



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Research Commons

<http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/>

Research Commons at the University of Waikato

Copyright Statement:

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

The thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of the thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from the thesis.

WOMEN AT STAKE:

IDEOLOGICAL CROSS-CURRENTS IN MISOGYNY AND PHILOGYNY

by

ROSEMARY SEYMOUR

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology at the University of Waikato,
March 1981.

University of Waikato

1981.

SUMMARY

This thesis investigates some relationships between a sociological population which manifests misogynous and philogynous behaviour, the sociological population towards which this behaviour is directed, and a third population which mediates relations between the first two. These populations are designated 'ecclesiasticals', 'women', and 'new philosophers', respectively. The focal period is the late Middle Ages, but extends backwards into remoter times.

The approach is interdisciplinary -- especially through New History (particularly Women's History); Philosophy (particularly developments in epistemology in this period); Literature (particularly aspects of metaphor and the genre of tragedy); and Sociology (particularly sociology of literature, sociology of women, and historical sociology).

The method draws mainly on Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism in sociology of literature and historical sociology. This interpretative method begins with an isolated empirical event (designated 'abstract'); and proceeds to make it 'concrete' by relating it to other events, and to smaller and greater dynamic social structures. The process is oscillatory between two aspects of research: 'comprehension' of a selected event in terms of a latent structure discernible in it; and 'understanding' the structure discerned in terms of its dynamic, homologous relationship to contextual structures, and to an over-arching structure.

Two empirical events were the points of departure: persecution of women as witches/heretics and survival of goddess-worship. The event with a structure relating to both was Malleus Maleficarum [c1486, by Henry Kramer and James Sprenger). This was comprehended as a defensive reaction in a dogmatic structure; and understood in relation to threats in new developments in philosophy (especially nominalism, dialectic, and the new content), in women's oral culture, and in over-arching structuration processes of transition from pre-modern to emergent modern.

There are six chapters.

CHAPTER ONE, INTRODUCTION outlines the substance and methods.

CHAPTER TWO, CONCEPTUAL PROLOGUE explicates the conceptual tools.

CHAPTER THREE, COMPREHENSION presents a close reading of certain passages of Malleus Maleficarum, which reveals the latent structure. The main points in this are: women's critical multiplicity, barrenness of theology, and fear of nature.

CHAPTER FOUR, UNDERSTANDING -- (A) VIRTUALITY relates this structure to the theologians' 'virtuality' of women and associated developments in philosophy.

CHAPTER FIVE, UNDERSTANDING -- (B) POTENTIAL CONSCIOUSNESS looks at women in terms of facilitators and interceptors of their 'potential consciousness'.

CHAPTER SIX, CONCLUSION summarises the links that have been discerned among the three populations, and suggests their relationships to the over-arching context.

The contribution made by this thesis is the construction of a theoretical framework for imaginative retrieval in an undocumented area, and the testing of its components. These components are: Goldmann's basic hypothesis that all human behaviour tends towards consistent rational responses; the general hypothesis that women were agonist in history not passive; and the particular hypothesis that at least some aspects of the phenomenon of persecution of women as witches did not have a dispositional or hysterical base, but a rational one related to changes in content and methods of thought within the wider context of change from pre-modern to emergent modern.

It is concluded that use of this framework has illuminated empirical events and relationships; and that it may be used for further research in this and other obscure areas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgements are extended to my supervisors: Professor D.G. Bettison, Department of Sociology, University of Waikato, and Dr Gerda Bell, formerly of the Department of German, Victoria University of Wellington.

I wish to acknowledge assistance given in bibliographical preparation by Marilyn Workman; and to thank members of the University of Waikato Library.

I wish to thank Margaret Comer and Rosalie Worthy for assistance with typing and xeroxing in the early stages of this work; and to express my gratitude to both of them and to Merle Bean for their general invaluable support.

I wish to make acknowledgement of the helpful criticism given by Dr Peter Oettli, Department of German, University of Waikato.

CONTENTS

	page
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Contents	v
Preface	x
 CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION	 1
Introductory	
1.1 Methods, Contexts, Problems, Solutions	1
1.2. Correlates of the Dialectical Attitude	5
Concluding Comments	
 CHAPTER TWO. CONCEPTUAL PROLOGUE	 13
Introductory	
2.1 The Basic Hypothesis of Genetic Structuralism	14
Concluding Comments	
2.2 Collective (Transindividual) Subject	18
a. The Individual and the Group	
b. World Vision and the Creative Individual	
Concluding Comments	
2.3 Conceptualisation of Women as a Class/Group	26
a. Class	
b. The Mathematical Notion of 'Group'	
c. Critical-Multiplicity	
d. Potential Consciousness	
(1) Overlapping Senses	
(2) Lukács	
(3) Goldmann	
(4) Application	
e. Virtuality	
Concluding Comments	

CHAPTER THREE. COMPREHENSION	41
Introductory	
3.1 Factual Details	42
a. Editions	
b. The Authors	
c. Immediate Occasion	
3.2 Sample of Critical Attitudes	44
3.3 Justification for Selection	48
a. Factual Plane	
b. Interpretative Plane	
3.4 Comprehension: Close Reading of Significatory Passages	51
a. Philogynous Passages	
b. Misogynous Citations	
c. Kramer and Sprenger's Analysis	
(1) Mind -- Intellect	
(2) Mind -- Will (Instinct)	
(3) Body	
(i) Barrenness	
(ii) Concupiscence	
Concluding Comments	
CHAPTER FOUR. UNDERSTANDING -- (A) VIRTUALITY	62
Introductory	
4.1 Topoi	
a. Land/Nation	
b. New (Christian) Jerusalem	
c. Church	
d. Philosophia	

4.2 Learning 67

a. Background: Two Cultures

- (1) Clerical and Latin
- (2) Secular and Vernacular
- (3) Re-Awakening and Intolerance

b. The Matrix of Philosophy

- (1) The Nominalism-Realism Debate
- (2) The Dialectical Method
- (3) New Content of Thought: Classical and Islamic Writings
- (4) Ethics

Concluding Comments

CHAPTER FIVE. UNDERSTANDING -- (B) POTENTIAL CONSCIOUSNESS 89

Introductory

5.1 Paganism 89

a. The Great Goddess

- (1) Material Evidence
- (2) Legends and History

b. Survival

- (1) Overview: Ancient Middle East
- (7) Ashtoreth and Yahweh

5.2 Paganism under Christianity 96

a. Overview:

b. Marian Cultus

5.3 Routes for Diffusion 102

a. Traders, Scholars, Immigrants

b. 'Brownian Movement' in Europe

c. Women and Diffusion

5.4 Christianity	108
a. Early Church	
b. Middle Ages	
(1) The 'Frauenbewegung'	
(2) 'de non recipiendis sororibus'	
(3) Non-Incorporated Groups	
(i) Poor Clares	
(ii) Beguines	
(iii) Sisters of the Common Life	
(4) Repelling Aspects of Christianity	
(i) Anti-Sexuality	
(ii) Corruption	
(5) Heresies	
(i) Background	
(ii) Women and Heresies	
5.5 Work and Status	125
a. Caveats	
b. Work	
c. Status	
Concluding Comments	
CHAPTER SIX. CONCLUSION	131
6.1 The Questions	
a. Clustered Manifestations	
b. Major Groups	
c. Over-Arching Background	
d. Access	
e. Conceptual Frame-Work and Tools	
(1) Genetic Structuralism	
(2) Women's Studies	

page

6.2 Contribution and Further Research	136
a. Contribution	
b. Further Research	
Chronological Table	138
Notes	139
References	151

PREFACE

This thesis investigates misogynous and philogynous behaviour associated with social change and with relationships between certain social sectors in the late Middle Ages. I have preferred the terms 'misogyny'/'misogynous' and 'philogyny'/'philogynous' to the terms 'feminist' and 'anti-feminist', because the latter pair now have more emotive and more immediately controversial political connotations, which are not of direct relevance to this study, than do the former.

Initially my definitions of these terms were:

'Misogyny': policies and practices that exclude, wholly or partially, women on the grounds of their sex alone. Its concomitant is rationalisation of such exclusion. Such policies, practices, and rationalisations have the potential of denigration and exploitation of, harm to, or destruction of women. 'Philogyny': policies and practices that do not exclude participation of women on grounds of their sex, or that positively promote participation of women; or that are concerned with refuting rationalisations generated and utilised to exclude or damage women; or that generate and sustain solidarity among women.

But these are merely general delineations. Although as such they remained as guiding principles, I saw the task of this piece of research as making them concrete and operative by setting them in historical context. For this purpose, I isolated two sets of empirical facts in the late Middle Ages -- persecution of witches/heretics and survival of goddess-religion --, and two associated sociological populations, which I have designated 'women' and 'ecclesiastics'. I later recognised a third set of empirical facts as mediatingly significant, namely developments in philosophy. I viewed these three sets as partial totalities related to one another within an over-arching totality. The latter comprised processes of decay of the pre-modern and emergence of the modern.

Women had a range of contacts, direct and indirect, with the various attitudes -- between the poles of misogyny and philogyny -- of churchmen. The latter did not in general know women in everyday life; but mainly in the peculiar, distorting circumstances of confession according to Catholic practice or Inquisitional torture -- both of which emphasised sexual and fideological transgression; and through their written, library-secluded heritage of stereotypic images of and prescriptions for Woman/women.

It is assumed that women acted in 'rational response' , from their base of knowledge and everyday activities, to their direct and indirect experiences with ecclesiastics and other groups -- that they were not passengers of history but agents, not passive victims but vigorously interacting human beings. The main questions in regard to them concern what they could have known and what they could not have known; their range of activities; the ways in which they were treated and the ways in which they reacted; what alternatives in belief and life-style there were for them; and the relevance to them of developments in philosophy, politics, and economic conditions.

It is likewise assumed that the ecclesiastics' behaviour was rational, not dispositional or hysterical. The main questions in regard to them concern: sources of their virtuality of Woman/women; sources of their fears; and the relationship between this virtuality, their fears, and women's historical behaviour in this period.

Method

The sources used are latent rather than manifest. Women were (like most men) illiterate, and (like most men) have, until recently, been ignored by historians. An additional difficulty is presented by the type of written statements that survive about women: pejorative, prescriptive, or idealising -- written by men, and rarely neutral. Relationships of such statements to everyday women cannot be proved. In the case of the ecclesiastics, although there is a plentiful store of written records these are narrow in content and in some aspects defective.

The problem of latent sources entails the use of indirect methods in imaginative retrieval. The guiding principle for this was that of Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism, a dialectical approach which emphasises historical processes, oppositional relationships, and oscillatory research procedure.

Although the sociological population of ecclesiastics is a well-documented and readily identifiable group, whether confined to the immediate contemporaries of Kramer and Sprenger or extended to one or more of the previous Catholic centuries, the case with the sociological population of women is different -- too many of them, too diffuse, too various, and endowed with too many contradictory characteristics. Thus a basic challenge in women's studies is how to conceptualise them. I have attempted to deal with this problem by means of the concepts of 'class', the mathematical notion of 'group', 'critical multiplicity' and 'potential consciousness'.

In the case of the ecclesiastics, I was able to hasten the early processes of découp-

age by discovering a work of cultural creation in which one process of *découpage* had already been performed, in that various facts had been gathered into a structural unity. The work selected was Malleus Maleficarum. c1486, by two Dominican Inquisitors Henry Kramer and James Sprenger. These men were regarded as a collective subject which contained contemporary and earlier groups of theologians. The structure, discerned as a defensive response, from the base of their long-established world-view -- static, hierarchical, and teleological --, was treated as a partial totality to mediate the uncentred whole. It was studied through the oscillating processes of comprehension (internal) and explanation (external) . Their presentation of women as weak in faith, rebellious in personal relationships, and destructive to men in their physical allurements was interpreted in terms of the rise of rival systems of belief, of the breakdown of feudal stratification, and the development of empiricism and individuation. Their frequent references to human and animal barrenness were interpreted in terms of an era that was drying up in its sources.

In this way my study illuminates the place in the great, centuries-long, glacier-slow transition from mediaeval to modern of the structuration processes represented by the first unifying, then defensive, behaviour of ecclesiastics and the critical-multiplicity behaviour of oppositional women and new philosophers.

I have thus fulfilled the requirement of Goldmann's interpretative method of genetic structuralism:

.. the object must be framed so that it can be studied as the deconstruction of a traditional structure and the rise of a new one.

The object is the complex of ideological cross-currents in misogyny and philogyny, and the jeopardy of women therein.

Outline of Chapters

There are six chapters, each of which is divided into several sub-sections. Each chapter begins with an introductory outline of its content, and has a commentary-summary as its conclusion -- or as the conclusion to each of its sub-sections.

CHAPTER ONE, INTRODUCTION describes the approach and the methods. It has three sub-sections. The first relates the method selected to methodological contexts. The discipline of History is selected for exemplification of innovatory developments in content, sources, and inter-relations with other disciplines. The distinction is noted between articulate, elite, and written manifest sources, on the one hand, and the illiterate masses and latent sources, on the other. Mention is made of difficulties in method,

conceptualisation, and criteria, as well as in regard to sources. Justification is made of the selection of the dialectical, interpretative method of genetic structuralism as the guiding principle, and of certain concepts to meet problems specific to women's studies. The second emphasises the 'rigorously holistic' nature of genetic structuralism; and presents three correlates of this. These are: compartmentalisation of knowledge having been artificially created for certain purposes may be broken down as appropriate for other purposes; the total time and place context may be retained as a feeling and as a framework; and there can be no one absolutely valid starting point. The third describes the oscillatory processes of the *découpage* for this thesis: these processes include the selection of Malleus Maleficarum as a ready-made signifiatory structure, use of which expedited the *découpage* in respect to the ecclesiastical population; the selection of the conceptual tools of 'class', 'group', 'potential consciousness' and 'critical-multiplicity' in respect to the women population; the recognition of relationships between these two populations and a third one -- that of new philosophers; and the recognition of relationships of these to the over-arching context of the transitional period of pre-modern and emergent modern.

CHAPTER TWO, CONCEPTUAL PROLOGUE provides an overview of the basic hypothesis of genetic structuralism and of major conceptual tools used. This is an attempt to overcome the problem of fluidity of terms in innovatory fields such as new history, sociology of literature, and sociology of women; and the problem of ambiguity that characterises interdisciplinary approaches. Presentation of the main concepts in this way avoids clogging up the exposition with definitions; and it provides convenient reference pages for the reader. The concepts are: 'rational' and 'structure' (basic to both of the main populations); 'collective subject', 'world-view', and 'virtuality' (of particular relevance to the ecclesiastics); and 'women-class', 'group', 'critical-multiplicity', and 'potential consciousness' (of particular relevance to women).

Goldmann's twin methodological concepts of 'comprehension' and 'understanding' are applied in the third, fourth, and fifth chapters.

CHAPTER THREE, COMPREHENSION justifies the selection of Malleus Maleficarum to expedite the *découpage* processes; and presents a close reading (comprehension of the latent structure) in relevant passages which refer to women's 'weakness' in Intellect (spiritual understanding), Will (instinct), and Body (concupiscence), and which display reiterated imagery of barrenness.

Chapters four and five are oriented to understanding -- relating the partial structure that is comprehended in the previous chapter to contextual partial structures: women's

culture and accelerating developments in philosophy.

CHAPTER FOUR, UNDERSTANDING -- (A) VIRTUALITY explores the seeming of Woman/women to theologians through topoi associated with Land/Nation, the New (Christian) Jerusalem, the Church, and Philosophy. It also traces relevant developments in philosophy, -- in new content, method, and the realism-nominalism debate; and relates these to the oral culture.

CHAPTER FIVE, UNDERSTANDING -- (B) POTENTIAL CONSCIOUSNESS looks at the oral tradition, women's attitudes to Christianity and the Catholic Church, theologians' attitudes to women, and the range of women's statuses and activities. The term 'potential consciousness' is used to denote what women might have known and thought, and what they were unlikely to have known.

CHAPTER SIX, CONCLUSION explicates in summary the problem addressed, and how the study has selected conceptual tools to explore and present the content as a scheme of relations between partial structures and the over-arching structure of transition from pre-modern to emergent modern. This scheme is not presented as definitive; but as a provisional conceptual framework for further research. (This is in accordance with the dialectical principle of genetic structuralist research.)

Bibliography and Notes

The Bibliography includes only works whose authors are named within the text.

The notes are not exhaustive. The manner in which they have been set out is a compromise between facilitating amplification and direction to sources, on the one hand, and avoiding cluttering up the text, on the other. For this reason, numbering has been adopted within the text, but more direct information is usually supplied at the bottom of quotations, a position in which it does not interfere with the flow of reading.

Note : a brief chronological table is provided (page 138)

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

Introductory

This chapter describes the approach and methods of the thesis. There are three subsections. The first discusses changes of perspectives and methods in scholarship (exemplified by History), and associated problems (especially in Women's History); and indicates the approach of this study through genetic structuralism as a guiding principle, and the four concepts of 'class', 'group' (in Galois' mathematical sense), 'critical multiplicity', and 'potential consciousness'. The second presents three correlates of genetic structuralism: de-compartmentalisation of knowledge; total time and place context; and the problem of a starting point. The third describes the processes of *découpage* for this study: the selection of Malleus Maleficarum as a cultural work containing a ready-made signficatory structure to assist these processes; the selection of the concepts of 'potential consciousness' and 'critical multiplicity' to assist in imaginative retrieval of women's culture; and indicates the further processes of searching for and identifying other relationships.

1.1 METHODS: CONTEXTS, PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS

Intellectual activities in the written tradition were, until the last few centuries, restricted to small minorities with interests limited to ancient texts and ownership of land. History and literature treated only what was political, military, diplomatic, administrative and ecclesiastical. Theologians and philosophers wrote almost entirely in and for the libraries of monasteries, cathedrals, and, later, of universities, and for judicial institutions. Their work was largely in the form of comments, commentaries, and attempts at synthesis; and it tended to be in-bred and self-perpetuating.

Despite the limitations of these written sources that emanated from an elite, historians remained almost exclusively interested in these formal and easily accessible documents, and at the explicit level only. There were exceptions, however, and new developments from about the sixteenth century onwards. It came to be realised that the elite did not represent the whole of society; that there is an essential relation among all the elements of society -- classes influence one another, economic and ideological

matters are in dialectical interrelation; and that sources must be sought beyond² the formal, and meanings searched for on the latent as well as on the manifest plane.

By the end of the nineteenth century a new history was emergent. Various influences have been suggested for these changes of perspective: exhaustion of conventional archives at the manifest level; widening of interests through travel and through developments in anthropology; emphasis on nurture over nature by Social Darwinists and Freudian psychologists, and on class-determinants by Marxists; the cynicism generated by World War I toward elites; and the concern with processes and problems of historic transformation created by the struggles of colonial countries for independence. In the United States, where religious and economic factors had so obviously had powerful influences and where the social sciences were vigorously developing, scholars were particularly critical of the narrowness of traditional History.

There are now several innovatory sectors of History which, although over-lapping, may be differentiated as local history, intellectual history, social history, prosopography, and women's history.

This study owes something to traditional History. The theological, philosophical and inquisitional material is derived (through secondary sources) from conventional records of elites. However, treatment is within, and across the branches of the innovatory movement. Aspects of the transformation of society are not read directly in, but discerned -- through metaphor and through application of selected concepts from genetic structuralism -- in the elite document Malleus Maleficarum; and attempts are made to reconstitute from latent meanings the minds of an elite and the minds of some of those with whom they were interacting. The approach is interdisciplinary: intellectual history, women's history, philosophy, sociology of women, and sociology of literature merge in investigating social origins of the key text, social impact of oral tradition, internal lineage relationships in theology and philosophy, and attitudes to and of women, -- and in relating these to their specific historical background of strain between heritage and innovation.

New developments in any discipline inevitably discover new problems: not enough material, or an unorganised plethora; lack of definition of terms; lack of conceptual frameworks; and lack of criteria. These basic problems generate further problems; tendencies to retreat into small and isolated groups, areas, or periods; tendencies to split into extreme allegiance to either the quantitative (with its inherent weakness of restriction to what can be handled by modern technology) or the impressionistic and intuitive (with its inherent weakness of inadequate control and associated vagueness and superficiality). Women's history and sociology of women share with the other new

branches all the problems associated with sources, bias, and conceptualisation; but it has intensities and extensions of these peculiar to itself. For example, there is a lack of neutral material: men tend to idealise or vilify women, and to prescribe rather than describe. There is very little in the sources actually written by women themselves -- this leads to a tendency to conclude that absence from the records means passivity in history. There are special difficulties in conceptualising women as a population, a culture, or a group. And conventional periodisation and concepts of progress and regression are unsatisfactory.

These particular and general problems were determinants in the shaping of this study. Inadequate sources for a non-literate and neglected population forced the decision to attempt imaginative retrieval by indirect means. This had the advantage of going beyond the limitations of modern technology; at the same time it had the disadvantage of being inadequately controlled, and the weakness of accepting areas of superficiality along with in-depth treatment. If we use 'concrete' in the conventional sense of 'observed and documented' there are concrete examples in the study; but there is no conventional case-study made of these. Instead they were approached as 'abstract' (in Goldmann's sense of 'unrelated to a partial totality') and made 'concrete' (by being related to partial totalities). This procedure involves hypotheses without statistical or empirical weight, for they are not supported by either detailed local studies of the relevant time and place or by serious archival research.

For these reasons, the basic premise, some major concepts, and the oscillatory procedure by comprehension and explanation of Goldmann's dialectical, interpretative method of genetic structuralism became the guiding principle of this piece of research. A specific text, Malleus Maleficarum was selected to expedite processes of *découpage*. Its authors were treated as a collective subject, and their world-view as a partial structure in interaction with other partial structures (particularly that of women and of new philosophers), within a total structure. All of these structures are regarded as dynamic, in varying degrees -- from the relative static Mediaeval Model to the jostling interanimation of new philosophy.

Both the tendency to solve problems by restricting the scope of research to limited aspects and the problem of precision in procedure and in criteria for models are avoided by the procedure of comprehension and understanding. Although the comprehension locus allows any degree of detailed analysis of a restricted field and restricted aspects, the understanding locus requires that this not be the limits of any particular piece of research. This must be sensitive to the whole field of partial totalities and of their relationships to an over-arching totality -- even though it does not (nor,

to
of course, is it possible)/explore all these thoroughly. A piece of genetic structuralist research is essentially as partial as the loci that are selected: that is to say that it is but a part of all research. However, it always reaches asymptotically toward totality. It draws most eclectically from past research and becomes part of a research-base for future investigation -- whether quantitative or intuitive, whether team-work or individual.

The problem of rigorous usage of key concepts which are necessarily eccentric and/or shifting in any new field was solved by the device of providing a detailed analysis of these in a special section of the thesis, CHAPTER TWO, CONCEPTUAL PROLOGUE.

Particular problems of women's history were dealt with by selecting from three controversial streams and by use of the four key-concepts of 'group' (in Galois' mathematical sense), 'women-class', 'critical-multiplicity', and 'potential consciousness'. The three controversial streams are active/passive, progress/regression, and either women can be conceptualised as a sociological population or they are too many and too diffuse for any such categorisation.

First, the feminist view of women as passive victims in history was rejected in favour of Mary Beard's presentation of women as continuously and importantly agonistic. This coincides with the basic premise of genetic structuralism that all human behaviour is 'rational response' and rests on the assumption that men and women are in mutual agonistic relationships. Second, the feminist view of women's history as linear and progressive within the liberal movement was rejected: women are viewed as having had more choice in life-styles and beliefs and being less exposed to negative myths and stereotypes than we are today under incessant media and electronic barrage. It may have been possible for women not to encounter the negative or prescriptive dimensions at all; whereas it is probably impossible to avoid them today. Moreover, the oral tradition contained a store of positive images drawn from fact and fiction -- a store which print has screened out for virtually all of us today. Third, the feminist attempts to conceptualise women as a sociological group is partly rejected in recognition of Gertrude Lerner's conclusion that this is impossible: women are too many -- the majority of the species; and too diffuse -- occurring in nearly all areas and strata of society. Moreover, for every defining characteristic adduced to categorise them there seems to be a countering one: for example, women are a majority, yet they can have the status of an oppressed minority. So far the conceptual frameworks of women's studies have achieved a series of new questions for universal history, but nothing (says Lerner) specific to history of women as a sociological group.

At the same time, women are conceptualised, in an actuarial way, as a sociological para-group in this study -- as potentially opposition and as 'women-class'. I use the term 'para-group' to indicate that this sociological population is not directly empirical, and yet not entirely speculative. Four concepts are used to convey this sociological status. 'Class' is used, both objectively and subjectively, in a non-economic sense. Women are recognisably aggregated on the objective level in a subordinate, alienated relationship to the controllers of religion. On a subjective level they are regarded as bonding together under conditions of precipitating consciousness, such as their repulse during the period of de non recipiendis sororibus. This bonding is conditioned by 'potential consciousness'. The latter term is used in several overlapping senses: anthropological whole; pool of potential knowledge and its associated interceptors and facilitators. This pool contained alternative religions and knowledge of women in the past and present. Interceptors included exclusion of women from formal learning and from formal position in the Catholic Church. Facilitators included circumstances that generated sisterhood (women-class in the subjective sense) -- these were experienced repulsion by the Mendicant Orders, experiences in alternative religious practices, and experience of urbanisation problems and opportunities. 'Critical-multiplicity' emphasises the oppositional character of women in relation to the defenders of the unitary, authoritarian status quo. The mathematical notion of 'group' is invoked to emphasise the paradoxical co-existence of permanence and transformation in a collective subject that must be thought of (as, too, must the ecclesiastics) as projecting backwards and forwards in time.

This treatment allowed speculation in terms of what was in the oral tradition; of women's activities and status; and of the rational response of the theologians, associated with endogenous and exogenous threats of destructuration and new rival structuration. In this way a conceptual framework was constructed for surmising about the partial totality of relations between women and ecclesiastics in relationship with other partial relationships, within the over-arching totality of the transitional era.

1.2 CORRELATES OF THE DIALECTICAL ATTITUDE

Genetic structuralism is a 'rigorously holistic position' which offers both a goal and the certainty that this goal can never be attained. We never can know the whole. We never can have a full and particular knowledge of each part. We can, however, increase our knowledge by incessant oscillation between processes toward comprehending a part (a particular historical event) and processes toward understanding the whole (the part in relationships within its context).

.. thought never moves forward in a straight line, since each individual fact or idea assumes its significance only when it takes up its place in the whole, in the same way as the whole can be understood only by our increased knowledge of the partial and incomplete facts which constitute it. [Lucien Goldmann. The Hidden God, page 5.]

One correlate of this dialectical attitude is that compartmentalisation of knowledge, as, for example, making separate disciplines of history and sociology, must be regarded as artificial: useful for insulating particular difficulties for particular investigation, not absolute.

.. no sociology can be realistic unless it is historical; no historical research can be scientific and realistic unless it is sociological .. there are no distinctively social facts, and other human facts which are historical .. thus the need to study human facts both in their essential structure and in their concrete reality requires a method which is simultaneously both sociological and historical. [Lucien Goldmann. In eds. Elizabeth and Tom Burns page 109.]

Thus this study takes a multi-disciplinary approach -- particularly through sociology, history, literature, and philosophy. Sociological perspectives directed attention to social relations such as those associated with cohesion and schemata of reality. Sensitisation through literary criticism discovered metaphorical meanings below the literal -- for example, references to barrenness in Malleus Maleficarum are interpreted as referring to the bleak theological and economic context; and, deeper than that, to the whole process of deconstruction that accompanied the structuration of the modern outlook. Traditional history was concerned with bishops, princes, and generals, and their political, military and ecclesiastical affairs; but of particular relevance to this study are the innovative branches of history (particularly intellectual history, prosopography, and women's history) that have emerged in order to study neglected areas and search out what is implicit below the explicit. Through philosophy, particular elements have been identified that may be interpreted as relevant to attitudes to Woman/women -- the dialectic method, the new content, and the supersession of realists by nominalists.

A second correlate is that the total time and place context are retained, as a feeling and as an intellectual (if extremely tenuous) framework. Some manifestations of misogyny and philogyny are explicitly related to a sophisticated theological tradition that developed, in abstraction in its dogma and in practice in its structure, over centuries in many regions. This tradition was developed by historical individuals in libraries and in historical circumstances as responses to earlier writings and to historical circumstances. The responses themselves are part of the written heritage. But the historical circumstances that generated them are largely lost in the oral tradition. Genetic structuralism offers a method to supplement or replace such direct documentation

and literary references as there may be. If, as Goldmann claimed, there is a homology between the group world-view and the deep, and non-explicitly presented structure of a creative work, any discernment of that deep structure will increase our knowledge of --or at least speculation about -- the group, its strata of contextual society and their inter-relationships. The discernment involves some acquaintance with the total contextual field -- enough to be able to structure its reaches of time and space and to sense its abiding and universal presence. This includes the ancient and pervasive illiterate culture to which adherents of written culture respond.

This illiterate culture reaches back as far as there are any records of human beings. In this remoteness of time there was a pervasive visibility of the female -- according to the evidence (largely inscrutable) of figurines -- which may have been ancestral to the Great Goddess and her great range of aspects as daughter goddesses, whose worship manifestly flourished or latently survived for thousands of years in the British Isles, what we now know as Europe, and the Middle East. The existence, diffusion, and survival of this religion is presented in Chapter Five. This rival belief-system is part of what the churchmen reacted against, both in the period of Kramer and Sprenger and earlier. It was a present threat and a heritage dating from biblical times at least. Moreover, goddess-religion is very relevant to the actual and potential consciousness of women, giving them confidence, providing insulation from Catholicism and its misogyny, and (with heresies) providing a base for critical assessment.

A third correlate is that there can be no one absolutely valid starting point. This gives a special significance to the process of *découpage* ('carving up' to select a partial whole from the totality). The first step in this is the rejection of an approach through general descriptive terms. Goldmann said that if a student told him that he wanted to do a project on a general delineation (such as 'hierarchy', 'dictatorship', 'bureaucracy', or 'capitalism'), he would reply that they are not meaningful structures, and they therefore 'lack operative value'. They must be discarded. The scholar is directed instead to what Goldmann regarded as the only possible starting point for study: 'isolated abstract empirical facts'. By 'abstract' he meant 'not made concrete by its integration into a whole'. The next step is to seek the meaning of the incomplete and abstract phenomena by integrating them into a whole; i.e. by gathering isolated phenomena into a structural unity. Appropriate, operative treatment requires that they be comprehended as partial structures made meaningful by being related to larger structures, which are contextual to them. The description of the latter helps to illuminate the former; and vice versa. These partial structures, neither static in themselves nor in relationship to the englobing structure, which itself

is not static, are participants in wider processes of structuration and deconstruction. It is in relationship to these processes that partial structures (i.e. structurations) must be understood: '.. framed so that it can be studied as the deconstruction of a traditional structure and the rise of a new one ..' [Lucien Goldmann. Cultural Creation, page 38.]

The progress in this is not linear but oscillatory: more than one process must go on at the same time. One has to possess a 'more or less elaborate hypothesis' about the structure that gives the phenomena unity and thus makes it possible to define them; but, at the same time, one has to study structures in terms of one's definitions of 'the set of immediate empirical data that make it up.

This logical impasse is solved in practice by 'a series of successive approximations'.

One sets out with the hypothesis that one may gather a number of facts into a structural unity, one tries to establish between these facts the maximum number of comprehensive and explanatory relations by trying also to include in them other facts that seem alien to the structure that one is uncovering; in this way, one ends up by eliminating some of the facts with which one set out, adding others, and modifying the initial hypothesis; one repeats this operation by successive approximations until one arrives (this, at least, is the ideal ..) at a structural hypothesis that can account for a perfectly coherent set of facts. [Lucien Goldmann. Towards a Sociology of the Novel, page 161.]

This process of oscillating among facts while gathering them through series of successive approximations into a provisional structural unity, which incorporates relations with facts that are still loose in the field, and further oscillating from the emergent unity to relationships that it may be discovered to have with contextual partial structures, -- this process may be expedited by focussing further oscillatory processes through a significatory structure which has already been achieved in some great literary or philosophical work.

Having conceived of a set of facts in a unitary manner, with the assistance of a cultural work, the next phases consist of being both comprehensive and explanatory by means of oscillating between the text and a larger structure -- and extending the oscillatory process to other englobing structures. These processes are 'one and the same process related to different co-ordinates'. Goldmann has differentiated them analytically as 'comprehension' and 'understanding'. Comprehension is oriented internally, to the text.

Comprehension .. is the bringing to light of a significant structure immanent in the [literary work] studied. It seems to be a strictly intellectual process, consisting of the description as precisely as possible of a significatory structure.

[Lucien Goldmann. 'The Sociology of literature: status and problems of method', 1967.]

Its orientation is internal as it demonstrates 'a structure which explains most of any event and .. almost the whole of a literary text. [Lucien Goldmann. 'Criticism and dogmatism in literature'.]

Explanation, on the other hand, demonstrates an homologous or a functional relation between the meaning immanent in the significant structure (the literary work or object) and the behaviour of a collective subject or a reality external to the work.

Explanation is nothing other than the incorporation of this structure as a constituent element in an immediately embracing structure, which the research worker does not explore in any detailed manner but only in so far as such exploration is necessary in order to render intelligible the genesis of the work which he is studying. All that is necessary is to take the surrounding structure as an object of study and then what was explanation becomes comprehension and the explanatory research must be related to a new and even vaster structure. [Lucien Goldmann, 'The Sociology of literature: status and problems', page 500.]

Goldmann gives as example of this 'one and the same process with two different coordinates' his own interpretations of Pascal's *Pensées* and certain of the tragedies of Racine.

The progress of a piece of genetic-structuralist research consists in the fact of delimiting groups of empirical data that constitute structures, relative totalities, in which they can later be inserted as elements in other larger, but similar structures, and so on.

This method has, among others, the double advantage first of conceiving of the whole set of human facts in a unitary manner and then, of being both comprehensive and explanatory for the elucidation of a signifiatory structure constitutes a process of comprehension, whereas its insertion into a larger structure is, in relation to it, a process of explanation. Let us take an example: to elucidate the tragic structure of Pascal's *Pensées* and Racine's tragedies is a process of comprehension; to insert them into extremist Jansenism by uncovering the structure of this school of thought is a process of comprehension in relation to the latter, but a process of explanation in relation to the writings of Pascal and Racine; to insert extremist Jansenism into the over-all history of Jansenism is to explain the first and to understand the second. To insert Jansenism, as a movement of ideological expression, into the history of the seventeenth-century 'noblesse de robe' is to explain Jansenism and to understand the 'noblesse de robe'. To insert the history of the 'noblesse de robe' into the over-all history of French society is to explain it by understanding the latter, and so on. Explanation and understanding are not thereby two different intellectual processes, but one and the same process applied to two frames of reference. [Lucien Goldmann, Towards a Sociology of the Novel, pages 162-163]

1.3 THE DECOUPAGE

My first step in the processes of *découpage* for this study was to discard misogyny and philogyny as general delineations which gave the false impression that they were historically a single phenomenon, whereas they are, historically, manifested variously. The second step was to select 'isolated abstract empirical facts' -- i.e. isolated historical manifestations of misogyny and philogyny: initially, the selection focussed on the persecution of witches and goddess-worship in the late Middle Ages. The third step was to give these meaning by both comprehending their structure and, by integrating

them into partial wholes, understanding them. These partial wholes were Christian theology and the culture and behaviour of women. The fourth step was to relate these partial wholes to one another, to other partial wholes, and to a totality. I related them to one another in terms of a defensive, unitary response and a critical-multiplicity response. I related them, as other partial wholes, to two contextual clusters: on the one hand, developments in science, philosophy, theology and epistemology -- new content, the dialectic method, and the supercession of realists by nominalists; and, on the other hand, sects, heresies, and other alternative religions to Catholicism. Finally, I related them to a totality that was the transition between pre-modern and emergent modern. Thus I was able to fulfil the requirement of framing the object of investigation so that it could be 'studied as the deconstruction of a traditional structure and the rise of a new one ..'

These processes were expedited by my discovery of an appropriate signifiatory structure that had already been partially achieved in a fifteenth century theologico-legal treatise, Malleus Maleficarum. This was written by two Dominican theologians and Grand Inquisitors, Henry Kramer and James Sprenger. Although this work had not achieved a signifiatory structure in the sense of that to be found in the works interpreted by Goldmann (for example, Racine's pagan plays and Genet's four last plays), there was one in it sufficiently discernible to be used as a tool in this piece of genetic structuralist research. Kramer and Sprenger have been, accordingly, treated as collective subjects -- exceptional individuals whose work presents (implicitly more than explicitly, in the universe of their treatise, the world-view of their group (theologian-inquisitors). This world-view -- partaking of both the theologico-rational and the tragic in a period of exceptionally vigorous processes of deconstruction and threatening new structuration -- is used as a conceptual tool for comprehending selected passages in Malleus Maleficarum and for understanding something of their relationship to their background.

Their world-view in the face of these changes is interpreted through their analysis of wicked women as intellectually feeble (i.e. deficient in understanding of spiritual things -- related to falling away from Catholicism); defective in will (i.e. refusing to be governed -- related to break-down of Catholic/feudal social stratification); and concupiscent (causes of lust in themselves and in men -- related to the new attitudes to nature and the human body; and through their reiterated imagery of barrenness -- related to decay of the pre-modern world-view.

This brief description in the form of distinct steps of my processes of *découpage*

gives a very false impression. My progress was not linear. It followed the typical pattern of genetic structuralist research by oscillating among several processes going on at the same time. I found that the several loci of my attention illuminated one another, as I progressed through a succession of approximations, in a series of elliptical courses that had, for example, the selected text as one locus and philosophical developments as another. Or, what I learned through the strata of time about the theologians' literate world illuminated my researches in the amorphous illiterate world of women and quickened my speculations about relationships, and vice versa; -- in constant and busy oscillation which produced 'a series of successive approximations' to a structural unity.

Nor does the above description do justice to my attempt to solve the problem of access to the illiterate, obscure world of women's culture and behaviour. No short-cuts were available here, as was the case of a ready-made significatory structure in the form of Malleus Maleficarum for the ecclesiasticals. Instead, I found other concepts useful: potential consciousness and critical-multiplicity. I have used the former in several over-lapping senses which may be distinguished analytically, if not always in practice: facilitators and interceptors of messages; precipitator of 'women-class' consciousness; 'ascribed consciousness' [Lukács]; and 'imputed consciousness' [anthropological sense]. I used the latter to refer to two manifestations of response: rejection of the unitary (i.e. of Christian theology by women) as essentially critical; and construction of the unitary as essentially a dogmatic defense against multiplicity. Thus three entry points for speculation about women are revealed: of what were they critical? what multiplicity was available, and what were its attractions? and what was there in the behaviour of women, or what was associated with women, that was threatening to the unitary-oriented theologians?

The significatory structure discerned in Malleus Maleficarum, together with the two concepts referred in the paragraph immediately above, directed me towards ever wider, contemporary sightings and historical regression by relating partial structures to other partial structures, and to the contextual processes of structuration, deconstruction, and new structuration. Other partial structures of basic significance for this study are those of religions alternative to Catholicism and of new developments in philosophy.

