

**PATRIARCHY, FEMINISM AND MARY DALY: A
SYSTEMATIC-THEOLOGICAL ENQUIRY INTO DALY'S
ENGAGEMENT WITH GENDER ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN
THEOLOGY**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that PATRIARCHY, FEMINISM, AND MARY DALY: A SYSTEMATIC-THEOLOGICAL ENQUIRY INTO DALY'S ENGAGEMENT WITH GENDER ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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SUMMARY

PATRIARCHY, FEMINISM, AND MARY DALY: A SYSTEMATIC-THEOLOGICAL ENQUIRY INTO DALY'S ENGAGEMENT WITH GENDER ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

KEY TERMS

Mary Daly, Patriarchy, Feminism, Patriarchal male, Patriarchal female, Patriarchal God, Biophilic women.

The exposition of patriarchy and feminism in this thesis points toward the difficulty women experienced in the past, and in many cases still do, in their pursuit for equality in a male dominated society. Without feminists' consciousness raising concerning women's oppression, women might still be under patriarchal domination, oppression, and marginalisation; in fact, many still are. As a result, many women today can reject the views that men are superior, stronger, and more rational than they are, and that God created men to dominate on male-female relations.

In their struggle against patriarchy, some feminists however, began to transform Biblical images and language for God, with the result that masculine images of God were simply replaced with feminine images, presenting God as androgynous and not as a Deity who transcends sexuality. God's identity thus, in my opinion, became obscured. In this thesis I argue that both patriarchy and feminism have contributed to our experiencing difficulties when we try to identify with a loving and caring God as portrayed in Scripture.

Daly's outrage and anger against men and the Christian faith, as well as her decision to turn away from Christianity on the basis of its patriarchy, I judge to be, for various reasons given in this thesis, a negative influence in this debate. She is undoubtedly

one of the most radical feminists of the past decades and her slogan “since God is male, the male is God” implies that in order for women to become liberated they require the emasculation of God. Daly’s line of reasoning is that Christianity is a male structure with a Scripture that is irredeemably patriarchal. Her belief that Christians are fixated upon the person of Jesus, a male, and that, therefore, women have to overcome this idolatry needs serious questioning. Her radical views have created disunity and separatism between women who are striving to answer life-changing questions

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE FOCAL POINT OF THE THESIS

1.1 Orientation

Feminism is represented by a wide range of theological and biblical positions and accepts that women have been living in a patriarchal culture in which women are often the victims of violence, abuse and discrimination, and that this makes them dependent on male autonomy. In analysing feminism, one becomes aware of how painful it is for women to live in a patriarchal society.

To engage with feminism is not a simple task, firstly because of the many variations of feminism that have developed over time, and secondly, people who criticise feminism risk being labelled in the case of men as sexist, or in the case of women, of being in collaboration with male oppressors. Feminists are not always in agreement and many controversial personal attacks and disagreements exist amongst them and others who hold differing views on what actually constitutes feminism. It is important, however, that women did begin to question stereotypical views held by men on the very nature and existence of women. In analysing feminism, it is clear that feminists communicate a shared emotional experience of women's suffering, their feelings of humiliation, inferiority and the emotional pain inflicted upon them under patriarchy. In fact, throughout Western history, a grim and alarming picture of discrimination against women has been painted.

Feminism, without a doubt, made important contributions to the liberation of women and the respective roles women play, especially within the church and society. Women may now be ordained, hold positions of power and their perspectives on the development of new statements of belief receive more recognition. Women have also

gained legal rights, the right to bodily autonomy and integrity, the right to abortion and the freedom to manage their reproductive health. The law now provides protection from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape. Many countries also practice equal rights within the work place. Other issues which have received positive attention include racism, homophobia, classism and colonisation. Feminists made crucial and life-changing contributions to the empowerment of women and to the breakdown of oppressive and derogatory barriers which had kept women silent and submissive throughout history.

There are many different views on patriarchy and I want to start by sketching some examples of these and how they have been experienced by women. Women's subordination can be traced back to as early as Plato and Aristotle who both viewed women as inferior, as not being fully human or capable of reasoning, and as generally being weaker in nature than men. In the early Christian tradition, women were depicted as temptresses, as the cause of all sin, as deformed males and as not having been created in the image of God. They were created purely for the purpose of procreation: women had few rights in the public or private spheres of society. With the rise of feminism, these views were challenged. In its quest for women's liberation, the feminist movement became a voice and platform through which women could confront the oppressive nature of patriarchy and through which they could ask life-changing and important questions in order to critique past and present assumptions and paradigms.

Patriarchy, as a concept for female oppression, has been used over time in a variety of ways. It has been discussed as an ideology, as a symbolic male principle, as the literal power of the father, as a method of controlling women's sexuality and fertility and as an institutional structure of male domination (Rowbotham 2006:52). Therborn (2004:17) states that "in the beginning of our story all significant societies were clearly patriarchal. There was no single exception". Walby (1990:20) explains patriarchy as a "system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women". Haas (1995:321) states that Christians of a "wide range of theological and Biblical positions" generally accept that the culture of the Old Testament is

patriarchal. Scanzoni and Hardesty (1992:1) equate patriarchy with sexism as being the systematic oppression of women. Van Leeuwen (1993:121) states that patriarchy is androcentric and male-centered and that men are the bearers of authority and power and that they deprive women of any authority or power. In a patriarchal society men are powerful and women are inferior, defective and less fully human (Van Leeuwen 1993:136-137). Hull (1998:97) contends that patriarchy “fosters discrimination and abuses human rights”. Ruether states that patriarchy is found where society is father-ruled and where it reinforces the subordination of women, as well as where weak and marginalised groups are held subordinate to the rich and powerful (Ruether 1983:61).

As a result of their experiences of suffering within a patriarchal society, many women began to question the intrinsically patriarchal Bible.¹ According to Schneiders (1992:57), feminists argue that since the Bible was written over a span of about two thousand years and because different authors at different times and places contributed to it, the Bible is not the word of God in a literal sense. Schneiders (1991:52) states, “The Bible is literally the word of human beings about their experience of God”. The Bible is a narrative about God, filtered through humans, reflecting the assumptions, attitudes and behavioural patterns of its culture during which it was written. Human understanding, being imperfect, implies that biblical writings cannot meet contemporary standards of justice and equity and, therefore, the Bible cannot answer contemporary questions (Japinga 1999:43). Van-Wijk Bos (1995:10) contends that the Bible is more than a human book because God chose to use human experience and words to communicate Divine truth. For Russell, (1985:141) it is dangerous to call the Bible the word of God if it means that everything reflected in the Bible is God’s intention or will for the world. Male interpretations of the Bible have resulted in women being dominated by men, and as such, many began to question whether it could ever redeem this subjugation.

¹ See for example Fiorenza (1984:15ff); Ruether (1983:53-54); Russell (1976:15ff); Tribble (1982:23); Scanzoni & Hardesty (1992:12); Mollenkott (1977:91); Evans (1983:25-26); Tucker (1992:58).

Some women have lost their faith in this war against patriarchy within Christianity. I want to refer briefly to four women as examples: Daphne Hampson, Naomi Goldenberg, Carol Christ and Mary Daly who all renounced the Christian faith.

Hampson, in her book *After Christianity*, 2002, states that if Christianity is true, God cannot be thought of as moral or good “given the harm that this myth has done to women” (Hampson 2002:xv). The Christian myth is misogynistic (Hampson 2002:xvi) and morally suspect (Hampson 2002:vxiii).

Goldenberg, in her book *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the end of Traditional Religions*, 1979, postulated that God is going to change and women are going to bring an end to God by taking up positions in government, medicine, law, business and religion. Goldenberg states that women will “change the world so much that He won't fit in anymore” (Goldenberg 1979:3). As women improve their positions in society, it is going to bring “an end to God” and feminists are bringing about a world that is “less and less like the one described in the Bible,... thus helping to lessen the influence of Christ and YAHWEH on society” (Goldenberg 1979:10).

Carol Christ, influenced by emerging feminist theological discourses, and in particularly by Daly, concluded that God, patriarchy, Scripture and language all paved the way for the rejection of biblical and traditional religions. In her book, *Rebirth of the Goddess: Finding Meaning in Feminist Spirituality*, 1979, she argues that “the image of God as Father, Son, and Spirit was the root of the problem” (Christ 1997:2) and that God is “judgmental”, that God is a “God of war and a military force”, and “Feminists view the judgmental dominating ethos as an integral part of the image of God as a patriarchal male” (Christ 1997:23). These women reason that the core of the Christian culture is understood as patriarchal and, therefore, Christianity is incapable of providing a full humanity for women.

Mary Daly, once a Christian from a Catholic background, rejected her Christian heritage altogether, because she believed that Christianity is destructive to women and that it is exclusionary in nature. Daly's most influential books were *The Church and the Second Sex*, 1968, and *Beyond God the Father*, 1985. In her feminist

critique on Christianity's support of the repression of women, Daly concluded that feminism and Christianity are not compatible and declared, "the patriarchal god is redundant for women" (Daly 1985:13). Daly's intentional and aggressive attack on the church placed her in direct opposition to the Church and the Christian faith. The quest for women to find religious legitimacy required a move away from tradition and the church (Isherwood and Mc Phillips 2008:5). Daly's critique on traditional Christianity and her rejection thereof became the face of the feminists' challenge to Christianity (Pears 2002:9).

Mary Daly, Daphne Hampson, Carol Christ, and Naomi Goldenberg are four examples of women who wrestled with the Christian faith and who asked deeply cutting and unsettling questions about the Christian faith. In their rejection of the Christian faith, they have played an important role in the feminist movement to destroy women's belief in a Christian God: this requires serious debate.

1.2 Approach and relevance

Schüssler Fiorenza once stated that theology is the product of each writer's experience and that this is determined by the historical and social context of every theologian. Theology is culturally conditioned and contextually shapes, reflects, and serves a particular group's or individual's interests (Fiorenza 1975:616). With this statement in mind, I will make some preliminary remarks to indicate the position from which I approach this research. One's own experience, and how one interprets the works and views of others, is of great importance and I will therefore identify my approach to Christianity and Scripture.

Gaylor and Fitzpatrick, in their *Stages for Consciousness Raising* (1987), constructed a six-stage scheme for consciousness raising which consists of "the no big deal stage", "the eye-opening stage", "the on the fence stage", "the coming home stage", "the passion or appropriation stage" and "the acceptance/incorporation stage". I want to apply this scheme, using one or two examples from my life, to demonstrate my development, my consciousness raising and my personal experiences of patriarchy and feminism.

At the age of 12, I came to realise my own sinfulness and need for salvation. I committed and submitted myself to Jesus Christ's Lordship. My religious roots stem from the Dutch Reformed Church and, at a later stage of my life, the Apostolic Faith Mission. I grew up in South Africa, Pretoria in an egalitarian Afrikaans-speaking household in which I was one of four daughters and four brothers. Although the oppressive nature and dominant culture of patriarchy was a reality in the social context I was living in, it was not something I experienced at home during my childhood – "my no big deal stage". In the broader society however, gender discrimination and female oppression in society and the Church were accepted as the norm although it was not called as such. In Church and in school we learned that Adam was created in the image of God as the first human being and that Eve was created as a helpmate for Adam. It was expected that women should generally be obedient and subservient. In Church, God was male and people were brothers, sons of God and men. Liturgy, prayers, the Eucharist, and the administering of baptism were reserved for males only and ordination of women was unheard of. In Church, women's contributions were mainly restricted to the serving of refreshments after the service and to the teaching of Sunday school, always within the confines of strict rules. Whilst I was a Sunday school teacher, I was once reprimanded for allowing younger children to sing other Christian songs besides Psalms and Hymns and, because of this, the reverend deemed it necessary to attend one of my Sunday school classes. His daughter (4 years old) attended my classes and after I gave my prescribed Sunday school lesson, I asked them what they would like to sing. She jumped up, stating that we should sing the national anthem "Die Stem", clearly not a prescribed Psalm or Hymn. I questioned whether it was wrong to sing other Christian songs and we were then allowed to sing only one other Christian song.. I began to feel uncomfortable with these strict rules and felt that women did not have a voice in the congregation.

That is when I found myself in "the eye-openings stage" of consciousness raising. I have never doubted that men and women are created equal in the image of God and I have always believed that we all deserve the same worth and dignity. I

subconsciously knew and experienced that the world I was living in was a male-dominated one and that it placed restrictions on me in various places and stages of my life. As I had always wanted to work full time in the ministry, I began studying theology. Once I had joined the Apostolic Faith Mission, I realised that, although women could partake in some liturgical processes, they were still restricted to certain roles and that there was a discrepancy between theory and practice, and words and deeds. Women remained on the periphery, largely unaware of their marginalisation.

This experience placed me in the “on the fence stage” of consciousness raising. I knew that whilst there were many gifted and capable women, men continued to enjoy privileged status within Church structures. Congregations submitted to the status quo and voted for men as leaders and seemed to prefer men as their spiritual leaders. As I felt that to speak out against this type of injustice might jeopardise my future in the Church, I pressed on with my studies and worked diligently inside and outside the Church, working with disadvantaged women and within the disabled community. A personal experience clearly illustrates the church’s attitude towards women at that time: one day, a pastor asked me not to wear any make-up because it might contribute to men having sinful thoughts about women. As with other women, I found that the goal posts for my ordination were constantly being shifted and I began to question both whether I would ever be ordained and what role I could possibly have in the church.

When I started working in the Department of Systematic Theology at the University of South Africa, one of my colleagues made me aware of feminism. I found myself in “the coming home stage” of consciousness raising. Admittedly, I did not know much about feminism or patriarchy, and so I began researching both concepts. One day, a professor in the department, who called himself a post-modern feminist, made a remark about another colleague who had completed her doctorate studies; he commented that she was under the impression that her views had actually been taken seriously by her male colleagues. I began to grapple with questions such as: was this the face of patriarchy and male dominance that women were speaking about? Do women still, in this day and age, feel that they have to know their place in

society and keep quiet? What I had previously experienced as normal became questionable – I was living in a patriarchal context. Digging deeper into the theological discourse of feminism and patriarchy, I was confronted with the struggle of women to gain human dignity, how they continued to have unequal status to men, and how, largely, the Church and society continued to deny equality to women.

I moved on to “the passionate stage” of consciousness raising which involved both a new way of thinking and of feeling. I became more and more conscious of the emotional discourse surrounding the oppression and injustice inflicted upon women. I started seeing these issues through new eyes and I knew that I wanted to become part of the theological dialogue between men and women on how to overcome these oppressive structures. I recognised that the Gospel can be lived in true love, forgiveness and reconciliation. Men and women stand in mutual relationships, and regardless of their sexual differences, both genders are in dire need of *metanoia* in the Church and society.

While I was writing this thesis, I arrived at the “acceptance and incorporation stage” of consciousness raising. I believe and accept that the lives and thoughts of men and women need transformation and that, we, collectively, should share a passion for justice. We need to work together for an inclusive Church and society, and we have to confirm the full humanity and dignity of all people as created in the image of God. I am committed to the inerrancy, inspiration and the final authority of Scripture but also acknowledge the importance of the historical and cultural background of the Bible. I condemn the use of the Bible to justify or to inflict any injustice upon any human being, whether it is patriarchy, feminism, slavery or racism.

1.3 Research interest

However, there is more to my consciousness-raising journey. During my research, I was also confronted with the works of Mary Daly. Daly’s outrage and anger against men and the Christian faith, as well as her decision to turn against Christianity on the basis of its patriarchy have had a profoundly negative impact on my thoughts; she is undoubtedly one of the most radical feminists of the past decade. Daly’s slogan

“since God is male, the male is God” implies that in order for women to become liberated they require the emasculation of God. Daly’s line of reasoning is that Christianity is a male structure with a Scripture that is irredeemably patriarchal. Her belief that Christians are fixated upon the person of Jesus and that, therefore, women have to overcome this idolatry needs serious questioning. Her radical views have created disunity and separatism between women who are striving to answer life-changing questions.

This thesis is an endeavour to evaluate Mary Daly’s feminist understanding of the nature of God and the significance of her understanding of God for the main stream, or traditional Christian view, of the person of God. This work focuses on the issue of gender and the person of God. Three basic questions consequently undergird this study. What is her view on God? What influenced her specific understanding of God? What are the implications and consequences of her critique on the traditional view of God?

1.4 Research aims

There are three primary aims of this thesis. The first aim seeks to explain the development of patriarchy as perceived by feminists; secondly, the thesis seeks to explain the development of feminism as a result of women’s resistance against patriarchy. The third aim is to debate Daly’s denouncement of God and Christianity purely on the postulation that God is male based.

I will argue from a Christian point of view that Daly’s views are not poles apart from those of patriarchy but merely the flip side of the same coin: her brand of feminism actually professes exactly what Christian patriarchy is accused of having done over the centuries. We have to ask what the implications and consequences of Daly’s critique on God and the Christian faith have had on women and their experience of God.

1.5 Qualitative research

This study is an attempt to substantively and critically review the feminist literature concerning patriarchy, feminism, and feminists' views on God. The nature of this research is a qualitative and descriptive review of literature that either contradicts or supports feminists' views on Christian theology.

1.6 The way forward

Feminists, especially radical feminists, who are concerned with religion and ethical issues, struggle with the question of whether one can be a feminist and remain faithful to the Christian faith. Therefore, a discussion on the development of feminist consciousness would be incomplete without an understanding of patriarchal views on women throughout history. Before exploring these issues central to feminism, one has to have an understanding of patriarchy as a reason for the development of feminism in general. Women's subordination to men has been, and continues to be, a worldwide phenomenon; women throughout the ages have experienced discrimination, humiliation, exploitation, oppression, control and violence by men.

In Chapter two, it will become evident that one cannot deny or ignore that patriarchy exists, and, that from a feminist point of view, patriarchy as a system is intrinsically evil. Feminists, in their endeavour to analyse women's oppression, use this concept of patriarchy. To understand feminists' quarrel with patriarchy, it needs to be defined. My research will focus on the many varied definitions and theories that exist about patriarchy. It will address the rise of patriarchy from the pre-historic era through to the views on women held by the Greek fathers Clement of Alexandria, Origen and John Chrysostom as well as those held by the Latin fathers Tertullian, Jerome and Augustine. I will then move on to discuss the views on women during the medieval era held by Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure and John Duns Scotus. The chapter will conclude with the views on women by the Reformation theologians Luther and Knox.

Chapter three is not an attempt to write a complete historical record of feminism. I will focus on the development of feminism between the 12th century and the 20th century.

What is important in this chapter are women's experiences of patriarchy and how women define this term. It will focus on the development of feminism in waves and the wave metaphor will be used to look at feminist generations and its history through a lens of movement and trajectory (Hukulani, *et al*, 2007:3). The development of the first wave, second wave and third wave will receive special attention, together with the different forms of feminisms that developed during each wave. The opinions of women who made their voices known in their quest to gain equality will be strongly visible throughout this chapter. I decided to use a chronological style in the discussion of the development of feminism because although women may be categorised within a specific wave, their works and thoughts were often carried over to the next wave. It will become evident that women, in their struggle for liberation, felt the need to re-read and to re-write their history. This chapter raises one's consciousness of how women have struggled over many years to be accepted as being fully human, as having been created in the image of God and to gain equality in all aspects of their very existence. However, what will also become evident is how women started to experience men, God and the Church as oppressive and misogynistic. The purpose of this thesis is to come to an understanding of how women perceived oppression throughout history as well as how feminists experience God and how they talk about God.

Chapter four will discuss the approaches of Daly and her arguments and claims that God is a patriarch as her justification for abandoning the Christian faith. Daly's views on God as Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church and patriarchy will be evaluated. Daly's conclusion that Christian theology is intrinsically biased against women and not redemptive for women needs to be investigated.

In Chapter five, I will present the findings of the research, focusing on the three key themes in the thesis namely patriarchy, feminism and Mary Daly. I will evaluate Daly's views on God, the church and on women and men. As this is an exercise in Systematic Theology, it will take up the question of whether patriarchy is an essential teaching of the Christian faith, which Daly claims it to be. The fact that Daly left the church and the Christian faith behind because she believed that Christianity is male

dominated, androcentric and misogynistic is one of the main concerns of this thesis. I will enter into a discussion on Daly's Post-Christian feminist views on the patriarchal nature of the Christian faith and Christian doctrines.

I will question whether Daly's numerous negative encounters with the Catholic Church, as well as her lesbianism, lie at the core of her anger towards God and males in general. Daly, as a postmodern feminist interpreter with radical views towards the Bible and Christianity, remains within her individual rights to reject the traditional readings of Scripture and to seek other avenues that will give her meaning and relevance as a woman. However, what is to be debated is whether her criticism and views about God, men and women opened alternative avenues for Christian women or was Daly merely telling her own story?

CHAPTER TWO

PATRIARCHY

2.1 Introduction

The concept of patriarchy has been used by feminists to analyse the oppression of women and has been developed within feminist writings, not as a well-defined or unfussy concept, but rather as a combination of different meanings. It is, therefore, prudent to have a discussion on patriarchy in order to examine the views and writings of men about all aspects of women's lives over the centuries. In this way, one can then evaluate Mary Daly's condemnation of Christianity as irredeemably patriarchal.

Feminists have drawn extensively on historical evidence to prove that women were, and still are, living in a misogynist and androcentric world; women continue on their spiritual quest of liberating themselves from this state of patriarchy. Lerner (1986:5), in her groundbreaking work on patriarchy, states that nowhere in history is evidence to be found of an overthrow of power from female to male. Patriarchy was not an event, but developed over a period of nearly 2500 years at different times and places, from China, Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, Mesoamerica, Africa, Europe and Malaysia (Lerner 1986:54), and was formed by both men and women (Lerner 1986:212). The creation of patriarchal concepts, according to Lerner (1993:3), was built into all mental constructs of societies and remained invisible over the centuries. These concepts projected men as whole and powerful and females as deviant, incomplete, physically mutilated and emotionally dependent. This understanding was founded on the fact that men and women were created differently, and therefore their biology, respective needs, capacities and functions are not the same (Lerner 1993:4). In a patriarchal society, men are viewed as naturally superior, stronger and more rational whereas women are viewed as naturally weaker, intellectually and rationally inferior, emotionally unstable and incapable of being involved in politics (Lerner 1993:4).

Therefore, men were designed by God to be dominant (Lerner 1993:4). Men, being more rational, explain and regulate the world and have control over a woman's sexuality and her reproductive functions. Women sustain daily life and are responsible for the continuation of the human race and have no rights over men. Only men can act as a go-between with God and humans; women can only mediate with God through men (Lerner 1993:4).

The purpose of this chapter is to understand how patriarchy and its origins are perceived by feminists. This chapter will begin with definitions of patriarchy followed by a discussion of theories that exist around patriarchy from feminists' perspectives. The focus will then shift to the rise of patriarchy from the pre-historic era, followed by a discussion of Plato and Aristotle and their influence on the Church fathers. Special reference will be made to Clement of Alexander, Origen, John Chrysostom (Greek fathers) as well as Tertullian, Jerome and Augustine (Latin fathers). The chapter will then move on to a discussion on patriarchy during the Middle Ages and the views on women held by Aquinas, Bonaventure and Scotus. This chapter will close with views on women by the reformation theologians Luther and Knox. The reason that these men are discussed is that feminists argue that all of them lacked a Christ-like concern towards women.

Since this is not an attempt to probe into the many centuries of Church history, and also to keep this chapter from becoming cumbersome, I have selected these men as having held views on women that are representative of their era.

2.2 Defining patriarchy

The word *patriarchy* derives from the Greek words —*patēr* (πατήρ, father) and *archē* (αρχή, rule) (William 1994:209), and literally means the rule of the father in a male-dominated family (Bhasin 1993:3). Patriarchy is a system in which women experience discrimination, subordination, violence, exploitation and oppression by men (Bhasin 1993:3) In a patriarchal society, women are treated as inferior in all aspects of their lives; men control women's reproductive power, their sexuality, their mobility and even their economic resources (Bhasin 1993:6-9). Patriarchy is defined as the 'rule of

the father' in a male-dominated family and as a social and ideological construct which considers men, as patriarchs, to be intrinsically superior to women. Ray (2011:1) and Walby (1989:214) define patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Although there are many patriarchal forms and practices, patriarchy is not a universal notion because the different forms of patriarchy depend upon the interaction of patriarchal structures in different times and places (Walby 1989:228). Walby (1989:220) identifies six structures of patriarchy and states that these are defined in terms of the social relationship in each structure. They are:

... a patriarchal mode of production in which women's labour is expropriated by their husbands; patriarchal relations within waged labour; the patriarchal state; male violence; patriarchal relations in sexuality and patriarchal culture.

Walby also makes a distinction between public and private patriarchy. Private patriarchy excludes women from the realm of social life where a patriarch appropriates the services of the individual woman in the private sphere of the home. Public patriarchy subordinates women in all areas of social life and the appropriation of women is more collective than individual (Walby 1989:228).

In popular discussions, the concept of patriarchy is referred to as the 'rule of men over women' and more broadly, it refers to the web of economic, political, social and religious regulations that have enforced the domination of women by men throughout the ages (Jones 2000:77). Patriarchy, as an oppressive force, has a long history that stretches across national and cultural boundaries and is a system that regulates women by means of male dominance (Maseno & Kilonzo 2011:45). Laurien (2004:1) defines patriarchy in its narrowest sense as a social system controlled by men and as an inheritance which is passed on from father to son. Family members are dependent on, and submissive to, the male head of the household. In its broader sense, patriarchy is a system in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women and which extends beyond the household to society in general.

It was with Kate Millett's book *Sexual Politics*, 1969, that the concept of patriarchy became popularised, especially amongst American feminists (Mirkin 1984:42). Millet states:

... our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a patriarchy. The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance – in short, every avenue of power ... including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands (Millet 1968:25).

Traditionally, patriarchy granted the father nearly total ownership over wife or wives and children, including powers of physical abuse and often even those of murder and sale (Millet 1968:33).

