

Madrian Literature Circle:

The Beauty and the Beast Debate

The three articles reproduced here represent a debate conducted in the pages of the New-Age magazine Aquarian Arrow. It began with a feature in that magazine entitled "Women on Crowley on Women", including a passage by the notorious occultist Aleister Crowley (who liked to refer to himself as "The Great Beast" of the Christian Book of Revelation, "whose number was 666"), expounding his views on maids. This was accompanied by comments from a number of maids working in the occult field. The whole piece was then sent to Lux Madriana by the editors, with an invitation to comment upon it. Sister Angelina responded with the article "Beauty and the Beast" which was published in the following issue.

This drew a response from an anonymous contributor writing under the nom de plume of "Robert". His piece, "Lux Madriana and the Solar Logos", sets out in a clear and serious way many of the fundamental errors and confusions of the New-Age movement in general and of the modern pseudo-matriarchal school in particular.

The refutation of these errors involves, indirectly, the refutation of the whole modern world-view. Obviously an entire book could be devoted to the subject; but in a witty and concise article, "Marie Antoinette and the Reime Soleil", Sister Angelina tackles all the fundamental issues. This piece should be read carefully more than once, for it will make many things fall into place which may previously have seemed obscure.

NOTE: Crowley's argument, briefly, was to reject all sexual morality as a "superstition" and to declare that woman should realise herself as a primarily sexual being, whose "archetype" is the Great Whore.

Beauty and the Beast

Superstition presupposes ignorance. For a superstition is literally something which "stands over"; a disembodied remnant of a philosophical structure which, rent from its context and idolised for its own sake, is devoid of content. A hundred years from now, when the primordial forests are slowly reclaiming these islands, there will no doubt be many who will set up steering wheels or spools of computer tape on piles of stones and bow down before them. That will be superstition. Our descendants will have a vague memory of the "power" attaching to these objects, but the context in which alone that power could be actualised will have been lost in the mists of ignorance.

In precisely the same way, the sexual "morality" prevalent in Crowley's time (and, to an extent, today) was and is superstition. Certain taboos and mores inherited from the past were regarded with a superstitious awe; a quasi-noumenous "power" was recognised as attaching to them. Just like the steering wheel, these mores had once been part of an integrated system, and it was in their relation to the system alone that their "power" had any validity. The relations between the sexes are the reflection on the material plane of certain transcendent Realities. Realities which existed long before the manifestation of physical creatures endowed with biological gender and which will exist long after they have passed away. Marriage is a ritual "actualisation" of the reflection. That is what it was created for, and that is how it has been understood in every civilisation that has not lost sight of the Absolute. The more conventional of Crowley's contemporaries were superstitious because they worshipped marriage while they did not have the vaguest idea of what marriage is.

Crowley (along with the whole contemporary avant garde, whom he merely echoes in rather more fustian prose) is not superstitious; but he is equally ignorant. He does not worship marriage, but he has no more idea of what marriage is. He disposes from the beginning of the idea that he might have any metaphysical understanding: "This Nibbana-idea is the coward - "mother's boy" idea; one ought to take a dip in the Tao, no more." To make a statement like

this is simply to say "I am not a metaphysician", just as to declare that $2+2=5$ is to say "I am not a mathematician". The wisdom of the saints and sages is replaced by the mass "dynamism" of Herbert Spencer projected onto the Absolute.

"Why do men insist on the innocence of women?" he asks, and comes up with a series of answers on the same level of profundity as the nineteenth-century dictum that "myths are primitive attempts to explain natural phenomena". He sees woman as nothing more than a sex-object, and he proceeds to project this sex-object onto his own sentimental equivalent of the metaphysical plane in the form of an Archetypal Whore. Always the same fundamental error - an error that can only arise in a materialist environment, but which in that environment will always vitiate any spirituality which lacks metaphysical principles. The projection of the relative onto the Absolute. The belief that "as below, so above".