Concluding Comments

In summary, the substantial problem addressed by this study relates to comprehending and understanding the empirical historical phenomena of misogynous and philogynous behaviour manifested by churchmen and women in the late Middle Ages, by interrelating certain events among one another and to the overarching totality. The focal points for the clusters of events (partial totalities) that are interrelated are: Malleus Maleficarum -- specifically the latent structure discerned in certain passages that concern misogyny and barrenness; women's culture and alternative religions (pagan and heresies); and developments in philosophy in content and method. The latter provides the main change in the bonds between the first two; and it further relates them to the over-arching totality of the transition from pre-modern to emergent modern, -- the decay of the unitary mediaeval model to the critical-multiplicity of modern individuation.

The methodological problems relate to retrieval of historical phenomena in an area that is not only largely undocumented but deficient in conceptual framework, concepts, and criteria. There are special problems related to research on women because there are either no records at all or no neutral records; and a further problem is related to the difficulties of exerting rigour in any intuitive approach. Solutions are sought through an interdisciplinary approach -- especially through new developments in history and in the sociology of literature and the sociology of women. This approach provides not only insights but also cross-checks to test framework, hypotheses, and argument. Basic hypotheses, conceptual tools, and procedure are mainly drawn from Goldmann's genetic structuralism. A conceptual framework is constructed from the latter, and from new history in which it has its genesis.

The argument takes the form of isolating problematic events, and suggesting lines of interrelationships -- how mediated, and within what overall totality.

CHAPTER TWO. CONCEPTUAL PROLOGUE

Introductory

This chapter lays out and explicates the relevant conceptual tools and their usage in this study. There are three sub-sections: the basic hypothesis of genetic structuralism; the collective or transindividual subject; and conceptualisation of women as a class/group/population.

It is deemed useful to provide this assistance to the reader for three reasons. In the first place, there is excessive fluidity of terms and concepts in any innovatory field, such as sociology of literature, sociology of women, and the new history of which Women's History is a branch. In the second place, the concepts are mainly derived from the marxist tradition which is not without controversial interpretation. In the third place, Lucien Goldmann, who wrote within the marxist tradition and who is the major influence on this study, had some eccentric usages which have not always been appreciated.¹

The key concepts explicated in this chapter fall into three categories, the first two of which overlap considerably. The first of these comprises those that are particularly relevant to the sociological group designated 'ecclesiasticals': 'collective (transcendental) subject', 'world-view', and 'virtuality'. The second comprises those that are particularly relevant to the group designated 'women': 'group', 'class', 'critical-multiplicity', and 'potential consciousness'.

The third category is basic for both women and ecclesiasticals. It contains the three aspects of what Goldmann presented as the basic hypothesis of dialectical thinking: rational response, tendency towards structural forms, and mutual transformation processes between individual/group and external phenomena. He developed this from the cognitive development theory of his 'ami et maître', Jean Piaget, who emphasised 'historical development, opposition between contraries, and "Aufhebungen", .. [and] wholeness'²; and who viewed the mind as the 'as yet unfinished product of continual self-development'³.

For Piaget, 'assimilation' and 'accommodation' were the biological processes 'whereby the organism in each of its interactions with the bodies or energies in its environment fits these in some manner to the requirements of its own physico-chemical structures',

and, at the same time, to the processes whereby it accommodates itself to them⁴. He saw that this analysis could be transposed to society, in order to suggest relationships between man and his world as being characteristically the transformations of man and his world by man constructing his own -- non-predestined, non-permanent -- structures.

Whereas other animals cannot alter themselves except by changing their species, man can transform himself by transforming the world and can structure himself by constructing structures; and these structures are his own, for they are not eternally predestined from within or from without. [Jean Piaget Structuralism, pages 118-119.]

Basically, the conflict between the ecclesiasticals and their oppositionals was that the former came to give priority to constructing structures to transform the world, at the expense of the creative adapting of their established structure -- because they viewed it as permanent and pre-destined; whereas the latter rejected both the priority and the belief.

2.1 THE BASIC HYPOTHESIS OF GENETIC STRUCTURALISM

Lucien Goldmann presented the basic hypothesis of genetic structuralism (and of all dialectical thought) as: 'there is a universal characteristic which is valid for all human behaviour'⁵.

He derived aspects in this hypothesis from concepts in the thought of Pascal, Hegel, Marx, and Piaget. Marx described labour as 'a process going on between man and nature, a process in which man, through his own activity, initiates, regulates and controls the material exchanges between himself and nature .. in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form suitable to his own wants'. .. [and] 'by thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature'⁶. Piaget's analysis of psycho-motor behaviour essentially reiterated (as Goldmann recognised) Marx's analysis of the interaction between man and nature. Although Piaget had not at the time been familiar with Marx's writings, he nevertheless arrived at what Goldmann took to be the definitive articulation of the dialectic.

The psycho-motor behaviour of every individual stems from his relationship with his environment. Jean Piaget has broken down the effect of this relationship into two complementary operations: the assimilation⁷ of the environment into the subject's scheme of thought and action and the attempt which the individual makes to accommodate⁸ this personal scheme to the structure of his environment when this cannot be made to fit into his plans. [my emphases]

[Lucien Goldmann]

Assimilation corresponds to the first aspect of the universal characteristic of behaviour (every action is a rational response to a situation); and partly to the second (individuals and thus social groups have a tendency towards creating some overall consistent pattern out of the totality). Accommodation applies partly to the second (.. tendency

towards creating some overall pattern); and wholly to the third (in each response the individual transforms the world as well as himself). The concept of accommodation is also related to Pascal's concept of transcendence ('the active, transforming, practical quality of all social and historical action'⁹; and, insofar as any process is internally generated, to Hegel's principle of negativity.

Goldmann's basic hypothesis has three aspects, and these develop the points indicated in the last paragraph above. Firstly, every action of an individual is significant in that it is a 'rational'¹⁰ response to a situation which constitutes a problem for him to resolve. This response is rational in that it is an attempt to 'so transform the world by his behaviour as to obtain a response which is significant for the problem facing him ..'¹¹ Secondly, every human action has 'a tendency towards overall consistency and towards creating structural forms'¹². This applies to social groups as well as to individuals. The third aspect makes explicit what is implicit in the second: that in each response the individual not only transforms the world, but he also transforms himself. The tendency to create 'overall consistent patterns'¹³ (structural forms) out of the totality entails a constant movement of efforts towards transcendence -- that is towards modifying and developing the structure of which it forms part.¹⁴

The patterns that may be created in these processes of rational response are not to be thought of as static. Goldmann finds the term 'structure' inadequate -- although convenient -- to describe them: either structures seldom exist, he says, or else they exist for a short time only.

One ought not to talk of structures .. but of structural tendencies and processes ..¹⁵

The characteristic attempt to give a meaningful response to a particular situation is part of a tendency towards equilibrium between the subject of action and the environment on which it bears. But the hypothesis that reality is entirely constituted of such processes of structuration means that these are necessarily at the expense of earlier structures. Any approach of equilibrium transforms the world, and this transformation renders the approach inadequate. This inadequacy engenders new processes towards a new equilibrium -- which, in turn, will be superseded.

This tendency to equilibrium, however, always retains an unstable, provisional character, in so far as any equilibrium that is more or less satisfactory between the mental structures of the subject and the external world culminates in a situation in which human behaviour transforms the world and in which this transformation renders the old equilibrium inadequate and engenders the tendency to a new equilibrium that will in turn be superseded.

We thus find ourselves confronted with a new process, involving a new coherence, which differs from the preceding one and which tends towards a different equilibrium which cannot be achieved except by dislocating the previously sought structural equilibrium -- which had been more or less achieved -- and the structure of thought and feeling corresponding to it. Thus what was coherent and rational in the preceding period ceases to be so. The pursuit of rationality creates its own negativity even when this negativity does not -- as is often the case -- come from outside. [Lucien Goldmann
In eds. Burns and Burns, page 118.]

Thus human realities must be approached, not only as dynamic, but also as two-sided, -- comprising 'destructuration of old structurations and structuration of new totalities capable of creating equilibria capable of satisfying the new demands of the social groups that are elaborating them' ¹⁶.

It is these processes, plus the equilibria that they are destroying and the equilibria towards which they are moving, that it is the task of scientific study to uncover. Goldmann in his dialectical approach urges this treatment to be extended (although by no means necessarily in a single work) to economic, social, political, and cultural human facts, historical and contemporary -- without compartmentalisation. Analysis of literal content of a literary or philosophical work is of lesser value than this analysis of structure: the former describes manifest one-one relationships without illuminating text or society; the latter discovers latent, multiple and complex relationships, and illuminates not only the text but also aspects of its contextual society.

Concluding Comments

In this study, the concern is with three vortices of rational responses in structuration processes.

The first vortex is that associated with the theological model. This model was developed historically over generations as significant responses to internal ambiguities and external situations. But these past structuration processes had entrophied into dogma -- structure rather than structuration. Its adherents confronted it as one confronts a house that one has not made.¹⁷ The permitted modifications -- defensive not creative -- may be characterised as significant or rational largely in terms of the structure of the dogma itself, rather than in terms of real threatening conditions external to the abstract doctrine. This response was defective because it gave disproportionate attention to transforming (assimilating by exterminating) the world, and not enough

to transforming (accommodating) their inherited structure and themselves. This was an unevenly balanced, but still rational, response to the changes in methods and content of thinking, or of attitudes to their comparatively stable belief-system.

The second vortex is that of oral women-culture. In interpreting this, Mary Beard's approach to women as agonistic¹⁸ is preferred to the passive model of some contemporary feminists. This permits Goldmann's concept of significant response to be applied to their behaviour no less than to the behaviour of the ecclesiastics. If Kramer and Sprenger reacted negatively against women, we may assume that women's behaviour in its historical context actively provoked this. Their behaviour was an active and rational response in terms of their knowledge and experience of events, behaviour and systems of thought and values. Phenomena for them to react against or towards included economic conditions (for example, urbanisation and proto-industrialisation), behaviour, treatment, and attitudes of other women, of Catholic clergy, and of adherents of other religions.

By means of the premises that women responded transitively and the ecclesiastics responded transitively to their responses, it is possible to follow a line of supposal into what they could have known or experienced and how they might have behaved responsively to it. This speculation is controlled by the conceptual tool of 'potential consciousness'¹⁹. The questions that arise are: what was there for women to respond to, negatively and positively? what potential consciousness could they have had to inform, monitor, and structure? how did they act on this? what was there in their responses that threatened the ecclesiastics, --or with what threatening phenomena did the latter associate or confuse these responses? The churchmen chose to destroy because they could not assimilate this behaviour and dogmatically refused to undertake accommodation of their eternally predestined structure.

The women-culture vortex is part of a greater one (oppositional to the ecclesiastics) which included heresies, paganism, Islam, the Greek and Roman classics, and epistemological developments. The third vortex was also part of this greater one, but is focussed on formal Western scholars in the new eclectic philosophy. They, too, presented offence and threat to the ecclesiastics by their readiness to accommodate. Thus basically the conflict was between priorities given to assimilation or accommodation. The ecclesiastics, with their unitary principle and respect for authority, gave priority to assimilation. The clusters of oppositionals, with their multiplicity principle, gave priority to accommodation.

2.2 COLLECTIVE (TRANSINDIVIDUAL) SUBJECT

.. I still believe, in the sense in which Hegel wrote that 'the True is the All', that the true subjects of cultural creation are, in fact, social groups and not isolated individuals; but the individual creator belongs to the group .. always by virtue of the objective signification of his work .. [Lucien Goldmann]

a. The Individual and the Group

Goldmann was far from denying that a work of cultural creation was the expression of the ideas or intuitions of the individual who created it. But he could not accept that the significance in general of 'a valid work of art, an authentic philosophical thought, or a historical creation' could be reduced to individual personality and desires. Moreover, he could not see that it was possible in practice to discover how an author wrote his books, and what they mean, by studying his personality. In the first place, the psychology of individuals is too complex. All individuals belong to more than one social group, each of which can influence him. This results for each individual, in an assortment of thinking, feelings, and behaviour which is 'more or less lacking in coherence'. In the second place, psychological data and techniques are not adequate. Therefore, even in the case of an individual whom one knows well, it is obvious that there is not sufficient relevant information available. The case is even worse if an author is dead, and only known through those who are also dead: even the most conscientious of historians cannot attain more than 'a very approximate reconstruction of the author that he is studying'.

It is much easier for the sociologist to uncover necessary links between a cultural work and collective unities than between a work and an individual author. Networks of inter-individual relationships, however complex they may be, present a comparatively much simpler and more coherent structure. For this reason, Goldmann found that 'the principal specific characteristic of Marxist thought' was the concept of the collective subject -- the recognition that almost no human actions are performed by isolated individuals.

.. the affirmation that, historically, effective action is never taken by isolated individuals but by social groups, and that it is only in relation to these that one can understand events, modes of behaviour, and institutions.

An action is a communal expression when it is exercised on an object by a group of men acting in common. One very simple example is that of two men shifting a table. Another example contrasts the relationship between an empirical individual and a building or institution with the relationship between transindividual subjects and a building or social institution. The empirical individual may find himself facing a house that he has not built, which is 'an objective, external given for him'¹⁹. The most that he can do is describe and judge it, morally, aesthetically or practically; or perhaps make some technical modification. The situation is very different for the trans-individual subjects. They have constructed buildings and institutions and they constantly modify them according to their needs and aspirations and the relationship of these to economic and social phenomena.

Human groups have constructed this house in fact, as they have constructed all the other houses in the town. They constantly modify them by the simple fact of living in them, and of integrating them into their existence .. houses and human behaviour cannot be arbitrarily separated. The manner of seeing and understanding this structure is closely connected with the needs of the men living there, and with their aspirations. These aspirations are themselves, to a certain extent, the result of the urban structure and of the economic and social status of its inhabitants. [Lucien Goldmann]

Not that the importance of the individual is lost²⁰; but the individual participates in a collective subject, -- not an 'I' but a 'We'. The 'I' is a 'We' insofar as the individual is not seen as an isolated atom in opposition to others and to the physical universe. This 'We' is a communal relationship -- more than a collection of different individuals isolated from one another; but the collective subject is not abstract but concrete: it is an historical, complex network of relations among both ordinary and exceptional individuals.

.. it is important always to specify the structure of this network and the particular place that the individuals occupy within it -- the individuals appearing quite obviously as the immediate, if not ultimate, subjects of the behaviour being studied. [Lucien Goldmann. Power and Humanism.]

Goldmann distinguished two different kinds of social networks and the corresponding collective consciousnesses: the 'ideological' and the 'world-view'. The former is exemplified by families and occupational groups. It is concerned, in terms of collective behaviour, only with improving particular positions in the social structure. Its consciousness is ideological: it has a restricted character specific to the group; and material interests are often preponderant. The second type has a 'world-view' collective consciousness,

in which tendencies of both assimilation and accommodation vary according to whether the motive is to conserve or innovate. Although material interests are important, 'concern for unity and coherence' and for humanity are far more important.

.. consciousness, feelings and behaviour are taken up with some wholesale reconstitution of all kinds of relationships between men and relationships between men and nature, or else with maintaining the existing social structure in its entirety. This comprehensive view of human relations and of relations between men and the universe implies the possibility (and very often the active presence) of an ideal of humanity. [Lucien Goldmann
In eds. Burns and Burns, page 114.]

The world-view group has been exemplified so far (but not necessarily) in Western history by social classes; but the criteria for a group to become a 'class' (in Goldmann's sense) are more than economic. The defining characteristic of a class is that it expresses its vision of what is and what ought to be. Interests must be directed, not to restricted material concerns, but, 'in the case of a "revolutionary" class, towards a complete transformation of the social structure; or if it is a "reactionary" class towards maintaining the present social structure unchanged'.

Each class will then express its desire for change -- or for permanence -- by a complete vision both of what the man of the present day is, with his qualities and failings, and of what the man of the future ought to be, and of what relationship he should try to establish with the universe and with his fellows. [Lucien Goldmann The Hidden God, page 17.]

As the personal development and the position in life of individuals is subsumed under the group or groups to which they belong, this involves their being subjected to all kinds of ideas that emanate from their own groups.

b. World-Vision and the Creative Individual

.. any great literary or artistic work is the expression of a world vision. This vision is the product of a collective group consciousness which reaches its highest expression in the mind of a poet or thinker. [Lucien Goldmann
The Hidden God, page 19.]

The innate tendency to order and to seek 'rationality and significance in the environment, linked to the search for overall consistency' [see above] is found in groups, individual members of which have the potential to make of common feelings, aspirations and ideas a roughly coherent and significant structure. This group consciousness²¹ is not simply the sum of individual consciousness: it 'exists only in and through individual consciousnesses' as a result of a particular social and economic situation.

Although certain groups succeed in approximating to 'a set of basic categories of thought, feelings, and behaviour'²², which links the members together, the latter have different degrees of awareness of the tendency which, resulting from a particular economic and social situation, is common to them. The awareness may reach its height at times of crisis for the group, or in certain exceptional individuals. Whereas most members normally fail to realise a coherent structure, occasional individuals do achieve an integrated and coherent view, on an imaginative or conceptual plane, of what the collective consciousness of the social group (to which they belong) is tending.

.. the more closely their work expresses this vision in its complete and integrated form, the more important does it become. They then achieve the maximum possible awareness of the social group whose nature they are expressing. [Lucien Goldmann The Hidden God, page 17.]

Goldmann exemplifies in several ways how the world vision which is expressed in the works of philosophy and literature goes beyond the individual writer. Similarities emerge as soon as we study the works of a single writer as part of a whole that is beyond the writer and his individual product. For example, poets and philosophers are polar opposites in that the former create particular beings and things, and the latter work with general concepts; and Kant, Pascal and Racine had very dissimilar lives - yet they all expressed the same world view: the tragic vision with very early adumbrations of the dialectic.²³

.. if most of the essential elements which make up the schematic structure of the writings of Kant, Pascal and Racine are similar in spite of the differences which separate these authors as individuals, we must accept the existence of a reality which goes beyond them as individuals and finds its expression in their work. It is this which I intend to call the world vision. [Lucien Goldmann The Hidden God, page 15.]

The emphasis on the latent structure over the manifest content or passive reflection is fundamental to genetic structuralism. Goldmann has derived it from Lukács, who directed attention of sociologists of literature away from works which reproduced reality with the least amount of re-ordering.

All previous sociology of literature was -- and a very large part of contemporary work still is -- guided by the search for 'interconnexions between a work and the content of the 'conscience collective'. .. Since they considered the work as merely the reflection of social reality, they were much more successful the more they dealt with minor creative works, which reproduce reality with the least amount of re-ordering; furthermore .. they break up the work into fragments, concentrating on high-lighting whatever is a direct reproduction of reality and disregarding everything which has to do with imaginative creation. [Lucien Goldmann In eds. Burns and Burns, page 120.]

Lukács sought out the interconnection between creation and social consciousness

not in the contents but in the categories which structure one or other of them .. [Lucien Goldmann]

Goldmann gives an example of what can be discerned by the genetic structuralist approach but missed by the content approach which concentrates on direct reproduction of reality and misses the imaginative creation. All critics before him who had worked on the content of Racine's plays have looked for Jansenist thought and feeling in the Christian plays. One well-known historian (whom Goldmann left nameless) became, he said, very cross at the notion that there could be any relationship whatever between the Christian thought of Port Royal and the pagan plays. But Goldmann in one, of his doctoral theses (The Hidden God) which set out the 'structural interconnection' in seventeenth century France of Jansenism, Pascal's Pensées, and Racine's plays, recognised shared categorial structures beneath the content: the structure of a tragic universe that was common to both the pagan plays and the Christian Jansenists at Port Royal. The use of a world vision (in this case, the tragic world vision) as an instrument of research enabled him to contribute a new interpretation.

Although the relationship between the world of literary creation and the world external to it is not a direct one -- it is never simply the reflection of the 'conscience collective' --, there is a relationship in that the literary creation has a collective character which 'derives from the fact that the structures of the world of the work are homologous with the mental structures of certain social groups or are in intelligible relation with them' ²⁴. It is there because the starting point for the created 'significant, coherent and unified world' is the collective working out of rough categories and the relationships among them. The creative worker takes them much further than the other members of his group/class.

His work corresponds to the aspirations and the tendencies of the 'conscience collective' and in this sense it is something pre-eminently social; but it also achieves a coherence on the imaginative level which is rarely, if ever, achieved in reality, and in this sense it is the work of an exceptional individuality and has a character which is highly individual. [Goldmann]

The relationship between the work and the group consciousness may be discerned by the interpretative critic who uses world vision as the research instrument for distinguishing an essential structure in the text from its accidental elements.

It may be that a world-vision is a highly schematic extrapolation made as a conceptual working hypothesis for the scholars' convenience; but, at the same time, Goldmann emphasises that the extrapolation is from 'a tendency which really exists among the members

of a certain social group, who all attain this class consciousness in a more or less coherent manner ..'²⁵. That is to say that this world-vision is not an immediate, empirical fact; but neither is it a metaphysical concept from the realms of speculation: it forms the main concrete aspect of the 'collective consciousness'. [Lucien Goldman. In eds. Burns and Burns, page 120.]

This new approach to texts greatly helps in understanding the structure and meaning of both social group (and its wider social contexts) and text. The two are seen in a dialectical relationship, so that each illuminates the other. Therefore, study must progress by allowing attention to oscillate between the text and the author's social group.

The exploration in structural terms of one permits the discovery of certain elements of the other, which might have escaped direct observation or intuitive study. [Lucien Goldman. In eds. Burns and Burns, page 120.]

This is exemplified by Goldmann in his studies of certain works of Racine, Pascal, Kant, and Genet²⁶. In this study it is exemplified in my study of certain passages of Kramer and Sprenger's Malleus Maleficarum.

Concluding Comments

We know that Kramer and Sprenger were empirical individuals who at a particular point in time (c1486) and in a particular location in Germany were joint authors of Malleus Maleficarum; but little is known about their personalities or personal biographies. Therefore, no significant contribution to this study can be sought through biographical sources beyond the bare facts of their being Dominicans and Inquisitors whose activities were resisted, and whose authority was consequently strengthened by Pope Innocent VIII, in his Bull de summis desiderantes affectibus, during a time of religious defensiveness and economic troubles. Access to the necessary links between Malleus Maleficarum, its authors, and the social context in which it was written must be sought elsewhere and otherwise than at the manifest level in conventional documented sources. To this end, the conceptual tools of 'collective subject' and 'world - vision' are applied. Instead of seeking understanding of Malleus Maleficarum through autobiography of its authors or on the level of its manifest content, interpretation is attempted on the latent level, through structure.

The empirical individuals, Kramer and Sprenger, are transposed to a component element in a contemporary group, which was itself within what I term a 'gross' collective subject, comprising producers and consumers of a book tradition of many hundreds of years. Malleus

Maleficarum is treated as a communal expression of this group. To some extent, the empirical individuals and the contemporary collective subject were in the position of the individual facing a house 'that he has not built' [see above]: the theology and the law content were 'objective, external givens'. On the other hand, they actively participated in attempting to maintain the enduring dominance of this long-established tradition by rational response to internal and external change. Malleus Maleficarum is a part of this response: articulation at a fairly high level of coherence by exceptional individuals, functioning as collective subject in maintaining the centuries-old view of their contemporary group -- and in revealing, at the latent level, their sensing of seminal events and conditions in this transitional period.

This study is not so much directed to any exposition or interpretation of the manifest structure that this collective subject is concerned to maintain. It seeks evidence of what -- that may be related to misogyny and philogyny -- is being reacted against in rational response related to major processes of systems of structuration and de-structuration in its social context. The question being asked is: what did they see through the narrow lens of their world-vision, in the context of their transitional era, and in their condition of ignorance of women's daily living?

In the case of women, there are no records of exceptional individuals participating in collective subjects. There are no texts, and therefore no ready-made signifiatory structures to expedite the processes of *découpage*. Therefore, although I retain the concept of collective subject it receives special treatment [see below, re conceptualisation of women as a group].

I also apply the concept of collective subject, but in a very general way, to the whole of the oppositionals -- pagans, infidels, heretics, and new philosophers.

To summarise, the collective subjects in this study comprise:

(a) The gross, dynamic collective subject of past Christian theologians which had evolved an increasingly sophisticated world-view, deriving from social and physical phenomena, and, increasingly, its own substance. It was made up of a series of responses to these by a series of individuals in different kinds of Catholic religious groupings. This is designated the 'Mediaeval Model', which subsumed secular and sacred matters in a hierarchy which set God at the heavenly apex; man -- half earthly, half divine -- in

the middle; and the devil at the lower apex. Every spiritual being, the heavenly bodies, humankind, animals, vegetables and minerals were ordered. There was a place for everything in heaven and on earth: any displacement of any element was a threat to the whole world-view. These theologians had linked their members -- and further members of society -- together by a very high degree of approximation to 'a set of basic categories of thought, feelings, and behaviour'.

(b) The contemporary collective of theologians of which Kramer and Sprenger were exceptional members: but as inheritors and defenders rather than as responsive, participant creators of a world-view. We may designate this world-view 'theological absolute rationalism'²⁷.

(c) The gross oppositional collective subject of the past alternative culture: pagans, infidels, and heretics.

(d) The contemporary oppositional collective subject: on the one hand, the alternative culture of pagans, infidels, and heretics; and, on the other, supporters of the new content and new methods of secular learning, -- an emergent alternative culture.

The collective subjects (a), (b), and the second part of (d) are different in kind from many, if not most of those, in the first part of (d) -- insofar as they have written documentation. Theological absolute rationalism was library-produced, library-preserved and defended -- increasingly related to library arguments rather than market-place or family concerns.

The oppositionals are largely known (insofar as they are known to us at all) from descriptions or references recorded by those whose attitudes to them were hostile, ignorant, or idealising.

Ultimately, the relationship between the absolute theologians and the oppositionals was one of struggle between those who held and tried to enforce an imperialist, unitary world-view and members of critical groups who resisted encroachments on their rights to multiplicity -- or to a pick-'n-mix world-view.

By the time of Malleus Maleficarum, the theologians' creative structuration processes had lost energy; but the structure remained as cherished dogma. Kramer and Sprenger did not participate in its structuration processes: they could only describe it, quote

from it, or make minor criticisms and minor modifications -- and defend it. The relationship had become what Barthes has termed 'readerly'²⁸ .

Their defence took the form of extermination, on the one hand, and of rationalisation (in the sense of justification) on the other. Of those who were put to death, about eighty per cent were apparently women. I have attempted to discern within the rationalisation set out in Malleus Maleficarum what the defence of its authors (as contemporary collective subject) was against, in terms of their inherited world-view, -- what sociological group? what counter world-view? I have not sought to identify stereotype groups such as widows, healers/curers, or women as victims. My task has been to extrapolate what was oppositional to these authors' world-view, in order to understand their structuration processes as rational responses to concrete situations. These processes were part of major structuration and destructuration that was participated in by a multitude of people over vast periods of time and space -- achieving a remarkable peak in the period of this study -- among the foothills of modernisation.

2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF WOMEN AS A CLASS/GROUP

This sub-section attempts to conceptualise women as a sociological group by using the concepts of 'class', mathematical notion of 'group', 'critical-multiplicity', and 'potential consciousness'.

A basic issue in women's studies is how to characterize women as a sector of society. They may be regarded by sociologists and historians as merely social chameleons , taking on the social characteristics of their male relatives, and thus excluded from separate scholarly consideration. Or they may be regarded as too many, too diffuse²⁹ , undocumented, and endowed with or ascribed too wide a range of contradictory characteristics to be regarded as a conventional sociological population. Nor do they qualify for either of Goldmann's definitions [see above].

All the same, women are conceptualised (somehow or anyhow) as a group by misogynists, creative writers, journalists, politicians, after-dinner speakers, and those scholars who treat them as invisible or take them for granted -- without empirical treatment -- as being homogeneous and endowed collectively with permanent characteriological traits, aspirations, experiences, etc. -- whose work is excluded from definition of work, whose power is excluded from definition of power, and who (it is accepted as a given) do not mind dull, repetitious jobs³⁰ . And some feminists look on them as a 'subculture .. unified by values, conventions, experiences, and behaviours impinging

on each individual'³¹.

And, indeed, women do have characteristics of a group inasfar as they, for physiological or social reasons, have common experiences that are unique to them: notably, on the physiological plane, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation -- which, of course, have social and psychological implications; and, on the social plane, a long history of exclusion on the grounds of sex alone from formal learning, and from formal office in church or state. In the latter respect, parallels have been identified between women and minority groups³².

Given these ambiguities, I have compromised by thinking of women as a para-group -- not quite qualifying, but partaking of some of the defining characteristics, and of some of the cancelling-out ones. From this para-group of all women, I have drawn out a more select group which is potentially empirical³³, and which is conceptualised as a sociological group for the purposes of this study. Its members are all those in the late Middle Ages who had the sorts of experiences of religious content and ecclesiastical behaviour that would elicit from them negative response which had some form of disapproved of visibility to the churchmen. The visibility might take the form of argument (based on empirical observation or on internal contradiction in the Bible), setting up alternative life-styles (for example, Beguinages), conversion to other religions (pagan or heretical), challenging Church claims to property³⁴, or confession of sins (mainly sexual or religious infidelity). It is surmised that negative responses of this kind would be particularly likely to be generated or strengthened where there was sudden exposure to church hostility to women as a sex, church indifference to women's material and spiritual needs, or clerical corruption in the form of rape, seduction, exploitation, and material greed. Negative response to these phenomena would be even more likely or more extreme where previous experience had been of neutral, kindly, or flattering treatment³⁵ from churchmen.

a. Class

I am not attempting to subsume women under Marx's objective and economic usage of the term 'class',

.. those broad aggregates of people which can be classified together by an objective criterion -- because they stand in a similar relationship to the means of production -- and more especially the grouping of exploiters and exploited which, for purely economic reasons, are found in all human societies beyond the primitive communal ..

In this approach, women are equated as a sub-sector economic class with, or within the economic exploited class of the proletariat. However, women's relationships to

the means of production vary from society to society: women may own means of production (from feudal estates to breweries); women may exploit as well as be exploited.

Nevertheless, a case can be made for presenting women as a class. In the first place, the above economic argument for women as objective class may be developed by transposing the economic factor into religion/ideology. That is, we may substitute, for 'relationship to the means of economic production', 'relationship to the means of religion/ideology production'. In this transposition women are the proletariat of religion³⁶-- denied any participation in decisions of doctrine or structure, and thus in a condition of alienation from the Catholic Church. If the property-owners and proletariat of Marx's analysis of labour are transposed to theologians (property-owners in religion) and congregation (the proletariat of religion), it is obvious (as Marx himself, of course, observed) that the same relationship obtains with religion as with material production -- in that the subject is transposed into object and vice versa.

Women of the Catholic sect were, in terms of Marx's economic concept transposed to religion, alienated in several dimensions. The human beings' own position was usurped by a postulated divinity, and they forfeited what is essential for human nature, 'principally to be in control of his own activities'³⁷. A mediary may alienate the worshipper from her religious experience and turn it against her, as in the parallel case of the worker being 'related to the product of his labour as to an alien object' which not only does not belong to him, but 'dominates him, and only serves in the long run to increase his poverty'. The worship that she has produced does not belong to her, but dominates her. It may only serve in the long run to increase her subjection and lower her self-esteem, if it predisposes her to accept misogynous teaching of the Church or misogynous attitudes of clergy and laity.

The worker is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object. The object he produces does not belong to him, dominates him, and only serves in the long run to increase his poverty. Alienation appears not only in the result, but also in the process of production and productive activity itself. [Marx]

Theologians, like property-owners may be comfortably rooted in their process of alienation, and possess in it 'the semblance of a human existence'. But their alienation is threefold. They are self-alienated from species life, by refusing to participate with half their fellow human beings (that is, the whole female sex). They are alienated from nature, by denying the pleasures and needs of the body and by denying natural evidence. Finally, they are alienated from spiritual life by turning it into a means.

Moreover, they make capital of the worship of others -- the creation of surplus worship aggrandised as a means to divine and earthly status in institutionalised religion: the congregation are expected to give beyond their direct impulses and needs in order to satisfy an external power, the churchmen.

The congregation are alienated by objective conditions of mediated worship, contrasted with immediate worship. The conditions of the former are opposed to the worshipper, as alien reality of another who absolutely controls it. Far from having the comfortable existence of the theologian they have an inhuman existence. Therefore, he or she may be expected to be 'in a state of rebellion against it and experience the process as one of enslavement'³⁸.

As such, they may, in the second place develop an awareness of their alienation which qualifies them for claim to subjective class. [Marx]

Class in the full sense only comes into existence .. when classes begin to acquire consciousness of themselves as such.

Certain historical phenomena might give them occasion to bond as they distinguish between essential common characteristics of women as women and their accidental attributes of class, region, age, or religion. Under these conditions, women might be transposed from a diffuse objective aggregate to a class-condition. This conscious bonding and awareness may have its grounds in relation to means of production; in common physiological experiences and their social consequences; or in women-culture of the oral tradition. Such consciousness may be continuous, if not strongly, present at various degrees of awareness³⁹ -- as part of the climate of the sub-culture; or it may emerge vigorously under specific historic conditions. In Marx's system the occasion for awareness -- of coming to distinguish between 'the individual as a person and what is accidental to him' -- was, of course, economic.

Big industry makes for the worker, not only the relation to the capitalist, but labour itself unbearable. [Marx]

In this study, 'big industry' is replaced by 'big religion' -- which made both the 'work' (religious practices) itself and the relation to the capitalist-theologians unbearable. In the former case, the proscriptions and prescriptions could attain intensities of burdens and denials (for example, chastity, excessive child-bearing, or marital subjugation); and convent life was excessively rigorous, in order to deter women from entering it and to subjugate those who did.

There was potential for the development of a subjective sense of class, and potential

for revolution in this large religious proletariat of women; and there were triggering conditions. Barrington Moore ⁴⁰ states that a combination of these is required before 'the oppressed decide that their oppression is an outrage and not to be borne, and do something about it'. Most importantly, there has to occur 'some precipitating incident in the form of a new, sudden and intolerable outrage' -- such as failure in the food supply, or 'an act of peculiarly offensive or tactless injustice by someone in authority, or some unreasonable demand'. During the Malleus Maleficarum period, there was a range of potentially precipitating circumstances. Some of these were economic, associated with bad harvests or over-crowding in the urbanising job market, and an indifferent or exploiting Church. Women made revolutionary responses to this need and injustice by setting up Beguinages outside the structure of the Church.

Even greater grounds for outrage may have existed in non-economic areas: that is in exposure to negative attitudes to women as a class/sex by theologians and priests. We may surmise that, in general, women had confidence and self-esteem; and that they were more or less unaware of negative attitudes of the theologians towards them. In the first place, these attitudes were based on abstract grounds acquired and transmitted in areas from which women were excluded. In the second place, theologians had two versions of womanhood: one, denigratory in the extreme, purveyed to celibate monks; the other, neutral to adulatory, purveyed to women themselves. In the third place, there were alternative models in paganism and heresies for women to turn to, if the negative Christian attitude was met and found offensive. In the fourth place, women were -- by virtue of their exclusion from the world of the written word and its remote language -- in undistracted touch with countervailing, empirical reality. In sum, they were far less exposed to the defamatory image of Woman/women than are women today with the written and electronic media proffering it incessantly and omnipresently; and far freer to build their own images from oral tradition, from alternative religious systems, and from their own practical experience.

This situation meant that unexpected, inescapable, and prolonged exposure to hostile attitudes to women by members of the Catholic sect might well have precipitated women's consciousness of themselves as women, as a class -- women-class.

Besides many and various occasions on which individuals or groups could be shocked by encountering callous or misogynous behaviour, there was an outstanding social event which could have been most particularly susceptible of interpretation as 'an act of peculiarly offensive or tactless injustice' -- that was the repulse of religious women in the period of the de non recipiendo soribus [see below].

This subjective recognition of sisterhood may well have been sensed by or made manifest to the ecclesiastics. The precipitation of women-class consciousness may have been what Malleus Maleficarum as the voice of the male and ecclesiastical was reacting against -- recognising in it one of the many elements within the gathering processes of deconstruction and new structuration. Certainly, there are traces of recognition of womanhood bonding in this book: the two wives of Socrates are cited as joining in common cause against him [45b]; and Kramer and Sprenger make an explicit reference [45a] to women giving priority to other women over men.

b. The Mathematical Notion of 'Group'

The mathematical notion of 'group' , 'a kind of prototype of structures in general'⁴¹, presents a paradoxical, inseparable combination of identity and change. It can be applied to a structure such as the mediaeval Model which underwent intelligible changes but was never transformed beyond recognition at one stroke; or it can be applied to a collective subject such as the ecclesiastics, over shorter or longer periods, who also exhibit the seeming antithesis of self-sameness and change. However, these examples are straightforward and hardly need the help afforded by this 'basic constructivist tool'⁴².

In the case of women, on the other hand, the twin concepts of self-regulating coherence and transformation do help in the conceptualisation of them as an agonistic, heterogeneous population over time and place.

Groups are systems of transformations; but more important, groups are so defined that transformation can, so to say, be administered in small doses, for any group can be divided into subgroups and the avenues of approach from any one to any other can be marked out. [Jean Piaget Structuralism, page 21.]

Application of the notion of group deals with the charges that, on the one hand, the conceptualisation of women as a population has connotation of staticity or of excessive homogeneity or of passivity, and, on the other hand, that failure^{to} conceive of them as a population leaves them atomised and not susceptible of sociological treatment. Instead this population may be conceptualised as 'one vast construction whose transformations under a graded series of conditions yield a "nest" of subgroups within subgroups'⁴³. This application facilitates the analytical withdrawal as a sub-group, self-same yet changing, of those individuals who had certain experiences which elicited from them responses which aroused negative reactions from the ecclesiastics.

The notion of group also assists in getting around the problem of paucity of information about women:

.. group structure is quite independent of the intrinsic nature of its elements, which can, accordingly, be left unspecified. Transformations may be disengaged from the objects subject to such transformation and the group defined solely in terms of the set of transformations.⁴⁴ [Jean Piaget Structuralism, pages 23-24.]

Finally, this concept assists in emphasising the change-continuity involved in the goddess-religion [see below], and in relations between it and the Yahweh and God religions [see below]; and in emphasising the same 'Aufhebung' character of the transition from pre-modern to modern. Both these emphases are important in grasping the notion of strata of collective subjects in this study.

c. Critical-Multiplicity

.. Kristeva has implicitly drawn attention to the sociological character not only of these elements [coherent conceptual thought and dogmatism], but what they refuse, deny and condemn. [Lucien Goldmann. 'Sociology of literature: problems of status and method' 1967.]

Goldmann came to recognise, when he read Kristeva's study of Bakhtin⁴⁵, that the concept of a unified world-view had a serious defect as a tool for research. It was derived from the development from German classical aesthetics -- through Kant, Hegel, Marx, and the early Lukács -- of 'a precise concept of aesthetic value in general and of literary value in particular'. This precise concept emphasised unity; although it was defined by the early Lukács as (in Goldmann's words):

.. a tension overcome between, on the one hand, sensible multiplicity and richness and, on the other hand, the unity which organises this multiplicity into a coherent whole. [Lucien Goldmann. 'The Sociology of literature: status and problems', page 515.]

Julia Kristeva, in contrast, drew attention to the neglected dimension: the aspects of literary work which 'correspond quite simply to the role of richness and multiplicity in the classical conception of aesthetical value'⁴⁶. This stressing of multiplicity over unity had the corollary of stressing criticism over dogma. This means, although Goldmann does not say so, that she was emphasising the deconstruction over the structuration. She characterised the dimension of coherence and unity in a mental structure (for example, a literary work) as '.. being connected with doing, with collective action

and -- at the extreme limit -- with dogmatism and repression ..⁴⁷ . She then contrasted this with what is at the other end of the pole, and what she regards as paramount:

.. what is open to question, what is opposed to unity and what .. has a non-conformist and critical dimension ..