Patriarchy as a rulership is linked to procreation in a manner that misconstrues and exaggerates the role of the father and regulates women's reproductive roles (Barnett 1997:127). Johnson (2005:5) describes patriarchy as a kind of society. A society consists of people, both male and female, and therefore patriarchy does not refer to any other man or collection of men but a society wherein both sexes participate. A society becomes patriarchal when males receive privileges, where males dominate, where males are identified as the society and where the society is male centered (Johnson 2005:5). Patriarchy dominates where positions of authority are claimed by men in all spheres of society including the economy, the law, religion, education, military and domestic (Johnson 2005:9). A society where cultural ideas of what is good, desirable, preferable or normal are identified with males is thus patriarchal (Johnson 2005:6). Patriarchy becomes male centered (Johnson 2005:10) when focus is placed on men and their actions and where women are historically excluded from state, church, university and other professions (Johnson 2005:16).

I conclude this section with the definition of patriarchy in the words of the post-feminist Mary Daly (2006:53):

1: society manufactured and controlled by males: FATHERLAND; society in which every legitimated institution is entirely in the hands of males and a few selected henchwomen; society characterized by oppression, repression, depression, narcissism, cruelty, racism, classism, ageism, [speciesism,] objectification, sadomasochism, necrophilia; joyless society, ruled by Godfather, Son, and Company;

society fixated on proliferation, propagation, procreation, and bent on the destruction of all Life 2: the prevailing religion of the entire planet, whose essential message is necrophilia.

It is important to take note of some theories of patriarchy in order to understand the complexity of the concept. I therefore turn to an explication of approaches in this regard.

2.3 Theoretical approaches in the understanding of patriarchy

Generally, feminists convey a message and take as their vantage point the view that women have been historically oppressed and are still so today. There is not a single explanation for when, how and why patriarchy originated. Many different theories exist about patriarchy and they mean different things to different theorists². The purpose of this section is not to study the literature on all the theories but, to highlight some theoretical assumptions and arguments of patriarchy. Feminist theorists have, over the years, tried to understand the origins of patriarchy and have asked wide-ranging questions such as: when and why did patriarchy originate? Was there a time when a matriarchal society existed in which women dominated men? Were the sexes ever equal in society? When and how were gender roles assigned and when did women's subordination began? The importance of these very questions ties in with the fact that their answers provide directives for addressing the unacceptable social phenomenon of patriarchy in order to understand its history so that society can be created with equal rights for both men and women.

When feminists address questions of women's subordination and analyse particular forms of patriarchy, (Beechey 1979:66) they use patriarchy as a concept. Thus, a theory of patriarchy is an attempt to penetrate particular experiences and manifestations of women's oppression in order to formulate a coherent theory of subordination (Beechey 1979:66).

² See Selden & Widdowson (1985) and Jones (2000) on feminist theories.

To provide a complete list of feminist theorists is not possible but we must acknowledge the works of well-known and important feminist theorists who have made significant contributions to feminist theory on the oppression of women over the years.

Important theorists during pre-19th century were Christine de Pizan in Italy (1365-1430), Olympe de Gouges in France (1748-1797) and Mary Wollstonecraft in Britain (1759-1797).

During the 19th century, the Americans Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), Susan Anthony (1820-1906), and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) made valuable contributions to feminist theory.

Simone de Beauvoir in France (1908-1986); Betty Friedan in America (1921-2006), and Virginia Woolf in Britain (1882-1941) contributed to feminist theories during the early-mid 20th century. Susan Brownmiller in America (1935-), Mary Daly in America (1928-2010), Shulamith Firestone, Canadian-born American (1945-2012), Marilyn French in America (1929-2009); Lucy Irigaray in Belgium (1930-), Julia Kristeva in France (1941-), Kate Millett in America (1934-), and Sheila Rowbotham in Britain (1943-) were among those who contributed to feminist theory during the 1960s and 1970s.

During the late 20th century, American theorists such as Judith Butler (1956-), Carol Gilligan (1936-), Donna Haraway (1944-), Joanna Russ (1937-2011), and Carol Tavis (1944-) are worthy of mention.

Feminist theories probe into the pervasiveness of gender inequality and aim to develop more complex theories about gender, sex and sexuality (Lorber 2010:8). Lorber (2010:7-8) states that feminist patriarchal theories shifted perspective over the years and integrated other perspectives on patriarchy into their respective theories. Lorber herself, is an example of such a shift and states that in her case she was

originally a liberal feminist³, then became a socialist feminist⁴ and that she currently considers herself to be primarily a social-construction feminist⁵ with overtones of postmodernism and queer theory (Lorber 2010:7).

Feminist theories share a common goal, namely the liberation of women everywhere. This common goal has had the effect of feminist theory referring to itself as a kind of political practice (Jones 2000:3) but, according to Hunnicutt, (2009:553) although political action is essential, feminists have not fully developed a gender-centered theory on one of the most important elements of patriarchy: violence against women.

Feminists are at odds about the actual use of the word patriarchy, as not all feminists like the term and prefer to use alternative terms such as gender or gender oppression (Ray 2011:3) and male dominance or the sex-gender system (Bennett 2006:65).

The concept of patriarchy has, on the one hand, been defended as a conceptual theoretical term and, on the other, it has been rejected and replaced by more neutral language such as the 'subordination of women' or the 'inequality of the sexes' (Bennett 2006:60-61). Bennett claims that the term patriarchy became an offensive concept and almost disappeared from women's history (Bennett 2006:61). Bennett goes on to say that the term has been de-politicised by an ambivalence towards the term, the concern of the origin of patriarchy and female historians who began to focus less on women's oppression and more on women's agency (Bennett 2006:66).

³ Clifford (2001:23) defines Liberal feminism as follows: "Liberal feminism emphasizes civil rights, interprets the right to privacy to include the right of women to freely make decisions about their own sexual and reproductive health. Seek the full equality of women with men in all facets of societal life, especially in economic and political life".

⁴ Clifford 2001:23) defines Socialist feminism as follows: "Emphasizes white male dominance in the economic class struggles of capitalist societies; Believes that this dominance is the reason for the division of labor according to sex and race and the devaluing of women's work, especially the work of raising children; Seeks to end the economic dependence of women upon men and to achieve major social reforms that will end class divisions, and enable all women and men to have the same opportunity to be gainfully employed and to be actively involved in parenting.

⁵ For social-construction feminism, gender is the core of inequality, and focus is on the processes that created gender differences in a historical and social context in which sexuality is learned and endorsed (Lorber 2010:32).

Bennett appeals for the use of the term patriarchy in order for feminists to become more consciously aware of what lies beneath the nature of, the structures of, and the power of the term patriarchy (Bennett 2006:70).

Theorists⁶ claim that the term patriarchy came under attack as a maligned and offensively anti-male term that ignores all the positive interactions between men and women, and that it falsely applies modern feminist assumptions to the past (Coward 1983:272-273; Rowbotham 2006:52). The term patriarchy has also been attacked for being a too-encompassing term which ignores women's experiences in different times, countries, religions, races, sexualities and classes (Fox-Genovese 1982:5-29). Rupp contests that although patriarchy might be everywhere, it is not the same everywhere; therefore, more attention should be given to the history of women and why inequality between men and women persevered regardless of change over time and place (Rupp 2008:136, 140). According to Kandiyoti (1988:274-289), the term patriarchy was under-theorised and that a subsequent theory of patriarchy to explain violence against women became derailed. The term patriarchy was predominantly abandoned and exchanged for terms such as male-dominated society, sexual inequality theory and vague feminist perspectives (Hunnicut 2009:553).

To feminist theorists, the opposite of feminism is not "masculism" but patriarchy and, for them, it has a range of negative associations. Patriarchy takes on many forms and can refer to a society where the father not only rules women but also younger men in society (German 1981:2).

The concept of patriarchy has been problematic, but also promising. Patriarchy, as a concept, is useful in theory building because the term calls to mind images of gender hierarchies, dominance and power arrangements (Hunnicut 2009:554). In her attempt to construct a theory of patriarchy to explain violence against women, Hunnicutt (2009:553) admits that the link between patriarchy and violence against women has received much criticism. Reasons given include the argument that the

⁶ See examples for theories on patriarchy: Fox-Genovese (1982); Walby (1986); Rupp (2008).

concept of patriarchy oversimplifies power relations; the concept of patriarchy implies a universalism; the concept of patriarchy casts men in a singular group; the theory of patriarchy cannot account for violence by women or men against men and that the concept of patriarchy cannot assist in explaining why only a few men in a patriarchy use violence against women. Hunnicutt (2009:554) states that although the word patriarchy nearly disappeared from literature, she continues to use the term as a theoretical tool to engage in the explanation of violence against women.

Let me briefly elaborate on some theories on patriarchy. I will focus mainly on the viewpoints of Ritzer, Lorber, and Beechey.

Gender theorists⁷ are divided into three groups according to Ritzer (1991:248), namely gender difference, gender inequality and gender oppression. I will briefly elaborate on the three groups.

- 1) Theories of gender difference. From a gender difference perspective, feminist theorists attempt to answer the question of 'what about women' and how women's location in, and experience of, social situations differ from that of men. The central theme in gender-difference theories is that women's inner psychic life is different from men (Ritzer 1988:293). Gender-difference feminists seek to explain gender through biological and institutional differences. For example, they examine the values of womanhood and femininity as the reason why men and women experience the social world differently and they focus on the marginalisation of women and why it is that women are being defined as the other in patriarchal societies (Ritzer 1988:294-295).
- 2) Theories of gender inequality. Gender inequality theories identify that, not only are women's location and experience of social structures different from those of men, but that they are also unequal to men. Characteristics of gender

⁷ Brownmiller (1975); Caputi (1989); Firestone (1979); Daly (1979); Griffen (1971); Millet (1969); Russel (1975); Chavetz (1990); Chodorow (1978); Oakley (1974); Walby (1986); Fox (1993); Flavin (2001).

inequality theories are: men and women are differently and unequally situated in society; inequality is a result of the organisation of society and not because of biological or personality differences between the sexes; gender-inequality feminists claim that women are less “empowered than men to realize the need they share with men for self-actualization” (Ritzer 1988:295-296). Liberal feminism and Marxian feminism are examples of gender-inequality theories. Liberal feminists argue that patriarchy historically denied women the ability to express and practise reasoning because patriarchy denied that women actually have the capacity for moral reasoning and agency. This resulted in a sexist division of labour. Women were confined to the private confines of the household with no voice in the public sphere. Even when women were allowed into the public arena they were still held responsible for the household duties and child rearing. Liberal feminists argue that marriage is not advantageous to women and nor does it support the struggle for women’s equality; they also argue for the abolishment of sexual labour divisions in both the public and private spheres (Ritzer 1988:296-300).

- 3) Theories of gender oppression. Power is the key variable in the theory of gender oppression. Gender oppression theories argue that women are not equal to men and that women are actively oppressed, subordinated, and abused by men (Ritzer 1988:303). Psychoanalytic feminists attempt to reformulate Freud’s theories of the subconscious and unconscious, human emotions and childhood development to prove that fear is the driving force behind men’s oppression of women (Ritzer 1988:303-5). Radical feminists argue that patriarchal societies oppress women and that, as physical violence is the basis of patriarchy, it can only be defeated when women realise their own innate strength and values (Ritzer 1988:306-307). Socialist feminist theory is in agreement with Marx and Engels that the working class is exploited and extends this theory not only to class but to gender as well. Inequality may include class, gender, race, ethnicity and age as not all women experience oppression in the same way. There are many examples where white women

and black women are faced with different forms of discrimination (Ritzer 1988:309). Sociological theorists claim that the social and cultural conditioning of gender roles is primarily responsible for patriarchy and that this is the result of sociological constructions passed down from generation to generation. Sociologists argue that the construction of gender roles is more evident in societies where traditional cultures with less economic development exist (Ritzer 1988:310-311).

Mirkin (1984:39) states that advocates of patriarchy are often soft Marxists who argue that underlying the economic class dialectic of Marx is even more fundamental sexual class dialectic. Theorists generally emphasize the cultural and institutional, rather than the economic controls. Theorists of patriarchy view males in almost the same manner as Marxists view the ruling class. They define males as controlling, that they have access to institutional power and are responsible for the shaping of ideology, philosophy, art and religion to suit their needs (Mirkin 1984:39).

Lorber (2010:9-11) categorises gender theory in a different way, namely as gender-reform feminism, gender-resistant feminism and gender-rebellion feminism. Liberal-feminist theory, Marxist/socialist feminist theory and developmental-feminist theories are associated with gender-reform feminist theories. From a liberal-feminist standpoint, it is argued that gender differences are not biological but learned and proponents propose a genderless society. Marxist and socialist theories view economic structure as the root of all gender inequality in private and public structures (Lorber 2010:10). Developmental-feminist theorists look at the global economy and the effect it has on the oppression of women. Radical-feminist theory, lesbian-feminist theory, psychoanalytical feminist theory and standpoint-feminist theory are associated with gender-resistant feminist theory. Radical-feminist theory is concerned with patriarchal gender structures and ideology and its proponents advocate that men are inherently violent and are also trained to be so. Lesbian theorists claim that all women are inherently lesbian and that their femaleness is distorted through their relationships with men. Psychoanalytic feminist theories, borrowing from Freud's theory, argue that men and women learn their sexual roles by following their parents'

gender roles. Standpoint-feminist theorists claim that women's voices are different from those of men and that women must be heard and must challenge male supremacy values (Lorber 2010:16-24). Multi-ethnic or multiracial-feminist theory, men's feminist theory, social-construction feminist theory, post-modernist feminist and queer theory, are all associated with gender-rebellion feminist theories. Multi-ethnic or multiracial feminists' theories are about race, class and gender as oppression variables. Men's feminist theorists apply feminist theories to focus on the study of men and masculinity. They aim to scrutinise masculinity as carefully as femininity and their goal is to develop a theory, not of masculinity, but of masculinities. They postulate that men, as the case is with women, are diverse and that men do not share universal characteristics. To social- construction feminist theorists, gender is at the core of inequality and they focus on the processes that created gender differences in an historical and social context in which sexuality is learned and endorsed. Postmodern feminist and queer theorists examine how societies validate beliefs about gender historically through discourses rooted in cultural representations or texts (Lorber 2010: 25-34).

Beechey (1979:66-82) makes a distinction between radical-feminist theory, revolutionary-feminist theory and materialist-feminist theory. Beechey (1979: 68) says that radical theorists claim that patriarchy is a society in which males dominate females, where older males dominate younger males and where the family is a patriarchal unit. Radical-feminist theory is a struggle against male power and social institutions where men control women through marriage, family and heterosexuality. Revolutionary-feminist theorists argue that patriarchy is responsible for female subordination and that gender differences are rooted in women's reproductive capacity and in the economy and the sex class system in which women are ruled by men. Materialist-feminist theories place capitalism and patriarchy as autonomous spheres in which each has its own systems of exploitation and social classes. The industrial mode of production and the family mode of production forms part of this theory on patriarchy. The industrial mode of production takes place in the arena of capitalist exploitation and in the family mode of production, where women are

exploited and oppressed through men's control over both their productive and reproductive activities (Beechey 1979:70-71).

Against this background of Ritzer, Lorber, and Beechey I now turn to a brief discussion on Christian feminism.

During the 1970s, Christian feminism arose as a movement that has had an important impact on both men and women. Christian feminists challenged Scripture and the basic interpretation regarding women's roles in the Church and society (Pierce and Groothuis 2004:17). Christian feminist theories are divided into three major viewpoints: Christian feminism, egalitarianism, and complementarianism (Grudem 2004:299). Christian feminism is representative of theological liberal views and supports the rights of homosexuals and is pro-abortion (Balmer 2004:237). Egalitarian theorists build their arguments for equality of the sexes on Galatians 3:28; that both men and women are one in Jesus Christ. This, according to Scholer, (1998:4) is the Pauline theological basis for equality of men and women and that they are equal partners in all of the church's ministries. Complementarianism emerged during the 1970s and affirms women's ontological equality. They insist, however, that women are subordinate in the Church and the home (Haddad 2006:58). The complementarian theory on gender acknowledges that women are created in the image of God, that men and women are equally redeemed in Jesus Christ but that men still have the authority in the Church and home. This is, according to Haddad (2006:58), a contradiction in itself. Whilst women's ontological equality is no longer challenged, women are still denied shared authority as image-bearers of God and are denied the right to exercise their spiritual gifts.

Given this theoretical overview, we now have to place it in an historical context.

2.4 The rise of patriarchy

The origin of social hierarchies, and the social and political position that women held throughout the ages, plays a major role in feminist theories. Modern feminists in the 19th century began to question whether or not there was ever a time when women

were dominant over men as men dominate women in patriarchal societies; they began to question whether matriarchy could ever have existed (Ehrenberg 1989:63).

Some feminists believe that men have dominated and oppressed women throughout the ages; this requires that we rely on information from archeological evidence for the existence or not of patriarchy since the beginning of time. However, two conflicting viewpoints have evolved, namely the traditionalist and the feminist anthropologist views, on whether a matriarchy ever existed before patriarchy.

Traditionalists believe that male domination is universal and natural and, that in religious terms, God created women to be subordinate to men (Lerner 1986:16). The phenomenon of sexual asymmetry, that is the assignment of different tasks and roles to men and women, is the most pervasive reason for the rise of patriarchy, according to traditionalist theorists (Lerner 1986:16). Traditionalist feminists focus on women's reproductive capacity and motherhood as the reasons for the sexual division of labour and see this biological division as functional and just (Lerner 1986:17). Traditionalist views changed over time, especially in their "defence of male supremacy based on biological-deterministic reasoning" and during the 19th century, their views on women's inferiority became "scientific" (Lerner 1986:18). Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest became the justification for the unequal distribution of wealth and privileges because of women's biological constitution as "scientific defenders of patriarchy" (Lerner 1986:18). It was also Freud's theory of the female 'anatomy is destiny' that reinforces traditionalists' explanations of women's subordination and inferiority.⁸

Feminist anthropologists, however, challenged these views. Male domination was not universal because no evidence has been found of societies in which sexual asymmetry carried any connotation of domination or subordination of women. The sexes were complementary (Lerner 1986:18).

⁸ See Freud (1931).

Marxist and social theorists build their views in the late 19th century on the works of Bachofen, Morgan, and Engels.⁹ Engels, in his book *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), made a major contribution to the understanding of women's roles and positions within society and history. According to Engels (1884), women's subordination historically started with the development of private property before class-gender divisions took place. Engels' theory of the rise of the class society was based on the pioneering research of Morgan during 1877 (Smith 1997:1).

If we then look at historical development we find that the Palaeolithic era spanned over 2 – 25 million years and is characterised by human species who lived a nomadic lifestyle, and were sexually equal. The Old Stone Age, the earliest phase of human history, includes the development of the human species from the earliest use of stone tools, and is characterised by a hunter-gatherer subsistence economy (Ehrenberg 1989:176). Agriculture had not yet been adopted and food was acquired by means of foraging, food gathering and hunting (Ehrenberg 1989:42). During this period, labour division mainly occurred for two reasons. The first was that as the human species advanced from hunting small game to the hunting of larger animals, women who were pregnant and those women who had small infants were not as mobile. These women would thus have found it difficult to hunt and started to focus on gathering food and looking after their young children (Isaac & Crader 1981:51). The second reason for the origin of the division of labour was the change of environment when the human species entered Europe. Colder conditions made it harder to source food. To overcome this, hunting of larger game became the duty of a section of the community whilst the rest gathered plants (Zihlman 1981:78). Although some division of labour occurred during the Palaeolithic age for reasons mentioned earlier, Ehrenberg (1989:77) maintains that at the end of the Palaeolithic age, women and men still treated each other as equals.

During the Neolithic period, agriculture was first practiced in Europe and is characterised by the earliest use of pottery and ground stone tools, both features of a

⁹ See Engels (1884); Bachofen (1861); Morgan (1944).

more sedentary lifestyle. This period starts in Europe from c. 7000 B.C. in the Near East to the early fourth millennium in North-west Europe and ended with the advent of bronze technology and the Bronze Age around 2000 B.C. in Europe (Ehrenberg 1989:176).

According to Engels (1884:94), savagery, barbarism and civilisation were the three phases that Morgan uses in his work *Ancient Society* (1877) to divide the development of human culture during the Neolithic period into three stages. Morgan (1944:5-6) subdivided the stages of savagery and barbarism into upper, middle, and lower segments.

Let me briefly turn to the development of the Neolithic society. During the savagery phase, humans gathered food and hunted during the lower stage of this phase. Humans lived in their original habitat in tropical and sub-tropical forests, and as they were mostly tree-dwellers, they lived on a diet of fruit, nuts and roots. The middle stage of the Neolithic society began when they started eating fish and using fire. The upper stage of the Neolithic society began with the invention of weapons that made game hunting a way of obtaining a regular source of food. Marriage was unheard of and no one possessed private property (Engels 1884:113).

During the lower stage of barbarism in the Eastern Hemisphere, as gathering and hunting continued, agriculture and the breeding and domestication of animals developed, and in the Western Hemisphere, humans started cultivating and irrigating plants; they also began to use bricks and stones to build with. Pottery was introduced and people started to cultivate crops. Women stayed at home to take care of children and homes, while men moved further afield to hunt. This gradually resulted in the division of labour between men and women, but women still had power and control over the clans (Engels 1884:220-221). As people built bigger and better weapons to hunt with, and to use for inter-group fights, the slavery stage emerged. Through the acquisition of animals and slaves, especially female slaves, more division between men and women developed. Men accumulated wealth in the form of animals and slaves which resulted in the formation of private property. During this stage, the right

of the father was established and women were domesticated and their sexuality regulated and controlled. This, according to Engels (1884:129), set the stage for both the development of patriarchy and monogamy for women.

It is accepted that during the Palaeolithic era, plant food was gathered by women and this would have ensured that women were highly valued for their work, particularly where food were exchanged within the society (Ehrenberg 1989:172). During the early days of horticulture in the Neolithic era, women became involved with the growing and harvesting of crops. When men became more involved in farming and production they started to contribute more towards food by tending their herds of animals and together with the introduction of the plough, women's status in the family started to decrease (Ehrenberg 1989:172). Women's power was overthrown after private property became a common phenomenon and men became the first sex to own private property (Ehrenberg 1989:64).

During the mid-Twentieth Century, the theory of matriarchy became a prominent topic in feminist theory and was fueled by archeological digs which pointed to Neolithic iconography that was predominantly female. In the Neolithic era, the mother-right was dominant and women received the highest status (Dashu 2005:195). Heine (1989:74) claims that the topic on the equality of the sexes in pre-history became attractive to feminists because they believed that science could provide evidence of the historical oppression of women and that the oppression of women was not only biological. Theorists of matriarchy,¹⁰ although they differ in position, believe that matriarchy existed before patriarchy.

According to Ehrenberg (1989:64), Bachofen, in his *Das Mutterrecht* (1886), was the first person who based his argument for the existence of a matriarchal society on archeological remains of female figurines which he took to be goddesses; he based his claims for the existence of a matriarchal society on classical mythology. Morgan theorised that a matriarchal society existed wherein women dominated the economy

¹⁰ Gimbutas 1991; Davis 1973; and Ruether 1983.

and politics, and where descent was matrilineal (female line) (Ehrenberg 1989:64). Engels based his findings of matriarchal societies on the works of Bachofen and Morgan. Engels' theory is that societies were matriarchal in the early stages of prehistory. He claimed that matriarchal societies were later overturned by patriarchy (Ehrenberg 1989:12). Ehrenberg, (1989:14) however, contests Engels' theory, claiming that anthropological and archaeological evidence oppose Engels' theory of the existence of matriarchy. Ehrenberg states that archaeologists are, however, hesitant to reject the possibility that evidence of matriarchal societies might be found (Ehrenberg 1988:63).

In conclusion, archaeological evidence is inconclusive and problematic particularly when addressing the issues of women's lives, because the preferred interpretative framework that the individual author and archaeologist present depends on the class of evidence that is expressed.

In the following section I will turn to a discussion of two significant philosophical voices that have influenced Christian thought substantially: Aristotle and Plato. Although they are not the only non-Christian philosophers, their influence remains significant in the gender debate as both Plato and Aristotle have had a substantial influence on the Church fathers' views and ideas about women.

2.5 The influence of Plato and Aristotle

Ruether (1985:65) says that traditional Christian dualism originated partly in ancient Greece from the metaphysical theories of Plato and Aristotle. She says:

The influence of ... Aristotelian biology on Christian theology ... can hardly be underestimated. Aristotle's biology gave "scientific expression" to the basic patriarchal assumption that the male is the normative and representative expression of the human species and the female is not only secondary and auxiliary to the male but lacks full human status in physical strength, moral self control, and mental capacity. The lesser "nature" thus confirms the female's subjugation to the male as her "natural" place in the universe.

Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle reflected and reinforced the discourse on women's status throughout history and their views on women also influenced the views and thoughts of the Church fathers about women in Christian theology.

Plato (428-347 B.C.) was the first philosopher to develop a substantial understanding of male and female identity. Gonzales (2007:21) argues that Plato's views were grounded in his mind-body dualism where the soul or mind was not necessarily reflected in the body, but significantly distant from it.

Yen (2003:1) argues that Plato's theory on the creation of humankind, where souls were originally implanted in male bodies and given volition, sensation and emotion, paved the way for gender inequality. For Kasubhai (1996:37, 47), the placement of the creation of women in concurrence with the creation of birds, mammals, reptiles and fish is an indication of Plato's negative views on women. She describes Plato as having had very strong views on the inferiority of women. He believed that, as they were not fully human and not capable of reason, their only hope was to return to earth again as men to perfect themselves. Plato also describes women as those men who have fallen prey to their irrational and emotional sides, and that as inferior beings, women must be ruled by men.

Tetlow (1980:7) points to Plato's views on women stating that in Plato's *Republic* he said that women were to be educated only for the good and for the defence of the state and in his *Laws* he limited women to traditional sexual roles. In the *Republic* he states that women must be confined to their homes and are to obey men.

