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THE POWER OF WOMEN:
TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE JEWISH RESPONSE

Roger Curtis Klein

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

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Referee, Professor Norman Mirsky, Ph.D.

DIGEST

In the introductory chapter I demonstrate, prima facie, the existence of a puzzling and pervasive misogyny and posit, as the central task of the thesis, the need to come to an understanding of the origins, nature, and implications of this attitude toward women. I then turn to several methodological problems and establish the need for two assumptions: the assumption of symmetry (between inner needs, fears, etc., and societal institutions, customs, etc.); and the assumption of coherence (as a criterion of truth). Chapter One concerns itself with the differences between sex (male-female) and gender (masculine-feminine) and shows how these two concepts have been seen to be, on the one hand, integrally related and, on the other hand, completely independent of one another. The nature of this controversy is then considered.

In Chapter Two I turn to the major ways in which man has reacted to the perceived female threat. Man reacts with fear and/or envy and/or ambivalence (the dynamic inter-relationship of fear and envy). Chapter Three then deals with some of the central manifestations of the male response to the female threat, considering, in turn, patriarchy, the monogamous family, male initiation rites, and the notion of

the female as a tabooed object.

In Chapter Four I examine some of these typical male reactions and responses as they are expressed in Jewish life and literature; my conclusion is that the literature reflects, quite prominently, both the primal dread of women and the assumptions necessary for effectively constructing the required institutions of repression.

Chapter Five deals with a prominent example of the so-called "return of the repressed" -- the figure of Lilith. Chapter Six brings this study to a close with several speculations about the possible causal and conceptual relationships that may obtain between the complex phenomenon of woman and the development of monotheism.

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INTRODUCTION

I recently had occasion to hear a radio interview with former Attorney General Ramsey Clark in which the discussion inevitably turned to his controversial book, Crime in America. "Mr. Clark, why is there so much violence in America today?" queried the interviewer. To which Mr. Clark replied, "Because, in my estimation, our gun control laws are not nearly rigid enough. Too many people have too many guns." Now, that Ramsey Clark has pointed his finger at an important aspect of the problem of violence cannot be denied; but seriously to assert that a plethora of destructive weapons is a central cause (rather than a central condition) of violence is seriously to misconstrue the origins of violence. (And Ramsey Clark himself would be the first to admit this.) The problem goes much, much deeper than this. The ways in which a society manifests its energies indicate a great deal about the nature of its frustrations, the quality of its drives, and the structure of its experience. The cause of pathological manifestations are to be found, not in pathological symptoms, but in the innermost and most basic elements of the structure of that society: in its attitude toward nature, in its attitude toward the value of human life, in its attitude toward the nature of interpersonal relationships. It is on this level that

ultimate values and estimations are to be discerned; it is on this level that the most basic characteristics of a society are reflected.

In this paper I want to focus upon one of these basic elements in the structure of a social character: the attitude toward women. Philip Slater has on many occasions pointed out the complex and disintegrative web of consequences that has evolved from Western civilization's malevolent attitude toward women. Later we will have occasion to examine Slater's hypothesis in detail; for now suffice it to say that, in my opinion, Slater has indicated a far more profound factor in the etiology of violence than has Ramsey Clark. Indeed, I hope to show that the most important clue leading to an understanding of the pathology of our culture is our attitude toward our women.

Christian David, in an article entitled "A Masculine Mythology of Femininity," avers that the unhealthy and destructive relationship between the sexes

can be attributed for the most part to the luxuriant mythology which prevents the sexes from knowing and encountering each other, especially as these fallacious images of sexuality, rooted as they are in the collective unconscious and not simply in the individual unconscious, are found secretly preserved in certain social institutions.¹

David's highly provocative statement suggests several fascinating questions, though the most important one at this point is this: what is the nature of this "mythology"? What is the prevailing attitude of men toward women and how do we

typify it? In order to get our bearings in the labyrinthine vastness of this subject, let us turn our attention to an exposition, at this point without elaborate comment, of some of the typical attitudes expressed about women. I do not intend this collection of statements to be typologically exhaustive; nor do I intend it to suggest what I take to be the normative attitude of our culture. That would be, at this point, quite premature. These statements do represent a starting point for our discussion; some of them are excessively polemical and carping; some of them, appearing to be descriptive, are loaded with unexpressed assumptions; some of them, while purportedly meant to heap praise upon "the fair sex," deviously utilize the method of praise to cast derision and scorn upon women.

Our first example, taken from the Book of Proverbs, Chapter 31, exemplifies the application of scorn via the method of praise. These are the verses "customarily recited on the Sabbath by good Jewish husbands as evidence of the high esteem in which women [are] held."²

The good wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.
The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
She seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.
She is like the ships of the merchant,
she brings her food from afar.
She rises while it is yet night
and provides food for her household
and tasks for her maidens.
She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants
a vineyard.

....

She makes herself coverings;
her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
when he sits among the elders of the land.
She makes linen garments and sells them;
she delivers girdles to the merchant.
(Proverbs, 31:10-16, 22-24, RSV)

Of the many revealing aspects of this passage, two elements deserve our attention at this point: first, though these verses soar to exalted heights in their apotheosis of the ideal woman, the key phrase is the first one. "A good wife who can find?"* It is as if the sage had said, "Now I'm going to indicate the qualities of the ideal woman; but, unfortunately, and as you well know, she is nowhere to be found." Hence, seen in the light of the opening phrase, the following verses of praise are to be construed, by contrast, as a derisive commentary on the "real" woman. The second significant element of this passage is the role in which it casts the ideal woman: not as an independent, active person in her own right but as an economic commodity, doing the

*I have sought corroboration for the following interpretation of Proverbs 31:10 from Dr. Matitiah Tsevat, Professor of Bible at the Hebrew Union College. Dr. Tsevat could not agree with my interpretation, primarily on the basis of the context of the passage, the nature of this kind of literature, and the length of the praise of the woman. Although I have the utmost respect for both the scholarship and interpretative skill of Dr. Tsevat, I must admit that I am not convinced by his arguments.

chores and providing life's necessities for her family while her husband "is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land." As Ruth Brin points out, "The Jewish woman was not invited to 'sit in the gates,' nor was she valued for her wisdom, moral or spiritual strength, [but see verses 26-31!] but she was valued quite simply for her economic utility to her husband."³

In our own time we are confronted with an embarrassment of riches when it comes to selecting statements that exemplify the "luxurient mythology" about which Christian David speaks. Perhaps, then, it would do us well to select passages from the writings of Dr. Benjamin Spock; as a humanitarian his credentials are impeccable. If anyone is to be expected to speak about women with reasonableness, candor, and largesse, it should certainly be Dr. Spock. Yet some of the things that he says about women (and girls) are truly astounding. What deep and apparently ineradicable cultural heritage could have prepossessed the good doctor to write the following panegyric to "maleness?" "More girls get high grades in school and college, because they are inclined to accept the instructor's word as long as it is reasonable." Boys, on the other hand, have a tendency to balk and argue. Women are more patient in working at unexciting, repetitive tasks; they are also inclined to accept their husband's positions more readily. Spock continues:

women working at a soda fountain simply
make sandwiches and drinks. Men must
turn such an occupation into a system,

a combination of game, ballet, and race against time in which they grab the bread, slap on the filling, slice, and sling the sandwich -- all in one rapid sleight-of-hand movement -- meanwhile bellowing cryptic orders back and forth and slipping exaggerated compliments to their female customers."⁴

Such unabashed ballyhoo becomes quite problematic when, in the hands of the doctor-turned-special pleader, the barely disguised value-judgments masquerade as the fruit of mature, objective, scientific investigation. Dr. Spock's professional ethics aside, two important problems emerge from his statements: first of all, how is it that Spock himself could have been hoodwinked into thinking that these assertions really do describe the differences between the sexes? Secondly, Spock indicated that "men must turn such an occupation into a system, a combination of game...." Why is it that men must do this? From whence comes the compulsion? What inner needs are reflected in this "must-ness?" And why is it that men (as epitomized here by Spock) must transform ordinary activities into competitive exercises, unspectacular procedures into operations totally out of proportion to their actual importance, play into work, and occupations into preoccupations? Spock's statements indeed raise a complex nest of problems without answering any of them (how could they be answered since their author is himself part of the problem). In this paper I shall attempt to shed at least some light on these puzzles.

At this point I can hardly resist the temptation to offer several more quotations from the pen of Dr. Spock,

primarily because they so elegantly epitomize what I take to be the pervasive and normative attitude of our society toward women.

The emotional strengths that women contribute to family life in our society are the following: realism, sensibleness, personalness. They sense human relationships around them, they have a strong urge to satisfy human needs, they enjoy making people comfortable, they sympathize with those who are suffering (suffering people make quite a few men acutely uncomfortable and impatient). These qualities make women indispensable as wives, mothers, nurses, secretaries.⁵

Women here are described in their role as helpers, always concerned about other people (always doing the "dirty work" toward which men feel discomfort and impatience) and not, it would seem, about themselves. One feels compelled to pose the following question: are women naturally, dispositionally cut out to be "wives, mothers (Spock is certainly referring here to the sociological and not biological role), nurses, secretaries" or has our society placed such rigid restrictions upon the viable outlets for their potentialities, that they are forced, as a matter of fact, to develop these "emotional strengths?"

Women are not fascinated with gadgets for their own sake; they view them skeptically until they prove their utility. They see a car as simply transportation; they have no craving to buy a particular one because it is newer or powerful; they generally object to the foolishness of spending extra money for such qualities.⁶

Young girls at the ice rink skate sociably with each other or practice twirls before the mirror. Boys of this age persistently

and illegally skate against the current and play tag in and out amongst the nervous adults, enjoying the combat with each other and the indignation of the older people.^{6a}

Unawares, George Dennison has written the most eloquent reply to this latter morsel from the arsenal of Spockean quotables; Dennison describes a day at the ice-skating rink with his school-children:

All the kids wanted to be skated with and to hold hands. Maxine [!], as usual, made a number of friendly enemies by breaking the rules, skating into the roped-off areas, etc. But⁷ she wasn't as bad as the previous time...

Statements such as those from Spock and the Book of Proverbs could be amassed endlessly; but let us, instead, turn writings of two of the most formidable critics of this attitude toward women in order to round out our fleeting overview of the situation. These two critics are Kate Millet and Philip Slater.

In our society, indicates Millet, men want to see men as aggressive, intelligent, forceful, and effective; whereas men want to see women as passive, ignorant, docile, "virtuous," and ineffective.⁸ Slater, in his brilliantly conceived book The Glor^y of Hera, enumerates some of the prevalent customs of ancient Greece which reflected the then-dominant male attitude toward women: that a woman shouldn't be older than her husband; that a woman shouldn't be of higher social status than her husband; that a woman shouldn't be more educated; that a woman shouldn't be paid the same as males for the same work; and that woman shouldn't be in a

position of authority. All of which Slater sums up with the following provocative interpretation, perhaps as applicable today as it is to ancient Greece: "all this betrays an assumption that males are incapable of competing with females on an equal basis; the cards must first be stacked, the male given a handicap."⁹ Here, I believe, is our first clue to an understanding of the nature and function of that "luxuriant mythology" about which David spoke. We will have much more to say about it later.

Further on in his book Slater attempts to apply his insights about Greek mythology to the American scene and especially to the mass media. The mass media, Slater maintains, are quite subtle and effective in reinforcing the normative attitude of our society toward women:

The mass media are filled with joking references to the multiple roles and skills which a "mere housewife" performs (nursemaid, mechanic, chauffeur, teacher, and so forth), as a way of denying the emotional and intellectual poverty of the role. The condescension implied in this device is barely disguised; to say that a housewife must be a Jack-of-all-trades is a sop to her desire to be a master of one. She is thus placed in a position like that of the unemployed Negro, who is alleged to be happy-go-lucky, with music in his soul. Indeed, detergent and floor wax are to the American female what watermelon is to the American Negro. Yet, despite the fact that no minority group has ever been portrayed as unflatteringly as is the American female in television commercials, this insult has gone unprotested.¹⁰

Enough has been said, I believe, by way of introduction, to indicate, prima facie, that "the luxuriant mythology which

prevents the sexes from knowing and encountering each other," about which Christian David spoke, is very elaborate and deeply rooted indeed. Yet the very existence and persistence of this mythology raise several other important questions: what is the nature of this mythology? Why did it have to be elaborated in the first place and what accounts for its durability? Which is to ask, from what kind of situation did it arise and for what purpose(s) was it promoted? Why, indeed, did it become so luxuriant? For what purposes, conscious or unconscious, have the sexes been prevented from knowing and encountering one another? What institutions, social, political, and religious, sustain this mythology? Why did this mythology need to be made permanent? These are the questions that cry out for answers; these are the problems that are implicit in the reflections of the male-female attitude indicated above; and it is for answers to these questions and solutions to these problems that we shall seek in this essay.

Among the many methodological problems that present themselves in a study such as this, one in particular deserves some careful attention; how are we to decide which institutions, rituals, customs, narratives, epigrams, et.al., represent the most characteristic attitudes of a given society toward women? And how are we to interpret these expressions? David has characterized the aggregate of these expressions as a "luxuriant mythology." What, then, is the nature of a myth and what is the "reality" that it discloses?

The temptation certainly exists to consider the elements of myth -- ritual, institutions, narratives -- to be little more than the result of misapprehension, deluded consciousness, or mistaken imagination. To view the matter in this way is to conceive of mythology as a form of error -- beautiful, imaginative, dramatic error to be sure -- but error all the same. In this paper we shall be dealing with the elements of David's "luxuriant mythology" and so it is crucial that we dispel at once this erroneous view of mythology. (I should clarify the way in which I am using the word "myth" here: I have no intention of confining the scope of mythology on the basis of some technical definition; nor am I going to draw distinctions among such related concepts as myth, saga, epic, and fable. In the broadest of terms, by mythology I want to mean the cultural manifestations of the deepest recesses of man's emotional life as they express themselves in terms of his attitude toward women. And we are here concerned not only with the substance of these myths but also with their function in man's cultural, social, and religious life.)

In order to understand in what way myth is to be seen, not as error, but as an expression of deep and fundamental truths, we can do no better than to turn to the writings of Ernst Cassirer. "One of the most essential elements of myth," writes Cassirer, is that

myth does not arise solely from intellectual processes; it sprouts forth from deep human emotions. Yet on the other hand all those theories that exclusively stress the emotional

element fail to see an essential point. Myth cannot be described as bare emotion because it is the expression of emotion. The expression of a feeling is not the feeling itself -- it is emotion turned into an image. This very fact implies a radical change. What hitherto was dimly and vaguely felt assumes a definite shape; what was a passive state becomes an active process.¹¹

Cassirer's central contention here is that there is a definite structural symmetry between the emotion and its expression; and thus, to come to an understanding of the structure, nature, and function of the manifestation is to come to an understanding of the structure, nature, and function of the drive, the need, the emotion of which the manifestation is the expression.

The mythological expression, then, does reflect an essential aspect of reality although that reality may not be, or be in accord with empirical, public reality. Cassirer continues

Myth is not only far remote from this empirical reality; it is, in a sense, in flagrant contradiction to it. It seems to build up an entirely fantastic world. Nevertheless even myth has a certain "objective" aspect and a definite objective function. Linguistic symbolism leads to an objectification of sense-impressions; mythical symbolism leads to an objectification of feelings. In his magical rites, in his religious ceremonies, man acts under the pressure of deep individual desires and violent social impulses.¹²

What is crucial here is the integral, tight, necessary relationship between the "deep individual desires and violent social impulses," on the one hand, and, on the other hand,

the objectification of these feelings, in magical rites, religious ceremonies, social taboos, etiological myths (e.g., the creation of woman), and the structure of familial and social institutions. In fact, the relationship between emotion-impulse and its cultural expression is so close that the expressions are rarely recognized as manifestations or reflections; they are not "known" as images. They are not regarded as symbols but as realities."¹³ This fact, that the myth does its job of objectification and expression so completely that whole civilizations may be unaware of the process, accounts, in large measure, for the type of uncritical, naive, and fantastic assertion exemplified in the writing of Dr. Spock. For those cultural institutions and norms which really are the expression of emotional needs and impulses are mistakenly seen as expressions of an immutable, constant, and impenetrable empirical reality. The assumption that they are an expression of reality is correct; the mistake, and a serious one it is, arises from the presumption of the locus of that reality.

Bruno Bettelheim, in his book Symbolic Wounds, illustrates this problem of locating the source of a particular social expression. Bettelheim here is concerned with the origin of certain initiation rites:

If women's power to bear young aroused envy in men, then the men may have devised rites for dealing with their envy, and later come to regard women as responsible for originating those rites. And psychologically speaking, they were.¹⁴

In this essay I propose to take certain cultural rituals, ceremonies, and institutions, both formal and informal, very seriously and to see them as the expression of certain very basic (individual and social) impulses, emotions, and needs. The longevity of a certain custom or procedure will deserve special attention; for on the assumption (emphasized by both Slater and Bettelheim) that a cultural expression will die without strong psychological relevance, durability itself must be seen as a signal of a persistent and adaptable human emotion, impulse, or need. As Bettelheim states

Almost any central institution of society, while it may serve the needs or desires of one sex more than the other, must to some degree satisfy certain needs of the other sex in order to survive permanently. Those satisfactions need not be primary or basic, but may be the consequence of custom. For example, certain passive desires may be activated in women who begin to live in a patriarchal society. But once aroused, they need to be satisfied. That such a society frustrates many of women's active desires goes without saying. Still, it could not have continued to do so had it not also met some of women's passive wishes.¹⁵

One of the leading assumptions underlying the substance of this essay is that there exists an integral, structural (indeed, necessary) connection between the emotion, the need and its cultural expression. It is this assumption, and I believe only this assumption, which allows us to examine the logic of a social institution or cultural phenomenon and infer from it something about man's fundamental emotional life. The problem with this assumption is that it

is too powerful; it permits such a range of possible interpretations that it will become easy to overinterpret the phenomena, as it were, to uncover an anthill with a twenty-ton steamshovel. This problem is aggravated by the fact that, inasmuch as man's emotional life is not given to rational categories of explanation or logical canons of consistency, so too are the expressions of man's emotional life quite often a-logical, inconsistent one with another, and inelegant. As Slater points out, "the myth is a little like a political platform: there is something in it for everyone; and for that reason one should not expect psychological consistency from a myth any more than one would expect value-consistency from a political platform."¹⁶

Hence, whereas our assumption of symmetry permits inferences, we need to posit another assumption that will restrict the types of explanations that can be validly offered. And this assumption I shall call the assumption of coherence: since each phenomenon permits too many possible interpretations, we cannot place too much emphasis on any single interpretation of any single phenomenon. The validity of a hypothesis, rather, will have to be seen as an attribute of a series of expressions and the alleged interpretations of them. A hypothesis will then become compelling to the degree to which a cumulative series of confirmatory expression-explanation sets can be coherently amassed.