Where Goldmann was seeing with what he came to recognise as the limited vision of coherence and unity in cultural creation (significant structures or world visions), Kristeva was recognising '.. a function of opposition and multiplicity (of dialogue as opposed to "monologue" .. ' ⁴⁸.

The Kristin-Bakhtin reversal of emphasis, from conservative unity to critical multiplicity directs attention not only to what the ordering response is defending, and to the defence itself, but also to what this response may be reacting against. More than this: it directs attention to those elements in the existent structure that the destructureation reaction against it is responding; and to those elements which are part of the processes in the new structuration.

Thus this dissertation is not only about the concern of one collective subject (the ecclesiasticals) for the unity (at the level of structure) that it is struggling to maintain; but it is also about the critical multiplicity (of the oppositionals -- specifically women) that threatens it with both destructureation of its unity and the challenge of a rising rival structuration, and how the unity-oriented group react to these threats -- what is their rational response?

d. Potential Consciousness

(1) Overlapping Senses

Goldmann's concept of 'potential consciousness' is, he thinks, the most important of all conceptual tools for the analysis of society. It is basic to this present piece of research. I have, however, developed it in ways that are specifically useful for investigating women. Although I have also applied it to the ecclesiasticals, I have distinguished the usages by using segregated terms: 'virtuality'⁴⁹ for the latter, and 'potential consciousness' for women.

I have used the term 'potential consciousness' in several overlapping senses which may be analytically differentiated as indicated in the following paragraph.

First , I have used it in a Goldmann sense to search out the interceptors of misogynous messages. Women, being excluded from places of theological learning, either did not encounter or did not understand theological misogyny. Secondly, -- also in a Goldmann sense -- I have used it to search out facilitators of philogynous messages. This may be distinguished from the former sense by being designated 'the pool of women's potential consciousness' -- all the positive information and myth about women that were available or may have been available in the oral tradition. Thirdly, I have used it in a marxian sense as referring to precipitators of class (women-class consciousness -- specifically, in reference to the negative attitudes of the Orders, and the indifference of the church and the guilds to women's needs for housing and work. Fourthly, I have used it in the Lukácsian sense of 'objective possibility': what women would have thought if they had known what philogynous and misogynous attitudes there were within the rival religions, the ranges of women activities, achievements, interests, and statuses in past and present, problems associated with urbanisation, and the relations of all of these to the whole structuration processes. That is to say, my speculative extrapolations have empirical bases that are related to larger and smaller partial social totalities. Finally, I have used it in the general anthropological sense of imputed consciousness: what was likely to be the consciousness of women, in smaller and larger contexts of time and place, if women were looked at as if they constituted a whole society.

(2) Lukács

Lukács distinguished between (a) the naïve description of historical content -- what men in fact thought, felt, and wanted at any moment in history and from any given point in the class structure' -- which, however important, is 'merely the material of genuine historical analysis'⁵⁰; and (b) genuine historical analysis itself which relates dialectically to society as a whole.

The relation with concrete totality and the dialectic determinants arising from it transcend pure description and yield the category of objective possibility.

He thought that, given that a particular group of people in a particular situation do not have sufficient and appropriate information or training to assess a situation and its relationships to other social elements, we, if we have this information and training, can infer what they would have thought and felt if they did have these advantages. By relating consciousness to the whole of society it becomes possible to infer the thoughts and feelings which men would have in a particular situation if they were able to assess both it and the interests arising from it in their impact on immediate action and on the whole structure of society.

This is very different from what it would be if we 'implanted in the workers .. from outside the economic struggle and the sphere of the relations between workers and employers'⁵¹ thoughts, feelings, or consciousness.

In this study, the consciousness of women is not directly described, nor is it implanted as pure speculation from outside; but it is imaginatively extrapolated as related to the whole of society, specifically the pre-modern and emergent-modern ideological transition, and the struggle (analogous to that between workers and employers on the economic plane) between secular worshippers and thinkers, on the one hand, and the ecclesiasticals on the other.

(3) Goldmann

Goldmann believed that his concept of potential consciousness led to the 'centre of the problems of comprehending social life'⁵².

To be scientific, sociologists must ask not merely what some member of a social group thinks today, .. but what is the field of consciousness within which some group can vary its ways of thinking .. without modifying its structure.

He based his claim on his fundamental universal premise: rational and significant response entails mutual exchange or adaptation between individual and environment. This means that knowledge about what an individual thinks at a particular time cannot be used as a base for prediction on its own: horizons of environmental factors must also be known.

.. in the study of human development we never deal with problems located uniquely on the plane of consciousness. Actually, every social or individual human fact occurs as an overall effort of a subject to adapt to a surrounding world. It is a process oriented toward a state of equilibrium; it remains provisional insofar as it will be modified by the subject's active transformation of the surrounding world within this equilibrium, and simultaneously by the extension of the sphere of that action.

These exchanges are influenced by restriction on the level of transmission or reception of information. Reception may be unimpeded ('received'); on the other hand, because of three restricting factors, it may be 'opaque' or 'distorted'. The first of these factors is lack of information (for example, if we do not have sufficient knowledge of mathematics we cannot understand mathematical formulae; or -- to add an example from this present study -- women without Latin or theological training could not read it or understand theological misogyny, and the ecclesiasticals with only a virtuality of women could not understand empirical encounters with them. The second is an individ-

ual's personal biography: Freud presented the 'conscience ego [as] impermeable to some information and making it distort the meaning of other information'⁵³. The third restriction is two-fold: incompatibility with a group's fundamental characteristics and incompatibility with its structuring categorial frameworks⁵⁴. The ecclesiasticals, because of such incompatibilities, were opaque to new developments in philosophy.

The sociologist must ask what horizons (i.e. limits) of the field of consciousness these fundamental intellectual categories impose; what lies within these horizons; and what information lies beyond these and cannot be received as long as the group retains its present fundamental defining characteristics.

.. every group tends to have an adequate knowledge of reality; but its knowledge can extend only up to a maximum horizon compatible with its existence. Beyond this horizon, information can be received only if the group's structure is transformed ..

It is important, therefore, in order to understand social life to know 'which information can be transmitted in a given situation, which will undergo more or less significant distortions in reception, and which cannot be received'⁵⁵.

(4) Application to This Study

Documented evidence about the ecclesiasticals makes their potential consciousness at the level of content non-problematic. On the other hand, their potential consciousness at the level of structure is problematic. Here I have attempted intuitive interpretation. Their detailed knowledge of developments in philosophy together with their familiarity with the niceties of heresy/not-heresy were facilitators of their recognising heretical elements in the utterances of women, whether the latter were conscious of the heresy or not. On the other hand, their insulation from women's culture acted as interceptor, preventing their recognising that what might be heresy in a philosopher or theologian was merely the traditional language of women.

Their general attitude to change may also be explained through potential consciousness: in terms of group resistance that arises out of loyalty to a school and thesis that they have supported. A group cannot, unless it loses its identity, receive notions that are part of destructure processes which threaten its own approaches to equilibrium. New developments in philosophy -- and contact with women's culture -- potentially generated questioning of all earlier schemes and their epicycles. The very fundamental intellectual categories in their specific aspects which defined the group were attacked: hierarchised holism; priority of faith over reason; and priority of spirit over body.

In the case of the women-culture collective subject, Lukács' 'category of objective possibility' is basic to research on women as protagonists in history. At the level of content, we can to a limited extent describe, or impute in a simple way, what women 'thought, felt and wanted at some given moments' (for example, the importunate tide of women seeking to enter Orders or those who set up Beguinages [see below]). However, there is a poverty of material at this level⁵⁶. Therefore, it is at the level of structure that research developments may be expected; and where they may be directed away from the purely speculative to searches for relationships which are concrete [in Goldmann's sense of the word] and susceptible to testing by further investigation.

Goldmann's concept of potential consciousness may be applied in two ways, one negative and one positive. In the negative application, we may look at factors that prevent or interfere with transmission or reception, in the case of what the Church may or may not have communicated to women. Women were not able to receive theological material directly because of being excluded from places of learning and from the linguistic medium of learning. Psychologists may pursue the possibility in consequence of this exclusion of women's 'conscience egos' being non-receptive to what was damaging to their self-esteem. Sociologists and historians may investigate fundamental characteristics of women-groups together with their structuring categorial frameworks, and surmise about them -- on the lines of Goldmann's two examples [see above] -- that messages that contravened women's fundamental characteristics such as their sexuality, their everyday experiences and their commonsense, had restricted access⁵⁷. And the same may have applied in the case of messages that contravened particular concepts and beliefs that were part of the female pagan culture, or a part of the heresies to which they belonged by birth or conversion.

The positive application is directed towards what I have dubbed women's 'pool of potential consciousness'. This denotes the collection of information (historical and contemporary) that was potentially available to women -- without taking into account its empirical availability to individual women or the existence of interceptors. This included myth, hearsay, superstition, first-hand reports; pagan, infidel, Christian, and heretical beliefs (particularly female-relevant aspects); new and ancient tales of heroines, local or far afield; learning relevant to sexuality, contraception, pregnancy, abortion, childbirth, child-care; sowing, planting, tending, harvesting, preparation and preservation of foods and herbs; care of the wounded and sick; and genealogies. Recognition of this pool makes it illegitimate to posit that women had low self-esteem or were passive, or that the Christian cluster had either monopoly or priority. In contrast, it emphasises the richness of the base from which women could make critical and confident

comparative scrutiny as they shopped around for beliefs.

It may be noted, as a warning against free extrapolation from present to past, that for women of oral culture this in itself was a facilitator (now lost) of availability of a wide range of fact and fiction for individual selection; and that women, before modern applications of technology to the mass media, were spared the associated oppositional facilitators (so pervasive today) of narrow and negative stereotypes without countering variety of women's behaviour and situations.

e. Virtuality

The reality-value of Kramer and Sprenger's restricted and peculiar knowledge of women is what I have dubbed 'virtuality', using a metaphor drawn from the computer world to contrast statuses of reality. Ted Nelson defines 'virtuality' as 'the seeming of a thing, the ideas and impressions and feelings you get from it'.

The virtuality of a magic show is the illusion of doves from a hat, or a sawn woman walking away intact. The virtuality of a Cadillac is a cushy drive and the sense of luxury ..

Users do not care about details of components and mechanics.

He gives as an example of what he means the facility and virtual structure of Sketchpad.

Sketch pad was a facility where you could make master drawings, and combine copies of these drawings of any size. If you changed the master drawing, all the copies would change correspondingly.

The virtual structure of Sketchpad, then, was of a space which could be stretched to any degree on the screen, and instances of pictures that could be copied.

This is the virtuality of Sketchpad .. The kind of computer it ran on was not significant to its virtuality, nor was any other feature of the computing hardware. Its virtuality was what you could do to the stored pictures through the screen, and how it felt.

Nelson contrasts with virtuality, the reality of the computer: 'the nuts and bolts, the solid metal and dirt'.

Kramer and Sprenger showed some recognition of the different statuses of reality in their statement about the phrase 'lust of the flesh' being used to represent women (i.e. the phrase has virtuality-value only)⁵⁸. Despite this insight, their knowledge of women was characterised as a virtuality-knowledge, -- 'seeming'. It could not have been derived -- not by priests and inquisitors -- from everyday behaviour and relationships

in marketplace and family, real 'nuts-and-bolts' (as it were) individuals in history.

Virtuality as a term related to conceptualisation of women as a group has its referenda about them drawn from a restricted range. The secular and ecclesiastical worlds were notably distanced by a Latin literacy of the latter and a vernacular illiteracy of the former. The female sex were particularly distanced, because of their exclusion from the Church structure and because of the celibacy of the clergy, which meant that women were not generally known in everyday living but only in extraordinary circumstances.

On the other hand, the ecclesiasticals had ready access to sources for building up a very potent virtuality of women. Most of these sources (the Bible, some writings of Aristotle, the early Fathers and later theologians) were written as library and academic products in largely or wholly segregated circumstances. Others are suspect because of the associated torture; or unrepresentative because only information about sins was communicated. Thus the ecclesiasticals were provided (collectively) with a metaphorical sketch-pad master-drawing which allowed them to stretch, copy, combine, without asking any questions beyond the virtuality. 'Nuts-and-bolts' individual personalities and behaviour were beyond the horizon of their potential consciousness. Women were elements to be integrated into their sophisticated system -- whether in the library, the school, the torture-room, or the confessional. The concern was for congruence with the system -- the maximisation of assimilation and minimisation of accommodation.

Concluding Comments

Thus the challenges of conceptualising women as a group and of relating them to a range of aspects in their societies -- challenges which are difficult for scholars in women's studies to escape -- have been met by these four concepts explicated in this chapter: 'class', 'critical-multiplicity', 'group' (in Galois' mathematical sense), and 'potential consciousness'. Unless these challenges are met, certain inhibiting tendencies interfere with wide-angled research.

In this study the tendency towards making women homogeneous and static has been avoided through the use of the concepts of group and potential consciousness. The tendency to make them passive chameleons has been avoided by the concepts of critical-multiplicity and potential consciousness. The tendency to atomism has been avoided by the concept of class (especially in its subjective aspects). The tendency to a simplistic interpretation of their relationship to change as being linearly ameliorative has been avoid-

ed by the concepts of facilitators and interceptors associated with potential consciousness.

Thus these four concepts have facilitated the viewing of women in the late Middle Ages as an active, oppositional group of heterogeneous individuals; bonded and made confident by a common pool of potential knowledge; and bonded also by a common vulnerability, in the context of religious relationships in a time of social and economic change, to frustration and outrage. The clearer this view becomes, the less possible it is to regard them as passive victims, in this or that static, passive, homogeneous yet atomistic group (such as widows or curei -healers); and the less possible to regard the ecclesiastics as inherently malicious or hysterically scapegoating, their behaviour unrelated to the behaviour of women -- whose behaviour is imputed as unrelated to theirs.

CHAPTER THREE. COMPREHENSION

Introductory

This chapter has four sections. The first briefly present factual details about the authors of Malleus Maleficarum, the occasion that seems to have prompted it, and the high demand for it. The second gives some glimpses of scholars' over-generalising attitudes towards it.

The third section justifies the selection of this text as a point of access for discovering behaviour and circumstances associated with it that were relevant to misogynous and philogynous attitudes of ecclesiasticals in this transitional period. Many points in its favour for this purpose are listed, on both the factual and the interpretative planes; but it has not been possible to follow up all of these within the limits of this present study. Those which have been developed to varying degrees are:- (a) on the factual plane: heresies; changes in content and methods of philosophy; explicit misogynous and philogynous statements about women; power relationships relating to women in family and nation; and (b) on the interpretative plane: tragic aspects; power-conflict plus ambiguity of attitude; and imagery.

The fourth section comprises the Comprehension [see above] locus of this piece of genetic structuralist research. It presents a close reading of certain passages of Malleus Maleficarum in which are discernible a significatory structure which is homologous to world-views in the external context. These passages include -- besides passim references:

PART ONE: Question VI, 'Why is it that Women are Chiefly addicted to Evil Superstitions' [pages 46b] and 'What Sort of Women are found to be above all Others Superstitious and Witches' [pages 47b-48a]; Question VII, 'Whether Witches can Sway the Minds of Men to Love or Hatred'; Question VIII, 'Whether Witches can Hebetate the Powers of Generation or Obstruct the Venereal Act'; Question IX, 'Whether Witches may work some Prestidigitary Illusion so that the Male Organ appears to be entirely removed and separate from the Body'; Question XI, 'That Witches who are Midwives in Various Ways Kill the Child Conceived in the Womb, and Procure an Abortion; or if they do not this, Offer New-born Children to Devils'.⁵⁹

PART TWO: Question I, Chapter V, ' .. And How they Impair the Powers of Generation ..'; Chapter VI, 'How Witches Impede and Prevent the Power of Procreation'; Chapter VII, 'How, as it were, they Deprive Man of his Virile Member'; and Chapter XIII, How Witch Midwives .. either Kill Children or Offer them to Devils ..' ⁵⁹.

Kramer and Sprenger's analysis of wicked women in these passages, expressed literally as weak in body and mind, is interpreted -- at the manifest level -- in the context of their own elaboration of their statements as lacking in understanding of the spiritual things of Catholicism and in fidelity to Catholicism; lacking an instinct to be governed, and concupiscent. At the latent level, this is interpreted in terms of the nearer and further, short-term and long-term, background. Paramount in this are endogenous and exogenous threats to the Church. The analysis of women is read as a significant structure homologous to this context -- expressing the vision of the collective subject.

The frequent references to barrenness are read as contributing to this structure in that they are latent statements about the barrenness of the Faith, insulated from everyday living and change, corrupt, and no longer creative. They also refer to the economic hard times of the period, associated with bad seasons and problems of early urbanisation. Finally, they express, perhaps, the authors' assessment of new developments in ways of using the human mind as worthless.

3.1 FACTUAL DETAILS ⁶⁰

a. Editions

Fourteen editions of Malleus Maleficarum were issued by leading German, French, and Italian presses between 1487 and 1520; and sixteen or more between 1574 and 1669. The exact date of the first edition is not known, but a likely year is 1486.

There is a modern German translation by J.W.R. Schmidt, Der Hexenhammer, 3 volumes, Berlin, 1906; second edition, 1922-1923. An English translation with Introduction, Bibliography, and Notes by Montague Summers, was published by John Rodker in 1928. This was reprinted by Dover in 1971.

b. The Authors

The authors were two Dominicans, Heinrich Kramer [b. Bohemia c1430; d.1505] and James Sprenger [b. c1436; d. c1500]. Both were professors of Sacred Theology; Inquisitors

in the dioceses of the five metropolitan churches of Germany, Mainz, Cologne, Trèves, Salzburg, and Bremen. Both were appointed General Inquisitors of Germany. Sprenger was Prior of the Dominican Convent at Cologne, and an inaugurator of the Most Holy Rosary. Their Inquisitorial activities were resisted; but they were authorised in the Bull Summis desiderantes affectibus [1484] of Pope Innocent VIII.

c. Immediate Occasion

The immediate occasion of Malleus Maleficarum may have been the Papal Bull of Innocent VIII which was promulgated in 1484. This gave Kramer and Sprenger supreme and absolute authority as Inquisitors.

The driving desire behind Innocent VIII's promulgation was for the Catholic Faith to increase and flourish everywhere. This was in a context of internal and external threat to this Faith. To ensure its strengths, he desired that 'all heretical depravity should be driven far from the frontiers and bournes of the Faithful', so that 'the regular observance of Our Holy Faith will be all the more strongly impressed upon the hearts of the faithful'.

He was prompted to write it by reports that many men and women had renounced the Catholic Faith and abandoned themselves to devils; and were afflicting plants, animals, and people with barrenness and disease.

.. many persons of both sexes, unmindful of their own salvation and straying from the Catholic Faith, have abandoned themselves to devils, incubi and succubi, and by their incantations, spells, conjurations, and other accursed charms and crafts, enormities and horrid offences, have slain infants yet in the mother's womb, as also the offspring of cattle, have blasted the produce of the earth, the grapes of the vine, the fruits of trees, nay, men and women, beasts of burthen, herd-beasts, as well as animals of other kinds ..; these wretches furthermore afflict and torment men and women, beasts of burthen, herd-beasts, as well as animals of other kinds, with terrible and piteous pains and sore diseases .. at the instigation of the Enemy of mankind they do not shrink from committing and perpetrating the foulest abominations and filthiest excesses ..

The phenomena enumerated by this Pope might well have been explained by natural or social phenomena: bad years (floods, droughts); or social phenomena (e.g. urbanisation). He explains them as being caused by those who have renounced the Catholic Faith and abandoned themselves to devils and the casting of evil spells.

It is to be noted that harm to others goes along with renunciation of the Faith. Thus the 'maleficii' of popular belief are conflated with non-supernatural phenomena (social and physical), and with Catholic doctrine.

The Bull makes it clear that Kramer and Sprenger were not eccentric in their belief in witchcraft, nor in holding that witchcraft was equated with heresy⁶¹. John XXII and Benedict XII anathematised witchcraft and all such abominations. Several subsequent Popes issued at least one Bull each 'which fulminate against sorcery and black magic'. And three Bulls [1473; 1478; 1483] of Sixtus IV clearly identify sorcery or witchcraft with heresy and revolutionary forces.

During his reign he published three Bulls directly attacking sorcery, which he clearly identified with heresy, an opinion of the deepest weight when pronounced by one who had so penetrating a knowledge of the political currents of the day.[Montague Summers. Introduction to Malleus Maleficarum, page xxva.]

3.2 SAMPLE OF CRITICAL ATTITUDES

Attitudes to Malleus Maleficarum have varied from the adulation of Montague Summers to the angry horror of feminists today.

As this dissertation is not concerned with the work on the level of content, nor with its literary, theologico-philosophical, legal, or moral appraisal, I shall not present a review of the literature, but merely a few glimpses of attitudes towards it, with brief comments. These indicate that a fresh approach to this work constitutes a contribution to literature, history, and sociology.

Hans Sebald points out, in neutral terms, that Kramer and Sprenger expend erudition and logic in defining witchcraft in theologico-judicial terms drawn from the previous two hundred years of secular and sacred writing on the subject. All of these writings derived from the Bible, Church tradition, and imperial and local laws⁶². The ecclesiastical treatises had their base in Mosaic law:

Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. [Exodus 22,18]

Any man or woman among you, who calls up ghosts or spirits shall be put to death. The people shall stone them. [Leviticus 20, 27]

However, he writes more emotively in assessing the work as 'this supreme manual of witch persecution', which surpassed all its predecessors and became the guide for both ecclesiastical and civil judges, -- in both its apologia and its judicial methodology. And he joins the chorus that accuses Kramer and Sprenger of 'opening the door to almost indiscriminate persecution'. The second statement at least is unprovable.

The following three writers provide examples of an approach through imputing personal misogyny to Kramer and Sprenger. These critics betray their lack of close reading of the treatise even at the manifest level, as well as very inadequate knowledge of the culture in which it was written.

Andrea Dworkin condemns male culture and some of its works, including Malleus Maleficarum and Ecclesiasticus. First she attacks a section of the former.

Men were protected [she writes] from becoming witches not only by virtue of superior intellect and faith, but because Jesus Christ, phallic divinity, died 'to preserve the male sex from so great a crime: since He was willing to be born and to die: for us, therefore He has granted to men this privilege' Malleus Maleficarum, 123]. Christ died literally for men and left women to fend with the Devil themselves. Without the personal intercession of Christ, women remained what they had always been in Judeo-Christian culture.

Then she quotes a long misogynous passage of citations in Malleus Maleficarum.

In commenting that 'Christ died literally for men and left women to fend with the Devil' on their own, she ignores the explicit statement in Malleus Maleficarum that informs us that Mary brought salvation to women (converting Eva to Ave), in counter-balance to Jesus' bringing salvation to men. And in citing Ecclesiasticus as proof of what women had always been in Judeo-Christian culture, she ignores two relevant facts. Ecclesiasticus is an apocryphal book: it is debatable whether it can be brought forward to support charges against the sector who rejected it. Besides that, although it castigates wicked women, it has high praise for virtuous women. The lines that she quotes refer specifically to wicked women, not to all women, or even Woman. The book has high praise, in fact, for virtuous women. And Kramer and Sprenger quote one of these philogynous passages. Finally, in quoting Crysostom she does not enquire as to whom -- or under what circumstances he was addressing his words ('What else is woman but a foe to friendship, a desirable calamity, a domestic danger, a delectable detriment, an evil nature, painted with fair colours!'). She does not allow for the evidence that the clergy spoke differently to audiences composed of young celibates from how they spoke to women themselves about women [see below]. Certainly, Kramer and Sprenger show themselves better

scholars than Dworkin in that they make countering statements.

Alan Anderson and Raymond Gordon impute personal misogyny to Kramer and Sprenger, and betray a lack of familiarity both with the treatise itself and with its cultural context. They refer to the former as 'that most anti-feminine of Catholic witch manuals' and to the authors as 'violently anti-female'. Thus they do not seem to be aware of the philogynous statements in Malleus Maleficarum, such as:

.. a sex in which God has always taken great glory that His might should be spread abroad ..

But for good women there is so much praise, that we read that they have brought beatitude to men, and have saved nations, lands, and cities ..

They illegitimately generalise from the references to wicked women to all women. Moreover they do not prove their charge that the book did 'a great deal to establish the feminine image of the witch and to link women with evil'. This charge reveals their ignorance of biblical imagery: the topos of woman has had connotations with evil since the Canaan period of struggle against the indigenous goddess-religion. It is inaccurate to credit Kramer and Sprenger with any such innovation. As for the consequences of the book: more women than men were burnt as witches before⁶³ -- not only after -- its publication. In any case, the reasons for accusations are probably historically unrecoverable, and far too various, for it to be possible to lump them all together and make two individuals responsible.

Finally, it is preposterous of them to state that the only reason that the Protestants supported the Inquisition was because of the negative image of women. The attitudes of the Protestant sects varied towards women. Indeed, they seem to have attracted many women because of their philogynous attitudes .

C.J. Simons reveals the same weaknesses as the three scholars referred to above. He says that 'the Church's evident hostility/^{is clear}throughout the Malleus'; but most of the treatise is neutral -- concerned with theological argument, methods and annulment of witchcraft, and judicial proceedings in ecclesiastical and civil courts, most of which is inherited by the authors not innovated by them.

The feminist theologian, Mary Daly, -- for all her wide range of scholarship -- has been equally careless in her treatment of Kramer and Sprenger and their book. She charges

them with reducing Innocent's attack on both sexes to an attack on women only:

Although Innocent's Bull itself refers to 'many persons of both sexes' as having 'abandoned themselves to devils, incubi and succubi', the authors of the Malleus Maleficarum manage to totally erase this idea ..'

Yet even a quick glance through the sub-section headings of the text would have acquainted her with the fact that at least fourteen of its pages⁶⁴ refer to ways 'in which Men and not Women may be Discovered to be addicted to Witchcraft'. Nowhere do Kramer and Sprenger suggest that only women are addicted. Their statement is that women are chiefly addicted. Moreover, her reading of the misogynous passages is extremely shallow in that she has taken the statements literally, out of their textual and social context, and as if written in her own contemporary English.

At the opposite pole of attitudes is Montague Summers. His introductions to the 1928 and 1948 editions contain the following enthusiasm:

.. Malleus Maleficarum is one of the most pregnant and most interesting books I know in the library of its kind -- a kind which as it deals with eternal things, the eternal conflict of good and evil, must eternally capture the attention of all men who think, all who see, or are endeavouring to see, reality beyond the accidents of matter, time, and space.

Certain it is that the Malleus Maleficarum is the most solid, the most important work in the whole vast library of witchcraft. One turns to it again and again with edification and interest. .. it is supreme. .. later writers, great as they are, have done little more than draw from the seemingly inexhaustible wells of wisdom which [Kramer and Sprenger] have given us in the Malleus Maleficarum.

What is most surprising is the modernity of the book. There is hardly a problem, a complex, a difficulty, which they have not foreseen, and discussed, and resolved.

Here are cases which occur in the law-courts today, set out with the greatest clarity, argued with unflinching logic, and judged with scrupulous impartiality.

It is a work which must irresistibly capture the attention of all men who think, all who see, or are endeavouring to see, the ultimate reality ..

He may have been prejudiced towards Malleus Maleficarum because he thought that witchcraft was a 'huge conspiracy against civilisation'⁶⁵ which was still as great a threat in his day.

In general, scholars appear to approach the work with pre-assumptions; not to read it with great attention; not to distinguish between what is cited as Question and what is presented as the authors' own arguments, or between what is peculiar to them and what is part of the doctrine of the Church or of the contemporary climate of opinion and belief; not to know circumstances of 'selection' of victims in the centuries of witch/heretic persecution; and not to take into account the equation of witchcraft with heresy

3.3 JUSTIFICATION FOR SELECTION

This sub-section presents a list of entry points provided by Malleus Maleficarum in the processes of developing misogyny and philogyny from general delineations to a meaningful historical structure.

a. Factual Plane

(1) The occasion of its writing was related to the economic background. Urbanisation and bad agricultural years are the back-drop to the reversion to paganism and the challenge to Church authority that are alluded to by Innocent VIII in his Bull [see above] of 1484.

(2) Its occasion was also related to the political background. Three dimensions are significant. In the first place, the Church was under great threat from both Western secular powers and the Turks. In the second place, the Church's doctrine and authority were being challenged by heresies, paganism, atheism, sorcery and witchcraft, astrology, humanism, mysticism, philosophy, and science. In the third place, there was pervasive social unrest and a breaking down of feudal stratification.

Only limited aspects of (1) and (2) are developed in this study. These are heresies, paganism, and new directions in philosophy. The other aspects are taken as givens. Attention is directed to them as means for further testing beyond the bounds of this piece of research of the relationships which it imputes and analyses.

(3) It contains explicit statements, both philogynous and misogynous, about Woman/women in a context of support from a range of theological, literary, and anecdotal sources.

(4) The women alluded to in its pages are associated with power: biblical and Christian heroines; midwives, who not only had power over life and death (through their intervention in conception, pregnancy, and birth) but who also had power in determining the sect into which the new-born was baptised; prostitutes, who had physical, psychological and, in some cases, political powers; domineering wives; and avenging literary/mythological characters. These details support my selection of the women-as-agonistic approach. Moreover, another source of threat to the Church was identified here: for example, if women in the past had been strong enough to lead men into Christianity, they have the potential to lead men out of it and/or out of Catholicism.

(5) It explicitly related women to witchcraft, and witchcraft to heresy; and stated that they were more addicted than men.

(6) It was an authoritative handbook for the prosecution of witches/heretics.

b. Interpretative Plane

The work has literary dimensions that allow interpretation through the genre of tragedy and through the imagery of poetics. These were used to develop the interpretation made through genetic structuralism. They are also available as a means of testing this interpretation -- within and beyond the study itself⁶⁶.

(1) The first literary approach views Malleus Maleficarum as having some tragic aspects -- the genre of tragedy being defined 'as the representation of a universe dominated by a conflict of values, where the conflicts are insoluble from the start'. The tragic hero cannot accommodate this conflict by admitting any compromise: for him there is absolute primacy of what ought to be over what is. In this particular work, I see something of the tragic hero in the heresy-hunting theologian who had undivided allegiance to his 'ought', an attitude that was in conflict with the pattern of contemporary structuration processes. That is to say that he was struggling to maintain the asymptotic structural equilibrium that he inherited. He thought in terms of structures in a world characterised -- with particular intensity in his period -- by structurational tendencies and processes; in terms of unity in a world of multiplicity; and in terms of dogma in a world of criticism. His tragic universe contained these sets of values in insoluble conflict.⁶⁷

The universe of the oppositionals was, in contrast, non-tragic. It was 'dominated by compromise, relativity and the more or less⁶⁹; it was inhabited by the critical, the neutral, the pick-'n-mix approach, and those who like peasants documented in Ladurie's Montaillou fished from both banks.⁶⁹

(2) The second literary approach views Malleus Maleficarum and associated events as one complex event in terms of Goldmann's interpretation of four of Jean Genet's plays -- The Maids, The Balcony, The Blacks and The Screens -- in which he identified several characteristics common to all four: collectivity of subject; dominator-dominated relationships of conflict and love-hate; and more than one level of reality. One collective character represents the dominators, one represents the dominated. If we apply this analysis to Malleus Maleficarum -- that is, if we look at the two collective subjects in terms of power-relations in conjunction with setting it into the wider contexts of structuration processes -- we see that the theologians as a group suffering deconstruction are the dominated; and the deconstructural-cum-neostructural group of oppositional women (plus the new philosophers) is the dominator. This view provides an explanation of the recurring references to dominating women in the work. It also strengthens surmise about their activities as innovators and disseminators of new elements in philosophy which are emerging into dominance: dialectical argument and nominalism, as well as the new content. The love-hate relationship is paralleled by the misogyny and philogyny which are both represented in Malleus Maleficarum; the love of change when it is part of their structuration (as in the early days of Christianity), and the hatred of it when it was part of deconstruction; and the ambivalent attitudes of the Church to the Beguines (and vice versa). The levels of reality are also represented: the reality of the Mediaeval Model, and the reality of emergent modern; and the different approaches of realism and nominalism, of authority and an individual's own observation and reasoning.

(3) The third literary approach is through imagery. In the first place, the biblical topoi of woman as city, land, society, or Church allow interpretation of women who are wanton and/or of 'weak faith' as personifications of a stricken land. And they may, by association, become blamed for the phenomena that they personify.

In the second place, the recurring imagery of barrenness in Malleus Maleficarum may be interpreted as a latent statement of awareness of the condition of deconstruction. This imagery is found in the reference to barrenness of plants, animals and human beings in the Bull [summis desiderantes affectibus] of Innocent VIII. It is also found in the many references in Kramer and Sprenger's treatise to sterility, impotence, barren-

ness abortion, still-birth and child-death -- all associated with women. The imagery may also be associated with the Church and its theology. For instance, Thomas Aquinas himself at the end of his life referred to his own theological writings as 'chaff'.

In the third place, the attitude to midwives may be read as an image. Kramer and Sprenger did not associate midwives with life-assisting, but with death-dealing and soul-damning. In this case, they perhaps represent rejection of the new age that was being born, which the theologians condemned to destruction as heretical to the established structure.

In sum, the application of literary, historical and sociological perspectives to Malleus Maleficarum revealed its potential as a ready-made significatory structure to be used as a tool for discerning inter-relationships between its vortices and those of other social groups -- those of the authors, women, and the new philosophers.

3.4 COMPREHENSION: CLOSE READING OF SIGNIFICATORY PASSAGES

This section presents a detailed analysis, in terms of latent structure, of certain passages of Malleus Maleficarum. That is, it is concerned with 'comprehending' (in Goldmann's sense of discerning an homologous structure in) misogynous and philogynous passages, in the first place; and passages with references to barrenness, in the second place. The other aspect of the oscillatory progress of the method of genetic structuralism -- 'explanation' -- is treated in chapters five and six, below.

On the manifest level, it is observed that Kramer and Sprenger wrote within a tradition; and that they were not blind misogynists but selective in their attitudes to women. They took, in fact, the same attitude to women as they took to ecclesiastics: viewing them both as divided into extremes, the virtuous and the evil. Both women and ecclesiastics, they stated,

.. know no moderation in goodness or vice; and when they exceed the bounds of their condition they reach the greatest heights and the lowest depths of goodness and vice. When they are governed by a good spirit, they are most excellent in virtue; but when they are governed by an evil spirit, they indulge the worst possible vice.

Clearly, they were no more generalising women-haters than they were generalising ecclesiastics-hating. They were attacking concrete behaviour in both cases, not generalising about genetic and generic vice. They admired women who led others to God; and they recognised that God had always taken great glory in women as instruments for spreading

His power abroad. The women whom they condemned were those who turned away from the Catholic Faith and persuaded men to follow them.

The authors begin their treatment of women in this work by presenting philogynist citations of dominant women in the Bible, Ecclesiasticus, and history. They then contrast these with misogynist citations from Ecclesiasticus, Chrysostom, Cicero and Seneca. Finally, they present their own analysis of women (excluding the type of women that they admire) in two sections, mind and body. Mind consists of two parts: intellect, in the sense of 'firm in faith' or 'strong in understanding spiritual things' -- women being weak in this respect; and 'will' in the sense of 'instinct' -- women's instinct being to refuse to be dominated. Although they refer to women as 'so fragile a sex' and 'the fragile feminine sex', the allusion is probably directed to women's selective religious allegiance. Two aspects of body are emphasised: barrenness and concupiscence. Women as witches and instruments of the devil, are held responsible for both.

a. Philogynous Passages

Old Testament heroines provide models of good women: Debbora, poet, prophet, and leader of the host to battle; Esther who risked her life to save her people from destruction; and Judith who cut off the head of Holofernes. There was nothing 'fragile' about these women who 'saved nations, lands, and cities'⁷⁰. And Kramer and Sprenger show no hint of disapproval of these women for acting out of what is today imposed on women as their proper sex trait of passivity. They also admire women who are good domestic managers and loving and virtuous wives.

A virtuous woman rejoiceth her husband, and he shall fulfil the years of his life in peace.

As the sun when it ariseth in the high heaven; so is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her house.

The last chapter of Proverbs, which is referred to, praises a capable and industrious wife; but her virtues are not restricted to household affairs. Besides what are presumably the routine domestic labours of caring for husband and children, and doing/supervising the cooking, spinning and weaving, she sells what she weaves. With her earnings she buys a vineyard. Moreover, all her speaking is wise. For all these things she is honoured 'in the city gate'. An example is also cited from the New Testament -- even from Paul -- who refers to the believing wife who sanctifies an unbelieving husband.⁷¹ Her superiority over him is acknowledged. There are also general references in the New Testament to good and great women leaders.

And all this is made clear also in the New Testament concerning women and virgins and other holy women who have by faith led nations and kingdoms away from the worship of idols to the Christian religion. [43b]

Next, they give examples from history; and the import is the same.

Anyone who looks at Vincent of Beauvais (in Spe. Histor., XXVI, 9) will find marvellous things of the conversion of Hungary by the most Christian Gilia, and of the Franks by Clothilda, the wife of Clovis. [43b]

Undoubtedly, women who take the lead, by violence, argument, or example, in order to serve the God of the Catholic Church, are those whom Kramer and Sprenger regarded as virtuous. Their model must be distinguished from the prescriptive model for womanhood of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries -- the passive, stay-at-home wife and mother. If this distinction is ignored, there can be not only misunderstanding of their work, but also misunderstanding of the status, activities and consciousness of mediaeval women.

b. Misogynous Citations

Conversely, women who take themselves and others away from the Catholic Church -- whether by violence, argument, example, or carnal allurements (voice, gait, apparel), with or without support of the devil -- are evil. It is not the nature of women that is evil, not everything that they do, and not their dominating behaviour in itself, that are evil. What is evil is their behaviour and its consequences if it damages the relationship between God and his people.

Their support in literature for their making out a case for the wickedness of women is drawn from abstract misogyny in Ecclesiasticus XXV and XXVI, St John Chrysostom, Cicero, and Seneca. It is not descriptive of historical and individual women, but alludes to woman who is 'full of words', 'full of anger', and impudence. She 'will not comfort her husband in distress; she is shameless, a harlot, proud, dishonouring her husband'. A 'loud crying woman and a scold' is also reprehensible, -- but seems not to be readily found.

A loud crying woman and a scold shall be sought out to drive away the enemies.
[Ecclesiasticus 26,27]

Chrysostom gave very high value to virginity; and he opposed women being in the fields of learning, warfare, or politics (which suggests that at least some of them were there);

The passage from his writings that is quoted by Kramer and Sprenger cannot be taken as definitive evidence of misogyny in Kramer and Sprenger, the Christian Church, or Chrysostom himself. Kramer and Sprenger quoted it in juxtaposition to philogynous passages. Chrysostom intended it as a comment on Matthew 19 and as propaganda against marriage, -- because marriage prevented absolute dedication to the service of God. Jesus had stressed the permanence of the marriage bond and the difficulties of celibacy. These circumstances explain the fearful picture that is painted of Woman [see the quotation in 3.2 above].