What, then, is marriage? For herein lies the answer to the whole problem. Marriage is the ritual actualisation of the fire-kiss. The transformation of the dragon by the sun-maiden. Beauty and the Beast, the Frog Prince and a hundred similar folk-motifs are allegories of the archetypal marriage. The maid is (nay, not represents, for, by the power of the Rite, she is) the Spirit, the supernal Sun. The man is the soul ensnared in matter, who is consumed, destroyed and reborn in Her kiss. No mortal maid is God; yet in the power of the Rite, while she does not become the Reality, the Reality becomes Her. The all-consuming fire-kiss is re-enacted in every "consummation" of the marriage; and the ritual extends not only to this, but to every action of marital life. That is why a man must obey his wife.

In many of the matriarchal civilisations which have dominated the world for the vast majority of human history, a maid was allowed up to four husbands: the four men representing the four material elements and the maid the quinta essentia. This is not the practice among contemporary Madrians, but it expresses a vital truth about the real nature of marriage.

Patriarchal marriage partly inverted and partly misinterpreted the truth. It was perversion, it was heresy, but it was not yet ignorance. Yet the seeds of ignorance lie at the very heart of patriarchy. For every act is a ritual and

every ritual has a magical effect. In ritually turning from the feminine principle to the masculine principle - from the sun-maiden to the unregenerate dragon - civilisation turned from the qualitative to the quantitative; from pure metaphysical Intellect to earthbound reason; from transcendent Truth to transient "facts". When the first warrior king usurped the throne of the first priestess-queen, the advent of Freud, Marx and Darwin became an inevitability. So did that of Crowley.

In rejecting the fire-kiss of the sun-maiden, patriarchal civilisation also rejected Intelligence in its pure form. For the Kiss operates on many levels, from the simple marriage to the consummation of the perfected here (saint) in God Herself. Without the Kiss of pure transcendent Intellect (which is not other than the supernal Sun Herself), the dragon of earthbound reason cannot be raised up out of the mire of matter. Instead it will become ever more "materialist", until it grows into the hydra-headed monster of modern techno-bureaucratic scientism. Crowley sought to react against this monster; but having no access to metaphysical principles, his thinking could not be radically different (in the strict sense of that much-abused term) from that which it opposed. He could not have been other than he was. 666, and never been Kissed.

Sister Angelina

This article is the first of three published by Aquarian Arrow.

Lux Madriana and the Solar Logos

I am no Thelemite, and hold no brief for Crowley's attitude to women nor his writings on sex. But when Sister Angelina accuses Crowley of metaphysical ignorance, this is really the pot calling the kettle black. For in none of his writings has Crowley ever displayed such a crass misunderstanding of the "underlying realities" behind traditional metaphysical attributions of some elements to women, and others to men, as Sister Angelina did in her article.

There may well have been cultures in the past in which women personified the Sun and men the Earth, just as the Moon is masculine and the Sun feminine in the German language. But these have been a minority, among patriarchal just as much as among patriarchal cultures.

Women have been associated with Earth and Matter long before the days of patriarchal monotheism. This was not the result of men seeking to debase women, because the Earth and Matter were not until recently regarded as "base". In pantheist cultures, Matter and Spirit are but two different aspects of the same divine Reality underlying all Life.

Women have been associated with the Earth, because they bear and bring forth children in the same manner in which the Earth brings forth crops. That is why the word "matter" (in Latin materia) has the same linguistic roots as the word "mother" (in Latin mater). Matter is seen as the mother-stuff from which all physical sentient life is made.

Women have also been associated with the Moon, because of the close parallel between their twenty-eight day menstrual cycles and lunar months. That is why in patriarchal fertility cultures, the calendar was divided into thirteen lunar months, and each month into four seven-day weeks representing one of the quarters, and why the number thirteen was sacred. It

is also at night, especially when the Moon shines and is near Full Moon, that men and women are most under the influence of their feelings and emotions, especially the feeling of Love. This is also associated more closely with women than with men, because of their primary role in bearing children and in protecting them in infancy.