Yen (2003:2) argues that although Plato was of the opinion that women were capable of performing the same duties as men, Plato also maintained that women are weaker than men, and that in order for women to become rulers they were required to divorce themselves from their private and biological role as mothers.

During Aristotle's (384-322 BC) lifetime, both slaves and women were not highly regarded and in male texts and through masculine language the male presides as the dominant figure. Thus, one finds in his *Politics* that he describes men as superior to

women and, therefore, that males should rule over females. Aristotle believed that women do not actually want to participate in political affairs. He concluded, therefore, that women were better off being ruled over by men. In his *Politics* Aristotle also reasoned that males, by their very nature, are more capable of leadership than females. Aristotle also maintained that men should rule over their wives as they lacked authority, a crucial component of ruling (Kraut 2002:249).

In an article, *Should Women Want Women Priests or Women-Church?* Ruether (2011) states that Aristotle in *The Politics* was of the opinion that males are superior to females because of their physical differences. Aristotle claimed that “The courage of a man is shown in commanding of a woman in obeying” (Aristotle in Ruether 2011:65). Women are smaller, shorter-lived, weaker and less articulated than men and, therefore, women should be ruled by men as determined by the natural order of the universe. Men actively provide the soul of offspring whilst women only passively provide the matter. Matter is less divine than form and, therefore, women are inferior to men and should be confined to the household (Ruether 2011:65).

According to Strachan & Strachan (1985:2), Aristotle placed women in the same category as slaves and non-Greeks; he perceived them to all be naturally servile and created merely for procreation; he believed that one should look upon the female state as being reformative.

Women, according to Aristotle, were defective beings, lacking mental volition and physical powers and therefore are not able to exercise public leadership in the Church and society (Ruther 2001:65). Aristotle’s texts are naturally perceived to be misogynist as his abiding views on women were that they were inherently inferior to men. To cite Cynthia Freeland’s catalogue:

“Aristotle says that the courage of a man lies in commanding, a woman’s lies in obeying; that “matter yearns for form, as the female for the male and the ugly for the beautiful;” that women have fewer teeth than men; that the female is an incomplete male or “as it were, a deformity”: which contributes only matter and not form to the generation of offspring; that in general “ a woman is perhaps an inferior being”: that female characters in a tragedy will be

inappropriate if they are too brave or too clever” (Freeland 1994:145-146).

Christian teaching has been influenced by Plato and Aristotle; Christian alienation from body and nature stems from the Church fathers and this will be discussed in the next section.

2.6 The Church fathers and perpetuation of misogyny

The Latin and Greek Church fathers’ writings reflect the times and conditions within which they lived. It finds expression in their dualistic view of the soul and body: God and nature, and male and female. Before I turn to a discussion of the Church fathers’ views on women, I will first make a few general remarks.

During the period 1-590 AD, Christianity became firmly rooted in the Graeco-Roman culture and this period marked a concerted effort to restrict the role of women in the Church and society – this is reflected in my discussion on Plato and Aristotle. During this period women were allowed to engage in charitable works but were forbidden to undertake religious instruction or to administer the sacraments. Women were not considered equal to men (Isherwood and McEwan 2001:57-58).

Not only were the Church fathers’ views built upon the anthropology of Aristotle and Plato, but also on Scripture and especially those of Paul. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 were often cited and used as a justification for gender inequality. They based their views on women from texts such as Genesis 1:27¹¹; Genesis 2:20-23¹²; Genesis 3:1-24¹³ in the

¹¹ God created human beings in his own image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

¹² The man gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every wild animal; but for the man himself no suitable partner was found. ... He took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the flesh over the place. The rib he had taken out of the man the LORD God built up into a woman, and he brought her to the man. The man said: ‘This one at last is bone from my bones, flesh from my flesh! She shall be called woman, for from man was she taken.’

¹³ In this passage, Eve is portrayed as the origin of sin.

Old Testament and in the New Testament on texts such as 1 Timothy 2:8-15¹⁴; 1 Corinthians 11:7-9¹⁵; 1 Corinthians 14:33-35¹⁶; and Ephesians 5:22-23¹⁷. Lerner points out that these texts were interpreted in different ways, either literally or allegorically. Literally, they pointed to the innate inferiority of women and allegorically, they referred to the human mind whereby the higher intellect belongs to men and the lower intellect to women (Lerner 1993:141).

Lerner (1993:140-143) states that according to the Church fathers, women were responsible for sin as the root of all evil. According to Clark (1994:168) the fusion of all women with Eve came with apostolic sanction and that Eve become the scapegoat for the limiting of women's activities and authority and to generally justify women's submission to men.

Sawyer (1996:149) offers three arguments whereby the Church fathers identified women with Eve.

Firstly, women were viewed as the second sex. Genesis 2 states that Eve was created after Adam and Genesis 2:18 became the proven text to maintain the sexual hierarchy in Christianity. Paul's epistles were applied to define the position of women in the family as well as in the church. Eve became the second sex for two reasons:

¹⁴ Paul prescribes how women should dress; that women's role is to listen quietly and with submission; he does not permit women to teach nor dictate to men because of Adam being created before Eve; Adam was not deceived but Eve and therefore they fell into sin; women's salvation will be possible through child bearing with the provision that they continue in faith, love, and holiness with modesty.

¹⁵ Paul prescribes the head covering for women and not for men because men are the image of God and the mirror of his glory. A woman reflects the glory of the man. Women were made out of men and they were created for the sake of men. Head covering for women is therefore a sign of authority of men over women and indicative of their submission.

¹⁶ Paul prohibited women from speaking in the congregation and if they needed to ask something they were to ask their husbands at home.

¹⁷ Paul orders women to be subjected to their husbands as men are the head of women, therefore women shall be subjected to their husbands in everything.

she was created after Adam and, because she was disobedient, she does not represent the image of God.

The second argument is the blaming of Eve for introducing sin into the world. Passages such as 2 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Tim 2:14 became the argument for the subordination of women and their inferior status within the church (Sawyer 1996:153). As the first sinner, Eve was the embodiment of all women and therefore women fell outside the redemptive power of Christ (Sawyer 1996:154). Women could only be redeemed through childbearing and their very existence was only for the sake of procreation.

A third argument offered by Sawyer is that Christianity produced two kinds of women: Eve and Mary. Irenaeus saw both similarities and contrasts between Eve and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Sawyer (1996:156) cites Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, as an example:

Eve, having become disobedient, was made the cause of death both for herself and for all the human race. Thus also Mary had a husband selected for her and nonetheless was a virgin, yet by her obedience she was made the cause of salvation both for herself and for all the human race. For this reason the law calls a woman engaged to a man his wife, while conceding that she is still a virgin. This indicates a link that goes from Mary back to Eve.

... Moreover, the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosened through the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve bound through unbelief, this the Virgin Mary loosed through faith.

Mary, however, was different in nature from Eve. Mary gave birth to Jesus who was without sin and therefore did not inherit sin. Eve on the other hand, is regarded as having incited Adam's lust for the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden (Sawyer 1996:157).

Women were not only regarded as the cause of all sin, they were also seen as inferior and weak in both mind and character and also as not having been created in the "image of God". Keane (1987:2) said that women, in the history of the Church, represented the *imago Dei* in a secondary sense. 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 became the

underpinning text of the Church fathers' views that women were not made in the image of God (Sawyer 1996:149-150). The terms 'becoming male' or 'women turned into man' became important themes and were frequently used in early Christian literature as well as in non-Christian texts such as those from the Koine culture (Vogt 2003:49). Femininity and masculinity stood in contrast and the term 'becoming male' refers to the development from a lower to a higher state of moral perfection (Vogt 2003:49).

Not only were women blamed for sin, but the Church fathers viewed women as the weaker sex, as inferior, and as creatures of lust (Ranke-Heinemann 1990:185).

Feminists argue that the Church fathers defined the status of women and sought to restrict and limit women's influence in society. What follows are some of the Church fathers' views on women, and more specifically, their opinions on women as the cause of sin, the position of women as inferior, women and the image of God, women and procreation as well as women and teaching. In the following sections, I will specifically concentrate on Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine and Chrysostom. It is not my intention to go into a lengthy discussion about the Church father's views on women but rather to highlight the significant effect that their views have had on women.

2.6.1 Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

Clement of Alexandria, born in Athens, moved to Alexandria, Egypt, after his conversion to Christianity (Ide 1984:65). With the fall of Byzantium, men began to blame women who had encouraged them to stand up against the enemy and to defend their property against the Severi invasion. They believed women wanted them to do this to harm them as they could lose their lives in the war. Their views on women became more sexist as they argued that since women did not have penises, scrotums and facial and body hair, they were incapable of participating in the defence of the city, state and region (Ide 1984:66). At first, Clement of Alexandria allowed women into his lectures and acknowledged their equality and wisdom, but after the

fall of Byzantium, he embraced the aforementioned argument against women. He accepted the reality of sex, but he advocated that it is only to fulfill God's will for procreation. He denounced and condemned physical pleasure as well as the femaleness of women (Ide 1984:66). Clement of Alexandria's sexism was carried over in his writings and he contended that the only strong person was a man. In his *Stromata* he writes:

... His beard then is the badge of a man and shows him unmistakably to be a man. It is older than Eve and is the symbol of the stronger nature. By God's decree, hairiness is one of man's conspicuous qualities, and at that, it is distributed over his whole body. Whatever smoothness or softness there was in him God took from him when he fashioned the delicate Eve from his side to be the receptacle of his seed, his helpmate both in procreation and in the management of the home. What he left (remember he lost all traces of hairlessness) was manhood and reveals that manhood. His characteristic is action; hers, passivity. For what is hairy by nature is drier and warmer than what is bare; therefore, the male is hairier and more warm-blooded than the female; the uncastrated, than the castrated; the mature, than the immature. Thus it is a sacrilege to trifle with the symbol of manhood (Clement of Alexandria in Ide 1984:66).

Clement of Alexandria writes on virtue stating that:

it belongs to the male alone to be virtuous, and to the woman to be licentious and unjust. Accordingly woman is to practice selfrestraint and righteousness, and every other virtue. ... We do not say that woman's nature is the same as man's, as she is woman. ... Pregnancy and parturition, accordingly, we say belong to woman, as she is woman, and not as she is a human being (Clement of Alexandria in Ide 1984:66)

The central themes of Clement of Alexandria's anthropology are based on human nature against that of sexually determined nature, as well as on the salvation of believers and their journey to salvation (Vogt 2003:49). God created different sexes and, as such, desire becomes the root of all evil (Vogt 2003:50-51). Women are inferior to men and he believed that his contempt for women was a universal point of view (Ranke-Heinemann 1995: 127,130). As cited in Ranke-Heinemann (1990:130) he maintained in *The Stromata*, that a woman could only achieve perfection in this life if she frees herself from the cravings of the flesh. Since virtue only belongs to the

male, and since women are “licentious and unjust” they have to “practice self-restraint and righteousness” and only then can they become more male-like by renouncing cravings of the flesh.

2.6.2 Origen (185-254)

Origen (185-254) was a Christian scholar, theologian and student of Clement of Alexandria. He is well known for his works *Hexapla*, *Against Celsus*, and *On the first Principles*. Origen hated both the sexual act and women and at the age of eighteen he castrated himself in his quest to achieve what he believed to be the highest Christian perfection. Origen disapproved of the sexual act even within marriage (Phelips 1931:203; Ranke-Heinemann 1990:51-52).

Origen’s anthropology distinguished between male and female as so created by God. God created male and God created female and he maintained that there is a sharply defined contrast between male and female (Vogt 2003:52) Origen, however, does not connect the female with the image of God. For Origen, human beings were created of spirit and soul and the spirit is described as masculine and the soul as feminine, therefore, the masculine is higher and in quality better than the feminine (Vogt 2003:53).

When God created man in his image, as male and female, Origen postulates that the female is connected with “fecundity” and not directly with the *imago Dei* whilst for males, being in the image of God is “constitutive” (Vogt 2003:52).

Weinrich (1991:258) states that Origen described women as “worse than animals because of their constant state of lustfulness. In his commentary on 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 on women speaking in public, Origen argued that women are not permitted to do so as female prophets never spoke publicly. In Origen’s teachings, he refers to the “interior man” and the “soul or anima”. Whilst the interior man refers to the male, the soul or anima refers to women. The male part is higher and more moral than that of women who are inclined to lean towards the senses and are, therefore, unfaithful, weak, lazy and dependant on men. However, when woman is ruled by her spirit she

is male and when she is ruled by her soul she is female. Origen believed God favored the male (Keane 1987:12; Vogt 2003:59).

Women, according to Origen, can do nothing manly but do have the potential to change into perfect men. The soul of a woman can change to become a 'perfect man'. He uses the metaphor of a 'perfect man' for humans who have not reached "a state of perfection" and these are the girls who accompany the Bride of the Church. The angels are those who have attained perfection and are "represented by young men with the Bridegroom". The Souls (female) can evolve from a sexual female stage to the highest masculine stage when they are freed from their femaleness and they can then become perfect men (Vogt 2003: 54-55).

On the ordination of women as priests and prophetesses Origen relied upon 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 to prevent women from these ministries. He claimed that, although women such as Marian and Deborah are mentioned in the Gospel, they did not speak in Church (Wright 1977:516-526).

2.6.3 Tertullian (155-255)

Tertullian was from Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. He was a lawyer of his time and after he converted to Christianity, he started to write against Gnosticism and heresy. He was also the first prominent ecclesiastical writer who used Latin and is referred to as The Father of Latin Theology.

It is often alleged that he was the most hostile of the Church Fathers towards women and had little regard for the gender at all (Ide 1984:76).

On the ordination of women and women being prophetesses Tertullian acknowledges in *Prescription Against Heretics*, that although women were active in the Church it was at the cost of men's dignity. Women performed exorcisms, were physicians, performed sacraments and were ministers of faith – tasks he believed were reserved for men only (McGuire 1999:264).

In his *De Culta Feminarum*, as cited in Ruether (1974:157), and Knight (1974:120), Tertullian claimed that Eve was the originator of sin and therefore all women carried the curse of Eve.

If there dwelt upon earth a faith as great as is the reward of faith which is expected in the heavens, no one of you at all, best beloved sisters, from the time that she had first known the Lord, and learned (the truth) concerning her own (that is, woman's) condition, would have desired too gladsome (not to say too ostentatious) a style of dress; so as not rather to go about in humble garb, and rather to affect meanness of appearance, walking about as Eve mourning and repentant, in order that by every garb of penitence she might the more fully expiate that which she derives from Eve,— the ignominy, I mean, of the first sin, and the odium (attaching to her as the cause) of human perdition. In pains and in anxieties do you bear (children), woman; and toward your husband (is) your inclination, and he lords it over you. And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. *You* are the devil's gateway: *you* are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: *you* are the first deserter of the divine law: *you* are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. *You* destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of *your* desert— that is, death— even the Son of God had to die (Tertullian in Lerner 1993:141)

Tertullian as cited in Ide (1984:75-78) stated in his *Prescription Against Heretics* that only men are created in the image of God and that they were innocent victims of the “wiles and evils of women” . He forbade women to teach, to baptise, to be priests or to speak in church and he demanded that women’s heads be covered.

For Tertullian, women were the source of all evil and he believed that there was nothing good about women in general or any woman in particular. In his view, women were responsible for pain, suffering, sin and corruption in both the private and public spheres (Tavard 1973:58-59).

Tertullian despised women so much that he warned men against gazing upon them, because it would mean that they would have their immortal souls consigned to hell and would be doomed to never enjoy the security of heaven after death (Tavard 1973:59).

2.6.4 Jerome (340-420)

Jerome was born in Strido in Dalmatia (Yugoslavia), studied in Rome, and became an ordained presbyter in Antioch (Ide 1984:83).

Jerome has been regarded as “the most authoritative post-apostolic interpreter of the Bible who lived during the early centuries of Christianity” (Phipps 1981:37) and is referred to as “the greatest exegete of the ancient Church” (Grant 1952:iii) as well as “the foremost Scripture scholar among the Church fathers (Brown, Fitzmyer & Murphy 1990:xx).

Jerome viewed women as the root of all evil. He declared that a clean body signifies a dirty mind because he found all aspects of sexuality repugnant (Strachan & Strachan 1985:6). It is often stated that he had a “love affair with virginity” because he saw virginity as better than marriage (Ide 1984:85). Ide (1984:88) states:

Unfortunately many male theologians and other men believed that sexual thoughts, interest, and expression were initiated, generated, and completed when a woman was present, being sexually evil – and yet at the same time not being capable of experiencing the same fullness of sexuality as did man

Jerome shared these views of his contemporaries about women. Women’s wombs were the soil that received the male seed and for Jesus Christ to become human, He had to endure the revolting conditions of the womb. He claimed that for women to become men they would have to abstain from sex, although through childbearing, women can escape the punishment they receive because of the sin of Eve (Knight 1974:120). Jerome claimed that although marriage is good, virginity is better because men are corrupted through sexual intercourse. It is thus better for men not to get married and to therefore escape the burden of having a wife (Ide 1984:72).

As cited in (Phelips 1931:203), Jerome viewed women as the root of all evil and said:

Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

In his *Letter*, to Marcella, he writes:

The women who ought to scandalize Christians are those who paint their eyes and lips with rouge and cosmetics; whose chalked faces, unnaturally white, are like those of idols; upon whose cheeks every chance tear leaves a furrow; who fail to realize that years make them old ... A Christian women should blush to do violence to nature, or to stimulate desire by bestowing care upon the flesh. "They that are in the flesh," the apostle tells us, "cannot please God" (Jerome cited in Phelips 1931:203).

Jerome held Eve, and as a consequence every women, responsible for all heresy. He claimed that men such as Nicholas of Antioch, the seducer of all impurity, was followed by crowds of women; Simon Magnus founded his sect with the help of Helene the prostitute; Marcion used women to prepare the minds of men to join his sect (Keane 1987:3).

Jerome as cited in Ide (1984:84) in his letter to *Pammachius, Letter*, has this to say about marriage:

For it is better that a woman should know one man (though he should be a second husband or a third) than that she should know several. In other words, it is preferable that she should prostitute herself to one rather than to many.

In the same *Letter*, he contends that it is "good for a man not to touch a woman".

According to Strachan & Strachan, (1985:4) Luther once wrote about Jerome, stating that he hates no teacher more than Jerome because he only writes about fasting, the victual or about virginity, but nothing about faith, hope, charity nor about the works of faith.

2.6.5 Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

Augustine was born in Tagaste, in North Africa, and after his conversion to Christianity became a renowned and influential philosopher and theologian (MacKendrick 1980:326). Augustine was the founder of the monastery in the city of Hippo (Ide 1984:91). Augustine had much to say about women, sin and sex. His works were greatly influenced by his mother and his views on what a proper wife is

were mirrored on his mother's life. His mother was always servile, humble and subordinate to her husband.

In Augustine's interpretations of Paul's theology, he concluded that humans had become alienated from their own good potential and had to get it back in a gift – the gift being the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. As a result, Eve became the origin of sin and the cause of Adam's fall. All women became Eve's daughters, the bearers of sin (Ruether 1983:167). Augustine believed that there was sex in Eden and that it was good and without lust. Lust became the product of sin after Eve ate the forbidden apple (Ide 1984:92). He blamed women for the Fall and for the eviction of Adam and Eve from Paradise on Eve (Ranke-Heinemann 1995:185). Augustine, as cited in Børresen (1995:170), explains the nature of woman in the image of God as:

... the wife with her husband is the image of God, so that the totality of this human substance forms a single image; but when woman is considered as man's helpmate, a state which belongs to her alone, is not the image of God. By contrast, man is the image of God by being solely what he is, an image so perfect, so whole, that when woman is joined with him it makes only one image.

Augustine, in his views on natural order, states in the *Heptateuch*, that women were created lesser than man and therefore they have to serve men as being the greater. Men are superior to women because women were created with a weaker brain. Therefore, the weaker has to serve the stronger. In his *Concupiscence*, Augustine wrote:

Nor can it be doubted, that it is more consonant with the order of nature that men should bear rule over women, than women over men. It is with this principle in view that the apostle says, "The head of the woman is the man;" and, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands" (Augustine in Ide 1984:97)

According to Phelps (1931:203), Augustine believed that it was an incontestable social and religious truth that women were subordinate to men. He was of the opinion that it is according to natural order for men to rule over women and for women to both serve and be subservient to their husbands. To Augustine, nothing was worse than a

house where the woman commands and the man obeys; therefore the husband must always rule over his wife.

Miles (1991:96) observes that for Augustine women were not created in the image of God but only in his likeness. These supported the idea that women were weak and have a greater tendency to sin, and even before they sin, women must be submissive and must, therefore, be ruled by their husbands. Augustine, as cited in (Lerner 1993:141) says:

I have said, when I was treating the nature of the human mind, that the woman together with her husband is in the image of God ... but when she is referred to separately to her quality of "help-meet," which regards the woman herself alone, then she is not the image of God, but as regards the man alone, he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman too is joined with him in one.

Augustine, as cited in Ranke-Heinemann (1995:88) once asked, "Why was woman created at all?" and in answering his own question he states:

I don't see what sort of help woman was created to provide man with, if one excludes procreation. If woman is not given to man for help in bearing children, for what help could she be? To till the earth together? If help were needed for that, man would have been a better help for man. The same goes for comfort in solitude. How much more pleasure is it for life and conversation when two friends live together than when a man and a woman cohabit?

2.6.6 John Chrysostom (347-407)

John Chrysostom was born in Antioch and later became the Archbishop of Constantinople.

Chrysostom described women as weak and flighty, a fault of nature, evil, as temptresses and as mischievous (Knight 1974:121; Ranke-Heinemann 1990:130, 236). Chrysostom believed that it was God who maintained the order of each sex. God gave men supremacy as leaders of business of the state, the market place, the administration of justice, the government and the military (Lampe 1981:124). Women, on the other hand, were assigned the presidency of the household and other

so-called inferior matters (Keane 1987:5). Cited in Knight (1974:121) and Ranke-Heinemann (1995:130 236) Chrysostom wrote:

Among all the savage beasts none is found to be so harmful as woman. ... The whole of her body is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, phlegm and the fluid of digested food. ... If you consider what is stored up behind those lovely eyes, the angle of the nose, the mouth and the cheeks you will agree that the well-proportioned body is only a whitened sepulcher.

Sawyer (1996:150) observes that in his interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 Chrysostom stated that women lost their divine image because of the Fall and are, therefore, subservient to men. As cited in Knight (1991:127), Chrysostom contended that because Eve sinned, all women were punished with subjection. He writes:

The woman [=Eve] taught once, and ruined all. On this account therefore he saith, let her not teach. But what is it to other women, that she suffered this? It certainly concerns them; for the sex is weak and fickle, and he is speaking of the sex collectively. For he says not Eve, but "the woman," which is the common name of the whole sex, not her proper name. Was then the whole sex included in the transgression for her fault? As he said of Adam, "After the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come" (Rom. v. 14); so here the female sex transgressed, and not the male".

Chrysostom did not include woman in the natural image of God, since this image is one of power and dominion, both of which woman have been deprived of by God and society (Tavard 1973:48ff).

Chrysostom, in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, said that female teachers ruined everything and he believed that the female sex is weak and fickle. In his Homily 9 on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 he stated:

To such a degree should women be silent, that they are not allowed to speak not only about worldly matters, but not even about spiritual things, in the church. This is order, this is modesty, this will adorn her more than any garments. Thus clothed, she will be able to offer her prayers in the manner most becoming" (Chrysostom in Keane 1987:5)

Against the background of the Early Church fathers, I will now turn to the views of Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Scotus and their opinions of women's nature.

2.7 Patriarchy during the Medieval Era

Greek philosophy continued to influence Christian thought throughout the Middle Ages and opinions about women were passed on from generation to generation. Many of the Medieval ideas about women (biological and gender) were Aristotelian and his views were preserved throughout the Middle Ages. His gender polarity and his views on women as incomplete men were based upon the differences between male and female reproductive organs (Verbanaz 2008:4). Masculinity remained the human ideal during the Middle Ages and women suffered as a result of the male standards they were measured against. Biblical texts were used as the major source by which gender-related views in Christian society were formed (Verbanaz 2008:6-7).

As Thomas Aquinas was the most influential theologian of this period, I will mainly focus on his views on women and will only briefly refer to Bonaventure and Scotus.

2.7.1 Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Thomas Aquinas was born in Roccasecca, located in present day Italy, and as an Italian Dominican priest, scholastic theologian and philosopher, he became the most influential theologian of this period (Torrell 2005:3).

Although Aquinas never wrote a treatise on women, he had extensively written about women in different works, at various periods and in a diverse context. Aquinas' views on women were two-sided; on one side he viewed women as equal to men in nature and on the other, he viewed women as inferior and subject to the authority of men. Popik (1979:1-4) and Strachan & Strachan (1985:2) observe that Aquinas was not directly influenced by the writings on women by Church fathers, but that his statements about women were mainly based on those of Aristotle and the contemporary culture of the day. He was impressed by Aristotle's statement that women were in a deformed state and he incorporated this into his own theology. He

believed, as Aristotle had, that women were defective males as a result of some dreadful accident to the male seed. He concurred that women's nature is defective and misbegotten because the male seed tends to be the perfection of the masculine sex, whereas women's defectiveness derives from a deformed force from some material indisposition.

Børresen (1995:174-175), in her analysis of Aquinas, states that for him, women and men differ in their rational abilities. Reason is more developed in men whilst women's reason and wisdom is deficient and weak. Women's lower ability to reason, therefore, makes them dependant on men for leadership. According to Aquinas, women are more concerned with temporal worldly matters and are controlled by their passions, whereas men think of principles and eternal things first. Aquinas also believed that women, being weaker than men, are more prone to sin. For him, this explains why the devil used a woman as the instrument in the downfall of the stronger man (Popik 1979:19).