Kramer and Sprenger also quote Cicero and Seneca to support anti-woman abstractions which centre around the very characteristics, as Dr Gerda Bell has pointed out⁷², that dominators tend to ascribe to those whom they dominate: hyper-sexuality/sensuality, greed, insubordination, extremeness of feelings, deceit, and evil thinking. On the other hand, these are also the characteristics ascribed to enemies be they weak or strong. The latter interpretation supports my model of women as active oppositionals, as well as the power-conflict theme.

c. Kramer and Sprenger's Analysis

After having presented a range of literary support for and against Woman/women, Kramer and Sprenger then make their own analysis. This is their attempt to account for there being more witches/heretics among women than among men. As it is only wicked women who are witches/heretics, their generalisations apply only to such members of their sex, -- not to all of them.

They begin their analysis with a general statement:

.. they [women] are feebler both in mind and body .. [44a]

Taken literally and out of context, this statement appears to be starkly misogynist. However, it is apparent from study of both the textual and the historical contexts that the terms 'mind' and 'body' do not have the ordinary meanings in their usage today. And this gives different connotations to the term 'feeble'. Kramer and Sprenger did not mean that women were mentally dim and physically delicate.

(1) Mind -- Intellect

As far as the intellect was concerned, what they were referring to was not acuteness or toughness of mentality, but steadiness of faith and appropriate submission.

The mind for Kramer and Sprenger had two qualities: intellect, or 'the understanding of spiritual things' , and 'natural will'⁷³. The usage of the first term is clearly stated in the following two quotations.

For as regards intellect, or the understanding of spiritual things, they seem to be of a different nature from men. [44a]

In those words they specifically equate the term 'intellect' with the phrase 'understanding' of spiritual things'. The next quotation extends this usage to include faith.

And it is clear in the case of the first woman that she had little faith; for when the serpent asked why they did not eat of every tree in Paradise, she answered: Of every tree, etc. -- lest perchance we die. [44b]

They add the comment: 'Thereby she showed that she doubted, and had little faith in the word of God'.

The weakness in understanding spiritual things and the little faith are associated with a disposition to be 'more credulous' [43b] and with their being 'naturally more impressionable' [44b]. This disposition is not necessarily bad in itself: the spirits whose impression women are dispositionally ready to receive may be good angels or bad angels.

.. women are naturally more ready to receive the influence of a disembodied spirit; and that when they use this quality well they are very good, but when they use it ill they are very evil. [44b]

They are able to make this active decision. If they make the latter choice, they are vulnerable to being made instruments of the devil in his evil aim of corrupting faith.

(2) Mind -- Will (Instinct)

The other mental quality is 'natural will'. The will is also referred to as 'memory' (in the sense of 'treasury', or 'repository' of 'instincts, which are not received through the senses' (that is, innate)⁷⁴. There are three aspects of will: influences on its motive; entry points of influence; and enactment.

The devil can have a powerful influence on motive. There are two entry points for his influence: the senses [see below] and the intellect. Because the latter is weaker in women than in men (that is, weaker in the understanding of spiritual things), the former are more susceptible to the devil. In addition, a woman's will is characterised by great vigour.

As to her other mental quality, that is, her natural will; when she hates someone whom she formerly loved, then she seethes with anger and impatience in her whole soul, just as the tides of the sea are always heaving and boiling. [44b]

This image of the sea has connotations of immense and ceaseless energy which can overwhelm men -- another allusion to build up the model of women as powerfully agonistic.

Women's enactment of will is involved in power relations which are characterised by conflict -- between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and between co-wives. In the examples given, the barren wife is less powerful than the fruitful concubine; Miriam resented the power of her brother; and husbands are dominated by wives and the families of wives.

If you do [marry], you suffer perpetual anxiety, querulous complaints, reproaches concerning the marriage portion, the heavy displeasure of your relations, the garrulousness of a mother-in-law, cuckoldom, and no certain arrival of an heir. [44a]

Co-wives were not necessarily in conflict: Socrates had a bad time of it with his two wives who supported one another against him.

This Socrates had two wives, whom he endured with much patience, but could not be rid of their contumelies and clamorous vituperations. So one day when they were complaining against him, he went out of the house to escape their plaguing, and sat down before the house; and the women then threw their filthy water over him. [45b]

Another example cites a husband who said of his dead wife: '.. she always, both in word and deed, went contrary to my commands ..'[45b]. Finally, they cited Cicero's references to wives who governed their husbands, imposed laws on them, forbade them to do what they wished, so that they could not and dared not deny their wives anything that they asked. [45b -- 46b]

There is virtually no evidence in Malleus Maleficarum of passive, subjected wives.

.. a woman will not be governed .. [46a]

In cases where a woman is dominated it seems to be usually by another woman.

Besides the particular examples, women are generalised about as being responsible for stirring up their husbands, by 'evil blandishments' and 'violent importunations', to 'anger and strife'. Again men are portrayed as the weaker, dominated by women -- symbolising the all-male Church as victims in processes of deconstruction; whereas women are agents in processes of both deconstruction and new structuration.

As for widows, no generalisation can be derived from Kramer and Sprenger that would make out widows to have been the main victims of the Inquisition because of the presumption of their being the weakest members of the community.

And if she be a widow, she takes it upon herself everywhere to look down on everybody, and is inflamed to all boldness by the spirit of pride. [46a]

Women, it is further charged, enacted their strong natural will by dominating not only their husbands but also nations. These powerful women who have overthrown nations were no more to be admired than the women who dominate in marriage -- in contrast to the admiration given to those dominant women who led conversions of individuals and nations to Christianity [see above]. In the women now being referred to, their refusal to be governed or humiliated and their will to power are deemed 'malicious'.

.. nearly all the kingdoms of the world have been overthrown by women. [46a]

The real charge against women seems to be that they lack the instinct to be dominated.

Women also have weak memories [i.e. instinct/will] and it is a natural vice in them not to be disciplined, but to follow their own impulses without any sense of what is due .. [45b]

(3) Body

Two points are immediately striking in the references of Kramer and Sprenger to the body: (i) the high incidence of barrenness and, particularly, impotence; and (ii) the association of women with concupiscence, in themselves or as causing it (through 'sensual approaches' which weaken the will) in men.

These references are read at a latent level as imagery which in the one case conveys the sense of barrenness in the Church's world-view, and in relations beyond itself in the later processes of deconstruction; and in the other case, conveys hostility to the physical content of neo-structuration -- empiricism and the Renaissance joy in nature and the human body.

(i) Barrenness

Kramer and Sprenger have been charged with being fanatically obsessed with impotence. But the Scholastics wove popular beliefs such as those surrounding impotence into their theology, so that they became accepted truths⁷⁵. Bernard of Pavia [c1195] clearly distinguished between 'frigidity', a natural and permanent impotence with any woman, and 'maleficia', a witchcraft induced affliction which caused impotence selectively -- with all but one woman, or with only one woman. The latter being imposed by witchcraft can be removed by witchcraft. The Decretals of Pope Gregory were only concerned

with natural impotence (mostly female). By the thirteenth century, the Schoolmen were associating it with sorcery. Albert and others gave it full scholastic treatment. Remedies, although they included repentance, prayers, almsgiving, exorcisms, also prescribed searching out the 'maleficium' and destroying it. Arnold de Vilanova, the foremost physician of the fourteenth century, based his prescriptions for treating impotence on belief in sorcery as its cause.

There is nothing, therefore, peculiar to Kramer and Sprenger in their references to impotence or in their scholarly or credulous treatment of it. Their attitude is not to be explained by their individual psychology or individual biographies; it is part of the scholarly tradition within which they were working -- prestigiously supported by St Thomas himself.

There are those writers who speak of men impotent and bewitched, and the fore by this impediment brought about by witchcraft they are unable to copulate, and so the contract of marriage is rendered void and matrimony in their cases has become impossible. For they say, and S. Thomas agrees with them, that if witchcraft takes effect in the event of a marriage before there has been carnal copulation, then if it is lasting it annuls and destroys the contract of marriage, and if it is quite plain that such a condition cannot in any way be said to be illusory and the effect of imagination.

Impotence caused by maleficia is not illusory. However, witches can also induce illusion: [Kramer and Sprenger. Malleus Maleficarum.] they can cause men to believe that they have been castrated. God permits the devil to work through witches in this way, because the organs of procreation were the instruments of original sin.

St Thomas (IV,340,) treating of obstructions caused by witches, shows that God allows the devil greater power against men's venereal acts than against their other actions; and gives this reason, that this is likely to be so, since those women are chiefly apt to be witches who are most disposed to such acts.

For he says that, since the first corruption of sin by which man became the slave of the devil came to us through the act of generation, therefore greater power is allowed by God to the devil in this act than in all others .. [47b-48a]

(ii) Concupiscence

The senses, like the intellect, are an entry point for the devil to enter and influence the will, which is 'directly the cause of sin' [32b].

For S. Augustine says in Book 83: This evil, which is of the devil, creeps in by all the sensual approaches; he places himself in figures, he adapts himself to colours, he attaches himself to sounds, he lurks in angry and wrongful conversation, he abides in smells, he impregnates with flavours and fills with certain exhalations all the channels of the understanding.[32a]

Thus the devil can make use of concupiscent women to achieve his ends: their voice, gait, posture and apparel are all 'vanity of vanities' which can allure and contaminate

men. Where the troubadours had sensuously celebrated human bodies and idealised love, Kramer and Sprenger sourly commented: 'the flower of love is a rose, because under its blossom there are hidden many thorns' [46b]. And they quote from misogynous literature instead.

Hear what Valerius said to Rufinus: You do not know that woman is the Chimera .. And he means that a woman is beautiful to look upon, contaminating to the touch, and deadly to keep. [46b]

Men are not only caught through their own carnal desires when they see and hear women; but woman is also 'a wheedling and secret enemy' because she, with the help of the devil, bewitches men for the sake of her own insatiable lust. They blamed Eve for this: lustful Eve succumbed to the serpent-devil and then seduced Adam.

For though the devil tempted Eve to sin, yet Eve seduced Adam. And as the sin of Eve would not have brought death to our soul and body unless the sin had afterwards passed on to Adam, to which he was tempted by Eve, not by the devil, therefore she is more bitter than death. [47a]

Woman's insatiable lust also explained why women were more likely to be witches than were men.

All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable. See Proverbs xxx .. Wherefore for the sake of fulfilling their lusts they consort even with devils. [47a-47b]

Finally, it is women's lust that was responsible for the corruption of the Church and the associated threat to the Faith.

.. we may say what is known by experience; that these women satisfy their filthy lusts not only in themselves, but even in the mighty ones of the age ..; causing by all sorts of witchcraft the death of their souls through the excessive infatuation of carnal love .. And through such men .. there arises the great danger of the time, namely the extermination of the Faith. [48a]

Concluding Comments

Kramer and Sprenger were far from being of the same stature as Augustine and Aquinas who had worked out, on the conceptual plane and in writerly manner, a world-view. Each of the latter achieved an integrated and coherent view of what the collective consciousness of the social group to which they belonged tended. Kramer and Sprenger, with Innocent VIII inheritors rather than creators, acted out the collective consciousness on the plane of action in a response that attempted to extirpate the external instead of accommodating to it. This was a symptom of internal negativity as well as an indication of the overwhelming deconstruction and neo-structuration processes of the oppositional.

Nor was Malleus Maleficarum a creative work of the order of those which Goldman has interpreted through genetic structuralism (the early philosophy of Kant, Pascal's Pensées, and certain of the plays of Racine and of Jean Genet). We do not find in the treatise the same order of coherent signficatory structure homologous to structuration processes in the world of actuality.

All the same, there are two distinct aspects of Kramer and Sprenger, and two different dimensions in their work. On the one hand, as executive and expository Inquisitors they expressed on the practical, conceptual, and expository planes the communal desire for extirpation of enemies of the Faith. This is supported by a good deal of inherited content, plus personal experience and what they had received through hearsay. On this level, Malleus Maleficarum is a scholarly treatise; a compendium of anecdotes; and a social document, both in its response to historical conditions and in its long-lasting consequences. And on this level of content, it contains three sets of material: theology, law, and witchcraft. Experts in these may seek, at this level, to match what was documented at witch trials with descriptions of witch behaviour and imputed effects in the pages of the treatise, and these with the records of anthropologists; compare judicial procedure prescribed in the text with other such prescriptions, contemporary, previous, or subsequent; or compare the theological content with that of other theological works. The background (economic, epistemological, and ideological) may also be researched at this level and related to the text.

On the other hand, at the level of structure they worked to some extent, and occasionally, on an imaginative plane. On this plane it is possible to discern through close reading of the misogynous and philogynous passages that there are homologous fragments which go beyond the manifest confines of the text; -- or, at least the hypothesis of such homology permits the discovery of certain relationships which are indicated in this chapter and developed in the chapters below which treat loci of Understanding.

What I detected below the manifest statements was a poetic expression of a communal sense of the massive processes of destructureation and neo-structuration. These processes were both endogenous in and exogenous to what the theologians were striving to preserve. I found this implicit awareness in many aspects. The nostalgic references to both women who had been Christian proselytisers and to the great men of creative theology convey a sense of contrast with the contemporary period of abandonment and decay. The attack on insubordination refers to the break-up of hierarchisation in Church and society: the instinct in women not to accept their lower position within marriage, Church, and state is matched to the insubordination, in terms of Catholic structure and doctrine

(in content and method) of religious leaders and worshippers in paganism, heresies, and proto-protestantism; and of members of social strata in the break-down in feudalism and its replacement by urban-industrial social structure . The attack on the physical was taken as attacks on the sensuality of Islamic civilisation, on the physically-oriented developments in philosophy (empiricism and nominalism), on the re-discovered classical literary texts, and on the development of the appreciation of nature and the human body by the humanists. The attack on ecclesiasticals⁷⁶ was interpreted as an acknowledgment of endogenous elements in deconstruction.

The misogynous passages were attacks on elements in the above that were associated with women, directly or indirectly, on the historical plane or through topoi and through admonitory preachings to the celibate.

In the next chapter I go on from this focus on comprehension of a structure latent within the text to the other focus of genetic structuralism -- the understanding of what is being comprehended by relating it to other partial structures -- on the one hand, the culture of women and their critical behaviour towards the Church, and, on the other hand, developments by new philosophers -- and to the over-arching totality of the tension-laden co-existence of pre-modern and emergent modern.

CHAPTER FOUR. UNDERSTANDING — (A) VIRTUALITY

Introductory

This section develops the concept of 'virtuality' as applied to the churchmen's 'seeming of women', and presents something of its circumstances and content in terms of: Biblical and literary topoi; the distancing of the literate Latin clergy from the secular illiterate, and of a celibate clergy from the feelings, thoughts, and activities of women; and new content and new developments in philosophy.

Biblical and literary topoi are Land/Nation, Flesh/Lust, Church, and Philosophy. Connotations of the first and second associated women with disasters, and made them seem causes of these disasters.

Distancing of the secular and ecclesiastical worlds was maintained by the Church monopoly of literacy, Latin, and books. Women were particularly distanced because they were generally not known in their everyday lives to the clergy, but only in extraordinary circumstances. Priests, excluding women from their lives as they did (except in their personal irregular unions with mistresses or prostitutes), mainly encountered them in sin -- of physical indulgence or intellectual rebellion -- through the confessional or torture-chamber. Their virtuality of women was thus, necessarily, fraught with rebellion of flesh, mind, and feelings. To counterbalance this, they had, it may be interjected, the Virgin Mary;⁷⁷ but here there were impossible expectations in the contradictory concepts of virginity and motherhood, on the one hand, and of meekness and power on the other. Therefore, women inevitably fell far, far short of the model set up for them.

The three foci in philosophy that were relevant to women and to major deconstruction and construction processes were: the nominalism-realism debate (which included debate about the status of the human individual and the status of sense evidence from natural phenomena, as against the status of the authorities); development and application of the dialectical method (with associated debate about the relationship between faith and reason, -- and again the status of the human individual); and waves of new content from Greek, Arab, and Jewish sources -- philosophical, theological, humanist, and scientific -- giving a new emphasis and respect to nature and human reason, promoting the breakaway of philosophy from theology, and weakening the traditional authorities.

Implicated with all three foci are changes in ethics, which were deconstructural in that reason was put at the service of criticism of Church belief and the clergy's corrupt practices; and in that priority was given to the individual over the divine or the common will.

4.1 TOPOI

This sub-section presents something of the content of the ecclesiastics' virtuality in terms of biblical topoi and personification of Late Antiquity and Mediaeval periods. There were negative or positive elements for the virtuality inasfar as there were negative or positive connotations of the topoi.

Metaphor was an important vehicle for the development of the theologians' virtuality and for the survival of misogynous or philogynous attitudes. From the Old Testament onwards, Woman/women have been metaphorically identified with Land/Nation, Flesh/Lust, the Church, and Philosophy. Consequently, negative situations -- drought for Land, defeat for Nation, lapsing and proselytisation in Religion, Philosophy as threatening (instead of ancillary) to theology, and moral and economic corruption in the Church are, in the same metonymous mode, associated with Woman/women. Further, Woman/women may have the blame transferred to them, as it was transferred to Land/Nation by a people who believed that natural disasters were punishment for forsaking Yahweh.

Women might also, conversely, be glorified by metaphor. [see below]

E.R. Curtius finds a 'striking frequency' of woman metonymised as nature and as city, in both pagan and Christian authors of late Antiquity. These female ideal figures seem to him to form part of the world of experience, 'often something wholly different from personified abstractions'. Ancient gods and goddesses haunted the dreams of pagans converted to Christianity.

Even in sleep we see, hear, and know the gods whom by day we impiously repudiate, reject, and offend by our forswearing. [Minucius Felix. Octavius, 7,6. Quoted in Curtius, 102]

And for even the most sophisticated of Christian theologians, 'a multitude of supersensuous beings' in the space between human beings and God -- angels, devils, and the visions of astrology -- were part of the mental paraphernalia and as readily available for rational written exposition as for oral narrative or fantasy.

They peopled the psychological cosmos of Late Antiquity: sybils, tutelary spirits, demons, supernatural redeemers and noxious creatures. In art as

in the coins of the empire, in the visions of monks as in pagan poetry, such figures confront us. Often we think that we are moving through a hallucinated world, through a world of waking dreams. Visions and dreams have immense power .. [Curtius, 102]

Kramer and Sprenger were inheritors of this psychological cosmos of Late Antiquity; of the influx of re-discovered fictitious beings from classical literature and religion; and of the Biblical topoi drawn from historical sources. All of these helped to shape their rational responses to the economic, political, and ecclesiastico-theological problems of their era. The following few pages provide brief details of selected topoi.

a. Land/Nation

The Land/Nation is presented at first as a faithful and loved bride of Yahweh.

I remember the unailing devotion of your youth,
the love of your bridal days,
when you followed me in the wilderness,
through a land unsown.
Israel then was holy to the Lord,
the first fruits of his harvest;
no one who devoured her went unpunished,
evil always overtook them.
[Jeremiah 2]

But when the people of Yahweh were faithless to Yahweh they came to be personified as a wanton woman.

You sat by the wayside to catch lovers,
like an Arab lurking in the desert.
and defiled the land
with your fornication and your wickedness.
Therefore the showers were withheld
and the spring rain failed ..
[Jeremiah 2]

These metaphors, by means of which the Old Testament prophet-priests drew symbolic analogy between the Hebrew people in their lapse from fidelity to Yahweh and women who did not conform to their notions of sexual morality, were used extensively by Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and Nahum. They were applied in historical reality to Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem, in reference to the clash between two cultures over possession of territory and over sexual ideology. For both cultures, sexuality was centred on women because of the promotion, on the one hand, of the 'hieros gamos' by pagan cultures as ritual fertilising of the individual woman, the nation, and the nation's earth; and the attack by the priests of Yahweh on sexual activity as polluting the individual woman -- and through her, the land, and the earth. They believed that Yahweh punished the people for infidelity by making their land polluted and barren.

Plead with her to forswear those wanton looks,
 To banish the lovers from her bosom.
 Or I will strip her and expose her

 I will make her bare as the wilderness,
 parched as the desert,

 Therefore I will take back
 my corn at the harvest and my new wine at the vintage ..
 [Hoseah 2]

The historical reason for the punishing wrath of Yahweh is made explicit: His people worshipped the indigenous pagan deities instead of Him.

I will put a stop to her merry-making,
 her pilgrimages and new moons, her sabbaths and festivals,
 when she burnt sacrifices to the Baalim,
 when she ran after her lovers and forgot me.
 [Hosea 2]

These lines which refer to the confrontation between the religions of the goddess and the religion of Yahweh are ancestral to the blame -- as cause of bad seasons and disease -- imputed to pagans, witches, heretics, and women by Innocent VIII and by Kramer and Sprenger. And the cure is derived from the same source. If the faithless ones are removed or persuaded to return to God, the consequences of His wrath will be lifted.

Come back to me, apostate Israel,
 says the Lord,
 I will no longer frown on you.
 For my love is unfailing, says the Lord,
 I will not be angry for ever.
 Only you must acknowledge your wrong-doing
 confess your rebellion against the Lord your God.
 Confess your promiscuous traffic with foreign gods
 under every spreading tree,
 confess that you have not obeyed me.
 This is the very word of the Lord.
 [Jeremiah 3]

This was the rationale behind the Inquisition, if its policy and actions are to be interpreted as rational responses to negative situations -- economic, political, and ecclesiastical -- not as blind scape-goating or as male cruelty towards females. Women equated with Land/Nation equated with infidelity to God were imaginatively and ratiocinatively imbued with cause and held to blame.

b. New (Christian) Jerusalem

Woman was originally good -- personified as virgin in the early Jewish community. After the wanton period, woman is again good: the personification of the new Christian communi-

ty to which the old Jewish community had given place.

God's people are now the Christians, and the woman becomes the Church, the new Israel, with no break in continuity. [Geoffrey Ashe]

The description of the Bride, the New Jerusalem in Revelation is preceded by the following celebratory lines:

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the throne: 'Now at last God has his dwelling among men! .. and they shall be his people .. He will wipe every tear from their eyes; there shall be an end to death, and to mourning and crying and pain; for the old order has passed away' .. 'Behold! I am making all things new!' [Revelation 2]

Then one of the seven angels said, 'Come, and I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb'. [Revelation 21]

These passages strongly counter the negative images of the wanton wife and the barren land -- and provide a base for philogyny among both ecclesiasticals and women.

c. Church

According to Genesis, God created male and female in his own image. Augustine extended the meaning to convey that male and female were together created in body as well as in spirit; but woman represents the body, the lower, and man represents spirit, the higher. From this conception, metaphorical extension presented man as the head of the woman, as Christ is the head of the Church: Eve was created from the side of the sleeping Adam, as the Church was created from the dying Christ.⁷⁸

Thus in metaphor/^{woman}represented flesh (in pejorative contrast to man as spirit or reason); and woman represented the potentially glorious but corruptible Church. When the Church was corrupt, in morals or in material greed, the equation of woman with the Church afforded denigratory connotations to women: consequently the blame for the Church may be transferred to Woman/women, who according to the topos is the Church.

d. Philosophia

Among the best-known mediaeval women are literary and pictorial personifications of abstract concepts. [Michael Evans. 'Allegorical Women and Practical Men: the Iconography of the "Artes" Reconsidered' in Mediaeval Women, ed. Derek Baker, 1978, page 305]

Among these personifications is Philosophia. There is also Rhetorica and Dialectica. Even where, in a miniature prefacing an early fourteenth-century copy of the Livre du Trésor of Brunetto Latini, all but one of the twenty-one 'artes' are portrayals of males practising them, all the activities are contained under the outstretched arms of female Philosophia.

When philosophy is regarded as ancillary to God or the Church, women may benefit from this personification. When it is in opposition -- as with the new learning associated with the Universities -- women may share the hostility that it incurs.

4.2 LEARNING

There are themes and concepts within philosophy that have been directly and indirectly, supportive of or deleterious to women; and that have been important elements within ecclesiastical virtuality of women. These themes and concepts include teleology, dualism/monism, active/passive, realism/nominalism, and the dialectical method.

The next three paragraphs treat the first three in the list very briefly. The following sub-sections treat more fully -- as being more significantly relevant to processes of structuration and destructuration -- nominalism and the dialectical, plus the new content derived from the recovery and discovery of classical and Arab writings.

A teleological notion was used to support prescriptions regarding the subordination of wives to husbands: woman was created in order to be a helpmeet of man.

.. the position of a woman was governed exclusively by her purpose in the mind of the Creator as the Bible had expressed it. There was no possibility or desire of assigning to woman an inferior place because of her lesser capacity for goodness or divine love .. As human souls men and women were equal, as saints a woman might be a better lover of God than a man. [Jarrett]

This particular conception could be extended to a more general conception of woman as inferior to man, and subject to him for that reason. Aquinas held that only men could receive the sacrament of orders; and he saw men as having vigour of soul and body, in contrast to woman's frailty of nature'. [Supplement to the tertia Pars of the Summa. Cited in Bede Jarrett, 1966, page 73]

Thus Aristotle's distinction between active and passive continued to be put to the misogynous service of allotting the superior active to the male and the inferior passive to the female. This gave philosophical rationality to awarding fathers the formal power

in civic and political matters; and it decreed that a father should be loved more than a mother. The former was deemed to be the active male partner begetting upon a passive female, who merely provided incubation facilities for the active male seed: '.. he is the active principle whereas the mother (physiologically) is a passive and material principle'.⁷⁹

The problem of accounting for evil in a monotheistic theology was partially solved by deeming the Devil and/or Woman the evil principle. Presumably this smuggled-in dualism was particularly manifest in times of calamity and of religious infidelity when people were seeking alternative explanations. Woman as cause is a passive principle if she is related to the devil as a subordinate who is his instrument, on the analogy of woman as subordinate to the man in marriage.

All these conceptions are part of the confused currents within the twin concepts of realism and nominalism. [see below]

Organisation of the material in the following sub-sections of this chapter is as follows:

The first briefly contrasts the two segregated cultures, clerical Latin and vernacular lay; relates these to the growth of intolerance in the face of the threats in multiplicity; and points out the particular vulnerability of women because of their association with vernacularisation and their exclusion from the centres of learning.

The second presents the matrix of structuration and destructuration located in philosophy. It is divided into four parts, each of which treats realism/nominalism, the dialectical method, new content in philosophy, and ethics, respectively.

a. Background: Two Cultures

(1) Clerical Latin

In 622, when Isadore of Seville compiled his encyclopaedic work, Etymologiae, this, with St Augustine's City of God, Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy (623), and the latter's translation of some Greek philosophers, provided the basis of knowledge of the classical world.⁸⁰ However, from the ninth century Carolingian renaissance onwards the old Graeco-Roman learning was becoming more and more available.⁸¹ Charlemagne had established schools in every monastery and cathedral, and these were flourishing centres

of intellectual life. The former were the great promoters of the study of the liberal arts and the ecclesiastical disciplines.⁸²

This culture remained, until the twelfth century, a Latin and monastic culture beyond the Alps -- 'a Latin movement, a revival of Roman law, of the Latin classics, of Latin poetry, of a philosophy and theology which had roots in Boethius and the Latin Fathers'.⁸³

Although the orientation was not to original creation nor the attainment of new truths , and, in general, was directed towards applying this learning uncritically -- and undisturbingly -- to the better understanding of the Scriptures and the Christian faith, it did stimulate a few minds.⁸⁴

From the eleventh century onwards, conflict between faith and reason, and between the dialectic and non-dialectic were central to mediaeval thought. The issue was not merely abstract: it was a constituent element in wider issues in the regnum-sacerdotium struggle, which reached its first climax in the struggle between Pope Gregory VII and the German Emperor Henry IV. It was part of the general movement for religious reform, and for the ending of secular control which interfered with spiritual responsibilities. For example, Peter Damian who denied the dependence of the Church upon the emperor also denied the admission of reason to the interpretation of revelation.⁸⁵

Education was extremely narrow. Emphasis was on the learning of singing and ceremonial, some understanding of the scripture and explanation of rites. There were no lay schools. The use of Latin, which was introduced with the Carolingian renaissance as the medium for education, restricted access to the written tradition. Latin was the only language taught. 'To be able to read was simply to be able to read Latin'.⁸⁶

Thus there were two sectors in the society of Western civilisation:

On the one hand, the language of the educated, which was almost uniformly Latin; on the other, the variety of tongues in everyday use .. [Marc Bloch, Feudal Society, 1961, page 75.]

Obviously, this basic division was more than merely linguistic. The 'universal' language of the educated made them able to communicate across nations, but made them remote from other strata within their own societies. Ethnic and geographic differences did not prevent communication among the international literate elite; class and sex, lay and ecclesiastical differences did.

Books were prohibitively expensive to all but the monasteries. Written by hand on parchment, they required both labour and materials that were not available elsewhere. Monks

had time, required no wages, and monasteries could use the skins of their own sheep⁸⁷. Only the wealthiest families were likely to possess any books at all -- and these were mostly religious service books. Libraries were in existence only in monasteries, cathedrals, and, latterly, universities.⁸⁸ The number of volumes and their range was tiny. The Benedictine Order had a policy of copying and collecting books, but even their prosperous Abbey of Reading took about a century to accumulate its first two hundred volumes. Judging from the catalogues of Rievaulx and the Austrian cloisters, there was little secular literature in the cistercian libraries⁸⁹. The library of Clairvaux has been reconstructed:

.. the codices of the twelfth century are almost wholly scriptural, patristic, and liturgical, with a little history, some textbooks, and a few classics. Law, medicine, philosophy, the scholastic theology are almost entirely lacking. [Haskins, 1957, page 45.]

A typical library in the twelfth century had little beyond 'the Bible and the Latin Fathers, with their Carolingian commentators, the service books of the church and the various lives of saints, the text-books of Boethius and some others, bits of local history, and perhaps certain of the Latin classics ..'⁹⁰. In Chaucer's day, one of England's largest libraries, that at Canterbury Cathedral, had about 7000 volumes; and until the middle of the fifteenth century, the entire library of Oxford University fitted into a room only 45 by 20 feet⁹¹.

The universities of northern Europe developed out of the cathedral schools of the Carolingian renaissance as the main focuses for the rebirth of learning in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They were centres of conflicting tendencies: Aristotle versus orthodoxy; and a secular versus a theocratic conception of life and learning.⁹² However, they retained their ecclesiastical character -- so much so that ultimately 'a university came to be defined as having a licence from the Pope to be a place of studies'⁹³.

The Dominicans (tending to be Aristotelians) and Franciscans (tending to be Augustinians) contributed, particularly at Paris and Oxford, nearly all the great scholars in university thought. The Dominicans -- from the first, theologically trained and organised as a body devoted to learning -- had their own schools at the universities, and were exempted from the pre-requisite of a six-year arts course. They thus escaped some at least of its influence. And their cohesion as distinct bodies strengthened their own particular tenets. Representing as they did the main strength of the theological faculty, the struggle between philosophy and theology was, especially at Paris, the struggle between the secular scholars and the Friars.⁹⁴

(2) Secular and Vernacular

Something of the Carolingian renaissance reached, through monastic and episcopal schools,

even peasant priests and through some of these the laity. At the same time, classical literature inspired the composition of secular verse⁹⁵. Lay culture persisted in Italy and France where law and medicine (Italy) and the seven 'liberal arts' (France) flourished, along with philosophy, theology, Latin poetry and vernacular verse⁹⁶. The suppression of pagan beliefs and practices which was an outcome of the increasing organisation of the Church,⁹⁷ may have been another positive condition for the stream of lay thinking in as far as it found compensation for this in the stimulus of new content and its by-product of enquiry. These new developments, potentially as destructive to paganism as to orthodox Christianity, may have set many thinkers on new paths leading away from ancient beliefs.

By the end of the twelfth century, both history and literature in the vernacular were established.⁹⁸ Familiarity with the ancient, re-discovered Greek and Roman literature proved conducive in the twelfth century renaissance, as in the Carolingian, to use of the vernacular and the flourishing of literature among the people. Developments in both of these fields held threats to the status quo.

Vernacularisation of history was a tremendous blow to control of learning and associated world-view by the clergy. Courtiers and citizens came to demand history in their own language of their own lay world, as seen by its inhabitants with their own eyes, undistorted by translation and the clerical vision.

By 1200 vernacular history had come to stay, and this fact is one of more than linguistic or literary significance, since it involved ultimately the secularisation and popularisation of history. So long as history was confined to Latin, it perforce remained primarily as an affair of the clergy and reflected their preoccupations and view of the world. [Haskins, 1957, page 275.]

In literature, the troubadours sang of physical love and profane joy. This included the 'jois'. supreme, individual happiness that an individual could seek and discover through the three planes of 'amors' -- without relationship to God.

There is the worldly plane of physical desire which may possibly be expressed within the conventions of courtly society; there is a plane of dreamlike imagining in which the poet puts distance between himself and his earthly love and finds escape in an illusory joy; and there is a 'transcendental' place which is removed from everyday pleasures and imagined satisfactions and which, because of its excellence, promises a supreme joy from which good results follow .. these three planes of love coincide with the three types of experience to be found in mediaeval philosophy, the sensual, the imaginary and the visionary. [Topsfield, 1975, pages 44-45.]

This scheme, evolved for courtly society, not for the monastic or ecclesiastical, presented a blasphemous parody of the established philosophical and theological edifice.

Courtly man seeks happiness here on earth, within himself and in society. [Topsfield, 1975, page 86.]

Besides the articulation of these rival values, the prescriptive marital relations between the sexes are reversed in the extra-marital: women are ascribed the position of superiority.

His submission to the 'domna' is feudal and complete; happiness lies in the reward of a glance, a love token, a kiss, the sight of her naked body. The 'domna' holds power of happiness and sorrow, life and death, she is a deity whose mercy can release him from the prison in which amors has set him. Bernart proclaims his devotion to 'Amor' and the 'domna' with mind and body, and his entire natural being. [Topsfield, 1975, page 113.]

Moreover, the divinely ordained social order is blasphemed as the knight, helpless, dependent on the mercy of his 'domna', makes his feudal submission to her:

Noble lady, I ask of you nothing but that you should accept me as your servant, for I will serve you as I would a noble lord .. [Topsfield, 1975, page 115.]

The social blasphemy does not lie in the fact that the male is servant to the female -- the existing social hierarchy required this at nearly all levels (for example, men served abbesses, princesses, and ladies). The blasphemy lies in the non-feudal, non-Catholic grounds of the hierarchisation of female over male, or of any individual over another individual on non-institutionalised grounds. Worse, all hierarchisation other than that of lover and 'domna' is negated by the claim that love 'puts poor men and rich on the same footing ..'⁹⁹

The reversal of order and the blasphemy are extended to nature. Nature and order ought to be in the power of God, but the poet gives them into the power of an individual woman.

Now I cannot see the light of the sun, so much are its rays darkened for me. I am not at all distressed by this for a light as brilliant as the sun shines upon me from the love which casts its rays into my heart .. The meadows seem to me green and scarlet as in the sweet maytime. So firmly does true love keep me happy and joyful that the snow is white and scarlet blossoms to me and the winter is the calends of May, for the most gracious and joyous lady has promised to grant me her love. [Topsfield, 1975, page 121.]

Clearly the vernacular language and its content in troubadour songs afforded great scope for women to build up positive images of women, and for the ecclesiastics to build up images of women as generative of disorder. Even if individual women did nothing in this movement of vernacularisation and secularisation which was threatening the values and social strata of the Mediaeval Model, they could easily be associated with a trouble-making stereotype which was contributing to the women-virtuality of Kramer and Sprenger.

The translation of the Bible into the vernacular (the Beguines [see below] were active

in this) -- plus the development of the printing press -- coincided with, supported, and received support from the new respect for the intellect and the dignity of man. These events and developments set off widespread reverberations. In the first place, they weakened the social control that the clergy had held as being virtually the only literates and the only Bible hermeneuts. In the second place, people who could read the Bible acquired a general interest in other, and undesirable books -- atheistical, heretical, pagan, or sensual. In the third place, the inconsistencies and sexism of the biblical authors -- or their hermeneuts -- became visible to all who could read and think critically.

Philosophy may be said to have been galvanised by these developments in the vernacular and through the printing press: philosophers spent less time on commentaries on authorities and more time on original -- and critical -- thinking¹⁰⁰.

(3) Re-Awakening and Intolerance

The twelfth century accommodated a broad range of opposing intellectual and spiritual viewpoints -- of Christians, Jews, Muslims, and heretics¹⁰¹.

Peter Lombard, the leader of twelfth century scholasticism was tolerant. He interpreted St Paul's words 'heresies there must be' to mean:

We need heretics, not because of their teaching but because they stimulate us as Catholics in our search for truth and for a proper understanding of everything in our world. [Quoted by Heer, 1961, page 149.]

Abelard was also tolerant: he defended the rights of heretics to their own conscience, even if they were in error.¹⁰² Both of these thinkers were oriented to structuration rather than defence of structure.

The thirteenth century was characterised by a range of sometimes contradictory characteristics. Direct access to texts was opening up new worlds of mind and spirit, of humanity and nature. Not only were there developments in comparative scholarship and language, but there was an awakening sense of the dignity and importance of the individual. This was the beginning of the period usually referred to as 'the Renaissance' during which enthusiasm and curiosity were licensed to find magnificent expression. Giotto's [1276-1337] paintings and Dante's literature [1265-1321] 'facilitated the transition from mediaeval symbolism to the exaltation of nature'¹⁰³. Petrarch [1304-1374] expressed the deep dimensions of feeling that characterised this new movement. Boccaccio [1313-1375] the sensual capacities, and Leonardo da Vinci [1452-1519] scientific curiosity.

At the same time, a feeling was developing for the dignity of the human being in the hierarchy of creation. Pico della Mirandola [1463-1504] imagined God as saying to man, his creation, '.. we have set thee at the world's centre that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world .. so that with freedom of choice and with honour, as though the maker and moulder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer ..'

All this was in strong contrast with the dry logic of abstract, authority-monitored thought that characterised the earlier period; and in strong contrast with the view of man held by Innocent III and his successors, as 'debilitated by sin'. This earlier logic and set of values were now being directly threatened by new structuration processes. The defenders of the old structure, oriented to the unitary, reacted with fear, misunderstanding, and intolerance. Their response was the attempt to extirpate multiplicity and criticism by extirpating those who voiced them.

How could any man call himself a Christian and repudiate the Church? How could anyone who declared that the Church and the whole of Christendom were in error still remain a Christian. [Heer, 1961, page 149]

Questions like the above underlay the intolerance that developed in the later twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, a period that was characterized by scholasticism, academic learning and the exclusive Church of the Canonists and the wordly papal politicians. 104

Dominic founded the Dominican Order under Innocent III for the express purpose of suppressing the Albigensian heretics¹⁰⁵. After the latter were exterminated in the 1208-1209 Crusade, the Inquisition was set up, staffed largely by Dominican Friars¹⁰⁶. The Order hunted out heretics, Jews, infidels, and pagans¹⁰⁷.

.. there was to be no liberty for erring consciences, a heretic must either be converted or liquidated. They were to be liquidated 'by the sword, by fire, by the militant learning of the new universities'¹⁰⁸ (to quote the charter of the University of Toulouse, founded in 1229 to help pacify the defeated and heretical southern regions of France). [Heer]

Possession of the Bible was forbidden. The synod of Toulouse issued, in 1229, 'the first of a long series of ecclesiastical prohibitions and restrictions on reading the Bible in the vernacular. The only books allowed -- and they had to be in Latin -- were the psalter, the breviary, and the Virgin's Book of Hours.'¹⁰⁸

With the appearance of the Inquisition, the Middle Ages became, in both Church and State, a closed society, which demanded 'abject surrender of conscience and intellect'.

There must be no arguing with heretics. [Heer, 1961, page 215.]