Yet, as we embark upon the task of describing and explaining, one central caveat must constantly be kept in

mind: that inasmuch as we are concerned, in this essay, with some of the most basic and variegated institutions, mores and respective emotions and impulses that are to be found within the fabric of our civilization, we must be content with partial explanations, tentative discoveries, and rough-hewn insights. For, slightly to modify a metaphor of Thomas Mann's: very deep is the well of the history of mankind's emotional life. Should we not indeed call it bottomless?"¹⁷

Now let me briefly indicate the way in which I plan to proceed in the following chapters of this essay: first we will examine the differences between the sexes and the controversy over the implications of these differences; then we shall look at the numerous effects that the perception of these differences have had upon men. (Why we shall need to focus upon male reactions and not those of women will become, at that point, obvious); next we shall investigate the kinds of ways in which men have responded to the resultant traumas -- and here we shall be especially concerned with man in his role as the agent of repression par excellence. We shall also want to examine some of the institutions, customs, and attitudes that are to be seen as the social ramifications of this response. Then we shall explore the centrality of these repressive attitudes and mechanisms in Jewish custom and literature. At this point we shall shift our focus from man (the represser) to woman (the repressed); first, through the use of Freud's notion of the "return of the repressed," we shall consider certain sub-cultural, folk-cultural (i.e.,

non-normative) manifestations of the feminine principle (exemplified not only by women); then we shall briefly consider the response of women as it occurs within the normative mainstream of culture and society. We shall deal with two moments of this response: defensively, in terms of the protective reaction of women; and, offensively, in terms of what we shall call "the religion of women." Thereafter, we shall attempt to understand some of the consequences and implications of the complex of male-female relationships and attitudes. And finally we shall speculate concerning the interrelationships between the structure and function of monotheism and the phenomenon of women.

I

SEX AND GENDER

It would seem to be an easy matter to delineate, clearly and unambiguously, the anatomical and physiological differences between men and women; to begin with we might point to the clear and distinct differences between the reproductive organs of the two sexes. But the matter is not so easy as any attempt to engage in a more definite characterization would demonstrate. The problem arises precisely from the difficulty in ascertaining where it is that description leaves off and evaluation begins. Is it possible purely and simply to describe without any imposition of interpretative categories on the part of the observer? Are there pure facts? Is observation a purely neutral operation? Philosophers from Kant to Werner Heisenberg have gone to great lengths to demonstrate that all of these questions must be answered in the negative.

To facilitate us in determining the nature of the basic differences between the sexes, the difficulties attendant upon such an attempt at determination, and the implications of these differences and difficulties, we will utilize two sets of categories: male-female and masculine-feminine. Following Kate Millet and many others, we shall mean by them the following: the "male-female" contrast shall

indicate the differences on the level of anatomy and physiology, i.e., biological differences; the "masculine-feminine" contrariety shall indicate psycho-social differences, positivistic distinctions in the area of behavior, feeling, thought, and fantasy. The "male-female" pair represents distinctions that are innate, describing differences of sex; the "masculine-feminine" pair represents distinctions that are learned, describing differences of gender.

Several important questions may now be raised in terms of these two pairs of contrasts: are there any genuine sexual differences or are all distinctions merely a matter of gender? If there are genuine sexual differences, do these differences necessitate any differences in gender? Do they imply differences or suggest differences? Do sexual, anatomical characteristics in any way restrict the kind of activity that, e.g., a woman might be capable of doing? Do distinctions either of sex or gender suggest the "natural" superiority of one component over another? It is with respect to these questions that controversy rages?

Let us first make an attempt to delineate the differences between the sexes (not the genders). The difference in reproductive organs seems to be the most outstanding distinction. But how about the developmental history (i.e., from birth to childhood to adolescence, adulthood, old age) of the reproductive system of each? The development of the female is much more dramatic than that of the male; as a boy passes into adulthood his voice deepens and pubic hair grows.

(The other changes seem to be primarily psychological.) A girl, on the other hand, passes through many more transitions: pubic hair forms, her breasts develop, she begins to menstruate, and she becomes capable of bearing children. Later the woman passes through menopause.

This seems to account for the denotative difference between male and female (although there is much discussion, to some of which we shall later turn, on just how basic and ineradicable these differences are). But the potential connotations and implications of these descriptive differences seem so obvious -- indeed they might appear to be part of the description itself -- that few not resolutely and imperturbably devoted to the ideal (the myth?) of objective consciousness can resist the barely perceptible transition into the realm of interpretation.

Let us first consider those who feel that anatomy, to some degree, is destiny, i.e., that differences of sex imply definite differences of gender. Eric Erikson seems to be the most benign of these. In his celebrated essay "Womanhood and Inner Space", Erikson effects the transition from "human being-with-uterus" (description) to "human being-with-inner space." (That we are now dealing with mere description is no longer clear.) This female attribute of inner space makes the woman the locus of pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation and moreover covers "all the richly convex parts of the female anatomy which suggest fullness, warmth, and generosity."¹⁸ Here, certainly, is a clear statement of the presumption that

sexual, anatomical characteristics imply certain temperamental traits. Implications with regard to role are also discerned: this inner space, this womb, which Erikson calls the "physiological rock-bottom,"¹⁹ gives a woman "a biological, psychological, and ethical commitment to take care of human infancy."²⁰

Kate Millet takes Erikson to task for his reaffirmation of the Freudian-psychoanalytic notion that the female personality is innate. Although he is to be praised for pointing out that "femininity is socially and politically useful"²¹ (although the invidious attribution of inherency is not thereby removed), Erikson gravely misconstrues nurture for nature.

What Erikson does not recognize is that the traits of each group are culturally conditioned and depend upon their political relationship, which has been relatively constant throughout history regardless of contemporary crises. Instead, the entire emphasis of his essay, and the whole force of the experiment on which his theory is based, is to convince us that complementary masculine and feminine traits are inherently male and female.²²

"Erikson's whole theory," Millet concludes, "is built on psychoanalysis's persistent error of mistaking learned behavior for biology."²³ Or, in the terms that we are employing, Millet accuses Erikson of mistaking gender for sex.

Millet, for her part, contends that sex and gender, in reality, have nothing to do with one another although our male-dominated society has made it appear that the relationship is integral.

Patriarchal religion, popular attitude, and to some degree, science as well assumes these psycho-social distinctions to rest upon biological differences between the sexes, so that where culture is acknowledged as shaping behavior, it is said to do no more than co-operate with nature. Yet the temperamental distinctions created in patriarchy ("masculine" and "feminine" personality traits) do not appear to originate in human nature, those of role and status still less.²⁴

Millet concedes that such secondary sexual characteristics as the heavy musculature of the male (which may have role and status implications) is biological in origin; but this characteristic "is also culturally encouraged through breeding, diet and exercise. Yet it is hardly an adequate category on which to base political relations within civilization." ²⁵ (emphasis Millet's) Millet concludes: "Male supremacy, like other political creeds, does not finally reside in physical strength but in the acceptance of a value system which is not biological."²⁶

In fact, continues Millet, the cultural and political overlay has been so heavy that it becomes difficult to know even what the "real" differences between the sexes may be. And we are not likely to know them, she says with penetrating irony, "until the sexes are treated differently, that is alike."²⁷

Millet takes her argument one step further, alleging that, contrary to expectations, gender traits are less easily eradicated than are sexual traits. Reporting the findings of studies conducted by Robert J. Stoller, Millet writes that

In cases of genital malformation and consequent erroneous gender assignment at

birth, studied at the California Gender Identity Center, the discovery was made that it is easier to change the sex of an adolescent male, whose biological identity turns out to be contrary to his gender assignment and conditioning -- through surgery -- than to undo the educational consequences of years, which have succeeded in making the subject temperamentally feminine in gesture, sense of self, personality and interests. Studies done in California under Stoller's direction offer proof that gender identity (I am a girl, I am a boy) is the primary identity any human being holds -- the first as well as the most permanent and far-reaching.²⁸

It would seem, then, that not only does sex not necessitate any consequences in terms of gender but that gender characteristics are of even greater importance and weight than are sexual characteristics. This conclusion, implies Millet, forces us to face the real nature of our misogyny, as rooted in a political, religious and cultural ideology which, though rationalized by means of specious, biologically-based assumptions, finds its true source in the complex, mysterious, and cumulatively pathological metaphysic of an inculcated masculine misanthropy.

Norman Mailer disagrees. To say that Mailer "takes issue" with Kate Millet is something like saying that the Visigoths "took issue" with the Romans. The vitriol from Mailer's pen, published in a recent issue of Harpers' Magazine, is a sustained, often brilliant maelstrom of controlled frenzy. Males and females, Mailer tells us, are irreducibly different and that difference is not the product of learning but of anatomy. And anatomy is destiny, sex is gender, sex

is temperament, role, and status. At the conclusion of our guided -- one begins to feel by the nape of the neck -- tour through the "land of Millet," Mailer confides that

"The prime responsibility of a woman probably is to be on earth long enough to find the best mate for herself, and conceive children who will improve the species." Was it too late now to suggest that in the search for the best mate was concealed the bravery of a woman, and to find the best mate, whatever ugly or brutal or tyrannical or unbalanced or heart-searing son of misery he might appear, his values nonetheless, mysterious fellow of values, would inevitably present themselves in those twenty-three chromosomes able to cut through fashion, tradition, and class.²⁹

The bravery of a woman, Mailer suggests, is to yield completely to the (obvious) implications of the architecture of her body, of the mystery of the womb. The possession of the womb determines the unique destiny of woman. True psycho-social equality is impossible because women have

that unmentionable womb, that spongy pool, that time machine with a curse, dam for an ongoing river of blood whose rhythm seemed to obey some private compact with the moon. How this womb, unaccountable liaison with the beyond, disrupted every attempt at uniform behavior.³⁰

Woman is different, irreducibly different, "a privileged element of nature, closer to the mysteries than men."³¹

Mailer's obsessive, sexual mysticism is nowhere so strikingly illustrated as in his fantasies of devouring, castrating vaginas:

While the prizewinner was packing lunches this picnicking summer, the particular part of his ghost-phallus which remained in New York -- his very reputation in

residence -- had not only been ambushed, but was apparently being chewed half to death by a squadron of enraged Amazons, an honor guard of revolutionary (if we could only see them) vaginas.³²

It is obvious that, for Mailer, a good portion of life's spice emerges from the hot and heavy antagonism between the sexes. Viva la difference, he shouts at us with polysyllabic pugnacity. Favorably contrasting Henry Miller's forays into the literary fields of flesh and cunt to our own banal efforts to sterilize, anesthetize, and flatten, Mailer avers that

we are looking for an accommodation of the sexes, whereas he calls for antagonism -- "the eternal battle with woman sharpens our resistance, develops our strength, enlarges the scope of our cultural achievements." Yes, he cries out to us, "the loss of sex polarity is part and parcel of the larger disintegration, the reflex of the soul's death and coincident with the disappearance of great men, great causes, great wars."³³

Let us return, briefly, to the redoubtable Dr. Spock. Inasmuch as we have previously found him to be a popular champion of rigidifying status, temperament, and role differences between the sexes, we should not be surprised to discover that Spock believes in a tight, causal relationship between sex and gender. And we are not disappointed. Some differences (between boys and girls), Spock relates, with uncharacteristic caution, "are at least partly innate."³⁴ And "these innate differences between the sexes

have been built into our species during the long course of evolution by the process of natural selection. That is to say, they

contributed to a successful family life, one which kept the father and mother in a harmonious, stable relationship so that they could divide the jobs in an efficient way, fend off threats, human and otherwise, safeguard and raise children trained to take over in their turn. Man has been the fighter, protector, theorizer, inventor. Woman has been empathizer, comforter, realist, preserver.³⁵

Nature, Spock seems to be saying, has graciously implanted certain dispositional proclivities into men and women (a unique set of them into each), thus facilitating a most desirable and salutary division of labor. Nature is purposeful and "desires" men to be masculine and women to be feminine. Thus, parents should encourage male-traits in boys and female-traits in girls,³⁶ helping Nature fulfill Her "desires" and accomplish her "goals." The astonishing naivete, the wholly uncritical hypostalization (by implication) of Nature, and the artless sentimentalism of these considerations -- all of this would demand a response were we not at this point concerned primarily with a delineation of the various theories about the relationship between sex and gender. Painful as it is, then, let us let Spock have the last word. He summarizes his views on the matter of sex and gender with the following statement: "...that men and women are quite different in temperament and needs and that the feminists' effort to deny this is increasing the rivalry between the sexes and impairing the pleasure of both -- but particularly of women."³⁷ (O tempora! O mores!)

C. Wright Mills observes the matter in yet another

light. For his, as for Millet, sex and gender provide different frameworks and divergent points of origin.

The facts of biology themselves take on the values that we give them, and woman is a female only to the extent that she is defined as such in her experienced situation. Anatomy is not destiny. And even her consciousness of her femininity does not define woman, for this consciousness is itself acquired under specific historical conditions. Like man, woman is not only a member of a species, she is an historical creation.³⁸

By way of illustrating Mills' contention that even a woman's consciousness of herself is something learned, something accepted by means of introjecting the particular mores of her culture, we consider this striking and direct confession made by a (may we say typical?) Jewish woman:

...Friday night, on Sabbath Eve, I am a queen, like every Jewish woman. On weekdays I am just a woman...³⁹

Rarely has the word "just mirrored such a depth of pathos and the pityfulness of oppression.

The most striking conclusion to emerge from this survey of viewpoints is the variety of possible attitudes on the relationship between sex and gender. After all, the most irreducible differences between the sexes seem obvious enough; yet how difficult it is to arrive at a consensus, either on the nature of these irreducibles (even on the matter of how they are to be described) or on the relationship of these "factual" differences to the relevant psychological, social, economic, religious, and political customs and institutions. Hence, although, in the abstract, clear and distinct lines

can be drawn between the notions of sex and gender, we can only conclude that the relationship between the two, in reality, remains distressingly problematic. Presently we shall turn our attention to the nature of the male reaction to the differences between the sexes. But the substance of our present chapter indicates that we will, in the next section, be dealing not with reactions to the differences -- as if those differences were sharply defined -- but with the reactions to the perceived differences; for it appears that both the manner of perception and the mentality of the perceiver are inextricably bound up with the data itself.

The second conclusion to emerge from the foregoing discussion is this: that although it seems to have been taken for granted by our culture that sexual differences necessitate differences in gender-determination, such a alleged dogma may no longer be considered to be axiomatic. This is not to say that there is no causal or conceptual connection; rather, that the existence of such a relationship now stands in need of convincing demonstration. Let us then turn to the nature of the male reaction to these perceived sexual differences.

II

THE REACTION

In this and the following sections we shall consider, respectively, the male reaction and the male response to the perceived (by him) differences between male and female. A few words, by way of introduction to these two complementary sections, seem to be in order. First, the notions of reaction and response are complementary in the following way: by "reaction to the perceived differences" we shall mean something like an immediate reflex, a being thrown off guard, the shock of a recognition; with respect to the reaction to the perceived sexual distinctions, we shall allege that man is literally shaken to his core, traumatized by what he senses. The notion of "response," on the other hand, will serve to indicate what active efforts man makes in his attempts to regain his equilibrium, to assuage the trauma, to salve his wounds. Under the heading of "Response," therefore, we shall be considering the social and religious institutions, the etiological narratives, the rituals and ceremonies which, I shall argue, are to be understood primarily as prodigiously amassed fortifications against the fearsome objects of his trauma-inducing perceptions. That the dual notions of reaction-response are indeed to be seen in this way obviously demands considerable justification.

The second consideration, by way of introduction, is this: whereas in the first two chapters we have been concerned, in the main, with the particular assertions of individual thinkers, we are now dealing with the highly unstructured, oftentimes obscure, and persistently vague cultural reflections of an amorphous collectivity. The expression of Spock's sentiments or Mailer's musings, for example, are written down in black and white; problems of interpretation abound, to be sure, but in the understanding of the insertions of a particular author, we have a great head start. Such an advantage disappears when we attempt to consider the various expressions of the collective "mind" of a group, a society, a culture, a civilization. In this section we are attempting to deal with just these expressions; yet how do we locate these "reactions" and "responses?" Spock's reaction and responses are to be found in his books which are to be found in the library or in the bookstore or on the library shelves of suburban homes; on the other hand, the reactions and responses of the collective "mind" of our society, culture, and civilization are to be found not only in the library, in the bookstore, and on the library shelves throughout suburbia (and then in all of the books taken together in some difficult-to-penetrate if not impenetrable fashion) -- these bookstores, libraries, bookshelves are themselves a significant part of that expression.

Furthermore, neither individual men nor groups of men ever consciously and deliberately create the central

institutions, customs, or mores of a society. They emerge from a complex of needs -- yet since the need is rarely articulated we can definitively ascertain neither the nature of the need nor the nature of the reaction-response. And when either the need, reaction, or response are given verbal expression, we can rarely take it at face value. The mechanisms, some conscious and some unconscious, of rationalization, reaction-formation, symbolizing, compensation, et. al., notoriously throw a smoke-screen between interpreter and interpretation, creating a network of protective devices between the raw, vulnerable, intolerable, immediate reaction-response complex and the distressingly (though necessarily) obfuscating institution, custom, ceremony, etc.

Thus, since we are now dealing with entities the very nature of which preclude explanatory concreteness and decisive penetration, we have necessarily moved into the area of speculation and hypothesis. And thus it becomes important, at this point, to re-emphasize that, from here on, this essay relies heavily upon the assumptions of symmetry and coherence.

In a very important way, it is artificial to attempt to separate reaction and response; indeed each tends to penetrate and contribute to the understanding of the other. It is difficult to imagine, for example, a pure reaction without some type of response built into the reaction itself. Some types of pure reaction may have occurred at the very dawn of history but as soon as a necessitated and appropriate response ensued, all future reactions must have been pervaded by the

initial responses. Thus, although the separation of reaction from response may provide us with conceptual advantages, facilitating understanding and interpretation, such a model of temporal succession must be seen as just that -- an explanatory model only insignificantly, if at all, reflecting reality. The falsifying effect of such a bifurcation will be obvious as we proceed. Indeed the increasing awareness of this falsifying effect will literally propel us from the realm of the reaction to the area of the response.

The male reaction to the perceived attributes of the female manifests itself primarily in two ways: through fear and through envy. I propose to consider this two-fold reaction in the following way: first, to explore the two moments of the fear-reaction -- the fear of the mature woman and the fear of the exclusive power of women over life and death. The former element of fear is the more immediate; the latter, to some degree, is inferential. Next, I shall deal with male envy of the woman's capacities. And lastly, I will glance at those reactions which can only be described as ambivalent, those reactions founded upon the uneasy fusion of both primary fear and primary envy. Of course it would be presumptuous of me to pretend that, in this schematization, I have exhausted the types of reaction of male to female. Only extensive anthropological data, significant training in the fields of psychology and sociology, interpretative acuity, and consistently lucky hunches would justify certainly in this regard. Nevertheless I do believe that, within the scope of

the aforementioned combinations and variations of fear and envy, we are dealing with some of the most important and revealing paradigms of male reaction.

