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Fayter and Garfeild Many Thanks *for your help.*



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Introduction

, began this study through my own work, where my initial concern was the creation of Eve, and the sacred fruit of sin. My work involved the reading of the bible and there to my utter dismay found writings on women that were derogatory in content.

I, immediately asked myself, why were these texts written and for what reason did such a plague of insults occur on women.My research carried me back to the source of the bible, the Book of Genesis, in particular the Creation of the Garden of Eden, man and woman.

Why was the world created by this Great Father God, who appears under many disguises. what was the significance of this seven day creation. Why was man created before woman, and what reason lay in the creation of Eve from the rib of a superior being.

The Great father God-Yahweh, *Elohim*, portrayed as the first God, and with him, the birth of creation.

Yet, Archeological, mythological and Historical evidence all reveal that the female religion, far from naturally fading away, was the victim of centuries of continual suppression by the advocates of the newer religion, which held male deities as supreme.

From, these new religions came the creation of Adam and Eve and the tale of the loss of paradise. In Genesis, are all the recognisable elements of the much more ancient Mother Goddess myth, symbol and ritual. Here, is the Garden of the Goddess and her wise cosmic serpent, the Tree of Immortality with its dark soma fruit -the fig of the Cretan Goddess - which became for westerners the magic apple of the European white Goddess.

However, we do not witness life or glorious re-birth, instead we are presented with a tale of destruction and decay.

I have carried out a, thorough examination of this creation along side its historical origins which provides us with vital information. It allows us to comprehend the role that the Judeo-Christian religion in particular have played in the initial and contrived oppression and subjugation of women, through the distorted creation of Eve.

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Chapter One The Babylonian Epic of Creation

he Enuma Elish - the Babylonian epic of creation tells the story of the conquest and murder of the Mother Goddess, Tiamat, by the City - God Marduk.^{fig 1.} In this moment of drama a new myth is born, the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy.

Then joined issue Tiamat and Marduk, wisest of the Gods. They struck in single combat locked in battle. The Lord spread out his net to enfold her. The evil wind which followed behind he let loose in her face. When Tiamat opened her mouth to consume him. He drove in the Evil Wind that she close not her lips ¹.

The Enuma Elish is the first story of the replacing of a Mother Goddess who generates creation as part of herself by a God who 'makes' creation as something separate from himself. Tiamat, the Mother Goddess was the mother of the Deep who fashioned all things, she displayed herself as night, truth and justice. Tiamat gave birth to the Gods. Then in later patriarchal epic, the Gods rebel against her and she is finally conquered by the Sun, Sky, Wind hero Marduk. He slays her in her form of the great whale dragon, or cosmic serpent, and she then surrenders her own body as building material for the universe.^{fig 2, 2.}

The Sea - Beast is female, the Goddess Tiamat and the God Marduk, who wounds her mortally usurps her authority has himself chained her in female form to the rock to keep her from mischief.

Here we can make a bold identification of the cherub, with the turning wheel that guards the Paradise of The Celtic Legend: for according to

Genesis 3, the cherubim were placed at the east gate of Eden. He was



Fig. 1. Marduk pursuing Tiamat, Assyrian seal, c.800 BC.

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anna an Anna an Anna ann Anna ann armed with the whirling sword of Jehovah - the one with which, according to Isaiah XXVII, he killed the Dragon, as Marduk had killed Tiamat - to prevent anyone from entering.

Marduk had clear social class implications, the slain body of Tiamat symbolised 'universal confusion', the abolition of order, hierarchy and chaos.

To the ancients the Cosmic Serpent - the spirit of earth and water - was known everywhere as the energy source of life: of healing and oracular powers, fertility and maternal blessing. This energy spirit, with emerging patriarchy was redefined as the dangerous enemy to be reviled, defeated and destroyed. Then it was said by the new holy men that 'chaos' has been ordered and the serpent force mastered. Marduk, appointed as the celestial champion fastened the Tablets of Destiny, (which had originally belonged to Tiamat) and it is then ' brazenly announced that he, not anyone else created herbs, land, rivers, beasts, birds and all mankind.'

The transfer of religious power from the Mother Goddess to the upstart Godling Marduk, signified a new world order.³

In the Enuma Elish there is already the germ of three principal ideas that were to inform the age to come: the supremacy of the Father God over the Mother Goddess, the paradigm of opposition implicit in the deathly struggle between God and Goddess and the association of light, order and good with God and of darkness, chaos and evil with the goddess.

Marduk's desire for his word alone to prevail would find its historical legacy in Yahweh's words: ' I am the first and I am the Last, and beside me

there is no God.' (Isa 44.6) The continuing myth of Marduk's conquest of Tiamat in many lands show that people no longer feel themselves to be a child of the Mother but a child of the Father.

Nature is no longer experienced as source but as adversary, darkness is



Fig. 2. Marduk slaying Tiamat, Assyrian relief (later called Ninurta and the Demon), c. ninth century BC.

no longer a mode of divine being as it was in the lunar cycles, but a mode of divinity and actively hostile, devouring of light, clarity and order.

The importance of change of imagery cannot be over emphasised for it has influenced the Judeo - Christian view of nature, matter and what ever else has been defined as feminine. Upon this foundation the book of Genesis and the creation of Adam and Eve were formed, with the image of the Sole Father God, King of King's, God of God's. (a) Conservation of the constance of the constance of the constance of the server of the server of the server of the term of the server of the term of term of the term of term

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Chapter Two The creation of Genesis, Man and Woman.