In Italy, Emperor and Pope evolved new codes of laws against heretics. The Emperor saw a heretic in every rebel against his rule. In 1232 the burning of heretics became a law of the Empire; and the Pope supported this in his papal territories. These innovations were opposed throughout the rest of the country by the people of Italy, Germany, and southern France; but opposition was gradually broken down.

These developments were very relevant to women who were necessarily at peculiar risk in the face of intolerance. In the first place, their presence in the heretical sects was highly visible in that they there had equal status with men and could hold office. This contrast to their subordinate position and exclusion from office in the Catholic sect could have the effect of drawing more attention to them than to male members. In the second place, they were closely and generatively associated with vernacularisation (which threatened the Church's monopoly of learning). They (for example, the Beguines) translated the Bible or read it to themselves and others in translation. Thus they were able to use its content, in defence against misogynous quotations or in counter-attack. And they appeared in vernacular literature in terms that threatened existing values, both secular and theological -- celebrating the body¹⁰⁹, parodying the knight-vassall relationship, idealising love outside marriage, blaspheming God in imputing His powers over nature to a woman, and attaining independence of God through secular love. [see a. (ii) in this chapter.] In the third place -- and most importantly -- they were inadvertently involved in certain aspects of destrurational and neo-structural developments in philosophy. Their exclusion from ecclesiastically-controlled centres of learning deprived them of formal learning in theological and philosophical argument. But this did not mean complete insulation. Leakages were inevitable between the women's world of market-place, field and family, on the one hand, and the library world of scholars on the other. Occasions for this were greatly increased in the period of de non recipiendis sororibus [see chapter five, below] and of the inquisitorial prosecutions. Moreover, besides what leakages there may have been, there was sufficient overlap between the content and methods of women-culture -- empiricism¹¹⁰, a nature content, and nominalism -- for certain coincidences to seem to be heretical. The same would have been true of men in the oral culture: but in the case of men, the general impact was tempered by the many counter-instances, whom the ecclesiastics could readily meet, of the learned non-heretical individuals in the learned elite. There were no learned women in the elite to temper the virtuality. Thus they may well have seemed, as a sex, to have dispositional poverty in the understanding of spiritual things; and therefore to outnumber men as heretics. They were excluded from learning what the theologians deemed to be spiritual things; both because of this and because of the coincidence of the new developments with their own values and practices, many of them may have

unwittingly uttered questions, comments, and statements that were deemed heretical.

Exclusion meant that women were deprived of opportunities to learn protective sensitivity to where philosophical or commonsense argument encroached on the theological. Nor could they know where the subtle, unstable lines were drawn between heresy and the permissible.

b. The Matrix of Philosophy

The content of abstract thought was made up, over the centuries, of a multitude of different concepts which sometimes jostled one another uncomfortably¹¹¹. The main sources were: the Bible, the Fathers, Greek philosophy (especially that of Plato and Aristotle); Neoplatonism of third and fourth centuries AD; Arabian and Jewish thought (especially Alfarabi, Avicenna, Averroes, Avicbrol, Maimonides) in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries; and a general smattering of Greek and Arabian science (for example, Euclid's mathematics and Alacen's astronomy).¹¹²

As multiplicity is pregnant with criticism, scholars had been busied with comments and defences. This accelerated effusively with the influx of the recovered and discovered learning through the Arabs in the period that centred, roughly, on the twelfth century. Within all these eddies, streamlets, and tides, there was one great matrix of structuration and destructuration located in philosophy, particularly in ways, contents of, and attitudes to, knowing. Mediaeval thinking had been characterised by the Fathers onwards by the priority of faith over reason. Reason was permitted to intrude only on the condition that it elucidated in order to support the fundamental tenets of faith. This was a break in thinking from the ground that faith was its own justification; but reason remained subject to being directed by faith. Scholastic knowledge remained within a dogmatic framework, -- and it was within this that faith and reason had to harmonise in a hierarchical relationship.¹¹³ And it was within this framework that the dialectical method with its strong potential for destructurational critique was developed and applied; and that the nominalist-realist debate -- which included attitudes to nature and to the evidence presented by natural phenomena -- flourished.

Women were affected, directly and indirectly, by these changes.

The dialectical method was basically a method of the market-place where it was doubtless practiced by townswomen as well as by townsmen; and therefore available to them in argument with ecclesiastics. Nominalism logically freed women from generic participation in the sin of Eve -- Eve having been conceived of as the species or common essence,

and each individual woman merely a variant --, and insofar as nominalism supported

The new content -- in its mere variety as well as in its acceptance of nature -- supported the physical (in the sense of, the human sensual body) and empirical aspects, and the critical-multiplicity [see chapter two, above] of women-culture.

(1) The Nominalism-Realism Debate

This sub-section briefly outlines the history of the realism-nominalism debate, including its heretical aspects and its relevance to concepts of nature and the senses; and indicates relationships between the rise of nominalism to overall change, the strengthening of individuation, and the reaction of heresy-hunting.

For realists, such as Anselm [1033-1109], the universal or general term, really had existence -- it was that in which all reality inhered, and it came before all individuals. The individual was merely a variant on a common essence.¹¹⁴ William of Champeux [1070-1121], for example, held that the species existed fully in every individual. Individuals were differentiated from the species only by local modification.

The same reality remains entire in each of the individuals of a species; they contain no diversity of essence but receive variety only from the multitude of accidents. [Leff, 1958, page 106.]

Realists in discounting individuals also discounted the senses and nature. For them ideas were the only reality; and the senses were a source of deception. Roscelin of Brittany [1050-1120], for a time a teacher of Abelard, seems to have been the first to re-introduce from Aristotle the challenge to realism. He thought that universals were merely words ('flatus vocis', breath/voice). He saw the individual -- not the universal -- as the sum of all reality, 'neither divisible in itself nor part of a whole'¹¹⁵. His theory of knowledge also included sense-empiricism. His views were condemned at Soissons and at Rheims, and brought suspicion upon the use of the dialectic¹¹⁶. Among others who recognised the need to relate Ideas and the world of everyday were Adelard of Bath [12th cent.] and Bernard of Chartres [fl. 1114-1124]; but they retained the concepts of the deceiving senses and of the hierarchy of eternal Ideas and Ideas immanent in things. It was William of Conches [1080-1145] who, heretically and pantheistically, closed the gap between God, nature and natural knowledge. He almost excluded faith in his concern to provide natural evidence to support the Christian belief in creation (largely influenced by Plato's Timaeus). He pantheistically extended the Holy Spirit into nature. Consequently, St Bernard had him condemned for heresy.¹¹⁷

Peter Abelard [1079-1142] developed the psychological aspects of Roscelin's challenge to the realists by exploring how the mind arrives at general concepts. He came to realise that knowledge of the universal can only be derived through intellectual activity from the individual.

Through our minds working upon the things encountered in the senses we are able to distinguish their common status. In the final analysis, the universal is a concept which the mind abstracts from the individual: 'because all clear understanding seems to derive from individuals, when we have grasped them through the senses we recall them through the intellect'. [Leff, 1958, pages 109-110]

In giving this status to nature and the senses, he undermined authority.

Although many authorities appear to agree [in regarding genera and species as things, and thus denying existence to individuals[, it contradicts nature in every respect. [cited in Leff, 1958, page 108]

Thomas Aquinas also rejected Plato's contradiction between 'the flux of the sensible world and the stability of our ideas' and his principle that reality corresponded to ideas.

.. whereas all Christian thinkers before him had sought to explain the effect by the cause, he .. instead of trying to explain God in His own transcendent terms, he began with what could be known from His creatures. He did not dismiss the sensible world as a shadow and its existence as unreal; but as the surest evidence open to us of reality. He turned the Augustinian world upside down ..

In contrast to the theologians who had found the thought of Aristotle, with its focus on movement and change, impossible to apply to God, Aquinas set himself to reconcile the 'transitoriness of this world with the eternity of God' by hylomorphism derived from Aristotle's concept of being as made up of two different states -- potency and act. Aristotle's concepts allowed for coming into being and going out of existence; and his concept of 'matter' allowed for individuation among individuals of the same species.

Aquinas' theory generated most opposition when applied to man. Man was conceived of as a material body and a spiritual soul. The latter was believed by the Augustinians to receive direct spiritual illumination from God. But Thomas Aquinas thought that the senses were the source of all human knowledge: '.. nothing exists in the intellect unless first in the senses'. His incorporation of the principle of potency and act meant that he denied the spiritual independence of the soul: he presented it as 'the form of the body -- actively united with matter'.

The human soul .. was dependent upon the body, its knowledge was from sensibles, and it was in itself devoid of innate ideas. [Leff, 1958, page 222]

Man's active intellect was unable to participate directly (as angels do) in the divine light of God, because his spiritual soul was joined with a material body. Therefore, he was dependent upon sensible experience.

. for St Thomas theology and reason were both distinct and yet complementary; and this indeed was the clearest expression of his outlook. .. The relation between faith and reason, therefore, marked at once the essential difference and the inherent unity between God and His creatures. Accordingly, St Thomas, like Albert made a sharp distinction between the two: faith came from revelation, and dealt with divine truths which were not accessible to reason; reason, on the other hand, had to start with what could be known through experience and demonstration. [see Summa theologica, Ia, q.32,a.I. Cited in Leff, 1958, page 215.]

Kramer and Sprenger were in the tradition of nominalism -- most relevantly, in that they distinguished individual women, good and evil; and they recognised that the term 'lust of the flesh'¹¹⁸ is a universal under which all women have been subsumed. Realism denies the differentiation of individual women; and deals with women as a universal, Woman. But they were realists, too, in that they accepted Eve as a universal in which all women inhered, -- as a general term that really existed.

These developments towards promoting individuation and towards removing pejorative connotations from the senses and from nature inevitably contained threats to the status quo. A base was provided for individuals to query revelation and authority -- and the contemporary authorities themselves. And individuals could feel confident to select their own faith according to individual needs and understanding. Hence the promotion of heresy, and the stimulation to reaction against it.

Inasmuch as women were associated with the material over the spiritual their status was, logically at least, raised with the new respect for the individual over the general, and the empirical over -- or at least in co-existence with -- what was divinely revealed to the human spirit. Their activities were based on the empirical: nature-derived curing and healing; agriculture and food processing -- to mention two major fields. How far the logical implications relating to women were perceived or acted upon is not established; nevertheless it is taken into account in the construction of the conceptual framework with which this study is concerned.

(2) The Dialectical Method

The processes of deconstruction and structuration and the associated defensive processes may be delineated in the developments, partly within the established structure and partly outside it, that clustered around the dialectical¹¹⁹ method.

This sub-section outlines its development, and resistance to it on the grounds that human logic should not be applied to the divine.¹²⁰ It was revolutionary in that it gave a base to query and an instrument for detecting contradictions in revelatory and

other authoritative sources. The significance of the part played by Abelard is emphasised: his synthesis of faith and logic, his familiarity with market-place techniques of discussion, and his attacks from a logical ground on clerical corruption. The synthesising powers of Aquinas are delineated; his promotion of reason; his limitations stemming from his persisting in giving faith priority over reason; and the persistence of Thomism as a dead hand up to the time of the writing of Malleus Maleficarum, and in the place where it was written. His achievements and posthumous reputation are seen as ambiguous in the totality of structuration processes.

The dialectical approach meant more than merely logical rules of discussion. The fact that it threatened faith by disclosing contradictions in its literature and argument prompted representatives of the older monastic culture -- which had always subordinated all learning to theology -- to oppose the use of the dialectical in theological and philosophical discussions. Chief among those who strongly opposed thus applying the logical rules of inference to religious dogma was Peter Damian [1007-1072]¹²¹.

That which is from the argument of the dialecticians cannot easily be adapted to the mysteries of divine power; that which has been invented for the benefit of the syllogisms .. let it not be obstinately introduced into divine law .. let it be like a servant ready to obey her mistress. [Patrologia Latina, -- quoted in Leff, 1958, page 96]

In a tract, On Divine Omnipotence, he argued that 'the laws of nature and of logic are founded by divine power, and that God is therefore not subject to the laws He has established'.

Anselm [1033-1093] was prepared to use reason in order to elucidate problems of faith, and applied it to theological themes or dogma. There were not yet any recognised boundaries between natural and supernatural knowledge¹²². Following Augustine, he began with faith which provided the data on which to proceed by 'logically true propositions and logically valid inferences' to understanding, which is a midway stage of human consciousness, between mere belief and the beatific vision of God. We do not understand in order to believe, but we believe in order to understand; and we ought to attempt to understand that which we believe. Some parts of our faith can be demonstrated through 'necessary reasons'; but he always subjected the results of his reasoning to ecclesiastical approbation'.¹²³

Abelard [1079-1142] was central to the gathering and strengthening processes of deconstruction and neo-structuration that co-existed with processes of defensiveness of the existing structure, inasfar as he made an outstanding contribution to the development

of the dialectic. He not only directed methodical doubt to the content of theology, but he also expanded the area that was accessible to rational thought. His Sic et Non contains one hundred and fifty theological questions, 'each supported and opposed by conflicting statements, which were resolved by the rules of logic'. Thus he brought to theology the method already practised by the canonists of reconciling contradictory authorities, -- and continued a line of endogenous negativity. He stated his aim explicitly as seeking the truth through a rational investigation of the different opinions given.

By doubting we come to enquiry, by enquiring we perceive the truth. [cited by Leff, 1958, page 111]

Although the dialectical arguments for and against a wide range of theses were pursued for the sake of disputation only, rather than in order to reach a conclusion, this book 'had a considerable effect in waking people from their dogmatic slumbers .. as a solvent of prejudices and an encouragement to the fearless use of the intellect'¹²⁴. Abelard himself believed that faith and reason should remain within their own demarcated fields. Faith and associated emotionalism 'should not be allowed to stand permanently in the path of reason'. Nor should reason seek to solve the inaccessible mysteries of faith.¹²⁵ Indeed, a great part of his writings was devoted to refuting heresy.

I do not want to be a philosopher if it means resisting St Paul; I do not wish to be Aristotle if it must separate me from Christ.

What greater affront can believers receive than to have God Himself examined and for small intellects to be able to understand Him and language to discuss Him.

Nevertheless, he was dealing in more than abstracts.¹²⁶ His method was not only developed from Aristotle and a few canonist predecessors. It also derived from real life, 'as .. a heightened and intellectualised form of the many verbal contests which were a daily occurrence in mediaeval towns, in the market-places, in the town courts and in the deliberations of the council chamber, as the citizens hammered out their differences. [Heer, 1961, pages 71-72]

This hammering out of differences was only possible in the towns where freedom of speech was protected.

Aquinas supported the dialectical method in his emphasis on the importance of the art of 'disputatio'¹²⁷ for training in clear thinking, in using unambiguous and unemotive¹²⁸ terminology. This entailed the preparation of a tool which could be used for independent enquiry as well as for arguing in accord with the Scriptures.

If he fished from both banks in his formulating of a synthesis which combined pagan and infidel philosophy with Christian mystery, inasfar as he owed much to astrology; he did the same in the overlapping process of facilitating co-habitation of faith and

reason in the same mind. He had to compromise in his attempt to save the structuration; but this compromise also contributed to de-structuration. He selected from both the conservatives (represented by the conservative university theologians and the Franciscans) and the radicals (represented by Siger). Consequently, he got blamed by both wings. On the one hand, the right blamed him for having admitted 'the whole rabble of Jewish, Arab and Classical philosophers into the university and the Church'¹²⁹; and for corrupting Christian humanity through pride of unrestrained intellect; for 'soulless learning based on reason' which excluded Augustinian grace and love; and for threatening the Augustinian distinction between the 'natural' and the 'supernatural', between spirit and flesh¹³⁰. They were suspicious of his 'dispassionate rational and speculative philosophy firmly committed to its 'scientific method'¹³¹.

Thomas could not reject the intellect, as he devoured the growing number of newly discovered texts, Arab, Jewish, and classical. But, on the other hand, the left also found him unacceptable, because he failed to follow his thinking to its conclusion; and because he tried to fit it into a totally unnecessary superstructure, which distorted what it contained, Aristotle, the Arabs, and all rationalist philosophies¹³².

He did not go as far as Siger in his appreciation of the human mind, which for Aquinas was limited because it was clouded by sin: therefore, its powers could only be exercised with God's help, which was only available through obedience to him.

Everything terrestrial is a fit object of investigation, and there can be speculation about much that is celestial. The world is good; it was created by God. Man, as the child of God, was created good; but his intellectual soul has become clouded, largely as the result of sin: 'the first-born daughter of impurity is blindness of the intellect'. With God's help, however, man can still unfold all the powers of his mind and spirit and henceforth, as master of himself, and therefore master of his intellect and his will, is free to do good, to fashion his life in a wholesome good and rational manner in the light of intelligent humility. God's help is available to man through four channels: the Church, society, the exercise of the powers of the understanding, and argument with opponents. All four are a means of education, which implies opening oneself to reality as a whole in accepting obedience.

Although he gave faith and reason their own domains, (whereas the Augustinians did not make this demarcation), this did not mean that reason was independent -- its function was subordinate to faith which it served.

The foundation of Thomism was that reason supplemented faith, not denied it .. it was not knowledge in its own right or for itself. It was directed to proving the truth of revelation. .. Hence when two arguments seemed equally probable, there could be no final judgement by reason. [Leff, 1958, page 212]

It was impossible to have an independent philosophy without endangering faith. Thus Aquinas remained a theologian; he did not become a philosopher. In the first place, he did not follow reason for its own sake, without assumptions or intentions, to pursue an enquiry with an unknown answer. He already knew the Catholic answer.

Although he uses purely rational considerations throughout an argument, when his result has been reached he appeals to the authority of divine commands and prohibitions: he quotes texts showing that reason has led him to a conclusion in harmony with the Scriptures. [Russell, 1961, page 451]

In the second place, he did not believe that rational investigation should be extended to God, but only to the created world of nature, man, society, and all objects.

For we cannot understand of God what He is, but only what He is not, therefore we cannot see how God is, but only much more how he is not. [quoted in Heer, 1961, page 270]

In the third place, he considered that reason should serve theology, reason should support revelation. Although he was interested in nature for itself, inasfar as he was a philosopher, the theologian in him related nature to God. He distinguished between '.. the philosopher [who] considers creatures in that which relates to their own nature, as for example fire ..' and '.. the believer [who] considers them insofar as they are related to God, as for example, that they are created by Him'. [Contra Gentiles, II,4, quoted in Leff, 1958, page 215]

His great synthesis of 'intellect and feelings, rational philosophy and Christian theology' failed to find a society compromising enough to accept both the dogmas and truth of revelation and the laws of logic and knowledge' at the same time. The universities reduced his great edifice of faith and reason to a rigid and mechanical orthodoxy, which used his concepts as if they had eternal validity. In the top tier of the Scholastics' two-tiered theological structure were all the doctrines and dogmas of the Church. Here were all the ideas of facts about the 'supernatural', to be defended, not argued out. In the lower tier were the subjects for argument -- the objects and data of the 'natural world'. But even for these, there was no real argument, only purely verbal exercises without relationship to any concrete situation. They refrained from dealings with 'objects, reality, history or the actual political situation facing the Church'.¹³³

As for Thomas himself, at the end of his life he felt that everything that he had written was 'so much chaff -- compared with what I have seen and what has been revealed to me'. [quoted in Heer, 1961, page 270]

His contributions to structuration processes were ambivalent. On the one hand, he contributed, through his synthesising, to the traditional structuration. He enriched it by advancing the status of human reason. At the same time, he opposed the neo-structuration processes of extending this advancement to equality and autonomy. On the other hand, he contributed endogenously to destructuration. The recognition that he did give

to the human mind meant that Faith could hardly regain the power of its earlier monopoly. He facilitated the admission of 'the whole rabble' of multiplicity -- and its offspring, the critical attitude. His great edifice, because of its very greatness, put its weaknesses on display. Its contradictions drove his contemporaries and later generations to extreme attitudes towards its various aspects; and his achievement was so impressive that his concepts were taken as eternal truths, damping down further argument and consolidating the remoteness of the theological citadel.

Most importantly for this thesis, his opening up and charting new grounds for theologians -- able to be labelled (whether clearly or confusingly) 'forbidden' or 'allowable' -- created hazards for those in the oral culture who were unversed in the niceties of the theological debate: for parts of this new ground were already occupied by, for example, women who could not afford to jettison their human reason. They relied on its powers of observing nature for directing their responses -- whether midwifery or agriculture, in brewing or trading or medicine. In any discussion or argument that touched the terms of 'nature' or 'observation' or referred to use of human reason they were at risk of interpretation as heresy.

(3) New Content of Thought: Classical and Islamic Writings

In the earlier period all knowledge and thought had arranged itself .. within the system of religious metaphysics; and now there appeared by the side of this a powerful, finely articulated, coherent body of thought which the age, thirsting after real contents in its barren dialectic, was ready to take up eagerly. .. The religious thought of the West, whose highest problem had been to understand the working of divine grace, was confronted by Oriental philosophy in which the old Grecian philosophical tendency toward knowledge of Nature had at last attained metaphysical supremacy .. [Windelband, 1958, page 318-319]

A particularly disturbing factor, of external origin, was the new content for thinking. This was derived from Greek, Arab, and Jewish sources, -- philosophical, theological, humanist, and scientific. Some knowledge of Greek learning had been about for several generations, but it was occasional and ill-understood. In 622, when Isadore of Seville compiled his encyclopaedic work, Etymologiae, this, with St Augustine's City of God, Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy [623], and the latter's translation of some Greek philosophers, provided the basis of knowledge of the classical world.¹³⁴ However, from the ninth century Carolingian renaissance onwards the old Graeco-Roman learning was becoming more and more available¹³⁵. Then with the Crusades and the development of Arab and Jewish centres of learning in Spain¹³⁶, more and more became available at accelerating speed.

In the first wave, Arabic translations of Greek scientists (for example, Galen, Hippocrates, and Euclid) stimulated the development of a kind of Neoplatonism which included a curiosity about nature. Church authorities had lacked this interest. Formerly, details of style and grammar had been more important than content; but now the attitude was reversed.¹³⁷ This reversal allowed the entry of nature and various kinds of paganism; thus it was a threat to the established theological edifice.

Attitudes to Aristotle were mixed; but three trends became apparent: acceptance (with the Augustinians) of only what was in harmony with the traditions of Augustine, while rejecting the incompatible peripateticism; acceptance of Aristotle wholly, regardless of the consequences for faith (as the 'Averroists' did), thus severing faith from reason; or the incorporating of his metaphysics into Christianity (as did the Aristotelians, especially St Thomas and the Dominicans).

With Albert the Great [1206-1280], Aristotle first gained a hold among the Dominicans. Albert, whose thinking drew eclectically from Christian, Jewish, Arabian, and Aristotelian sources, was the first Christian to accept a rational treatment of natural phenomena; and the first in the West to take over Maimonides' distinction between faith and reason. His interests lay in observation, especially in zoology and botany; he believed in the importance of experiment; and he upheld natural science as something different from revealed truth¹³⁸.

Theology and philosophy were two different pursuits: theology dealt with revelation, philosophy with natural experience. This meant that neither could act as the explanation for the other. It struck at the Augustinian attempt to employ reason in what lay beyond it. The truths of dogma could not of themselves be reached from ordinary human understanding for it had no direct experience of them:

.. from a purely natural light no one can attain to knowledge of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection.

[Leff, 1958, page 208]

Thus the challenge to Christianity was met through processes of de-limitation, absorption and synthesis. Delimitation of knowledge raised the status of both reason and faith; absorption retained to various degrees the hierarchical ordering of both fields; and so, too, did synthesis. These reactions, however defensive and devoted to maintaining and/or building up the established structure, contributed to destructuration by enabling reason to intrude.

This expansion of knowledge cut away the once firm ground of mediaeval belief: metaphysical explanations were measured by the standard of the new science of nature, and found insufficient. From this the challenge to their eternal truth was but a short step. [M.A. Gibb, 1947, page 11]

(4) Ethics

The definition and practice of the good were closely associated with the realism-nominalism debate, the dialectical method; and the jostling new content. The spoken or written word which in itself had given reality and authority to feelings and thoughts of men of long ago was becoming for many now no longer valid, but mere breath. The dialectical method was inevitably corrosive of whatever criterion was set up. The new content made available challenging comparative facts and beliefs.

Abelard was a seminal influence within these processes that generated the critical attitude -- which may be identified as secularisation, nominalism/individuation, intellectualism, empiricism, and feminism. He used reason to challenge mediaeval ethics and the implication of this system for monastic practices. He discerned that one form of corruption in the Church derived from the system of ethics which 'saw guilt and expiation as a legal transaction with God'.

.. the sinner had to pay God the King a definite graduated fine for each sin, each breach of faith, just as a murderer had to pay a definite graduated fine for killing a nobleman, a clerk, or an unfree peasant.

Monasteries unscrupulously profited from wealthy sinners who expiated their sins by making rich endowments. This practice went against Abelard's emphasis on the rights of the 'inner kingdom' of mind and conscience.¹³⁹ His emphasis on the 'inner kingdom' rejected the need for a supernatural act in carrying out good acts. He effectually denied what dogma specified: 'a prevenient grace in every good action'.¹⁴⁰ The novelty of his approach '.. lay in transforming morality from a supernatural into a personal matter; in an age of objective criteria, Abelard turned to subjective values. .. it made reality rest with individual certainty, rather than with general concepts of good and evil; but it also violated the tenets of faith'.¹⁴¹

Thomas Aquinas derived his ethics from both Aristotle and Christian doctrine. From Aristotle he took over the concepts of 'common will' and 'entelechy' ('everything acts on account of an end'¹⁴², which on the ethical plane means to do good and avoid evil). From Christianity he took the notions of human will and divine grace. This confirmed the teaching that the individual had to submit to the prevailing social order, according to the mediaeval Catholic vision¹⁴³. The common will and divine grace had priority over human and individual will.

This was very different from the revolutionary approach of Boetius of Dacre [fl. c1277] who most explicitly extended the realm of the intellect beyond the true to the practice of the good. Not only did he exclude considerations of the divine in his defining good as anything that was useful to the human race; but he held that the human intellect was a divine guide to the discovery of both the good and the true.

.. for if there is anything divine in man then it is the intellect, and it is by the exercise of intellect that truth and justice are discerned and practiced; intellect, truth and right conduct make up the trinity of human beatitude. [Heer, 1961, page 264]

Aquinas, in contrast, although he respected reason as 'the radical cause of all liberty'¹⁴⁴, held that man is in a state of sin. Therefore, he is dependent upon being infused with divine grace in order to remain free from sin, to believe in and love God, and to achieve good behaviour. Original sin, which is transmitted by human nature, is indeed the substitution of human, individual will for God.¹⁴⁵ It is the gulf between God's infinite perfection and his imperfect creatures.¹⁴⁶ Thus Eve was paramount in evil for asserting her human, individual will -- just as for Kramer and Sprenger those women who asserted their individual intellects and wills heretically were evil and tools of the Devil.

Concluding Comments

The relevance of the above circumstances for deconstructural and neo-structurational processes in general, and for women in particular, are briefly indicated in these final paragraphs of this chapter.

The individual of emergent-modern gained in status, while authority -- both divine and human -- was weakened together with dependence upon it; things of the spirit and the intellect that served it were losing their priority over independent reason, the senses, the physical, and human actions. These changes were supportive of women. The authority was being weakened of those who attacked them in the abstractions of topoi or in the realism of finding them continuing participants in Eve; established values were being transmuted to ones that came near to coinciding with Eve's; the dialectical method of the market-place and the home had become a recognised instrument of philosophical and theological argument; and the physical -- both nature and the human body -- was losing its negative connotations and being positively regarded.

These overall changes and the advantages therein for women held a threat for them. In the first place, their virtuality was so much involved in the tremendous structuration that was now being endogenously and exogenously eroded, that these changes inevitably challenged it and may have seemed to come from insubordinate, corrupting Woman herself. In the second place, the new values and methods coincided sufficiently with those of women-culture (and the oral culture in general) for there to have been difficulties in assigning sources of women's questions, comments, and statements. Did these come from women themselves? if so it was evidence that they were servants of the Devil,

as they could not have got them from the higher, all-male, places of learning -- and thus they were heretics. Or did women repeat what they had learnt or overheard from male intellectual heretics? If so it was evidence that they were consorting with heretics -- and thus heretics themselves. In either case, women were, in virtuality, supporting the men and devils who were involved in deconstructural processes and in the threatening neo-structuration, -- or themselves, as a generality or as individuals, responsible for some of the aspects.

In sum, the appearance of something of the content and methods of the oral world in literate philosophy and theology made women visible in their own native culture, and caused them to be given the same heresy-hunting scrutiny as was given to the sophisticated versions. This put women in great danger in times of intolerance. For in virtuality -- however far from or close to observable behaviour and unobservable intentions of individual women this might have been -- women were both cause and symptom of the decay that was lamented and the new growth that threatened.

CHAPTER FIVE. UNDERSTANDING -- (B) POTENTIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Introductory

This chapter presents bases for both negative and positive aspects of women's potential consciousness. These include: Goddess religion; heroines; women in everyday life; heresies; the 'Frauenwebebung' and the Beguines; women-excluding hierarchisation of the Church; corruption of and neglect of responsibilities by the Church. Their presence in troubadour and other vernacular literature is also relevant: the reader is referred to Chapter Four, a. (2) above.

The first part of this chapter establishes the ancient existence, the survival and diffusion of Goddess religion. These aspects emphasise how historically deep were its roots; and how pervasive -- in how great a range of manifestations -- its continuing life, both before and in co-existence with Christianity. It provided, in layers and clusters and hybrid confusion, a vigorous and various rival to the Catholic Sect -- often strengthened by intimate association with local places, and by women-orientation.

The second part looks at aspects of women's lives in the late Middle Ages. Some major aspects are presented of their relationships with the Church -- their repulsion by the Orders, their attraction to heresies, and their breakaway movements. This part of the chapter also presents a brief overview of their work, status, and range of lifestyles. Although their status within the Church and marriage was one of subordination, this did not theoretically impose inferior status outside these institutions. Even within marriage, there was spiritual equality, -- or even superiority of wife over husband. In any case there were alternative religions and alternatives to marriage. Passive and dependent economic or religious status was not the norm in practice.

5.1 PAGANISM

a. The Great Goddess

The ancient goddess religion, insofar as it survived in oral culture, was available to temper the impact of the all-male sect of Catholicism. This section briefly indicates the evidence for its existence, survival and diffusion from the earliest human evidence

that there is until the period of Malleus Maleficarum.

(1) Material Evidence

Probably the oldest examples of representational art were female figurines. These originated among the Gravettians, the Advanced Hunters of the late Old Stone Age, who flourished from about 25,000 BC to about 10,000 BC. The figurines are generally interpreted as having religious meaning associated with fertility¹⁴⁷. There seems to be a continuity between these works and the Mother Goddess figures of the New Stone Age up to historical times.

Two of the oldest towns in the world -- Jericho 8000 BC and Catal Hüyük c6250 -- have left evidence of what is deemed to be a fertility cult which Hawkes refers to as 'the most widespread and popular cult of the age ..'¹⁴⁸. In the latter city, the supreme Goddess, in her aspects as 'Crone, Mother and Maiden' seems to have been the centre of art and religion.

Free-standing idols were found which portray the Goddess in all forms from the most stylised to the fully naturalistic. Among the latter, .. in one, .. she sits enthroned between two felines ..

The Mother Goddess of life and death with her consort and bull cult, were images that were to be refined and to flourish in the Bronze Age civilisation .. [Hawkes, 1976, pages 41-42]

Patterns of diffusion have been discerned from Catal Hüyük to Crete, Thessaly, Peloponnese, Macedonia, Southern Hungary (before and immediately after 6500 BC); Spain, Portugal, and the east coast of Italy (well before 5000 BC); Sumer and Egypt (much later); and Cyprus (probably before 6000 BC). The most important movement was in the Tigris-Euphrates area, and here three groups are known to have practiced the cult associated with the Goddess. In Syria and Palestine, which were characterised because of their geographical position by 'mixed populations and nomadic incursions, female figurines made of ivory which were almost certainly derived from the old Mediterranean and Asian mother-goddess cults greatly predominated over models of men and animals. Female figurines have also been found in Iraq, Anatolia, Iran and Elam, Transcaspian, Sind and the Punjab.

The fertility interpretation has been over-stressed. For example, a stout, stylised female figure seated in a massive chair is described as 'magnificently fat .. as a child is born to her'. But James Mellaart describes her as 'enthroned'. The former interpretation is associated with our contemporary, blinkered stereotype of 'woman

= fertility, or with the gushing sentimentality of the following quotations:

..from the point of view of the history of thought, these Late Paleolithic Venus figurines come to us as the earliest detectable expression of that undying ritual idea which sees in Woman the embodiment of the beginning and continuance of life, as well as the symbol of the immortality of that earthly matter which is in itself without form, yet clothes all forms. [Franz Hanzcar, quoted in Campbell, 1974, page 314-315]

There can be no doubt that in the very earliest ages of human history the magical force and wonder of the female was no less a marvel than the universe itself; and this gave to woman a prodigious power, which it has been one of the chief concerns of the masculine part of the population to break, control, and employ to its own ends.

Merlin Stone, in contrast, emphasises the power aspect. This study is influenced by her interpretation, although it recognises that conjecture about archaeological findings is hazardous. Not only is there contradiction over interpretation, but there are other blockages. In the first place, in the early days of archaeological digging labour was very cheap. This meant that the work was done at such speed that 'a not inconsiderable volume' of evidence was left. In the second place, at a later period because of the practice of finely and slowly sifting all the evidence, nothing, according to Max Mallowan, was missed; on the other hand, they tended to find nothing. All excavations are only partial. For instance, Catal Hüyük, which is easily the largest neolithic site discovered in the Near East, has had only one of its thirty two acres excavated (only the priestly quarter), and the levels below the present fourteen which have been worked on have not been reached¹⁴⁹. The third blockage is that most of the material is still underground. And the fourth is that much important evidence 'lies buried in museums or notebooks'.

The recommended approach is through the common sense and scholarly humility of James Mellaart or Geoffrey Ashe. The former wrote of interpretations in respect to findings at Catal Hüyük:

This suggests that paintings were made in connection with certain events, the precise nature of which we shall probably never ascertain. Catal Hüyük is thus one of those rare cases in archaeology where man tried to communicate some of his thoughts. For us to read these is another matter [my italics]. [Mellaart, 1975, 110]

And Ashe echoes Mellaart:

The primitive sculptors leave no message, and the precise meaning of their work is open to challenge. [Ashe, 1976, page 1-]

However, we are able to accept as established all that we need for the purposes of this study. Figurines with defining female biological characteristics did exist in very ancient times and over very wide areas. The making of these presumably had significance which may have been religious, erotic, or political -- whatever it was, femaleness was visible.

(2) Legends and History

These ancient cultures of the Middle East were, it is surmised, invaded by Indo-Europeans who probably came down from the north by riverways, bringing their own male god with them. They attacked the female-oriented principle of female divinity as well as the economic power of the goddess temples. Written evidence (accounts of ceremonies and detailed theological explanations of rituals within legends) suggests that the invaders suppressed, demoted, and assimilated various aspects of the goddess religion.¹⁵⁰

Transition of power can be read into descriptions of the marriage of the consort to the priestess, 'providing him with the position later defined as kingship'¹⁵¹. Juxtaposition of the two roles of priestess and queen is repeatedly referred to in tablets and texts. Stone speculates that the high priestess of the Goddess, the highest and most sacred attendant of the female deity, may have gained the position of ruling queen by matrilineal descent¹⁵². Legends and fragments of texts and prayers suggest that the high priestess, as the incarnation of the Great Goddess chose annual lovers or consorts. After the 'hieros gamos' [sacred marriage], the consort held royal rights until he died, or was put to death, every autumn and was resurrected as the lover of the following year. The symbolism of the dying son/lover of the Goddess occurs and recurs in Goddess legends, probably recording Neolithic and earliest historic periods. It is found in the most ancient legends of both Sumer and Egypt, and survives in all historic periods of the Near East until the first centuries of Christianity, in which it may have been retained in the annual mourning for the death of Jesus¹⁵³.

This sacred sexual union may be read, through the stereotype, merely as a fertility rite. However, by changing our orientation from fertility to power, an equally important facet is added to the image of woman, and the myth illuminates historical conflict.

b. Survival

(1) Overview: Ancient Middle East

The Great Goddess survives in myths in aspects of daughter goddesses that challenge the stereotype-based interpretations in terms of fertility or erotic sex object: as female Creators of the first people and the entire earth and the heavens in Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, Africa, Australia and China; as 'wise counsellor and prophetess'; as 'powerful, courageous warriors, leaders in battle'; as 'healers, dispensers of curative herbs, roots, plants and other medical aids, casting the priestesses who attended the shrines into the role of physicians of those worshipping there'; as developing agriculture.

(for example, the Goddess Ninlil in Mesopotamia); as deity of language (Celtic Ireland's Brigit) and inventor of clay tablets and the art of writing (Nidaba in Sumer); and inventor of the original alphabet (Sarasvati of India).

The Celtic Ceridwen was the Goddess of Intelligence and Knowledge in the pre-Christian legends of Ireland; the priestesses of the Goddess Gaia provided the wisdom of divine revelation at pre-Greek sanctuaries; while the Greek Demeter and the Egyptian Isis were both invoked as law-givers and sage dispensers of righteous wisdom, counsel and justice. The Egyptian Goddess Maat represented the very order, rhythm and truth of the Universe. Ishtar of Mesopotamia was referred to as the Directress of People, the Prophetess, the Lady of Vision. [Stone, 1976, page 20]

And besides all this evidence from myths about Goddesses of a wider range of dimension than merely sexuality-fertility, 'records of Nimrud, where Ishtar was worshipped, revealed that women served as judges and magistrates'.

The pattern of goddess-worship survival in her various aspects of sexuality-fertility, knowledge, and power covered wide areas and long periods of time. This is indicated below, over the periods from about 3,400 BC, in Egypt, Anatolia, Crete, Mesopotamia, and Sumer.

Invaders seem to have entered Neo-lithic Egypt just before the earliest dynastic period (3000 BC). They united the two indigenous cultures, -- North Egypt worshipping the Cobra Goddess, Ua Zit, and South Egypt, Nekhebt, the Vulture Goddess -- under their male ruler and their male deity. The king wore the royal crowns of both goddess regions. This symbolised the survival of the goddesses, or represented it in fact.

In Anatolia, early Indo-European leaders may have gained acceptance by taking part in the hieros gamos with Hittite priestesses. The great national deity of the Hittites was in fact the Hittite deity, the Sun Goddess of Arinna 'who directs kingship and queenship', 'She who controls kingship in heaven and on earth'. After about 1000 BC, the Goddess is known as Cybele, and her dying son/lover as the shepherd Attis. In the version of the legend brought to Rome, Attis castrates himself and dies. This was the religion of Claudius and Augustus which was celebrated in 'great processions and festivals' during the time that Christianity was being developed, until AD 268. Similarities with Christianity are striking.

Roman reports of the ritual of Cybele record that the son, this time as an effigy, was first tied to a tree and then buried. Three days later a light was said to appear in the burial tomb, whereupon Attis arose from the dead, bringing salvation with him in his rebirth. [Stone, 1976, page 162]

In Minoan Crete, worship of the female deity flourished from before 3000 BC until the arrival of the Indo-European Dorians in about 1100BC. Even as late as classical times, Zeus was revered mainly as the son -- an infant or a dying son -- of the Goddess Rhea. In Cyprus, the Goddess is Aphrodite whose worship was closely associated with the Canaanite Astarte. Part of the rites of this worship survived into the period of classical Greece. A version of this same legend is referred to in the Old Testament: ' .. I saw the women sitting and wailing for Tammuz'¹⁵⁴.