The Moon influences also the sea's tides: hence a link between the Moon and the sea, and by extension between women and the element of Water, which also plays an important role through rain in preserving the fertility of the soil. These are the "underlying Realities" behind traditional metaphysical attributions of Earth and Water as feminine elements.

The Sun, on the other hand, is associated with the element of Fire: not unnaturally, since the Sun is itself a huge ball of fiery thermonuclear explosions and chemical reactions. Fire is itself an aggressive and destructive element, capable of reducing fertile jungles to ashes. The Sun too is essentially destructive when it is not balanced by water in a landscape: it turns vast parts of the tropics to deserts, and its solar flares were the main agent of evolution on Earth before the arrival of Man, usually by causing climatic changes that wiped out whole species unable to adapt, for example, the dinosaurs.

The male sex has traditionally been the more aggressive of the two, not just in human cultures, but in most mammal species as well. Hence it is natural to attribute the aggressive elements of Fire and the Sun to men.

Humanity alone of all animal species has been able to domesticate Fire, and to turn its destructive properties to creative use, in the smelting of metals and the fashioning of tools. But these in turn have been used as means of aggression against the environment, of destroying an existing landscape as the first step to fashioning it in a new form. This creative use of the destructive power of Fire, and of the tools made with it,

requires the ability for mental conceptualisation of patterns different from the existing ones. This conceptual ability, usually attributed to the element of Air, tends to be more highly developed in that statistical myth the "average man" than in the "average woman", although differences between individuals are of course much greater than between the sexes. Hence the attribution of the elements of Air and Fire, Conceptualisation (Logos) and the Destructive and Creative Will to men.

Life on Earth is the result of a delicate balance between all these elements. Pure Conceptualisation and Destructive-Creative Will unbalanced by the conservative forces of Form and Love produce the fiery furnace of the Sun, in whose chemical processes millions of new shapes and colours are forever being created, but endure for less than a microsecond, because the conservative force of Matter is absent to hold them and give them form.

But pure Matter and Form, unfertilised by the energy of the Sun mediated by an atmosphere of Air and Water, produces the unchanging surface of the Moon. The Earth is intermediate between these two extremes, though closer to the Moon, and thus we have the marvellous balance of Life, ever-changing but also renewing itself, and in which individual life-forms last long enough both as species and as individuals, to establish an identity and to experience that identity.

The ancient pantheistic cultures recognised that Life on Earth is the product of a sacred marriage between the Sun and the Earth mediated by the Moon, of the elements of Fire and Matter, mediated by Air and Water. The sacred marriage of men and women was indeed a paradigm of this. But it was not unregenerate Man being spiritualised by the Sun-maiden. It was Man's fiery aggression and airy speculative intellect being "earthed" and made productive by Woman, by disciplining it into the world of Form.

This is still true in practice today, though in the absence of an

understood ritual to sanctify it, participants in the process are mostly unaware of it on the conscious level. Men on their own either form armies, that are embodiments of the Destructive-Creative Will, the element of Fire; or congregate into monasteries, universities, or research laboratories, to pursue pure speculative and conceptual thought for its own sake, the element of Air.

It is the women who domesticate the warriors, and bring the speculators down to reality, by asking practical questions such as: "How are your children and I going to survive this war?" or "What good will this wonderful utopia do to ordinary people?" Men are the idealists, women the materialists. But when a great statesman, writer or architect actually achieves something enduring, it is frequently because he had one or more women behind him, encouraging him to give form to some of his many abstract concepts.

Solar monotheism originated with the Aryan tribes of the Caucasus, as an attempt to become more efficient at war and conquest by worshipping the spirit of fiery aggression to the exclusion of the gentler loving elements of Earth and Water. That is why they forbade the priestess-dominated fertility cults: they made the tribes "soft" and tolerant, and less effective in war. Solar monotheism also made these warrior tribes less efficient at the Goddess-ruled arts of agriculture, but this did not matter since they could conquer agricultural Goddess-worshipping peoples and force them to feed them. This was the logic behind the solar monotheism of the Aryans and Persians, and later of the Jews under Moses and the Prophets.