" If one does not understand how the body that he wears came into being, he will perish with it." ^{1.}

When the Old Testament, we come to our own mythological universe, the cultural inheritance who's doctrine of creation expresses the belief that God is the origin of the world and of everything in it. The great Father God Yahweh - Elohim, created heaven and earth in the beginning and what he said was so, has become a fundamental belief from which flows much of what christians profess about God, about the cosmos we inhabit and about our destiny and hope.

In Hebrew mythology all the various male Deities of earlier cultures - Enhil, Ptatt, Marduk and El - combine with the one image of the great Father God, who enters the stage of the Bible as though he were the first and only diety. ² As suggested the elevation of the god begotten of the Mother Goddess into the Father God was finally achieved in Babylonian mythology, but now it becomes supreme as though the idea of a Mother Goddess had never existed.

Since the Bible begins with the two accounts of creation, they will be our starting point. The creation narratives beginning in Genesis 1 and in Genesis 2 are examples of the Priestly (6-5 Century B.C.) and Yahwist (10-9 Century B.C.) traditions respectively. Each narrative is a product of a different period in Israelite history, a period that expresses its belief in God in a manner that reflects its own concerns and needs, addressing issues that are peculiar to its own situation. ³

The historical context of the Priestly account of creation is the Babylonian exile in the 6 Century B.C.. The exile was a devastating experience for Israel, politically and theologically. Those who survived the trauma reasserted their beliefs in Gods power over chaos. They did this by developing their own creation narrative, influenced by earlier motifs from Egyptian accounts of creation.

Parallels in the progression of events in Enuma Elish, which means "From

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on high," 4 and in Genesis 1 led scholars to believe that the former is an important part of the pre-history of Genesis 1.

The general succession of events in both accounts is this, chaos at the beginning, then the creation of firmament of dry land, of the heavenly bodies and of people.

In Genesis 1, the earth emerges from primeval watery chaos, resembles Marduk's construction of heaven from one half of Tiamat's lifeless body and his fixing of the upper waters, he "shot a bolt across, and placed watchers over it, to prevent Tiamat from letting out her waters," which celebrated the annual emergence of dry land from the winter flood of the Tigris and Euphrates.^{5.} In Mesopotamia the creative moment is the spring, the Babylonian spring celebration of new years day.

Both the Babylonian and the Biblical creation myth in Genesis 1 took the lunar number seven to be sacred, following the seven planets which were seen as the ordering principal of the universe. Significantly, it was on seven tablets that Marduk's war against Tiamat was recorded.

In the Neolithic era, sun, moon and stars were the epiphany of the Mother Goddess and by the time of the Bronze age they had become deities in their own right. Fig. 1. However, in the Enuma Elish they are no longer divine beings, but objects set in space created by God. The emphasis on the creaturliness of the heavenly bodies serves to exalt Israel's God as creator. The first chapter of Genesis 1 develops this imagery and their the supreme creator makes the greater and lesser lights of sun and moon, together with the firmament, the dry land, the sea, animals and man and woman.

In Genesis, (1 v 26) man and woman are created together in the image of Elohim which suggests that Elohim is imagined as both male and female, god and goddess. The human race is no longer made from the womb of

the goddess nor the blood of a slain demon. The second creation account found in 4Genesis 2, is the product of a much earlier generation. It reflects the concern of the United Kingdom of David and his successor Solomon (ca.1010-930 B.C.), with Israel's development of a Patriarchal society. 6. The word Patriarchal derives from two Greek



Fig. 1. Neolithic images of the moon.



words - '*pater*', meaning father and '*arche*' meaning beginning or first- and refers to that form of social organisation in which the father has first place.

In Genesis 2, the ordering of persons, the way in which women are portrayed and this in contrast to the way men are portrayed verifies that Israel's culture was Patriarchal and then Hierachical.

Before humanity was created "the lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, nor was their any man to till the soil." (Gen. 2 v 6)

Once the decision to create human beings was made "*a flood was rising from the earth watering all the surface of the soil*," (Gen. 2 v 7) so that the mixture of dust and water could become clay. This image reflects the parched and barren land of summer in Canaan before the first hint of coming rain in the dense white morning mist that rose from the valleys. The creation moment is autumn following an ancient Canaanite festival of new years day. His creator then passes the "*breath of life* " from himself to the man, to make him a "*living soul*." This is exactly how the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses gave life to the living and the dead, by holding of eternal life-*ankh*-to their nostrils. ^{Fig. 2}. The myth of humanities creation from earth, clay or dust had long existed in the Near East. In the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh, Goddess Aruria made Enkidu by pinching of a piece of clay from the earth that was her 'own' body and breathing life in to him. The

God Enki and the Goddess Ninhursag made human beings from clay, and in Egypt the Gods Knum and Ptah threw the forms of men and women on the potters wheel. ^{fig.3.} The image of the god as divine potter is later extended to his shaping of the destiny of Israel, " *Behold, as the clay is in the potters hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.*"(Jer.18 v 6)

Immediately after he made



Fig. 2. The goddess Hathor holding the *ankn* to the nostrils of the Pharaoh, Amenhotep II, tomb painting, *c*. 1425 BC. Thebes.



man, Yahweh planted a garden and put the man in it "to till it and keep it."(Gen. 2 v 16) Their is still no sign of woman. Significantly, in the light of subsequent events it is Yahweh's first mention of death which brings the idea of a 'help-mate' to mind.

