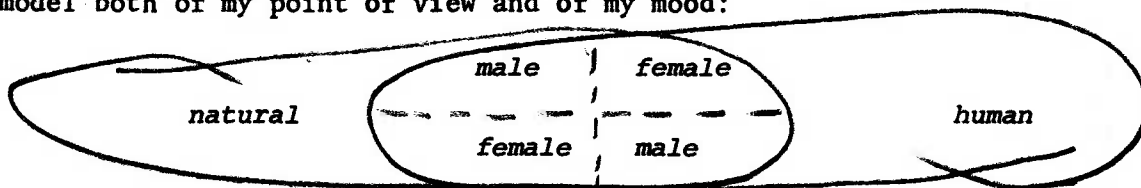


For the Near-Eastern feel of the feminine, Ab. M. Rihbany's THE SYRIAN CHRIST. For the creative interaction of the hierarchical-patriarchal and the feminine, Julian of Norwich's SHOWINGS (fresh ed., Paulist Press, 1978; e.g., chap. iv).

PBS last night (12 May 80) aired "Death of a Princess," a British journalist's experience of trying to get the story of a Saudi Arabian execution of a pair of young lovers. Was this event an instance of the corruption of the patriarchal (as I believe), or an exposé of the patriarchal as corrupt (as many feminists, female and male, would hold)? Anyway, it set me to meditating on the current neomatriarchalism, the antithesis of all patriarchalisms, and to praying for the soon emergence of stage-three pax, viz., synthesis/reconciliation/symbiosis/synergism beyond the battle of the sexes. This thinksheet is about the current eris (strife) and toward eros/agapé (the biblical dream/vision/picture of shalom/utopia/erewhon/cocaigne/tao/physics/ideality). Here is a field-model both of my point of view and of my mood:



Note the mutual superiority of the sexes, the mutuality/separation of the natural and the human, and the complexity of relationship (1) of female and male and (2) of both male and female to both the natural and the human. Itself, the model is feminine, a "matrix" (Lat., *womb*), and also masculine, a map for exploration (whether or not gestation/exploration or essentially, respectively, female/male).

To this, I wish to contrast a curiously perverse though learned neomatriarchal tract, Eliz. Dodson Gray's WHY THE GREEN NIGGER? (Roundtable Press/79). Aside from the bad taste of "nigger" (doubtless on the frame of the 1960s tract "The Student as Nigger"), this book cripples itself by proposing a new Flatland (see Edwin Abbott's 1881 "Flatland," and Marcuse's "One-Dimensional Man"): gone is "the hierarchical paradigm," the divine/human and human/human vertical, which my model preserves. Some additional observations:

1. Going "natural" does not deliver from, but rather into, patriarchy. In giving the female tiger superior musculature, God gave priority to the female of that species; and thus God gave priority to the male of the human species, a priority/superiority of declining significance. The defense of the cave entrance, the creation of the city wall, the mastery of nature in the interest of human surviving/thriving--these were natural-divine assignments to us males, and wise females help us rejoice in this natural superiority over them, who are so obviously superior to us in gestation-lactation-nesting.

2. Nesting: Understandably, Gray (or should I call her Dodson-Gray?) prefers the "home" metaphor, which is uterine-feminine, to the "family" metaphor, which is phallic-masculine. Biblical religion has Abraham leaving "home" and creating "family": biblical religion is essentially, ineradicably, patriarchal; and any efforts to deny, circumvent, or transcend this while remaining biblical are condemned to pathos and defeat. "Remything Genesis" amounts to replacing Genesis with myths quite similar to those which Genesis was shaped to oppose. For a distance perspective, cp. Japan's Shinto *amaterasu omikami*, devotion to the sun goddess: Jap. relig. myths are dominantly feminine, and women dominate in the origins of Japanese religions--but, and Japanese history shows this, the illusion that the feminine is less rapacious (with the implicate that replacing Gen. with feminine mythology would tame Westernism and thus be good news to the biosphere) is indeed illusion, the pervasive illusion of WHY THE GREEN NIGGER? (Cp. also "primitive," Indic, and Sinic proto-religions.)

3. In Gray I found a dozen apparently deliberately unbalanced or torqued phrases, the most obvious style-indicator of eristic vs. expository literature. It irritates me to find reviewers who treat such a rhetorical tract as though it were exposition; I conclude that they do it out of inauthentic guilt. Will "the majority" ever be honest with "minorities"? And fair to the Bible?