Børresen (1995:171) further observes that Aquinas was influenced by Augustine's views that women were not created in the image of God. Aquinas, therefore, was of the opinion that the image of God exists in man in a way that is not found in woman. As man is the beginning and end of woman, so too, is God the beginning and end of every being. He believed that women have particular duties, for example procreation, and that men are the leaders of women (Børresen1995:167). Aquinas described women as misbegotten males whose main purpose was to assist with procreation. In his view, woman are rationally and physically inferior, and for this reason, they must be subjected to the more rational gender: men.

Popik (1979:12-14) notes that Aquinas viewed women as inferior to men in bodily strength, temperament and constitution and that femininity is inferior to masculinity in all ways. He felt that women are inferior because Eve was created after Adam and was made for his sake only. Masculinity, for Aquinas, meant a body which is more perfect, honourable, dignified and noble than that of a female body, and to him, this meant that the male soul must have more dignity and perfection.

Aquinas echoed many of the opinions held by Medieval theologians on women. He defined women as incomplete and inferior to men and believed that the male was created with a superior capacity for knowledge, and that he possesses a rational soul. Women, on the other hand, were only created as reproductive aids. Aquinas stated “despise not yourselves, women, the son of God was born of woman” (Lerner 1993:142).

Aquinas held that as women are deficient, they have inferior intellectual powers and that they should be subservient to man; woman is not fully a representative image of God. He argued that the active power of production belongs to men and the passive power to women. In the animal world, the male is not in continuous union with the female but only at times of coition. He also believed that males are more ordered in intellectual operation than females because men have a superior intellect. Aquinas believed that women are incomplete, and as failed men, should be subjected to the leadership and authority of men (Børresen1995:170).

Although Aquinas generally viewed women as both rationally and morally inferior to men, he maintained the view that it is not true of all women. According to Popik (1979:13), Aquinas made it clear that there is always an exception to the rule. Mary, Mary Magdalena and the Samaritan woman was such exceptions because of their perfection and high ability to reason. These exceptions, according to Aquinas, were proof that some women become wiser through education and within a culture where weighty topics are discussed (Popik 1979:46).

Because Paul forbade women to teach (1 Timothy 2:12) or to have any authority, Aquinas maintained that women are not allowed to receive Orders. Women, being in the state of subjection to men, may not receive the sacraments of Order because she cannot represent Christ (Børresen1995:176).

In the following sections on Bonaventure and Scotus I will refer briefly to their Commentaries on *Sentences*¹⁸ (herein after referred to as *Sentences*), a book of theology written by Peter Lombard during the 12th century.

2.7.2 Bonaventure (1217-1274)

Bonaventure was born in Bagnoregio, in Latium, and became an Italian scholastic theologian and philosopher (Walsh 1991:216).

For Bonaventure both male and female seeds contribute to generation. The one seed is from the father's body and the other from the mother. The father's seed acts as "efficient" cause of conception and the mother's seed as "maternal". Bonaventure maintained that both are endowed with the "power and the seminal reason of the propagation of the body". For Bonaventure the male sex is in itself more perfect than the female. When the male seed lack full strength it evolves into a male (Tavard 1973:132). Male superiority does not originate from the sexual function but in the "principle of factual superiority" in his believe that all mankind originates through Eve in Adam. This is because man is orientated to action, whilst women bears suffering better. Human leadership belongs to action rather than suffering, thus "the head of women is man" (Tavard 1973:132).

Tavard points out that in Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Sentences*, he argued for male ordination only. He offers four reasons for his views. The first is that since women were required to wear veils, according to 1Corinthians 11:5 it is, therefore, inappropriate for women to hold clerical positions in church. Secondly, men by virtue of their sex are made in the image of God and because men are naturally more divine than women only men should receive the sacrament of Orders. Thirdly, Bonaventure argues that women do not have spiritual authority because they were not permitted to speak in church, according to 1 Timothy 2:12. Lastly, women could obviously not be ordained as bishops, as a bishop is the husband of the church and women cannot be husbands (Tavard 1977:5).

¹⁸ See Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, Books 1-4. Toronto: Institute of Medieval Studies, 2007-2010.

2.7.3 John Duns Scotus (1266-1308)

Little is known of Scotus apart from his work, but it is generally accepted that he came from Duns in Berwickshire, now Scotland. Scotus is thought to be one of the three most influential philosophers/theologians of the High-Middle Ages (Vos et al 2003 23, 27).

Scotus' great work is his commentary on the *Sentences*. On the ordination of women, Scotus states:

One should not hold it to be decided by the Church, but it comes from Christ. The Church would not presume to deprive the entire female sex, without any guilt on its part, of an act which might licitly pertain to it, being directed toward the salvation of woman and of others in the Church through her. For this would seem to be an extreme injustice both toward the entire sex and toward a few specific persons. If by divine law the ecclesiastical Order could licitly be fitting to woman, it could be for the salvation of women and of others through them. But what the Apostle says in 1 Tim. 2:12, "I do not permit a woman to teach," speaking of the public doctrine in the Church, he does not say on his own authority; but, "I do not permit," because Christ does not permit (Scotus in Tavard 1973:214).

John Duns Scotus believed that women were inferior to men because, in his opinion, they were less intelligence as well as emotionally unstable; he also believed that God chose men to lead women. In his opinion, as Christ had himself excluded women from the Holy Orders and the Apostles, the Church did not exclude women on their own authority, but through that of Christ, and that He also believed that women should not be teachers (Tavard 1977:101).

The discussion will now turn to the Reformation theologians Martin Luther and John Knox and their views on women.

2.8 Patriarchy and the Reformation Theologians

After the scientific revolution and the emergence of a spirit of inquiry that began in the Renaissance, more serious questions pertaining to religion and moral life began to be asked; this, in part, led to the Protestant and Catholic reformation (Malone 2001a:206).

The Reformation began in 1517 with Luther, who challenged the custom of selling indulgences. The Reformation was a reaction against the abuse of power, corruption, and the deception of common people by the Catholic Pope and, by implication, the Catholic Church (Malone 2001b:35).

In the early stages of the Reformation it appeared that women had high status, but soon, women were prevented from gaining equality as a result of existing societal norms (Phillips 2004:1). The hierarchal society prevailed, and a well-ordered family was dominated by the father with this status quo being enforced by the state (Davis & Farge 1993:258).

Martin Luther and John Knox will be discussed as representatives of views widely held about women during the reformation.

2.8.1 Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Martin Luther was born in Eisleben; he studied law and then entered the monastery in Erfurt to study theology. He later became a professor of theology at Wittenberg and his teachings about grace, faith, Christ, Scripture and the glory of God sparked the Reformation.

The doctrine of the image of God, particularly with regards to the distinction between male and female, remained distorted throughout the reformation. Luther downplayed the doctrine of the image of God against that of the doctrines of justification and Sacrament. Where and when the image of God in women was disputed, Luther depended on the Church fathers, especially Augustine, as he believed in the continuation of the traditions they represented (Douglas 2003:72-73). Only males could be ordained because they represent the maleness of Christ (Ruether 2011:65).

Luther continued the traditional teachings of women in which they were portrayed as having been created second to man and as the first to sin. Luther also agreed with the beliefs that women should be excluded from public teaching and leadership (Ruether 1998:117-126). Luther regarded females as inferior to men and also as less rational. He viewed women as more emotional and prone to chatter, and he felt that

as they have diminished reasoning capabilities, girls should only be educated in piety, housekeeping and motherhood (Karant-Nunn & Wiesner-Hanks 2003:10). Luther was also of the opinion that women's chief role is motherhood because they have broad hips. Women's narrow shoulders, according to Luther, were a symbol of their weakness. He furthermore claimed that women are not thinkers (Karant-Nunn & Wiesner-Hanks 2003:10).

Luther's position on marriage, as well as the abolishment of monastic houses narrowed women's choices. Luther expected nuns to leave their orders and to marry. He believed that marriage shields society from the effects of Eve's sins and from the inborn inferiority of women. Marriage, according to Luther was a remedy against sin (Karant-Nunn & Wiesner-Hanks 2003:11).

Luther maintained that women should be quiet, pious and submissive within the domestic sphere (Karant-Nunn & Wiesner-Hanks 2003:13). Luther says:

... in my opinion, the Holy Spirit has shown that God orders the man to carry out the offices of governing, teaching, and preaching. For when Adam is called forward [Gen. 3:9], it is nothing other than a sermon before the Law, by means of which he recognizes what he has done and what he owes to God. Preaching is entrusted to the man and not to the woman, as Paul also teaches, insofar as this has to do with Christian matters. Otherwise, it can occasionally happen that a woman gives better advice, as one reads in Scripture. But apart from that, the offices of leading, preaching, and teaching God's word are commanded to the man (Luther 2003:24-25).

Luther also stated that women may not instruct or teach in the public domain, but that older women should train younger women to be modest and submissive. He says:

"Good teachers" are those who are instructed, apt, and skillful at teaching, filled with good doctrines and exhortations, because he will appoint older women as the instructors of younger women. To what end? [Titus 2:]4. And so train the young women. They should train by example and by word and should make them modest; that is, they should train them in modesty, so that they are sensible, not noisy and raucous but quiet and gentle. Any of them who is not modest should be taught and instructed by [an older] woman, so that the young women love their husbands and are devoted to their children. They should see to it that they take care of their husbands and children. ...

Thus he instructs matrons to be good teachers and to train younger women to love their husbands and children (Luther 1968:53-54).

In his analysis of 1 Timothy 2:11 and women in the public domain Luther states:

Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I believe that Paul is still speaking about public matters. I also want it to refer to the public ministry, which occurs in the public assembly of the church. There a woman must be completely quiet, because she should remain a hearer and not become a teacher. She is not to be the spokesman among the people. She should refrain from teaching, from praying [i.e., leading in prayer] in public. She has the command to speak at home. This passage makes a woman subject. It takes from her all public office and authority (Luther 1973:276-277).

2.8.2 John Knox (1514-1572)

John Knox studied at St Andrews and became a Roman Catholic priest. He was the founder of Presbyterianism in Scotland. The decade before Knox wrote his tract *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558), was marked with provocative and heated controversy about traditional female stereotypes. Phipps (1981:85) states that the rule of women was not a theoretical one for Knox. Knox became vexed that his work in England was cut short by the reign of Mary Tudor when he was banished from England for the part he played in the reformation. Knox showed much contempt for woman rulers such as Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart in Scotland and Catherine de Medici in France who were Catholics and who had all been discriminated against and persecuted by Protestants.

Knox contended that it was absurd for a woman to be the head of the office of highest responsibility in the state when she is generally considered incompetent to perform the lesser office of judge, teacher and the like. To make his point, Knox drew extensively from philosophical and religious literature, the Old Testament, the New Testament and from the works of Latin and Greek fathers of the church (Phipps 1981:86-87). He used Scripture, nature, and the revealed will of God, the Holy Spirit, and other authorities to reinforce his views on women (Soskice 2003:2). In the *First Blast*, Knox (1995:389) states:

To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion or empire above any realm, nation or city is repugnant to nature, contumely to God, a thing most contrarious to His revealed will and approved ordinance, and finally it is the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice, ... Nature, I say, doth paint them forth to be weak, frail, impatient, feeble and foolish; and experience hat declared them to be inconstant, variable, cruel and lacking the spirit of council and regiment. ... As St Paul doth reason in these words: 'man is not of the woman but the woman of the man. And man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the cause of man ...' (1 Corinthians 11:8) ... and therefore that she should never have pretended any kind of superiority above him, no more than do the angels above God the creator or above Christ Jesus their head. So I say that in her greatest perfection woman was created to the subject to man.

Knox claimed that women are weak, impatient, feeble, foolish, inconsistent, variable, cruel and lacking in the spirit of counsel and regiment, and should therefore be removed from rule and authority. Quoting from the Roman Rules of Law, Knox wrote that women had been removed from all civil and public office and that they were forbidden to be judges and magistrates. They were also not allowed to be "*speakers of others*". Women, Knox believed, could not be trusted with authority. Knox also believed that God created women to be ruled by men, and that women should take on the roles of obedience and servitude, never as the ruler of men. Quoting Genesis 3:16 as proof and reason for women's subjection to men, Knox said that:

... after her fall and rebellion committed against God ... she was made subject to man by the irrevocable sentence of God. Women suffer as a result of Eve's sin and therefore all women are under the dominion of men (Knox 1995:59).

Phipps (1981:95) states:

Knox concluded his anti-feminist career as a persecutor of alleged witches. He condoned burning them and was personally involved in tormenting at least one.

In James Melville's *Autobiography and Diary* (1842), he writes that he had witnessed the execution of a witch where Knox denounced from the pulpit that she should be put up on a pillar before him (Melville (1842:58).

It is clear that Knox denounced women in power as foolish and that he believed it was against the will of God. In his opinion, women should be forbidden from representing God in office, as well as be forbidden from holding any authority above men. Knox retained his argument against women in authority as being repugnant, unlawful and unjustifiable.

2.9 Conclusion.

This chapter took as its vantage point the difficult task of explicating the theories, definitions and the development and rise of patriarchy. The importance of the historical context of influential figures such as Plato and Aristotle lies in the influence they had in shaping the views of the Church fathers on women. They were also extremely influential in the patriarchal views and thinking about women during the Middle Ages and the Reformation.

History teaches us what people before us did, what their intentions were and where they failed or went wrong. What is undeniably clear from these discussions is that a bleak and grim picture emerges from these historical studies of women.

If these historical viewpoints about women reflect women's subordination and oppression, they force women to discover their roots and their past. With this, comes the right to define, to decide and to act upon freedom from oppression, and to ultimately create emancipation.

Chapter three will address these oppressive and subordinating viewpoints and will examine how feminists conducted themselves historically in an attempt to gain equality for all women in both the private and public arenas.

CHAPTER THREE

FEMINISM

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter two, I discussed the debate and views of feminists on the origin of patriarchy, feminists' theories on patriarchy and the views men historically held on women, particularly the opinions of Christian men.

Chapter three builds on these discussions and in it, I intend to trace the historical development of feminism. I will focus on the period between the 12th century and 20th century. It is not possible to write an historical record of all women because of the many silent voices of those women whose records were either lost, never written down or destroyed (Lerner 1993:16-17). I will, therefore, discuss a sample of women in this chapter where I will focus on their contributions and their works relating to their experiences of oppression and subjection in all areas of their lives.

The discussion on the development of feminism using waves as a metaphor also needs clarification. The wave metaphor is useful as it allows one to study feminist history as if through a lens of movement and trajectory. On the positive side, this metaphor offers the possibility of thinking about the movement as fluid; on the negative side it places the movement in static opposition by dividing generations into different waves (Hokulani, Ericson, and Pierce 2007:2). One also has to keep in mind that, although individuals may belong to a specific generation based on their age, their experiences are influenced by the ideas, resources, and support of women from other generations at a given time and place (Hokulani *et al.* 2007:3). The amalgamation of hundreds of thousands of women under different waves may contribute to the homogenisation within each wave and the erasure of similarities across the waves (Harnois 2008:141). In an attempt to prevent this homogenisation I will discuss the development of feminism using a chronological style.

The term feminism appeared first in France in the 1880s, in Britain in the 1890s and then in the United States in 1910 (Cott 1987:13-15). The socialist, Charles Fourier, who supported equality of the sexes coined the term in the early 19th century (Humm 1992:1).

The development of feminist consciousness is traditionally placed in the 19th century when historians began to trace earlier developments of feminism which had taken place at different stages over hundreds of years. Feminism must be understood as not a unitary concept but as a term that covers diverse and multi-faceted ideas, theories and actions (Lerner 1993:14). Some feminists attempted to make feminism much older than the rise of feminism as a movement in the late 1800s. Women who had engaged in women's issues before the 1900s reflected a protofeminist consciousness of prophetic judgments and condemnations of the injustice afflicted upon women (Martin 1994:145-146). This consciousness was, however, not yet defined as feminist consciousness. Therefore, one has to concentrate on common characteristics of the many different types of feminism such as the call for changes in the social, economic, political, theological and cultural realms.

Defining feminism can be challenging but it broadly includes women and men who act, speak and write about women's issues, rights and social injustice. Broadly, feminists are concerned with issues such as gender differences and equality for women. They all share one common goal: the liberation of all women from oppression and discrimination (Botting & Houser 2006:265-278).

It is generally accepted that feminism equates to the concept of equal rights for women, but feminism is so much more; it also focuses on all aspects of womanhood in an attempt to identify oppressive elements that need change (Scholtz 2010:9). Feminism is, therefore, the critical consideration and deliberation of practices, customs, language and social roles and how these affect women in relation to men (Scholtz 2010:10). Feminists use a variety of methodologies in their studies, but, what are central to all are the lives of women (Scholtz 2010:11).

History is filled with bitter and intense disputes over what is permissible for feminists to do, to say, to think or to feel. Feminists are so fragmented in their opinions that the construction of a simple, modern, shared definition of feminism is very difficult (Delmar 1986:9). It is more appropriate to speak of a plurality of feminists rather than just of feminism. Different feminists became a sort of sclerosis of the movement and so fragmented and divided that many have become antagonistic towards each other. Radical feminists, socialist feminists, Marxist feminists, lesbian separatists and women of colour all want to protect and portray their type of feminism as the only true one, whilst often either ignoring or criticising the others (Delmar 1986:9). Delmar offers a basic definition of feminism and states:

Many would agree that at the very least a feminist is someone who holds that women suffer discrimination because of their sex, that they have specific needs which remain negated and unsatisfied, and that the satisfaction of these needs would require a radical change (some would say a revolution even) in the social, economic and political order (Delmar 1986:8).

Klein (2002:3) remarks that as feminism developed as a social, political, philosophical, sexual, literary and artistic movement, it became more difficult to define the term. To most women inside the feminist movement, the term became more and more unsatisfactorily because of its ever-changing and unstructured nature. This resulted in the movement splitting into splinter groups, each with its own specialised agenda (Klein 2002:4). These many different schools of thought within feminism, each with varying views, has led to much criticism about the feminist movement as a whole (Arneil 1999:3).

This splitting and changing nature is also true of feminist theology. It is important to note that it is not easy to map and present feminist theology in some kind of chronological order. The reason, according to Pears (2004:9), is that feminist theologians and historians claim that history was recorded largely by men and that women's experience, interests and achievements were either not recorded or when they were, they were done so through the eyes of men. To speak of the beginnings of feminist theology is misleading and inaccurate and needs careful qualification in order

to avoid representing feminist theology as a unified whole (Pears 2004:10). Feminism has had a dramatic impact on Christian theology. Ruether (2002:3-4) says that Christian feminist theologians started to take feminist critique and the reconstruction of gender paradigms into the theological realm. They began to question male dominance and female subordination and the fact that exclusively male language is used to describe God. They also began to question the views which held that males are more like God and that only males can represent God and the Church in society. Feminist theologians began to redefine symbols, such as God, humanity, male and female, creation, sin, redemption and church in a gender-inclusive way as social and cultural constructs (Ruether 2002:4).

Watson (2003:28) distinguishes between two different groups of feminist theologies. The first group of feminist theologians seeks to find and create a theological basis for women's equality. The second group proposes the celebration of women's differences and identities. Regardless of which category they fall into, all feminist theologians grapple with the same issue: speaking about God as a male whilst women throughout history have experienced suffering, injustice, and oppression inflicted on them by men. To feminist theologians, traditional male language portrays a one-dimensional view of God as Father, King, Lord and Master and as a powerful and controlling ruler; feminist theology seeks to develop new female names and images for God (Watson 2003:29). Feminist theologians' goals are, amongst others, to reinterpret male-dominated imagery and language about God, to include and increase women's roles among clergy and religious authorities and to act against the injustice of white supremacy (Heyward 1982: xiv).

Biblical criticism was an act of resistance against the constraints and limitations imposed on women by patriarchy, which, by its very nature, has defined women's roles in public and private spheres. Women's critique and reinterpretation of the Bible were in themselves feminist acts of rebellion and their attempts to transform patriarchal doctrine (Lerner 1993:138). During the second century A.D. the earliest known example of a women's Bible commentary was that written by Helie. She was the first woman to legally win the right to make her own decisions within a patriarchal

realm. As she chose not to marry but instead to remain a consecrated virgin and take Christ as her husband, she was brought to a judge by her parents. The judge cited to her St. Paul who said "It is better to marry than to burn"; her counter argument that "men are not bound by laws promulgated for women" won her the right to remain a virgin and to take Christ as her husband (Lerner 1993:140).

De Solenni (2002:1) explains that feminism can be categorised in many different ways and that feminism should be broken down into general groups based on how individuals (man and woman) are considered in relation to each other. In order for women not to be considered as atomistic individuals, men and women have to realise that happiness relates to intimate relations with others and God. Not all Christian feminists agree, or have consensus, on the topic and their beliefs vary notably, explains De Solenni (2002: 2):

Woman is created in the image of God. Like man, she is created for the purpose of knowing, ultimately knowing God. True feminism, therefore, respects woman's essential identity as an image of God. Where she differs from man, a true feminist understands that these differences are constructive and complementary. True feminism concerns itself more with how a woman exists, rather than the jobs that she can do. Whatever she does, she does as a woman, not as a genderless creature. The same is obviously true for man.

Ruether states that feminist theology was not born *ex nihilo* because women in earlier eras had already critiqued and reconstructed sexism in the religious realms. Feminist theology is a movement that reinterprets and reconsiders traditions, practices, Scripture and the theologies of religions from a feminist perspective (Ruether 2002:4).

Ruether wrote:

The uniqueness of feminist theology lies not in its use of the criteria of experience but rather in its use of women's experience, which has been almost entirely shut out of theological reflection in the past. The use of women's experience in feminist theology, therefore, explodes as a critical force, exposing classical theology, including its codified traditions, as based on male experience rather than on universal human experience (Ruether 1992:13).

Feminist theology is concerned with the overturning of misogynist assumptions of the Bible and the Christian tradition. Church fathers are regarded as sexists whose works

presumed the inferiority of women and held woman responsible for the existence of evil (Oppenheimer 2003:25-31). Christian feminism attempts to evaluate the impact and implications of patriarchy and its devastating effect it has had on women and to recover, to name and to reconstruct women's historical and religious selves (Pears 2004:1).

It is clear from the above that mapping feminism and the development thereof in different waves and schools of thought is a difficult task. In this discussion on feminism I will concentrate on women who are regarded in feminist circles as those women, and in some instances men, who have made an impact on, and contributed to, the struggle for women's rights and freedom.

3.2. The History of Feminism

As I explained earlier, the history of feminism may be divided into three waves, each describing and dealing with different aspects of the same feminist issues (Krolokke & Sorensen 2006:2). To reiterate, the wave metaphor is a tool for looking at feminist generations through a lens of movement and mobile trajectory (Hokulani, *et al.* 2007:2). My discussion on the development of feminism will examine the period from the 12th century until the 20th century. I found that selecting which feminists to include in this chapter a particularly onerous task as there are many admirable people to choose from. I decided to focus my attention on those who are recognised as having contributed to the development of women's consciousness.

I will focus in the following section on women who have resisted patriarchy and who voiced their opposition to the oppression of women before the 18th century - often referred to as protofeminists. Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, Christine de Pizan, Agrippa von Nettsheim, Jane Anger, Amelia Lanyer, John Fox, Margaret Fell, and Mary Astell, are amongst others who are referred to as protofeminists and who will be discussed in the following section.

3.2.1 12th Century - 17th Century (Protofeminism)

Historians of feminism claim that the term feminism cannot be limited to that of the modern feminist movements and they use the term protofeminism to refer to, and to describe, earlier movements (Botting & Houser 2006:268). Protofeminism is a term used to define women in a philosophical tradition that projected modern feminist concepts, but who lived in a time when the term feminism was unknown – thus prior to the 20th century (Botting & Carey 2004:707). Those women who interpreted the Bible prior to the feminism of the late 20th have been largely forgotten, and therefore feminists in recent times have sought to prove that protofeminist works reveal familiar approaches to biblical text and interest in women's liberation (Calvert-Koyzis & Weir 2009:5).

During the time of Antiquity and that of the Church fathers, it was believed that male rationality and logic were divine gifts. The interpretation of the Bible through rational, philosophical, and theological arguments were reserved for males only. It was believed that women lacked rational capabilities, and as such, were not allowed to receive education or to participate in philosophical and theological discourse (Lerner 1993:65). Many women began to engage in various forms of mysticism as an avenue for another mode of cognition and enlightenment. Mysticism emphasises that transcendental knowledge is not a product of rational thought, but is a way of life wherein individual inspiration and sudden revelatory insight occur through intuition (Lerner 1993:66). Christian women, through mystical experiences, found the boldness and authority to speak, to teach and to influence other people. Over many years, female mystics found alternative ways to stand up for their right to achieve religious equality. According to Lerner (1993:88), it took on a variety of forms such as:

- 1) the development of God-language and symbolism;
- 2) the re-conceptualization of the Divine as both male and female;
- 3) women's direct intervention in redemption and salvation; and
- 4) a deliberate and often scholarly feminist Bible criticism.

I will now turn to a discussion of Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, Christine de Pizan, Jane Anger, Margaret Fell, and Mary Astell, and their contribution to the women's cause from the perspectives of other feminists.

3.2.1.1 Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Hildegard of Bingen, an English 12th century nun, mystic and recluse was the first medieval woman who reflected and wrote at length on female symbols (Ruether 1998:81-92) and women's equality to men in both their souls and in redemption (Lerner 1993:143).

The fact that Bingen's work covered medicine, natural sciences, cosmology, theology, ethics, mystical revelations and poetry, (Lerner 1993:57) and her ability to argue against oppressive and traditional gender-roles places her firmly in the role of a protofeminist.

Bingen wrote her theological trilogy *Scivias* (Know the ways of God) between 1141-1151, *Liber Vitae Meritorum* (Book of Life's Merits) between 1158-1163, and *Liber Divinorum Operum* (Book of the Divine works) between 1163-1173/74 (Flanagan 1995:59-73). *Scivias*, according to Newman (1985:163-175), is

a comprehensive guide to Christian doctrine ... ranged over the themes of divine majesty, the Trinity, creation, the fall of Lucifer and Adam, the stages of salvation history, the church and its sacraments, the Last Judgment and the world to come.

