

SOME--THINKING THEY ARE DOING IT OUT OF RESPECT FOR WOMEN--HAVE BANNED THE BIBLE'S PRONOMINAL WAY OF REFERRING TO **GOD**--WITHOUT REALIZING THAT THIS

REDUCTIONIST CENSORSHIP (1) IMPOSES THE NEED TO MONITOR AGAINST RECIDIVISM (i.e., slipping back into the way the Bible speaks of God), (2) FADES THE SENSE THAT GOD IS PERSONAL, (3) CONFUSES THE DIRECTION OF REVELATION (Our will be done in heaven as it is on earth.), (4) WEAKENS THE BIBLICAL* WITNESS IN THE WORLD, & (4) FURTHERS "THE GODDESS REVIVAL" (which is the title of a Baker/95 book--detailed below--which, with unintended irony, purports to be *against* the return of the Goddess).

BY THE LAW OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES, HERE OPERATING IN THE INTEREST OF HELL, THIS PRONOMINAL **SCUPULOSITY** HAS PRODUCED A NEW RELIGION.

* Both by questioning the authority of, & alienating the people from, Scripture.

A The above is my only Thinksheet title that is, in itself, a Thinksheet &--in this perspective--is my shortest Thinksheet. But you may be interested enough to read some commentary.

B Pages 3 & 4 are my response to Gabriel Fackre's request that I comment on the book's 6th chapter, titled "God Is Not Male." The remainder of the Thinksheet is commentary after he loaned me the book. (Previously, I'd had only the 6th chapter.)

C Note the 1st phrase of this Thinksheet's title. The three women & one man who did the book were not aware that in the ideological refusal to refer to God as a god (masculine), they were paying their respects to Goddess as a goddess (feminine), as some Christians think to pay respects to Jews present by not mentioning Jesus. Goddess is grateful to have her competition pronominally neutered, in this case by Evangelicals (a peculiar people to be found eroding the biblical substance)....NOTE: "Goddess" is now being used by her devotees anarthrously (without the definite article), as is "God" by his devotees.

The **mutual alienation** of the sexes on earth has now been projected onto the screen of heaven, a neo-primitive political transcendentalization--itself a reversal of the primitive projection (e.g., in Homer) of the battle of the sexes from heaven to earth.

D What most impedes theological dialog, vis-a-vis ultimate devotion, is the fact that for most people the political (power-talk) is more real than the mythical (god/dess-talk). Devotion transposed from the mythical to the political plane = ideology, which is mind-crippling devotion to an idea-construct. Politics is corrupted into tyranny, whose first victim is honesty (devotion to truth). (Instance the dishonesty in the production of THE NEW CENTURY HYMNAL.)

E Mythical (i.e., religious) thought demands/commands **bilevel** staging, an over-stage & an under-stage. (True even in Buddhism, the Buddha [Enlightenment] experience being of a higher stage of consciousness.) The current gender-feminist attack on verticality (called "hierarchy" & "patriarchy") is, at bottom, an attack on religion, though feminine religionists are unaware of this yet.**

In Homer & Virgil, we can observe the decay of the ancient Greek/Roman bilevel conceptual world: we can't really believe that earth goings-on are all that influenced by the capricious, humanity-unmindful god/desses (deities). But soon, with religious invasions from the East (the Mysteries, Judaism, Christianity, Mithraism, Manicheism), the upper stage became populated by moral, humanity-caring divinities, the Christian God finally winning over god/dess rivals.

To smell the battle, please look to Eph.1.3-14, in Greek a one-sentence (!) summation of Paul's battle-cry. It's a jubilant liturgy, conveying the triumphal spirit of early Christian worship. Note events on the upper stage: v.3, "in the heavenlies," NRSV "in the heavenly places," Zink (German), "in the heavenly world," where the heaven-Father (vv.2&3) exercises his will (vv.1,5,9,11) downward onto the lower stage, where those who are in Christ (vv.1,2,10,12) submit to him

** Religion requires the vertical (axis mundi): Mircea Eliade, THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE (Harper/61).

as Lord (vv.2&3). Together with Ephesians' salutation, this sentence is "like the overture of an opera, foreshadowing the successive melodies that are to follow" in the rest of Ephesians & throughout the Pauline corpus (9 [?] letters), which it introduces (E.J.Goodspeed, THE MEANING OF EPHESIANS [U. of C.33] p.20). The whole is obviously not about a goddess who seduces but about a god (Father, Lord) who works out his will vis-a-vis his creation, including humanity.