The Goddess cultures of Mesopotamia were entered by Northern groups, probably Indo-European, with their deities, Enki, Enlil, Anu and Marduk. A myth suggests that the first three of these gods were weak, and were therefore gradually assimilated into the powerful and indigenous Creatress-Goddess Serpent, Tiamat; but the fourth of them, Marduk, conquered her and became the dominant deity¹⁵⁵.

Sumer was invaded somewhere between 3400 BC and 3200 BC. The newcomers generated typical, complex patterns of suppression or total destruction of the indigenous religious and other social institutions. For example, a myth written after 2000 BC credits Enki with the establishment of world order, and refers to the indigenous Inanna as having lost most of her royal powers. However, she still retained some of her powers from the earlier civilisation.

She is still in charge of the words spoken by the young lad, words which she had established, and the crook, the staff and wand of shepherdship were still hers. [Stone]

One of these remaining powers was that of bestowing the rights of shepherdship or kingship. In the historical periods of Sumer, the hieros games, between the king who represented the god Damuzi and one of the priestesses who represented the goddess Inanna, led to the idea that the King of Sumer whatever his origins must become the husband of Inanna. The dominant partner was the priestess/goddess:

In the sacred marriage the dependence of the god upon the goddess is strongly emphasised. Texts from Isin leave no doubt that the initiative was ascribed to her'. [Henri Frankfort. Quoted in Stone, 1976, page 153]

The Sumerian version of the legend (one of the earliest) indicates power conflict, in that -- unlike the other versions which emphasise the grief of the Goddess -- it emphasises her anger. Although, as in many versions, in a range of times and places, she makes him 'shepherd of the land' (king), in this Sumerian version the death of the spouse is not an accident: he dies at her command, because he 'dared to climb joyfully upon her throne during her absence' (in the Land of the Dead) and behaved in a most arrogant manner upon her return.

(2) Ashtoreth and Yahweh: Biblical Evidence of Goddess Survival

Among the Biblical peoples there were several conditions for survival and revival of Goddess worship, and for conversion to it.

The Hebrews may themselves have originally been Goddess worshipping (only the Levites being Indo-Europeans who worshipped a male deity). Egypt was women-oriented to some extent. Goddess worship was indigenous in Canaan, and not all of its cities were conquered by the Hebrews. Where there was conquest, the girls and women who survived were likely to have hugged their own faith to them in lives of slavery among the invaders who had slaughtered their kinsfolk. In any case, hard times were likely to drive people back to old faiths under which they had (or thought that they had) been happy. Thus when times were hard under Yahweh, people remembered things that had gone well when they carried out the proper rituals to the Queen of Heaven.

.. and all the women who were standing there, a large assembly .. answered Jeremiah as follows, we have no intention of listening to this word you have spoken to us in Yahweh's name but intend to go on doing all that we have vowed to do, offering incense to the queen of heaven and pouring libations in her honour as we used to do, we and our fathers, our kings and our leaders in the town of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. We had plenty of food then, we lived well, we suffered no disasters. But since we have given up pouring incense to the queen of heaven and pouring libations in her honour we have been destitute and have perished either by sword or by famine. .. we offer incense to the queen of heaven and pour libations in her honour .. we make cakes for her with her features on them and pour libations to her. [Jeremiah 44]

Marriage provided great opportunities for survival and cross-fertilisation of ideas, beliefs, and attitudes, as pagan brides and bridegrooms moved from one area to another, often accompanied by kinsfolk or retinues. Moreover, where there is polygamy, the more wives the more temptations for a husband to turn from Yahweh and worship one or more of the several deities that were part of the dowry of each wife. This is what happened -- to the great wrath of Yahweh -- in the case of Solomon.

King Solomon was a lover of women, and .. he married many foreign women, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite, from the nations with whom the Lord had forbidden the Israelites to intermarry 'because', he said, ' they will entice you to serve their gods'. But Solomon was devoted to them and loved them dearly. He had seven hundred wives, who were princesses, and three hundred concubines, and they turned his heart from the truth. When he grew old, his wives turned his heart to follow other gods, and he did not remain wholly loyal to the Lord his God as his father David had been. He followed Ashtoreth, goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the loathsome god of the Ammonites .. to which all his foreign wives burnt offerings and made sacrifices. [I Kings 11]

Many details can be found in the Old Testament of the survival, revival, and the prose-

lytising of indigenous Goddess religion -- despite the Hebrew God's threats to destroy it, and despite the violence of the persecution.

Be careful not to make a covenant with the natives of the land, or, when they go wantonly after their gods and sacrifice to them, you may be invited, any one of you, to partake of their sacrifices, and marry your sons to their daughters, and when their daughters go wantonly after their gods, they may lead your sons astray too. [Exodus 34]

As I live, says the Lord god, because you have defiled my holy place with all your vile and abominable rites, I in my turn will not spare you. One third of your people shall die by pestilence and perish by famine in your midst; one third shall fall by the sword in the country round about; and one third I will scatter to the four winds and follow with drawn sword. [Hosea 4]

5.2 PAGANISM UNDER CHRISTIANITY

Paganism, in a wide range of forms, co-existed with Christianity in Europe and its margins. For instance, the Goddess survived in the Greek Mysteries, which attracted people of wealth and status whose widespread influence lasted for hundreds of years. She offered to overcome death.

Thrice blessed are those among men who after beholding these things go down to Hades. Only for them is there life .. [Sophocles, quoted in Ashe, 1976, page 20]

And in Late Pagan Antiquity, the Great Goddess survived in Rome as Roma and Natura, goddesses who were 'more real than the gods of Olympus' ; and Roma continued to be worshipped under Otto III [about 1000]¹⁵⁶.

a. Overview: legal, ecclesiastical and literary sources

Margaret Murray emphasises that an old cult does not die out immediately when a new cult is introduced; and, in any case, it was often (as in Britain) only the rulers who were converted to Christianity. The people continued to follow their ancient customs and beliefs, even if they did absorb a few Christian elements.¹⁵⁷ However, Christian ecclesiastics, who wrote all the records tended to omit references to pagan practices so that it might appear that Christianity was the only religion. A few other writers, predominantly legal or literary, filled in some of such blanks. Strabo mentioned that Demeter and Persephone were venerated. Bede recorded that Redwald, King of the East Saxons, had in the same temple, one altar to sacrifice to Christ, and another small one to sacrifice to devils. The Liber Peenitentialis, the earliest (seventh century)

ecclesiastical laws of England, included a whole section of pagan offences.

.. celebrating feasts in the abominable places of the heathen and offering food there, .. serving this hidden idolatory, having relinquished Christ .. [Margaret Murray, 1921, page 21]

Several Church documents provide formal evidence of the co-existence of paganism with Christianity. In 314, the Council of Ancyra discussed the future relations of the Church with State Paganism and all other non-Christian religions. They gave particular attention to the Old Religion, -- possibly 'because aristocratic rich women -- the Church's most notable converts to date -- were already forming a 'reform group' within their own intrinsically separate (but, which might easily become separatist) section of True Belief'. The monastic ideal was developing in Rome, in reaction against 'the wealth and luxury of the aristocratic elite, the passion for the circus and the arena, the ostentatious progresses with attendant slaves and eunuchs, the extravagant banquets, the ornate hairstyles and jewellery of the women'. But there were some who renounced property and pleasures in order to pursue the purer and simpler Christianity that they believed that the Church had abandoned. At the same time this was a protest which the Church recognised as a threat to itself.

But for how long, the assembly asked itself, were disappointed scandalised women to be content with moving backwards within the Church? Might not a time be coming -- and perhaps soon -- when the revolt of the rich, earnest women would take them outside the Church, into the orbit of another faith living obviously nearer to its original simple ideals? [Harrison, 1973 , page 115]

It was necessary, therefore, to destroy all alternative religions. The Canon Episcopi was drawn up to deal with them -- heresy, sorcery, paganism, infidelism, and unbelief. This work retained authority until the end of the century in which Malleus Maleficarum was written.

Harrison has noted that the Council seemed to be predominantly concerned with women.

.. just as women were the main support of the early Church, so it is obvious that they were -- or the members of the Council believed them to be -- the main support of the Old Religion. [Harrison, 1973, page 118]

Women, almost exclusively, made up the Old Religionists. And they were sufficiently vigorous in 314 for the Church to organise itself against them.

The Canon Episcopi exhorted bishops to 'uproot thoroughly .. sorcery and malefice invented by the Devil', and to eject 'fouly disgraced' followers of this wickedness. It refers to some wicked ones who, 'perverted by the Devil, seduced by illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess themselves, in the hours of night, to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans, and with an innumerable company of women, and in the silence of the dead of night, to traverse great spaces of earth, and to

obey her commands as of their mistress, and to be summoned to her service on certain nights'. These wicked ones, it was believed, deceived 'an innumerable multitude' who wandered into paganism and abandoned the 'True Faith'.

Evidence of survival of pagan practices is also provided by imperial and conciliar legislation such as Charlemagne's capitulary.

We have decreed that each bishop, according to the canons, shall take heed .. that the people of God do no pagan rites .. [quoted in Margaret Deansley, 1956, page 508]

These capitularies were directed specifically to the indigenous Germanic or Scandinavian paganism of a newly converted people. But co-existing with this indigenous religion was the classical paganism of Greece and Rome which had been diffused in this area -- and had also been the object of Christian suppression.

The very constellations in the night sky had been named after the old gods and heroes who were now painted on the walls even of episcopal palaces. [Deansley, 1956, page 550]

The Council in Nicaea, convened by Constantine the Great ten years later to suppress the Arian heresy, 'was in reality a meeting summoned to decide on internal discipline and external relations with non-Christian elements' .

Attention is also to be directed to literary sources: for example, the lament for the lost goddess by Chaucer's Wife of Bath:

In th'olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,

 Al was this land fulfild of fayerye.
 The elf-queene, with her joly compaignye,
 Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede.

b. Marian Cultus

Our Mother which art upon earth
 Hallowed be thy name.
 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in us
 As it is in thee.
 As thou sendest every day thy angels
 Send them to us also.
 Forgive us our sins, as we atone all
 our sins against thee
 And lead us not into sickness, but
 deliver us from all evil,
 For thine is the earth, the body, and
 the health.
 Amen.

The above prayer¹⁵⁹ is susceptible of interpretation (probably no less in the Middle Ages than today) that imputes it as goddess worship or Marian cultus. The latter was an important vehicle of survival and diffusion of goddess religion.

Markale thinks that among the Celts the ancient Mother-Goddess was replaced, sometimes with force, by a warlike father-god who was jealous of her superiority. But popular thought re-created her in the role of Mother of God and men. She continued to be constantly invoked, ever-present and ever-triumphant. In reaction to this, the official Church tried to make the 'Theotokos' an asexual and 'virginal' being whose female nature was evident only in her role as the admirable mother who was subservient to her son. They attempted to contain this revival of a very ancient myth by deflecting spiritual and intellectual strength away from its original objective, and making it a pliable instrument for the domination of one caste (the faithful) by the wealthy, the priesthood and the nobility.

Geoffrey Ashe explores a strong suspicion set down in 1963 by an Anglican canon 'that the deepest roots of the Marian cultus are not to be found in the Christian tradition at all'.

The religious history of mankind shows a recurring tendency to worship a mother-goddess. [de Satgé, 1963. Quoted in Ashe, 1976,

The canon had found that three factors suggested that 'the cult of Mary may be an intrusion into Christianity from the dark realms of natural religion'. First, the earliest historical traces are tainted by syncretising Gnosticism; second, the devotion is associated with local holy places; third, emphasis on a female object of devotion may be a form of psychological compensation for the elevation of chastity.

Ashe, in his own study of the development of the Marian cultus, found that the last centuries before Christ, in regions where the Goddess had been worshipped, were haunted by a 'deep, unconsciously perceptive nostalgia for the life-giving, divine Female .. in her true majesty'.

She survived; not -- for most -- in her pristine integrity, but fragmentarily, through myths and special aspects and local cults. She never, for example, lost her old status as mistress of inspiration. Apollo had staked his claim as a god of poetry, but the actual Muses, nine facets of the Goddess, remained feminine. A resurgent worship of Cybele as Great Mother of the Gods, spread from Asia Minor to Italy and won a popular following (she was credited with ending the invasion by Hannibal). [Ashe, 1976, page 20]

He cites the great apostrophe of Apuleius, in the second century AD, to support the strength of the survival of the Great Queen of Heaven in her many aspects, despite the attempts of state-supported priests to wipe out her worship and her memory.

Blessed Queen of Heaven, whether you are pleased to be known as Ceres, the original harvest mother who in joy at the finding of your lost daughter Proserpine abolished the rude acorn diet of our forefathers and gave them bread raised from the fertile soil of Eleusis; or whether as celestial Venus, now adored at sea-girt Paphos who at the time of the first Creation coupled the sexes in mutual love and so contrived that man should continue to propagate his kind for ever; or whether as Artemis, the physician sister of Phoebus Apollo, reliever of the birth pangs of women, and now adored in the ancient shrine of Ephesus; or whether as dread Proserpine to whom the owl cries out at night, whose triple face is potent against the malice of ghosts, keeping them imprisoned below earth; you who wander through many sacred groves and are propitiated with many different rites -- you whose womanly light illumines the walls of every city, whose misty radiance nurses the happy seeds under the soil, you who control the wandering course of the sun and the very power of his rays ..

The reply of the Goddess completes the summarising of her many powers and aspects.

I am Nature, the universal Mother, mistress of all elements, primordial child of time, sovereign of all things spiritual, queen of the dead, queen also of the immortals, the single manifestation of all gods and goddesses that are .. Though I am worshipped in many aspects, known by countless names, and propitiated with all manner of different rites, yet the whole round earth venerates me.

It is within this powerful tradition that Ashe places the Marian cultus: 'in reality an older religion, a paganism which has too lightly been baptised into Christ and whose ancient features persist under a thin Christian veil'¹⁶⁰. In addition, he notes that, despite the absence of details about Mary in the Gospels, the Church, *pari passu* with its proclamation of 'unwavering fidelity to the Gospels', also -- paradoxically -- develops a worship of the Mother of Christ which the gospels entirely fail to justify. The only clues and material to be found are the miscellany of Marian matter in Christianity consisting of some New Testament passages and reflections upon them; Wisdom of Ecclesiasticus 24; the Woman of the apocalypse; a medley of legends; various 'weird fancies and speculations'; and the 'abiding need for a female power'¹⁶¹.

After three centuries or so the Mary cult begins entering the life of the Church, yet it enters, apparently, from nowhere. In all that time, its sole scriptural credentials have never been mentioned. No early Christian author does point to Mary as Maiden Zion, or read Zephaniah or Zechariah as prophetic of her. No early Christian author does say the relevant things about the apocalyptic woman. She is scarcely ever mentioned, and when she is, the approved view seems to be that she is simply an image of the Church. [Ashe, 1976, page 122]

Ashe concludes that there was a source outside the mainstream of Christianity from which both Gnostics and Christians drew. He finds the key in Epiphanius' references to the Collyridians, a group which originated in Thrace and spread to Upper Scythia and Arabia. This wide diffusion implies that the religion was well-established. And the fact that the group was ridiculed, -- in the nickname [meaning 'little bread-rolls'] and in references to its members as 'silly, weak, contemptible women' -- suggests that manifest contempt may have concealed a fear of the power of goddess worship and priestesses. This group adored Mary 'in her own right as a form of the Goddess'. It is not

to be confused with a heresy: it is not 'an exaggeration or distortion of a prior orthodoxy'. It was, in fact, 'another religion drawn from the same source'. And it arose among 'feminists, who resented a Church founded on male supremacy, and looked to Mary as their head'.

.. they worship Mary as Queen of Heaven, with a ritual derived from far back behind Christianity.

They adorn a chair or a square throne, spread a line cloth over it, and, at a certain solemn time, place bread on it and offer it in the name of Mary; and all partake of this bread. [Ashe, 1976, page 150]

Ashe also finds inter-relationships among the Goddess, Israel (the people of God), the Woman of the Apocalypse, and the Virgin Mary. Newman had already discerned that the Arian controversy had revealed a new throne whose predestined occupant was Wisdom and/or the Woman of the Apocalypse.

.. a throne was seen far above all created powers, mediatorial, intercessory; a title archetypal; a crown bright as the morning star; a glory issuing from the Eternal Throne; robes pure as the heavens; and a sceptre over all; and who was the predestined heir of that Majesty? Since it was not high enough for the Highest, who was that Wisdom .. 'created from the beginning before the world', in God's counsels, and 'in Jerusalem was her power'? The vision is found in the Apocalypse, a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. [Ashe, 1976, page 142]

The meaning of the Apocalyptic Woman lies in the long-accepted personification of the people of God as a woman. Several Christians of the early centuries explain her as standing for the Church; but she is also the 'Jerusalem above, our Mother' of Galatians [4,26]; and she extends through both Testaments.

At first she is Israel before Christ, and her twelve stars are the twelve tribes, an image recalling Joseph's dream in Genesis 37,9 .. she is in labour to produce the Messiah and eventually does. Through him the old Jewish community gives place to the new Christian one; God's people are now the Christians, and the woman becomes the Church, the new Israel, with no break in continuity. her stars are not only the tribes but the apostles ..

But .. since this woman gives birth to Christ, we may wonder 'prima facie' whether on a different level, she is also Mary .. she was the Maiden Zion, was the female Israel-personified .. To discern her in the apocalyptic woman is only to carry on its logic. [Ashe, 1976, page 121-122]

What Ashe is emphasising is the complex and potent connotations of the Virgin Mary.

She is cosmic and glorified .. Not only does she represent Israel, she passes into a figure of the Church and is mother of the faithful .. If we are looking for a hint at the Assumption, there it is, poetically, at least: she is in heaven as in her own place ..

These connotations include the primaeval Great Goddess, Neith.

The divine child has no father. the woman [of the Apocalypse] bears him alone, like Neith.

Thus we may find in the Marian cultus widely available and widely ranging connotations to build up images of women, in the pool of potential consciousness, as of high status and powerful. As far as the ecclesiasticals' virtuality of women is concerned, the connotations are ambiguous: reverence and threat. The latter element is associated with the presence in these developments of endogenous negativity: for the growth of worship of Mary potentially promoted the survival and growth of paganism.

5.3 ROUTES FOR DIFFUSION

Not only must it be established that there was a source for oral tradition and that oral tradition survived; it must also be demonstrated that survival was characterised by free, wide, and incessant diffusion. Such circumstances give validity to the concept of women's pool of potential consciousness.

One possible vehicle of diffusion has already been presented in the preceding sub-section of this chapter (5.2,b]. This sub-section presents brief glimpses of means and extent of oral diffusion through the travelling by land and sea that went on all through the centuries -- linking the Middle East, the British Isles, and Europe.

a. Traders, Scholars, Immigrants

The long history of the Celts offers significant examples of the vast range and variety of diffusion links over the centuries. The Celts came from the original Indo-European race from the Central Asian plains, which spread in many waves of migration: to the valleys of the Indus and Ganges; to the high plateaux of Iran; into Northern Europe; the Aegean; and West as far as Ireland. Markale's linguistic and toponymic studies led him to conclude that the Celts extended throughout Western Europe. In their migrations they, as an intellectual and warrior elite, imposed their own way of life; and at the same time they assimilated aspects of indigenous cultures.

Just as the Greeks contributed to the radical transformation of early Roman society when conquered by the Romans and brought under Roman discipline, the ancient populations of Gaul, Britain and Ireland deeply influenced early Celtic civilisation. (Markale, 1975, page 23]

Similar two-way and wide-ranging diffusion is exemplified by the Greeks -- through not only trade and colonising, but also through the roaming of philosophers, historians, and priests.

.. all these things -- alphabet, architecture, sculpture -- the Greeks had in some degree learnt from the 'barbarians'.

Then there is the other side to the story .. the beginnings of the spread of Greek civilisation into Italy and Western Europe. [Boardman, 1964, page 22]

Diffusion by trade can be plotted from far-flung contacts among the Saxons of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. One important source for this reconstruction was the remains of an ordinary cargo ship ['the Graveny boat'], the shards within which have been traced to France and Belgium. Another source is Aelfric's Colloquy in which a merchant described his outward cargo of hunting dogs and slaves .. furs, silver, linen, horses and weapons'. He brought back with him 'purple and silk, precious gems and gold, rare garments and spices, wine and oil, ivory and brass, copper and tin, sulphur and glass and such like things'. Other records tell of timber, fish, wine and blubber-fish coming into the port of London; and exports of slaves going from Bristol to Denmark. Pottery was brought across the North Sea from the Rhineland (as early as the eighth century), and from the Low Countries and Northern France, up to and after the Norman Conquest. The merchants, according to records dated in London about 1000 AD, came from a wide range of regions, including Friesland, Flanders, Normandy, France, and the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁶³

New ideas and old traditions were also taken from region to region by migrants. For example, Bela IV of Hungary [1235-1270] attracted French, Italian, and Germans; and 'he especially brought in blocs of pagans'¹⁶⁴. And in thirteenth century Spain, -- despite all the pressure to expel Muslims, because the prosperity of ecclesiastical and lay landlords depended on the skills of this sector, there was a stronger pressure to retain them.

Gypsies were another group who provided links between the Arabian and the European worlds. These people, claiming Egypt as their homeland, entered Western Europe in 1417 .

b. 'Brownian Movement'¹⁶⁵ in Europe

Besides the particular examples referred to in the last sub-section, there was constant going backwards and forwards, and criss-crossing in all directions, over the multifarious foot and animal tracks and vehicular roads of pre-industrial Europe: armies (not only soldiers, but also a great range of male and female followers -- cooks, prostitutes, entertainers, doctors); missionaries; slaves; traders; refugees driven by war, disease or famine; peasants seeking a piece of land to cultivate; bandits; scholars; nobles and their retinues; exiles; messengers; pilgrims; entertainers; heretics (proselitising or escaping persecution); labourers; and hosts of kinsfolk and serving folk connect-

ed with brides and grooms. There was an infinite number of places on the network of routes for occasional meetings; and many stable meeting-places along the major routes, -- at monasteries or convents, inns, castles, market-places, fairgrounds and shrines. And where and when people met, their chatting, gossiping, discussing, their telling of tales and singing of songs were not interfered with by television or other technological barrier to oral diffusion of information and ideas.

From sixty to ninety miles a day was not an exceptional record for a ship .. On land, the normal distance covered in a day amounted, it seems to between nineteen and twenty-five miles -- for travellers who were in no hurry, that is: say a caravan of merchants, a great nobleman moving round from castle to castle or from abbey to abbey, or an army with its baggage ..

.. no institution or method could take the place of personal contact between human beings. .. to control a country, there was no other means than to ride through it incessantly in all directions. .. The nobleman with his entourage moved round constantly from one of his estates to another; and not only in order to supervise them more effectively. It was necessary for him to consume the produce on the spot, for to transport it to a common centre would have been both inconvenient and expensive. Similarly with the merchant. Without representatives to whom he could delegate the task of buying and selling, fairly certain in any case of never finding enough customers assembled in one place to assure him a profit, every merchant was a pedlar .. The cleric eager for learning or the ascetic life was obliged to wander over Europe in search of the master of his choice: Gerbert of Aurillac studied mathematics in Spain and philosophy at Rheims .. [Bloch, 1961, page 62]

Travel connected with monastic and ecclesiastical matters was encouraged by both the international character and the centralisation of the Church; by Latin as a common language; by affiliations between monasteries; wide dispersal of possessions and associated appeals and confirmations; the preaching to lay audiences by mendicant orders; and the 'reforms' which periodically made the places first affected not only mission centres, but also courts of appeal to which people came from all parts.¹⁶⁶

A wide range of other travellers also came to monasteries: these were halting places for transients; journey's end for pilgrims and scholars; and economic centres for merchants and traders.

Stations of call and entertainment for every traveller, refuges of healing and consolation shrines of devotion and even of miracles, these religious establishments collected distant fact and rumour for their local annals, spun their narratives of the wonders wrought by local saints and relics, and passed on rich material for the popular epics which grew up along these roads and about these shrines. They were the natural meeting points of the world of the monk and the sacristan with the world of the pilgrim, the trader, and the jongleur, of sacred and profane, Latin and vernacular .. [Haskins, 1957, page 47]

Clearly, there was a multitude of conditions that favoured the diffusion of old and new ideas among the illiterate.

c. Women and Diffusion

Women participated in this diffusion. Both as agents and as receptors they were part of the whole 'Brownian movement'. They travelled as pilgrims, as brides or in brides' retinues. They shared campaigns with armies (to be with husbands or lovers, to cook or wash, to entertain, to doctor the sick and injured, to earn money by trade or prostitution, and sometimes to fight). They moved around as independent traders, to hunt for jobs, as survivors of war or famine, or as refugees from plague or persecution.

Below is an example of how a woman might move from place to place, in order to follow 'strategies of family, marriage and business'.

Raymond Arsen [replied] .. 'I have made a contract with my master Bonet up to the next Feast of St John the Baptist' .. At the end of June, Raymonde Arsen .. gave notice to her master, Bonet, and went to fetch her natural daughter, Alazafs, whom she had put out to nurse at Saint-Victor. Then, with her bundle over her shoulder and her baby in her arms, she went up into the mountains. When she reached Prades, near Montailou, she entrusted her daughter to another nurse .. who took the child to the village of Aston .. Raymonde Arsen herself then went down again into the present department of Aude, to help get in the harvest in the Arque valley. After that she went back to Prades d'Aillon, which, being higher up, gathered the harvest later. So during one short summer Raymonde lived as an itinerant child-mother, harvester and outsider .. [Ladurie 1979, page 44]

Far from motherhood keeping her tied to a home, it seems to have provided further cause for lengthy journeys.

Whether or not women moved physically from place to place, they had other means of communication, such as embroidery, weaving, songs, and marginalia.

Embroidery was one stream of learning and activity that was common to all classes of women in all periods. It was an independent 'language' that may well have been as universal as Latin in preserving and transmitting matters from the past, in contemporary links of communication from castle to cottage, from region to region, from secular to religious (pagan, heretical or Christian). Nuns wrote histories with their needles: 'that of Christ His Passion for their altar-clothes and other Scriptures -- and more legend-stories in hangings to adorn their houses'

The tigers in the panel that she made
Will go on prancing, proud and unafraid.

[Adrienne Rich, quoted in Pratt, 1978, page 163]

By means of needles and threads they exchanged 'herbal lore and flower patterns of great power and centrality to discuss marital horrors and tales of woman heroes --

long threads with which by hook or by crook they have woven a complex, centuries-long tapestry of communication'¹⁶⁷.

Pratt has identified clusters of images, symbols, and narratives as recurring in a broad range of works -- for example, the Lady of the Beasts, references to whom are 'immediately recognisable' in embroidery patterns of Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth I. The latter occupied herself during her years in prison by

'figuring forth the fortunes of herself and her family in the language of animal heraldry .. she depicted her captivity in the emblem of a lion in a net with hares leaping over it and of a hawk flying above a bird in its cage. [Kendrick, quoted in Pratt, 1978, page 176]

The Keeper of the Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum was puzzled about the emblems embroidered on dresses worn by Queen Elizabeth I: a spouting whale, a sea-horse, and various reptiles, birds and flowers on one garment, and eyes and ears, and a serpent holding a ruby on another. But Pratt reads embroidery-language, and she thinks that the Queen could do so. Elizabeth was 'empowered by and familiar with snakes and with the magic carbuncles (the ruby) they excrete for monarchs, and at home among powerful animals one of which (the sea-horse) is traditionally associated with Thetis, Goddess of the Sea'.

Among tales of women narrating personal histories in their weaving is that of Philomela who became the nightingale. Raped by her brother-in-law, Tereus, and her tongue cut out to prevent her from reporting the outrage, she wove upon her loom the narrative of these events for her sister to read.

Procne applauded her maimed sister's efforts with delight when, as the pattern began to emerge, she could recognise in the cleverly worked threads .. events from their childhood. She was encouraged also by the first weavings of the story of her wedding, and of Philomela's setting out for her visit, feeling that to recount the tragic loss of her tongue to bandits would help her to overcome a sense of terror that seemed to have lingered on after the incident. But what bandit wore the leather greaves, the shield, the insignia of Tereus? .. [Pratt, 1978, page 172]

Between about the ninth century and the time of Elizabeth, needlework became a commercial industry under the control of men, with a public function: the recording of national history. For example, the Norman conquest of England was narrated on the Bayeux tapestry by both Normans and Anglo-Saxons. Women were engaged in such public needlework, and Pratt suggests that they may have carried on a private activity at the same time. Their own private iconography may have underlain whatever heroic deeds were publicly celebrated.

.. it is on the 'boundaries' or 'borders' of needlework that women revealed their symbologies ..

Women scholars are now looking beyond the decorative function of the animals and plants embroidered on these borders, and finding a vast chronological and geographical network of learning, presented symbolically, allegorically, and as narrative. Phyllis Ackerman,

for instance, has recognised in the Bayeux tapestry allegories derived from Marie de France's later collection of Aesop's fables. Common to them all is the recurrent archetypal motif of the tree of life. The latter is a prominent design or symbol in domestic needlework, and has ancient pre-patriarchal associations with many goddesses and female rulers.

Thus, while women were excluded from the Latin literacy, they were able to communicate by needle and thread on two levels: subliminal symbolism in 'swans, dolphins, hedgehogs, centipedes and whales', as well as straight, historical narrative.

Another medium for women's intercommunication across time, place, and class was the marginalia of Gothic manuscripts. Imaginative comments and direct reporting may be found in these. Straightforward depiction of ordinary behaviour includes evidence in, for instance, scenes of falconry and chess-playing, of

the equal footing, and more often than not, the more than equal footing with men, enjoyed by women on the highest rungs of the social scale ..' [Verdier, in Morewedge, 1975, page 189]

But other marginalia subversively show women as

.. exponents of a woman's freedom movement fighting against the definition of her condition by the Church or against the rules edicted by man. ..

And not only husbands are held up to ridicule, so too are knights and friars.

.. the lance of a tilting Dominican breaks against her shield .. a peasant woman armed only with a lance and riding a goat, dismounts a fully armed knight astride a ram. Such tilting females .. represent .. married ladies ('baillistres), dowager duchesses or countesses who, replacing their absent or incapacitated husbands, fought more fiercely against their vassals than did the liege lords. [Verdier, in Morewedge, 1975, page 136]

5.4 CHRISTIANITY

a. Early Church

I commend to you Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their necks to save my life. .. I commend to you Phoebe, a fellow-Christian who holds office in the congregation at Cenchræ. [Romans 16, 1-5]

Give your greetings to .. Nympha and the congregation at her house. [Colossians 4

Both misogynous and philogynous attitudes are found in the behaviour of Christianity.

Several references to women in the Gospels suggest that they were important members of Jesus' following. The Gnostic version lists four women and eight men; and evidence from a mosaic has been interpreted to suggest that, besides the twelve male disciples, there were twelve women. Abelard believed that Jesus' women disciples were closer to Jesus than any of his men disciples¹⁶⁸.

.. because the women of Christ's following showed greater devotion to Him .. they were consistently honoured and favoured more highly than His masculine disciples. Only women had been permitted to minister to Christ, to perform for Him those services of humanity which He Himself had performed for His disciples. More important, women alone had been allowed to perform the 'sacraments', the anointing of head and feet, by which Christ was made Priest and King.

All the Christian communities mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles met in women's houses¹⁶⁹. The first Churches in Rome and other major cities were houses donated by wealthy widows¹⁷⁰. Marital status of the first adherents varied; but until the middle of the third century, support of the Church still came largely from women, both aristocrats and other classes -- even though the men in their families remained pagan. Some of these women were not only attracted by the promise of 'perfect love, perfect equality, and perfect justice', but also by the promise of release from the curse by which Eve 'was made servant to her husband and bound to a chain of painful pregnancies triggered by her desire for him'¹⁷¹.

In these very early days, women and men worshipped, taught, prophesied, and participated in the priesthood on equal terms. There were no distinctions as to special authority or status of any individuals¹⁷². Later, women were squeezed out, one reason being that the female body was polluting. This attitude was reinforced by Paul's likening the 'inferior relationship of the wife to the husband as a parallel to the inferiority

of the flesh to the spirit . Thus women became identified with the flesh and the world; and the latter -- and thus women, too -- became identified with evil.¹⁷³

However, it was not a case of unadulterated misogyny: logic could not allow this. Christian doctrine claimed that God was the sole creative power in the universe and that there was necessary goodness in his creative design. Therefore, necessarily, the nature of women had to be defended. Augustine denied that Paul had ever intended to equate the wife with the flesh, except to command that men should love their wives as they loved their own bodies. Bishop Paulinus of Nola put forward the notion of spiritual equality and pointed out that God chose to incarnate Himself as a man and be born of a woman so that both sexes might be made holy by their Creator¹⁷⁴.

The physical and intellectual qualities of women were admitted and admired. Tatian defended the philosophic studies of Christian women by claiming their superior wisdom and citing the fame of female philosophers among the pagans. Jerome surrounded himself with learned women¹⁷⁵. Participation in warfare and politics was acceptable, according to classical literature and the Old Testament.

Women proved their courage again and again in martyrdom. They administered estates. They were active in the market-place. Tertullian scoffed at the idea of a woman needing the protection of a man¹⁷⁶.

Although women were prescribed the subordinate position in marriage; marriage was not the only alternative; and, besides, the marital subjection was of a limited kind. The wife was not a servant to her husband; and both spouses had equal sexual dues from each other.

For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does. [I Corinthians 7]

Moreover, the inferiority was, according to Ambrose attached to wifeness, not to womanhood.

A woman is not inferior in her own person. It is because of her condition [of wifeness], not her nature, that she is subjected to man and ordered to fear him. [Ambrose, quoted in McNamara, 1976, pages 148-149]

Finally, the subjection was not spiritual, but only temporal.

.. the nature of woman, like that of man, was essentially spiritual. The restrictions of marriage were dissolved if they conflicted with the demands of morality which the fathers assumed to be binding equally on both sexes. Occasionally, they felt the need to remind the reader that women were included under the category 'man' .. [McNamara, 1976]

It was accepted that the woman might be the moral superior of the man: in such cases

it was the duty of the wife to disobey her husband, whether he was Christian or pagan. McNamara cites Paul, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexander in this respect; and she points out that this was not empty preaching in periods when women faced torture and death by conversion to Christianity.¹⁷⁷

If marriage was a state of bondage for women; it was considered to be so for men as well.

But I would have you be free from cares. He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord; but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. .. She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and spirit; but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. [I Corinthians 7]

The same standards of behaviour were expected from both sexes, from the sexual to the sartorial.

As though God gave two commandments, one for men and another for women! .. How is it that some men are so insolent that they say cruel vice is lawful for men but not for women! They do not reflect that men and women have been redeemed equally by Christ's blood, have been cleansed by the very same baptism, approach the Lord's altar to receive his body and blood together, and that with God there are no distinctions of male or female. [Caesarius of Arles, quoted in McNamara, 1976, page 149]

Despite these men and sentiments that were supportive of women, in fact, when the Church became the official religion, women lost their position of equality in Christianity. Many of them seemed to have become its critics, and attempted to restore the early condition by prayer and contemplation -- in isolation or in desert communities.

b. Middle Ages

The Middle Ages and women present a common problem to historians: they have been romanticised, on the one hand, and denigrated on the other.

Different periods have found very different characteristics in the Mediaeval period. Renaissance classical scholars saw it as ignorant, scholastic, static, and lacking philosophical, scientific, technological, humanist, and rationalist ways of thinking. In short, they saw it -- although there was, of course, no sudden break between that age and their own-- as the very opposite of their own. In the Reformation period, scholars saw the Middle Ages as hierarchical and corrupt. Enlightenment thinkers saw it as irrational and superstitious -- not recognising that responses of the past were as rational in terms of their contemporary paradigm as were their own in terms of their

contemporary one.

The nineteenth century romanticised the Middle Ages. They found there an ideal Christian society, and an ideal social structure in which the guilds brought together 'masters, apprentices, and workmen in one harmonious society'. All mediaeval workers, they thought were craftsmen or artisans who, in a blessed age without machinery, worked with their hands in social harmony and individual fulfilment.

Liberal Catholic reformers began to look back on those centuries as a time when there existed an ideal Christian society, a model for contemporary Christianity. [Gimpel, 1977, page 238]

In the case of women, extremes of presentation range from romanticised passive damsels in courtly literature to evil daughters of Eve who are snares of flesh and sin. But these are simplistic statements. Barbara A. Hanawalt¹⁷⁸ suggests that mediaeval people would not have understood such generalisations. Their complex range of aspects and characteristics, of conflicting prescriptions and of pick-'n-mix behaviour must be borne in mind in conceptualisation of women as a group/class, and in conceiving of their pool of potential consciousness.

(1) The 'Frauenbewegung'

During the High Middle Ages, an era of great economic and social growth -- and associated problems and opportunities -- there developed an independent women's movement. This reached its climax in the thirteenth century, and was characterised by the setting up of religious and semi-religious communities of women

Several factors seem to have been involved in this phenomenon: the yearning for social freedom, especially independence of superordinate husbands; a lack of marriage partners, in that men tended to be killed off in battle, to be absent on crusades, or to enter the priesthood; the cult of female virginity; the risks of child-birth; loss of dowries and associated independent status as primogeniture was increasingly adopted; increasing social mobility, with urban and industrial growth, and related promotion of individual independence.

Many of the rebellious women may have been widows, runaway nuns, beggars, and prostitutes, or wives evading domestic responsibilities. Many of them seemed to have made a free choice. Bolton¹⁷⁹ found that many of the women and girls who joined convents or Beguinages had wealth but gave it up in order to do so. He emphasises the aristocratic origins of the Poor Clares, Beguines, and Cistercian nuns: and he speculates that women from this class were more likely to be critical and, because of their self-assurance

to be listened to¹⁸⁰. The religious factor was involved inasmuch as women who lacked status in the world may have been seeking it in a higher realm; or inasmuch as they were reacting against either established landed wealth or newly acquired urban wealth. The competitiveness associated with the latter may have seemed especially incompatible with these women's interpretation of Christianity. Thus their behaviour was a comment of protest against both social and religious conditions.

(2) 'de non recipiendis sororibus

In the early thirteenth century, religious women experienced a series of repulses by the Mendicant Orders. Thus they had frequent opportunities to know at first hand misogynist attitudes within institutionalised Christianity. This experience may have been in contrast to the clerical flattery that some of these women may have found characteristic of the Church in the past. It may have provided an important precipitant of women's consciousness of themselves as a sex, bonded in rejection and outrage.

In the great contemporary tide of religious fervour, especially in urban communities, lay groups proliferated. These proclaimed the absolute and literal value of the gospels and practiced the 'vita apostolica'. This religious feeling led to the formation of numerous orders of 'poor men'; and the foundation of the mendicant orders -- including the Dominican, of which Kramer and Sprenger were members. Women were part of this great tide; but the Church either could not or would not accommodate them. Nunneries were few and exclusive; and men's Orders excluded women. This repudiating attitude was contrary to the Franciscan and Dominican task of preaching to audiences of both sexes. Women were an important part of these.

