

CHAPTER 6: WHERE WE LIVE

Patriarchal Navel Gazing: The Great Father

Along the evolutionary way, men realized that the old magic was wearing out so they came up with a new idea: the singular, masculine patriarch. The male unigod! God, Yahweh, Christ, Allah, Buddha, you name it—whatever the unigod spin, they all subordinate women and with disastrous consequences.

The unigod usurped the place of the old female goddesses and pagan gods, which were embodiments of the natural elements. It was the perfect device in which to invest the stakes of patriarchal power. In the process, jealous unigod built a convoluted narrative around the idea of feminine evil to reinforce his power. As women did not reject this slander, the myth set up camp in our hearts, minds and bodies and took hold. The ultimate payoff was in making women feel culpable for male oppression and violence.

The patriarchy has perpetuated a vast array of ideas and practices that have different values and applications of fairness depending on one’s gender. They use one set of standards to judge themselves and another set to judge you. A good example is blaming Eve for the downfall of “man” because she picked and gave Adam the apple—not blaming Adam because he took it and ate it. Eve not only takes the rap for picking and giving, but also as middleman causing Adam to act against God.

God. I told you not to do it and you did it anyway.
Adam. But she gave it to me!

Adam’s responsibility for his own behavior is thus deflected and even though he secretly knows this, instead of fessing up, the male authority invents guilt. Guilt is sin seen in retrospect—shipped off for a psychological jail term. They then project their own guilt onto Eve (a hidden tactic) and blame her (a public affair) taking the glare off Adam—again. Sin, guilt, blame and shame—all in one little folk tale.

But it’s not over. Then they came up with forgiveness; forgiving Eve, that is, upon whom they had piled their corruption and cowardice. Eve, in turn, was expected to forgive them for their corruption and cowardice, which she did. But the act of perpetrating the fraud upon Eve—over millennia—never comes into question. That part is gummed up somewhere in the lint of patriarchal navel gazing.

Flesh and blood men established themselves as agents of unigod to protect “His” occupancy in that unruly territory known as women’s minds and bodies; and in the process, men legitimized their rights to lord it over us. In the Great Father, we have patriarchal fraud operating at a genius level. (I really have to hand it to them.)

The dialectics of God’s nature and authenticity vary, depending on who’s talking. Even God’s existence itself is challenged from time to time, and his popularity takes a bashing. Whenever this happens, male egotists rush in to fill his shoes with a substitute doctrine. The common theme these days is “new man as god” sent to reveal the truth to the masses. These replacement icons, like the cults and pseudo-cultures they spawn, usually collapse as a result of delusions about their own greatness. Nietzsche, Marx, Hitler, Freud, Mao Tse-tung, are examples of these Great Ones (and short, Ethiopian tyrant, Heilie Selassi definitely got some of “the divine right of kings” on him). There are also individualist god-poseurs like writer and master egotist Norman Mailer who pronounced that what God left unsaid, it is up to the novelist, i.e., Mailer, to say. He also bestowed upon us the absurdity that within the psychopathic murderer, lie the makings of new man’s, new nervous system, “freed of the inhibitions and blockages imposed by morality and conditioning that prevented the free flow of “life-force.” (Take that, all you mothers! They’ll be coming out of your uterus.) Mailer died in November 2007, with the reputation of literary lion still clinging to him, but as a god figure, he was typical—just another flash-in-the-pan.

Another type in this category is film maker and alcoholic wingnut Mel Gibson, who claims to have the last word on unigod’s truth and makes the movies to prove it (*The Passion of Christ*). Gibson is bound to crash and burn in hubris any day now—lucky us. But keep an eye out—there are always plenty of contenders waiting in the wings, eager to make an appearance as god. Tom Cruise has made his move as scientology guru and is now being called its “movie messiah.” And you can see the up and comers on the screen with regularity: they usually start by playing angels.

Man’s need to project his own image onto ultimate reality is a symptom of his lack of self-knowledge and denial of death. In other words, unigod’s maleness is his biggest problem. For a more restorative way to assuage the terror of the final moment, they should try contemplation on the wonders of creation and the day-by-day palliation of introspection, self-knowledge and telling the truth. Fiction is an unreliable solution for ethical and moral failure.

God always makes a reappearance, having banked a great deal of residual recognition over the years. The rise of Christian fundamentalism and George W. Bush’s claim that “God wants me to be President” are examples of God’s bounce. And the 2008 salvation twist? Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama and his messiah news, “We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” Praise God and pass the mashed potatoes.

After a hiatus, unigod inevitably rises once more like the phoenix of backwardness, fulfilling the patriarchal promise of inadequacy and narcissism, yet again. With preposterous fantasies of righteousness and salvation, the earth-destroying hunter-killers are bound together in a deadly rampage which instead of making themselves humble in the reflection of their own foolishness, makes them think they're right! Man's struggle with the mysteries of nature and the universe ended long ago. He traded in the wisdom of the search for what we've got now—organized unigod religion with all of its emotional, intellectual, spiritual corruption.

As the enlightened aspects of secular society in the 21st century attempt to acknowledge the scope and extent of gender oppression, the unigod forces push back with all their might. They employ their misogynistic strategies in all aspects of political, social, economic and cultural life. Despite this blatancy, women still buy into the childish fictions of religion en masse. Addressing the logic of their position would be a more reasonable place to center their search for meaning. As churches and religions would not survive without women, women should be eliminating sexism and anti-woman dogma from religious doctrine and practice, not propping it up.

End Excerpt *Patriarchal Navel Gazing*

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