do not feel any empathy for women's suffering. They either cannot or will not identify with women even enough to achieve such a basic human sentiment. Instead, they are likely to identify with the male agents:

If one seeks a probable explanation for such muddying language, I suggest that it may be found in the fact that the authors identify on some level with the agents of the atrocities, while being incapable of identifying with the victims--a subjective condition which is masked by the pose of "objective scholarship." (Daly, p. 125)

As I mentioned in Chapter I, Daly came to experience her encounters with patriarchal institutions, with the political patriarchy, as deeply personal. Thus, they evoked her rage, just as her writing evokes rage in many of her readers. One cannot rage against systems and expect any response. Daly has gotten around to holding people responsible for patriarchy. Some expectation of response, some hopefulness, can still be seen in her work in that she hurls their own, rather than her own, values at them as weapons. For example, since academics cherish objectivity, this is the value she accuses them of betraying. When raging against theologians and clerics, Daly accuses them not of subjectivity, but of idolatry.

Daly's emphases on agency and intentionality, as well as her analysis of language as ideology, are important new critical contributions in Gyn/ecology. It is fitting that they appear in the same book, since language use is so easily linked

to the user's subjective reality. Finally, Daly's creation of new language and myths is important because it serves as one ideological basis for an alternative community of radical feminists.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In trying to understand, summarize, and evaluate Daly's writing I have found it helpful to try and understand both her intellectual and emotional process. This seems to be a reasonable strategy to me for understanding any author's work, since I believe that emotion acts both as a valuable stimulus and a confounding factor to thought. Daly's constructive position has remained constant throughout all her work. This is her vision of "the world as it ought to be." It seems to have been born of an enviable relationship with an extraordinary mother who simultaneously nurtured both a sense of well-being and a sense of subjectivity in her daughter.

Daly's vision of the world as it ought to be is essentially a vision of her own mother writ large. It is an existentialist position which holds that it is the right, duty even, of each person to "unfold," to develop all the potential that s/he possesses and, further, that the best social world that we as human beings can construct will accommodate, even nurture, that development in every human being. All man-made obstacles to human development must be removed. They are legitimate targets for criticism. It is Daly's understanding of the man-made obstacles to women's development in particular that constitutes her critical

position.

This critical position becomes progressively more radical between the time she writes The Church and the Second Sex and the time she writes Gyn/ecology. In fact, her understanding of the root cause or origin of obstacles to women's development moves from ancient biological necessity combined with misunderstanding to malicious intention on the part of men. In each book, however, she sees that these obstacles exist at the material level of reality, women's actual social circumstances; the ideological level of reality, the social map of reality to which both men and women refer, especially religious definitions; and at the psychological level of reality, women and men's subjective realities. The relationship between the three levels constitutes the systematic nature of an enduring obstacle to development that women face because they are women, which Daly understands as "sexual prejudice" in The Church and the Second Sex, idolatry in Beyond God the Father, (patriarchy as the basis of social organization which has managed to co-opt religion by making religion idolatrous) and as patriarchy actively maintained by malicious agents in Gyn/ecology.

In The Church and the Second Sex, Daly's position is that sexual prejudice consists mainly of exclusion of women at the social level of reality, which is both motivated and rationalized by definitions of generic female personality at the ideological level of reality. The content of these definitions is represented primarily by the images of Eve and Mary, which either define women as inferior to men, evil temptresses descended from Eve, or idealize passive virtue in women

(Mary). Herein lies the infamous good woman/bad woman dichotomy. Women may be seen as either good or powerful, but not both. Both the exclusion of women and the social definitions of femininity produce passivity and a conviction of their own inferiority in women. The definitions, then, act as self-fulfilling prophecies that produce "evidence" for their own truth-value (the natural inferiority of women) and thereby justify the exclusion of women.

In Beyond God the Father, a caste system that disadvantages women is maintained by a generalized tendency towards stasis in the Christian ideological system. Daly targets the most important symbols in Christianity, God the Father and Jesus the Christ, as important sources of this stasis. In her view, this stasis can be traced to the fact that both images are "idolatrous" in one way or another. That is, they represent the hypostasization of transcendence. They, therefore, impose limits on transcendence. God the Father is basically a projected image of a human patriarch, who represents limited benevolence. This is especially seen in that his image cannot be dissociated from his maleness. Accordingly, the personal worth and dignity conveyed by the phrase "the image of God" has been available only to men. Jesus is represented quite differently than God the Father. Certainly, Daly finds no problem with his personality. The problem is in the idea that the historical Jesus represents a unique and final revelation, a once-and-for-all model contained in the past. Here is another way of boxing in transcendence.