This could work as long as solar monotheism was the religion only of an upper caste of rulers and warriors, and the lower classes were allowed to retain their religious bonds with the Earth. But when the Christian Church in its zeal hunted down the witches of the villages, and made the ordinary country people be as solar monotheist as the aristocracy and town inhabitants, the path was set for the society we have today. This is not

so much "materialist" in the true metaphysical sense - would that it were! - as obsessively creative of useless artefacts from which we derive no real enjoyment other than the pride of having made them. In doing so, we destroy the much more beautiful and essential environment in which we live, and display the mutual fear and distrust (or at least our rulers do) that is the sign of people alienated from their roots.

Sister Angelina claims to deplore this society as much as I do. But she and her fellow Madrians appear to think that all that is needed to redress the balance is to put women at the top of a religious-political edifice that still worships the Solar Logos to the exclusion of Matter, by making the Sun a "Her" instead of a "Him". Instead of turning to the great Earth Mother Goddess of antiquity - to Isis, Ishtar, Astarte, Cybele or Kwan-Yin - the Madrians worship Jehovah-in-drag.

Jehovah is a real God - i.e. aspect of the Ultimate Reality - who generally answers the prayers of those that worship Him/Her exclusively, by refashioning their souls in His/Her image of ruthless Destructive-Creative Will. He gave the Jews the will to conquer Palestine on at least three occasions in as many millenia, and the Protestant Puritans the will to conquer and settle North America, South Africa and Australasia, as well as to found countless business empires.

Judging by the tone of her interventions at the recent conference on "The Re-emergence of the Goddess" in April 1979, Jehovah has already given Sister Angelina that steely conviction of alone possessing the Truth that I normally associate with Jewish and Christian Fundamentalists. In time Jehovah will help the Madrians to get themselves accepted as equals by men in the rat-race to the top of executive boardrooms, or to become tomorrow's Mrs Gandhis, Golda Meirs and Margaret Thatchers (which is all that some feminists are interested in).

But I doubt whether Jehovah can teach the Madrians how to make their kisses initiatory to a higher level of consciousness either to their

partners or to themselves, for that is not in that God's gift. To achieve self-transcendence in a Sacred Marriage, the two partners must approach it in a spirit of recognising the divine in their partners that can complement the divine in themselves, and then surrender to them, rather than look down on them as rather base creatures "ensnared in matter" whom one is trying to lift up.

What good would it do humanity to have more Golda Meirs and Mrs Gandhis? Israel was no less intramigently aggressive under Mrs Meir than under earlier and later male Prime Ministers, and India a great deal more oppressed under Mrs Gandhi than before or since.

Western civilisation has now worshipped the Solar Destructive-Creative Will exclusively for so long that it is in grave danger of blowing itself and the whole of life on Earth up with its overstocked arsenal of artificial suns, the H-bombs. If we are to prevent this, then it is desperately urgent for us to restore the ancient Earth Mother Goddess to Her temples, put more faith into the preserving power of Love and Fertility than into the sterile Capitalist and Socialist abstract utopias.

It is because we all know deep down within ourselves that women are so much closer in intuitive empathy to the Earth spirit that alone can save us that male resistance to the women's struggle is crumbling in the West, and many men would indeed gladly put up with a period of matriarchy. But it would have to be a matriarchy of the intuitive as well as of intellectual women, the sensual and loving ones more than the politicians and administrators.

Fortunately, important elements in the Feminist Movement recognise this better than Lux Madriana. For perceptive and sensitive contributions to the resurgence of Mother Goddess worship, and a historically more accurate description of the matriarchal past, read Merlin Stone's Paradise Papers, Carol Ochs's Behind the Sex of God and Anne Kent Rush's Moon, Moon.