My point? The whole heaven/earth picture is **integral**, of a piece. Every thing "fits" the upper/lower stage,*including the masculine pronouns for deity. Throw anything out, practice reductionism on this or that (e.g., Father, Lord, masculine pronouns for deity), & the stages fade (along with the sense that God is personal, the nature of revelation, the Bible, the Christian religion).The fading is visible in the book's awkward non-masculine-pronominal referencing of the deity, & inceptively in other ways. * Cp. the Lord's Prayer: "on earth as...in heaven."

F Since to her devotees Goddess is unapologetically "she," why for many of his devotees is God no longer "he"? Because under feminist pressure they have surrendered the name-brand deity with his "scandal of particularity" (Barth) & gone to preaching a **generic** deity, who can be referred to as "it" but never as "she" or "he." Goddess is definite, concrete, personal, cataphatically (positively) "she": God does not exist pronominally as personal & is apophatically (negatively) not-"he." On those terms, God cannot compete with Goddess, for his devotees have crippled him, claiming that this reductionism is good for women & therefore also for men. Neither conclusion is, at least as yet, in evidence. And it can be as well argued that the neutered deity is bad for men and therefore also for women. The offspring? What's bad for either women or men is bad for children.

G Easter '96, members of the National Atheist Alliance, in sunrise meetings across America, came out of the closet as thaists, Goddess devotees with no hesitation in saying "she." Developed monothaism includes the digestible masculine just as developed montheism includes the digestible feminine. The latter, the biblical God, had long experience of contesting, & defeating, the former. In a fair fight, he'll win again. But pronominal neutering of him makes the fight unfair in favor of Goddess. But since only a minuscule % of devotees of the biblical religions have disciplined themselves to this neutering, I believe the Goddess will lose again.

H Am I making too much of the masculine pronouns for the biblical God? Is it only a peripheral issue? "What is at stake in this issue of pronouns for the deity? Nothing ultimately less than the faith, identity and mission of the church of Jesus Christ" (Alvin Kimel & David Hook, Scottish Journal of Theology 46 ['93], 323). Note also Karen Anderson's rejoicing in the dying out of the masculine pronouns for God (in her antitheistic tome, A HISTORY OF GOD), for this repression will hasten the demise of theism, which is "intellectually, morally, and spiritually flawed" & an impediment to the emergence of a mature religion for the new century. In her view, THE "NEW CENTURY" HYMNAL is thus contributing to the death of the biblical God.

I Gender feminism (& those who, like the producers of THE NEW CENTURY HYMNAL, knuckle under to it) falsely assume a **tight interlock** between theology & society: specifically, if the feminine is minor in heaven, women will be minor on earth. The history of religions does not bear out this intermeshing-gears theory most powerfully stated by Mary Daly as "If God is male, males are gods" (though as a well-trained ex-nun, she knows that the Church has never taught that God is male). When Cardinal Ratzinger speaks of women as "equal in dignity" with men, he's both stating a theological fact & lodging a severe social critique & challenge. To me it's sad he does so in the context of denying ordination to women. But we cannot conclude that the biblical (masculine-feminine) God, & therefore canonical Christian theology, *necessarily* is bad news for females: what other worldview has ever been better for females? CONCLUSION: Redesigning the deity out of kindness to women will probably do women (& therefore men & children) more harm than good. Is dropping the masculine pronouns for God a redesigning of the deity? Yes!

J **The new religion** emerging, as biblical-historical religion is being processed through the cultural icons (equality [v. mutuality], autonomy [v. submission], "love" [v. duty]), is an all-purpose generic religion with a generic-impersonal deity. +

1 Attacking witches has not been popular since 1692, but I'm glad its back & Gordon-Conwell's OT prof. is undertaking it.