Yahweh forbids the man to eat of the 'Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil', "for in the day that thou eatest there of thou shalt surely die'. (Gen. 2 v 17) Yahweh's first idea of a help-mate for the man was the beast of the field and the fowl of the air. It is only when Yahweh brings to him the animals to see that the man receives his own name, Adam, from the name of the soil, 'Adámáh', actually a noun of feminine gender that could be interpreted as Mother.⁷

God then created woman out of the human creatures rib. ^{fig. 4.} The Sumerian word for life was '*Ti* ' which also meant rib. Nihursag, the Sumerian Mother Goddess once healed the rib of Enki, god of the sweat waters, by creating Nin-ti, a goddess of childbirth, who made the bones of infants in the womb from the ribs of their mothers. In the Sumerian tale the unity of the mother and child carries the likeness of sharing bones as an image of birth, while in the Hebrew myth nature and the goddess are sacrificed to the miracle of Yahweh's inventive mind.

When Adam is presented with the woman, he speaks to testify that this creation is the appropriate help-mate, they are now '*Ish*' and '*Isáh*', man and woman, ultimately related. She is not made from the substance of earth



Fig. 3. The god Ptah throwing the cosmic egg on to the potter's wheel.

and does not have the breath of life breathed in to her, yet Adam gives her the



Fig, 4. The Creation of Eve, Lorenzo Maitani, 1310 - 30. Duomo, Orvieto.



title of the Old Mother Goddess, Mother of all Living. Eve ("háwwáh") is etymologically derived from the Hebrew word for life ("Há").⁸. The reduced reference of this ancient title means that the woman's role as this patriarch culture understood it, is to bear life - the first mother of the human racenot as was its original meaning, "Mother of all that lives." She is named by the man whose rib she has, and whose rib she is. The creation of woman becomes secondary to that of man. Kierkegaard has provided a striking analysis of Eve as "the point of weakness through which sin gains a foot hold in the human world." ⁹. Her weakness lies in her derived relation to Adam, the external position of being created out of a superior creature.

Lilith arose out of an attempt to make the sense of the difference between the two creation myths. In Genesis 1, male and female are created equally and together, while in Genesis 2, the female is created after the male and out of his body. In the simple logic of legend, Lilith was the first wife, who was worse than the second. In Hebrew mythology Lilith's creation, like Adam's was made from the earth, but instead of using clean soil, he took filth and impair sediments from the earth, and out of these he formed a female. As was to be expected, this creature turned out to be an evil spirit. In retrospect, Lilith became Adam's first wife, whose original presence is never fully banished from his marriage to the second. 10. What went wrong with the first was obviously Lilith's equality and independence, since that was the matter that was rectified with Eve. Consequently, Lilith's assumption of the role of equal partner is treated in legend as insubordination, as, so the story goes, she would not agree to her proper place, which was apparently to lie beneath Adam in sexual intercourse; "why should I lie beneath you when I am your equal since both of us were created from dust."

She flies away to the wilderness of the Red sea. There she gives birth to broads of demons. God sends three angels after her to bring her back, but she will not return. She warns the angels that she has the power to take the lives of children. In the end she agrees; 'when ever I shall see you or your names or your images on an amulet, I shall do no harm to the child.' Henceforth, she roams all over the world searching for the children who deserve to be punished 'because of the sins of their fathers.....and she smiles at them and kills them'. Death is conceived as punishment for sin. She could also take possession of a man while he slept. He would realise

that he had fallen into her power if he found traces of semen when he awoke, for then he would know that Lilith had intercourse with him. Consequently, the phallic serpent and Lilith were equated and the serpent was drawn with a women's body which would have been understood as Lilith. ^{fig.5.} At other times the serpent has a face like Eve. For this reason a view of sexuality as ungodly pervades legends about Lilith as the darker side of Eve and subtly underpins the character of Eve herself.

Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the lord God had made. The serpent asks the woman a question. Did God forbid you to eat from any tree in the garden? The woman replies to the serpent that they may eat of any of the trees except the tree in the middle of the garden, the "*Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*", if they do they will die. (Gen. 2 v 2-3) They will not die, rather says the serpent they will be like God, knowing good and evil (Gen. 2 v 4-5). She looked at the tree and desired its fruit. She took it and ate it, and gave some of it to her man who also ate it. The consequence of their eating was knowledge: they knew " *they were naked*."

When the Lord God saw they had eaten from the forbidden tree he punished all three.God curses the serpent for what she (serpent is feminine in hebrew) has done, she will crawl on her belly and she will always be regarded by humans as their enemy (Gen 3 v14-15).God curses the woman with words of punishment: she will have increased pains at child birth and she will be the victim of patriarchal structures (Gen 3 v16-17). God curses the man with words of punishment, because he obeyed the woman and disobeyed God, he will have to work hard for a living and then he will die. Adam, created from the earth, will return to the earth at death.God then

gives them another tree in place of the violated tree. For Yahweh's curse on Adam that he die to be fullfilled, Adam must not eat from the Tree of Life. God banishes them from the garden and place a cherubim at its entrance to guard the tree. The Expulsion from Paradise - Baldung's only know version of this subject,



Fig. 5. Lilith, Holzschmitt, 1470.

A second back second by a second secon
Eve is given greater prominace, facing rather than turned from the viewer, suggesting Eves predominant role in the Garden of Eden as the cause of the Fall of man-kind. ^{fig. 6.}

There are significant differences in the two creation myths of Genesis. In Genesis 1 (P) the animals are created before man and woman. In Genesis 2 (J) in striking contrast, they are created after Adam but before Eve. In Genesis 1 (P) man and woman are created together in the image of Elohim, but in Genesis 2 (J) where in the story of exile from the garden is told, the man is created first and when no suitable companion is found among the animals, a woman is then created from the mans body.

Are we to believe from these texts that man has dominance over the earth. Are one form of human-male, now to be intrinsically superior to the other human-female, and all the other forms of creation, with unlimited powers over them.