Let us first turn to the fear of the mature woman. Erik Erikson points out how pervasive the male fear of the mature woman is. "Dreams, myths, and cults attest to the fact that the vagina has and retains (for both sexes) connotations of a devouring mouth and an eliminating sphincter, in addition to a bleeding wound."⁴⁰ Here we seem to be observing man (again, not necessarily a particular man but rather the cumulative, paradigmatic reaction of "Man") as he confronts the mature female: he perceives and becomes terrified by a body quite different from his own, functioning in ways that reflect few of the activities of his own body. The woman's breasts protrude and her vagina bleeds "an ongoing river of blood whose rhythm [seems] to obey some private compact with the moon."⁴¹ At pregnancy her body bulges and blossoms, mirroring some private rapport with Nature's annual Springtime. There is unfathomable mystery in the ways of the body of a mature woman and man dreads it. We can see primitive man recoiling from this immanent numina just as he did from all the mysterious and unfathomable objects of his perception. What he didn't understand he feared and attributed power to. Erikson intimates that, in this regard, we "moderns" are not so very different from the primate: "The physiological changes and the emotional challenge of that everyday miracle of pregnancy and childbirth, have disquieted every

man through childhood, youth and beyond."⁴²

Philip Slater points out how awesome and fearsome the mature woman must have been for the ancient Greek. (Slater, by the way, does not limit the application of his interpretation of the society of ancient Greece to ancient Greece.) Slater finds this terror objectified in those most perspicuous products of Greek genius, the drama and epic. The Greeks, Slater indicates, were terrified by the statuesque and passionate women they portrayed effectively -- among them Medea, Clytemnestra, Hecuba, Alcmena, Antigone, and Electra. Both Clytemnestra and Medea, for example, are portrayed as "able, long-suffering, resourceful, purposeful, capable of great depth and intensity of feeling."⁴³ And Slater contends that the dastardly and audacious crimes committed by these women reflect the deep fear of the mature, full woman which the Greek experienced; Clytemnestra slaughtered her husband and his concubine. Medea killed her brother, her children, two kings, a princess and made an attempt on the life of Athens' most famous hero. How insightful, then, was Nietzsche's evaluation of this ubiquitous dread of women -- at least in ancient Greece (Nietzsche was a classical scholar) -- when he called woman "that instrumentum diaboli."⁴⁴

Bruno Bettelheim, who contends that tendencies basic to all men are "more readily and openly visible"⁴⁵ in children (and some schizophrenics), summarizes some of his observations with regard to menstruation:

Despite what in many girls seems like an

open recoil from menstruation, on a deeper level the magic power they ascribe to it holds an irresistible fascination for them. If they wish boys to know that they menstruate, it is often because of the power boys they believe it confers. On the most conscious level, it is the power to make boys uncomfortable if not plainly anxious; and this not through any deliberate act but just being female. This seems like magic because it is their very femininity that makes boys shudder, and not anything specific they have done to achieve such a power.⁴⁶ (emphasis mine)

What Bettelheim implies here is that there is a general fear of woman (notice, especially, the terms Bettelheim uses to describe this fear: "magic power," fascination," "shudder") and that this dread is based precisely on their femininity, in this particular instance epitomized by the menstrual blood. The awe and fear of woman, though, is not exclusively the result of menstruation fantasies. There is also anxiety caused by the breasts, an anxiety expressed in the following riddle posed by the children at Bettelheim's Orthogenic School:

"What is the strongest thing in the world?"
And they never failed to supply the answer:
"A brassiere, because it holds two huge
mountains and a milk factory."⁴⁷

The brassiere has to be "the strongest thing in the world" in order to contain such obviously portentous -- and thus powerful and dreaded -- objects. And Bettelheim finds it significant that the girls themselves never seemed interested in the riddle. This is a male fantasy.

Another factor which seems to play a role in the production of fear is this: as girls pass into adulthood they

begin to menstruate and this is a sign of the sexual maturity, the fitness of a woman. Men enjoy no such obvious, delineable, and continual sign of maturity. His doubt is not allayed by physical signals. And the transition from the perception of this difference to the feeling of relative inferiority, powerlessness and anxiety must be small indeed. The way in which men deal with this perceived inequity, by artificially "punctuating a growth sequence that is inherently unpunctuated,"⁴⁸ is a matter to which we shall direct our attention when we turn to the "response."

Freud himself deals with what he calls the "generalized dread of women"⁴⁹ in his essay entitled "The Taboo of Virginity." Freud surmises that "perhaps this dread is based on the fact that woman is different from man, forever incomprehensible and mysterious, strange and therefore apparently hostile."⁵⁰ Of course this, in itself, is no explanation. Freud, though, does add another element when he considers the power that man attributes to women. "The man is afraid of being weakened by the woman, infected with her femininity and of then showing himself incapable."⁵¹ Freud contends here that femininity is conceived by man as a kind of communicable disease, a disease to which he is particularly susceptible and against which he has no defenses. It seems, moreover, not only that women carry this disease, but that women are considered to be the disease. The locus of this disease, its power source as it were, is, according to Freud, the vagina, the illicit handling of which brings down upon

its violator the eternal wrath and enmity of its owner -- a truly devastating prospect. And what constitutes this illicit treatment? In a word -- defloration, the first intercourse. "The danger which is thus aroused," Freud contends

through the defloration of a woman would consist in drawing her hostility down upon oneself, and the prospective husband is just the person who would have every reason to avoid such enmity.⁵²

It is for this reason, Freud concludes, that in many cultures surrogate husbands are appointed to handle those dangerous rites of the first night. (It occurs to me that, although such "first night" anxieties are as prominent in our own culture as in any other, we do not deal with the anxieties nearly as honestly or directly; and hence these anxieties, not yet dealt with, are bound to manifest themselves at another time and in a less "rational" way.) The wrath of the dreaded woman, and especially of a deflowered woman, indeed seems to buckle the knees of even the mightiest of Titans.

One last aspect of the fear of the mature woman ought to be considered although the importance to be attached to it remains controversial: that is, the relative capacity, between male and female -- and anatomically considered, for sexual activity. Relying primarily upon the research and conclusions of such investigators as Masters and Johnson and Dr. Mary Jane Sherfey, Kate Millet contends that

all the best scientific evidence today unmistakably tends toward the conclusion that the female possesses, biologically and inherently, a far greater capacity for sexuality than the male, both as to

frequency of coitus, and as to frequency
of orgasm in coition.⁵³

Of course the problem with this contention, especially from the perspective of this section of our investigation, is that, since "capacity for sexuality" is not perceptually obvious, we must wonder to what degree it can be said to play a role in the actual male reaction to the perceived feminine distinctiveness. This reservation becomes even more substantial when one considers the numerous prescriptions and proscriptions that have surrounded the expression (and therefore the perception) of female sexuality these many millenia and which have forestalled even the scientific discovery of this capacity. The perception of the menstrual blood is direct; that of woman's "capacity for sexuality" is not.

Nevertheless, to the extent to which this factor may have contributed to the fear-reaction (and perhaps the very plethora of prescriptions and proscriptions is an indication of the reality of the perceived uniqueness of female sexual capacities), let us continue with Millet's exposition. The studies of Masters and Johnson, Millet points out, prove that "the female sexual cycle is capable of multiple orgasms in quick succession, each of which is analogous to the detumescence, ejaculation, and loss of erection in the male."⁵⁴ Millet then turns to the distinction between the clitoris and the vagina as organs of sexuality; the striking thing is that, as Millet says, "the clitoris... is the only human organ which is specific to sexuality and to sexual pleasure."⁵⁵

Thus, "while the male's sexual potential is limited, the female's appears to be biologically nearly inexhaustible, and apart from psychological considerations, may continue until physical exhaustion interposes."⁵⁶ Although researchers such as Dr. Sherfey have placed too great an emphasis on insatiability -- for such factors as physical exhaustion, psychological need, and the force of social custom do place restrictions upon physiological capacity -- Millet concludes that women do have an "extraordinary biological potentiality for sexual arousal and pleasure,"⁵⁷ which indeed places a tremendous pressure on man, in recognizing, confronting, and fulfilling that need and in confessing his own relatively limited capacities. A woman may get out of control and become impossible to handle or to satisfy; she presents a threat to man. Thus the body of a woman, with its unique potential for becoming exclusively devoted to the pursuit of sexual pleasure, must certainly strike awe and fear in the heart of every man who perceives this fact, however dimly. At this point Freud's summary deserves reiteration: "perhaps this dread is based on the fact that woman is different from man, forever incomprehensible and mysterious, strange and therefore apparently hostile."⁵⁸

Let us, at this point, turn our attention to the second element of fear -- the fear that women and only women have power over life and death. The relationship between the two types of fright is clear: the former, just discussed, emerges directly from the perceived somatic distinctiveness

of women; this second type of apprehension emanates from some of the inferences that may immediately be made from this distinctiveness.

How then does man effect the conceptual-emotional transition from the perception of a woman's female attributes to the fear that only she has power over life and death? First of all, man sees that pregnancy and childbirth form an uninterrupted continuum: the woman's relationship to the child is unmistakable and undeniable. But what about the man's role in conception, pregnancy, and childbirth? Perceptually, he plays no role at all. Even if he understands the function of insemination (which civilization has come to realize only relatively recently), his role is still apparently nil; nothing happens to his body as it does to the woman's; nothing grows inside of him. And the months and months of pregnancy, during which man is just a bystander (with the husband really no closer to the "action" than any other man -- and not even completely certain that it is his "action"!) adds the final devastation. Herein, then, lies the foundation of the male trauma: the woman's role is direct; the man's, at best, is only inferred.

Bettelheim offers an illustration of this situation. Having questioned the natives of a primitive culture about the function of sexual intercourse, "most women believed that the semen remained in the vagina and had nothing to do with the child. 'Him nothing,' was the trenchant reply."⁵⁹ Bettelheim cites another example:

A Forest River woman whose child was born some months after her husband's death advanced this as evidence of the irrelevance of sexual intercourse which all natives, apart from its preparatory function, regarded simply as an erotic pastime.⁶⁰

This fact, that there exists a tremendous asymmetry between the sexes with respect to their respective relationship to pregnancy and childbirth, is bound to produce in the man a multitude of reactions and responses. The woman, in this regard, has a huge advantage: her relationship to childbirth is natural, obvious, and integral; man's is artificial (even non-existent to pre-scientific civilizations and, I dare say, it is still psychologically artificial to men today), inferred, and peripheral. Moreover, this unique integration of woman and child takes on magical, mystical, and mysterious overtones; woman appears to have a special relationship to nature, to reality, to the rudiments of life -- and death. Furthermore, this awareness of the utter centrality of the female in the matter of childbirth takes on cosmic significance. Man begins to see all generation on this model. Raphael Patai points out, in his book The Hebrew Goddess, the ubiquity of goddesses in the Ancient Near East. These goddesses are generally seen as pregnant, as prototypical women with big breasts, buttocks, and abdomens. One of the most important functions of these goddesses, asserts Patai, was to provide an answer to the question "from where?" -- from where did the earth come, from where did man come? And, on the analogy of the female members of the tribe, the answer to these conondrums must have seemed

ridiculously obvious -- everything comes out of the body of the primordial goddess.⁶¹ Yet this very self-evidence is the problem; for, the female role was thought to be decisive enough to be universalized and given cosmic representation; how dreadfully powerful these bodies and their terrestrial owners must be! Men can't give birth; only women can -- indeed, women give birth to men! The man who first came to this recognition, unprotected by the accretion of cultural palliatives, must have never recovered from the shock. How all of us men even today, in our heart of hearts, must still recoil at this monstrous thought. How awesome must woman be to have given birth to me! Woman is everything, man nothing.

Moreover, thoughts of birth and thoughts of death go hand in hand. It is but a small jump from understanding the vagina as the threshold of life (and who can fail to understand this?) to seeing it also as the threshold of death. The gateway to existence faces both directions! Slater indicates that

insofar as the child receives a healthy and non-devouring love from his mother, he will regard the female genitalia as the source of life. But insofar as he fails to receive such love, or receives it only at the price of living solely for the satisfaction of the maternal needs, he will regard the female genitalia as threatening his very existence.⁶²

Just as the vagina can be seen (perhaps only directly in fantasy; but not much more circuitously in myth, dream, ritual and ceremony) as life-producing, warm, and safe, so also can it be viewed as devouring, threatening, and castrating. And

by a kind of metonymic turn of thought, the woman herself takes on both of these sets of attributes, the one more prominently than the other depending upon the perception of her. Yet, insofar as she may be either -- life-producing, warm, safe, or devouring, threatening, castrating -- she must be both; for what does the unconscious mind understand of the logic of modality? Woman becomes life-producing and death-inspiring, warm and devouring, safe and threatening. Moreover, she presents, if only by virtue of the ambiguity alone, a confusing visage, unstable, mysterious, fearsome, dreadful.

The analogy between women and "mother earth" -- really a natural affinity that is almost universally recognized -- will help further elucidate both of these aspects of the dread of women -- that emerging from her ambiguous visage and that emanating from her attribute of death-inspiring vagina. The earth also is seen as both womb and tomb. Man "enters" the ground to plant his seed; after a time the earth produces vegetation. In like manner does man enter the ground to place his dead. The process of planting is the same as the process of burying. Furthermore, the place of birth is the place of death -- from dust to dust. Slater points out that the processes of planting and burying are so closely related that the goddess of fertility is usually associated with the realm of death.⁶³ And of course women and the earth both share another aspect: the possession of many "caves and pools and dark places" -- places, on the one hand, of refuge and warmth;

places, on the other hand, of terror and suffocation. Hence, the natural -- and astonishing -- parallels between woman and the earth -- and the earth as locus of both birth and death -- lends yet another measure of corroboration to the allegation that woman is the perceptual focal point of both birth and death. "Woman is death," is the way in which an old Brahmanic saying puts it. Slater summarizes: "Death and birth share an element of mystery, and it is the woman's power over the latter process that causes her to be associated with the former."⁶⁴ How then can man fail to dread woman?

There is so much more that could be said about this intriguing phenomenon: we could go into Freud's notion of the death instinct (how right Freud appears to have been in light of the foregoing) or pursue Norman O. Brown's suggestive insights into the powerful, dynamic relationship between the life and death instincts. But enough has been said to demonstrate the basis upon which women are perceived to be the locus of both life and death. What began as the perception of woman's monopoly over birth (which, in and of itself, also produces envy in men -- a phenomenon to which we shall presently turn), developed, by means of the integral relationship between birth and death, into a recognition of women as the sole embodiment of personified and personalized power over life and death. Man could not help but see himself as trapped betwixt and between two unapprehended eternities into whose comforting-terrifying domain one gains entry through but one portal -- woman. The true wonder is, not that man should fear

woman, but that he should not.

Let us now consider the second major male reaction to women -- envy. We have already alluded to this attitude of envy, i.e., that man, noticing woman's monopoly over child-birth, should be jealous of her capacity and want to share in it. We now turn to an elaboration of this consideration. On the subject of male envy of the female, Bruno Bettelheim is especially incisive. At the beginning of his Symbolic Wounds Bettelheim states that "we are hardly in need of proof that men stand in awe of the procreative power of women, that they wish to participate in it..."⁶⁵ Of course we have all been made aware, primarily by Freud, of the tremendous envy that women feel toward men. But on the subject of male envy of the female, there is considerably less discussion. Bettelheim attempts to explain this fact.

If in this book I speak mainly about the male envy of female sex functions that is because it is less often discussed and not because "penis envy" is any less common. It seems that in any society, envy of the dominant sex is the more easily observed. In societies where men play the more important role, the envy of males and with it of the penis is more readily admitted, more openly expressed and more recognized; the consensus is that it is desirable to be a man. This drives underground men's envy of women since it is contrary to professed mores and therefore looked upon as unnatural and immoral.⁶⁶

Men too feel envy of the opposite sex; yet it is more difficult for them to express it. But express it they do; foreshadowing the consideration that we shall take up in the next

chapter, Bettelheim mentions, in this regard, one of the expressions of male envy:

We might ask if one of the reasons why boys' initiation rites are usually more complex than girls' is that in many societies women can express their envy of men openly, while men's comparable envy can be expressed only in ritual.⁶⁷

Now, at last, we seem to be approaching the threshold of religion. More specifically, though, what is the nature of this envy? First of all, men desire "to bear children and to participate in other female functions."⁶⁸ Dr. E. Jacobson has noticed among her male patients "an intense and persistent envy of female reproductive ability -- an envy that is often disguised by a seemingly normal masculinity."⁶⁹

Christian David has also recognized male envy of women and, especially in boys (perhaps especially in boys only because of the more spontaneous expressiveness of children), the desire to be a woman. This, intimates David, can be understood in several ways: as compensation for "feminine castration;" as a replacement of the desire to possess the mother; and as a wish to participate in woman's power to attract admiration and courtship and in their ability to bear children.⁷⁰

Benjamin Spock also takes cognizance of this phenomenon although his description of it is somewhat undermined by his persistent chauvanism. Why, Spock asks, are men today doing things that women traditionally did (such as diaper changing and infant feeding)?

...when men are deprived of the satisfaction of making distinctively masculine contributions, they more readily respond to their latent envy of women and shift over toward women's traditional occupations.

Without understanding the causes either of latent or manifest envy, Spock concludes: "Not every man would feel threatened by a highly successful wife, but this is the kind of ego-vulnerability that many, many males have."⁷¹ It is not, as Spock says, that some males as a matter of fact and by dint of some characterological infirmity are envious of -- and hence threatened by -- women. It is the structure of experience itself -- inevitable, persistent -- that results in male envy and ego-vulnerability. Given the function of women in the central process of procreation, man can not avoid his feeling of envy. This is what Bettelheim and David are telling us; and this is what I have taken such great pains to demonstrate. Without really understanding its depth-psychological significance or the irrevocable (and for men, devastating) centrality of its implications, Spock makes the following observation: an active mother, Spock contends, may be highly rivalrous of men and she is particularly proud of producing a son. "The unconscious statement may be, 'Though I can't be a man, I can create one.'"⁷²

We have now examined what I take to be the two main male responses to the perceived female: fear and envy. In many respects they are mutually conflicting reactions; fear connotes repulsion, dread, and a desire to quash the feared object. Envy, on the other hand, indicates attraction,

desire, the wish to join, to participate, to incorporate. by these descriptions I do not wish to imply that I take either fear or envy to be quite so one-dimensional and transparent. Certainly each emotion is complex, opaque, and itself productive of a whole host of secondary and tertiary elaborations. But I do believe that fear and envy, at least as they have been described in this chapter, can be, in the main, contrasted in this way. If I am correct here and if both of these reactions can exist side by side in a single human being or in a single cultural expression, then we must conclude that one of the central aspects of man's reaction to the phenomenon of woman is ambivalence. Actually, we would expect to find ambivalence at the core of man's emotional reaction-center for the following reason: each of man's primary reactions, fear and envy, are intense, demanding, enervating, and distorting. If either of these were to gain control of man's active response (and I am not contending here that these are the only two elements that constitute man's response), chaos would result, either in the form of enormous bloodshed and open, unequivocating suppression or in the form of a wholesale surrender to woman's attractiveness. Neither of these responses has ensued; man lives with (the dreaded and envied) woman in what can only be described as an uneasy equilibrium, the eruptive potential of which lies horribly close to the surface. To the maintenance of this uneasy equilibrium ambivalence must contribute its share.