Bingen's *Liber Divinorum Operum*, is described as

A broad cosmological reflection on the Christian revelation from a profoundly anthropocentric point of view according to which men and women, who are themselves the 'work' of God, are called to co-operate actively with God in the perfection of his creation (Bowie & Davies 1990:n.p).

In *Scivias* she attempted to answer questions of how Christians should live to reach the Heavenly City, and her *Liber Vitae Meritorum* is an attempt to explore the same subject. In this work she deals with the vices that plagued travelers on their way to the Heavenly City (Flanagan 1995:65).

Bingen often referred to herself as an uneducated woman, which was part of her strategy to strengthen her claims of divine revelation. Her visions started when she was five years old and she kept it secret into adulthood (Lerner 1993:53). She believed that these visions gave her authority and after falling severely ill she revealed these visions later in her life “on command of her inner voice” convinced that this command was the will of God. (Flanagan 1995:60).

In Bingen’s *Liber Divinorum Operum*¹⁹ she reports 10 visions concerning the love of God as revealed in man and man’s relation to Christ.

Bingen also wrote on the relationship between men and women. For her, when God looked upon humans he was very pleased because he created them all in accordance with his Divine image and likeness. Humans, therefore, have to announce God’s wonderful works by means of their tongues – the reason why Bingen was “endowed upon human’s tongues”. Bingen explained that God gave the first man a helper, a woman, and that she was made as a mirror image of the man. In this woman, the whole of the human race was presented in a latent way. This woman, Eve, was created through God’s manifold creative power just as He had produced the first man with this same power. Therefore, Bingen believed that men and women are intrinsically involved with each other, so much so that in one of them is the work of the other. Thus, without women, men cannot be called man, and without men, women cannot be called woman. Bingen was a great advocate of the view that men and women cannot live without each other. For Bingen, men are an indication of the Godhead whilst women are an indication of the humanity of God’s Son (Lerner 1993:60-61)²⁰.

¹⁹ *Liber Divinorum Operum*, is the last of Bingen’s visionary works. There is no complete translation available for this work. Partial translation was done by Robert Cunningham. Some parts were omitted in the Latin edition that Cunningham used and some parts available in the Latin edition are either omitted or summarised (some of the omitted sections are in Flanagan, 1995).

²⁰ See Hildegard of Bingen’s book of Divine works with letters and songs (Ed) Matthew Fox (Vision 4 pp. 122-123).

Bingen's spiritual awareness was grounded in what she called *limbra viventis lucis*, the *Reflections of the Living Light*. At the age of 17 she wrote a letter to Guibert of Gembloux in which she describes her experience. In the *Opening Declaration Protestification to Scivas* written in 1150 she describes the events of 1141 as follows:

In the year of our Lord 1141 when I was forty-two years and seven months old, the heavens opened and a fiery light throwing off great streams of sparks utterly permeated my brain and ignited my heart and breast like a flame which does not burn but give of heat the way the sun warms an object, which it touches with its rays. And suddenly the meaning of the Scriptures, the Psalter, the Evangelium and the other catholic books of the Old and New Testament was revealed to me ... I had experienced the power and mystery of hidden and marvelous visions since childhood, that is from the age of five up to the present, but I had revealed this to no one except to a few others who shared my way of life. I concealed it and kept silent until such time as God saw fit to manifest it through his grace.²¹

Bingen's re-conceptualisation of the Divine as both male and female presents an androgynous God (Lerner 1993:90) and in her theology of the feminine, her visions of archetypal maternal figures such as Caritas, Mary and Ecclesia point to her mediation between God and humanity (Newman 1987: xviii). Bingen stood in direct opposition to patriarchal viewpoints on gender roles and argued that women have the right and ability to think.

Bingen removed herself from the traditional role of mother and wife and decided to live a religious life instead, where she "grounded her authority in mystical revelations and a direct relationship with God" (Lerner 1993:57).

3.2.1.2 Julian of Norwich (1342-1416)

Julian of Norwich lived in England, and like other mystics of her time, experienced a series of visions and encounters with God after falling seriously ill. She spent most of her time meditating on these visions. In her writings, Julian uses feminine images to

²¹ See *Opening Declaration Protestification to Scivas*, written in 1150 describing the events of 1141. Latin original is on p.p. 3-6 Scivas A. Führkötter & A. Carlevaris (Eds). CCM 43-43A. 2 Volumes with continuous pagination.

describe God and Jesus. She portrays God as Father and Mother, the Father who wills and the Mother who works through the affirmation of the Holy Spirit (Japinga 1999:16). In her *Showings*, 1413, she states:

As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. Our Father wills, our Mother works, our good Lord the Holy Spirit confirms. And therefore it is our part to love our God in whom we have our being, reverently thanking and praising him for our creation, mightily praying to our Mother for mercy and pity, and to our Lord the Holy Spirit for help and grace.

Beer (1992: 7-8) proposes that:

Julian most dramatically reveals her femaleness in her understanding of the motherhood of God. ... Julian explains that the Trinity actually includes a female component; as well as being the Son, Jesus is our mother, who feeds and nurtures us, and looks after us during our lifetime. ... Are these sorts of 'female' observations the result of 'nature' or 'nurture', of biology or social conditioning? Impossible (as always) to say with finality. ... [T]he fact that Julian may have been brought up to equate womanliness and motherhood with gentleness, and may herself had a particularly close bond with her own mother, cannot in itself have given rise to her understanding of Jesus as Mother, which was (and still is) in direct contradiction to the orthodox view of the Trinity.

Julian of Norwich presents God as an androgynous Trinitarian God who is essentially both male and female. She describes God as one God and one Lord and as the kind almighty Father and Mother, and the Holy Ghost as both loving and good. In God's Fatherhood we have our being and in God as Mother we have restoration and reformation. In God, all our parts are united as perfect men and through the grace of the Holy Spirit we are fulfilled. Human nature is whole in each person of the Trinity as one God (Colledge & Walsh 1978:293). She describes Jesus as our Mother who feeds us with Himself (Colledge & Walsh 1978:296). Julian's views on sin were extremely different from those held by the medieval church. Her view was that people sin because they are ignorant and naive, not because they are evil. She believed that sin was a necessary part of the learning process of life and that it brought people to self-knowledge which would inevitably lead people to accept God in their lives (Beer 1992:143).

3.2.1.3 Christine de Pizan (1365-1430)

Christine de Pizan lived in France, but was Italian by birth (Ruether 1998:81-92; 2002:5). She is known for her arguments for the recognition of women as completely human and for the way she defended women against the misogynist speeches and writings of churchmen and poets.

De Pizan became known as a champion of women's rights with her works *L'Epistre au Dieu d'amours* (Letters to the God of Love, 1399); *Le dit de la Rose* (The Tale of the Rose, 1402), *Epistres du debat sur le Roman de la Rose* (Letters on the Debate of the Romance of the Rose, 1401-1403), and *Le Livre de la Cite des Dames* (Book of the City of the Ladies, 1405). She inspired more women to become involved in discussions about women's rights and freedom.

She defended women against misogynistic representations of women and, for example, attacked Jean de Meung's misogynic doctrines in the popular *Roman de La Rose* (Sponberg 2002:66). In her famous work, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405), she extensively argued for the equality of women especially with regards to education. Through the character of Lady Reason in the *City of Ladies* De Pizan encouraged and advised women to engage in economic issues and family business. She encouraged women to be sound administrators and to know how to use their revenues and possessions wisely to escape the shame of debt collectors (Lawson 1985:114).

De Pizan's biblical commentaries included her views on the Fall and that of Eve as having been created in the image of God. She contested the widely-held view that Eve was subordinate because she had been formed from a rib of Adam whilst he was sleeping. Eve should not be portrayed as a slave nor as subordinate but as a companion for Adam. On whether Eve was created in the image of God, De Pizan stated:

I don't know if you have already noted this: she was created in the image of God. How can any mouth dare to slander the vessel which bears such a noble imprint? ... God created the soul and place wholly

similar souls, equally good and noble, in the feminine and masculine bodies. ... Woman was made by the Supreme Craftsman. In what place was she created? In the Terrestrial Paradise. From what substance? Was it vile matter? No, it was the noblest substance which had ever been created: it was from the body of man from which God made woman (cited in Richard 1982:23-24).

In the book, *The Book of the City of the Ladies*, De Pizan demolished the view held by many that women were inferior. She managed this in her dialogue with Lady Reason by raising several misogynist charges against women and answering them in such a way that reflected women in a better light than men (Lerner 1993:145).

3.2.1.4 Jane Anger

Jane Anger was an English author during the late 16th century and the only evidence of her existence is a pamphlet she wrote in 1589, *Her protection for women. To defend them against the SCANDALOUS REPORERS OF a late Surfeiting Lover, and all other like Venerians that complaine so to bee overcloyed with womens kindnesses*. According to Lerner (1993:150), this work by Anger was a reaction against anti-feminist debates that had taken place in France and England. Thomas Orwin's, *Boke His Surfeit in Love, with a farwel to the folies of his own phantasie*, in 1588 evoked a response from Anger in an effort to defend women against misogynist ideas. In this pamphlet, in the section on *To all Women in general*, Anger (1589) writes:

FIFE on the falshoode of men, whose minds goe oft a madding, & whose tongues can not so soone bee wagging, but straight they fal a railing. Was there ever any so abused, so slaundered, so railed upon, or so wickedly handeled underservedly, as are we women?

Anger also reminded women in the same pamphlet that

Wee are contrary to men, because they are contrarie to that which is good: because they are spurblind, they cannot see into our natures, and wee too well (though we had but halfe an eie) into their conditions, because they are bad: our behaviours alter daily, because mens vertues decay hourelly.

Anger also receives credit as a protofeminist and is often used by feminist Bible commentators as an example of a woman who has interpreted the Creation story (Lerner 1993:151). The following words from Anger's pamphlet are often quoted as proof of Anger's contribution to women's liberation:

The creation of man and women at the first, he being formed In principio of dross and filthy clay, did so remain until God saw that in him his workmanship was good, and therefore by the transformation of the dust which was loathsome unto flesh, it became purified. Then lacking a help for him, GOD making woman of man's flesh, that she might be purer than he, does evidently show, how far we women are more excellent than men. Our bodies are fruitful, whereby the world increases, and our care wonderful, by which man is preserved. From woman sprang man's salvation. A woman was the first that believed, & a woman like wife the first that revered him

3.2.1.5 Margaret Fell (1614-1702)

John Fox, the founder of Quakerism in Britain, wrote, *Women Learning in Silence*, in 1656. He argued that all human beings are equal in God through the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit works and speaks in men as well as women. This pamphlet influenced Margaret Fell (Lerner 1993:101) to such an extent that she expanded Fox's doctrine by including women's right to preach. Margaret Fell, also a Quaker, wrote the essay *Women's Preaching Justified* in 1667 which was a fully developed scriptural argument that justified women's roles in the biblical world. She argued that women have the right to participate and play an active role in public religious life (Lerner 1993:100). She also argued that Christ allowed women to preach publically and that this was crucial in the formation of the Church as a movement of redemption (Ruether 1998:138-140). Fell played an important role in the ongoing quest for women to have equal education and rights. Her writings became powerful ammunition against the misogynistic interpretations of the Bible. Fell also argued that women may be preachers because Christ allowed them to be; therefore a redemptive Church should allow women to preach:

Those who speak against the Power of the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord speaking in a woman, simply, by reason of her Sex, or because she is a woman, not regarding the Seed, and Spirit, and Power that

speaks in her; such speak against Christ, and his Church, and are the Seed of the Serpent ...

The Lord God in the Creation, when he made man in his own image, he made them male and female; and ... Christ Jesus was made of a Woman, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her and the Holy Ghost came upon her ... (Fell 1667:5, 12).

3.2.1.6 Mary Astell (1666-1731)

Mary Astell, an Anglican humanist in Britain, wrote *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* in 1694 wherein she argues for women's equality within the Church. In this work, she criticises men for describing women as irrational and for the fact that they prevented women from receiving education. Astell contended that God gives women and men intelligent souls, therefore women should not be forbidden from improving themselves (Freedman 2002:50). In *Some Reflections upon marriage* (1770) she questioned the patriarchal authority of scriptural interpreters and she writes:

Scripture is not always on their Side who make Parade of it, and through their Skill in Languages, and the Tricks of the Schools, wrest it from its genuine Sense to their own Inventions. ... Because Women, without their own Fault, are kept in Ignorance of the Original, wanting Languages and other Helps to Criticise on the Sacred Text, of which, they know no more, than Men are pleas'd to impart in their Translations (Astell 1916:103-104).

Although women remained marginalised in the Church, both Fell and Astell can be regarded as having developed the first feminist theology movement, according to Ruether (1998:4-5).

The abovementioned women are a small sample of the many women who, between the 12th and 17th centuries, voiced their opposition to male domination and patriarchal oppression. Despite gender indoctrination and the pressure on women to be submissive, these women wrote themselves into the story of redemption and reserved themselves the right to define their own humanity.

In the following section, women's issues during the 18th century will be considered.

3.2.2 18th Century

The women's movement was a movement of individualistic and rights-orientated women in the United States and in Britain who also incorporated the relational orientations of early French and German feminists (Offen 1988:119-157). The United States and the French revolutions in the 18th century brought about the pursuit for the liberty of women. Although there were struggles for women's rights before these revolutions, the movement for social change during the late 1700s was the catalyst for greater interest in women's issues and rights (Scholtz 2010:13).

It was during the late 18th century that feminists such as Olympe de Gouge (1745-1793) in France, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) in Britain, and Abigail Adams (1744-1818) in America, argued for equal rights for women against the existing aristocracy and capitalist class efforts to re-enforce male dominance (Ruether 1998:138-140). Most scholars claim that contemporary feminism started with these women's works (Klein 2002:20). In her essay, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792, Wollstonecraft protested against the stereotyping of women in domestic roles, the failure to regard women as individuals in their own right, and the failure to educate girls and women (Klein 2002:29). This work was written to oppose the views of Edmund Burke's publication in 1790, *Reflections of the Revolution in France*, wherein he made the statement that "A women is but an animal, and an animal not of the highest order" (quoted in Klein 2002:30). Wollstonecraft challenged Burke's views and protested that the lack of education for women and the way in which women were socialised, created the differences in intellectual skills, temperament and ethical values between the sexes and not because of biological differences.. She argued that women are as rational as men but that men have power because they received education. She believed strongly that in order for women to be productive citizens they required education (Klein 2002:32).

In 1777, whilst the writing of the American Constitution was underway, Abigail Adams wrote a letter to her husband, John Adams, in which she challenged him to take women's rights seriously and to protect women against the tyranny of their husbands.

She also argued that women's rights should be included in the American Constitution. This letter formed the starting point of the women's movement in the late eighteenth century (Klein 2002:29).

In France, women were mobilised and inspired by Olympe De Gouges (1748-1793). Olympe De Gouges, in her *Declaration of the Rights of Women and Citizen* in 1793, appealed to women to wake up, to discover their rights and to unite themselves against oppression (Klein 2002:29). Like Wollstonecraft, De Gouges also campaigned for women's equal rights in government and in education (Klein 2002:30).

It was not only women at this time who were actively promoting women's rights; men such as Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1994) in France, Theodore Gottlieb von Hippel in Germany and John Stuart Mill in England started to express their opinions on women's issues.(Klein 2002:32). In his book, *On the Civil Improvement of Women (1794)*, von Hippel stated that women were simply neglected and intentionally suppressed. He argued that reason is a gift of nature bestowed on all human beings and that, therefore, all human beings should have the opportunity to develop and to fulfill their potential (Evans 1977:14). Mill, in his *Thought the Subjection of Women (1869)*, campaigned for women's voting rights and for their access to professions and public office. He declared that the subordination of one sex by the other is wrong and that it is a hindrance to human improvement. He argued that the excessive authority which husbands had over their wives should be removed under the law (Evans 1977:20). In De Condorcet's *Essai sur l'admission des femmes as droit de cite (1790)*, he campaigned for women's education and, after the French Revolution, he pointed out that men took women's natural rights for granted and questioned whether proof existed that rights for women should be different from those for men (Rendell 1985:42-430).

During the mid-19th century the wave metaphor emerged. In the following section some of the main issues regarding the development of feminist waves will be considered.

3.2.3 Mid-19th – Early 20th Century (First wave feminism)

Arising from the industrial and liberal political contexts, first wave feminists debated materialism, women's self-determination as well as women's individual, collective, social and political interests. These feminists campaigned for equal opportunities in the workplace, education, the public and material world, and for the abolishment of male dominance. In seeking equal opportunities for all women, first wave feminists joined forces with working-class women in the pursuit of proving that women are equal citizens (Krolokke & Sorensen 2006:1).

Women in the United States such as Sarah Grimké (1792-1873) and Angeline Grimké (1805-1879), Lucy Stone (1818-1893), Lucretia Mott (1793-1880), Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) and Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826-1893), are regarded, amongst others, as prominent and important key thinkers in the development of Christian theology in the early stage of feminism (West, 2010:1).

Sarah and Angeline Grimké were Quaker abolitionists, and as members of this society, condemned the evils of slavery and urged women to speak out publically against this dehumanising evil that was supported by Christian churches (Clifford 2001:11). Angelina wrote the *An Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* in 1836, asking women to denounce slavery and Sarah published the pamphlet *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Conditions of Women* in 1838. In this letter she wrote a reinterpretation of the biblical text from an orthodox Christian point of view. She argued that biblical texts are sacred, but tainted by human frailty and error (Lerner 1993:161). Sarah Grimké theologically engaged in interpreting the equality of the sexes in the image of God as His original intention. She argued that by discriminating against women God's intended creation had been distorted and was a sin, not only against women, but also against God (Gross 1996:36). At the end of this work she clearly states her position as a woman: "Here I plant myself. God created us equal" (Grimké 1838:4).

Both Gage and Stanton were critical of Christianity and the role Christianity played in establishing and promoting injustice against women (Pears 2004:10). Scripture,

according to Stanton, is a sexist product (Ruether 2002:5-6). They grew sceptical about all religion and eventually stopped believing in the Bible's sacred origin and the autonomy of the church. They argued that religion was the oppressor of women and they rejected Biblical texts as having no authority over women's lives. During 1878, whilst in New York, Gage stated that the Bible and the Church were both obstacles to women's advancement (Lerner 1993:163). Gage stated that the challenges the Church were faced with were the questions of human existence:

The most important struggle in the history of the church is that woman for liberty of thought and the right to give that thought to the world. As a spiritual force the church appealed to barbaric conception when it declared woman to have been made for man, first in sin and commanded to be under obedience. Holding as chief tenet a belief in the inherent wickedness of woman, the originator of sin, as its sequence the sacrifice of a God becoming necessary, the church as treated her as alone under a "curse" for whose enforcement is declared itself the divine instrument. Women's degradation under it dating back to its earliest history, while the nineteenth century still shows religious despotism to have its stronghold in the theory of woman's inferiority to man (Gage 1980:237).

Stanton wrote the Women's Bible in 1895 and claimed that the Bible was sexist and a cultural monument that denied the revelatory quality of the Bible (Hauke 1995:53). She also campaigned for gender equality and aspired for women to obtain property rights, higher education as well as civil and political rights (Ruether 1998:160-176).

Just as Grimke had, Mott argued that both male and female was created in the image of God, and that this had been His intention. Mott and Stanton led the first women's convention which was held at Seneca Falls on 19th July 1848 (Rendell 1985:227). Here, they declared that all women and men are equal and that the history of mankind inflicted injuries on women because of men's tyranny (Basch 1979:346-366). As a result of their political strategy and fight for women's emancipation (Ruether 1998:160-167), Mott, Stanton and Anthony are regarded as the best-known advocates for economic and legal equality for women. These women's efforts made it possible for American women to gain the right to own property and suffrage (Clifford 2001:11). At the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, ten resolutions were

drawn up which included the right of women to own property, to own income, to share legal custody of children, to gain access to education and the right to vote (Coolidge 1966:50-55).

The abolitionist movement during the 1800s has furthered the women's cause by providing the rhetoric and forums for public discussions on the role of women in society. It is often referred to as the first wave of feminist activism where the focus was placed on women gaining status as human beings including full civil, intellectual, social, economic and legal rights (Scholtz 2010:5). But, the issue of female slaves was not addressed until 1833 when the Female Anti-Slavery Society was founded which became "a natural setting for connecting the oppression of slaves with the subordination of women" (Clifford 2001:11). The Female Anti-Slavery Society became a movement against the oppression of slaves and the subordination of women (Bacon 1986:103-105).

Black religious women abolitionists in the United States during 1830 and 1870 such as Maria Stewart (1803-1855), Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) and Harriet Tubman (1823-1913) started to participate in the new religious abolitionism and were instrumental in the campaigning for the rights of women of colour during the early 1800s (Clifford 2001:157). Stewart was a member of the Boston African Baptist Church, and in her antislavery campaigns, she stated that violence may be necessary to end slavery (Clifford 2001:157). Tubman, also called 'Moses' by her followers, led more than three hundred slaves to freedom during 1850-1857 via the Underground Railroad (Clifford 2001:157).

During the Akron Convention in 1848 Sojourner Truth, a member of the African Methodist Zion Church, spoke out and protested against the racism in the women's movement (Clifford 2001:157). In her 1851 speech²² as cited in (hooks 1981:160), she said:

²² Although no formal record of the speech exists, it is postulated that Frances Gage, an abolitionist and president of the convention, recorded Truth's words.

Well, children, whar dar is so much racket dar must be something out o' kilter. I tink dat 'twixt de niggers of de Souf and de women at de Norf all a talin 'bout rights, de white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all dis here talkin' 'bout? Dat man ober dar say dat women needs to be helped into carriages, and lifter ober ditches, and to have de best places ... and ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! ... I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me – and ain't I a woman? I could work as uch as any man (when I could get it) and bear de lash as will – and ain't I a woman? I have borne five children and I seen 'em mos all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus hear – and ain't I a woman?

Truth, a slave who was born Isabella Baumbree, became the most influential black woman's voice of her time. She became a spiritualist and prophet and preached her own brand of Christianity. She had little or no contact with other spiritualists and did not belong to a specific church. Truth claimed that she received her authority from direct communication with God (Lerner 1993:107).

These women were frustrated that sexism and racism were enforced by white men and that first wave feminists were mainly white middle-class and well-educated women. This tendency was reinforced by the counterstrikes of both the abolitionist movement and the working unions to keep women involved in these movements (Krolokke & Sorensen 2006:3).

The Civil War (1860-1865) had both positive and negative impacts on feminism. Many women were left to run homes, farms, and businesses alone which naturally made them more independent and self-reliant. They became educated in business and politics. On the negative side women owners were often more aggressive, harsh, and violent towards their slaves than their husbands, fathers or brothers had been. After the war, and with the newly acquired freedom for black women, the distance between black and white women widened (Weiner 1996:232). One reason for this was that white women had to do their own housework that once was delegated to the now free slaves (Weiner 1996:201, 212).

During World War I (1914-1918), women were actively recruited to do work for the Red Cross and the government. Women's contributions were, however, limited to

traditional women's work such as sewing, cleaning and clerical work (Foner 1980:1-2, 28). The 19th amendment of the United States constitution was ratified in 1920 and it declared that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex (Klein 2002:45). The 19th amendment is closely associated with Anthony, Stanton, Stone and the black woman activist Sojourner Truth (Klein 2002:45).

The depression years during the 1930s opened new opportunities for women in the work force. Whilst men were being laid off, women were being employed and that gave women more power in the work force. Women however, still received poorer benefits and pay (Klein 2002:50)

Once women had gained the right to vote, they began wanting equality on all levels. Women wanted recognition as women firstly and then as wives and mothers (Klein 2002:48). However, women also started to experience mixed feelings about equal status and marriage for two reasons. The first reason was that women themselves believed that "having a job lessened their chances for marriage" (Brown 1987:97). Secondly, marriages could fail because women who had never worked or travelled outside the home did not share equal social status with their husbands (Brown 1987:164). For these reasons equal education and opportunities became essential. As professional jobs became available to women, education became more and more important to them. They began to attend college and demanded the same education as men (Klein 2002:49).

After World War II (1939-1945), men returned to their jobs and most women were laid off. The number of women who worked declined and feminism was placed on the back-burner. The majority of women still supported the importance of marriage and the traditional division of sex roles (Klein 2002: 50-51).

The Civil War, World War I and World War II all created a severe backlash for women's rights "as the focus then became demands of national unity and patriotism" (Krolloke & Sorensen 2005:3).

The term 'first wave feminism' was coined only after the next feminist movement, called the second wave feminist movement, had emerged. Whereas the first wave feminists were engaged in political actions (Martin 1994:155) to achieve equality for women (2010:14), the second wave was directed at securing better status for women in society as a whole (Martin 1994:155).

The struggles of women in the first wave set the stage for the development of the second wave feminism. In the following section the emergence and issues of the second wave feminism will be considered.

3.2.4 Mid-20th Century (Second wave feminism 1960's -1990)

According to Scholtz (2010:6), the second wave of feminism began somewhere between 1948 and 1960 and peaked in the early 1990s. Walters (2005:97) states that the second wave of feminism emerged after the Second World War with the Commission on the Status of Women in the United States in 1947 and the Declaration of Human Rights two years later in which women gained equal rights.

Issues such as reproduction, experience and sexual differences were important topics for second wave feminists (Humm 1992:53). Second wave feminists focused on reproduction, and through their radical campaigns, addressed issues such as gender theories, sexuality and sexual preference, social representation, family identification, environmental and racial differences (Humm 1992:54).

Second wave feminists began to look beyond oppression and shifted their scope to women's physical existence and experiences. They urged solidarity amongst all women in the Sisterhood as a political power and felt strongly that they could bring about cultural change for all women. Feminists in the second wave, however, had to acknowledge that a collective basis in women's experience is limited because of the existence of diverse social classes and racial groups (Scholtz 2010:15).