2 Starhawk has reversed divinity cooptation. The biblical God coopts into himself every feminine good: Starhawk's Goddess coopts into herself every masculine good. The first cooptation is good, a matter of revelation: the second cooptation is evil, a matter of demonic-chthonic influence. For canonical Christians, that's all clear.

3 What's also clear is that feminist theology either (1) denies that history-of-religions account of how the genders were consolidated in biblical monotheism, or (2) accepts the account & calls for a revisioning, re-imagining, on the basis of "women's experience," of the biblical God. Moves in a half-dozen directions are now in process. (Yesterday at NYTS I marked "Probably Yes"* next to the announcement of Letty Russell [ed.], feminist theological dictionary.) *"*Purchase for Library.*"

4 One of the few continuities in the canonical deity is that he's consistently masculine (never feminine) both in address & in pronominal reference. Where one goes with that fact is an issue separate from whether one admits, or tries to evade, the fact. One who admits is not embarrassed by the masculine-only incarnation. One who tries to evade will produce such bowdlerizations as I describe in "The Christmas Carols Ashamed of Jesus" (which was the basis of Woodward's article's "neutering" of the baby Jesus, & thus indirectly of the York [Pa.] York Sunday News' Larry Hicks column [herewith]).

5 Oddly, the chapter seems orthodox, but refuses to follow the Bible's personal-pronominal use for the deity. E.g., in the last 5 lines of p.109, the text uses "God" 6x--which makes ugly, as well as biblically unfaithful, writing.

6 The chapter begins with the assertion that God is known, "in addition to the incarnation," by "actions, descriptive adjectives, and metaphorical language." Why not add (as I do) "and by titles"? Because, as one can see on p.110, the authors include titles/names in metaphors, as does (e.g.) Sally McFague. In my opinion, a fatal concession (e.g., in the Trinity at the end of Mt.). Of course names/titles are subject to metaphorical analysis; but they carry a revelational-historical authority no other metaphors do: they are revelation-privileged metaphors.

7 The authors, like radical feminists, try to weaken masculine language by reference to social location (e.g., "father-son" = "ruler-heir"). All this bypasses the liturgical situation: what language for God are we Christians to use in worship? There's less distance between these authors & Starhawk than they think....The liturgical situation: the authors never mention it, not even so much as "Father" in the "Our Father," which we Christians are to pray daily. Perhaps elsewhere in the book their seminary students get some help as to what God-language to use in worship, but this chapter would incline the poor liturgist-to-be to tongue-tiedness.

8 The chapter's title, "God Is Not Male," announces its project as negative. A straw "man": who but the Mormons believe God is male? Really, the project is "God is not masculine." But (p.111) "Both interpreters at the far right and the far left seem to agree that the God of the Bible is essentially masculine": what adverb other than "essentially" would the authors accept? Certainly not "consistently," though in names/titles & personal pronouns that's a fact....Nowhere do the authors look at this compound fact: The Bible's God is never feminine (in either names/titles or personal pronouns), never feminine-masculine, always masculine-feminine (in that the feminine is incorporated into the masculine). In the Christological controversies, the orthodox rightly feared the subordination of the Son to the Father: our authors fear the subordination of the feminine to the masculine in God even though it's a solid biblical fact.

9 ? : "Most biblical metaphors [for God] are not clearly sex-specific." A specious remark, as it applies only to a mere enumeration rather than to proportionality (112).

10 ? : "God does not conceive children through intercourse." The authors speak of Zeus but not of Jesus' virgin birth--disbelieve in the former, perhaps also the latter. The virgin-birth narratives assume divine maleness: a mythological datum whether or not one "believes in" the virgin birth of Jesus....See also Gn.6....(113)

11 ? (114): "God has no form or body." Phil.2.6. Their next sentence is quasi-docetist: the "celibate" Jesus....Same error on 125.

12 ? (117): "'Father' is also a synecdoche." What is the whole of which "Father" is a part: a divine couple? And if "Father" generically includes "Mother," should we thus improve on the Lord's Prayer?