What then of this ambivalence? Bettelheim notices a

striking expression of it among the children at his school.

The boys were less concerned than the adolescents with sexual maturity and menstruation. They wished to be of both sexes; to have vaginas like -- hence to be like -- the powerful, feared, loved, and hated women. Concomitant with this desire was the powerful urge to extirpate women's sex organs. Thus the desire to possess a vagina may represent identification with women while the wish to excise it seems to result from the hatred and anxiety generated by women and from the desire to overpower them.⁷³

Bettelheim, at another point, speaks of "an attitude of rivalry towards... woman, with its blending of envy and hatred."⁷⁴

Slater alludes to this ambivalence in a passage from his Pursuit of Loneliness. To be sure, Slater's statement is far more suggestive than it is explanatory:

From Freud we learned long ago to suspect, when a fear seems out of proportion, that it has been bloated by a wish; and this seems particularly likely when the danger is defined as a psychological one -- an evil influence.⁷⁵

Enough has been said about ambivalence by way of introduction; for, with our discussion of ambivalence, we have arrived at the difficult-to-chart boundary that divides reaction from response. Indeed, with the discussion of ambivalence we have, I believe, even imperceptibly crossed this boundary. For ambivalence itself may be described as a response -- a response to the unmanageability of either alternative taken in isolation. (This is not to deny the existence of primary ambivalence also.) So we will leave off here and

continue, in the next section, with some of the central reflections of this ambivalence.

What, then, is the picture of man that emerges from our discussion of his typical reactions to the women he perceives? It is, first and foremost, an image of a man shaken to his foundations, confused, distressed, and traumatized. He is a man who, out of his own fragile and unconfirmed place in the universe, confronts this counterpart and, with half-glazed eyes, sees her as a creator of life in a world full of life, as intimator of death in a world full of death, reminding him of his life before life and presaging his "life" beyond. Her place in the universe is firm and secure, confirmed daily and ratified everywhere by the unending surfeit of natural events. Man, when compared to woman, is like a stranger on his own planet, an intruder in the natural environment of continuous birth and decay, an outcast looking in, without roots, without a center, without significance. The following poem by Yeats, though certainly expressive of emotions felt by both men and women, most poignantly depicts that special pathos of male alienation, his unrelieved dread over the fragility of his existence, his dazed awareness of the peripheral quality of his life, and the absurdly nagging recognition of the utter evanescence of his momentary presence here on earth.

I heard the old, old men say,
"Everything alters,
And one by one we drop away."
They had hands like claws, and their knees
Were twisted like the old thorn-trees

By the waters.
I heard the old, old men say,
"All that's beautiful drifts away
Like the waters."⁷⁶

So now we find man alone, afraid and reeling. He cannot remain this way and survive, for to succumb to this recognition is to go mad. And we know that man hasn't succumbed; he has responded to his situation and, in the process, carved out the structure of some of the central elements of his civilization. In this chapter I have tried to indicate the foundations of this response, the structural roots of its expression. We shall see the many ways in which man, in the process of his responding, tries to eradicate the problem by denying its sources. But the sources cannot be denied and cannot be extirpated -- for they are woman and man's reaction to her. Man, we shall see, has attempted to expunge all traces of the inevitable. It is on the basis of this inauthentic, desperate, feeble, destructive -- and ultimately sterile -- manner of response that we can best understand the provocative assertion of George Simmel: "There is something fundamentally fraudulent at the core of organized social life."⁷⁷ To the core of this "organized social life" we now turn.

III

THE RESPONSE: THE REPRESSION

We now turn to a consideration of some of the elements of man's response to his perceived situation. Given the devastation that man feels and given, therefore, the enormous compensatory "work" necessary to regain his equilibrium, we would expect the products of this "work" to be numerous indeed. In fact, I believe that most of the components of our culture are permeated by a significant amount of the "structured energy" of this response. We cannot hope to examine very many of these cultural expressions; rather, in this chapter I want to take a look at a few of these expressions and especially those that have some vital bearing on the structure and function of religion. In this section, then, we will consider such phenomena -- now seen as responses arising out of the male reaction -- as patriarchy, male initiation rites, the exclusion of women from the mainstream of the social, political and religious life of the community, and the notion of taboo as it relates to women. Thereupon, in the following chapter I shall consider some of these expressions as they emerge within the scope of Jewish life and literature.

I want to consider the process of "culture-building" on the model of repression -- the repression both of women

and of the feminine principle as it finds natural expression also in men. Repression so viewed has at least two moments: the products of the repression -- the resultant institutions, customs, ceremonies, etc., -- and the mechanisms of repression, the tools by which these products are conceived, effected, ratified, and sustained. Here again we are dealing with an artificial distinction for, in many ways, the mechanism and the product are markedly intertwined. Once again, then, we make the distinction primarily for the sake of conceptual clarity.

The first mechanism that I wish to discuss is one which I shall call "prescription through description." The mechanism is common and powerful -- we have seen it many times already in this essay. For all its effectiveness, it is a deceptively simple device. One starts with something desired, something to which he wants other to subscribe. To present it as a direct and forceful prescription (e.g., a man to a woman, "You ought to stay at home all day.") will only meet with resistance and anger. Moreover, refusal to comply will be especially intense when the commanded behavior is especially distasteful and oppressive -- behavior to which one would not be inclined to subscribe. Direct prescription, then, is obviously not the way. The person, in this case a woman, must be convinced -- coerced -- in such a subtle, indirect, seemingly innocuous way so that she will unwittingly accept, and contribute to, her own enslavement. What better way to effect the desired end than to convert the original prescription --

the command -- into a description and make it appear to be a statement of fact? Now, at this point, instead of saying to the woman, "You must stay at home all day," we are able to say, "A woman's place is in the home." ("This is where you belong.") Now the desired end of one group (in this case, man) is made to appear as a fact of nature -- and who would want to violate nature's intentions? And to the degree to which the woman sees the prescription as a description, to that degree will she comply and collaborate in her own subjugation. It is a nice device, indeed.

A particularly inofficious example of this device is to be found in Erikson's "Womanhood and Inner Space." Erikson, drawing an inference from a (for him) decisive experiment (but see Willet's critique of that experiment, Sexual Politics, pp. 213ff.), states that

...women have found their identities in the care, suggested in their bodies and in the needs of their issue, and seem to have taken it for granted that⁷⁸ the outer world space belongs to the men.

This statement illustrates the two layers of meaning common to this device. (I do not mean to imply that Erikson here deliberately utilizes this device. Actually, I believe that he is unaware of his complicity. It is the unconscious ease with which this device can be utilized, as demonstrated here, that makes it so devastatingly effective.) On the surface this assertion describes how a woman's body suggests certain activities (very restricting activities at that) and how men have their own special preserve in the world (read for "world",

"most of the world"). But under the surface of this assertion operates the imperative mode: "Woman! this is how you ought to act! since other women have found their identities in this way and since your body does suggest a certain type of devotion, you ought to find your identity in your body and you ought to act at the behest of your bodily cues. You may perform in your domain but relinquish your right to the 'outer world space.' It belongs to men." The purpose of this type of statement, so construed, is not to describe but to prescribe. Even Erikson has swallowed the bait.

The enormous mythology surrounding the prodigious sacrifices of the legendary Jewish wife is similarly reinforced and transformed into exhortation by this prescriptive device. How much fact and fact-producing fiction is contained in the following brief statement: "For a woman, eating is incidental, feeding others is important."⁷⁹ For "this is the way a Jewish woman is" read: "Jewish women! deny yourselves, sacrifice yourselves for others, give, support, encourage, nurture, feed, feed, feed. For yourselves, nothing!"

The uses to which this device is put are beyond enumeration. Consider the matter of the so-called "sexual modesty" of women. From our previous explorations into the matter of the mature woman and man's fear of her, we would not expect the "magnitude and awesomeness" of this woman naturally to result in a "sexual modesty" is not natural but imposed. The imposition of this norm upon woman is one of the ways man deals with his fear of the concomitants of her more

(perceptually) anticipated sexual immodesty and aggressiveness. In Tractate Eruvin (100b) of the Babylonian Talmud the Rabbis attempt to account for a woman's "natural" sexual modesty and her "innate" inhibition against overt initiation of sexual activity. The process of "prescription through description" begins by intimating that this is the way God prescribed it to be. (After all, God's prescriptions are the real descriptions.) And so it is. As punishments for her transgression Eve (women) was to suffer many penalties. One of them is her "natural" submission to men: your "desire is unto thy husband but he will rule over you." (Gen. 3:16)⁸⁰ Women, by being told that this is the way they are, are really being told that this is how they ought to be. After all, this is how God ordained it to be. Moreover, given this prescribed -- and unnatural -- interception of natural drives, a great onus is simultaneously placed upon the shoulders of man. He must now initiate all the sexual activity; and for this fearsome task he needs some "prescription through description" of his own. David Feldman states:

if male aggressiveness of female coyness is etiologically associated with the "curse of Eve," then, says the Talmud, it is the husband's mitzvah to spare her embarrassment and to initiate sexual activity.⁸¹

In the introductory chapter we considered what Christian David called "the luxuriant mythology" of feminine sexuality. This device of "prescription through description," here fleetingly discussed, is one of the ways in which the elements of this mythology are created and sustained. And,

as David says,

if their influence persists I would suggest that the men who created these myths either managed to make women accept them or believed they were right in considering the protestations of some women as exceptions.⁸²

Once again we turn to the irrepressible Dr. Spock for our final example. As usual his statement is a clincher and needs no comment: "Women on the average have some passivity in the inborn core of their personality, though this can be counter-acted and hidden from view when they are brought up in an atmosphere of aggressiveness."⁸³

A second, closely related device used in the service of repressing women is to be found in the conversion of biological facts into a social reality. By means of this method facts of sex are converted into "facts" of gender, biological data transformed into attributes of temperament, role, and status. Of course, whether or not one sees this as an artificial device or as a natural and quite proper method of elaborating the implications intrinsic to sex characteristics, depends upon the way in which one views the relationship between sex and gender.

Bronislaw Malinowski, in an article entitled "Parent-hood, the Basis of Social Structure," has discussed an important example of this device. Malinowski states that "in kinship the most typical and fundamental process is that in which biological facts are transformed into social forces."⁸⁴ There is not one single instance on record concerning a primitive society, Malinowski continues, in which the processes of

maternity are left up to nature alone.

...it is a universal fact that conception, pregnancy, childbirth, and suckling are sociologically determined; that they are subjects of ritual or moral and religious conceptions, of legal obligations and privileges.⁸⁵

Since most of the rituals, moral and religious conceptions, and obligations and privileges of most societies are formulated, effected, and sustained by men, we can speculate about the reasons for such determinations: man, alienated from the processes of conception, pregnancy, childbirth, and suckling -- and simultaneously afraid and envious of what he sees from a distance -- wants to put his stamp on these processes, to control them, direct them, and determine their significance. Hence, man surrounds these processes, with which he has almost no natural relationship, with customs, ceremonies, and rituals of his own making; thus, among the many other salutary (for him) effects of this process of encapsulation, he now enjoys a diminution of his raw fear and envy.

"Once conception takes place," asserts Malinowski, "the prospective mother has always to keep taboos and observe ceremonial rules," such as: abstaining from certain foods and carrying out lustrations, undergoing more or less complicated pregnancy ceremonies and wearing special decorations and clothes. The woman is regarded sometimes as holy, sometimes as unclean and she is often sexually tabooed, even to her own husband. Malinowski sums up the matter: the physiological

mother is converted into being also a sociological mother.⁸⁶
And converted, we might add, through male machinations and
for male purposes.

Examples of this device could be proliferated endlessly; its usefulness and pervasiveness are obvious to even the most casual observer. Let us turn, then, from a consideration of the repressive devices to a consideration of some of the institutions, customs, and ceremonies which epitomize the substance of the male response.

We may characterize patriarchy in the following way: as a social form it supports, first, the predominance of men over women, and secondly, the superordination of the older men over the younger men. (We will consider primarily the former aspect; as an example of the latter concept David Feldman indicates the priority, in matters of dispute, of the older source, e.g., the Rishonim over the Acharonim, the Tannaim over the Amoraim. As Rav Yom Tov Lippman Heller (1577-1654) says in his commentary to the Mishnah: "Every religious authority is a matter of assumption (min ha-s'tam) superior to those of the succeeding generations."^{86a}

The question now arises as to whether patriarchal institutions are natural or artificial. Some observers see it as natural and original, as founded upon the superior physical strength of the male, the debilitating effects of pregnancy on the female, and the environmental needs of a hunting culture. Kate Millet takes exception to each of these "justifications." Millet argues that

there are several weaknesses in this theory making its hypotheses insufficient to constitute necessary cause: social and political institutions are rarely based on physical strength, but are generally upheld by value systems in co-operation with other forms of social and technical force; hunting culture was generally succeeded by agricultural society which brought different environmental circumstances and needs; pregnancy and childbirth may be socially construed or socially arranged so that they are very far from debilitating events or the cause of physical inferiority, particularly where child care is communal and fertility revered or desired. And finally, since patriarchy is a social and political form, it is well here, as with other human institutions, to look outside nature for its origins.⁸⁷

Millet obviously sees patriarchy as a set of institutions artificially imposed for the purpose of subordinating women. And in the previous chapter we saw that man has ample motivational impetus for its implementation.

The problem of the priority of patriarchy is pertinent here. Some people claim, reports Millet, that matriarchy was anterior, that is, that patriarchal rule was preceded by some form of matriarchal rule, where mother-right or the "feminine principle" dominated social and religious life. Of course, the main thrust of these arguments is to challenge patriarchy's claims to eternal authority, primeval or primordial origins, and biological or environmental necessity, seeing patriarchy as but one era of human history and, therefore, theoretically, as capable of dissolution.⁸⁸ Millet, indeed, would like to believe it; in this regard it is worth mentioning that Margaret Mead has somewhat said that the matriarchate is unknown to the human experience. The controversy continues.

Friedrich Engels drew the connection between patriarchy and the origin of the institution of property; he thought that the origins of property were to be found in the subjugation and ownership of women. The matriarchate appeared to him, by contrast, to be a primordial communism. Willet points out that patriarchy is accompanied by all the ills Engels deplored: the ownership of persons, beginning with women and progressing to other forms of slavery (see, in this regard Eldridge Cleaver's allegations, in Soul on Ice, about the hidden sexual foundations of racism; also Calvin C. Hernton, Sex and Racism in America), the institutions of class, caste, rank, ruling, and propertied classes, the steady development of an unequally distributed wealth, and the state.⁸⁹ If Engels is right about the implications of patriarchy, then we must conclude that its ramifications are as wide as its causes are deep. As Willet points out

While patriarchy as an institution is a social constant so deeply entrenched as to run through all other political, social or economic forms whether of caste or class, feudality or bureaucracy, just as it pervades all major religions, it also exhibits great variety in history and locale.⁹⁰

Willet supports this claim by showing that "in the matter of conformity patriarchy is a governing ideology without peer. It is possible," she continues, "that no other system has ever exercised such a complete control over its subjects."⁹¹ Patriarchy is supported by family, state, and religion. Deferring to William Goode's The Family Willet indicates that patriarchy's chief institution is the family;

it is both a mirror of and a connecting link to the larger society; a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole. The family and its roles are prototypical, encouraging its members to adjust and conform and serving as a unit in the government of the patriarchal state which rules its citizens through its family heads. Patriarchy receives support from religion also, seen in the Catholic precept that "the father is the head of the family" and in the Jewish delegation of quasi-priestly authority to the male parent.⁹²

J. C. Flugel finds an essential relationship between the institutions of patriarchy and the reality of the tight regulation of the expressions of feminesexuality. First of all such regulation ensure [though never completely] the legitimacy of the children; secondly, such control satisfies [though never completely] the husbands possessiveness; and thirdly, it preserves the "sanctity" of the home [though, again, never completely].⁹³ Though it would not be fair to say that only men are served by these things, it seems true that a woman would be less threatened than a man by their non-realization. For example, the demand for the legitimacy of children seems to arise pre-eminently from male anxieties, e.g., the anxiety concerning biological immortality (an anxiety not shared by women to that degree) and the anxiety concerning inheritance.

H. L. Mencken too understands the structure and function of patriarchy; and the peals of laughter with which we receive the morsels of Mencken's delicious wit barely

conceal the pathos of grim recognition and the shadow of melancholy that passes over us as the hilarity desolves into the poignancy of discovery. In describing some of man's desires and aversions, Mencken intimates that patriarchy is not without its grave difficulties for men, too.

He may desire [from marriage] let us say, a housekeeper to protect his goods and entertain his friends -- but he may shrink from the thought of sharing his bathtub with anyone, and home cooking may be downright poisonous to him. He may yearn for a son to pray at his tomb -- and yet suffer acutely at the mere approach of relatives-in-law. He may dream of a beautiful and complaisant mistress, less exigent and mercurial than any a bachelor may hope to discover -- and stand aghast at admitting her to his bankbook, his family tree and his secret ambitions.⁹⁴

We have barely begun to consider the implications of patriarchy. Yet, even now, we cannot but see either the power and scope of the cluster of patriarchal institutions or the elaborate and integral way in which the expressions of patriarchy are connected with the male response to his reaction to the perceived female distinctiveness.

Kate Millet, J. C. Flugel, and many others have pointed out the close relationship between the structure of the nuclear family and the nature of the societal galaxies that orbit around it. At this point I want to focus upon that nuclear family and attempt to understand its structure as yet another reflection of the male response. And here I turn to Philip Slater's brilliant and exciting examination of the family -- primarily of the Greek family but it is not without obvious and important parallels (to many of which

Slater himself devotes much attention) to most other cultures. Slater devotes the five hundred pages of The Glory of Hera to this study; I purport to devote eight pages to a summary of his argument. My summary, then, must, by necessity, appear swiss cheese-like when compared to the fullness of Slater's elaborations; hopefully, though, the unforgivable omissions, the falsifying foreshortenings and the distressing discontinuities will not completely flatten the pungency of the parts that remain.

The study of the family is of crucial importance, especially in providing a foundation for an understanding of the elaborations of the religious imagination. In this regard Slater quotes Lloyd Warner: "Religious symbols... are formed by, express, and reinforce the family structure."⁹⁵ Furthermore, the very universal applicability of the tenets of the world religions necessitates symbols which will evoke universal sentiments. In this respect, the family is "the only social institution which provides men of all cultures with such powerful and compelling experiences."⁹⁶ So the family is pivotal, reflecting, on the one hand, the deepest of human urges and needs while, on the other hand, providing prodigious reservoirs of disciplined energy which stand ready to be channelled into the efficient construction of nearly unassailable supra-familial institutions.