Different types of feminism emerged during the second wave such as liberal feminism, socialist feminism, radical feminism, and cultural feminism (Riley 1989:46). Brief comments on each must suffice.

- Liberal Feminism places emphasis on the civil rights of women, their right to privacy, and the right of women to independently control their sexual and reproductive health. It seeks full equality for women on all levels of society, including economic and political equalities (Riley 1989:48). Liberal feminism is concerned with securing the rights and equality of all persons. Their struggle for full equality was expressed in different ways such as legislation to ensure equal pay for women and men, equal access for women to leadership and the individual woman's right to make decisions about her own body and her sexual and reproductive health (Clifford 2001:22).
- Socialist feminists are in agreement that patriarchy is a problem (Riley 1989:57), and they seek to end economic dependence for women. They focus on social reformation, the end of class division and the provision of equal employment for women and men; they also believe that men should be equally involved in parenting (Clifford 2001:23). Their strong focus on economic class struggles causes socialist feminists to take action against white male dominance in the economic class struggle of capitalist societies and in their view, male dominance results in the division of labour according to sex, race as well as the devaluation of women's work (Riley 1989:57).
- Radical feminism considers the sexist male-controlled capitalist hierarchy as the defining feature of women's oppression (Clifford 2001:23). Their belief is that male-driven authority and power structures are responsible for oppression and inequality. As long as this system and its values are in control, society cannot be reformed in any significant way and, some radical feminists, such as Mary Daly, see as the only alternative the total uprooting and reconstruction of society in order to achieve their goals (Echols 1989:416).

- Cultural feminism highlights the female nature and the underestimation of women's attributes. Although cultural feminists emphasise the differences between men and women, they contend that these differences are not biological but psychological (Alcoff 1988:32). It was Brook Williams who introduced the term cultural feminism in 1975 (Kramarae & Spender 2000:746). The roots of cultural feminism can be traced to "the cult of womanhood" which postulates the moral superiority of women because of their maternal roles and the need to give women's roles in society much deserved value (Riley 1989:50).

Another classification of feminism types is noted by Rhodes. Rhodes (1991:20) classifies feminisms in the following sub-groups:

- Secular feminists who reject God, revelation, and religion because they see the Bible as the major source of chauvinist ideas and they feel that it has no relevance in the debate on the roles of men and women in modern society.
- New age feminists are pagans who worship a feminine deity or goddess.
- Liberal Christian feminists work within a Christian framework but approach feminist theology from a liberal perspective in which they view Bible writers as simply men of their times who were limited in their perspectives. Liberal Christian feminists employ a "hermeneutic of suspicion" - meaning, they systematically assume that male authors and interpreters of the Bible deliberately covered up the role of women in early Christianity.
- Evangelical feminists generally hold on to the conservative views of the Bible and theology, but embrace the feminist ideal of abolishing gender-based roles in society, church and home. Evangelical feminists believe the Bible is authoritative and, that if rightly understood, it supports their feminist views (Rhodes 1991:20; Woodward 1989:61).

These subgroups should not be viewed as having clearly defined lines of demarcation, but they should rather be viewed as clusters along the theological-

philosophical continuum; it is possible for feminists to fall between the clusters as they may share some characteristics of other groups (Litfin 1982:334).

Socialist and Marxist feminism was initiated by Emma Goldman (1869-1940) in the United States amongst union workers. In Germany, Rosa Luxemburg (1870-1919) started the reformist social-democratic movement and in Russia, Alexandra Kollontai (1873-1952) played an important role with the rise of communism in Russia. These women fought for equality for women across many spheres including the recognition of non-legislative partnership and the right to control their own reproductive health (Krolokke & Sorensen 2006:6).

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) is regarded as one of the most influential second wave feminists with her work *The Second Sex* in 1949 (Walters 2005:97). Although she is regarded as an important second wave feminist, De Beauvoir's book was not a feminist tract but rather an analysis of women in society and the rejection of the subordination of women as a historical given, and as a natural and necessary state (Hogan 1995:19). De Beauvoir (1953:13) clearly states that

Enough ink has been spilled in quarrelling over feminism, and perhaps we should say no more about it.

In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir raised the problem of the social conditions people lived in, especially women (Hogan 1995:20). De Beauvoir (1953:29) states

Now what peculiarly signalizes the situation of women is that she – a free and autonomous being like all human creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other. They propose to stabilize her as object and to doom her to immanence ...

De Beauvoir rejects the economic theory of Marx and Engels that private property is the root of women's social and economic oppression. Oppression, according to her, lies in the innate desires of human beings to dominate. She states that

One is not born, but becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this

creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine (De Beauvoir 1953:295).

De Beauvoir encouraged women to rise above and to act collectively and to reject being treated as objects (Hogan 1995:25).

In 1963 Betty Friedan (1921-), a pioneer in the American Women's Movement, wrote *The Feminist Mystique* wherein she called upon women to refuse inferior social roles. Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique* exposed the concealed concerns of women's experiences as unwaged housewives and consumers. The term mystique was used by Friedan to label 'the problem with no name' which, according to her, is the instinctive concerns that women experience when they do not have public careers and are forced to remain in the domestic sphere (Hogan 1995:28). Friedan founded the National Organization of Women (NOW) in 1966 and went on to create a contemporary model for liberal feminism. NOW campaigned for the following for women: equal civil rights, education, health, welfare and pay. Friedan's works were influential and paved the way for future liberal feminist movements (Tong 1989:23-24).

In 1964, discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, religion, origins or sex, were prohibited by the Civil Rights Act. The Chicago Women's Liberation Movement was formed after the Conference on New Politics removed the feminist resolution from its agenda.

During the 1960s, changes were brought about with the reform of marriage (1965) and contraceptive laws (1967) in France. It needs to be mentioned that Lucy Irigary, Julia Kristeva, and Helen Cixous are associated with the development of feminism in France during the 20th century and they focused mainly on theories of the body (Pollock 2006:87).

During the late 1960s, feminists became increasingly radical in their thoughts and desires for social and sexual transformation; one major success was that women were finally allowed to formally study theology. Women in the Congregationalists, Unitarian, Universalist and Methodist Protestant Churches acquired access to

theological education and ministry and women's ordination was approved in the Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Episcopalian churches (Ruether 2002:7).

During the 1970s, lesbian feminists challenged women to become more politically inspired with publications such as Kate Millett's (1934-) *Sexual Politics* (1969), Adrienne Rich's (1929-2012) *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence* (1984), and the African American lesbian Audre Lorde's (1934-1992) *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (1984).

Millett placed the oppression of lesbian women feminists on the feminist agenda and claimed that patriarchy played a fundamental part in heterosexual relationships because it created a male-dominated society within which women had no economic equality (Humm 1992:61). Millett's main thesis was built on her firm belief that sex was a frequently neglected political component and that men dominate women in sex as they do in other parts of life (Schneir 1994:229).

Lorde (1934-1992) was a self-proclaimed Black lesbian feminist who campaigned against white feminists. She writes that white women's experiences are very different from black women's experiences. In her essay *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House*, Lorde attacks what she called the underlying racism of feminism which is dependent on patriarchy. She claims that when the differences between women are denied, feminists only pass on old systems of oppression and therefore no real change can prevail (Lorde 1984:113). She states:

Let me tell you first about what it was like being a Black woman poet in the '60s, from jump. It meant being invisible. It meant being really invisible. It meant being doubly invisible as a Black feminist woman and it meant being triply invisible as a Black lesbian feminist (Lorde 1984:40).

Germaine Greer, (1939-) in *The Female Eunuch* (1970), challenged women who accepted the role of natural dependence and inferiority to change their views and to become independent. Natural dependency and inferiority impoverish women's lives, making them the objects of male fantasy causing women to become desexualised housekeepers (Walters 2005:106).

Whilst Protestant women were allowed to study theology and to be ordained as ministers, women in the Catholic Church were still denied these rights. Catholic women received education at liberal Protestant theological institutions such as Princeton, Yale, Harvard, Union and Chicago as well as at liberal Catholic Universities like Fordham, Notre Dame and Jesuit seminaries (Ruether 2002:8). The Roman Catholic Church's control over Roman Catholic education jeopardised Catholic feminist's ordination because the male-dominated Catholic church did not allow women to be ordained. A group of women who had become disillusioned with this stance founded the Women's Church Movement to allow women a free liturgical community which nurtured feminist spirituality (Ruether 2002:8). As Protestant women experienced difficulties with their limitations within patriarchal religious communities, many joined Catholic women in their quest to shape the women-church movement (Ruether 2002:9). Protestant feminists, Letty Russell (1929-2007) and Rebecca Chopp (1952-) started feminist liturgical communities and based their ecclesiology in the context of a women-church (Chopp 1992:72-8). Russell states:

From its inception, feminist interpretations and concern with scripture has been generated by the fact that the Bible was used to halt the emancipation of women and slaves. Not only in the last century but also today, the political Right laces its attacks against the feminist struggle for women's rights and freedoms in the political, economic, reproductive, intellectual, and religious spheres with biblical quotations and appeals to scriptural authority (Russell 1985:129).

During the late 1970s and early 80s, feminist theologians entered teaching facilities and feminist theology became an established discourse in American theological schools (Ruether 2002:9); evangelical feminists such as Letha Scanzoni (1935-) and Nancy Hardesty (1941-2011) were both recognised for the pioneering work they carried out in the 1980s (Ruether 2002:10). They radically affirmed that the Bible was inadequate for the emancipation from sexism in the church and society (Ruether 2002:10).

Carter Heyward (1945-), also a lesbian feminist theologian and priest in the Episcopal Church in the United States, wrote extensively about the nature of God (Pears 2004:79). Heyward states that it is possible for all human beings to incarnate

God through genuine relations, and in so doing so, experience 'godding' - a term she coined (Heyward 1989:188). God, to Heyward is not a personal figure but in the light of compassion, God moves in and through the heights and depths of all that exists (Heyward 1999:156). The human action to love, to befriend and to seek justice for all makes God incarnated in the world (Heyward 1982:9). Heyward believes that God is in us as our "Sacred, Sensual Power", who infuses flesh that is rooted in our embodied yearning to reach out to one another. God was in Jesus as He is in us (Heyward 1999:126).

Feminist theologians such as Mary Daly (1928-2010), Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936-), Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1938-) and Phyllis Trible aspired for women's equality in the church and are acknowledged as pioneering feminist theologians who set the scene for the critique of Western traditional Christian theology (Collier & Sawyer 1999:12).

Mary Daly, a Catholic influenced by de Beauvoir's philosophy, taught at Boston College and became a well-known radical critic of the church. After rejecting Christianity as a patriarchal religion, Daly's thinking shifted to spirituality outside, and apart from, Christianity (Ruether 2002:9). Daly's book *The Church and the Second Sex* (1968) was written to voice her frustration with the Catholic Church's refusal to give women equal rights in the Church and became the most well-known post-Christian and anti-Christian theologian. She became disillusioned with the Church and Christianity and rejected both of them. She challenged the symbols and structures of Christianity as patriarchal and oppressive to women (Pears 2004:16-17). Daly called upon women to walk away from patriarchal religion (Daly 1993:137). Daly states:

We cannot really talk about belonging to institutional religion as it exists ... the women's movement is an exodus community ... we can affirm now our promise and our exodus as we walk into a future that will be our won future. ... Our time has come. We will take our place in the sun. We will leave behind the centuries of silence and darkness. Let us affirm our faith in ourselves and our will to transcendence by rising and walking out together (Daly 1993:138)

Ruether, a Catholic theologian, seeks to expose, to understand and to undo oppression, including sexual oppression, and became an important voice for more radical feminist theological views (Ruether 2002:8). In her famous work *Sexism and God-Talk* she states that:

Few topics are as likely to arouse such passionate feelings in contemporary Christianity as the question of the exclusive male images for God (Ruether 1983:47)

Speaking out against patriarchy, Ruether states that faith does not lie in the Church and Scripture and that patriarchy distorts all traditions including that of Scripture. Feminist theology, therefore, relies upon the primary intuitions of religious experience itself; the belief in a divine foundation of reality which is ultimately good, not evil, and one that can uphold women's autonomous personhood (Ruether 1985:710). Ruether believes that the sinful, fallen world is characterised by patriarchy as the whole structure of a father-ruled society: aristocracy over serfs, masters over slaves, kings over subjects and radical overlords over colonised people (Ruether 1983:93).

Fiorenza (1938-) is well known for her hermeneutics of suspicion which she uses as an interpretative framework for Biblical text used by patriarchal systems to exclude women from symbolic, public and social forms of communication. The patriarchal system devalues and reduces women to the role of victim (Upton 2002:101). Fiorenza proposed a shift from patriarchy to kyriarchy as the rule of the emperor, master, lord, father, and husband over his subordinates. This she has done to point out how deeply seated female oppression is. Being concerned for feminist theologians who became divided by their different political identities she writes:

In the face of increasing global violence against women as well as the growing neocapitalist exploitation of the so-called two-thirds world and the explosion of an 'informatics of domination', feminist theory cannot stop with the postmodern 'subject-in-language' and its permanent destabilization, global dispersal, and atomizing regionalization. It must develop a theoretical discourse and analytic framework that can account for the interaction between cultural-religious, economic, and political spheres of production (Fiorenza 1994:14).

Fiorenza states that women should reclaim the liberating nature of Christianity and she proposed a radical reconstructionist approach to recover women's Christian history and heritage that will serve as a live model of inclusive contemporary Christianity (Pears 2004:23). Fiorenza proposes four criteria for the reading of Scripture namely:

a hermeneutics of suspicion – Scripture's patriarchal authors should be analysed with critical response thereto a hermeneutics of remembrance – to reconstruct women's history in Scripture that was concealed by male historical consciousness, a hermeneutics of proclamation – to assess and to evaluate Scripture theologically in order to point out its oppressive effect on women, and a hermeneutics of actualization to recall, to embody and to celebrate women in the Bible's achievements, suffering and struggles (Fiorenza 2001:174-190).

Phyllis Trible in *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* in 1978, proposed a hermeneutics of reinterpretation of key biblical texts and language and made an endeavour to prove that biblical texts were used to support sexism (Pears 2004:23.)

Feminists of colour needed to emphasise their unique experiences and to develop their own agendas towards liberation in which they could incorporate their unique concerns within their special social contexts. This movement is characterised by women who grouped themselves according to shared characteristics. They perceived themselves as targets of discrimination in a society that was against women of colour, lesbians, female bisexuals, transgendered women, and women of low income. More emphasis was placed on the differences amongst women of colour. Clifford (2001:25) states that the vast majority of feminists in the second wave movement were well-educated, white, middle-class women. Women of colour reacted critically towards white feminists for universalising their experiences and ignoring those unique to coloured women. Feminist leaders rooted in the second wave like Gloria Anzaldua (1942-2004) and Cherrie Moraga (1952-), both Chicana feminists, are best known for their anthology of feminist thought in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1981), Audre Lorde (1934-1992), and many other feminists of colour, made a plea to women to be more resilient in voicing their feminist views and

to seek and to negotiate a more prominent space in race-related feminist thought (Henry 2004:28). bell hooks²³ claimed that she experienced that white women treated her and women of colour in a condescending way::

Much feminist theory emerges from privileged women who live at the centre, whose perspectives on reality rarely include the knowledge and awareness of the lives of women and men who live in the margin (hooks 1984: preface, xvii).

Between 1975 and 1985 the United Nations called three international conferences in Mexico City, Copenhagen and Nairobi where it was acknowledged that feminism

... constitutes the political expression of the concerns and interests of women from different regions, classes, nationalities, and ethnic backgrounds ... There is and must be a diversity of feminisms, responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women, and defined by them for themselves (Walters 2005:97).

During this conference, African women reminded delegates that women are members of classes and countries in which they are dominated and that, contrary to the 'sisterhoods' best intentions, identical interests are not shared by all women (Walters 2005:97).

Black feminism, now called 'womanists' and 'majoristas', distinguished themselves from the white feminist movement and Hitchcock (1995:6) says that:

another reason why it is so hazardous to attempt any critique whatsoever of any aspect of feminism or the feminist agenda is that the critic, whether a man or a woman, will automatically be accused of opposing the equality and dignity of women: if the critic is a man, he is called a sexist victimizer of women; a woman critic is an anti-feminist collaborator [sic] with the oppressors of her sex.

The experience of black women differs from white women and as such, they prefer to identify themselves with the term womanists instead of feminists. Alice Walker (1944-) coined the term womanism which affirms black women's identity and the proclamation

²³bell hooks prefers to spell her name without capital letters.

of who she is as black women, in a world where little value is placed on either women and black women in particular (Floyd-Thomas 2006:4).

Isasi-Díaz coined the term *majurista* for women of Hispanic origin. The term *majurista* refers to the majority of woman who experience life as a woman very differently from a first generation Hispanic woman, an Asian American woman or as an educated white woman. These women have distinct cultures and their struggles against oppression come out of their unique societies (Clifford 2001:27). Isasi-Díaz (1989:560) describes *Majurista* theology as the bringing together of the elements of Latin American liberation theology and cultural theology. Hispanic women struggled against ethnic prejudice, sexism, and classism and did not know what to call themselves. Being marginalised by white feminists, and rejected by the Hispanic community because they called themselves *feministas hispanas*, the term *Majurista* was coined to call these women together, so that they could understand their oppression and to identify the specificity of their struggle without being separated from their communities (Clifford 2001:224).

The following women deserve to be mentioned for their groundbreaking work in feminist theology during the mid-1980s: Elizabeth Grossman, a German woman who taught in Japan, French theologian Kari Børresen, in Germany Dorothee Sölle, and Catharina Halkes in Holland. In England, Mary Grey, Ursula King, Elaine Graham, Grace Jantzen, Christine Trevett, Lisa Isherwood and Janet Soskice all became involved in theological women's discourse. In Scotland, Mary Condren, Katherine Zappone and Ann Marie Gilligan published many works on feminist spiritualities and in Italy there was Carla Ricci, a feminist church historian (Ruether 2002: 13).

During the mid-1970s, Latin American feminists joined forces with African and Asian theologians and the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) was established. Women such as Mercy Amba Oduyoye in Ghana, Virginia Fabella and Mary John Manazan from the Phillipines, Marianne Katoppo from Indonesia, Korean Sun Ai Park, and Latin Americans Ivone Gebara and Elsa Tamez made their contributions towards gender inequality (Ruether 2002:14).

In 1994, the 4th Conference of EATWOT united Third and First World feminist theologians with the inclusion of Eastern and Middle Eastern representatives. In Latin America, the Latin American Biblical University in Costa Rica was established. In Sao Paulo, Brazil, the Methodist Theological Institute developed under Nancy Cardoso Pereira and Ivone Richter Reimer. In Rio de Janeiro, Catholic women, such as Margarida Brandao, Clara Bingemer and Ana María Tepedino, were involved in the Pontifical Catholic University and Wanda Deifeldt at the Lutheran Seminary in Brazil (Ruether 2002:14-16).

African women theologians also claimed their voice through the themes of inculturation and liberation and claimed the Christian tradition of the equality of all human beings created in the image of God. These women are Rosemary Edet in Nigeria, Betty Ekeya in Nairobi, Teresa Okure in Nigeria, Elizabeth Amoah in Ghana, and Teresa Hinga in Kenya (Ruether 2002:15).

Asian women theologians in the 1980s, such as Mary John Manazan in the Philippines, founded the St. Scholastica College and Elizabeth Tapia was involved with the United Theological Seminary in Cavite. In Korea, Chung Hyun Khung endeavoured for women's liberation. In India, the All India Christian Women's Council and the Women's Institute for New Awakening are the platforms through which feminists in India can express themselves theologically (Ruether 2002:17-18).

Whereas the first wave feminists fought for, and gained the right for, women to vote, the second wave of feminists obtained equal rights for women in the workforce and the end of legal sex discrimination. In the following section I will move on to a discussion of third wave feminism.

3.2.5 Late 20th Century – Current (Third wave feminism 1990s onwards)

Third wave feminism is a reaction against second wave feminism and a response to its supposed failures. It is a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave (Clifford 2001:25).

The third wave feminist movement originated with two books, one by Barbara Findlen *Listen Up: Voices from the Next Feminist Generation* in 1995 and the other by Rebecca Walker *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism* also published in 1995. Walker is considered one of the founding leaders of the third wave. Page (2006:2) believes, however, that the third wave actually started during the 1980s with black feminists' critiques of racism within the second wave. In an article *Becoming the Third Wave* (1992) Rebecca Walker wrote that she is not a post-feminist but that she is the third wave (Walker 1992:39-41).

Schneiders describes the third wave feminism as a movement of liberation:

This movement is concerned not simply with the social, political, and economic equality of women with men but with a fundamental re-imagination of the whole of humanity in relation to whole of reality, including non-human creation. ... feminist consciousness has gradually deepened, the feminist agenda has widened, from a concern to right a particular structural wrong, namely, the exclusion of women from the voting booth, to a demand for full participation of women in society and culture, to an ideal of recreating humanity itself according to patterns of eco-justice, that is, of right relations at every level and in relation to all of reality (Schneiders 2000:8).

The term third wave feminism is used in three ways. Firstly, the term refers to young feminists in the age group 15-30 and organisations which support these young women. Secondly, it refers to, and describes the development of a generational cohort of feminists which began in the 1970s with the development of women's political consciousness. Thirdly, it is characteristic of the development of theoretical perspectives of post-modernism and multiracial feminist theory (Harnois 2008:121-122). Harnois (2008:122) points out that the third wave is an attempt to include

women who were excluded during, in what she calls the whitewashed privileged second wave feminism because of race, class, or sexual orientation.

Catford (2010:n.p.) characterises third wave feminism as the celebration of women's multiple and contradictory identities; the promotion of personal empowerment; the views of women as survivors and not as victims; the emphasis on emotions and experience that were traditionally labelled as unfeminine; the encouragement of women to explore their sexuality; the celebration of women's diversity and the characterisation of women in the third wave as Generation X and Generation Y.

Another characteristic of the third wave feminist movement is that of ecofeminism. Although ecofeminism has strong ties with second wave radical feminists, it was hailed as, and located within, the third-wave feminist movement (Clifford 2001:223). Ruether states that to speak of eco-feminism as a post-Christian movement is redundant, because ecofeminism arose without any special relation to Christianity (Ruether 2009:38). Ecofeminism is the umbrella term for a variety of forms of ecofeminism such as socialist -, cultural -, radical-, and eco-womanist ecofeminism. Although the term was coined in 1972 by Françoise d'Eaubonne who developed the *Ecologie-Féminisme* group, it is acknowledged as a third wave movement. The term ecofeminism refers to women who call for an end to all forms of oppression as well as to the end of the exploitation of the Earth which is the home for human as well as nonhuman forms of life (D'Eaubonne 1974:213-52; Clifford 2001:28). Ecofeminism upholds women's capacity to bear and nurture life as a form of power and encourages men to develop the same qualities of nurturance and caring. Ecofeminism draws inspiration from early human societies in which they worshipped a mother goddess. They also look to the Sanskrit concept of Shakti (the primordial female energy of the universe) which connects the Earth as mother of all life to women as the bearers of human life. Ecofeminists argue that the 'female' principle of caring and peace needs to be strengthened and that the male principles of aggression and war are the foundations created to disrupt global psycho-social balance and harmony (Bandage 1997:319). Ecofeminists share a radical critique of male domination, not only culturally, but also as a reflection of the damage that is

being done to the natural world (Deane-Drummond 2002:1-2). Ecofeminists, as radical feminists, argue therefore, that the root of women's inferior status and the exploitation of the earth can be blamed on patriarchy (Clifford 2001:27).

Ruether and McFague have presented analytical-critical perspectives on God and the physical environment from a Christian point of view (Sameulsson 2009:74). The views of McFague, a first wave feminist, and Ruether, a second wave feminist, were not presented in the previous section as it is more appropriate to present them here because of their strong views on ecology during the third wave.

McFague's contributions to feminism and ecology are seen as one of the most significant contributions to Christian ecofeminism theology (Ruether 2002:9). McFague contributed much of her writings to the discussion about God's connection with the ecological health of the planet (Clifford 2001:236). According to McFague, metaphorical language for God is also the linguistic means for humans to make connection, to seek resemblance and to unite body and soul. McFague sees metaphors as embodied language forms that are grounded in life experience (McFague 1975:16). She contends that the way one envisions the earth has an effect on one's relationship with the earth, oneself, and with God; inclusive Christian views about God must thus be extended to the nonhuman world and she states:

The feminist theologians who have given attention to the nonhuman world have been, for the most part, those involved in the Goddess traditions and witchcraft, for whom the body, the earth, and nature's cycles are of critical importance. Those of us from the Christian tradition have much to learn from these sources, but even feminists have not, I believe, focused primarily on the intrinsic value of the nonhuman in a way sufficient to bring about the needed change of consciousness (McFague 1987:7).

Ruether is committed to the development of an ecofeminist theology which makes an analysis of the Christian tradition's bias to women in the categories of creation, judgment, sin and fallenness and redemption. The Christian tradition, according to Ruether, distorted relationships and she suggests that the categories mentioned should be reconsidered as "Creation, Destruction, Domination and Deceit", and

healing as more holistic concepts of traditional concepts (Clifford 2001:240). In her interpretation of Genesis 1; 1-2 she claims that the texts are anthropocentric. Ecofeminists view this particular text negatively because they believe that it allows the belief that humans have the right to dominate the earth. Ruether, however, argues that the exploitation of nature is not the intention of this passage. She believes that humans are created in the image of God and have been commissioned as God's stewards, not to exploit or destroy, but rather to care for the earth (Clifford 2001:240). Ruether's ecofeminist theology of God reflects a response to post-Christian ecofeminist theologians whose spiritual journeys lead them to goddess religions. Ruether, in her book *Gaia and God* (1992), points out that:

Some [ecofeminists] see the Jewish and Christian male monotheistic God as a hostile concept that rationalizes alienation from and neglect of the earth. Gaia [the Goddess] should replace God as our focus of worship. I agree with much of this critique, yet I believe that merely replacing a male transcendent deity with an immanent female one is an insufficient answer to the "god-problem" (Ruether 1992:4).