According to legends of Sumer and Babylon, women and men had been created simultaneously - in pairs by the Goddess. But in the male religion it was of ultimate importance that the male was made first, and in the image of his creator. We are then to assume that the male does not come from the female but the female from the male. We are then informed that the woman was presented as a gift to the man declaring and assuming her status as the property of the male.

The metaphor is one of ownership, control and possession with the interchangeable relation of fear and dread on the part of those so treated. Ultimately, the martial image of subduing and having dominion over the other eventually extended to suppress the worship of the Goddess and her religion. Henceforth, the Hebrew creation myth blamed the female species for initial sexual consciousness. The whole fable was designed to provide male supremacy over women.





Fig. 6. Expulsion From Paradise, Hans Baldung Grien, c. 1514



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Chapter Three The Serpent

"The infernal Serpent, he it was who's guide stirred up with envy and revenge deceived the Mother of mankind." ^{1.}

The serpent with its quick and fluid shape and movement came to symbolise the dynamic powers of water, beyond, beneath and around the earth. It appears in many different mythologies as the creative source or generator of the universe. The serpent first appears as serpent Mother Goddess in the Neolithic Era. ^{Fig. 1.} Great live snakes were everywhere, kept in the Goddesses temples during the Neolithic period. In wall paintings, bas reliefs, and statues. She was often represented carrying snakes in her upraised arms or drawn coiling around the womb as the principal of regeneration. ^{Fig. 2.}

The Sumerians believed that the primeval sea was the source from which all creation emerged. Nammu, whose ideogram was the sea, may originally



Fig. 1. Enthroned goddess holding her child, with spiralling snakes, fifth millennium BC. Sesklo, Thessaly.



Fig.2. Sculpted figure showing the goddess giving birth to a snake. Date unknown, possibly Gallo-Roman,





Fig.3. Goddess with a serpents head, holding her child, c. 4000-3000 BC. Ur.





Nammu may be compared with the Hindu image of Ananta, *'the endless,'* the great serpent of the cosmic abyss. The Sumerian Goddess was know as the Great Mother Serpent of Heaven, perhaps another image of the Milky Way, the great spiralling galactic arms.²

The goddess as a great serpent reappears in Maya and Buddhism where the Serpent Goddess Muscalinda provides a throne for the Buddha and raises her seven heads to offer him a protective canopy as he confronts the destructive powers of the universe on the night of his awakening. ^{Fig. 4.} She is at once serpent and tree. This beautiful image of the relationship of the Mother Goddess as Zoe to her son as Bios may offer a perspective on the Sumerian image of Nammu as the great serpent Goddess of the abyss, and her son, Enki.

In Egypt she was the Cobra Goddess, the use of the cobra in her ceremonies and icons was so ancient that the inscribed picture of a cobra preceded the name of all goddess and became 'the hieroglyphic sign for the word Goddess', registering the self-renewing character of divinity. Isis, the greatest goddess in Egypt was also pictured as a Serpent Goddess. ^{Fig. 5., 3.}

When we see this worldwide occurrence of the Goddess and her Serpent, we begin to see why the patriarchal religions based themselves on the utter destruction of the goddess\serpent, pictured by the Babylonians as 'primeval chaos', an image picked up later by the Hebrew's and used in the biblical Genesis, where upon the male deity spoke directly, 'I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed





Fig. 4. The Buddha seated on the coils of the great serpent goddess, Mucalinda, Srivijaya.,c thirteenth century AD. Thailand.



Fig. 5. Isis and Nephthys as serpent goddesses, Nineteenth Dynasty, c 13000 BC. Tomb of Seti I, Valley of the Kings, Thebes

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In this way, the serpent, once Lord of Rebirth, was now to be regarded as the symbol of pleasure which caused the downfall of the human species. The woman, who's advice and counsel had been identified with the serpent for several millennia, was no longer respected but hated, feared or at best doubted and ignored. The serpent, the instigator of death was in league with Eve, who in turn became, the emblem of ontological evil. The first associating between Eve (Há) and the serpent comes in the close-

ness of their names, for the Hebrew *Háwwáh* is very close to the Arabic and Aramaic word for serpent, and this was remarked upon by the earliest Jewish commentators. ⁴.

'The associ ation between Eve and the serpent, and between the

serpent and Satan is made again and again in interpretations of the story of the creation and fall of the first humans... She is held to be the devils mouth piece, Satan's familiar. At times she herself is seen in some way to be the forbidden fruit, or the serpent in Paradise or even the Fall'. 5.

It was probably inevitable that once the association between Eve



Fig. 6. Van Der Goes Adam and Eve

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and the Serpent was made symbolically, the association of the serpent with devil, and of the devil with Eve, would follow. The influential commentary of the church historian Peter Comester, who died in 1175, held that 'Satan chose a certain kind of serpenthaving a virginal face, because like things applaud like'. ⁶

While the serpent often appears to be tempting Eve erotically. Satan was

eventually to appear in European paintings as the serpent with Eve's head on it, with the suggestion implicit in the image that Eve has assumed the serpents tempting role in relation to Adam. ^{Fig. 6.}

Why Eve, was attracted to the fruit of the 'Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,' creates the most interesting speculation in the myth of Eden, which begins with the serpents question,

"Did God say, you shall not eat of any tree of the Garden'.(Gen.3v2)

This question is commonly taken to be the prologue to the temptation, which occurs when the serpent enjoins her to pluck the fruit of the one forbidden Tree. This can be seen as the ultimate religious question simply seeking to affirm the 'Word of God'.