13 Mal.2.10 is wrongly extended from Israel to humankind. See Mal. context. (119)

14 The title on 120 is false to the Bible: "God Is Not Limited by Pronouns." The biblical God is limited by pronouns in the sense that feminine pronouns are never used of him. Of course in the wider sense, God is not limited by human language. But stating that truism, while serving as a warning not to take language too seriously, does not help us decide what God-language to use....This subsection, mucking around with literalism & verbal statistics, can't manage to slither away from the fact that whatever the pronoun count in Hebrew/Greek/English, pronouns present or implied always refer to the masculine-feminine (never feminine-masculine) God of the Bible. It's silly to adduce "gospel of God which promised," which is English nonsense, as evidence that the early Christians were less conscious than we English-users are of the divine masculine. Silly, too, to say that English-Bible users are more inclined to think "God must be male" than were the early Christians. But I do like the authors' saying a good word for Ms. Montgomery's translation....What the authors are up to is the obtaining, I'd say by false premises, a biblical warrant for their never doing what the Bible always (in Hebrew, Greek, & all Eng. versions/translations) does, viz. to use masculine pronouns for God. There's genuine pathos in their attempt; but it's in the new-religion category of redesigning the deity, which is bad news for God & good news (though they intend otherwise) for the Goddess.

15 More mucking around in the subsections titled "The Significance of Gender in Language" & "Gender in Biblical Languages Signifies 'Class'" (121ff). Some shaky scholarship here; e.g., it's untrue that "'Wife' in German is masculine" (it's neuter). Nowhere in this disquisition do the authors distinguish between a noun whose gender must be determined by its modifiers/anaphors & a noun whose gender is independently known (in the latter category being the biblical God, whom the Bible addresses only with masculine titles/names, never with feminine). Playing around with language history cannot obscure that boulderlike fact on the landscape of biblical speech. Arguing from developmental linguistics may wow the booboisie but cannot advance the cause of redesigning the biblical deity....Error (124): "'God' is not a masculine term in English." OED: "regarded as masculine," antonym of "Goddess." It's why I say "deity" instead of "God" in contexts where I'm speaking in general of the divinity. Radical feminists are correct in never saying "God," but instead either "God/dess" or "Goddess." Ignorance of the gender of "God" doesn't demasculinize the word.

16 "Language is like a glove....it can be changed." This functionalism plays into the hands of these authors' radical-feminist enemies. Closer to the human truth is that a language is more like the hand than like the glove.

17 Feminists fight against the generic use of "he," but these authors claim (127) that the Bible's "original writers" meant "He" generically vis-a-vis God. True in a way the chapter does not intend: the masculine in the "He" is inclusive of the subordinate feminine....They worry (129) that "we may very well end up worshipping another deity" if we add foreign terms; I say, also if we drop biblical terms such as the masculine pronouns for God.

Gabe from Willis, 31 Mar 96, the day he lent me the book (of which my preceding comments were on chap.6 of): Aida Besangon Spencer, Donna F.G. Hailson, Catherine Clark Kroeger, Wm. David Spencer, THE GODDESS REVIVAL (Baker/95).

18 The Preface (14) says "God discloses **Godself** in all things." That was enough to tip me off that this book would be a sellout of biblical religion. The Goddess' first move against Christianity is to convince its leaders to abandon the Bible's consistent pronominal way of referring to deity. Irony: This antiGoddess book is protoGoddess. Not surprisingly, the Intro., which immediately follows the Preface, emphasizes the feminine in human experience.

19 Though Gn.1.27 is dealt with in four places, nowhere is the biblical question whether male only or both male & female are imago dei. Rather, we get this (252): "the Bible teaches that male **and** female were created in God's image." Not surprisingly, the 1Cor.11 problem of male-only imago dei is never touched on. Somewhere in a recent publication R.R.Reuther deals with it, though by implication she elsewhere (16, in Judith L. Weitman [ed.], CHRISTIAN FEMINISM [H&R/84]) accuses Paul of "idolatry": to take "one gender...as normative for God is to legitimate this gender and social group as the normative possession of the image of God and representation on earth." Reuther does not allow for the possibility of a heaven Father who, while affirming (hormonally) earth-father initiative, condemns earth-father dominance.