For Ruether, humans are an inextricable part of nature, but they have set themselves apart from non-human nature by engaging with it through domination. Human domination causes problems that can only be resolved through ecological healing by theological and psychic-spiritual processes (Clifford 2001:240). Ruether also contends that the goddess movement is insufficient as a religion because it is difficult for contemporary people to adapt to it and that the movement is too focused on self-blessing. With its emotionally charged experiences, it can easily develop into a recreation of self-indulgence for the countercultural elite (Ruether 1996:5). Ruether grapples with essential questions on ecology and God language and asks:

How can our views of God overcome the heritage of fear of the body, of sexuality and of finitude and embrace the whole creation as the embodiment of the divine? Can God truly become ecological, and can Christians overcome the *idea fixe* that we are the unique representatives of God and acknowledge that we are one species among others, latecomers to the planet? (Ruether 2009:336).

Ruether also asks:

How can humans acknowledge that we are one species among others who can sustain our own life on earth only by fitting into the flourishing of the whole ecosystem of which we are an interdependent part? (Ruether 2009:336).

These questions Ruether answers by arguing that change lies within the conversion of our language about God as an integral part of the conversion of the human mind to the earth and a sustainable living with other forms of life. She states that by seeing God's presence in the diverse experience of life on earth where God manifests itself, not only in humans, but in animals, insects, trees and flowers, and the waters from the sky and the earth, can we bring change. Therefore, she proposes an ecofeminist God language in order to overcome human domination over the earth as a triune process of diversification, interrelation and communion as the basis for ongoing creativity (Ruether 2009:337).

Both Ruether's and McFague's eschatology changed radically over time. Their views shifted from unrealised eschatology to realised eschatology and in their ecofeminist eschatology they focus on creation itself and that of ecological and cosmic sustainability (Karras 2002:243).

In conclusion, ecofeminists' organic vision of nature has a more intrinsic value than an instrumental value as a spirituality that confirms the sacred character of living things (Clifford 2001:232). Ecofeminists are committed to recovering the earth's sacredness and to re-establishing an organic and holistic vision of the sacred. Whilst some eco-feminists look to Buddhism and Hinduism, others look to the goddess religion to accomplish this. I will now turn to a discussion of post-Christian feminists and the goddess movement.

3.2.6 Post-Christian feminism and the Goddess movement

In this section, I am going to highlight the thoughts of Mary Daly and Daphne Hampson as post-Christian feminists, and Carol Christ and Naomi Goldenberg as goddess feminists as examples of women who have rejected the Christian faith

because of their firm beliefs that the Christian faith is patriarchal and, at its core, against women.

Genealogies of Christian feminism provide an account of women's engagement in the injustice inflicted upon them and it is from this agenda that post-Christian feminism emerged (Isherwood and McPhillips 2008:5). For women to find religious legitimacy, it necessitated their moving away from tradition and the church because the Christian culture is essentially patriarchal. For these women, the Christian church is incapable of providing a full humanity for women (Isherwood and McPhillips 2008:5). Most radical feminist theologians actually fall under the category of post-Christian feminists (Clifford 2001:32).

Although many feminists participated in Christian churches, most concluded that Christianity is irredeemably patriarchal and, by its very nature, therefore anti-woman. Clifford traces this argument back to Matilda Joslyn Gage in the early 1900s who proposed that women should worship the goddess. Gage contended that women can only become liberated when they leave patriarchal Christianity behind. Gage's works resonated with radical feminists who are also referred to as post-Christian feminists. Post-Christian feminists continue to have issues with the male God of Christianity who, according to them, will always legitimise the oppression of women (Clifford 2001:33).

Many feminists claim that the word "God" is intrinsically linked in the human imagination to a male patriarchal God (Hilkert 1995:345). They also argue that the male God is rooted in a patriarchal culture and that the Church is guilty of suppressing the female images of God's nature. They moved from the archaic and misogynist views of woman and demand that the views of God should include female characteristics (Costner 2008:4). Goddess feminism, as an alternative belief system, forsakes Christianity and challenges patriarchal dominance in their search for social and spiritual transformation.

According to goddess believers, the world was once inhabited by a matriarchal, egalitarian society. Humans worshipped a matrifocal, sedentary and peaceful

goddess 5000 to 25000 years before the emergence of the first male-orientated religion. The egalitarian culture was eventually overthrown and destroyed by patrifocal invaders (Gadon 1989: xii-xiii). Goddess followers claim that these invaders subjugated the goddess worshippers through their superior military skills and imposed their patriarchal culture on them (Budapest 1986:121).

According to Gimbutas (1982:23), we have a distorted historical perspective. She coined the term "Old Europe" (Rae & Marie-Daly 1990:54) and distinguished the Neolithic and Copper-Age pre-Indo-European civilizations from the Indo-Europeanised Europe of the Bronze Age (Gimbutas 1982:23). The Neolithic and Copper-Age pre-Indo-European civilisations were matrifocal, sedentary, peaceful, art loving and earth- and sea-bound, whereas the Indo-Europeanised Europe of the Bronze Age was patrifocal, mobile, warlike, ideologically sky-orientated and indifferent to art (Gimbutas 1982:23).

Bolen points out that as the goddess became unseated, the invaders imposed their patriarchal culture onto the people they had conquered, and as the myths of male warriors appeared, the great goddess became fragmented into many lesser goddesses. The unseating of the Great goddess in Indo-Europe continued later with the rise of Hebrew, Christian and Muslim religions in which male deities dominated: goddess and women faded into the background (Bolen 1984:21).

Daly contends that as Christianity is patriarchal, it has nothing to offer women. She contends that Christianity must be dismissed and castrated as the product of super-male arrogance (Daly 1985:71). Daly dismissed Jesus as pure idolatry and says that Christian myths of sin and salvation are products of super-male arrogance (Daly 1985:71-73). In her book *Beyond God the Father* Daly states:

I have already suggested that if God is male, then the male is God. The divine patriarch castrates women as long as he is allowed to live on in the human imagination. ... those which in one way or another objectify "God" as a being, thereby attempt in a self-contradictory way to envisage transcendent reality as finite. "God" then functions to legitimate the existing social, economic, and political status quo, in which women and other victimized groups are subordinate (Daly 1985:19).

Although Daly calls herself a post-Christian feminist, she states that it does not mean that she is an atheist, but that she has passionately longed for the transcendence of religion and theology from one that she has experienced as choking and imprisoning her as a woman (Daly 1993:174). Daly's views on Christianity will be further developed in Chapter 4.

Daphne Hampson (2002: xiv) rejects Christianity because she believes that feminism and Christianity are not compatible and that the Christian myth can no longer be accepted. Hampson clearly states that in no way can women be feminist and Christian without contradiction (Hampson 1990:1-3). Hampson blames Christianity for being, by its very nature, hopelessly patriarchal and harmful to human equality (Hampson 1997:4). In her opening plenary talk at a conference in the United Kingdom in 1997, Hampson describes her religious identity as follows:

I am a Western person, living in a post-Christian age, who has taken something with me from Christian thinkers, but who has rejected the Christian myth. Indeed I want to go a lot further than that. The myth is not neutral; it is highly dangerous. It is a brilliant, subtle, elaborate, male cultural projection, calculated to legitimize a patriarchal world and to enable men to find their way within it. We need to see it for what it is. But for myself I am a spiritual person, not an atheist. I am amazed at this "other dimension of reality" in which there is; which allows healing, extra-sensory perception, and things to all into place. I am quite clear there is an underlying goodness, beauty and order; that it is powerful, such that we can draw on it, while we are inter-related with it. I call that "God" (Hampson 1997:1)

Carol Christ became alienated from Christianity as she believes that it is sexist and anti-Semitic. She became a neo-pagan believer and is committed to the goddess movement. The goddess religion is an effort to resurrect the egalitarian harmony between men, women and nature as it was before patriarchy (Christ 1997:62-67). Carol Christ attempts to prove that the goddess spirituality can have a positive effect on the doctrine of God and the psychology and spirituality of women. She states:

Religions centered on the worship of a male God create "moods" and "motivations" that keep women in a state of psychological dependence on men and male authority. ... The simplest and most basic meaning of the symbol of Goddess is the acknowledgement of

the legitimacy of female power as a beneficent and independent power (Christ 1992:275, 277).

When goddess feminists are asked what they mean by 'God-She', 'Sophia', 'Shekhinah', or 'goddess', many will answer as follows, says Carol Christ:

She is not like the male "God out there" we have known. She does not sit in heaven on a throne, demanding obedience. She is not a judge, threatening us with eternal damnation. She is not separate from the world. She is "in the world" and "in us". If asked, 'Why do you believe that?' many of us become tongue-tied. 'I don't know,' we may respond. 'I just feel it.' Or, we may revert unwittingly to traditional understandings of divine power that do not suit our new understanding (Christ 2002:99).

Carol Christ (2002:101) believes that feminism teaches us to be suspicious of all male-created systems of thought. Carol Christ acknowledged that her thoughts are embedded in Christian and Biblical Christian theology. She contends that goddess theology is different from Christianity because goddess theology does not have to come to terms with the use of masculine imagery found in tradition and the Bible (Christ 2002:102).

Heyward (1982:10) says the God who she affirms is a feminist God and this god/dess

is not a projected construct of hierarchical power, control, possession, and jealousy. Such a God does not demand obedience for the sake of obedience. Such a God does not obliterate Canaanites, denigrate sexuality, and despise women – in Israel, the church, and in the so-called "pagan" glorifications of female power through the image of the Goddess. Such a God is as truly the Goddess as she is God, she who bears a close resemblance, for example, to Asherha (Canaanite Goddess of sexuality) as to the Hebrew God of righteousness, Yahweh.

Reid-Bowen (2007:102) states that goddess feminists' beliefs and concepts are not inconsistent, incoherent or simply sloppy as many critics suggest, but she also admits that disagreement and divergence exist amongst the various forms of the goddess movement. Although the goddess movement is understood to be a single divine power, literally hundreds of different goddesses are drawn upon, such as Aphrodite, Astarte, Bast, Brighid, Cerridwen, Durga, Tiamat, Uma, Vesta, Yemanja, and Zoe

(Reid-Bowen 2007:106). The goddess is not imminent in the world, but rather within the whole cosmos; the world is theologically conceived of as the living body of the cosmos (Reid-Bowen 2007:107). Goddess feminism can be divided into three contemporary feminist theological concepts of deity namely the goddess as personal, loving and panentheistic; the goddess as an impersonal female and generative panentheistic body of nature, and the goddess as a maternal space or receptacle of becoming (Reid-Bowen 2007:101).

3.3 Conclusion

Feminists have analysed the situation within the Church and society through re-reading and re-writing the history of women as a means of expressing their struggle for liberation. In the discussion that took place in this chapter, one is very conscious of how women have struggled over the years to be accepted as being fully human and as having been created in the image of God: as equal to men in all aspects of their lives. It is also evident that the women I discussed, and the many I could not mention, experienced man, God and the Church as oppressive and misogynistic. For many women they had no option other than to explore alternative spiritual avenues.

It is clear that historically, women have made their voices heard in an endeavour to gain equality in all spheres of life. I had to decide whether to discuss the development of the feminist movement using chronological style or to concentrate on the wave metaphor. I opted for the first option, and the reason I did this, is that although women are categorised in a specific wave, their works and thoughts were often carried over to that of the next wave. The wave metaphor is not static and one should not envision a clear break in the different waves but rather, one should focus on the different developments that took place in each wave, whether it is political, economic or theological, or about issues such as gender, class and race.

I conclude this chapter with the words of Gerda Lerner:

Women were denied knowledge of their history, and thus each woman had to argue as though no woman before her had ever thought or written. Women had to use their energy to reinvent the

wheel, over and over again, generation after generation. Men argued with the giants that preceded them; women argued against the oppressive weight of millennia of patriarchal thought, which denied them authority, even humanity, and when they had to argue they argued with the “great men” of the past, deprived of the empowerment, strength and knowledge women of the past could have offered them. Since they could not ground their argument in the work of women before them, thinking women of each generation had to waste their time, energy and talent on constructing their argument anew. Yet they never abandoned the effort. Generation after generation, in the face of recurrent discontinuities, women thought their way around and out from under patriarchal thought (Lerner 1993:166).

Against the backdrop of this chapter the stage is set for a discussion on Mary Daly, a second wave feminist. In the next chapter, Daly’s theological and philosophical development will be discussed, as will her departure from being a Christian Catholic to a post-Christian feminist.

CHAPTER FOUR

MARY DALY

4.1 Introduction

Gross states that according to Post-Christian feminist theologians, the biblical traditions are too broken to be fixed and its patriarchal symbols and values are too central and too essential in their worldviews to be overcome. Patriarchy's manifestations and its meanings are deeply embedded in Christianity and women, especially, will never be able to experience wholeness, healing, integrity and autonomy until they reject biblical religion as demeaning and harmful to women (Gross 1996:141). The North American feminist, Mary Daly is one such Post-Christian feminist.

Mary Daly is acknowledged as the best-known and most distinguished feminist theologian. Daly's name is in almost every publication on feminism and according to Hauke, Daly's name is the second-most-frequently cited name in the dictionary of feminist theology, just after that of Jesus (Hauke 1995:78).

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss Mary Daly's theology, philosophy and her development from a Catholic Christian to a Post-Christian feminist. The chapter will begin with a discussion of Daly's biographical information and her use of language. A discussion of her theological and philosophical development will follow, especially the influence that De Beauvoir and Tillich have had on Daly's development. Following these discussions, I will discuss Daly's issues with the Church as a patriarchal institution. Daly's concept of the Sisterhood is central to her Post-Christian feminist views of the Church and Christianity and as such, this Sisterhood concept will receive attention. According to Daly, the Church's doctrines on the Triune God, Christology, Mariology and the Fall are all myths, originated from, and as a result of, patriarchy. These themes will receive special attention in the last section of this chapter.

Daly deals with many topics from a woman's viewpoint regarding Systematic Theology such as deity, evil, Christology, morality and the Church (Gross 1996:143). Daly contends throughout her works that women's power has been stolen from them through the ingrained structures of patriarchy and that women have to reclaim what is theirs. Daly believes that this means the castration of patriarchal language and images that are part of the structures of a sexist world (Daly 1985:76). She sees patriarchy as a world religion and believes that all religions are subjects of patriarchy, which live off female energy (Daly 1978:59-60).

Daly's works are fiercely anti-male. Daly's definition of anti-male is:

... that males and males only are the originators, planners, controllers, and legitimators of patriarchy. Patriarchy is the homeland of males; it is Father Land; and men are its agents. ... we live in a profoundly anti-female society, a misogynistic "civilization" in which men collectively victimize women, attacking us as personifications of their own paranoid fears, as The Enemy. Within this society it is men who rape, who sap women's energy, who deny women economic and political powers (Daly 1978:28-29).

All of Daly's works reflect her concerns with women's oppression and male superiority and throughout her works, she concerned herself with the development of a feminist spiritual revolution (Pears 2004:47).

4.2 Biographical information

Mary Daly was born on 16 October 1928 in Schenectady, New York, as the only child of Frank and Anna Daly who were working-class Catholics; Daly grew up as a devoted member of the Catholic Church. At the age of 25, she earned a BA degree in English at the College of St Rose in Albany, New York. Two years later, she earned a MA degree in English literature at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC. In 1954, Daly earned a PhD in religion at the School of Sacred Theology, situated at St Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana (Campbell 2000:170).

Daly wanted to study Catholic theology in the United States, but when her application was rejected on account of her sex, she pursued the degree at the University of

Fribourg in Switzerland (Campbell 2000:171). During her time at the University of Fribourg, Daly obtained a degree in sacred theology in 1960, followed by a licentiate in sacred theology in 1961, a doctorate in sacred theology in 1963, and a doctorate in philosophy in 1965. In Daly's dissertation *The Problem of Speculative Theology*, she wanted to master the writings of Thomas Aquinas in order to apply and to interpret them in a modern context and in her dissertation *Natural Knowledge of God in the Philosophy of Jacques Maritain* she attests to her grasp of scholastic and neo-scholastic theology (Campbell 2000:171).

In 1966, Boston College employed Daly as an assistant professor (Daly 1975:5). During the same year, she published her first book *Natural Knowledge of God in the Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*. With the publication of her book *The Church and the Second Sex* in 1968 in which she criticised the Catholic Church, Daly was fired by the administrators at the Jesuit-run Boston College, because her employers found the book upsetting (Daly 2006:66). The college denied her tenure, as well as promotion to that of associate professor. Students, however, held demonstrations on her behalf, and Daly was consequently awarded tenure and the college promoted her to associate professor (Daly 2006:67). According to Daly, this experience changed her thinking profoundly and made her more radical. She saw through the "grim grasp of patriarchy" not only at Boston College but also at all universities and she states:

My concern was no longer limited to 'equality' in the church or anywhere else. I did not really care about unimaginative reform but instead began dreaming new dreams of a women's revolution (Daly 2006:68).

When Boston College admitted women to its College of Arts and Science, Daly knew that further battles were going to take place because she was convinced that her books, speeches, and feminist philosophy and ethics courses threatened the university. She also maintained her policy of teaching women and men in separate sections of those courses. Daly experienced continued harassment "for three more decades, but had a lot of fun fighting them back" (Daly 2006:68). Daly's promotion to full professorship in both 1975 and 1989 was denied.

After teaching for 30 years at Boston, which saw Daly involved in a series of fights and triumphs at the university, another series of events happened which Daly calls “bizarrely comparable to the original scenario of 1969” (Daly 2006:69). In December 1998, Daly received a call from the chair of the theology department who informed her that a male undergraduate who had not met the required prerequisites to register for her courses, would be registering and attending her Introduction to Feminist Ethics classes, with or without, her consent. She was also informed that the student threatened to sue Boston College on account of sexual discrimination and that he had the backing of an ultra-right law firm in Washington DC, known as the Centre for Individual Rights (Daly 2006:69). Daly contended that she was often wrongly accused of refusing to teach men. She attempted to explain that the student, called Duane, was the leader of the Young Republicans on campus, and was used by the Centre for Individual Rights to take advantage of the “conditions of heightened right-wing backlash, including the climate of double-think and reversal”, which they promoted (Daly 2006:70). She defended her classroom policy that she had developed in 1970 for teaching men and women separately in her Feminist Ethic classes because:

... I saw the dulling of women’s participation that occurred in mixed classes. Of course, I never refused to teach a student, female or male, who expressed interest and had completed the course prerequisites (Daly 2006:70).

Without Daly’s knowledge, Boston College agreed to a settlement during 1998, which allowed the student to register for her classes despite the fact that he lacked the required course prerequisites. Daly was convinced that Boston College was under pressure to conform to the Vatican rule that required it to affirm its “orthodoxy and fidelity” to Catholic teachings; the university continued its pretence of championing open academic freedom (Daly 2006:71).

Daly refused to be trapped into allowing “an impostor” to attend her classes so she cancelled all her classes during 1999 and took a leave of absence (Daly 2006:71). Daly agreed to attend two meetings with the administrators of Boston College to discuss her conditions of leave and during these, she realised that the situation was treacherous. During one of those meetings, Daly said that she “panicked and blurted

out that she would rather resign than to teach under those conditions”. The administrators used this to force her to accept a retirement agreement, which she refused (Daly 2006:73). The university announced Daly’s supposed resignation and her courses were removed from the university catalogue without notice. Daly filed a lawsuit with a civil rights attorney and Feminist activist who agreed to represent her in her dispute against Boston College (Daly 2006:73). Daly was suspended in 2000 and she sued the College for the violation of her tenure rights and breach of contract, and the lawsuit was settled out of court during 2001.

Daly describes her experience at Boston College as:

... being disappeared from Boston College in the spring of 1999, and the atrocities leading up to this, I can say that it was a compound traumatic event. To be more precise, it involved a complex series of shocks, each of which had multiple layers that interacted with each other. I could not understand immediately all that was happening. I sense it had something in common with gang rape. ... What they perpetrated against me was an act of rapism (Daly 2006:75).

Daly felt that this “rapism” was not only physical, but consisted of multiple levels of “invasion, violation, degradation, destruction and horror” (Daly 2006:75).

Little information is available about Mary Daly’s earlier life and such data would have been helpful in the construction of the conditions and contexts that influenced Daly’s development as a post-Christian feminist and philosopher. Daly shared some moments she experienced during her childhood, which affected her life and contributed to her philosophical quest. Some of these “Moments” describe her mystical intuitions of be-ing (Daly 1993:23).

When Daly was four or five years of age, she discovered “a big gleaming block of ice in the snow”. Even then, she realised that she was in touch with something awesome – something she later called “Elemental”. Daly describes the shock she experienced as something that was awoken in her, “the knowing of an Other dimension and the experience of the first stirrings of the Call of the Wild” (Daly 1993:23).

Daly's encounter with a clover blossom had a great deal to do with her becoming a Radical Feminist Philosopher (Daly 1993:23). She describes her encounter as follows:

My own existential encounter with a clover blossom happened when I was about fourteen years old. I was lying on the grass after a dip in the local swimming hole in Schenectady, New York. Suddenly the clover blossom spoke two words. It said: "I am." I recall being shocked and amazed ... I had the impression that the clover blossom was making a statement about itSelf – not trying to show off or overwhelm me but simply making a point. I could not forget this experience. ... I had never heard of an intuition like this and had not words for this event. But my life was suffused with it. It guided me on paths ... it was connected with my ever-growing conviction that I wanted to become a philosopher, even though I couldn't know exactly what that word meant (Daly 2006:46-47).

If a clover blossom could say "I am," then why couldn't I? (Daly 1993:23).

Daly describes her encounter with a hedge that provided her with new questions to pursue her desire to become a philosopher (1993:51-52). She states that her:

... brief but everlasting affair with a hedge on the campus of Saint Mary's College, at Notre Dame, Indiana. I was about twenty-three and was studying for my doctorate at the School of Sacred Theology ... One morning I happened to walk past a hedge on my way to class. It spoke two words to me. These words were "Continued existence." I realized eventually that this was a companion intuition to the earlier one, making explicit the duration of the verb "I am," which refers to participating in Be-ing. It Announced a Now that always Is (Daly 2006:47).

Daly also describes her "Dream of Green", which she had later in her life. While she was a student at the Catholic University of America, she was busy translating Middle English into modern English late into the night and fell asleep, Whilst she slept she dreamed of green:

Elemental, Bedazzling Green. When I woke up, I had a revelation: "Study philosophy!" (Daly 1993:48).

She interpreted this dream as a sign that she should focus on philosophy (Daly 1993:49). One day when she was sitting in class, she had a sudden vision of herself “teaching theology standing at a black board” (Daly 1998:77).

Daly places these moments carefully in their own contexts and their purpose is to depict Daly’s growing “Self-consciousness” and the process by which she calls herself a radical feminist, “a Hag, and a Pirate”. She presented these moments within specific temporal frameworks, which are not a representation of a linear series of events (Campbell 2000:168-169).

Daly’s experience at Fribourg became the catalyst for her decision to leave the Catholic Church in the late 1960s. After the publication of her book *Beyond God the Father* in 1973, in which she challenged the structure of Christianity as a patriarchal religion and an inherently sexist religion, Daly, who also referred to herself as a radical lesbian feminist, left behind all Christian symbolism and ingrained her theology into that of women’s experiences (Suhonen 2000:114-115).

In the *Feminist Postchristian Introduction of the Church and the Second Sex* (1975), Daly claims that she would never have written the *Church and the Second Sex* if it was not for the “great carnival event”, the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church in 1965 (Daly 1975:9). Daly attended a meeting of the Vatican II, optimistic that meaningful and lasting reforms in the Catholic Church would take place. Instead, she felt that the future looked hopeless for women in the Church. She describes the Rome of Vatican II as:

... a sea of international communication – the place/time where the Catholic Church came bursting into the open confrontation with the twentieth century. It seemed to everyone, except to the strangely foreseeing “conservatives,” prophets of doom who in some perverse way knew what was really going on, that the greatest breakthrough of nearly two thousand years was happening (Daly 1975:9).

According to Daly, theologians, students, journalists and lobbyists met and shared their most secret thoughts about the Church and shared a sense of hope for the Church, a hope that was real but ultimately misplaced. A realisation emerged that the

primary force of hope should be transferred away from the Church and directed to the self and others. To Daly, it would mean that we had to all stop calling ourselves part of the Church (Daly 1975:9).

One day during the Second Vatican, Daly borrowed a journalist's identity card and attended a session at St Peter's Basilica. What she saw was a multitude of cardinals and bishops whom she describes as old men in crimson dresses. There were also women present who were mostly nuns, clothed in long black dresses with their heads veiled. Daly wrote:

The contrast between the arrogant bearing and colourful attire of the "princes of the church" and the humble, self-deprecating manner and somber clothing of the very few women was appalling. Watching the veiled nuns shuffle to the altar rail to receive Holy Communion from the hands of a priest was like observing a string of lowly ants at some bizarre picnic. Speeches were read ... but the voices were all male, the senile cracking whines of the men in red. ... the nuns, sat docile and listened to the reading of documents in Latin, which neither they nor the readers apparently understood (Daly 1975:10)

Daly also noticed that the women were cautious to ask any questions or to express an opinion, but repeatedly expressed their gratitude for the privilege of being present. Although Daly states that she did not grasp the full meaning of the scene at once, the multilevelled message burned its way deep into her consciousness (Daly 1975:10).

According to Daly, it was not only her experience of the Vatican Council that made this written expression of anger and hope possible; an article by Rosemary Lauer in 1963 was another important catalyst. Lauer (1963:365-368) moderately criticised the church's treatment of women and Daly supported Lauer in an article *Built-In-Bias* in 1965. After this publication, a publishing house contacted Daly and asked her to write the *Church and the Second Sex* (Daly 1975:10-11).