Fig.7. Hans Baldung Grien's, Eve, The Serpent and Death as Adam. 1525

The question enables Eve to establish or dispute whether a word is the 'Word of God', or not. This temptation is invoked subtly by the serpent when he invites Eve to participate with him in judging Gods word, and blatantly when he promises her that her "*eyes will be opened*," she will be as God. The fact that Eve must on know account be viewed as a Goddess herself is underlined by her delusion that the fruit will make her one and the final slide into a purely human condition is marked, by sexual self-consciousness and bodily shame. With the fading of the eternal-womanly and the association of women with Evil and Sin, death had become the end, with no prospect of Re-Birth. ^{Fig. 7.}

The serpent, no longer is it to be the ever rising sap of the Tree of Life, supreme among all others, now he is cursed above cattle and every beast of the field. Ultimately, the Hebrew patriarchy destroyed the world's original, most widespread and enduring religion by branding it as evil, and by portraying the Mother Goddess and her magic snake (through the distorted image of Eve, that all woman are meant to identify with), as the source, not of all life but of all wickedness- hated and condemned by their new tribal God Yahweh.

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Chapter Four The Tree of Life and The Tree of Knowledge

" you shalt not plant any trees as an Asherah beside the Altar of God" (Deuteronomy 16 : 17).

The serpent is not the only link between the story of Adam and Eve and the worship of the Goddess. Another more important symbol in the story is that of the, 'Tree of Life', the 'Tree of Knowledge of good and evil', from which hung the forbidden fruit.

The Tree of Life was one of the primary images of the Goddess herself. Growing on the surface of the earth, with roots below and branches above, the tree was the great pillar that united earth with heaven and the underworld, through which the energies of the cosmos poured into earthly creation. The animating spirit that moved within it was the serpent, the guardian of the tree, and the treasure that hung from its branches. ^{Fig. 1.}

All over the Near East, Egypt, Crete and Greece the tree was planted in the temples of the Goddess, particularly the fig, palm, cypress, apple, sycamore and olive. How-ever, a particular species of tree was continually mentioned as sacred in various ancient records, but under three different names, so that its singular identity has been over looked. At times it was called the sycamore, at times the fig and sometimes the mulberry. This tree is actually



Fig. 1. Goddess and God seated beside the Tree of Life, with serpent; cylinder seal, c. 2500 BC.

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the Near Eastern Ficus Sicomorus, the 'sycamore fig'. References to this sacred tree are found in the writings of Egypt, while representations of it appear on Egyptian murals. The Goddess Hathor of Egypt, revered as the 'Eye of Wisdom' and the 'Serpent Lady', was also know by another title - the 'Lady of the Sycamore'. ^{Fig. 2.} This tree was Known as the 'Living Body of Hathor on Earth'. To eat of its fruit was to eat of the 'Flesh and Fluid' of the Goddess. ^{1.}

Some Egyptian murals depicted the Goddess within this tree, passing out its sacred fruit to the dead as the food of eternity, immortality and continued life after death. ^{Fig. 3.} The sacred symbolism of this coffin tree of Hathor makes it likely that this was the tree repeatedly referred to in the bible as the Asherah. The Asherah was the Neolithic Goddess (Inanna-Ishtar, Astarte-Ashtoreth-Asherah) or the symbol of the Goddess. It was a conventionalised or stylised tree, perceived as she, and planted therefore at all altars and holy places. ^{Fig. 4., 2.}

In Northern Babylonian the Goddess of the Tree of Life was called the 'Divine Lady of Eden' or Edin, and in the south she was called the 'Lady of the Vine', an understandable change of name given that the Sumerian sign for 'Life' was originally a vine leaf. ^{3.}

Turning back to Genesis, the tree or two trees, and the serpent take on a different resonance. Since, on discovering not the water of life but their



Fig. 2. (left) Hathor or Isis as the Tree of Life suckling Tuthmosis III;c 1479-1425 BC. Tomb of Tuthmosis III, Valley of the Kings.

F1g. 3 (Right) Hathor, Isis or Nut as the Tree of Life offering the water of eternal life to the deceased; vignette from a Book of the Dead, Twenty-First Dynasty, c. 1000 BC.



own nakedness.

"And in my darkness I began to look in my part of Paradise for leaves to hide my shame, but I could not find any ; for as soon as I had eaten, the leaves dropped off all the trees in my part of Paradise, except the Fig - Tree. So I took some leaves from it and made myself a girdle. And it was from that very same tree that I had eaten." ^{4.}

It was only in the middle ages, when Latin texts of the Bible were read, that the Western tradition grew up that the identity of the fruit was an 'apple' probably because of the belief from antiquity that the apple was both a divine and an aphrodisiac food and because of the accidental similarity in Latin between 'apple' (malum) and 'evil' (malus).

"If an apple is halved cross-wise each half shows a five pointed star in the centre, emblem of immortality, which represents the Goddess in her five stations from birth to death and back to birth again."

It also represents the planet Venus - Venus to whom the apple was sacred, - adored as Hesper the evening star on one half of the apple, and as

Lucifer, son of the morning on the other. ^{5.} Upon eating the fruit, Adam and Eve became

aware of the sexual nature of their own bodies.