Robert

This article is the second of three published by Aquarian Arrow.

Marie Antoinette and the Reine Soleil

To begin at the end of Robert's article: yes, there is a form of matriarchalism very different from that of Madrianism. It is preached (with variations) by Merlin Stone, Robert Graves and others. It consists, broadly, in accepting the old patriarchal sky-father/earth-mother doctrine, but inverting their hierarchical order, so that the earth-mother and her chthonic values are exalted above the "rationality" of the sky-father. Madrians have always maintained that such a minor cosmetic operation could never alter the real patriarchal essence of the doctrine; and if proof were needed, Robert's delightfully chauvinist article (behind every Great Statesman is a Good Woman, etc.) surely supplies it.

Actually, the whole situation is the result of a metaphysical confusion so excruciatingly entangled that one is reminded more than anything else of a kitten that has managed to get itself trussed like a chicken in its own ball of wool. And this confusion, in turn, derives from the sheer blackness of metaphysical ignorance which characterises (and indeed practically constitutes) the post-Renaissance mentality. In view of this, it is scarcely surprising that Robert is able to accuse me of metaphysical ignorance. I have heard a topologist facetiously but not inaccurately described as "someone who can't tell the difference between a teacup and a doughnut". Robert's reaction to true metaphysics is akin to that of the bumpkin who bursts out: "Topology's supposed to be the science of shapes, ain't it? Well any idiot can tell the difference between a teacup and a doughnut. Them blamed professors must be daft!" This is not so much a personal criticism of Robert as a general criticism of modern ignorance as a whole. But a little real metaphysics can quickly dispel the ignorance and get the kitten out of the cats'-cradle.

But what is real metaphysics? It is the primordial Philosophy not devised by any human mind, but passed down (traditio) from mother to daughter since the primordial time, the Golden Age "when earth touched Heaven". In its original form, this Philosophy was matriarchal, as was the social order. The social order was matriarchal because the primordial Philosophy was matriarchal. Earth

followed the law of Heaven. Yet even ~~was~~ humanity descended away from the Golden Age, through the Silver and Bronze Ages, into the Iron Age itself (which began some 5,000 years ago), and in this final Age, patriarchy slowly took over from matriarchy, the primordial Philosophy continued to be taught. It was taught by Plato and Plotinus, by Shankara and Shakyamuni the Buddha; indeed, every Iron Age civilisation has possessed its own more or less scaled-down version of the primordial Philosophy. Or rather, that was true up until the last 300 years. And although each version speaks a slightly different spiritual "language", each is saying the same things. Metaphysics is not a matter of personal opinion; it is as precise as a mathematical equation.

The essence of Robert's confusion is as follows: he equates the sky-father/earth-mother duality with two other dualities, namely Spirit/matter and rationalism/emotionalism. Now in the first place these two dualities are not only not equivalent, they have no common measure whatever; and in the second place, he has completely misconceived both of them.

He states calmly that the majority of matriarchal as well as patriarchal cultures have regarded women as earth/matter as opposed to sun/spirit. Yet even Merlin Stone has pointed out that the sun was female in Japan, India, Canaan, Anatolia, Arabia, Australia and among the Eskimos (The Paradise Papers, p.18) and one could easily add others to the list. In fact the male sun is purely a patriarchal Indo-Aryan invention. The same author points out that far from being exclusively an earth-goddess, Her most frequent title from the earliest times has been Queen of Heaven (perhaps Robert should scratch the book off his list). The reason he gives for this supposed matriarchal equation of maid with matter is that matter was then given its due worship for its own innate virtues. This is an interesting argument, but it has one fatal flaw. However amazing it may seem to the modern mind, the concept of matter as a physical stuff possessing certain innate qualities was wholly unknown up until 400 years ago. All form, all qualities, according to the primordial Philosophy, are Archetypes, or Divine Ideas, belonging to Spirit. Matter is simply the wax upon which the seal of forms and qualities is impressed. This means that pure matter, untouched by Spirit, would have no qualities whatever: no size, no weight, no shape, neither hardness nor softness, heat nor coldness nor colour. Obviously, it is in no