20 ISSUE: Is "patriarchy" so "deeply rooted in Christianity's core symbolism of God the Father and Son" that honest feminists must abandon Christianity, as former Ep. priest Carol P. Christ did (3, quotes hers, her LAUGHTER OF APHRODITE: REFLECTIONS ON A JOURNEY TO THE GODDESS H&R/87)? Much of the book I'm commenting on is mealy-mouthed efforts to deny the heaven Patriarch, a biblical scandal of particularity never in sharp focus till the present feminist wave. Moves possible were/are (1) to attack, vigorously proclaiming the Bible's masculine-feminine (not feminine or feminine-masculine) deity; (2) to retreat, conceding patriarchy as a hitherto-unconscious defect in the biblical deity; (3) to wait for the whole thing to blow over, considering the wrangle a tempest in a teapot; (4) to abandon ship, confessing (with Carol Christ & an increasing number of feminists) that biblical religion is irreparable. We need a book, as scholarly as the one I'm commenting on, that takes position #1. Do you know of such?

21 Such a book could make good use of much material from radical feminists. E.g., S.-Fiorenza & I hold that Jewish monotheism appropriated (coopted, ate) the Goddess (33, IN MEMORY OF HER [Crossroad/84]). Her conclusion is that it's therefore appropriate to make God (my figure!) cough up the Goddess so that once again we can see/hear her: "Divine Sophia is Israel's God in the language and *Gestalt* of the Goddess." Without such statements, & her authority, the WCC wouldn't have put on "Re-Imaging '93." During the 9 yrs. between book & conference, no major voice (to my knowledge) attacked S.-Fiorenza for prostituting her scholarship in the interest of (our book-title) THE GODDESS REVIVAL. A fundamental strategy of biblical religion is to keep the divine feminine repressed. That's a project of THE GODDESS REVIVAL (though the book doesn't put it that way), but in the book the divine masculine is too weak to do the job.

22 Oden's paleo-orthodoxy (which you say it'd be unpolitical for "us" to mention) doesn't have the problem of a weak, wimpish, androgynic God. Nor did Athanasius (The Incarnation of the Word of God, 54): The Word of God "revealed himself through a body, that we might receive an idea of the invisible Father." The maleness of that body ought not be an occasion for embarrassment & apology (as in the "inclusive language guidelines" controlling THE NEW CENTURY HYMNAL), but the reverse.

One way to lessen the embarrassment is to weaken the meaning of the Incarnation, e.g. to take it as a metaphor for the divine, the par excellence instance of the Stoic paradigm. If it's said that the Fathers don't emphasize Jesus' maleness, I'll respond that the Fathers didn't have our problem of the Goddess' invasion of the Church.

23 Our century's history's most masculine-innovative-violent, against which we're in a geocentric-biocentric-feminine-peaceloving period prior to an oncoming surge of masculinity (when the masculine-feminine biblical God will have an easier time in his battle with the New-Age-soup goddesses/Goddess)....The joy of biblical salvation rests on two battles already won: (1) In the OT, the Sky Father's victory over, & ingestion of, the Earth Mother (the media's "Mother Earth"); (2) In the NT, Jesus Resurrexus' victory over "sin, death, and the devil." The 2nd victory is severely compromised if the 1st victory is denied/rejected....Since the Bible leaves no room for other deities, dualisms ancient/modern are out. When Starhawk says (25) that "The Goddess can be seen as the symbol, the normative image of immanence," & then uses the Golden Age Ante prepatriarchal Goddess-myth (mocked up by Marija Gimbutas & others) to appropriate congenial transcendent elements into the Goddess--the mirror image (as I said differently above) of YHWH's appropriation of congenial immanent elements into himself--we can expect the fight in this repackaged paganism to be considerable. The Christian theological project must be to describe the biblical God as powerful enough to subdue the Goddess again, as the devil (Rev.20.10) was thrown back into hell after having crawled out.

What we must live through, & bear witness to Christ in, is a period when (36) the West's pendulum has swung from the rational (masculine; secular humanism) to the romantic (feminine; cosmic humanism). Against the book, I say that dumping the Bible's divine "he" fails, in its concessive conformity to the present trend, to pass the test of faithful witness.