Considering the hatred the Hebrews felt toward the Asherim, a major symbol of the female religion, it would not be too surprising if the symbolism of the tree of forbidden fruit said to offer the knowledge of good and evil, yet clearly represented in the myth as the provider of sexual consciousness, was included in the creation story to warn that eating the fruit of this tree will cause the downfall of all humanity. Eating of the tree of the Goddess, which stood by each altar, was as dangerously 'pagan' as were Her sexual customs and Her oracular serpents.⁶ It was vitally important to the construction of the Levite myth that they did not both decide to eat the



Fig. 4. The goddess Astarte or Ashtoreth standing on a lion, girdled with serpents and holding lotus flowers in her hands; gold pendant, fifteenth century BC. Ugarit (Ras Shamra) northern Canaan.



forbidden fruit together, which would have been a more logical turn for the tale to take since the fruit symbolised sexual consciousness. No, the priestly scribes make it exceedingly clear that the women Eve, ate of the fruit first, upon the advice and counsel of the serpent. ^{Fig. 5.} By eating the fruit first,



Fig. 5. Hans Baldung Grien's, The Garden of Eden.

woman possessed sexual consciousness before man and in turn tempted man to partake of the forbidden fruit, that is, to join her sinfully in sexual pleasures. She was sexual. Sexuality was then against God, that is for the devil. It was a short step to find Eve, and those who share her sex to be a gateway for the devil to enter. In the painting *Adam and Eve*, ^{Fig. 6.} by Peter Paul Rubens, 1598, crossed legs symbolise sexual involvement and Rubens paints Eve's invitation to eat of the apple as a sexual invitation.

A small serpent coils around the trunk of the tree, its tail almost becoming a curl in her hair and its body touching her hand, which also curves, serpentine around a branch. Eve, here, is the serpent of the sex.

The Levite Leaders than announced, because Eve had disobeyed the word of God, women must be ruled by men,declaring that it was in agreement with the original decree of Yahweh, who, according to these new legends, had first created the world and people. The myth of Adam and Eve, in which Male domination was explained and justified, informed women and men alike that male ownership and control of submissively obedient women was to be regarded as the divine and natural state of the human species.

In earlier mythologies the one tree offered both 'Knowledge' and 'life' or 'wisdom' and 'immortality' Fig. 7.

In the Garden of Eden, where there is significantly not one tree but two

trees, where upon the eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge has been tasted, that the deeper dimension of the Tree of Life is revealed. Only when their eyes are open can they see what they do not have, for they now know the distinction between mortality and immortality. Here, in the garden of Eden, the knowledge of good and evil is split apart from eternal life so that a perception of good and evil is rendered to a perception of life's unity.



Fig. 6. Adam and Eve; Peter Paul Rubens, 1589.





Fig. 7 The Tree of Life and Knowledge in the Garden of Immortality; Sumerian cylinder seal, c. 2500 BC.



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Chapter 5 The Garden

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downs edge between windward and lee around with rocks as an island. The ghost of a garden fronts the sea. ¹.

The demythologising of the Goddess was a process that extended to the whole of nature, in whom she had been embodied. When Eve and Adam are cursed by Yahweh, so also is the earth and her cycles of fertility:

'Cursed is the ground for thy sake in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, Thorns also, and thistle shalt it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field' (Gen. 3:17-18).

*where as before the man was put in to the garden:'to dress it and to keep it'(Gen.2:15),.after the curse he has to,' till the ground from whence he was taken' (Gen. 3: 23). It is humanitys relation to nature that is cursed. No more is heard of the 'garden' or 'the cool of the day', earth is now rendered in the hard image of the 'ground', or the dry, desiccated image of 'dust'. which is to be the food of the serpent and the substance into which humanity disintegrates:'For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return'(Gen. 3:19).

Human beings are to imagine themselves on their as lifeless dust from which the breath of life has gone, no longer to share in the sanctity of all

life, visible or invisible and not even that small breath of life is to return to the Father, whose breath it once was. Yahweh has become the punishing Father, who proscribes the life he has made when he saw that it was not good.

In Hebrew, Eden means 'a place of delight', while the term 'paradise', which is of Persian origin, comes later.² The precision of the topography of Eden and the garden is interesting because they are obviously not to be



Fig. 1. The Terrestrial Paradise, from Les Trés Riches Heures du Duc, de Berry, Limbourg Brothers, c. 1410

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thought of as the same. Yahweh, planted the garden 'east-ward in Eden' and their he put the man he had formed. One river went out of Eden, to water the garden, where it was parted and became into four heads, (Gen. 2:10). The garden is then situated in the land of the sunrise, symbolically exact for the drawing of human consciousness, but what of the north, south and west of Eden? Is this, then, to be the world that the man and woman are condemned to wander in, banished for ever from the source?

The image of the garden with the four rivers and the one or two trees at the centre is clearly an image of totality, with the tree as the pivot or axis of creation. ^{Fig. 1.} Since God is said to form humans in the garden, then the garden is the human womb, Eden is the placenta, the river which, flows out of Eden to water the garden is the naval, which is divided in to four channels- two arteries and two veins etc. But the four rivers of Eden are also interpreted as an allegory of the four senses posed by the unborn child in the womb.

The story, of the first gardener comes from Sumeria, the first 'garden' in the world, where human beings were to work to provide food for the gods to save the gods having to till the ground themselves. later the king, as the son-lover of the goddess, took the official title of 'gardener', personifying the title of vegetation and the fruitfulness of the earth, and enacting the role of husbandman and shepherd. He held his throne by virtue of this covenant with the goddess: 'I am he,' says the Sumerian King, Ishme-Dagan, 'whom Inann, Queen of Heaven and Earth, has chosen for her beloved husband.'But, there, the garden was the goddess, immanent as nature. ^{Fig. 2, 3.} In Genesis, Adam, the first man, is also the gardener, but now, in a patriarchal culture, he becomes the 'son' of the Great Father rather than the son and consort of the Great Mother.