sense physical. The equation of nature with matter implied in Robert's article rests upon the post-Cartesian concept of matter. Applied to ancient civilisations, whether matriarchal or patriarchal, it is pure anachronism. When we speak of modern "materialism", we are using the term loosely, for what is in question is not true matter, but the modern fantasy of "physical matter", which very phrase is a contradiction in terms. This is not to say that all ordinary people in the ancient world possessed a clear philosophical concept of matter, but they certainly did not possess the unnatural notion of "physical matter" which has been inculcated into the modern mind via the compulsory "education" system and the mass-media.

Matter, then, is a "crystal mirror", a tabula rasa ready to accept whatever image Spirit shall impress upon it. The combination of matter and Spirit is nature (whether physical or non-physical). The patriarchs knew precisely what they were doing in equating maid with matter, thus making her the purely passive support of man's activity (behind every Great Statesman is a Good Woman). The matriarchal perspective is not simply the reverse of this, for the man in the marriage rite is not "man" being saved by "maid", he is soul being saved by Spirit; the maid is just as much soul as the man; but she is enacting a ritual role. The ritual is certainly real, and not just an "act". But not on the most obvious level. If that were so it would mean that every wife was God! This is subtle stuff, I know, and it cannot be made any clearer by tossing it about in a polemical arena. All I can say is, contemplate it if you want to and don't if you don't. Any true understanding will be supra-verbal.

Which brings us to rationalism. It has become a New-Age truism that the Christian west is overbalanced on the side of solar intellect; and like most New-Age truisms, it is not true. Of the two paths, bhakti marga and jnana marga; the path of Love, will, or emotion and the path of Light or solar Intellect, Christianity has always erred on the side of the former. If one were to look for a culture which has erred on the other side, Buddhism would be an obvious example. What the New-Age critics have in mind is actually the rationalism of the Christian west. But rationalism and solar Intellect are two entirely different things. Intellect not only perceives, but is one with, the Spiritual Archetypes. It is not an individual faculty at all, but rather the point at

which the individual soul touches the trans-personal Centre. Viewed subjectively, it is Enlightenment; viewed objectively, it is the Absolute; nor is it other than pure Love (which, from our earthly point of view, is lunar), since the distinction between the two is an illusion which appears only when seen from "below".

Rationalism, on the other hand, is the ignorant reaction of the individual mental faculty, through its agent the brain, upon the contingent things of the physical world as transmitted via the physical senses. Ignorant because it is, by definition, unaware of the Spiritual Archetypes which are the real essence of all physical phenomena. Sentimentalism or emotionalism is a similarly ignorant reaction to the same phenomena by the passional faculty. Far from being in any way opposed, rationalism and sentimentalism are two sides of the same coin. The west is rationalist because it is sentimentalist. The two are inseparable. But just as Love and Intellect, seen in their true perspective, are seen to be one, so their inferior parodies, sentimentalism and rationalism, being cut off from unitive Reality, present the illusion of being eternally separate. Every modernist reaction against rationalism inevitably takes the form of a mere appeal to emotional reactions as opposed to mental ones: thus its sole effect is to give the wheel of Samsara another turn. Robert's underlying thesis is simply another essay in the long history of such barren sentimentalist reactions. One must sympathise with the desire to react against rationalism. But nothing is achieved by running continually from the right hand of Moira into her left.