The Greek family, as our own, was based upon the model of male dominance. The fifth and fourth century (B.C.) Greek woman seems to have had practically no social status whatsoever;

she was a legal non-entity, excluded from political and educational life, uneducated, virtually imprisoned in the home, and obviously regarded with the utmost disdain.⁹⁷ This male superordination may have seemed secure; yet there is, Slater points out, a crucial flaw in this fantasy of male dominance: "the rejection and derogation of women means the rejection and derogation of domesticity -- of home and family life, and hence of the process of rearing young children."⁹⁸ Thus, the Athenian male fled the home; but this meant that the Athenian male child grew up in a female-dominated environment. Moreover, a serious conflict now arises, a conflict which was to have -- and continues to have -- grave consequences: to the male adult the woman is of no account but as a child he had known that the reverse was true for then, as far as he could see, the most important things in his life were decided for him by women.

Let us interrupt our exposition of Slater's hypothesis momentarily in order to make a few comments. First of all it hardly needs mentioning that Slater's analysis of the Greek family applies just as well to our own -- and to other family structures which reflect the consequences of such intense and lopsided male resolution. The ambivalence that a young boy comes to feel about his mother (and other women) results directly from the structure of the family itself which, in turn, seems to emerge from the virulent misogyny with which we have, in this paper, been concerned. Thus, the adult male, reflecting and expressing his dreaded vulnerability in the

face of the mature woman, puts a fence (i.e., the home) around the woman in order to pretend to himself that he is her master. But the pernicious little game (Simmel's "something fundamentally fraudulent at the core of organized social life.") backfires because his son, spending an inordinate amount of time with the mother, comes to view her as possessing the very same attributes -- power, insatiability, indomitability -- which the boy's father had attempted to deflate, constrict and eliminate. The boy comes to view her in this way because, in his own life, she is that powerful and important. Thus, as the boy grows into manhood, his own increasing fear and envy of the (natural) woman he perceives is itself exacerbated by the accumulated fears arising out of his own childhood. And the boy -- now himself a man -- perpetuates the cycle, dealing with his wife in the same way in which his mother was treated by his father. The continuum from the perceived distinctiveness of the female to the intense reactions of fear and envy, to the creation, as a response, of self-perpetuating familial patterns, to other extra-familial consequences -- this continuum is direct and clearly delineated (in the highlighted form in which I have described it).

Perhaps we are a bit ahead of ourselves. Let us then, return to Slater's analysis. The Greek male's contempt and fear of women is reinforced by an underlying suspicion of his own inferiority. This helps to explain, says Slater, the extreme nature of certain Greek customs: that a woman shouldn't be older than her husband; that she shouldn't be of

higher social status than he, that she shouldn't be more educated than he, that she shouldn't be paid the same as men for the same work, and that she shouldn't be in a position of authority. Slater concludes:

All this betrays an assumption that males are incapable of competing with females on an equal basis; the cards must first be stacked, the male given a handicap.⁹⁹

How does the woman respond to her subjugation?

Slater begins by pointing out that the woman was not without her own substantial spheres of influence and pivotal points of control. First of all Greek men -- as do all men -- needed sons for the continuance of lineage and the perpetuation of their property. In this regard the woman had some great leverage over her husband's needs. She also had considerable power in raising her children. The relationship between mother and child (especially a son) was complex and fraught with ambivalences. The woman, feeling hostility toward the husband for being forced to be the "vehicle" of his immortality, takes out her resentment on her son. Her antagonism, both toward her husband and her son, is intensified by the recognition that her only real activity is confined to the home. Yet, she loves her son and sees him as a vehicle for her own (thwarted) fulfillment, both as a mother and as a human being. Her son then becomes her surrogate in the world of accomplishment and productivity. So the woman feels a tremendous ambivalence toward her son: he is the vehicle both of her enslavement and of her (vicarious) liberation.

On the basis of these considerations Slater posits the existence of the cycle about which we previously spoke: sex antagonism which produces the segregation of women which, in turn, produces maternal ambivalence toward the son which results in a particularly narcissistic son who then himself feels hostile toward women. And on and on. But what element initiates the cycle in the first place? To what is this cycle itself a response? It seems to me that the central factors are the fear and envy of the mature and powerful woman. These reactions produce the antagonism that men feel toward women, causing the men to segregate (delimit, imprison, control) the women. In this way does the cycle begin.

It is important to indicate here that we are now dealing with two aspects, from the point of view of origin, of male fear and envy. On the one hand we have the fear and envy resulting from man's reaction to the perceived physical attributes of the mature woman. On the other hand we are dealing with the fear and envy that emerges from the young boy's overdetermined relationship with his mother. Although the two aspects are related and are mutually reinforcing, there are some important differences: first, whereas the fear emerging from a particular family structure is contingent upon that structure, the fear of the mature woman is far more inevitable and "natural." Hence, to this natural fear we must attribute primacy. Secondly, and as a consequence of the first point, the contingent fear appears to be a part of the solution emerging from the response to the more natural fear.

The solution in fact seems to create as many new problems (although they are far more structured) as it purports to solve. And this fact indicates the degree to which we must consider the male response to be a dismal, destructive, enervating, and self-defeating failure.

A particularly fascinating, but extraordinarily complex, aspect of this cycle is the development of the narcissistic male. Slater at one point enumerates what he takes to be the elements of narcissism: an insatiable striving for honor and prestige, a devouring envy of the successes of others, emphasis on competition and achievement, pessimism, rationalism, loose attachments to people and to things, treachery and duplicity, life as a contest.¹⁰⁰ This narcissism is the product, Slater avers, of the ambivalence of the mother; the mother who simultaneously adores and loathes her son, who showers suffocating attention upon him, and who makes excessive demands upon him. Inevitably, she becomes too much for him. As Slater asserts, the mother is "alternately seducing and castrating, inflating and deflating the boy's self-concept."¹⁰¹ A narcissistic youth, such as Slater describes, seems, on this basis, unavoidable. As Slater says: "There are two bases for this narcissistic pattern... the instability of the self-concept resulting from the mother's ambivalent responses [and the]...boundary anxiety induced by the mother's involvement."¹⁰² Moreover, when this familial model becomes the rule within a given society, evidence of excessive societal narcissism within that society becomes

abundant. Narcissism becomes a social-psychological attribute. Slater presents some striking descriptions of the cultural ramifications of this narcissism:

One might expect... that for the male, at least, flight does not represent sexuality as such, but sexuality warped by narcissism. The goal is not pleasure but accomplishment: copulation is defined as conquest, erection as achievement, woman as the enemy, lack of desire as failure... in our own society it is international policy rather than religion through which the sexual pathology of the population is funneled, and hence these concerns find their expression in the language of rocketry. The desire for phallic superiority is manifest in discussions about which nation has the biggest rocket, or the one with the greatest "thrust." Most revealing of all in its peculiar inversion of usual exit-entry thinking is the fact that a rocket which escapes the earth's atmosphere more or less on course is said to have made a "beautiful insertion."¹⁰³

After pointing out some of the significant differences between Greek society and contemporary American society, Slater makes the following claim:

...there is no motivational difference between an Achilles and a Carnegie, an Agamemnon and a Lyndon Johnson, an Alcibiades and a Ford, an Alexander and a Getty... the need to surpass others, to aggrandize oneself, to prove one's worth and manhood are just the same. The only difference is that the Greeks usually threw away their successes through some ill-considered act, while Americans usually do not.¹⁰⁴

And the final tragedy, the culmination of this network of divisive misogyny is this:

What narcissism makes possible is the emergence of a small number of notable individuals -- "great man" -- most of whom are vicious and destructive and are admired because they succeeded heroically in making an impact on the world rather than by having

improved the lot of mankind. And the price of enabling these few to embody the narcissistic fantasies of the many is that the bulk of mankind is left disappointed, frustrated, and miserable because they operate, with fewer advantages, on the same premises.¹⁰⁵

With this we must ask, with Slater: "Is our culture worth what its narcissism has cost us?"¹⁰⁶ And if I am correct in believing (as I think that I have shown) that all of this can, significantly (though certainly not exclusively), be seen as a response to the complex fear and envy of the mature female, then the depth and scope of the implications and ramifications of the response to the male reaction are astonishing indeed.

We turn now to an all-too-brief consideration of another aspect of the response -- male initiation rites. Bruno Bettelheim has considered the problem of the origin and function of these rites in some detail. Bettelheim's central contention is that male initiation rites, those rites which typically take place at the time of puberty, are largely compensatory in nature; that men, noticing their negligible role in the process of childbirth, attempt to demonstrate, by means of initiation rites, the actual centrality of their contribution. "Apart from altering his own body," Bettelheim asserts,

man can try to emphasize his contribution to childbearing negatively or positively. Using the positive approach, he can claim directly or symbolically to give birth to men... The negative way is to de-emphasize the importance of the woman's contribution (illustrated by the biblical promise of God to make of Abraham a great nation, with no mention of Sarah) or to become convinced

that it is negligible...¹⁰⁷

Bettelheim centers his attention upon the positive approach.

That initiation is a symbolic rebirth, usually with the male sponsors acting the part of those who give birth to the initiates, is now widely accepted.¹⁰⁸

Men are jealous of women's monopoly over childbirth and fervently desire to usurp a piece of the action, if possible, the whole action. Quoting Frazer, Bettelheim gives the following account of an initiation ceremony:

In the west of Ceram (one of the Indonesian islands) boys at puberty are admitted to the Kakian association... The Kakian house is an oblong wooden shed, situated under the darkest trees in the depth of the forest, and is built to admit so little light that it is impossible to see what goes on in it... Thither the boys ...are conducted blindfold, followed by their parents and relations... As soon as each boy has disappeared within the precincts, a dull chopping sound is heard, a fearful cry rings out, and a sword or spear, dripping with blood, is thrust through the roof of the shed. This is a token that the boy's head has been cut off, and that the devil has carried him away to the other world... So at sight of the bloody sword the mothers weep and wail, crying that the devil has murdered their children... During his stay in the Kakian house... the chief... warns the lads, under pain of death... never to reveal what has passed... Meantime the mothers and sisters of the lads have gone home to weep and mourn. But in a day or two the men who acted as guardians or sponsors to the novices return to the village with the glad tidings that the devil, at the intercession of the priests, has restored the lads to life. The men who bring this news come in a fainting state and daubed with mud, like messengers freshly arrived from the nether world...¹⁰⁹

The significant features of this ritual are the following:
the attempt to give central importance to the boy's new

birth, his "resurrection," at the obvious expense of his "natural" birth which is supposed to pale into insignificance by comparison; the desire to make men appear to be the true persona in the drama of childbirth; the exclusion of the women; the attempt to fool and frighten the women (with the obviously aggressive and retributive overtones); and the camaraderie that develops among the members of the beleaguered sex as a result of these secrets.

On the basis of many such examples of initiation rites, Margaret Mead has concluded that

the cult assumes that boys can become men only by ritualizing birth; in this way they take over symbolically and collectively the functions that women perform individually and naturally.¹¹⁰

Bettelheim himself infers that

the psychological mechanism behind the assertion that rebirth takes place in initiation may in many cases be very simple: men's desire to detract from the importance of childbearing or to cancel out their obligations to women as the source of life.¹¹¹

That initiation rites of this sort may be seen as a male response to the perceived female distinctiveness needs little more justification or clarification. Men here endeavor to deny the centrality of feminine sexuality and try to replace it with the putative pre-eminence of their own power. The attempt, bold, defiant, preposterous, and pitiful must necessarily fail to assuage male fears (although it may displace them) because it is a lie -- and a patently obvious lie. A palliative it may be; a cure it is not. It may offer momentary

satisfaction and temporary quiescence; but it fails to deal with the problem on the level of its essential forcefulness. Indeed, any response not grounded in the limitations presented by reality is bound to fail. Denial and prevarication merely put off the unwanted consequences.

I would like to consider now one last expression of the male response; that is, a pair of important attitudes that men have assumed toward women, idealization and denigration. As we shall see these two attitudes are complementary and interrelated. It is not clear which of these two attitudes is to be seen as primary; Christian David is inclined to believe that denigration precedes idealization although, with respect to the way in which he conceives the matter, I have my doubts. David's point of view is decidedly psychoanalytical for he sees the dominant aspect of the sexual mythology with respect to woman in terms of the image of her as a deficient man. Woman has no penis but only a clitoris, the perception of which has grave repercussions for both the masculine and the feminine mentality. Without pursuing this last point, we can see how the image of a woman as a deficient man can lead to the male attitude of deprecation toward women. Yet it is this attitude, as a distortion of the totally perceived picture, which leads to its polar opposite. David contends that "the idealization of women, equally common and often representing a conception complementary to the preceding one, is a reaction formation due to the misapprehension of women as a castrated gender."¹¹²

David has pointed to an important duality although it seems to me that the matter is somewhat more complex in the manner of its unfolding. (This is by no means meant to be, in and of itself, a criticism of David's hypothesis for he too would most certainly see the need for greater elaboration.) As I see it, man is initially stunned by the distinctive female characteristics which he perceives. Woman seems to him to be something superhuman, powerful, and awesome. Her stature is exalted in his eyes and he is frightened and thrown off balance. When he at last regains his wits he knows (however dimly) that he must make an attempt to carve out for himself a place in the sun. One of the ways in which he responds, then, by way of initial compensation (and here we come to the point at which David takes up his description), is to derogate and deprecate women. This in itself is something of a reaction-formation to his immediate, brusque, and fitful reaction. Thereupon follows the reaction-formation to the reaction-formation, as it were. Woman is idealized, she is exalted, considered a paragon of purity. Whereas the original image of the exalted woman was thrust upon man through his senses, and reflected some kind of real imbalance between the sexes, the latter exaltation is a product of male manipulation and falsification of reality, an expression of the male attempt to deny and distort. Calvin Hernton, in his Sex and Racism in America, has pointed out the absurdities to which this (apparently psychologically necessary) manipulation and falsification of reality may lead: "It is significant

that even when white women are married and become mothers, southern white men still refer to them as chaste!"¹¹³ (emphasis Hernton's)

Continuing with David's consideration of this complementary pair of attitudes, David proceeds to link the presence of neurosis with these attitudes (and according to Freud we are all, to some degree, neurotic). David states that

neurosis is always accompanied by sexual problems... there are few ideas in a man's mind designed to demean woman or to idealize her which are not linked to overt or covert neurotic problems.¹¹⁴

Freud, of course, linked the origin of neurosis to the various elements of repression. And we have posited that man's active response to the perceived woman may be characterized as repression. Hence there seems to be an integral connection among the factors of response, repression, and neurosis. (Freud believed that such repression was a sine qua non for the very possibility of social organization and this would imply a certain pessimism concerning the possibility of ameliorating the male-female relationship, as we have described it. At this point, however, we might want to introduce Herbert Marcuse's important distinction between necessary and "surplus" repression. Perhaps man can not help reacting and responding (i.e., repressing) to women; but how much of this is necessary and how much surplus repression?)

Slater has also considered the dual response -- now seen as particular responses and not in their relationship of complementarity -- to the fear of women: disparagement, ex-

pressing the (hoped for) feeling that there is nothing to be feared from so lowly a creature -- this, says Slater, was the Greek solution; and idealization, expressing the (again, hoped for) feeling that there is no need to fear so saintly a being -- this is the modern European solution.¹¹⁵

The notion that woman is a tabooed object, so prevalent in so many cultures, is closely connected with the complementarity of denigration and idealization. We will briefly touch upon this important subject here and, in the next chapter, look into some of its applications. Jacob Singer, in his Taboo in the Hebrew Scriptures, indicates that two of the fundamental ideas underlying all taboos are the notions of sacredness and impurity. From these conceptions, Singer continues, follow such aspects as the sacredness (and/or uncleanness) of the relevant persons or things, the prohibitions emanating from them, and the sacredness (and/or uncleanness) which results from a violation of the prohibition.¹¹⁶ These sacred-unclean objects themselves, whether they be persons, places, or things, are considered to be charged with what Singer calls "spiritual electricity."¹¹⁷ So the tabooed objects seem to be associated with just those two complementary attributes that are often ascribed to women. J. C. Flugel, in a chapter entitled "Taboo and its Equivalents," has also noticed the relationship between the idealization-denigration duality and the woman as taboo: "there has been a constant tendency to look upon women either as paragons of purity or as dangerous sources of contamination..."¹¹⁸

We noticed, in the last chapter, how dangerous and dreaded women were conceived to be. One of the ways in which one can respond to a dangerous, powerful, dreaded, and mysterious person or object is to transform it into a tabooed object -- an object with a "spiritual electricity." It is then encapsulated, separated, and placed under control. Moreover, most observers agree that the taboos current in any society tend to relate to objects and actions that are significant for -- and potentially threatening to -- the social order. It is instructive, at this point, to recall Freud's description of women and notice the close connection between his ascription and the attributes often associated with a tabooed object: Freud contends that women are "forever incomprehensible and mysterious, strange and therefore apparently hostile."¹¹⁹

F. B. Jevons offers a concise and provocative overview of the notion of the taboo. The origin of a taboo, Jevons states, is

an inherent quality in the minds of men that certain things must not be done... it marked the awe of man in the presence of what he conceived -- often mistakenly -- to be supernatural. This feeling is spiritual in the sense that sense experience is not the sole source or final test of truth; and that the things which are seen bring man daily into relation with things unseen. This irrational fear lies at the bottom of our morality.¹²⁰

Jevons here articulates some extraordinary ideas -- the importance of the non-sensuous aspects of our lives, the integral relationship between things seen and things unseen,

and the non-rational, even irrational roots of our morality. I think that we have seen, in this paper, that man's reaction and response to the perceived female is a central example of each of Jevons' considerations.

This brings to a close our examination of some of the important ways in which man has responded and, as a result, given shape to his culture. Many ingredients contribute to the formation of a civilization and to attempt to reduce them to one factor would be fatuous indeed; yet who, at this point, would deny the centrality of man's reaction and response to the female that he perceives? As Norman Mailer has put it: it is the "fear of that natural woman that must have rested at the heart of the itch to build a civilization."¹²¹

IV

THE TESTIMONY OF JEWISH LIFE AND LITERATURE

We now turn our attention to the male response, first, as it emerges within the corpus of Jewish literature and, secondly, as it manifests itself in Jewish (primarily shtetl) life. The subject is obviously much too large to be dealt with adequately within the scope of this essay; the literature is of legendary vastness and every other sentence can undoubtedly be seen to reflect an attitude relevant to our inquiry. Therefore, comprehensiveness, either in terms of depth or scope, is utterly out of the question. What I shall try to do, then, is intimate some of the typical attitudes toward women that I have found expressed in the literature -- and by "the literature" I mean that small part of it that I have perused.