In Genesis, the Goddesses Garden of Immortality was taken over by a male God and where upon Eve was to be severely punished as the male deity decreed:

'I will multiply your pains in childbearing You shall give birth to your children in pain. Your yearning shall be for your husband Yet he will lord it over you'. (Gen. 3:16v17).

Eve's punishment for her 'sin', consists of patriarchal marriage. Her desire must be only for her husband, she must leave her Garden and follow him over the barren male-ordered earth, condemned to



Fig. 2. Inann as Queen of Heaven and Earth, cylinder seal, Akkad period, c. 2334-2154 BC.

unwanted pregnancies and painful childbirth. In other words, patrilocal marriage, in which she is isolated from the women's collective and deprived of her ancient knowledge of herbal contraception and narcotics used for painless labour. She is no longer priestess and midwife to the Goddess. She will now bear children bitterly and they will 'belong' to the man. She must passively make love to Adam on her back, he enacting the male Sky Father over meek Female Earth. She must play the role of 'corrupt matter', chained to a husband forever striving to 'free' his immortal spirit from her.

Simone de Beauvoir sums up the psychological history of the male-female relationship:

Fig. 3. The creation of Eve, in Les Heures de Rohan, the Rohan Master, c. 1415-16

'Humanity is male and male defines woman not in herself, but as relative to him, she is not regarded as an autonomous being ... She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is the incidental, he is the Absoluteshe is the Other'. ⁴.

He is her formal cause, since she is made from his rib; and he is her final cause since her end and purpose is help for him. The male is the precondition of the female and the grounds of its possibility.

In the tenderly concerned picture from the Hueres de Rohanin. ^{Fig. 3.} God draws Eve gently out of the side of the sleeping Adam, yet she is both the diminutive size of a child and also a full-grown woman. an exact image of the imbalance to which Simone de Beauvoir refers.

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Chapter 6 Eve in Christian Culture

'The first woman was born of a man and procre ating woman is nothing, more than a sack that temporarily harbours a human life generat ed by man'.¹.

he biblical myth of Eve and Adam and their expulsion from the garden of Eden, is another tale of the separation of the female from the male at Yahweh's command. According to Hebrew and Christian teachings Eve-the 'first woman'- is the cause of the fall of humanity from paradise in to earthly source. She is the source of 'Original Sin'.

St. Augustine proclaimed that everyone is born of 'Original sin', the stain is than cleansed with the sacrament of Baptism, but the temptation to sin is still there. And so the need for forgiveness through God's never ending mercy is established. Augustine proved that this is to be so, highlighting the fact that Adam and Eve covered their genitals after the evil deed,



Fig. 1. Hans Baldung, Fall of Man, 1525



Adam and Eve at Bamberg. Their bodies are as little sensuous as the buttresses of a Gothic Church. Eve's figure is distinguished from Adams only by two small, hard protuberance far apart on her chest. ^{Fig. 2.}

The opposition between mind and body in Christian doctrine took its flavour from the sin of Eve, which became the inherent sinfulness of the flesh in particular all those bodily organs that had to do with excretion of waste material, sexual intercourse and birth.

'The whole of her bodily beauty is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, rheum and the flood of digested food.'².

'Woman is like an apple, lovely without, rotten within', so runs the 15 century York mystery cycle. The forbidden fruit by now the apple, became a symbol of sexual intercourse. Eve was the instigator. Common to christians writings, that due to her secondary creation and inferior substance, Eve was more likely than Adam to give in to temptation because she was the weaker vessel in Gods word.Henceforth Eve and her female counterparts are drawn as morally weak, less rational, less disciplined, vain, greedy, gullible,

devoid of critical intelligence, cunning, perverse and wily like the serpent. $^{Fig.3.}$

When the early Fathers were formulating Christian doctrine, they drew on three sources out-side the book of Genesis: the writings of Paul, the non-scriptural Jewish writings- such as the Secret Book of Enoch, the Apocalypse of Moses and the books of Adam and Eve- and the Greek myth of Pandora.Although it was pagan and so, properly irrelevant, the parallels between Pandora and Eve proved irresistible.

To expand on the story of Pandora, she was the first woman in classical mythology, while Eve represented the first (official), woman in Judeo-Christian religions. Pandora was warned not to open a vessel box containing the evils, of the world. Pandora is also the one personification of the Earth Goddess 'Phea' the 'All-giver', and the first woman in an anti-feminist fable by Hesiod,



Fig. 3. Eve, Reills Cathedral,13 Century, Marburg.

who tried to blame 'war, death, disease,' and all other evils on woman. In both myths the Mother of All Living, is blamed for disobeying an order.

'But the woman took of the great lid of the jar with her hands and scattered all these and her thought caused sorrow and mischief to men'.³.

Pandora, like Eve, was blamed for human mortality and all the troubles that afflict humanity. In Fig. 4., the suggestive nakedness of the woman with one hand on the skull of death and the other on the urn of all ills is clearly intended to bring sexuality to mind as the cause of both myths The nature of this idea for the Christian Fathers must explain their straying into pagan paths to gather evidence for their case against Eve.

In 1486, the Malleus Malefieanim (Hex-enhammer, The Hammer of Witches), written by two Dominican monks,-Heinrish Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, made its appearance. This notorious theological and legal manual for the identification and eradication of witches, with the approval of the theology faculty of the University of Cologne and the sponsorship of Innocent V111, argued that the first woman was an ally, and all women are potentially allies, of Satan against men. In words strikingly similar in style and content to Hesiod's characterisation of Pandora, the Malleus summed up women as 'beautiful to look upon, contaminating to the touch and deadly to keep'. Fig. 5., 4.