Everywhere they went they were met by a huge wave of female piety. [Bolton, in Stuard, 1976, page 151]

Dominic, long before he had established his own Order, had recognised the danger of women being attracted into heresy. He had founded a nunnery in the south of France, and set out to create a new form of religious life which would attract daughters of the impoverished nobility away from Cathar education, and which would offer older aristocratic women an austere, non-catharist way of life. But at the end of his life, he came to give priority to preaching. Both Orders came to fear that extension of pastoral care to women would weaken their original mendicant character; and that the nature and extent of economic support would weaken their resources.

Thus we have another example of endogenous negativity: the ecclesiasticals contributed to deconstructural processes by promoting the dissatisfaction -- and thus the critical energies -- of women.

The Church did not, however, put up a united front against women. There was recognition

of both the needs of women, and of the dangers of their going over to the heretics. The latter were generally not only glad to accept them but allowed them freedom of movement and the right to preach. Therefore, the curia tried to force the mendicant Orders to accept women. However, as the numbers of women seeking places in institutionalised Christianity continually increased, Innocent III, in his Bull de non recipiendis sororibus [1198] confirmed and commended the decision no longer to accept them. From 1213, there were attempts to discipline them; but no provision of pastoral care. Further nunneries were forbidden to be attached to the Cistercian order. In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council decreed that there be no more new orders: henceforth any new community had to be established within the framework and rule of an approved Order. This decree 'epitomised the contest between those who would have allowed new forms of religious life' and those who were conservative and reactionary.¹⁸¹ In 1228, the general chapter of the Dominican Order 'forbade not only the incorporation of women's convents but also threatened with censure any brother who accepted their vows, tended to their pastoral needs, or allowed them to wear religious habits .

Instead of treating women as potential allies in the struggle against heretics, the Cistercians and Mendicants created a situation which shifted the horizon of women's potential consciousness, and which generated rational response away from their own structure to new processes of structuration -- including those of their enemies. Overall, it was not the women who were weak in their faith, but the churchmen who were weak in understanding and weak in providing institutionalised support for the religious needs of women. The enormous tensions created during this period, between women and the ecclesiastics, may explain much of the denigration of women -- including some of that in Malleus Maleficarum.

(3) Non-Incorporated Groups

Rebuffed by the Orders, women sought answers to their problems and aspirations by innovating alternative forms of organisation.

(i) Poor Clares.

The Poor Clares and early Franciscan tertiaries followed the example of the primitive church in various hospices near the towns. Innocent III supported Clare, and helped her to create an entirely new form of convent community in the church of St Damian of Assisi. This community was exempted from the decree of the Lateran Council that houses had

to maintain themselves by 'a sufficient income from corporate possessions', and allowed to follow Francis' profession of evangelical poverty. Living in convents, instead of as mendicants, they were seen to have the revolutionary potential of developing, within the Church, a separate order for women. Yet the Franciscans violently opposed attempts to have the Poor Clares in the Franciscan Order.

Thus this sisterhood remained a dangerous example¹⁸².

(ii) Beguines¹⁸³

The Beguine movement began at the beginning of the thirteenth century, spontaneously and simultaneously, in urban Belgium and in trading areas of the Rhine valley. A contemporary, Jacques de Vitry, reported that they had no real founder. Essentially an urban phenomenon, the movement evolved to cope with contemporary economic, social, and religious problems by carrying out charitable and educational work, and by taking economic and religious responsibility for their own lives.

The first beguinages seem to have been started by well-to-do women who built special houses on the edges of cities for women workers, who were migrating into cities that were unable to cope with this influx of demand on housing and employment. Other houses were purchased by the pooling of resources.

The Beguines shared the pervasive religiosity of the Middle Ages, and were especially influenced by the religious aspects of the guilds. However, they did not seek authority from the hierarchy; nor did they impose irreversible vows: 'they did not follow the rule of any saint, nor were they confined within a cloister; but they took private vows of continence and simplicity of life'. They practiced strict evangelical precepts by stressing the importance of family life, prayer, exhortation, and manual work.

There is evidence that they were highly thought of, by some at least. De Vitry wrote that he was impressed by the 'fervour and spontaneity of their personal religion'. Robert de Sorbon thought that the Beguines would give a better account of themselves at the last judgement than 'many a learned "magister", jurist, or theologian'. Grosse-teste told the Franciscans who lived on alms that the Beguines, who lived only by manual work 'had achieved through their way of life the highest degree of Christian perfection'. Surviving fragments -- which are all the record that remains of this phenomenon -- suggest that, although there were some outstanding named figures (some of whom were

teachers of male clergy), in general they consisted of local, communal groups of ordinary women whose names have been lost. One of those whose name has survived 'provided leadership to a group of priests living in a small independent religious commune'.

Mary [d'Oignes] re-channelled her own preaching drive into the teaching of a group of men who became her disciples .. she trained them to analyse the world the way she did, and to preach eloquently. Some of her students became leading bishops of the day, and they all became promoters of responsibility for women in the Church and the community.

Another Beguine who taught men, who then became prominent supporters within ecclesiastical structures of women's activities in organising outside the religious orders, was Christine Stemmeln.

The movement was more than an alternative to convents for those who did not or could not marry, or who could not afford convent dowries. It offered mixed characteristics of guilds, workshops, poorhouses, and religious houses. Elise Boulding emphasises both its secular and its religious aspects. The beguinages offered women what the Church and the guilds were failing to do: independence of men and the male-dominated structure of urban society. Working women continued their trades, as if in all-women trade guilds with religious practices. The wealthier women, stirred by the 'Frauenwebeung' toward the 'vita apostolica', joined their working sisters in workshops. Motivated by desires for the simple life, the need for charitable work, and the urge for independence, they supported themselves by nursing, weaving, lace-making, and embroidery, -- pooling their earnings. Their way of life gave opportunity for developing womanhood solidarity; and for developing in-group activities and in-group cohesiveness and strengths within a society that threatened them, or excluded them in both religious and economic spheres.

They were both religious leaders and 'leaders of a movement for social and economic justice and against institutional corruption'. Thus some of their aspects contained, latently and manifestly, attacks on society -- and, specifically, on the Church for its neglecting to meet the crises of urbanisation -- by their organisation of workshops for the poor, as well as hospitals and schools. The latter had a high reputation, among both worldly ambitious and spiritually-oriented parents, as well as among little girls who overcame their parents' resistance in order to attend. These included Christine Stennelm, who ran away from home at the age of thirteen in order to join the Beguines, and the great mystics, Mechthild and Beatrice Madequijch

Jacques de Vitry saw dangers in the irregular status of the Beguines. Some of them, were in fact persecuted as heretics and burned at the stake. Heer states that an Archbishop of Cologne inaugurated his rule by burning Beguines and Beghards (a later male branch), or by drowning them in the Rhine. The persecutions peaked in the years between

1290 and 1322. De Vitry thought that all Beguines should be completely incorporated into the ecclesiastical structure, so that their obedience could be ensured and so that they could be a force against heresy. Innocent III did make attempts to keep any movements which might be of value within the Church; but he was defeated by the mendicants' antagonism and by traditional elements within the hierarchy. [see preceding section of this chapter, 5.4, b (2)]

Their combination of mysticism and independence (economic and religious) made it difficult to distinguish between the Beguines and heretics, despite the distinction that Beguines 'generally accepted the ultimate authority of the Church' whereas heretics 'to varying degrees denied that authority'. What Beguines and heretics had in common was 'independent-mindedness, a general feeling that one's spiritual state did not depend very closely on obedience to men .. [and] that God was best served in freedom'. A Franciscan of Tournai 'accused them of rejoicing in new and over-subtle ideas when not trained in theology'. he saw them as a threat to monopolised religious learning. With preachers, prophetesses, and community workers, they were held by the clergy to be 'run by the devil'. The Church alarm increased as the Beguines, becoming more organised, established a self-contained women's world in which no men held positions of authority. They 'developed rules about living together, appointed councils of women to administer their affairs, and finally installed a "grand mistress"'.

Although the Church applied pressure in some areas to get them to adopt an enclosed way of life, in fact, the attitude of the Church towards the Beguines was as complex as the attitudes of the Beguines to the Church. Neither side could entirely reject nor entirely accept the other. Most Beguines went to Church, but very few entered the cloisters. They could not accept the all-maleness, the aridity, the rigidity and the corruption. More than that they could not accept the Church's turning away from the world as it increasingly needed the service that the clergy were failing to provide.

The Church wanted to control them, because it feared them for encouraging heresy and secularisation, -- for being a part of the processes of destructureation and of new structureation. For instance, the churchmen were hostile to their translating the Bible into the vernacular, for this enterprise not only threatened the power and privilege of the clergy, it also encouraged critical ideas among the people and gave them training in the articulation of these. The Church also distrusted their mysticism which was part of their independence of the mediation of the Church. On the other hand, they did not want to expend their resources of time and goods upon these women.

(iii) Sisters of the Common Life

In the Low Countries, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, hundreds of wealthy, aristocratic women formed working groups with servant girls. Although they worked within the framework of the established church, they did not belong to any formal order. They did not take any binding vows or wear any distinctive habit. Their movement was a response -- paralleling that of the Beguines -- to corruption and inadequacies in the church and to problems and opportunities of urbanisation. They were suspected of heresy, but never persecuted as a group.

(4) Repelling Aspects of Christianity

At least three aspects of Christianity had features that were potentially repelling to women: the prescription of subordination in marriage, the denial of the sexual, and sensual corruption among the clergy. The first has already been referred to [see chapter 4.2 above]. A little will be said about the other two aspects in the following pages.

(i) Anti-Sexuality

The first Christian Emperors legislated to control sexuality, and 'thus launched the first Christian campaign against sex ..'¹⁸⁴ Needleman suggests that the weakness in Christianity of failing to integrate the natural order in its perspective is a legacy of their violent reaction against paganism after Christianity emerged as the victor in their long struggle. Because they saw paganism as a 'divinisation of physical phenomena', Christians adopted, in contra-distinction an anti-natural bias in their own feeling and thinking. At the same time, Judeo-Christian hostility to sexuality may derive from further back still: from taboo associated -- as in the Old Testament -- with menstrual blood and with semen. A third explanatory may be found in experiences of celibacy -- such as this described by St Jerome.

Often when I was living in the desert amid scorpions and wild beasts, I used to fancy myself amid the pleasures of Rome, among beves of yong women. My skin was dry and my frame gaunt from fasting and penance, my body was that of a corpse, yet my mind was aflame with the cravings of desire, and the fire of lust burned in my flesh. [Jerome, quoted in Simons, 1973, page 117]

In any case, whatever origins may be suggested, some noted Christians have left written record of their disgust at the human body. St Augustine commented that 'inter faeces

et urinam nascimur'; St Bernard saw man as 'nothing else than fetid sperm, a sack of dung, the food of worms'; and Marcion could not understand how God could be responsible for 'the disgusting paraphernalia of reproduction and for all the nauseating defilements of the human flesh from birth to final putrescence'¹⁸⁶. This feeling was extended to the flesh and sexuality of both sexes. Augustine had identified the sin of Adam and Eve as sexual because after they had eaten the forbidden fruit they did not cover their hands or their mouths, but their genitals. Although sex within marriage was sanctified, the Church tried to impose its own control even between the married, by an accumulation of conditions and abstinences which went beyond merely restricting its performance to the end of procreation only. It might only be performed in one position, and only on certain days. It was made illegal on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays; for forty days before Easter and forty days before Christmas; and for three days before attending communion. It was also illegal from the time of conception to forty days after childbirth. Numerous penalties were prescribed for breaking these rules, -- and, of course, it was forbidden during penances.

The reaction of women may perhaps be found in Chaucer's Wife of Bath. We may assume that her vehement logic was neither a lone voice, nor purely fictional, in her defence of sexuality as given by God and by nature.

In wyfhod I wol use myn instrument
As frely as my makere hath it sent.

For hadde God comanded maydenhede
Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede.
And certes, if ther were no see ysowe,
Virginitee, thanne wherof sholde it growe?

[Chaucer. Wife of Bath's Tale, lines 149ff.]

It is not that she is not religious; but she has a very different God from that of the Church: hers is a God of commonsense and close to nature. And it is not that she does not accept asceticism as a value -- but for others, not for herself.

He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly;
And lordynges by youre leve, that am not I.
I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age
In the actes and in fruyt of mariage.

[Chaucer. Wife of Bath's Tale, lines 111ff.]

She also flouts the prescription of wifely subjection.

An housbonde I wol have, I wol nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,
And have his tribulacioun withal
Upon his flessch, whyl that I am his wyf.
I have the power durynge al my lyf
Upon his propre body, and noght he ..

Women desiren have sovereynete
As wel over hir housbond as hir love,
And for to been in maistre hym above.

[Chaucer. Wife of Bath's Tale, lines 154ff.]

Malleus Malificarum might almost be said to contain an explicit reply to the Wife of Bath's views on sexuality and power-relations between spouses and the joys of sexual relations. Lest it be thought that Chaucer of England is a long way from Kramer and Sprenger of Germany three centuries later, I direct attention to the fact that Caxton wrote a Prologue to his edition of Chaucer in 1483 -- a year or so before the publication of Malleus Maleficarum¹⁸⁷.

Besides the general negative attitudes towards the body, there were special negative attitudes towards women. Early Christian Fathers saw her as man's curse. Chrysostom described her as 'an unavoidable calamity', the most harmful of all savage beasts, and 'a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painted ill'. Tertullian saw her as a 'templum super cloacum', and as the gateway of the devil. For him, Eve continued to inhere in all her daughters.

You persuaded him whom the devil dared not attack directly. Because of you the son of God had to die. You should always go dressed in mourning and in rags. [Tertullian.]

The negative attitude toward women was not only associated with reaction against paganism and with the celibate's agonised disgust at sexuality; it was also associated with family life as being a distraction from service to God. Jesus himself had pointed out the incompatibility between domestic duties and family ties on the one hand, and dedication to following himself. The alternatives are set out in the Mary and Martha anecdote, and in the following quotation:

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. [Matthew 19]

On top of the general distractions of marriage; the churchmen were aware of the special distractions of women's sexuality. It gave women power over men: it could make them forget their spiritual duties; it could persuade them to change from one faith to another; it could empty their pockets.

(ii) Corruption

Alas why does a cleric desire fine raiment and why does he want to live so richly .. when he knows that God wished to live in poverty? And why does he desire so much what others own, and strive to get this when he knows that all that he spends or fritters away, beyond his food and lowly garments, is stolen from the poor ..[de Montanhagol, quoted in Topsisfield, 1975, page 246]

Corruption was two-fold: economic and moral. Economic corruption was manifested in the selling of indulgences¹⁸⁸, and by harsh tithes and taxation. Sensual corruption was

manifested in luxurious living and sexual licence, as monasteries became wealthy from both exploitation of people and from developments in agriculture.

The claims to fullness of papal power brought with it corruption, as Popes pretended to the same powers as God -- to depose monarchs and absolve men from oaths. The church increasingly concentrated on litigation and raising money for wars and a luxurious court. Italians, Germans, English, and French writers have documented complaints against harshness and corruption in their chronicles; as have Dante and Petrarch in literature. Behind the great fortress walls of Avignon, indulgence in luxury compared miserably with the poverty outside. The frescoes in the Pope's robing room sensuously portrayed earthly pleasures; and contemporary writers described the papal court as a field of tares (pride, envy, ambition, lust, and simony), a 'sink of iniquity', Hell, Babylon. As most states now refused to pay Crusade tithes, the Church had to find an alternative source of income -- in taxation and the selling of offices: 'every document and privilege cost something' ¹⁸⁹.

Women were implicated in sensuality and corruption, innocently and not innocently.

They were victims of the lust of celibate ¹⁹⁰ priests ----whose celibacy was not necessarily equated with virginity or chastity: its defining characteristic was no-marriage. It co-existed with rape and seduction by priests in confessional and other situations. There is some evidence that women saw celibacy as a concomitant of corruption. ¹⁹¹ Katherine Zell, for example in the next century, pressed for clerical marriage, denouncing the 'celibate priest' who makes seven women pregnant at the same time. ¹⁹²

We may assume that, then as today, women were vulnerable to a blame-the-victim attitude in confessors and other members of society: complaints based on actual experience of sexual assault may well have been dismissed as women's hysteria or malice, or met with the counter-charge of being responsible for arousing the man. On top of that there was the possibility of denunciation to the Inquisition as a priest's threat or revenge if a woman resisted or complained. Ladurie gives an example of this sort of threat in Mont-aillou.

On the other hand, women must be viewed as agents as well as victims in clerical corruption. They intentionally allured men, either for their own sexual pleasure, or for the sake of power and wealth. This behaviour in sensual and ambitious women was referred to by Kramer and Sprenger. They blamed them for the death of churchmen's souls and for the great danger of the time, -- the threat to the Faith.

(5) Heresies

All strange and secret sects have, over the years, been concerned, consciously or otherwise, with restoring women's rights and privileges in a new human society. [Markale, 1975, page 170]

(i) Background

Intolerance was not a characteristic of early Christianity. But as soon as this young religion had grown in numbers and respectability and become formally organised under a hierarchy of authority, it followed the pattern of the contextual society and became authoritarian. From the recognition by Constantine of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire, heresy became treason. Firmicus Maternus displaying the zeal typical of the newly converted demanded that the Emperor should put pagans to death and confiscate their property -- 'even though it should be your brother, your son or the wife of your bosom'. Augustine, after earlier tolerance, gave the order against the donatists of North Africa: 'compel them to come in'. Their reply to this expresses the theme of all heretics: 'the true church is the one that is persecuted, not the one that persecutes'¹⁹³.

Social unrest is associated with independent thinking and heresies: 'Arianism and Pelagianism in the fourth and fifth centuries, manicheism in the eleventh and twelfth, extreme apocalyptic views like Joachism in the thirteenth and fourteenth as well as the recurrence of a kind of Pelagianism'¹⁹⁴. Moreover, all the early heresies were reactions against developments in the church of intolerance, authoritarianism, institutionalism, and wealth; and the earlier values surviving in the West were predisposing to heresy. This was manifested in asceticism and poverty (for example, Peter Damian), and in anti-clericalism (for example, Peter Valdes, founder of the Waldenses or Vaudois)¹⁹⁵.

Most of the important work in Christian thought (including most of Augustine and most of Aquinas' Summa contra gentiles) emerged in reaction against heresy and in defending the faith. The tenets of their faith provided the base for philosophical and logical argument to explain the natural and the human. This meant that the Church believed that it was the final arbiter, according to the above criterion, on any question. It meant further that the Church became preoccupied with heresy: it condemned heretical views because they conflicted with accepted doctrine; and any threat to the established

doctrine was a threat to the established social order.¹⁹⁶

In the thirteenth century, the practice of excluding and condemning the critical and the unorthodox culminated in the centuries of witch/heretic hunting.

Against this brief overview, two points stand out emphatically. In the first place, intolerance did not have misogyny as a defining characteristic. In the second place, if witchcraft was equated with heresy it had the same associations with social unrest and anti-democratic manifestations in the Church. Therefore, -- in the third place -- women's heretical/witchcraft behaviour was not something passive, and not something separate, but an active involvement between women and wider social processes.

(ii) Women and Heresies

From the beginning, heresies offered women a place to escape from, or to protest about, the sexism that had developed in the Church. Moreover, they often offered asceticism and anti-marriage attitudes which freed women from Church-enjoined wifely subordination and the risks of child-bearing. We may not be able to assess what contact women had with the misogynous mode of Christianity or the misogynous moods of individual Churchmen; we can, however, posit that where one or the other was encountered more or less at the same time as there was contact with more philogynous attitudes among heretics and heretical religions, the latter would have increased appeal. Christianity required more of women^{and} offered them less. Therefore, it could be less certain of their adherence. Earlier and later heresies, in contrast, gave higher or equal status to women, as worshippers, priests, or as divinities. Christianity, once it had become hierarchicalised on the model of its contextual society, rejected priestly participation of women as pagan; but some of the heresies continued this practice.

The very women of the heretics, how bold! who teach, argue, perform exorcisms, promise cures, baptise. [Dietrick, 1897, quoted in Boulding, 1976, page 360]

R.A. Knox goes as far as to state that 'from the Montanist movement onwards, the history of religious enthusiasm is largely a history of female emancipation'¹⁹⁷. Priscilla and Maximilla (described by St Jerome as 'noble and rich') left their families to assist Montanus. They claimed immediate revelations and were recognised, with him, as the original prophets of the sect¹⁹⁸. After the death of Montanus, Priscilla became head of the Montanist Church. Montanists believed that as the Holy Ghost inspired both sexes equally, the Church on earth should make no distinctions between men and women. The prophets and prophetesses were believed to be Christ of the Lord God Almighty.

.. the inspiration of the Holy Ghost made the Montanist prophet himself divine, himself a Christ. 'I am not an angel nor a messenger. I am the Lord God the Almighty present to you in man's form, said Montanus, or again, 'I am the Father, the son and the Paraclete'. Priscilla was 'Christ assuming the outward form of a woman'. [Epiphanius, quoted in Runciman, 1955, page 18]

In this period, this attitude of equality was common. So, too, was the belief that leaders of sects, whether men or women, were Christ.

Among the Messalians, women doctors were revered even more than their male priests¹⁹⁹. Adepts of the Mother, a fourth century Gnostic sect, worshipped a female divine power, the Mother of Light. This deity had a higher status than Sabaoth, the God of the Jews: she dwelt in the eighth Heaven, he in the Seventh. And instead of Eve (and through her all women) being made responsible for evil coming into the world, the onus of this was laid on the demon-son of Sabaoth²⁰⁰. The Gnostic heresy linked Mystery religions to Christianity. Thus it was not surprising that many Roman women who were adherents of the Mysteries were attracted to Gnosticism for its similar mystical aspects. Another attraction was that the cultivation of poverty removed the sexist-imposed stigma from women under conditions where they were not permitted, as women, to own property or wealth. There was also absolute celibacy which countered women's negative experiences such as rape, seduction, wifely subjection and the hazards of childbirth. On the other hand, for those women who preferred sensuality some sects promoted licentiousness. There was equality of women and men, and women performed baptisms, as they used to in all the earlier Christian communities. The Gnostics claimed that half of the disciples were women;¹⁸¹ and they emphasised Mary Magdalen over the Virgin Mary. Their scriptures reversed values that insulted women, and replaced them with others that gave them respect. The Old Testament God was presented as the wicked Satan²⁰². Therefore, all those who opposed him were not villains but heroes. The sect of the Ophites worshipped the Serpent as the creature that tried to give Adam and Eve the knowledge that Jehovah withheld from them. Thus Eve was given respect, in contrast to the denigration of her by the Church. There was, as a final attraction, a tendency towards magic which supported women's herbal and other Wise Woman skills.

Catharism was essentially a popular religion. Nobles were converted to it later, probably by cloth merchants and doctors of medicine from the East. The combination of 'popular fervour with the swords of the nobility' made this heresy a very formidable threat to the Church, particularly when this alliance deprived it of its vast ecclesiastical states in the South. Therefore, the Church created the Inquisition to suppress this heresy and all its writings. What we know of it is found in the careful records that the officers of the Inquisition kept.

Women made 'considerable positive contribution to Catharism , for it neither denied women nor degraded them, but admitted them to leadership positions and activities. They 'were eligible to become Perfects ²⁰⁴, and were authorised to preach and dispense the 'consolamentum'²⁰⁵. This inclusion extended beyond the directly religious sphere. The women and girls of Toulouse fought with their men against the crusaders from the North, and stoned their leader, Simon de Montford, to death.

Specific items in Catharist belief -- besides the general attitude of sexual equality -- had potential particular appeal for women. Eve was not formed from Adam [as in one version of Genesis]. The Virgin Mary was given little importance. Chastity was not the ideal; but only for the Perfecti -- sympathisers and Believers were not expected to abstain from sexual intercourse or any other physical pleasures. [The Wife of Bath would have approved this practice.] Casual sex was preferred to marriage, because the perpetual bonds of marriage made impossible the highest aim, that of negation of the body. For women who saw marriage as forced, inegalitarian, and associated with incessant childbearing, this preaching against it could have had attractions. Finally, the fact that the conception of children was discouraged was an attitude that might have been more attractive than the 'Go forth and multiply' injunction of Catholicism.

It is not, therefore, surprising that Catholicism lost so many women to earlier heresies and to Catharism. The Church had failed to provide scope for their religious energies, and demeaned them in its structure and doctrine. On top of that, the spiritual regime that was -- sometimes grudgingly and under external pressure -- provided for them was harsh and rigid.

No penance could be accepted from the fallen, though all the world knew how easy it was for young nuns to fall from grace, seduced as often as not by clerks. [Heer, 1961, page 321]

Thomas Aquinas found women acceptable only in servicing and reproductive functions:

Woman was created to be man's helpmeet, but her unique role is in conception .. since for other purposes men would be better assisted by other men.

Christianity cast women adrift, spiritually and intellectually, -- excluded from a 'masculine society, governed by a thoroughly masculine theology and by a morality made by men for men'. In these negative circumstances, women were offered the contrast of sects such as the Waldensians and Cathars who 'encouraged women to preach and propagandise and to cultivate their own souls .. ²⁰⁶.

5. 5 WORK AND STATUS

a. Caveats

Jarrett has pointed out two major factors that must be taken into account in interpreting evidence which suggests that women were regarded and treated as inferior.

In the first place, the civil or economic subjection of a woman in the family is not to be equated with a valuation of women as inferior to men. For example, Mareo Vegio of Lodi [d.1457], a poet, liturgical scholar, and a canon of St Peter's, refers explicitly to his massive work, De Liberorum Eruditione, in which co-exist both mediaeval and newer attitudes, refers explicitly to the education of boys throughout; but he also explicitly states that 'there is hardly anything that he has written that should not equally be applied to girls ..'²⁰⁷ He also thought that boys should be taught to reverence women.

In the second place, literature which treats women must be distinguished according to the readers or audience to whom it was addressed. For example, in a sermon of Humbert de Romans (Master-General of the Dominican Order during Aquinas' middle period), there is clear evidence that addresses to women -- in contrast to sermons to young celibate monks, could be effusively philogynous. Jarret quotes a characteristic passage which was 'intended to form a model for other friars when preaching to women, and to furnish ideas to be adapted by them to the circumstances of their audience'. Its theme is:

God gave women many prerogatives, not only over other living things but even over man himself, and this (i) by nature; (ii) by grace; and (iii) by glory. [Jarrett, pages 71-72]

This sermon was itself extensively used, and its ideas were common in other mediaeval sermons.

Jarrett stresses that it is grossly unscientific to take monastic writers in their monastic treatises as representative of mediaeval thought on womanhood, for they are not intending to write primarily on women as women ..but solely on women as dangers to monastic observance'.

Two other factors must also be taken into account when doing research on women in this period. On the one hand, prescriptive literature must not be taken as descriptive. On the other hand, it must be recognised how very sparse is the latter. The position may be highlighted by means of a significant parallel in presentation of mediaeval women today. The lack of balance is described by Charity Cannon Willard in the opening

of a paper that she presented at the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York.²⁰⁸

It is no doubt significant that on this program devoted to the role of women in the Middle Ages there is only one woman speaker and that a relatively small portion of the subject matter concerns real women -- as opposed to literary figures -- or with women's own view of their place in medieval society. This is not entirely the fault of the program committee for, as Simone de Beauvoir pointed out some years ago in *Le Deuxième Sexe*, women's history has been traditionally written by men. [Willard in Morewedge, 1975, page 90]

Exc eptions include the love-letters of Heloïse, the writings of the women mystics, the verse of the 'troubairiz', the 'lais' of Marie de France, and Christine de Pisan's realistic pictures of women in various strata of society.

b Work²⁰⁹

It is probable that the simplistic terms 'women's work' and 'women's role' had little meaning in the Middle Ages. Both their domestic and exta-domestic work covered a wide range; and they are not to be thought of as economic dependents of husbands. Priests, for example, depended no less than did warriors on the economic support of their wives. This is documented in the opposition to celibacy of about 960 married priests at Vercelli. They replied to the order to put away their wives:

.. unless they were maintained by the hands of their women they would succumb to hunger and nakedness.

And their status was measured by the critical importance of their economic function.

This importance was partly derived from the great physical mobility of the men. Herlihy points out that not only did the mode of life of the mediaeval warrior nobility involve considerable movement, but in circumstances that fostered emigration, men tended to leave earlier and in proportionately greater numbers than did women. This left women to assume great responsibility in management of estates and farms. They were expected to be familiar with feudal law and military strategy, if they belonged to the nobility; to understand agriculture -- selection and supervision of labourers, care of animals and crops, and market-place bargaining -- if they belonged to the squirearchy.

Two industries which were mainly controlled by women were brewing and preliminary processes of cloth-making. Other food producing and textile industries were also largely practised by them. Marital status was not relevant in carrying on these occupations. Moreover, before the separation of domestic from factory work, the former covered almost every stage of food cultivation and preparation. On the other hand, women joined men in many non-domestic occupations, working in fields, shops, and mines.

Mediaeval records are, indeed, full of these independent women. A glance at any manorial 'extent' will show women villeins and cotters living upon their little holdings and rendering the same services for them as men; some of these are widows, but many of them are obviously unmarried. The unmarried daughters of villeins could always find work to do upon their fathers' acres, and could hire out their strong arms for a wage to weed and hoe and help with the harvest. [Power, 1937, page 41]

c. Status

David Herlihy's study of documentation of sales, leases and exchanges between 700 and 1200 provides some glimpses (varying, of course, by period and region) of the behaviour and status of women in the non-ruling classes. Not only did ladies of the manor have the primary responsibilities for storehouse ('cellarium' and the workshop ('genitium'), as well as the garden and land around the manor-house or castle, but peasant women also had authority and responsibility. Women seem to have had 'chief responsibility for the "inner economy" of the household' -- baking, brewing, tending yard animals, and cultivating land close to the house.

The fact that husbands who were warriors or priests needed freedom from 'domestic solicitude' greatly enlarged not only their wives economic function, but increased their contacts with a wider world, and gave them social prominence.

High respect towards women is reflected in the fact that sons -- whether of knights, nobles, or kings -- often used matronymics.

.. some women were so well known in their communities that their names, rather than those of their husbands identified the sons. The mothers' family may have been long established or wealthy or she may have had outstanding personal qualities, or she may have been in control of the family property. [Gies, pages 25-26]

Power points out that there was a 'certain rough and ready equality'²¹⁰ between the sexes of both noble and humble classes.

In mediaeval society, status was in general derived from economic function in relation to land. In some places and periods, there was no limit to the aspirations of upper class women. For instance, in the late ninth century, women had rights of inheritance and were endowed with property.

Since land had become the only source of power, by exercising their property rights, secured in the Carolingian period, a growing number of women appear in the tenth and eleventh centuries as chatelaines, mistresses of landed

property and castles with attendant rights of justice and military command, proprietors of churches, and participants in both secular and ecclesiastical assemblies.

Even where custom was unfavourable to them, it was possible for women to accumulate inheritances.

Raymond Donat had three sons and two daughters. One of the sons and the heir of a second both went on crusade and mortgaged or sold their land to their sister Saura. The other son and the male heir of Saura's sister died .. without issue, so Saura gathered together the total inheritance of her father for herself and her own son Bertrand. [Herlihy, 1976, page 33]

In the early mediaeval period, everywhere and at all times, according to Herlihy, women appear with fair consistency as owners and managers of land and, apparently, as heads of families. A high proportion of women are shown as donors and as contiguous owners in the Carolingian charters. But whether they actually owned property or not, their management of it could give them high status.

The one most prominent in managing that land, who paid or collected the rent, who sold what surpluses the farm or estate produced or bought at the market place what it lacked, who participated in the various community functions that land management entailed -- he would perforce become well known to his neighbours. When and if that manager was a woman, her reputation would be widespread. Then, too, prominence in economic life may have enhanced a woman's influence on those activities supported by it: court life, court entertainments, and the qualities of the new vernacular literature therein developing. [Herlihy, 1976, page 24]

Concluding Comments

The main points to be emphasised in summing up this chapter are briefly indicated below.

There is some evidence for the existence of cultures with aspects favourable to women; parts of these were peculiar to women; and other parts, across lines of sex, were significantly participated in by women. There is also some evidence that there were means among the illiterate of diffusion of ideas, traditions, and news -- by physical mobility and pictorial (brush or needle) representation.

There is manifest evidence that women were vigorous, independent members of the economy and respected citizens -- if not all of them everywhere and at all times, at least significant numbers of them, qualifying for conceptualisation as a sociological group (of Galois characteristics).

From these three points, issue these premises: (a) women were likely to be exposed to and receptive of material that favoured their self-esteem, and likely to be opaque to material that might have the opposite effect; and (b) women were protagonists in history from a base which allowed varying degrees of freedom, confidence, and wide range of social interaction.

From these hypotheses and the evidence on which they are based, it is concluded that the relationship between women and ecclesiasticals in the period of persecution by the latter of the former was ultimately one between rational protagonists, and not one between irrational perpetrators and passive victims.

The existence of this oppositional group of women -- characterised by critical-multiplicity -- was at stake because of its agonistic behaviour. And it is because of its agonistic qualities that it has survived.

CHAPTER SIX. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER SIX. CONCLUSION

6.1 THE QUESTIONS

What questions have been addressed in this study, and how have they been met?

a. Clustered Manifestations

Is there a period in which manifestations of misogyny and philogyny^{have} been clustered? If so did they co-exist with other striking clusters of contemporary events or phenomena?

The late Middle Ages were characterised, on the one hand, by some striking negative treatment of women as a group -- repulsion by the Mendicant Orders and other institutionalised sectors of the Church; and persecution of women as witch/heretics. On the other hand, it was also characterised by a women's movement which presented examples of protective, critical, and autonomous sisterhoods. Other clusters of striking phenomena were recognised through which the misogynous and philogynous manifestations were discerned to be related, and thus partially explained. These were: intolerance for heretics (of both sexes); growth of formal (women-excluding) learning, and development of modern perspectives, concepts, and methods in philosophy (especially in epistemology); and urbanisation and proto-industrialisation with associated problems and opportunities.

Therefore, this period appeared to be a promising area for research on misogynist and philogynist behaviour.

b. Major Groups

Can major groups be identified?

Misogynous and philogynous and other behaviour can be readily associated with members of the Catholic Church -- from its early period to the late Middle Ages. The misogyny was manifested in: exclusion of women from the Church structure; some denigration of women in doctrine and ethics; prescription of subordination of women in marriage; repulsion of women by the Church, especially by the Mendicant Orders. Problematic is the relevance of misogyny in this group to the persecution of women as witches/heretics. Did the directives come from disposition, feeling, or rational response in terms of

their world-view to events generated by, or associated with, women? Philogynous behaviour is also to be found in this group: early equality; certain writings and preaching; and some support (for example, of the Beguines).

Women manifested philogynous behaviour in, firstly, setting up all-women protest and practical groups or communities -- to some extent in reaction against the early institutionalisation and hierarchalisation of the Church; its tendencies towards materialist values; its neglect of women's spiritual and material needs with the development of urbanisation and industrialisation, with associated problems and opportunities. And, secondly, in supporting women-oriented or women-favouring religions, or religions that practised equality between the sexes. In all these attitudes and events, there inhere the potential development of women's consciousness of themselves as a class.

Besides the two groups -- ecclesiastics and women -- referred to in the above two paragraphs, there were two other significant clusters: members of alternative religions and new philosophers.

There was ever-present potential conflict with the ecclesiastics in the existence of the alternative religions and sects -- often explicitly critical of the social behaviour of the Catholic Church. They also presented an ever-present alternative -- and often kindlier model for women. Thus it is evident that the Church had a reason for hostility to women: their rejection of Catholicism and preference for paganism and heresies.

There ^{was} likewise ever-present conflict inherent for a unitary- and authority-oriented Church in new developments in philosophy. These were, therefore, explored for possible connecting links between women and ecclesiastics. Such links were discerned in developments in nominalism, the dialectical method, and new content.

Women, alternative religionists, and new philosophers were deemed to be linked among themselves insofar as they were -- or seemed to be -- oppositional to the ecclesiastics. The latter had cause to identify threats to their own structure in the oppositional behaviour.

c. Over-arching Background

Was there an over-arching background of social change to which these manifestation and groups might be related?

These manifestations and groups were related to the processes of defensiveness of an established structure and of de-structurational and neo-structurational processes that threatened it, within the frame-work of the uneasy co-existence of the pre-modern and emergent modern. That is to say that the object of research was framed so that it could be 'studied as the destructureation of a traditional structure and the rise of a new one' [Goldmann].

d. Access

What direct and indirect access is there to these groups, events, and relationships?

Written records and scholarly treatment in history and literature tend to be restricted to small, male elite groups. Documents are in Latin, and, having been written down by an exclusive, insulated sector or society, are narrow in scope. Recent developments in scholarship are searching for more widely-based documents and reaching beyond the manifest level of documents. The mainstream of these developments is deemed to be located within several innovatory branches of history. To these are related developments which are specific bases for this study: Women's Studies (women's history, sociology of women, women and literature) and Sociology of Literature (post-Lukács).

e. Conceptual Framework and Tools.

Is there a framework or set of concepts to provide a guiding principle and major conceptual tools?

(1) Genetic Structuralism

Goldmann's interpretative method of genetic structuralism was discerned as appropriate for the aims and scope of this study.

The loci selected for the processes of comprehension were, on the one hand, the behaviour of ecclesiasticals; and, on the other hand, the behaviour of women. In the case of the former, a text Malleus Maleficarum -- was recognised as containing a significatory structure homologous to events that were external to it. This text was, therefore, adopted as the major ready-made instrument for research on this sector. In the case

of the latter, no helpful text was available, -- therefore, a complex concept, that of potential consciousness, became the major research tool here.

The loci for understanding were the relationships among women, ecclesiastics, alternative religionists, and new philosophers -- and beyond them to the over-arching background of change from pre-modern to emergent modern.

In the first place, the behaviour of women was looked at in order to explicate the behaviour of the ecclesiastics; and the aspects of opposition between the unitary and critical-multiplicity were considered especially relevant. In the second place, the behavior of the ecclesiastics was looked at in order to explicate the behaviour of women; and the aspects of ambivalence, institutionalisation and hierarchalisation associated with exclusion of women and with social irresponsibility were considered especially relevant.

That is to say that what was comprehension -- especially in the case of the ecclesiastics for whom this process could be carried out fairly satisfactorily by means of the signficatory structure discerned within Malleus Maleficarum -- in one locus became explanatory for the other; and vice versa. It must, however, be borne in mind that the comprehension process for the women was of a different kind: for this reason it was not included in the chapter on Comprehension.

In the third place, the behaviour of other relevant groups was explored. These groups were identified as those associated with alternative religions or sects -- paganism and heresies, and those associated with oppositional developments in philosophy. These two loci of understanding were related to the ecclesiastics and to the women.

Further, the four loci were related as structurational processes -- including the defensive, the corrosive (endogenous and exogenous), and the creative -- within the over-arching, stressful co-existence of pre-modern and emergent modern phenomena.

(2) Women's Studies

From Women's Studies -- especially Women's History -- I took the following models and directives: women cannot easily be conceptualised as a group; women have been protagonists in history, not passive chameleons; women's status and opportunities have not necessarily improved with the passing of the centuries; and both latent and manifest sources have only begun to be explored or re-interpreted.

I responded to the challenge of conceptualisation of women as a group by conflating and extending four concepts from four different sources: 'class' (Marx), mathematical notion of 'group' (Piaget), 'potential consciousness' (principally, Lukács and Goldmann), 'critical-multiplicity' (derived, through Goldmann, from Kristeva-Bakhtin). I showed that women may be conceptualised as a group -- in terms of Galois' group, which is characterised by permanence and self-transcendence; and of a commonality of exclusion/deprivation and associated critical-multiplicity -- plus a conceptualised pool of consciousness and associated receptors and interceptors.