The most important new theme in Beyond God the Father is naming. Because the Christian symbol system is a male-constructed system ("named" by

men), women are represented only as objects in it. That is, they are represented only as they are functionally related to men. The problem at the psychological level is that women internalize the male view of themselves as objects. They thus have a divided consciousness, which results in psychological paralysis.

Since the material, ideological, and psychological levels are still seen as reinforcing each other, women can threaten the caste system at any level. But Daly especially sees them doing so through the women's movement, which, by its consciousness raising, can enable women to see their nothingness (presence only as objects) in the male-constructed map of reality, particularly the Christian symbol system. Through this horrific vision, women will somehow gain access to an "intuition of Being" that will enable them to affirm their own participation in Being. It will provide them with a sense of subjectivity despite the reflections they see coming from the ideological level. On the ground level, when women refuse to live out the definitions from the ideological level, the definitions will become implausible and die.

By the time she writes Gyn/ecology, Daly sees all ideological systems as permeated by sexual prejudice. Patriarchy is, in fact, the "religion" of the world. In other words, Daly find that she can extend her analysis of Christianity to any ideological system, even language itself. The major difference between Gyn/ecology and the earlier two books is in the degree to which Daly holds men responsible for patriarchy and the motives that she attributes to them. In Beyond God the Father, Daly noted that the bias towards conservatism in Christian

ideology seems to have originated in pre-Socratic philosophy and was probably not accidental since it functioned to preserve the status quo, which would obviously serve the interests of the elite male philosophers. But she seemed to feel that this bias survived almost automatically, without requiring active support from anyone.

In Gyn/ecology Daly sees active hostility and malicious intention practically everywhere. Her focus has switched from a concern about the exclusion of women to a concern about male bonding against women. She looks at the language use of contemporary scholars in an effort to establish their culpability in the maintenance of patriarchy. Her general theory about the motivation behind patriarchy is that men bond together against women because they see women as "the dreaded anomie." The open question is whether or not Daly sees this male view of women as anomie as the product of a social situation or whether she sees it as an inevitable concomitant of maleness itself. Does she see maleness itself as evil?

Daly anticipated that her scholarly colleagues would accuse her of being anti-male. Indeed, other feminist theologians do accuse her of essentializing masculinity as evil. In terms of the ideas that Daly explicitly propounds, before Gyn/ecology, this charge was most certainly false. In Gyn/ecology, it is more difficult to assess the veracity of the charge. But Daly's own response to the charge does not include the idea of male or female natures or essences. Daly responds with a counter-charge that insists upon the importance of historical and

empirical--not natural facts. She implores her readers to consider the context in which the charge is made. The historical evidence of violence and prejudice against women--for normative misogyny, in fact, is overwhelming. Daly asks:

What then can the label *anti-male* possibly mean when applied to works that expose these facts and invite women to free our Selves? The fact is that the labelers do not intend to convey a rational meaning, nor to elicit a thinking process, but rather to block thinking. (p. 28)

It seems to me that there is a lot of truth in this insight of Daly's.

However, there is another point that should be addressed in a consideration of reactions to Daly's writing. Daly herself asserts that "the medium is the message." She rightly calls liberal theologians to task for abstract analyses that fail to address misogynist content in Christian myth, as if such content has no effect on consciousness. Yet she does not hold herself to the same standards. In Beyond God the Father, Daly relies heavily upon castration imagery, which she justifies in the following manner. She says that feminists are rising up to castrate not people but the system that castrates. She also explains that since castrate can mean to deprive of power and vigor, female persons are the true victims of castration.

Such analysis just does not change the fact that the word "castrate" has a very specific association with violence against men. Just as maleness cannot easily be dissociated from the word "god," it is unlikely that violence can be easily dissociated from the word "castrate" at the imaginative level. In fact, with this and much of her other imagery as well what Daly constantly associates

associate social evils with male reproductive organs, which is equivalent to essentializing maleness itself as evil. I would contend that, despite Daly's more explicit analyses, the use of such imagery does make her work anti-male at some level.

This being said, it should be noted that since blatantly misogynist male scholarship has met with so little resistance, male scholars apparently do not hold colleagues accountable for misogyny. In this light, the fact that feminist scholars do scrutinize feminist writing for anti-male bias is itself revealing. They should not be expected to dismiss the entire corpus of an author's writings based on her anti-male bias. If such a standard were reversed, nearly all accumulated scholarship would have to be jettisoned.

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