Because Eve was created out of Adam, the substance of Eve was believed to be inferior.The idea of female inferiority, deriving in the Judeo-Christian

tradition- the creation of new life from old, woman was therefore considered to man in her capacity to contribute to the birth of a child. This



Fig.4. Eva Prima Pandora, Jean Cousan, c.1550.

point of view was originally formulated by Aristotle, whose works had reached Europe in the 12 century. Aristotle, proposes that by nature the sexes differ in their aptitude for 'cooking' the blood to produce their particular bodily humours: 'woman's menstrual secretions are an incomplete and imperfect form of sperm. Sperm, a ratification and purging of the blood by intense concoction, is the purest of substances'. For Aristotle, woman was not the creator of the child but only the passive vehicle that brought it to birth, the active and vital function in procreation being male. ⁵

The combination of Aristotle and the Genesis myth was decisive for Thomas Aquinas, and in his writings, which were for central for catholic theology, he presented woman as being on a lower plane than man.

'To be fully developed as a human being is to be born a male'.

The female ovum, or egg, was not discovered until 1827. So for 2 thousand to 4 thousand years of patriarchy all religions, philosophical, biological and medical theories on the assumption of the male as the sole generative physical and cosmic force. The semen was still regarded as superior to blood, and the male role in procreation, superior to the role of female, who simply provided the womb.

If secondary creation and inferior substance are accepted, it follows that their is in Eve an image of a flaw in creation.



Fig. 5. Hans Baldung, Fall of man, c. 1530-40, panel, Thyssen Collection, Lugano.

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Woman, in judeo-Christian traditions are seen as some kind of functional mistake.Aquinas believed the female sex was produced by a defect in nature's 'active force', or even by a wind shift, 'such as that of the south wind, which is moist'. Life is a mistake. And the male mind was born to correct it.

'Every woman should be overwhelmed with shame at the very thought that she is a woman' (St. Clemenent)

Marriage, under patriarchy, was seen as a symbol union of sacred spirit (man) and profane (matter). The Christian church combined Old Testament insistence on sex-for-procreation. The result was a form of marriage involving the greatest possible restriction of sexual feeling. The doctrinal union of 'spirit' with 'dumb matter'- seen as a legal union and Gods will ,of two incompatible opposites- was of course not a union at all, but a cultural and physical enslavement of one sex by the other.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians we read:

'Wives submit yourself onto your husbands, as unto the Lord, for thy husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject on to Christ, so let the wives be ti their own husbands in everything' (Eph. 5:22-24).

This brings to mind the quote from Hosea in which the husband so totally identified himself with the male deity that his words became the words of Yahweh. In the new religion not only the priests but all men, were to be considered as direct messengers of the Lord, not merely in Church but in the privacy of a woman's kitchen or even in her bed.

Using the know familiar Eden myth, Paul asserted that this was the reason woman must be obedient, denying themselves even the faculty of their vocal chords, not to mention their mind. We read in 1 Tim: 2:11-14,

'Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.For Adam was first formed and then Eve and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression'.

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Statements carefully designed to suppress the earlier social structure continually presented the myth of Adam and Eve as divine proof that man must hold the ultimate authority. The status of the male deity was the status of the male mortal, and it was surely no accident that the levite priests of Yahweh had fought so bitterly for his position.

Through the violent imposition and eventually forced acceptance of the male religions, woman had finally been manouvered into a role far removed from the ancient status they once held in the lands where the Queen of Heaven reigned. The Christian Church assumed the woman's guilt for the Fall and regarded the Garden of Eden story as final proof of the conspiratorial and seductive nature of women.



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Conclusion

'Can man be free if woman be a slave? Chain one who lives, and breathes this boundless air. To the corruption of a closed grave. Can they whose mates are beasts condemned to bear scorn, heavier than toil or an anguish, dare. To trample their oppressors?In their home. Among their babes, thou knowest a curse would wear. The shape of woman-hoary crime would come. Behind, and fraud rebuild religions tottering dome'. -Shelley.

The image of slavery is the primary theme of all Patriarchal religions. It begins in Genesis, with the take-over of the Goddesses Garden of Immortality by a male god, and the inversion of all her sacred symbols-tree, serpent, moon, woman-into icons of evil.

'Kings, priests and statesman, blast the human flower. Even in its tender bud, their influence darts like subtle Poison, through the bloodless veins of desolate society'.

Shelley.

Eve, the first 'official', woman was born from a mans body, (a very interesting biological reversal), by the Great Father God Yahweh, with no apparent history, yet as I, have highlighted, traces of the evolution of Eve, can be found as far back as the Enuma Elish, where the beginning of a patriarchal war society came into existence, through the murder of Tiamat by the city God Marduk.

Eve, an inferior creature, due to the superior substance she was created from, in turn became, maligned as the cause of 'Sin', in the world.

The image of Eve, presents a complex character in history, yet I, believe her creation was distorted, to provide a focal point, on which the male could justify himself as supreme being.

Before, the Great Father God Yahweh, could establish a patriarchal society, there first had to be a flaw in nature. This flaw was rendered as woman, to be corrected by man.

Eve, though she plays a minor role in the Garden of Eden, her punishment is the severest, limited to those which the patriarchal culture has assigned her, inferiority to man, marriage, motherhood and the rearing of children.

Henceforth, the arrival of an oppressive culture began with the denial of

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freedom of choice for women. Woman are prisoners to the body of flesh they breath.

I may not be in the position to change history, but I, feel it prudent as an artist to recognise the plight of woman, as objects of discrimination and injustice in both the church and society for millennia-the church reinforcing the culture and the culture reinforcing the church. To discover this history of woman, women are therefore in the position to create a new future.

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