Goldmann's concept of rational response could be taken over for following the directive of women as protagonists, allowing the hypothesis that if women were negatively involved in the rational response of the ecclesiasticals, then women must have been negatively (from the point of view of the ecclesiasticals) involved in the phenomena that prompted the response -- either as a separate group (women) or as part of a wider group (oppositionals).

The concept of potential consciousness facilitated recognition of the contrast between women of today and the Middle Ages in terms of interceptors and facilitators: today there is regimentation through technology; then there was open access for both oral accumulation and oral retrieval.

My use of sources has been characterised by re-interpretation of a text, through the processes of comprehension and explanation, which led to a re-interpretation of other contemporary phenomena and relations among them: specifically women as a multiplicity-critical group and new philosophers as pre-eminent in processes of de-structuration and neo-structuration. These comprised, in behaviour or in the ecclesiasticals' virtuality, the deleterious and creative oppositionals.

6.2 CONTRIBUTION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

a. Contribution

I have tested a cluster of conceptual tools for imaginative retrieval and re-interpretation in a sparsely documented area.

Accumulation of such evidence as exists and the relating of it to aspects of social contexts in terms of the premise that all human behaviour is ultimately significant response enabled patterns to be discerned. One of these was selected as an aid to illuminating a specific period and events. The pattern of oppositional behaviour among women in various contexts led to the identification of an oppositional (dialectical) relationship between the ecclesiasticals and certain sectors of society. It was found that women were directly and indirectly related to the wider group of oppositionals in their behaviour, and it was surmised that they were persecuted as such.

The structure of the ecclesiasticals was manifestly documented; so too was their violent behaviour against women as witches/heretics. The latter had been interpreted as rational response to threats to their structure from the oppositionals -- who were likewise acting in rational response against uncomfortable events. By locating the non-documented group as an element juxtaposed to, on one plane, and within, on another plane, a documented group (new philosophers) who were in opposition to the documented group of ecclesiasticals, the former may be speculated about from an empirical base. Further, this speculation may be tested through other disciplines.

It was noted that the elements within new philosophy that provided links with women all had associations with oral culture -- which represented another larger group within which women were located. It was, therefore, surmised, that there was an overlap between women's behaviour in the content and method of their thinking, on the one hand, and the content and method of thinking of the breakaway developments in formal learning, on the other hand. It was concluded that not only was it possible that there was overlap, but that this overlap -- combined with women's lack of access to formal learning -- was dangerous. The ignorance of women, the overlap, and the confusion of ecclesiasticals in the shifting lines of division between the permissible and the non-permissible made it possible that women's traditional ways of thought -- of which the insulated ecclesiasticals were unaware -- could be interpreted as heresy (whether it had that intention or not). This was what put women as a critical-multiplicity group with freely accessible pool of potential conscious at stake. This was the negative aspect. On the positive side, the Catholic rationalisation for the subordination of women in Church and marriage was eroded by new developments in philosophy; and thus potentially at least their subjective and objective status was raised.

Thus the future of women as a group, oppositional in themselves and as part of a much wider oppositional tide was only at stake, not destroyed.

b. Directions for Further Research

Dialectical research is by its nature partial. In this case, I have assembled, modified and tested conceptual tools; and used them to illuminate certain events and relationships. These now await further testing, by the extension of what has already been done and the application of different frameworks. These might include concepts and perspectives from the following: literature (especially the new interpretations in Women's Studies criticism); astrology (relationships among pagan religions, the Virgin Mary and empiricism); political background (international and intra-national); economic background (industrialisation, urbanisation, and financial and administrative organisation); alchemy (herbal lore and new empirical developments); medicine (amateurs, professionals, the Church); witchcraft (its history in Western civilisation and primary inquisitional sources, and comparative studies of Western and non-Western attitudes, behaviour and distribution between the sexes); demographic changes; and parallels between women's communal behaviour in places beyond Europe and within Europe, and both past and present.

A series of testings on the base of this preparatory study may further illuminate the circumstances that put women at stake, the degrees and origins of danger, their reactions to these -- and to the saving circumstances to be found within economic developments and ideological cross-currents.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Old Stone Age (Gravettians). 25,000 - 10,000 BC

Catal Huyuk c6500 BC

Neo-platonism (as a main source of mediaeval thought), 3rd & 4th centuries.

Ancyra, Council of 314

St. Augustine, 354 - 430

Charlemagne, - crowned as Holy Roman Emperor, 800

Arabian and Jewish Thinkers (Avicenna, Averroes, Maimonides, etc) 10th - 12th centuries.

Abelard, 1079 - 1142

Aristotle's works: a large part of these were available to the West by 1200

Albert the Great, 1206 - 1280

Innocent III. Crusade against Albigensians, 1208 - 9

Inquisition. Established after 1208 - 1209 Crusade (Under Innocent III) against Albigensians.

Arabic translations into Latin, 13th century

Thomas Aquinas, 1225 - 1274

Avignon schism, 1309 - 1378

Constantinople falls to Turks, 1453

Revolts, restlessness, plagues, emigration, expansion, - 15th and adjacent centuries.

Da Vinci, 1452 - 1519

Printing. 1st surviving book printed in Europe 1447, - by 1500, at least 30,000 individual editions

De summis desiderantes affectibus, Bull of Innocent VIII. 1484

Malleus Maleficarum, c1486

Christopher Columbus sailed to America, 1492

NOTES

1. Several reasons are conducive to misunderstanding Goldmann. One is the chaotic state of bibliographic material about him: it appears in several languages, translated and non-translated, and in a very wide range of publications. He is inadequately represented in Anglo-Saxon scholarship. Elizabeth and Tom Burns [1973] blame this neglect on a 'chronic provincialism in British and American cultural studies. They also see negative reactions to the Marxist approach to literature as 'a response and counter-attack to the Marxist undermining of the autonomy of literature, and, beyond that, of the hierarchical ordering of culture and society which .. [Ortega, Leavis, and Eliot] saw, and rightly, as the rock on which the peopled world of the "clerisy" (Kermode's word for what was one time known as the "republic of letters") was founded'.

Reasons that he himself recognised as leading to misunderstanding were that, in the first place, he wrote in order to provoke, and, in the second place, his style is elliptical. The former characteristic is a consequence of his having already explained his position and defined his terms in previous works. Add the fact that his remarks may appear contradictory because he is attempting to 'express dialectical ideas in a terminology which is not yet used to them'. These contradictions are 'merely apparent ones', which could have been avoided if he had made up 'an abstract language that was suited to the immediate needs of the situation'; but he did not want to make his writings 'obscure and unintelligible for the lay reader'.

2. Jean Piaget. Structuralism, page 121.

3. *ibid.* 114.

4. *ibid* 71.

5. Lucien Goldmann. 'Genetic Structuralism in the Sociology of Literature', in Tom and Elizabeth Burns, editors, 1973.

6. Capital, part 3, chapter 5, Everyman. Quoted by Goldmann in The Hidden God, footnote 2, pages 15-16.

7. 'Assimilation: the process whereby an action .. comes to incorporate new objects into itself ..' Accommodation: 'the process whereby the schemes of assimilation themselves become modified in being applied to a diversity of objects'. Piaget, Structuralism, page 63.

8. see note 7. above.

9. Lucien Goldmann, in Elizabeth and Tom Burns, editors, 1973, pages 115-117]

10. Goldmann's 'rational response' may be equated with Piaget's 'intelligence which has the function of the preservation of the organism.

It consists of both the activity of coping with the environment and the end state of 'compatibility'. It is never fully realised, but is the maximum potential of the adaptive capacities.

11. Lucien Goldmann in Elizabeth and Tom Burns, editors, 1973, pages 112-113.

12. *ibid.* 119.

13. *ibid.* 112-119.

14. *ibid.*
15. Goldmann's 'structures' may be equated with Piaget's 'schemata'.
Schemata are frameworks that act on mediating processes for incoming data. The emphasis is on the term 'process' for these frameworks are not static. Although these structural units for intelligence are stable and predictable, systematic and orderly, the frameworks are continually changing shape as part of the process of assimilating incoming data. But the structure of intelligence may be said to maintain a steady state in that although the equilibrium is in constant process of adaptation it is nonetheless maintained.
16. see note 15. above.
17. see Lucien Goldmann. Power and Humanism. See, also, below.
18. see below.
19. See Chapter Two below.
20. Lucien Goldmann. Power and Humanism, page 3. See also page 18.
21. Goldmann prefers the term 'group consciousness', accompanied by a description of the group in question (family, professional, national, class, etc.) to 'collective consciousness -- because 'it exists only in and through individual consciousness': it is not simply made up of the sum of these. [The Hidden God, page 18.
22. Lucien Goldmann. The Hidden God.
23. See Goldmann's study of Pascal and Racine in The Hidden God; and of Kant in Immanuel Kant.
24. Lucien Goldmann. Toward a Sociology of the Novel, page 159.
25. Lucien Goldmann. The Hidden God, page 17.
26. See the following works of Lucien Goldmann: The Hidden God, Immanuel Kant, and Cultural Creation.
27. 'Absolute' in the sense that it demands that all phenomena, including behaviour, be subsumed under its scheme; and attempts to explain all phenomena under its scheme. In contrast, 'partial rationalism' subsumes only its own elements; and explains only these in terms of its own essence. [see Georg Lukács, History and Class Consciousness]
28. The creators who participated in the earlier structuration processes were, in contrast, in a 'writerly' relationship, integrating their social and economic environment into their dynamic product. [Note that I have taken liberties with Barthes' twin concepts in S/Z of 'lisible' and 'scriptible'.]
29. See Gertrude Lerner's two articles in Berenice Carroll, editor, 1976.
30. See, for example, Robert Blauner's Alienation and Freedom. In this study of workers in the textile industry, he skimmed over almost half of them -- the women -- with these comments: 'a major safety valve against the consequences of alienating work conditions'. By their doing jobs that are 'the least skilled, the most repetitive' they allow men to have skilled and non-repetitive jobs', etc.
31. Elaine Showalter.

32. Helen Hacker, 'Women as a minority group', 1951.
33. Like Goldmann's 'world-view', the conceptualisation is not merely abstract speculation: it is extrapolated from documented, historical events.
34. There was rivalry between women and the Church over ownership and/or management of property of deceased or absentee men.
35. See Chapter Five, below.
36. For example, for 'worker' in the quotation below read 'congregation':
 [The objective, self-centred indifference of the alien nature of objective conditions of labour as against living labour power] face the worker, as a person, in the person of the capitalist (as personifications with their own will and interest), this absolute separation and divorce of ownership (i.e. of the material conditions of labour from living labour power); these conditions are opposed to the worker as alien property, as the reality of another legal person and the absolute domain of their will ..
37. McLelland, 1971, page 106, quoting Marx.
38. McLelland
39. Compare this with Goldmann's world-view, in terms of degrees of awareness by individual and situation.
40. Cited by P.N. Furbank, 'Politics for Yourself', The Listener [U.K.] 8 February, 1970, page 231.
41. Piaget gives an example:
 Thus, starting with the group of which we spoke just now, the group of displacements, which leaves not only the dimensions of the displaced body or figure invariant, but preserves its angles, parallels, straight lines, and so on, as well, we can go on to the next 'higher' group by letting dimensions vary while preserving the other properties enumerated. In this way we obtain the group of similar figures of bodies: shape is kept invariant under transformation of dimensions. The group of displacements has thereby become a subgroup of the shape group. Next we may allow the angles to vary while conserving parallels and straight lines. A still more general group, that treated by 'affine geometry' (which deals with such problems as how to transform one lozenge into another), is thus obtained, of which the shape group now becomes a subgroup. Continuing this process, parallels may be modified while straight lines are preserved; the 'projective' group is thereby constructed; and the entire preceding series now becomes a 'stack' of subgroups within the projective group. Finally, even straight lines may be subjected to transformation. Shapes are now treated as if they were elastic: only 'biunique' and 'bicontinuous' correspondence among their points are preserved under transformation. The group thus obtained (that of 'homeomorphs') is the most general. It constitutes the subject matter of topology. [Structuralism, page 22]
42. *ibid.* 21.
43. *ibid.* 22.

44. Piaget goes on to give an example:

The Bourbaki program consists essentially in extending this procedure by subjecting mathematical elements of every variety, regardless of the mathematical domain to which they belong .. so as to arrive at structures of maximum ^{generality} 'Bourbaki' was the collective pseudonym of a group of French mathematicians.] ^{Piaget 23-24}

45. Goldmann does not attempt to distinguish the separate contributions of Kristeva and Bakhtin. (see his 'Sociology of literature: problems of status and method', 1967)

46. Lucien Goldmann, 1967. page 515

47. *ibid.*

48. *ibid.*

49. See Chapter Two, below.

50. Georg Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, page 51.

51. *op. cit.* pages xviii-xix.

52. Lucien Goldmann, Cultural Creation, page 39.

53. *ibid.*, page 34.

54. Goldmann gives two examples of incompatibility as a restricting factor. The first describes the radical change of consciousness that Lenin effected among Russian peasants, by employing the conceptual tool of potential consciousness to analyse factors involved in communicating with them. In January 1917, he says, non-dialectical enquiry -- however precise -- would probably have found that the great majority of Russian peasants were loyal to the Tsar. Lenin's analysis, in contrast, led him to realise that it was not loyalty to the Tsar that was holding the peasants back but faulty transmission. The message that he was trying to get through -- 'that it would be better to work co-operatively than to possess land' -- was not compatible with the fundamental characteristic of the peasants. Therefore, he formulated a new slogan: 'land to the peasants'. This changed their consciousness radically, and made it possible to transmit the revolutionary message.

The other example is that of scholars attached to a scientific school and a particular thesis who may resist receiving, or else distort, certain information. 'Given the structure of its real consciousness resulting from its past and from the multiple events which have influenced it', members might refuse to recognise some new theory which would challenge all their earlier work. More than this, if the 'fundamental intellectual categories' of a group are incompatible with the information the limits are reached of potential consciousness. Reception can only be at the cost of the group's transformation to the point of losing its essential characteristics, or of disappearing altogether.

55. Lucien Goldmann, Cultural Creation, page 33.

56. Nor is it likely to increase significantly. See below.

57. We may also wonder how far women's empirically-based awareness of the fundamental relationship between sexual intercourse and pregnancy made it impossible for them to accept the theologians' Virgin Mother. I can cite from personal knowledge of peasant women in Spain that they thought that the priests treated them like fools in expecting them to believe such nonsense.

58. Malleus Maleficarum, page 43b.
59. *ibid.* pages i-ii.
60. See Montague Summers' Introductions [1928 and 1948] to Malleus Maleficarum.
61. Heresy was virtually unknown in the Roman Church between the eighth and the twelfth centuries; but was endemic from about the beginning of the thirteenth century, and in the following two centuries. It was associated with the intellectual ferment that the new learning brought to the towns and universities. [Hay, page 150]
62. Hans Sebald, 1978, page 215.
63. About two-thirds of all accused in the period 1300-1500 were women; and many of the male one-third were accused in the early fourteenth century. This suggests that the proportion of women accused had risen sharply in the century ^{in the latter part of the century} and a half before the time of Kramer and Sprenger. Thus Malleus Maleficarum cannot be held responsible.
64. Pages 150-164.
65. See Summers' Introduction to 1928 edition of Malleus Maleficarum.
66. Cross-disciplinary checking increases the rigour of intuitive interpretation.
67. Lucien Goldmann. The Hidden God, pages 313-318.
68. *ibid.*
69. People could be pragmatic or indulge their personal preferences whatever the dangers of prosecution for heresy.
70. Malleus Maleficarum, page 43a.
71. I Corinthians 7.
72. Personal communication.
73. Malleus Maleficarum, page 44a and 44b.
74. *ibid.* 45b, 50a, and 50b.
75. See H.C.Lea, 1957, page 144.
76. Our bishops are become spearmen, and our pastors shearers. And by bishops is meant those proud Abbots who impose heavy labours on their inferiors, which they would not themselves touch with their little finger. And S. Gregory says concerning pastors: No one does more harm in the Church than he who, having the name or order of sanctity, lives in sin, for no one dares to accuse him of sin, and therefore the sin is widely spread, since the sinner is honoured for the sanctity of his order. [Malleus Maleficarum, pages 42b-43a]
77. The relevance of the Virgin Mary to ecclesiastical virtuality is presumably of significance, -- especially as one of our authors was a founder of the Order of the Rosary; and because a few years before the writing of Malleus Maleficarum the Virgin Mary had been invoked to save Cologne -- as many centuries earlier the Goddess Cybele had been invoked to save Rome. (In both cases, the female divine intervention was successful.)

However the topic of the Virgin Mary is too wide, too diverse, and too complex for treatment in this respect in a brief work such as this. Interested readers are directed to two recent publications which relate the Virgin to pagan goddesses and a range of topoi: Alone of All Her Sex, by Marilyn Warner, and The Virgin by Geoffrey Ashe..

78. See Augustine, De Genesi ad Litteram, III, xxii; and De Genesi contra Manichaeos, II, ii.
79. Ambrose Chrysostom. Quoted in Bede Jarrett, 1966, page 74.
80. Denys Hay, 1964, page 18.
81. Margaret Deansley, 1956.
82. *ibid.* 504.
83. Charles Haskins, 1957, page 29.
84. Charles Haskins, 1957, page 275.
85. Gordon Leff, 1958, page 91.
86. Marc Bloch, 1961, page 77.
87. A single Bible required two hundred sheep!
88. W.F. Bolton, 1970, pages xi-xii.
89. Charles Haskins, 1957, page 45.
90. *ibid.* 90.
91. Bolton, *op. cit.*, page xii.
92. Gordon Leff, *op. cit.*, page 176.
93. Leff, *op. cit.*, page 84.
94. Leff, *op.*, pages 181-182.
95. Deansley, *op. cit.*, page 507.
96. [Eclectic - e.g. Haskins and Deansley.]
97. Deansley, *op. cit.*
98. Haskins, *op. cit.*, page 275.
99. L.T. Topsfield, 1975, page 120.
100. Samuel Enoch Stumpf, 1971, page 218.
101. Friedrich Heer, 1961, page 147.
102. *ibid.*, 149
103. Stumpf, *op. cit.*, page 217.

104. [Eclectic - especially Heer and Haskins.]
105. Herbert Waddams, 1968, page 136.
106. *ibid.*
107. Heer, *op. cit.*
108. This alternative was denied to women. Perhaps there is here another causative factor in the high incidence of women as heretics. They were denied access to unlearning it.
109. Women -- the 'troubairiz' -- also wrote troubadour poetry about secular, carnal, and unmarried love.
110. Notably, their tradition of herb-lore and practices, as well as their midwifery skills were -- with or without a web of superstitions -- at the very core of empiricism.
111. Leff, *op. cit.*, page 12.
112. *ibid.*
113. *ibid.* 113.
114. Leff, *op. cit.*, page 104.
115. *ibid.* 115.
116. Albert E. Avey, 1961.
117. Leff, *op. cit.*, pages 120-121.
118. Malleus Maleficarum, page 43b.
119. The term, concept, and practice came from the Greek 'dialego' to discourse, to debate. Dialectics was a method of arriving at the truth by inviting the argument of an opponent, disclosing its contradictions, and then overcoming these contradictions. [Stumpf, *op. cit.*, page 348]
120. In 1210, the exhumed body and ten living followers of Amaury of Bêne -- a follower of Joachim of Flora -- were burnt for teaching that everything, including God, was accessible to the human intellect; that the recognition of every human act as the act of God is the only resurrection and heaven. These humanist ideas were developed later in the same century by the Averroistic Aristotelians. Scholars and students at the universities, especially Siger of Brabant at Paris, took up these key ideas as they discovered Aristotle and his Arabic commentators, Avicenna and Averroes. These ideas enabled them to conceive of 'God and nature, matter and spirit' as all on the same plane. They could think of all men having the power of thought in common. [see Heer, *op. cit.*]
121. Julius R. Weinberg, 1964.
122. Leff. *op. cit.*, page 98.
123. Weinberg. *op. cit.*, page 62.

124. Bertrand Russell, 1961, page 430.

125. Heer. op.cit., 112-113.

126. Abelard is to be contrasted with the logic-chopping dialectician obsessed by the insoluble and the futile, whom John of Salisbury (1110-1180) attacked in Metalogicon.

Disdaining everything except logic, they spend their entire lives on it; having become old they are puerile doubters; they discuss every syllable and even every letter of words and books; they hesitate over nothing, and they search everywhere and they never come to knowledge. [quoted in Leff, op.cit., page 125]

127. A prescribed form of disputation which dominated the thirteenth century university. The stages of argument were: question, thesis, agreement, refutation, argument, suggested proof and final resolution. This was the basic framework of Thomas' work. He favoured the 'disputatio de quolibet' where the theme was left to the audience to decide. This reflected his basic conviction: in intellectual argument the common interest demanded the victory of truth, not the victory of one side or the other. [Heer, op.cit., page 269]

128. Thomas respected all efforts to find truth: and, in his cultivation of the art of 'disputatio legitima', he realised the value to the search for truth even of those who prove to be in error.

We must love equally those whose opinions we share and those whose opinions we reject. For both have made the effort to discover truth, and both, in so doing, have assisted us. [Heer, op.cit., pages 269-279]

This writerly and structural activity is to be contrasted with the later intolerance that proved destructurational.

At the same time, Thomas did see heresy as both virulent and infectious, -- and to be eradicated by severest punishments. Thus the endogenous, destructurational tendency was at the very heart of Dominican theology.

129. Heer. op. cit., page 266.

130. *ibid.*

131. *ibid.*, 267.

132. *ibid.*

133. *ibid.*, 133.

134. Hay. op. cit., page 18.

135. Deansley. op. cit.

136. Many Spanish cities had universities which fostered Islamic, Jewish, and Greek ideas. Subjects ranged from mathematics to theology.

.. Sufis, the mystics of Islam, shared Greek ideas with the Jewish Kabbalists; and those Christians who were capable of seeing beyond the sectarian view visited Toledo and Cordova and other cities where real knowledge was being discussed. [Warren Kenton. Astrology; the Celestial Mirror, 1974, page 103]

137. Leff. op. cit., page 115.

138. *ibid.*, 207-208.

139. Heer. op. cit., page 113.

140. Leff. op. cit., page 113.

141. *ibid.*

142. Quoted in Leff, op. cit., page 216.

143. Before the dawn of the modern scientific age in Europe, an ideal conception of authority had been enshrined in the mediaeval vision of a Catholic community, where Feudalism and the Universal Church ruled side by side, and where government, although highly centralised and imposed from above, aimed (at least in theory) at the curbing of selfish interests for the good of the whole and at the guidance of individual consciences by the wisdom of the Church. A metaphysical explanation of the Universe conditioned the acceptance of this idea of order in government, an order which found its prototype in the Divine harmony observable in the Cosmos. [M.A. Gibb, 1947, page 9]

144. De veritate, q.24, 1.2.

145. Summa theologica, Ia, IIae, q.82, a.3.

146. Leff. op. cit., page 224.

147. Jacquetta Hawkes. The Atlas of Early Man, 1976, pages 2; 68.

148. *ibid.* 41.

149. James Mellaart, 1965, 1975.

150. Merlin Stone, 1976, page 148.

151. *ibid.*

152. *ibid.*

153. *ibid.*, 147.

154. Ezekiel 8. See also 5.1, b.(2) of this chapter, below.

155. Stone. op. cit., page 217.

156. Fedor Schneider, cited by Curtius, footnote on page 104.

157. Margaret Murray, 1921, pages 19-21.

158. Much of this art was allegorical -- and women were strongly represented as the seasons; as Earth ('strong vigorous woman among a profusion of chariots, animals and serpents); and as towns (crowned with a walled and towered headdress ..' [Deansley, op.cit., page 550]

159. A copy of this prayer was sent to me and identified as follows:

.. culled from a small book named 'The Gospel of Peace of Jesus Christ by disciple John' .. The prayer was taken from Aramaic and old Slavonic texts compared and edited by Edmond Szekely. Translated by Edmond Szekely and Purcell Weaver. Published by the C.W. Daniel Company Limited, 60 Muswell

Road, London N 10.

The prayer was removed from John's gospel by a religious council during middle ages.

It was taken from its hiding place and along with other texts journeyed across Europe in advance of invading hordes of Ghengis Khan.

The texts were rediscovered in a monastery in Yugoslavia.

The remainder of the book is not so interesting. Given over mostly to tedious business of body cleansing, and is more directed to males.

160. Geoffrey Ashe, 1976, page 8.
161. *ibid.* 142.
162. *ibid.* 151.
163. Robert Lloyd Laing and Jennifer Laing, 1979, pages 152-153.
164. Robert I. Burns, 1975.
165. The phrase is Marc Bloch's.
166. Haskins, *op. cit.*, pages 45-46; Bloch, *op. cit.*, page 62.
167. Annis Pratt, 1978, page 163.
168. Heer. *op. cit.*, page 114.
169. Elise Boulding, 1976, page 359.
170. *ibid.* 397.
171. Tavard. Quoted in Boulding, *op. cit.*, pages 355; 358.
172. Dietrick. Cited in Boulding, *op. cit.*, pages 360-361.
173. Jo Ann McNamara, 1976, page 146.
174. *ibid.*
175. *ibid.* 156.
176. *ibid.* 147.
177. *ibid.* 149-150.
178. Barbara A. Hanawalt, in Susan Mosher Stuard, 1976, page 127.
179. W.F. Bolton, 1970.

180. It is to be noted that Kramer and Sprenger belonged to the Dominican Order which addressed itself particularly to the upper classes. Relevant to their attitude towards women may have been the disloyalty of the latter to their class, and the critical questioning of the institutionalised Church by the aristocratic members of the 'Frauenbewegung'.

181. This behaviour, of course, is within the structuration pattern.

182. See also Boulding, op. cit., pages 467-468.

183. The sources for this sub-section -- as for all the section on the Middle Ages is eclectic and difficult to itemise for acknowledgement. I make particular mention of Elise Boulding, op. cit.

184. C.J. Simons, 1973, page 98.

185. Needleman

186. Westermarck. Quoted in Simons, op. cit., page 99.

187.

I direct attention to the fact that Caxton wrote a Prologue to his edition of Chaucer in 1483 -- a year or so before the publication of Malleus Maleficarum. [Bolton, 1971] It is perhaps significant that this work also contained an attack on the moral corruption of the clergy in their behaviour towards women -- according to the Wife of Bath.

For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
 Ther walketh now the lyntour hymself

 In every bussh or under ever tree;
 Ther is noon oother incubus but he.
 And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.

188. See Abelard's attack on this in Chapter Four, above.

189. Heer, op. cit., page 338.

190. Gregory VII (Hildebrand, 1073-1086) established celibacy for all clergy, as part of the struggle against 'worldly and carnal' prelates and priests. He hoped that by freeing them from temptations of the flesh and demands of a family that they could devote themselves absolutely to the service of God and the Church. Corruption and falling away from service was associated with the seizure of the pontifical throne by the German king.

191. The following illustrates the distinction between celibacy and chastity: Innocent VIII had what Montague Summers has described as a 'few faults'. During his youth he had 'indulged in an amour with a fair Neapolitan by whom he had two children'. This, Summers admits, was 'contrary to strict morality and to be reasonably blamed'. Innocent provided for these children 'in an ample and munificent manner'. The daughter's marriage was celebrated, with great magnificence, at the Vatican in 1488. [Malleus Maleficarum, page xxxi]

193. Heer, op. cit., page 147.

194. Leff, op. cit., page 12.

195. Heer, op.cit.; Leff, op.cit.

196. Leff, op. cit. page 12.

197. R.A. Knox, 1950, page 20.
198. McGiffert, 1933, page 166.
199. Timothyus Constantinopolitans. Quoted in Stephen Runciman, 1955, page 23.
200. *ibid.* 27.
201. Boulding, *op. cit.*, pages 362-363.
202. Runciman, *op. cit.*, page 10.
203. Heer, *op. cit.*, page 320.
204. The state of the Perfect, male or female was superior to that of any orthodox priest: 'filled with the Holy Spirit, he [or she] was to some extent God Himself; and as God he [or she] was worshipped by the ordinary believer'. [Runciman, 1955, page 159.]
205. Heer, *op. cit.*, page 320.
206. *ibid.* 321-322.
207. Jarrett, *op. cit.*, page 65.
208. Charity Cannon Willard, in Morewedge, 1975, page 90.

REFERENCES

- Abelard, Peter. Sic et Non.
- Abelard, Peter. Summa Dialecticae.
- Ackerman, Phyllis. Tapestry: The mirror of civilisation. London, Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Anderson, Alan, and Raymond Gordon. 'The uniqueness of English witchcraft: a matter of numbers?' British Journal of Sociology, vol. xxx, no.3. Sept. 1979.
- Aquinas, Thomas. Summa Contra Gentiles.
- Aquinas, Thomas. Summa Theologiae.
- Aristotle. Metaphysics.
- Aristotle. Ethics.
- Aristotle. Organon.
- Ashe, Geoffrey. The Virgin. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1976.
- Augustine (Saint). Against the Academics.
- Augustine (Saint). Soliloquies.
- Augustine (Saint). The City of God.
- Avey, Albert E. Handbook in the History of Philosophy. New York, Barnes and Noble. 1961.
- Baker, Derek (ed.). Mediaeval Women. Oxford, Basil Blackwall. 1978.
- Beard, Mary R. Woman as Force in History. New York, Collier-Macmillan. 1962.
- Bible. English Authorised. Oxford, Oxford University Press. Also New English Bible, Oxford, The Bible Societies, 1972. Books of the Bible referred to:
- Corinthians
- Colossians
- Exodus
- Galatians
- Genesis
- Isiah
- Jeremiah
- Kings
- Matthew
- Nahum
- Proverbs
- Revelation
- Romans
- Blauner, Robert. Alienation and Freedom. University of Chicago Press, 1964.
- Bloch, Marc. Feudal Society. London, routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961.
- Boardman, John. The Greeks Overseas. Harmondsworth. Penguin, 1964

Bolton Brenda M. 'Mulieres sanctae', in Susan Mosher Stuard, Women in Mediaeval Society. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976.

Bolton, W.F. (ed.) History of Literature in the English Language. vol.1. The Middle Ages. London, Sphere Books, 1970.

Boulding, Elise. The Underside of History; a view of women through time. Boulder, Colorado. Westview Press, 1976.

Burns, Elizabeth and Tom. (eds.) Sociology of Literature and Drama: selected readings. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973.

Burns, Robert I. 'Immigrants from Islam: the crusaders' use of Muslims as settlers in thirteenth-century Spain'. American Historical Review, vol. 80, No.1, February, 1975.

Campbell, Joseph. The Masks of God: creative mythology. London, Souvenir Press, 1968.

Campbell, Joseph. The Masks of God: occidental mythology. London, Souvenir Press, 1974.

Campbell, Joseph. The Masks of God: primitive mythology. London, Souvenir Press. 1973.

Campbell, Joseph. Myths to Live By. London, Souvenir Press, 1973.

Curtius, E.R. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages. Princeton. Princeton University Press, 1973

Cooper, David. The Dialectics of Liberation. Harmondsworth. Penguin, 1968.

Daly, Mary. The Church and the Second Sex.

Daly, Mary. Beyond God the Father, Boston, Beacon, 1973.

Daly, Mary. Gyn/Ecology; the metaethics of radical feminism. London, The Women's Press, 1978.

Deansley, Margaret. A History of Early Medieval Europe 476-911. London, Methuen, 1956.

Dworkin, Andrea. Women Hating. New York, E.P. Dutton, 1974.

Ecclesiasticus. Apocrypha.

Eckenstein, Lina. The Women of Early Christianity. London, Faith Press, 1935.

Eckenstein, Lina. Women Under Monasticism: chapters on saint-lore and convent life between AD 500 and AD 1500. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1896.

Evans, Michael. 'Allegorical women and practical men: the iconography of the "artes" reconsidered', in Derek Baker (ed.), Mediaeval Women, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1978.

Firnbank, P.N. 'Politics-for-yourself'. The Listener [U.K.], 8 Feb. 1979.

Genet, Jean. The Balcony. London, Faber and Faber, 1957.

Genet, Jean. The Blacks: clown show. London, Faber, 1960.

Genet, Jean. The Maids: a play. London, Faber, 1963.

Genet, Jean. The Screens. London, Faber and Faber, 1963.

- Gibb, Mildred Ann. John Lilburne the Leveller: christian democrat. London, Lindsay Drummond, 1947.
- Gimpel, Jean. The mediaeval machine: the industrial revolution of the middles ages. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1977.
- Goldmann, Lucien. 'Criticism and Dogmatism in Literature'. In David Cooper (ed.), Macmillan, 1969.
- Goldmann, Lucien. Cultural Creation in Modern Society. St Louis, Telos Press, 1976.
- Goldmann, Lucien. 'Genetic Structuralism in the Sociology of Literature', in Elizabeth and Tom Burns (eds.), Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin, 1973.
- Goldmann, Lucien. Immanuel Kant. New Left Books, 1971.
- Goldmann, Lucien. Racine. Cambridge, Rivers Press, 1969.
- Goldmann, Lucien. The Hidden God: a study of tragic vision in the Pensées of Pascal and the Tragedies of Racine. London, Routhledge and Kegan Paul, 1964.
- Goldmann, Lucien. The Human Sciences and Philosophy. London, Jonathan Cape, 1964.
- Goldmann, Lucien. 'The sociology of literature: status and problems of method'. International Social Sciences Journal, XIX, 4, 1967.
- Goldmann, Lucien. Towards a Sociology of the Novel. London, Tavistock, 1975.
- Hacker, Helen. 'Women as a minority group'. Social Forces, U.S. 1951.
- Hanawalt, Barbara A. 'The female felon in fourteenth-century England' in Susan Mosher Stuard (ed.), Women in Mediaeval Society, Pennsylvania Press, 1976.
- Harrison, Michael. The Roots of Witchcraft. Frederick Muller, 1973.
- Haskins, Charles Homer. The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century. Cleveland, Meridian, 1957.
- Hay, Denys. The Medieval Centuries. Lond, Methuen, 1964.
- Hawkes, Jacquetta. The Atlas of Early Man. London, Macmillan, 1976.
- Heer, Friedrich. The Mediaeval World: Europe 1100-1350. New York, Mentor, 1961.
- Innocent III. 'de non recipiendis sororibus'. 1198.
- Innocent VIII. 'summis desiderantes affectibus', 1484.
- Jarrett, Bede. Social Theories of the Middle Ages. New York, Ungar, 1966.
- Kieckhefer, Richard. European Witch Trials. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976.
- Knox, Ronald. Enthusiasm: a chapter in the history of religion. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1950.
- Kramer, James, and Henry Sprenger. Malleus Maleficarum, c1486.
- Ladurie, Emmanuel. Montaillou: the promised land of error. New York, Random, 1979.
- Laing, Lloyd Robert and Jennifer Laing. Anglo-Saxon England. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.

- Lea, Henry Charles. (comp.) Materials towards a History of Witchcraft, 3 vols. New York, Yoseloff, 1957.
- Leff, Gordon. Mediaeval Thought, St Augustine to Ockham. London, Penguin, 1958.
- Lerner, Gerda. 'New Approaches to the Study of Women in American History', in Berenice A. Carroll (ed.) Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays. University of Illinois Press, 1976.
- Lerner, Gerda. 'Placing Women in History', in Berenice A. Carroll, Liberating Women's History: theoretical and Critical Essays, University of Illinois, 1976.
- Lukács, Georg. History and Class Consciousness. tr. London, Merlin Press, 1971.
- McGiffert, Arthur Cushman. A History of Christian Thought. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932.
- McDonnell, Ernest. The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture. New York, Octagon, (1954) 1979. McGiffert, Arthur Cushman. A History of Christian Thought. 2 vols. New York, Charles Scribner, 1933.
- McNamara, Jo Ann. Feminist Studies, vol.3, 3/4, 1976.
- Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. Selected Works in three volumes. Moscow, Progress, 1969.
- Markale, Jean. Women of the Celts. London, Gordon Cremonesi, 1975.
- Morewedge, Rosmarie The. (ed.) The Role of Woman in the Middle Ages, Papers of the Sixth Annual Conference of the Center in Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, held at the State University of New York, Binghamton, May 1972. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1975.
- Murray, Margaret. The Witch Cult in Western Europe. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1921.
- Needleham, Jacob (ed.) The Sword of Genesis. Baltimore, Maryland, Penguin, 1974.
- Nelson, Ted. The Home Computer. USA, T. Nelson, 1978.
- Pascal, Blaise. Pensées.
- Piaget, Jean. Structuralism.
- Power, Eileen. Medieval People. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1937.
- Power, Eileen. Medieval Women. Cambridge, Cambridge University, 1975.
- Pratt, Annis. 'Aunt Jennifer's tigers: notes towards a pre-literary history of women's archetypes'. Feminist Studies, vol.4, no.1, February 1978.
- Racine, Jean. Andromaque.
- Racine, Jean. Britannicus.
- Racine, Jean. Iphigénie.
- Racine, Jean. Phèdre.
- Runciman, Stephen. The Mediaeval Manichee, Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 1955.
- Russell, Bertrand. History of Western Philosophy. George Allen and Unwin, 1961.

- de Satgé, John. The Blessed Virgin Mary. 1963.
- Sebald, Hans. Witchcraft: the heritage of a heresy. New York, Elsevier, 1978.
- Showalter, Elaine. A Literature of Their Own: British Novelists from Brontë to Lessing. Princeton, New York, Princeton University Press, 1977.
- Simons, C.J. Sex and Superstition. London, Abelaed-Schuman, 1973.
- Stone, Merlin. The Paradise Papers. London, Virago, 1976.
- Stuard, Susan Mosher (ed.) Women in Medieval Society. Pennsylvania Press, 1976.
- Stumpf, Samuel Enoch. Philosophy: history and problems. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1971.
- Summers, Montague. Malleus Maleficarum. An English Translation, New York, Dover, 1971.
- Summers, Montague. The History of Witchcraft and Demonology. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965.
- Székely, Edmond and Purcell Weaver (eds.) Aramaic and old Slavonic texts. London, C.W. Daniel Company.
- Tavard, George H. Woman in Christian Tradition. University of Notre Dame Press, 1973.
- Topsfield, L.I. Troubadours and Love. Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- Verdier, Philippe. 'Woman in the Marginalia of Gothic Manuscripts and Related Works', in Rosemarie Thee Morewedge (ed.), The Role of Woman in the Middle Ages. Hodder and Stoughton, 1975.
- de Vitry, Jacques. 'historica occidentalis, exempla, sermon to the Beguines, 1229-1240.
- van Vuuren, Nancy. The Subversion of Woman as practiced by churches .., Westminster, 1973.
- Waddams, Herbert. The Church and Man's Struggle for Unity. London, Blandford, 1968.
- Warner, Marina. Alone of All Her Sex. London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1976.
- Weinberg, Julius R. A Short History of Mediaeval Philosophy. Princeton University Press, 1964.
- Willard, Charity Cannon. 'A fifteenth century view of women's role in medieval society: Christine Pizan's Livre des Trois Vertus', in Rosemary Thee Morewedge (ed.), The Role of Woman in the Middle Ages, Hodder and Stoughton, 1975.
- Windelband, William. A History of Philosophy. 2 vols. Harper Torchbooks, 1958.