Since deserting the revealed symbolic structure of the matriarchal Philosophy, patriarchal metaphysics has always been balancing on a tightrope. With Christianity, it finally fell victim to its own meddling with the primordial Doctrine. Due to its dogma of the male 'son', it mistook the Christ (who is actually a masculinised version of the lunar Daughter, as opposed to the solar Mother) for the Solar Logos; thus depriving itself of any authentic representative of the solar Principle. The two greatest exponents of solar Intellect in Christianity were Origen and Meister Eckhardt. Both were declared heretics. Lacking the "backbone" of Intellect, the Love-path of Christianity declined into a samsaric sentimentality, which eventually gave rise, at the time of Aquinas, to an equally samsaric rationalism, which was the inverse parody of the missing Intellectuality. This rationalism developed slowly, still dressed

in metaphysical garments, until the Renaissance, when it broke loose and initiated the wild downward spiral which has led us to the modern world; creating on the way such topsy-turvy notions as "physical matter", and all the confusions which they have generated. These confusions have proved particularly effective in neutralising all intellectual resistance to the downward movement.

What is the answer to this impasse? How shall we cleave a path between the Scylla of rationalism and the Charybdis of sentimentalism? The Madrian answer is very straightforward: we must put right the original deviation at source. In other words, we must return to the primordial matriarchal Philosophy, devotion and way of life. This does not mean constructing a "matriarchalism" from a handful of archaeological bones tied together by modern speculations (which will inevitably be rationalist, sentimentalist or - more likely - both). That will leave us right back where we started. We must go to the living matriarchal tradition, as it has been preserved down the ages in this country and elsewhere. The tradition we call Madrian. And this means not only accepting a Philosophy - although the path of Light is indispensable; nor simply opening our hearts to the adoration of God in the form in which He has revealed Herself to humanity from the dawn of time - although the path of Love is also indispensable. It also means treading the third path, which is called the path of Works, or of themis. This entails governing our entire way of life in accordance with the divine Harmony. It means rejecting all secular political systems which are not directed by the one lawful Princess of Earth. It means rejecting all industrial systems which are geared to merely "making goods", instead of practising the ancient sacred crafts which are not merely utilitarian, but also a path of meditation. It means rejecting commercialism and the cash nexus, whether in its capitalist or socialist forms. In short, it means rejecting the whole edifice of modern human-centred culture, and returning to a God-centred matriarchy.

This is the most extraordinary part of Robert's article. He might have accused us of being wild anarchists bent on warring down all the "achievements" of "progress". He might have called us Amazon reactionaries intractably opposed to the liberal-democratic ideals of late patriarchy. Either accusation would have some semblance of plausibility. The more imish among us might have been sorely tempted to reply: "Yop, that's about the size of it." But instead, he chooses to

accuse us of wanting to join "the ratrace to the top of executive boardrooms, or to become tomorrow's Indira Gandhis, Golda Meirs and Margaret Thatchers" - we, who do not even accept any secular or patriarchal government as legal! It is rather like accusing Mary Whitehouse of being a pornographer, or Archbishop Lefèbvre of being a Protestant. The good primate no doubt has his detractors. Some of them, perhaps, say some very nasty things about him. It is even conceivable that some of those things may be true. But if anyone is going about accusing him of being a Protestant, we may be forgiven for thinking that that person does not have the remotest idea of what she is talking about.

Actually, Madrihanism, while it is unashamedly matriarchal both in its doctrine and in its social institutions, has nothing to do with denigrating men, or with regarding them as in any sense "base". It is a simple, traditional way of life, based on authority, love and devotion. It puts God (both in Her solar and Her lunar aspects) at the centre not only of its Sundays, but of its stories, its songs, its work and its life. It is lived by men and maids, in that mutual love and respect which one finds only in a God-centred hierarchy. I do not deny that there are many self-styled matriarchalists (most of whom have never seen the inside of a matriarchal household) who, filled with the urban ideologies of the Iron Age, despise our way of life and all that it stands for. But I cannot help thinking that theirs is the fastidious contempt of a Marie Antoinette, dressed up with crook and smock, upon meeting a real-life shepherdess.

Sister Angelina

This article is the third of three published by Aquarian Arrow.