One of the difficulties of a study such as this is that, through intense concentration upon one attitude, however important, one may begin to feel that other attitudes are of little consequence. I am concentrating, in this essay, upon what I take to be the central male attitude toward women; but there are other attitudes which, on the surface at least, appear to differ both in tone and in content. What stance shall we assume toward these (potentially disconfirm-

atory) expressions? We could attempt, on the basis of the alleged (by us) totally comprehensive validity of our hypothesis, to reduce all discrepancies to apparent discrepancies. This would amount to but little more than an exercise in begging the question; and, like the bed of Procrustes, it might induce a bit of tortuous distortion. On the other hand, we could, for the sake of balance and perspective, consider these different attitudes on their own terms and leave open the question of their possible superfluosness.

I intend to begin our consideration of Jewish literature on this latter note. First, then, I will adumbrate some of the more positive expressions toward women in order to add that measure of balance. Then I will turn to a consideration of some examples of the derogation of women, both in terms of the low social and political status of women and in terms of the putative inadequacy of their abilities. Next I will consider the so-called "womanly duties" and briefly explore their significance for our study. Thereupon I will turn to the matter of the fear of the mature woman as it is given concrete expression in the literature and in one aspect of Jewish life. Finally I will take a look at three Biblical motifs: the creation of Eve, the matter of the frequent barrenness of women, particularly the matriarchs; and finally, the matter of the covenant of circumcision.*

*Bibliographical note: the texts employed for this chapter are the following: the Soncino editions of the Talmud and Midrash Rabbah, the Danby Mishnah, the RSV Bible, and the Solomon Ganzfried Code of Jewish Law (Kitzur Schulchan Aruch).

There are many passages in which women are praised, their attributes extolled, and the importance of their presence for a man's happiness expounded. G. F. Moore finds the social and religious position of the woman in Judaism to be a high moral achievement.¹²² David Feldman points to a passage from Tractate Yebamot: what kind of a helpmeet is woman? ask the Rabbis. "She... enlightens his eyes and puts him on his feet."¹²³ What does the husband find in his marriage? Happiness, blessing, and his own completeness "for a man without a woman is not called a man -- as it is written 'Male and female created he them, and he called their name Man (Adam).'"¹²⁴

In one passage of Tractate Yebamot we find Abaye, Raba, and R. Hama b. Hanina engaged in a friendly discussion. The topic of conversation is this: how is one to understand the meaning of a bad wife? Abaye comes forward first. She is one who prepares a meal for her husband and has her tongue ready for him also. Raba replies that, no, she is one who prepares a meal for him and then turns her back to him! But R. Hama b. Hanina finds this petulant prattle insufferable. "You are all wrong, for as soon as a man takes a wife his sins are buried; for it is said: 'Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good and obtaineth favor of the Lord.'" (Proverbs 18:22) (Yebamot 63b)

Expressions of such philogyny are not rare; yet we should notice, with respect to our hypothesis about the male response (which we must hawk even here), that these encomia

are given to the woman who can help man. Woman is seen as a wife, helpmeet, one who completes man. But the following passage from the Kitzur Schulchan Aruch, although it too sees woman in her complementary role, tends to encourage the high estimation of a woman in her own right: a man must treat a woman with respect "for it is only for the wife's sake that a man's house is blessed." (145.10)

A final example is taken from Tractate Niddah in which, by way of a play on the Hebrew words for "build" and "understanding," the point is made that a woman has more intelligence than does a man.

"And the Lord God built (בָּנָה) the rib"
(Gen. 2:22) which teaches that the Holy
One Blessed be He endowed the woman with
more understanding (בִּינָה) than the man.
(Niddah 45b)

Now that we have seen something of the other side of the woman question, wherein the woman is visualized as more than just an object of derision and scorn, let us return to the central motifs of our examination and, first of all, scrutinize the ways in which a woman's low status is reflected in the literature. This low status, let us keep in mind, is to be seen as part of the measure of the male response. The Bible is replete with relevant examples. As Louis M. Epstein and many others have pointed out, the Bible assumes a patronymic family organization in which marriage represents acquisition and ownership, the acquisition and ownership of a wife (or wives) in the same sense in which one purchases slaves.¹²⁵ Within such a family organization the head of the

family owns the entire household unit and he embodies within himself all the rights belonging to that unit (see Genesis 46:8-28). The head of the family (the ba'al) possesses everything; the land, chattel, all the freeborn females brought from the outside to be wives to the subordinate members of the household, and all male and female slaves and their offspring. (see Genesis 14:14, 17:27; Judges 8:30, 12:9)¹²⁶ (We should recall at this point the observations of Engels and Calvin Hernton on the relationship among the notions of slavery, property, and the typical attitude toward women.)

Of course this picture of the biblical family organization is too simplistic and doesn't account for the many apparent exceptions and complexities (see, for example, Julian Morgenstern, "Beena Marriage in Ancient Israel and its Historical Significance," in Zeitschrift fuer Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft N.S. VI (1929)). Yet this adequately precise model does give us a framework by which to organize the relevant examples. Now certainly we can readily see that, within this patronymic familial organization, the woman's status had more in common with that of the slaves than with that of the master (or even his sons who were destined to become masters).

First of all, the very word for "wife" is very often used to signify the fact that the woman belongs to the man (e.g., Isaiah 54:1 or Isaiah 54:1-- "a man ...his wife"; see Genesis 2:24-25; 3:8, 17; 4:1, 17). This subordinate status is further reflected in the popular but false (its popularity

is more indicative than its accuracy) etymology of the Hebrew words for "man" and "woman" (a relationship which is also reflected in the English words). Furthermore, although the wife had considerable freedom (see Genesis 19:31-35), it is clearly stated that the husband is the master (Gen. 3:16).¹²⁷

The matter of the rape and seduction of a young woman is similarly instructive. The penalties for such a deed are outlined both in Exodus 22:16-17 and in Deuteronomy 22:28f.

If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall give the marriage present for her and make her his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equivalent to the marriage present for virgins. (Exodus 22:16-17)

If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, then the man who lays with her shall give to the father of this young woman fifty shekels of silver and she shall be his wife... (Deut. 22:28f.)

Eugene Borowitz, in his book Choosing a Sex Ethic, offers an interpretation of these passages. First of all, Borowitz points out that these laws are addressed only to men, indicating that, although it is the girl who is being seduced, it is only the men who have any rights. Secondly, the central concern of these statements is the matter of compensation; no particular onus is attached to the act of seduction itself nor is any attention paid to the various injuries -- social, personal, and physical -- suffered by the girl herself. Of special interest here, then, is the fact that the aggrieved party is not the girl but the father "since his daughter, whose virginity has been taken, will now bring him a lesser

bride-price..."¹²⁹ In fact, it might be fair to say that, from these passages, one might conclude that the girl is regarded as little more than an economic quantity whose market value (to her father) rises and falls on the basis of the experiences to which she is subjected and the resultant usefulness of her capacities.

This brings us to the matter of the bride-price (the mohar -- see Genesis 34:12), the payment rendered by the family of the bride. Obviously, in the event of marriage, the bridegroom's family obtains an economic asset and the bride's family must be duly compensated for its loss -- its loss both of a pair of productive hands and of the future (and productive) progeny. This, too, is the language of the market-place and the woman the quantifiable commodity.

There is no dearth of illustrations of the low status of the biblical woman. In Leviticus 12:1-5 we see, by indication, that a daughter is less desirable than a son, for a woman remains impure twice as long after the birth of a daughter. Leviticus 27:1-7 offers a comparison between the value of the vows of men and women of different ages. The older the person, the more valuable is his vow (up to the age of 60 years old); yet, given a man and a woman of the same age, a man's vow is considered to be of greater value (implying that a man is of greater value than a woman). Furthermore, as we see in Numbers 30:2-8, the force of a woman's vow depends upon the approval of her father or of her husband. The same does not apply to the man whose vows are

always and absolutely binding (30:2). Thus, with the exception of the vows made by a widow or divorcee, if the woman's husband or father finds her vows to be foolish or rash, he can summarily dismiss them. Biblical man (or the men who penned these sections of the Bible) obviously spared no effort in his attempt to effect the utter subordination of women.

Reflections of the low status of women are also to be found throughout Rabbinic literature. Polygamy was an important issue in those days but some of the means by which it was limited, as is exemplified by a passage in Tractate Yebamot, are almost comical. This passage suggests that a man should not marry more than four wives in order that he may distribute his weekly marital contracts equally among them and give each wife her marital satisfaction once a month. (44a) A particularly inventive reflection of the status of women is to be found in Tractate Niddah. The passage, by the way, is a fine example of the repressive device of "prescription through description."

Why are the pains of a female birth greater than those of a male birth? -- The female emerges in the position she assumes during intercourse and the male emerges in the position he assumes during intercourse. The former, therefore, turns her face upwards while the latter need not turn his face. (31a)

Thus the birth of a daughter is the more painful because her body has to be rotated from the face-down to the face-up position before emerging, and this intensifies the birth pains.

Hence, baby girls are more difficult (and thus less desirable -- actually the logic of the matter, I believe, is the reverse) than baby boys because the girl must enter the world in the physical position which best exemplifies her role and status during her lifetime (nature's ratification of female oppression) -- the role and status of submissiveness and passivity ("Women are born to be fucked.").

The "natural" passivity and submissiveness of women receives further "verification" from another passage.

Why did the Torah state, "If any man take a wife" (Deut. 22:13) and not "if a woman be taken to a man?" Because it is the way of a man to go in search of a woman, but it is not the way of a woman to go in search of a man. This may be compared to a man who lost an article: who goes in search of whom? The loser goes in search of the lost article. (Kiddushin 2b)

The man is the natural aggressor because he is the one who is searching for something lost (his rib-woman). Herein, then, is yet another application -- this time in the service of repression -- of the inexhaustibly rich etiological myth of the creation of Eve. Later in this chapter we will examine that myth in some greater detail.

Our final passage is taken from Tractate Sanhedrin 39a in which the final, irrevocable blow is dealt to a woman's vanity -- if indeed she has any left at this point.

"...He (God) should have taken it (the rib) from his (Adam) openly." She (the emperor's daughter) replied to him (the one with whom she was conversing and who made the former statement): "Let me have a piece of raw meat." It was given to her. She placed it under her armpit, then took it out and offered it to him to eat. "I find it loath-

some," he exclaimed. "Even so would she (Eve) have been to Adam had she been taken from him openly," she retorted.

Could anyone have conceived of a more spectacularly forceful visual aid? And that the hideously final degradation of women is itself placed in the mouth of a woman is a true tour de force indeed. To have to see oneself on the analogy of a sweaty piece of raw meat whose like would never have survived the light of that first day had it not been for Adam's drowsiness -- what an abominable insult.

So much then for the miserably low status of women. Let us now direct our attention to certain examples of the more general deprecation of women, of which, naturally, there is also no paucity. And here we find that woman is so often characterized as a dimwitted shrew who, for all her potential destructiveness and intractability, needs to be treated, condescendingly, with gentleness and tolerance. (This is reminiscent of our discussion, in the previous chapter, of the denigration-idealization duality; as I mentioned, in my expansion of Christian David's exposition, the initial denigration follows upon, as a reaction-formation, the observation of woman's powerfulness and awesomeness. The following few examples, picturing the woman, as they do, as a kind of bewildered shrew, seem to be good illustrations of this very type of rebound-denigration.)

Rab Judah is expounding a verse from Ecclesiastes: "And I find more bitter than death the woman." (7:26) Rab Judah offers an example to his son: "Your mother. She was

indeed irascible but could be easily appeased with a kindly word." (Yebamot 63b) G. F. Moore cites another illustration of this patronizing attitude: R. Hiyya had a shrewish wife -- once when he was making her a present, wrapped up in cloth, his nephew and disciple, Rab, exclaimed, "And this when she plagues you so!" Hiyya replied, "All we can expect of them is that they bring up our children and keep us from sin."¹²⁹ As we recognized from our summary of Slater's analysis of the family, such condescending (but barely concealed) misogyny will inevitably lead to devastating consequences, for the son, for the son's marriage, for the son's world-view, and for the central institutions and expressions of the culture itself.

The following two gems are taken from Deuteronomy Rabbah 6.11. The authors of these passages are so thorough in their deprecation of women and so steadfast in their obvious desire to do so, that the passages hardly need comment.

R. Levi said: "Women possess the four following characteristics: they are greedy, inquisitive, envious, and indolent. Whence do we know that they are greedy? From what is written, 'And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food etc.' (Gen. 3:6). Whence do we know them to be inquisitive? For it is written, 'And Sarah heard in the tent door.' (Gen. 18:10) that is, she was eavesdropping on the angel. Whence do we know that they are envious? For it is said, 'And Rachel envied her sister.' (Gen. 30:1) Whence do we know that they are indolent? For it is written, 'Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal.'" (Gen. 18:6) The Rabbis added two more characteristics: they are querulous and gossips.

God said: "I shall not create her [Eve from Adam] from the eye, that her eye may not be haughty, nor from the ear, that she may not be an eavesdropper, nor from the mouth, that she may not be talkative, nor from the hand, that she may not be a thief, nor from the foot, that she may not be a gadabout; whence then shall I create her? from his most private limb, from the thigh." And yet of no avail. For everything that God intended should not be in her is to be found even in the best of women.

Enough has been said in order to indicate some of the prevailing attitudes toward women that are to be found in Rabbinic literature. Moreover, given the theoretical framework elaborated in the first four sections of this paper, there seems to be little doubt that these rabbinical musings are to be considered among the many expressions of the male response.

We must now touch briefly upon the topic of the three traditional "womanly duties" -- "taking Hallah" (i.e., throwing a bit of the dough onto the fire as an offering before baking the bread), purification at the Mikvah, and lighting the Sabbath candles. How are these duties -- their nature, origin, and purpose -- seen in the literature?

Louis Ginzberg intimates that the religious commands addressed exclusively to women are connected with the history of Eve; Niddah, because of the transgression of her womb; Hallah, because Eve defiled Adam, the heave-offering of the world, necessitating her expiation; and the Sabbath lights, because woman extinguished the light of man's soul.¹³⁰ Thus, it should be noted, all of these "womanly duties" are considered to be connected with the sins of the prototypical woman; the origin of woman's special tasks lies in her

"sinful nature." Seen in this way, the "womanly duties" become yet another vehicle for the deprecation of women; and by accepting this interpretation of her duties, the woman herself thus accepts her own guilt and participates in her own enslavement.

This is particularly true of menstruation, the experiencing of which, according to Moore, is regarded by all the sources as a penalty for Eve's sin (see Eruvim 100b).¹³¹ The monthly "way of a woman" is thus a constant, punitive reminder of the primeval transgression (for which all women, obviously, must suffer and hence, feel guilty) and the Mikvah is the place of her (only temporary) expiation.

Especially insidious is the contention that, if a woman fails to perform these duties of her derogation, the penalty is death in childbirth.

For three transgressions to women die in childbirth: for heedlessness of the laws of the menstruant, the Dough-offering, and the lighting of the Sabbath lamp.]
(Mishnah Shabbat 2.6)

In terms of our discussion of the male fear and envy of the woman's procreative ability, what more ingenious method of male revenge could be imagined? For it transforms the tokens of female superiority into the vehicle of her ultimate chastisement, while, at the same time, maintaining the sanctity and desirability of childbirth itself. Hence, if a woman should die in childbirth, it is not to be blamed on the exigencies of childbearing but on the transgressions of the woman or of womankind of which she is a member. Thus the

mechanism of repression serves male needs in two ways; first, it separates the causes of the traumas of childbirth from the process of childbirth and hence makes the process of procreation that much less vulnerable to womanly whim; and secondly, as we have said, it converts the natural superiority (as men perceive it) of women into the vehicle of their own derogation. A woman, as it were, carries around her own implements of self-flagellation.

Of course a woman has other obligations such as grinding meal, baking, washing clothes, cooking, nursing her child, making the beds, and working in wool. The Rabbis concede that, if a woman has servants, she can be relieved of up to all of these duties but "this does not exempt her from certain personal attentions to her husband, such as washing his face and hands, etc."¹³² Of course, complete idleness was disapproved.

Even if she brought him a hundred bond-women he should compel her to work in wool, for idleness leads to unchastity. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says: Moreover, if a man put his wife under a vow to do no work he should put her away and give her her Ketubah, for idleness leads to lowness of spirit.
(Mishnah Ketubot 5.5)

At this point we want to look at some of the expressions of the fear of women and the male response to that reaction. Striking reflections of that fear of the mature woman abound throughout the literature. We will touch on some of them. In Chapter 19 of the Book of Exodus we find God telling Moses how the people are to make themselves ready for the theophany

"on the third day." (19:11) The people are to wash their garments and avoid touching the holy mountain.

So Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. And he said to the people, "Be ready by the third day; do not go near a woman."
(19:14-15)

Thus it seems that sexual abstinence was an important form of ritual purification. Of course the command is directed only to men, the women alone being the bearers (at least in terms of focus -- but see Leviticus 15:1-18) of the elements of contamination. It seems to me that this expression of the fear of the female, set in the context of the giving of the Torah, is extremely significant; it is an early expression of an essential idea, an idea that weaves its way throughout Jewish life and literature: namely, that there is a fundamental and mysterious antagonism between women and Torah, that women present a most serious threat to the integrity and preservation of the Torah. Perhaps, on the basis of this one example, I have overstated the point; however, I shall consider this crucial antagonism in greater detail later.

The fear of the power of woman is expressed in The Song of Songs: "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the hinds of the field, that you stir not up nor awaken love until it pleases." (2:7) That is to say, women have the power to uncover potentially uncontrollable emotions and for this they are greatly feared. In the Book of Micah we also read of the dread of the destructive potential of the mature woman: "Put no trust in a neighbor, have

no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom." (7:5) Even a woman with whom one experiences great intimacy (that she is not merely a one-night fling is indicated by the structural parallel among "neighbor," "friend," and "woman") still threatens her lover with some awesome and uncontrolled force.

Expressions of such fear are to be found in post-biblical literature also. In Chapter 9 of the Wisdom of Sirach, there is an elaborate admonition concerning the threat of women. The very words used to describe the kinds of consequences that may befall a man who deals unguardedly with women, indicate the disquietude with which women were perceived: such a man would "lose his mastery over his strength" (9:2), "fall into her snares" (9:3), "be caught in her intrigues" (9:4), "stumble and incur penalties for her" (9:5), and "lose his inheritance" (9:6). The passage continues.

Turn away your eyes from a shapely woman,
and do not look intently at beauty be-
longing to another; many have been mis-
led by a woman's beauty, and by it passion
is kindled like a fire. Never dine with
another man's wife, nor revel with her at
wine; lest your heart turn aside to her,
and in blood you be plunged into destruction.
(9:8-9)

In this passage, especially, do we feel the author's awe at the raw and unbridled electricity of a woman's ontic energy (especially that of a married, experienced, mature woman). It is almost as if a woman were a yawning and alluring vortex of devouring ferocity (appropriately vaginal imagery) over the precipice of which man inescapably totters.