24 The biblical masculine-feminine God has come under fire not only from gender (or "radical") feminism but also from the mavens of the men's movement, which instead of being a countermovement to feminism is a parallel movement amplifying much in feminism, including hatred of the masculine in God. Most of the latter build on the impetus of the 6-hr. PBS Moyer/Campbell tapes & book (THE MASKS OF ETERNITY, Apostrophe/88). (The 5-hr. PBS Moyers / Houston Smith will only amplify this prejudice.) Luther's definition of sin as incurvature on the self is displayed in the Moyers/Campbell cult-object, in which C. says "You are God in your deepest identity. You are one with the transcendent." This psychomystical individualism (based on Jung's archetypal contents of the unconscious) reduces religion (which is organized-communal spirituality) to spiritual consumerism. THE GODDESS REVIVAL recognizes this prostitution of spirituality & subversion of religion, but does not have a deity sufficiently masculine-transcendent to counter it effectively.

Within the men's movement, I should recognize Sam Keen's admission (FIRE IN THE BELLY, Bantam/91, 95f) that "we'd have neither individualism [relative sense] nor empirical science and technology" unless we'd escaped from the goddess' harmonious garden in order to worship the biblical God: "This God, who stands above the fatedness of nature, commands men to stand above nature and society and woman and take charge of his own destiny....the spirit of history called for man to stand up and take charge." Sam, with whom I had long conversations at Esalen, is ambivalent on gender in deity. Rightly, he associates the feminine with immanence (the female being biologically closer to offspring than is the male) & the masculine with transcendence. Again rightly, he holds that the masculine in our culture has hypertrophied; wrongly, he blames this on the biblical God, as though God were masculine instead of what the biblical God is, viz. masculine-feminine. (He does not want to admit that the appearance & victory of the biblical God was possible because of the Goddess's hypertrophied femininity.)

25 More than once, the book claims that (48) "both genders were needed to reflect the image of God." As I've indicated above, this statement is dubious in Gn.; & it can't even be claimed that in the late Wisdom Literature the feminine Hockma-Sophia is God's equal in creation. Here, & many other places in the book, the political notion of gender equality sneaks not only into anthropology (broadly, the story of gender relationships) but also into theology (specifically the nature of deity). What makes it, right now, almost impossible to be honest-to-Bible is the fact that equality has acquired numinous-authoritative value: to be in any way against equality would

be spiritually blasphemous, morally perverse, & intellectually unthinkable. To escape from this false sacred, the Bible stands as a permanent resource, as does biology (the priority-initiative of the androgens vis-a-vis the estrogens). The slippery-slope fear that a move away from feministicism will return our church-&-world culture to "sexism" (male dominance) underestimates hormonal-homeostatic power. But where are the thinkers in the humanities & in biology who are prepared to risk their reputations by attacking gender equality? When they begin to stick up their heads, we'll enter a new "prophetic" state. (I take comfort in anticipating the synergism of Scripture & science in this matter.)

26 "Since God is the source of both [male & female], both are needed to reflect who God is" (49). How true! Also true is that God himself is not male or female, but the book (48) innocently asks (in light of the extensive analogical language in the Bible), "why do we suddenly turn literal with the 'Fatherhood' of God?" Since only the Mormons are literal about God's fatherhood, the book here is attacking what we used to call a straw (sic) man. Except for Mormons, I've never met anyone old enough to make the literal/metaphorical distinction who believed God to be male. What is sun-clear in Scripture is the divine initiative, whose biological analog is the androgens, especially testosterone: he's hormonally masculine, & has additional father-qualities I need not enumerate here. In Christian catechesis, we need to teach how to understand the Our Father, as Catholics call the Lord's Prayer; & also, to use the title of a famous Eliz. Actemeier essay, "Why God Is Not Mother." I fear that for a long time to come, the mainline churches cannot be trusted to teach the children to address God with full heart as our Lord addressed him: for them, the Our Father is an embarrassment....Of late, some have claimed--but without solid support from anthropology--that culture, not hormones, is the determinant in initiative. Further biological & cultural research may bring some surprises but cannot reverse the ethological confirmation of androgenic initiative (as Loree & I observed this evening, in couples of various waterfowl, as we walked around--as we do daily--Craigville's Lake Elizabeth): in our fellow-animals, we can observe the hormonal in action, unimpeded by the (human-)cultural; & the usual caveats against the ethological leap from the other creatures to us do not, in this case, apply.