Tractate Yebamot 63b reflects a horrified dread of an ancient woman who is (not so strangely) reminiscent of Helen of Troy: "through the form of a beautiful woman, many were destroyed and a mighty host are all her slain." On the potentially destructive power of a woman (and as another example of the antagonism between women and Torah), Mishnah Avoth has this to say: "Hence the Sages have said: He that talks much with womankind brings evil upon himself and neglects the study of the Law and at last will inherit Gehenna." (1.5) That is some elaborate, retributive measure for even the most incorrigible of conversationalists; it just goes to show to what degree women were feared.

Without becoming involved in the specific point at issue in the following midrash, we can easily see yet another reflection of the dread of the mature woman. Notice here that the object of fear is the discharging, bleeding woman.

R. Judah b. Rabbi said: At first He created her [Eve] for him and he [Adam] saw her full of discharge and blood; thereupon He removed her from him and recreated her a second time. Hence he [Adam] said: "This time she is bone of my bone." (Genesis Rabbah, 18.4)

A final example is taken from the Kitzur Schulchan Aruch; in many ways it is the most extraordinary of all the passages just cited. First, because of the author's hilarious squeemishness, reflected in the euphemism that he uses for "vagina" (how dreadful must the very thought of the vagina -- that snaky Medussa's head -- have been for him). Secondly, because of the unabashed implication of the integral connection among

the vagina, abomination, and sin.

It is forbidden to glance at that place, for whoever glances there possesses no shamefulness and violates "being chaste" and removes disgrace from his face; for the one who is bashful is not apt to sin... Certainly one who kisses that place violates, "And yeshall not make your souls abominable." (150.5)

What is the nature of the Jewish response to this fear of the mature woman? What forms did (and do) the response take? We have already touched upon many of them -- the deprecation of the abilities of women, the imposition upon them of a low social, economic, and political status, and interpretation of the "womanly duties." These mores and customs are all to be seen, in large measure, in terms of the male response to the perceived female threat. And there are other types of response. One of them, emerging directly and obviously from that fear, is the matter of the "avoidance" of women, a pattern so common in the life-style of the European shtetl.

This avoidance pattern seems to have stood at the very foundation of shtetl life, permeating most of its important customs and institutions. We find early expressions of the desirability of this pattern already in the classical literature. The following statement is a typical example.

A man should not walk behind a woman in the road, and even if his wife happens to be in front of him on a bridge he should let her pass on one side, and whoever crosses a river behind a woman will have no portion in the future world [because the woman in crossing will naturally lift up her dress]... Our Rabbis taught:

If a man counts out money from his hand into the hand of a woman so as to have the opportunity of gazing at her, even if he can vie in the Torah and good deeds with Moses our teacher, he shall not escape the punishment of Gehinnom, as it says, "hand to hand, he shall not escape from evil." (Proverbs 10:21) (Berachot 61a)

G. F. Moore states that the Rabbis, in wanting to keep man far from sin, took various precautions against the excitement of lustful thoughts to which man's senses made him vulnerable.¹³³ The central precaution was the general avoidance of women for "whoever even looks at a woman will in the end fall into transgression." (Medarim 20a)

Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, in their book Life is With People, consider in some detail the centrality of this avoidance pattern. Each sex, they contend, occupies its own area of the community; the man's domain is the Shul, House of Prayer, House of Study, House of Assembly all rolled up into one. Here man rules supreme. The woman's province is the home and here she rules, if not with absolute authority (for men live there too), then with relative authority.¹³⁴ A girl is trained almost from the start to accept the fact that her place is in the home; she shall not aspire to Torah-learning or to a life of her own in the outside world. As we read in Mishnah Sotah: "R. Eliezar says: If any man gives his daughter a knowledge of the Law, it is as though he taught her lechery (למדת)." (3.4) And a passage in Tractate Yoma 66b reads: "A woman has no learning except about a spindle." So the socialization process finds support from many sources. The girl may, as a youth, go to Cheder but she

only learns what she absolutely needs to know: to read and write a little Yiddish, to read a little Hebrew, and to manage the operations of elementary arithmetic. The prevailing sentiment seems to have been: "if a girl can read a little and pray a little, then she's a real intellectual."¹³⁵

The conclusion that can legitimately be drawn from this is that it is the monumental male fear of the mature woman that has led to this elaborate separation of the male and female domains; and, as in all societies, the educational system tends to fulfill a conservative, preservative function. As Zborowski and Herzog relate, the prevalent fear is that a creature so undisciplined (!) and given to excess will not help a man to maintain moderation and righteousness but, rather, will incite him to break the rules he has accepted.¹³⁶ Hence the sexes are separated in their daily round of activities, and this from early childhood, which, in turn, is supposed to protect both the mitzvah of learning and the sanctity of the home.

Something of a problem arises at this point: on the one hand, women are objects of terror and must be avoided whenever possible; yet, on the other hand, marriage is considered to be a blessing and sexual pleasures thought to be healthy and good. (On this latter point see David Feldman's elaborately documented argument in Birth Control in Jewish Law, especially chapters 2 and 5.) How, then, are women to be both highly valued and highly scorned, wholesomely desired and fearfully avoided? The "solution" that the shtetl (and

not only the shtetl) provided for this dilemma is an ingenious one indeed. In essence the solution consists in the creation of what Slater, in his Pursuit of Loneliness, calls a "scarcity mentality." (see pages 83, 85 and passim) This amounts to taking something of which there is a plentiful supply (e.g., sexual energy) and making it artificially scarce by surrounding its expression with rules and customs, interposing between impulse and manifestations a surfeit (over-determination is one of the tokens of this response) of notions of proper times and proper places, proper mates and proper methods. The resultant framework is one in which the raw, unbridled, threatening, and superabundant energies are contained and "rationally" redirected without, simultaneously, being extirpated, and in which the unbounded vigor of play is transformed into the productive and joyless torpor of work. These transformations, though astonishingly effective in the normalization of relationships, were (and are) achieved only at a price, as Slater has so powerfully demonstrated.

In the shtetl the attempted implementation of this solution resulted in the concentration of all threatening persons (women) and emotions in the home and the simultaneous de-sexualization and de-feminization of the rest of life. Such an undertaking is no easy matter -- and this is demonstrated by the large number of proscriptions and prescriptions enlisted in its support. Great emphasis, for example, was placed on the avoidance of untoward thoughts, especially when studying Torah. And because it was considered sinful to be

distracted by thoughts of sex while studying the Law, boys were married early so that their needs would be satisfied (we might say "contained") and then they would have no difficulty in concentrating on their books.¹³⁷ The precautions taken to avoid the inappropriate and threatening intrusion of sex were severe. Among them are the following examples: the bride's hair was cut off and for the rest of her life she wore a wig, or sheytl, in order to reduce her dangerous charms; women were enjoined against wearing short sleeves and in any case a man was not supposed to study in a room where a woman's arms were exposed; finally, a man was not supposed to listen to a woman singing lest his desire be aroused.¹³⁸ The avoidance pattern was also meant to protect the home; for, if impure thoughts were aroused, even there, they might be followed by the sin of fornication (as opposed, of course, to the "sanctity" of intercourse!); and this, as a popular belief had it, could lead to bastards.

In general, the woman was considered so potent a source of attraction that a man had to avert his eyes in order to protect both himself and the woman.¹³⁹ Some men avoided speaking with women entirely. At certain social functions and during religious ceremonies, women and men were strictly separated, the women usually finding themselves in the background, out of the way. Is it any wonder then, in light of all of this, that men thanked God daily for having not created them as women?

Let us now direct our attention to three biblical

motifs: the creation of Eve, the matter of the frequent barrenness of women, and the covenant of circumcision. The central puzzle surrounding the creation of Eve is this: why is it that, in direct contra-distinction to the easily observed realities, it is woman who is conceived as having been created from man? It seems obvious that the author of that second creation story (Genesis 2:4b-25) was neither reflecting upon his perceptions nor attempting to convince his audience that women, in fact, do not give birth to men. What hidden urge, then, was the narrator expressing? The story itself is well-known: God, seeing that Man was alone, decided to create a helper (!) fit for him; so God created the beasts of the field and the birds of the air "but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him."

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.
(2:20-22)

Theodor Reik sheds some important light on the tendentiousness of this passage:

The first myths are, it seems to me, produced by, and meant for, men. They often become, it is true, old wives' tales, but only long after they have been contemptuously dismissed by the men of the tribe. Women are more often occupied than preoccupied with the creation of men. Their imagination is not involved with the solution to the question of how the first human being was created. This is no problem for them; they know. It could not have been very different, they feel, from the manner in which their own children are born. The myths and legends of

creation, including those of the Bible,
pre-suppose an audience of men.¹⁴⁰

Reik refers to Frazer's comment that the Biblical author "hardly attempted to hide his deep contempt for women," which is readily seen in the lateness of her creation, the undignified manner in which it took place, and the subsequent intimation that all the misfortunes and sorrows of the race come from her and her unbridled appetites.¹⁴¹ On the basis of these considerations we come to see, first, that the author of this episode is primarily speaking to men and attempting to address himself to their needs and, secondly, that the author's "solution" is worked out at the expense of women.

What we find here, in fact, is a clear attempt to demonstrate that, although women may appear to monopolize the process of childbirth, at the very beginning it was man who gave birth to woman. It was man who initiated the whole process. Once again the repressive device of "prescription through description" is employed here; as Slater says, "the Eden myth... celebrates the emergence and dominance of a repressive male-oriented religion."¹⁴² And Bettelheim, in support of our contention that this episode serves compensatory, male needs, adds that "the Jewish myth of the creation seems [to be] an example of... defensive over-insistence... the Jewish myth suggests either an actual condition of total male dominance, or the desire for such a condition..."¹⁴³

That the expression of this male-fantasy is not

restricted to the Bible is clear; we have previously discussed its elaboration in the form of male initiation rites. It is reflected also in many places throughout Greek literature, one of the most unmistakable examples of which is to be seen in this speech by Apollo in Aeschylus' The Eumenides:

...mark a soothfast word
Not the true parent is the woman's womb
That bears the child; she doth but nurse the seed
New-sown: the male is parent; she for him,
As stranger for a stranger hoards the germ
Of life, unless the god its promise blight.
And proof hereof before you will I set.
Birth may from fathers without mothers be:
See at your side a witness of the same,
Athena, daughter of Olympian Zeus,
Never within the darkness of the womb
Fostered nor fashioned, but a bud more bright
Than any goddess in her breast might bear.¹⁴⁴

A problem closely related to this one is the matter of the frequent barrenness of the women in the Bible; three of the four matriarchs were initially barren; (Leah, too, was, at one point, unable to bear children, but not initially.) this is certainly one of the central motifs of the Genesis narratives; Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and the unnamed mother of Samson, were also at first barren. There are undoubtedly other important examples of this theme; but for now, let us examine these six cases.

Sarah was barren. (Gen. 16:1) Yet God said that "I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you [Abraham] at this season next year." (17:21) Then "the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised." (21:1) The situation practically repeats itself in the case of Isaac's wife Rebekah: "And

Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived." (25:21) The case of Rachel and Leah is similar (with Leah as an added element) to the previous episodes: "When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened up her womb; but Rachel was barren." (29:31) After Leah bore four sons she "saw that she had ceased bearing children." (30:9) Sometime thereafter "God hearkened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son." (30:17) "Then God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her and opened her womb." (30:22)

Hannah's plight is similar for "the Lord had closed her womb." (I Samuel 1:5) But after much petitioning to God "...Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her; and in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son..." (1:19-20) Manoah's wife was also barren; but "the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, 'Behold, you are barren and have no children; but you shall conceive and bear a son'... And the woman bore a son, and called his name Samson." (Judges 13:2-3, 24)

The sequence of the events of each of these five (plus the special case of Leah) is remarkably similar: the woman is barren but, after God himself intercedes, she has a son. The constant repetition of this motif is no accident; for it expresses a persistent male anxiety; that is, does the woman have control over every element of the childbearing process? And the central implication of these stories is this: that woman, in spite of disquieting (for the man) appearances, does

not, in fact, have a monopoly over the process of childbearing. She fails to come through even in the most consequential crises, when the very future of the people is at stake. Indeed, it takes the intervention of God for the required child-births to take place.

And who is this God? How is he portrayed? As a male deity, to be sure. God is called "He" and he is described by several unmistakably masculine epithets: "Man of War," "Hero," "Lord of Hosts," "King," "Master," and "Father" are but a few of them. Such portrayals of God as a husband, in Hosea and The Song of Songs, reinforces that male image. Further examples would only prove the obvious. God, then, is seen as a man and, in terms of the problem of barrenness, it is thus the male deity who is ultimately and unmistakably responsible for child-birth. Thus, two complementary and mutually reinforcing impressions emerge from this persistently recurring motif: first is the actual inefficacy of the female in the process of childbearing. She may at best be the vessel but she by no means sets the process in motion. Second is the decisive, utterly non-superfluous role played by the male. Once again, then, man strenuously and ingeniously insists, as a compensatory response to his fear and envy of the female he perceives, that the male contribution is the more significant. The fact that this motif is repeated a bit too often and is insisted upon with a bit too much forcefulness, serves to indicate the degree to which man feels the initial devastation of his perceived inferiority.

(It should be noted that the story of Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) may have to be considered as a counter-example to the aforementioned hypothesis; for, in this episode one woman, in spite of several obstacles, sees to it, singlehandedly, that the holy seed is maintained. Though the final judgment on her is somewhat mixed she is really never cleared of the charge of harlotry -- or of cult-prostitution -- though see verse 26; see also Tractate Sotah 10a-b for a further attempt to clear Tamar of any possible wrongdoing, she is clearly responsible for the perpetuation of the race. And neither God nor man usurped her female prerogatives. But that Tamar is also seen as a frightful and annihilating woman, see 38:11 where Judah sends her away for fear that she would cause the death of his last son Shelah also -- even though it is clearly the case, from the evidence of 38:7-11, that Tamar ought to have born no responsibility for the deaths of Er and Onan.)

Finally, let us turn to the matter of the covenant of circumcision, described in Genesis 17. In verse 2 God says to Abram: "And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." This sentence strikes one of the key cords of this chapter: the integral relationship between the covenant of circumcision and the promise of a plenitude of progeny. If Abraham and his descendants will honor this covenant, God will respond by providing for a never-ending flow of progeny. What is so significant here is the utter absence of women (until verse 15). The important

connection, according to this chapter is between man, his circumcised penis, and progeny. If Abraham will sanctify the male organ of reproduction, he will become "the father of a multitude of nations." (17:4, 5) No mention is made of woman's role in propagation when God promises Abraham that "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and kings shall come forth from you." (17:6) The descendants are continually referred to as Abraham's alone. (17:7-10, 12-13) And finally, when Sarah is brought into the picture and her role mentioned, it is only in terms of the male God giving Abraham the son by utilizing her body. (17:16) She is just a tool whose role in the development of the holy nation is mechanized and minimized. Hence, the episode of the establishment of the covenant of circumcision sees, once again, to be aimed at the diminution of the female role in the crucial matter of procreation. God sanctifies the male organ of reproduction and neglects the female almost entirely.

This concludes our brief survey of Jewish life and literature. The testimony is clear, the male reaction and response reflected therein has been seen to be firm and ingeniously diversified.

V

THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED: LILITH

Up to this point in our investigation we have been considering our subject from the point of view of the male; the male perception of the female threat which generates the need for the repression of women and, then, the male response to that perceived threat, the repression itself. Yet, there is another aspect to the matter -- the emergent expression, not of the represser, but of the repressed. The repression, as we have seen, has been swift and devastatingly thorough, extending the tentacles of its implementation over and around a vast and varied multiplicity of life's enterprises. The result of this process has been the relentless manipulation, falsification, and distortion of many of the most elemental human needs and fears and impulses. Manipulated, falsified, and distorted because they could not be faced, because they were too jagged and rough and unmanageable and suffocating. Man could not face his complex and intolerable fear and envy of the mature woman, his unmanageable, threatening desire to embrace and be embraced by femininity; so he suppressed these impulses and tried to forget them; yet, they have not been supplanted nor have they been blotted out. They still seethe within the confines of their meticulously constructed, sedulously guarded, though perilously insecure dungeon, ever at

the ready to re-emerge from their accustomed darkness to the light of day.

Theodor Reik has pointed out that, as we have learned from Freud, men are not made to keep secrets.¹⁴⁵ Among these (badly kept) secrets are both the male fear and envy of the mature woman, and the archetypal embodiment of that woman -- i.e., both the emotion and the perceived cause of that emotion. Man has attempted to extirpate both the unmanageable impulses and emotions, and the existence of that dreaded woman who called forth these impulses and emotions. From the perspective of the institutions and customs of "normal, normative, and conventional" culture, man's success in this regard has been quite stunning. However, the process of annihilation has never met with complete success. For, traces of that repressed female and of those repressed impulses continue to permeate even the most strikingly suitable and efficient implements of their intended obliteration.

From time to time the repressed returns in a more direct and unmistakable form, cutting a figure of the retaliatory rancor, stony wilfulness, and unguarded contentiousness that so appropriately befits the image of one so thoroughly and unremittingly oppressed. The figure of Lilith is such an example of the personified "return of the repressed." Raphael Patai, in his book The Hebrew Goddess, suggests that

No she-demon has ever achieved as fantastic a career as Lilith who started out from the lowliest of origins, was a failure as Adam's intended wife, became the paramour of lascivious spirits, rose to be the bride of Samael

the demon king, ruler as the Queen of Zemarqad and Sheba, and finally ended up as the consort of God himself.¹⁴⁶

In the remainder of this chapter we are going to consider the figure of Lilith as the most dramatic example of the "return of the repressed." We will deal with only the most salient and relevant aspects of her long and chequered career as it unfolds in the literature. And, hopefully, this examination will lend further -- and unique -- corroboration to our contention that the bricks and mortar of the edifice that we call "civilization" have been quarried, to a large degree, from the inexhaustibly rich mines of male repression. Thus, we are now about to look at that edifice from the point of view of the victim (as that victim responds to its victimization); and the picture of the victim that emerges, we hope to see, in yet another way, the anatomy of the represser and of his civilization. In this regard, by recasting Newton's Third Law of Motion, we might posit that, for every cultural manifestation (in this case a sub-cultural manifestation -- Lilith), there is always an equal and opposite counter-manifestation. The rancor, wilfulness, and threatening visage of Lilith may then be seen as further confirmation of the existence of the equally forceful, antipodally directed (though much less definable and visible) repressiveness. It is in opposition to this repression, then, that Lilith is the symbolic manifestation.

The antecedents of the Lilith legend are to be found already in the Sumerian culture and as far back as 2500 B.C.

But it is the existence of the two creation stories in the book of Genesis that accounts for the origin of the particular legend now under consideration. The Rabbis speculate: Eve is created from the rib of Adam (Genesis 2:21); but already in Genesis 1:27 we read of the creation of woman -- "male and female he created them" Who, then, is this first wife of Adam and what was her fate? (One of the central axioms of rabbinic hermeneutics, let us remember, is that there is nothing superfluous nor are there contradictory elements in Scripture.) The first wife of Adam was Lilith; and, as the biblical verse says, she was created at the same time -- and evidently with the same prerogatives -- as Adam. When they opened their eyes and saw each other, they immediately began to argue about their relative prominence. Adam insisted that he was superior; but Lilith saw no reason to accept this and she refused to be subservient to him. The quarrel continued until Lilith, fed up, uttered the ineffable name of God (the $\text{E}^{\text{L}}\text{O}^{\text{H}}\text{I}^{\text{M}}$ $\text{S}^{\text{E}}\text{M}$) and, on the strength of that incantation, fled the Garden of Eden. Adam, now alone and afraid, complains to God and begs him to get Lilith back. Thereupon God sends three of his angels to find her and to persuade her to return. But she demurs, insisting that, if she has to accept servility, then Eden is no paradise to her. She persists in her refusal, even when the angels warn her that the anticipated punishment for disobedience is that she will bear one-hundred children a day, all of whom will die in childbirth.

In the meantime God, seeing that the recalcitrant Lilith is beyond persuasion, returns to Eden and creates Eve from the sleeping Adam. This time God wisely creates woman from man's rib in order to make sure that man's pre-eminence becomes obvious even to women -- and to insure that "the embarrassing question of woman's rights might never be raised again."¹⁴⁷ Eve is formed and becomes the "mother of all the living." Lilith, however, is distraught and contemplates suicide whereupon the angels inform her that, as compensation, she will obtain control over the lives of all new-born children up until they are eight days old; if she can kill them within this time, she may do so. Furthermore, she is given special powers over all children born out of wedlock. (It was to protect their babies from Lilith's retaliatory clutches that it became customary to employ amulets and talismans during the first few days -- and years -- of a child's life.)

Meanwhile, Samael, the fallen angel, jealously watches Adam and Eve reaping the fruits of their carnal pleasures; and noticing Lilith, he takes her as his consort. Samael finds that Lilith is an eager conspirator against God and his plans for man and woman. Among the new activities that she now undertakes to perform, the enticing Lilith cohabits with innocent, sleeping men, the offspring of which unions become demons; she also becomes the instigator of nocturnal emissions.

This, in brief, describes the career of Lilith. How, in some further detail, was she conceived? Raphael Patai

relates that Lilith's most appropriate sobriquet was "the beautiful maiden;" for once she chose a lover she would never let him go although she would never give him any real satisfaction. She seems to have been regarded, moreover, as a source of special danger for women, especially during the many periods of her sexual life-cycle; e.g., before defloration during menstruation, and at the hour of childbirth. One representation depicts Lilith as naked, with long, loose hair, pointed breasts, strongly-marked genitals, and chained ankles.¹⁴⁸ How powerful and evocative these images of Lilith are: chained and restrained though threatening and aggressive and angry; defiant and potent and remorseless. The repressed has returned with a vengeance.

Moncure Conway offers his own estimation of the significance of the Lilith legend. Lilith, he states, has become the prototype of the "strong-minded" and "cold-hearted" woman -- a danger to children; a perilous seducer of young men, each of whose victims perishes of unrequited passions; and an eternally young, alluring, beautifully attired vampire.¹⁴⁹ Conway continues with a statement that is an almost too-perfect crown for our argument: "like Lilith, women become devil's brides whenever they are not content to sit at home with home and children."¹⁵⁰ In conclusion Conway contends that

Had there been an order of female rabbis the story of Lilith might have borne obvious modifications, and she might have appeared as a heroine anxious to rescue her sex from slavery to men.¹⁵¹

Lilith, however, remains a sub-cultural figure precisely because she stands in such dramatic opposition to all of the sacred customs and institutions of male culture; rather than accepting subservience, she demands equality; rather than participating in procreation on a man's terms, she aggressively arrogates for herself priority and preeminence; rather than acquiescing to the desexualization of her body, the molli-fication of her instincts, and the pacification of her charms, she insists upon the unencumbered expression of her prerogatives, the unrestrained activity of her capabilities, and the untrammelled expression of her voracious appetites. The fact that Lilith, too, insists a bit too much and lashes out a bit too vigorously demonstrates the degree to which she (woman) has been oppressed and the obstacles which she must overcome.

VI

WOMEN AND MONOTHEISM

In this final chapter I intend to explore, briefly, some of the relationships that may possibly exist between the phenomenon of woman, as discussed in this paper, and the origins, nature, and implications of monotheism. My central contention will be that women present one of the major threats to the integrity and persistence of monotheism and, conversely, that the monotheistic God, in this regard, represents yet another strategem conceived and sustained for the purpose of repressing the female threat. It will be obvious that, in this chapter, the animating Muses are Speculation and Intuition; yet, the centrality of monotheism, on the one hand, and of the phenomenon of woman, on the other, demands that we consider their possible interdependence, both causal and conceptual.

First, let us agree upon what we shall mean by "monotheism." There is no small disagreement about this crucial concept, concerning both its meaning and significance. Yet, for the purposes of this essay, we can come to a basic understanding.

E. A. Speiser, in the preface to his Genesis, intimates that monotheism "is predicated on the concept of a God who

has no rivals and is therefore omnipotent.

As the unchallenged master of all creation, he has an equal interest in all of his creatures. Since every nation has the same claim to his care, each can aspire to just and impartial treatment in conformance with its conduct. The same holds true of individuals. It is thus causality and not caprice that is the norm of the cosmos. Impersonal justice, moreover, is conducive to objective standards of ethics and morality.¹⁵²

Yehezkel Kaufmann, in his The Religion of Israel, contrasts the essence of monotheism with what he considers to be the fundamental idea of paganism. This fundamental idea implies "the existence of a realm of power to which the gods themselves are subject."¹⁵³ "It is not," asserts Kaufmann,

the plurality of gods per se... that expresses the essence of polytheism, but rather the notion of many independent power entities, all on a par with one another, and all rooted in the primordial realm.¹⁵⁴

Kaufmann, in another passage, concludes that

it is not an arithmetical diminution of the number of gods, but a new religious category that is involved, the category of a God above nature, whose will is supreme, who is not subject to compulsion and fate, who is free of the bonds of myth and magic.¹⁵⁵

Speisior emphasizes, we have seen, the uniqueness of the monotheistic God and regards omnipotence and justice to be his main attributes; God is the "unchallenged master of all creation" and deals with his creatures on the basis of what they deserve. For Kaufmann, the central idea lies not in the arithmetical diminution of gods but in the concentration of all the power in the universe into one personality; it is this aspect of personality that is crucial, for the Israelite

God is not to be seen on the model of the Greek notion of Fate -- impersonal, blind, inexorable -- but rather on the model of a person -- with a Mind, a Will, and, as it were, a Moral Sense.

In sum, then, the biblical religious idea, visible in the earliest strata, permeating even the "magical" legends, is of a supernal God, above every cosmic law, fate, and compulsion; unborn, unbegetting, knowing no desire, independent of matter and its forces; a God who does not fight other divinities or powers of impurity; who does not sacrifice, divine, prophesy, or practice sorcery; who does not sin and needs no expiation; a God who does not celebrate festivals of his life. An unfettered divine will transcending all being...¹⁵⁶

Thus, a quite definite picture of this God emerges: he is the unique power in the universe, transcending everything material, conceived of as a person, and dealing with all human beings on the principle of fairness.

Obviously, at this point, we have only scratched the surface of this enormously complex topic. Enough has been said, however, to provide a framework for the subject-matter of this chapter.

Indirect evidence of the threat which the female principle presents to the One God is to be found in the unpromising minimization of female potency in biblical literature. We have already examined this contention with respect to the matters of barrenness, circumcision, and the creation of woman. The powerful, mature woman presents a threat, not only to man, but also to God. In what specific ways is the perceived female intimidating to the Deity?

First of all, according to Kaufmann, the genius of monotheism consists in its concentration of all the disparate and independent "pockets of power" into one being -- God. God is the one, unique, personalized repository and wielder of cosmic power. Yet, as we have seen, one of the most frightening aspects of the perceived female is her mysterious, uncontrollable, and awesome power: woman is observed as controlling the process of birth as well as, by implication, the process of death; moreover, the protruding contours of her body, the secretions associated with menstruation and childbirth, and the harmony of the rhythms of her body with those of nature, present to man the composite visage of a naturally superior being, more powerful, more independent, less predictable, less controllable. Citing the research of G. Devereux on the matter of menstrual taboos, Bettelheim asserts that

it is wrong to interpret the secluding of menstruating women as a sign of temporary degradation; on the contrary, he [Devereux] feels that the innumerable restrictions placed upon women and slaves clearly indicates where genuine power rests: in women, who propagate the species, and in the masses, who are the species.¹⁵⁷

Hence, we can see that intense and irrepressible power is ascribed to both God and woman. Perceptually, it is woman who has the power; according to biblical and normative religion, it is God who has the power. Depending, then, upon the perspective, it is either woman or God who controls the forces of life and death; it is either woman or

God who becomes the locus of that mysterious, potent, indomitable power source that Jacob Singer calls "spiritual electricity." Thus God and woman appear to be natural adversaries; they cannot both flourish in the same universe. The type of power attributed to the one excludes, by definition, the existence (so-conceived) of the other. And the palpably tendentious, defensive, and compensatory character of the biblical treatment of barrenness, circumcision, and the creation of Eve reflects (may we say "creates"?) this struggle. On the strength of these types of male-oriented and normalizing narratives, God has come to prevail against woman; but as long as the female threat persists (and how is it to be annihilated?), God's victory remains incomplete and his suzerainty perilously maintained.

The matter of the uniqueness of God is also susceptible to the female threat. God, allegedly, is the only independent and autonomous power in the universe; but perceptually, there are a plethora of such powers -- the thunder and lightning, the sun and the moon and the stars, the earth, the wind and the rain -- and woman. Monotheism, the notion of but one deity (one source of power), is, of course, the highest of all abstractions; its acceptance demands a leap of faith, an act of intellectual prestidigitation, indeed, an act of will. In the face of the obvious multiplicity of independently active powers, we are asked to affirm the supremacy of one, unique, and unseen power. For what reasons are we asked to affirm this? On what grounds? What is at stake

here? The answer to these questions, I believe, is not hard to imagine: the purpose, the reason is to undermine, cripple, and disqualify the potency of the multiplicity of powers so apparent to our senses. And the mature woman is the most menacing of these powers. The mature female presents such a devastating threat to man, her power is so mortifying, so implacable, and so unmanageable by anything within man's perceptual grasp, that the only (and foolproof) way to combat this visible threat is to fashion an unseen competitor of even greater proportions, greater strength, and greater potency -- a competitor whose superiority cannot, in principle, be challenged. Thus, these women, these all-too-visible, all-too-powerful, all-too-independent plurality of powers are eclipsed (hopefully) by the invisible, infinitely (made possible by his invisibility) powerful, infinitely independent, singular power -- God. It is, once again, an ingenious maneuver, the forcefulness and influence of which can be seen and felt everywhere. But, once again, the solution has not eliminated the problem; woman remains, and so remains the much-evaded problem -- the female threat.

Another, very important and revealing, aspect of this woman-God rivalry may be seen in some of the ways in which woman, on the one hand, and God, on the other, are conceived. Normative Judaism, especially, has tended to become intellectual and unemotional, emphasizing, most obviously within the prophetic tradition, God's attributes of justice and impartiality, his concern for law and reflective judgment.

Notice, on the other hand, the visage of the mature woman; she is emotional and unpredictable, adding an irrational, demonic element to her already awesome power; she is seductive and suffocating, capricious rather than impartial, manipulative and treacherous rather than juridical and judicious. God seems to represent controlled, appropriately directed power; woman seems to represent frenetic, erratically directed power. God is "law-abiding" (even though they may be his own laws), woman is "law-ignoring." God is above the law; woman beyond its control. By substituting the word "God" for the word "man" in the following statement, written by C. Wright Mills, we can succinctly epitomize this very impressive contrast: "if God is transcendent and authoritarian, woman is often manipulative: the form of power for the immanent. If God commands, women seduce."¹⁵⁸ Yet, strikingly, these powerful contrasts converge at one central point: for just as God threatens to withhold progeny, the continuation of the holy seed, from his disobedient subjects, so too does woman, in her own way and with her own special brand of persuasion, threaten to withhold progeny from her disobedient subjects. It is, I believe, the elemental, primary fear of the latter threat that has produced the possibility and necessity of the former.

Thus, in conclusion, we have once again seen how man has attempted to extricate himself from the clutches of the woman he perceives: that capricious, manipulative, seductive, passionate, suffocating woman who, on top of everything else,

seems to have the unfettered power to act with impunity. One of the ways in which man has attempted to escape from her sway has been to create the "One, True God" -- the God whose attributes and powers seem especially well-suited for the task of neutralizing woman -- of frustrating her power, of counteracting her forcefulness, of rendering her ineffective. The One, True God, then, may be seen as the culminating rivet, the master screw, in the amazingly elaborate apparatus of repression. But this repression of women, once again, only simulates containment; for, the dike of her imprisonment is full of holes and, though God has a "thumb" for each of them, he too seems strangely incapable of containing the seepage or of forestalling the deluge which, we must, with terror, feel, threatens to engulf us all.

FOOTNOTES

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²Ruth F. Brin, "Can a Woman be a Jew?" Reconstructionist, XXXIV (October 25, 1968), p. 9.

³Ibid.

⁴Benjamin Spock, Decent and Indecent: Our Personal and Political Behavior (New York: The McCall Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 31-32.

⁵Ibid., p. 34.

⁶Ibid.

^{6a}Ibid.

⁷George Dennison, The Lives of Children, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 39.

⁸Kate Millett, Sexual Politics (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1970), p. 26.

⁹Philip E. Slater, The Glory of Hera: Greek Mythology and the Greek Family (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1968), p. 8.

¹⁰Ibid... p. 45ln.

¹¹Ernst Cassirer, The Myth of the State (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 43.

¹²Ibid... p. 45.

¹³Ibid... p. 47.

¹⁴Bruno Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds Collier Books (New York: Crowell-Collier Publishing Co., 1962), p. 99.

¹⁵Ibid... p. 70.

¹⁶Slater, The Glory of Hera, p. 196.

¹⁷Theodor Reik, The Creation of Woman (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1960), p. 135.

¹⁸Erik Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1968), p. 267.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 285.

²⁰Ibid., p. 266.

²¹Millett, Sexual Politics, p. 210.

²²Ibid., p. 210.

²³Ibid., p. 215.

²⁴Ibid., p. 26f.

²⁵Ibid., p. 27.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 29.

²⁸Ibid., p. 30.

²⁹Norman Mailer, "The Prisoner of Sex," Harper's Magazine, March, 1971, p. 92.

³⁰Ibid., p. 54.

³¹Ibid., p. 55.

³²Ibid., p. 43.

³³Ibid., p. 68.

³⁴Ibid., p. 31.

³⁵Ibid., p. 41.

³⁶Ibid., p. 57.

³⁷Ibid., p. 30.

³⁸C. Wright Mills, Power Politics and People, ed. by Irving L. Horowitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 340.

³⁹Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, Life is With People (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1955), p. 130.

- ⁴⁰Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, p. 267.
- ⁴¹Mailer, Prisoner of Sex, p. 54.
- ⁴²Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, p. 264.
- ⁴³Slater, The Glory of Hera, p. 164.
- ⁴⁴Friedrich Nietzsche, The Genealogy of Morals, trans. by Francis Golfing (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1956), p. 241.
- ⁴⁵Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 10.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 27.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 32.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 134.
- ⁴⁹Sigmund Freud, "The Taboo of Virginity," in The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. by James Strachey, XI (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), p. 198.
- ⁵⁰Ibid.
- ⁵¹Ibid.
- ⁵²Ibid., p. 202
- ⁵³Millett, Sexual Politics, p. 116.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., p. 117.
- ⁵⁵Ibid.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., p. 117f.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 118.
- ⁵⁸Freud, "The Taboo of Virginity," p. 198.
- ⁵⁹Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 104.
- ⁶⁰Ibid.
- ⁶¹Raphael Patai, The Hebrew Goddess (New York: Ktav Publishing House Inc., 1967), p. 15.
- ⁶²Slater, The Glory of Hera, p. 68.
- ⁶³Ibid., p. 77.

- ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 78.
- ⁶⁵Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 10.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 56.
- ⁶⁷Ibid.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., p. 53.
- ⁶⁹Ibid., p. 57.
- ⁷⁰C. David, "A Masculine Mythology of Femininity,"
p. 56.
- ⁷¹Spock, Decent and Indecent, p. 49.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 51.
- ⁷³Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 53.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., p. 56.
- ⁷⁵Philip E. Slater, The Pursuit of Loneliness (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 2.
- ⁷⁶William Butler Yeats, "The Old Men Admiring Themselves in the Water," in The Selected Poems and Two Plays of William Butler Yeats, ed. by M. L. Rosenthal, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 30.
- ⁷⁷Slater, The Glory of Hera, p. 79.
- ⁷⁸Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, p. 274.
- ⁷⁹Zborowski and Herzog, Life is With People, p. 372.
- ⁸⁰David M. Feldman, Birth Control in Jewish Law (New York: New York University Press, 1968), p. 63.
- ⁸¹Ibid., p. 86.
- ⁸²C. David, "A Masculine Mythology of Femininity,"
p. 51.
- ⁸³Spock, Decent and Indecent, p. 32.
- ⁸⁴Bronislaw Malinowski, "Parenthood, The Basis of Social Structure," in The Family: Its Structure and Functions, ed. by Rose L. Coser (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), p. 8.
- ⁸⁵Ibid., p. 10.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 11.

^{86a}Feldman, Birth Control in Jewish Law, p. 14.

⁸⁷Millett, Sexual Politics, p. 109.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 109f.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 110f.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 25.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 32f.

⁹²Ibid., p. 33.

⁹³J. C. Flugel, Man, Morals, and Society (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 286.

⁹⁴H. L. Mencken, In Defense of Women (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926), p. 28.

⁹⁵Slater, The Glory of Hera, p. xvi.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. xvii.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 4.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 7.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 36f.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 438.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 417.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 325.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 452.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 463.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 465.

¹⁰⁷Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 109.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 113f.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 118.

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- 112 C. David, "A Masculine Mythology of Femininity," p. 49.
- 113 Calvin C. Hernton, Sex and Racism in America, Grove Press (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1965), p. 18.
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- 130 Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909), p. 70.
- 131 Moore, Judaism, Vol. I, p. 78.
- 132 Ibid., II, p. 127.
- 133 Ibid., II, p. 269.

- 134 Zborowski and Herzog, Life is With People, p. 124.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 Ibid., p. 134.
- 137 Ibid., p. 136.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Ibid.
- 140 Reik, The Creation of Woman, p. 17.
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- 150 Ibid., p. 101.
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- 152 E. A. Speiser, Genesis, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1964), p. xlix.
- 153 Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, trans. by Moshe Greenberg (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 22.
- 154 Ibid., p. 23.
- 155 Ibid., pp. 226-227.
- 156 Ibid., 121.
- 157 Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds, p. 138.
- 158 C. Wright Mills, Power Politics and People, p. 344.

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