27 "We can only guess why Jesus became a male rather than a female" (101). Suggesting several possibilities, the book's only concern about this is to exclude back-reading from Jesus to God: Jesus' maleness reveals nothing about God, who is (the book frequently reminds us) bodiless spirit. Again, the book finds it impossible to distinguish gender from sex. Oddly, this comports well with Mary Daly's "If God is male, men are gods." The book would rather risk God's being seen as impersonal ("spirit") than take the chance that his biblical character as masculine-feminine be misread as male.

28 Donald G. Bloesch (THE BATTLE FOR THE TRINITY: THE DEBATE OVER INCLUSIVE GOD-LANGUAGE, Ann Arbor: Servant/85, 29) uses time to distinguish masculine-feminine (i.e., the priority of the masculine) in God: God "is primarily and originally transcendent and secondarily and derivatively immanent." But the book, under the spell of cultural egalitarianism, cannot tolerate any transcendence/immanence imbalance, & denies it by refusing the distinction: "The Bible does not create a dichotomy between transcendence and immanence" (148). This is specious: God far/near is a basic category of the biblical experiencing of God. But this (149) is good: "Because God is transcendent, God can be immanent."

29 "Goddess worship is simply an old heresy jumping onto the feminist bandwagon, kicking out the Christian drivers" (180). As for formal Christian ministry, that was well underway 1½ cs. ago in America, & the Bible-school movement had more women than men students (including, I believe, the 1900-founded school now N.Y.Theological Seminary). Austin Craig (of whom "Craigville" is patronymic) fought off those who didn't like to have women preaching in the Churches of the Christian Connection, including the Craigville Tabernacle (vol.2, chap.26, Writings and Addresses of AUSTIN CRAIG [Dayton, O.: The Christian Publishing Ass'n., 1913: "The Preaching

of Women): "Women are the equals of men in respect to the gifts of the Holy Spirit." Actual Judaism (in contrast to Joel 2.19) was infected with the "Asiatic & heathenish notion of woman's spiritual inferiority," so (Jn.4.27) Jesus' disciples "were surprised that He talked in public with any woman." Paul preached "the spiritual equality of all believing souls before God and their unrestricted access to His presence" (Gal.3.28). See the women at the end of Romans; Ac.21.9; Phil.4.3. He then takes on 1Tim.2.12; 1Cor.14.34-35; 5.1-2,9,11; 6.9; 10.8; 2Cor.12.12. Women silent in the Cor. church was "a policy of prudence and love...to forestall possible scandal." Women fellow-laborers with Paul: Phil.4.3. Women colaborers with Jesus. "Christ...makes womanhood holy." Craig commends a congregation that has a diaconate of 14, 7 of each sex....So who needs the goddess? Well, in a way, culture & church both do: she's sent to signal that we've neglected the feminine in humanity & in deity. For the health of culture & church, we need to repress her, but only after learning the lessons her eruption has to teach us.

30 "God chooses attributes in self-description....The generic 'he' expresses God's power, intimacy, unity, diversity, and action" (192f)--yet the book *never* so refers to God!

31 109pp of useful appendices, notes, & indices! The book is marred mainly by the unbiblical, paradoxically feminist scruple I've stated in §30. Especially good at exhibiting the roots of goddess feminism in Jungian male/female polarity (including Jung's distaste for Jesus & hatred of the Jewish/Protestant masculine, unjust, destructive God), neopaganism (including wicca [witchcraft]), ecology (Gaia+), antisexist (i.e., gender) feminism (including lesbian misandry, a rising factor to which I'd give more weight).

32 The bibliography's annotations are, to my knowledge, accurate. E.g., R.R. Reuther's SEXISM AND GOD-TALK "discredits 'romantic feminism' as unhistoric and sexist."

ELLIOTT THINKSHEETS
309 Lake Elizabeth Drive
Craigville MA 02632