During October 1971, the Harvard Memorial Church invited Daly to preach. Daly accepted the invitation and decided to turn the sermon into an action – "a call for a walk-out from patriarchal religion". As the sermon moved to an end Daly concluded:

We cannot belong to institutional religion as it exists ... The women's movement is an exodus community. Its basis is not merely in the promise given to our fathers thousands of years ago. Rather its source is in the unfulfilled promise of our mothers' lives, whose history was never recorded. Its sources are in the promise of our sisters whose voices have been robbed from them, and our own promise, our latent creativity. We can affirm now or promise and our exodus as we walk into a future that will be our own future. ... Our time has come. We will take our own place in the sun. We will leave behind the centuries of silence and darkness. Let us affirm our faith in ourselves and our will to transcendence by rising and walking out together (Daly 1993:138).

Daly refers to this Exodus from the Church as a historic "Moment of Breakthrough and Recalling" and a "Metaphoric event" and a manifestation of the "Courage to Leave" and the "departure from all patriarchal religions" (Daly 1993:139).

But what does the "Courage to Leave" and departure" entail for Daly? Before turning to its theological content, it is necessary to study her specific use of language.

As Daly's use of language often makes it difficult to understand her theological and philosophical thinking, I will focus on her language in the next section.

4.3 Daly's use of language

It is important to point out that Daly uses new words and unfamiliar capitalisation of words²⁴. I will use the same words, spelling, and capitalisation as Daly does and will explain them in footnotes to clarify their meanings.

Daly was not only a philosopher and theologian; she was also a skilful linguist. The role and place of language had always been a major concern to Daly and specifically,

²⁴ Capitalization of words and phrases defined in the Wickedary is capitally irregular, conforming to meaning rather than to standard usage. Many entries Strangely begin with an uppercase letter. Words wear capital letters for a variety of reasons. First, this can indicate that they Name Background realities. ... Second, capitalization is sometimes intended to distinguish Wickedary words from standard English words and phrases. ... Third, Websters sometimes even capitalize words Naming foreground fabrications simply for emphasis. ... Fourth, words Naming inhabitants of the foreground and their products are sometimes capitalized to express Be-Laughing irony and humor. .. Many entries begin with a lowercase letter. ... Lowercase usually indicates that the words Name foreground inhabitants or their characteristics, activities, or products (Daly 1987:xxi-xxii)

how language socially constructs women. To Daly, language is not sex/gender neutral but sex/gender specific and it operates within a socio-political context. Women, therefore, have to take back the power of naming themselves – a power which patriarchal language stole from women (Daly 1985:8). For Daly, women's liberation involves a "castration of language and images which is embedded in the structures of a sexist world" (Daly 1985:9). Daly used language in her early works with caution, but the more she became convinced that women have the right to name themselves, the more she began to replace "inadequate and false words" (Daly 1978:xi).

Gray points out that Daly's use of language, is on the one hand, to challenge male authority and to make language work for her in an attempt to initiate women's discourse. On the other hand, Daly deliberately wants to destabilise male language in order to chip away at its sexist foundations (Gray 2000:223).

Daly uses language strategically as a means to achieve a revolutionary end - that is, to expose undermining male language in order for women to name themselves and to hear and speak their own words (Daly 1985:10).

In her first works *The Church and the Second Sex* and *Beyond God the Father*, Daly did not use language in a divisive and destabilising manner. Daly's work with language began in *Gyn/Ecology* and she went on to develop it further in *Pure Lust*, *Wickedary*, and *Outercourse* (Gray 2000:225). In *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly states that, although some words in the 1970s appeared to be adequate, feminists discovered that they were false words and that the old semantic baggage needed to be discarded (Daly 1978: xi). For example, Daly states:

Three such words in *Beyond God the Father*, which I cannot use again, are God, androgyny, and homosexuality. There is no way to remove male/masculine imagery from God. ... I now chose to write/speak gynomorphically. I do so because God represents the necrophilia of patriarchy. ... androgyny, is a confusing term which I sometimes used in attempting to describe integrity of be-ing. The word is misbegotten ... The third treacherous term homosexuality,

reductionistically “includes,” that is, excludes gynocentric being/Lesbianism (Daly 1978:xi).

Another example of how Daly uses words is her explanation of the title of her book *Gyn/Ecology*. The title says exactly what she means to say; Gyn/Ecology refers to the “complex web of interrelationships between organisms and their environment” and a way to “wrench back some wordpower”. The term Gyn/Ecology is played off against the term “Gynaecology that is defined as the science of womankind” as defined by males (Daly 1978:9).

Naming is the root metaphor for Daly’s transformation of language through which she creates new symbols and meaning (Campbell 2000:8). Grey points out that naming in Daly’s work should be read as metonymy: a figure of speech that consists of the use of the name of one object or concept for that of another to which it is related, or of which it is a part. Daly uses her unique forms of language as a vehicle for women to discover their potential and their becoming (Gray 2000:9).

Daly’s commitment to women’s liberation is embedded in language and ontology; she uses the patriarchal centeredness of language and ontology creatively in her endeavour to liberate women. Daly uses patriarchal language and ontology politically, identifying them as socially and morally corrupt practices. In so doing, Daly attempts to redefine theology and philosophy (Gray 2000:230). Language became the ontological underpinning of Daly’s sex/specific discourse. For Daly, language becomes ontology and the substance out of which ontology is built (Gray 2000:230).

For example, Daly’s concern with the term God is not only grammatical but also poses a problem in the use of the term as a noun. Daly stresses that verbs are more important than nouns. She asks:

Why indeed must “God” be a noun? Why not a verb – the most active and dynamic of all? Hasn’t the naming of “God” as a noun been an act of murdering that dynamic Verb? And isn’t the Verb infinitely more personal than a mere static noun? The anthropomorphic symbols for God may be intended to convey personality, but they fail to convey that God is Be-ing (Daly 1985:33).

To Daly, this implies that the “Verb of Verbs is intransitive and need not be conceived as having an object that limits its dynamism” (Daly 1985:34). Against this backdrop, one becomes aware of her problem with the term God because of her ontological concerns and mistrust of the term. Therefore, Daly refuses the term God, preferring instead the term Goddess (Gray 2000:223). Daly is not intentionally conveying the idea of a female super-person, but uses the term Goddess metaphorically - a term that represents potential and a possibility of what women might become (Gray 2000:223). In *Amazon Grace* Daly states that:

in ontological/theological language, the ultimate Final Cause is She Who Attracts. She is the Ultimate/Intimate Reality, the constantly Unfolding Verb of Verbs who is intransitive, who has no object that limits her dynamism. She is the Good who is Self-communicating, who is the Verb from whom, in whom, and with whom all true movements move. That is, She is, of course, Be-ing (Daly 2006:20-21).

Gray points out that the relationship between Daly’s language and ontology has three interconnected elements. The first is that Daly uses language against itself by undermining neutral language in order to make women’s language possible. Secondly, Naming, as used by Daly, is an active process, a metonymy to appropriate and to invent language. Thirdly, Daly’s metaphors are central to the creative process of Be-ing – “leading to an open-ended understanding of women” (Gray 2000:231).

Daly uses language against language and Gray states:

... to looking at its etymological sources, using them, abusing them, drawing out their implications for women and doing that within the horizon, which necessarily must change, of existing philosophical and theological discourse. She is therefore, engaged in a double project: exploring and using the present/past terrain of philosophy, while at the same time shifting the boundaries it imposes on itself and in particular upon women (Gray 2000:231).

Gyn/Ecology and *Pure Lust* portray Daly’s development of highly sophisticated language. In these works she plays on words, neologism and re-definition, and practises and emphasises the importance of verbs over nouns (Gray 2000:231-232). In *Gyn/Ecology*, for example, Daly states that she makes up words and un.masks and

divides deceptive words. She employs alternative meanings for prefixes. For example, she makes up words such as “gynaesthesia” for women’s “synaesthesia”. She unmaskes deceptive words and applies alternative meanings for prefixes such as “re-cover” that actually means “cover again”. She also unmaskes hidden reversals in patriarchal language; for example, she uses “glamour” to name “witch power” (Daly 1978:24). Daly also rejects “women-made words” such as chairperson because she contends that they are inauthentic and that they obscure women’s existence (Daly 1978:24).

In conclusion, Daly’s use of language is directed towards the re-creation of women through the “dis-membering and re-construction” of discourse and her concern is with producing a radically creative and subversive women’s discourse. Daly’s strategy is ontological-linguistic in which such a strong relationship exists between ontology and language, that language actually becomes ontology (Gray 2000:241).

4.4 Daly’s theological and philosophical development

When one studies Daly it is important to understand that in the early 1970s she underwent what she calls “dramatic/traumatic change of consciousness from radical feminist to post-Christian feminist” (Daly 1975:5). Daly claims that some Christians tried to label her as:

... a post-modern, secularized, Gnostic, new age/old age catholic Christian – or whatever disguised variety of “beyond Christian” Christian happened to be in vogue. But – how can I say it clearly enough? – I was becoming Other than Christian. I had not considered all of the implications yet, but I would continue in that direction, as subsequent chapters, and my subsequent books, demonstrates (Daly 1993:153).

Daly’s critique and rejection of traditional religion remains for many the face of the feminist challenge to Christianity (Pears 2002:9). Daly’s feminist authorship has greatly influenced the development of feminist theology as a movement since 1970, and although many women today no longer identify with Daly, they are grateful for her painful pioneering of the movement (Berry 2000:29).

Daly has formulated a feminist-based critique of Christianity and the subjugation of women and has concluded that feminism and Christianity are incompatible (Pears 2002:11). In Daly's famous words:

The Bible and popular image of God as a great patriarch in heaven, rewarding and punishing according to his mysterious and seemingly arbitrary will, has dominated the imagination of millions over thousands of Years. The symbol of the Father God spawned in the human imagination and sustained as plausible by patriarchy, has in turn rendered service to this type of society by making its mechanisms for the oppression of women appear right and fitting. If God in "his" heaven is a father ruling "his" people, then it is in the "nature of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male dominated (Daly 1985:13).

She claims that the patriarchal God is redundant for women. Daly believed that the women's movement, by rejecting and transforming patriarchal religions, would become the greatest single challenge to the major religions of the world (Daly 1985:13-14).

In her book *Outercourse: The Bedazzling Voyage* (1993), Daly describes herself as a "Positively Piratic Plunderer and Smuggler" when she was writing *Beyond God the Father*. She examined and borrowed from the writings of philosophers such as Aristotle, Nietzsche and Whitehead, as well as the works of theologians such as Aquinas and Tillich, the works of anthropologists such as Bachofen and Briffault, and the works of modern thinkers such as Herbert Marcuse, Peter Berger, Paulo Freire, Thomas Szasz and Jürgen Moltman (Daly 1993:157). Daly claims that she placed their patriarchal distorted knowledge into a Metapatriarchal²⁵ context to transform old and limiting meanings in order to "Dis-cover New Meanings" (Daly 1993:157). As an Alchemist, Daly claims that she used her "Alchemical powers to Dis-cover and to create an entirely Other setting" - that of Radical Feminist Theology (Daly 1993:157). As a Pirate, she hacked away the false meanings of transcendence, courage, revelation, revolution and Sisterhood and during her "Righteous Plundering", she

²⁵ The word Metapatriarchal describes the context of the writing of *Beyond God the Father*. It means "situated behind and beyond patriarchy; transformative of and transcending the Static State" (Daly 1993:157).

reversed the myths of the Fall, the myth of the feminine evil, and the covenant in *Beyond God the Father* (Daly 1993:151). In so doing, she worked to reclaim women's "Reality" (Daly 1993:152).

Daly points out that she did not create her philosophy of being in isolation and credits "Other Forsister Pirates of the Past" and other collaborators such as Matilda Joslyn Gage, Jane Ellen Harrison, Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, Pauli Murray, and Elizabeth Gould as her Cronies²⁶ while she was creating *Beyond God the Father*. She refers to Nelle Morton, Betty Farians, Robin Morgan and the Tigers²⁷ as contemporary Cohorts in the writing of *Beyond God the Father* (Daly 1993:158).

During her years at Fribourg, Daly found herself in a "clerical world who was devoted to Neo-Scholasticism and where Thomas Aquinas' texts were studied to defend Roman Catholicism against modern philosophy (Korte 2000:78). Daly did not attempt to reconcile Christianity and modernity, as her views of God, theology and religious faith were neo-scholastic (Korte 2000:79). Daly was critical of those who spoke in theological terms "as if nothing has changed since the Middle Ages" and she became the voice for men and women who were interested in religion, but who was uninspired by traditional language and logic. It was in this context that Daly addressed specific problems women were faced with, and she criticised the exclusion of women from clerical positions in the Church as well as their exclusion from higher theological education (Korte 2000:79).

In her dissertation on *The Problem of Speculative Theology*, Daly argues in favour of speculative theology as an inductive method based on "positive knowledge of God through creatures" (Korte 2000:79). Daly opposes the view that the revelatory context of the Bible could be explained or proclaimed. Daly believed that one gains access to God if one reflects on one's own sense of being and self-awareness. By reflecting on one's own existence, one can grasp God's Being (Daly 1968:41-47).

²⁶ Crone ["an intimate companion esp. of long standing: a familiar friend: and old chum" – Webster's]: This definition has been awarded Websters' Intergalactic Seal of Approval (Daly 1987:116).

²⁷ Jan Raymond, Linda Barufaldi, Emily Culpepper and Jean MacRay (Daly 1993:137).

In her book *Beyond God the Father*, Daly devotes herself to developing a vision of a feminist spiritual revolution. Not only is she committed to going beyond Christianity, she also urges women to make an ethical choice to leave Christianity. She argues that:

... the Courage to leave springs from deep knowledge of the nucleus of nothingness which is at the core of the fallacious faith that freezes/fixes its victims (Daly 1985:xiii).

Although Daly admitted that many feminists had an impact on her theological and philosophical development, I will concentrate on the influences of Simone de Beauvoir and Paul Tillich. In my analysis of Daly, I observed that both de Beauvoir and Tillich played a crucial role in Daly's formation as philosopher and theologian.

4.4.1 De Beauvoir's influence on Daly

Daly wrote *The Church and the Second Sex* 1968 in light of the Catholic Church's lack of acknowledgment of its discrimination against women. This book was the beginning of an outline for a case against the Church and was inspired by a book of one of the Church's most forceful critics, the French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir's book *Le Deuxieme Sexe (The Second Sex)* (Daly 1968:8-9). De Beauvoir's book was first published and translated into English in 1949 and was introduced to America in 1953 (Kassian 1992:16). Daly credits de Beauvoir's book as the most influential, comprehensive and vigorous work written that highlights the generally oppressive situation of women (Daly 1968:14). Daly also acknowledges that although de Beauvoir's study does not have a special section on the Church's role in the conditioning of women, one can find her criticism of Catholic ideology and practices throughout its pages. Daly reminds her readers that de Beauvoir was not a completely neutral 'outsider' of the Church (Daly 1968:14-15). Daly explains that de Beauvoir's analysis of Christianity, as an atheist and adherent of the existential philosophy of Jean-Paul Satre, often shocked Christian readers (Daly 1968:15). De Beauvoir experienced conflicting influences as she grew up as a child of a pious Catholic mother and a non-believing father. De Beauvoir's loss of faith was a result of

her negative experience of Christianity which she whole-heartedly rejected (De Beauvoir 1963:134-40). In her book, *Pure Lust* (1984) Daly states:

In the late 1940s the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's great feminist work, *The Second Sex*, made possible dialogue among women about their lives. ... *The Second Sex* helped to generate an atmosphere in which women could utter their own thoughts, at least to themselves. ... Most important was the fact that de Beauvoir, by breaking the silence, partially broke the Terrible Taboo²⁸ (Daly 1984:374).

Daly identifies five recurring themes in de Beauvoir's work, which deal with the Church.

4.4.1.1 Oppression and deception

The Church is guilty of the oppression and deception of women (Daly 1968:15). De Beauvoir states:

... the canon law admitted no other matrimonial regime than the dowry scheme, which made woman legally incompetent and powerless. Not only did the masculine occupations remain closed to her, but she was forbidden to make depositions in court, and her testimony was not recognized as having weight (de Beauvoir 1953:58).

There must be religion for women; and there must be women, "true women", to perpetuate religion (de Beauvoir 1953:624)

But, above all, it [religion] confirms the social order, it justifies her resignation, by giving her the hope of a better future in a sexless heaven (de Beauvoir 1953:264).

... There is no need to do anything to save her soul; it is enough to live in obedience (de Beauvoir 1953:622).

Daly agrees with de Beauvoir that the equality women obtained through Christianity is inadequate because of the overwhelming evidence that exists within Christianity showing women as despised sexual beings. The pseudo-equality bestowed upon

²⁸ The universal, unnatural patriarchal taboo against women intimately/Ultimately Touching each Other; prohibition stemming from male terror of women who exercise Elemental Touching Powers (Daly 1987:97).

women by Christian ideology is not a genuine acceptance of her as person and partner (Daly 1968:18). Daly argues that the Church during the Middle Ages upheld legislation to keep married women economically and legally dependent and although modern society emancipated women, the Church reluctantly ameliorated women's legal status (Daly 1968:15). Both Daly and de Beauvoir agree that the Church is guilty of deceiving women. The Church awarded women a future where their souls will be weighed in Heaven and not according to what they have accomplished on earth. They blamed the Church for the passivity that it forced upon women. Women do not need to do anything to save their souls - they just have to live in obedience (Daly 1968:16).

4.4.1.2 Dogma versus women

The Church, by its doctrine, implicitly conveys the idea that women are naturally inferior (Daly 1968:19). According to de Beauvoir, the church actively encourages women to identify with the image of Mary. During antiquity, pagan religions worshipped the mother-goddess and Judaism and Christianity reacted against this. The Christian Church symbolically accomplished women's enslavement by using the cult of the Virgin Mother of God; the Church glorified in the acceptance of her in an assigned subordinate role (de Beauvoir 1953:171). In her analysis of this viewpoint of de Beauvoir, Daly states:

Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex*, manifested a strange mixture of insight and understanding when she wrote that Mary kneeling before her own Son represents the supreme victory of the male over the female. Catholic readers, shocked by this, protest that Mlle. de Beauvoir simply does not understand. It may well be true that she does not have sympathetic understanding of Catholic theology, but in fact she understands its abuses only too well. It is unfortunately not difficult to find examples in Catholic writings about women which manifest the vision of man-women relationship which Simone de Beauvoir is talking about. ... We might well ask where the true culpability lies for Simone de Beauvoir's misunderstanding of Marian doctrine, and incidentally be grateful for her insight into the perversion thereof (Daly 1965:509-510).

Both Daly and de Beauvoir agree that women were conditioned by Church doctrine to adore and serve men and that these doctrines continue to serve as traps to keep

women in the restrictive and passive roles of motherhood and housekeeping (Daly 1968:20-21).

4.4.1.3 Harmful moral teaching

Daly argued that the church harmed women through its moral teachings (Daly 1968:20). According to Daly, de Beauvoir wrote that male Orthodox Jews thanked God in their morning prayers for not having created them as women and that Plato uttered a similar prayer. De Beauvoir claimed that this could be an expression of the *de facto* situation, but she also maintained that a *de facto* situation could change (Daly 1968:20). De Beauvoir states:

... the religions invented by men reflect this wish for domination. In the legends of Eve and Pandora men have taken up arms against women. They have made use of philosophy and theology ... (de Beauvoir 1953:xxii).

Daly identifies two major sources of the misogynistic cast of Catholic moral theology in de Beauvoir's work: Hebrew tradition and Greek philosophy. Firstly, the Jewish tradition was savagely antifeminist and secondly, Greek philosophers, such as Aristotle, supported the idea of women's inferiority. These ideas operated in patriarchal institutions and the church (Daly 1968:20). As the church serves a patriarchal society, its moral attitude towards women is that of the oppressed sex (Daly 1968:21). De Beauvoir also believed that the enslavement of women caused prostitution and argued that prostitution is illustrative of the hypocrisy of men's double standards. Men are measured by other standards and even if they frequent brothels, they remain respected; women, however, stake their moral value in the contingent realm of sexuality (de Beauvoir 1953:614). Daly states that de Beauvoir also finds hypocrisy in the church's sadistic attitude to abortion. Often the husband or lover demands that a woman has an abortion. Although the church supports legislation against this, women feel pressured into having abortions, often with dire consequences. The church is also against the use of contraception (Daly 1968:22). Although Daly does not blame the church directly for this, she supports de Beauvoir when she observes that the church helps to perpetuate the enslavement of women

reproductively. Science has made reproductive liberty possible but the Church continues to forbid women from using the most effective of method of preventing unwanted pregnancies (Daly 1968:23).

4.4.1.4 Women's exclusion from the hierarchy

Due to the church's exclusion of women from the hierarchy, (Church leadership) the church contributes to the process of inculcating feelings of inferiority and psychological confusion in women (Daly 1968:23). De Beauvoir states:

God's representatives on earth: the pope, the bishop (whose ring one kisses), the priest who says Mass, he who preaches, he before whom one kneels in the secrecy of the confessional – all these are men. ... The Catholic religion among others exerts a most confused influence upon the young girl (de Beauvoir 1953:290).

On her knees, breathing the odor [sic.] of incense, the young girl abandons herself to the gaze of God and the angels: a masculine gaze (de Beauvoir 1953:290).

Daly agrees with de Beauvoir that women are filled with a sense of specific inferiority, one that hinders her from aspiring to an exalted role; this is directly linked to the idea that the male is divine. This endorses the view that God is Father, Christ is male, and that angels are males because they have masculine names. Thus, in Christianity, the male sex is associated with the divine whereas women's nature is irredeemably inferior (Daly 1968:24).

4.4.1.5 Transcendence through religion

The fifth point Daly makes is about de Beauvoir's treatment of the question of how women can achieve transcendence through religion. Daly describes de Beauvoir's work as portraying typical religious women, especially the mystics, as neurotic, over-emotional and narcissistic. De Beauvoir describes their ascetical practices as repulsive and gives ample examples of the sado-masochistic fantasies of female mystics (Daly 1968:25). De Beauvoir however, viewed St Theresa of Avilla in a different light, as an exceptional and unique woman who has achieved transcendence (Daly 1968:25-26). St Theresa of Avilla distinguished herself from other female

mystics because she understood that the value of mystical experience is measured according to its objective influence and not according to subjective feelings. Thus, she was able to transcend the limitations that were imposed upon her sex (de Beauvoir 1953:130). When writing the *Church and the Second Sex*, Daly was of the opinion that the church can be an instrument for allowing women to rise above the handicap of femaleness and that it can play a liberating role for women (Daly 1968:26). This view, however, changed drastically in her later works.

Daly defends de Beauvoir against her critics who rejected her interpretations and questioned her views because of her status as a non-believer. Daly claims that non-believers are aids in the struggle to “purify the Christian doctrines of its nonsense, hypocrisy, and injustice”. Daly reminds these critics that Christians are human and are subject to the same failures as non-believers (Daly 1968:28). Daly argues that although de Beauvoir claims that one is born neither a man nor a woman, but that one becomes one, is not to deny biological differences, but that men and women acquire characteristics through cultural conditioning and historical expectations. Women, as the “Other”, are exploited, and in order to liberate themselves, they must be conscious of what type of people they want to become (Daly 1968:29).

Daly acknowledges that de Beauvoir’s position on the role of the church in the oppression of women is largely justified, but that neither she nor de Beauvoir blames only the Church for this. Both women recognised that “the oppression of women has been an evolutionary process (Daly 1968:178). The difference between the two women’s views of the Church lies in the difference between despair and hope. De Beauvoir was willing to accept the conservative vision of the Church as reality. Daly, on the other hand, proposes an alternative – a commitment to transform negative and destructive elements of the Church (Daly 1968:179).

Whereas de Beauvoir rejects Christianity as an inherited and burdensome baggage, Daly believes that women should not opt for a philosophy of despair but rather a theology of hope (Daly 1968:181).

Daly later distanced herself from her first feminist book *The Church and the Second Sex*. Although Daly describes her first book as a milestone in her journey, she says:

The situation with that book is different, however. As I explained in the *Feminist Postchristian Introduction* to the 1975 edition of that work, during the years following its initial publication I moved from “reformist” feminism to identifying as a postchristian radical feminist. Therefore, my reevaluation of *The Church and the Second Sex* expresses my view of the earlier Daly as a foresister²⁹ whose work is an essential source and to whom I am indebted but with whom I largely disagree (Daly 1985:xiii).

In *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly writes that de Beauvoir became “a personal friend” to all those women who had been awakened by her work, and she states that de Beauvoir became part of the movement of “Be-Friending”, and a catalyst for the friendships of many women (1984:374).

4.4.2 Paul Tillich’s influence on Daly’s theological views

Paul Tillich is credited with having had an impact on Daly’s scope and depth of thinking about God with his analysis and vision of culture, existentialism and ontology (Schneider 2000:55). Schneider calls Daly a student of Tillich in the profound sense that her work was influenced and informed by his. Daly uses Tillich’s analysis of culture, symbols, existentialism and ontology as a springboard for her post-Christian feminist philosophy (Schneider 2000:55). Tillich influenced Daly’s intellectual development both consciously and unconsciously (Berry 2000:34). Daly accepted and developed several of Tillich’s theological concepts such as the method of correlation, God as the Power of Being, courage, and his understanding of *kairos*.

4.4.2.1 Method of correlation

Tillich, in his *Systematic Theology* (1951), uses a method of correlation to correlate theological answers with existential questions. The analysis of existence, which develops existential questions, is a philosophical task and the correlation of Christian

²⁹ Noun: Great Hag whom the institutionally powerful but privately impotent patriarchs found too threatening for coexistence and whom historians erase (Daly 1987:126).

answers with those same questions is a theological task (Stenger 1984:220). Tillich believed that it is out of the human situation from which existential questions arise, and that it demonstrates that the symbols used in the Christian message are the answers to these questions (Tillich 1951:62).

The existential question is man himself and it is the shock of nonbeing, which causes man to ask existential questions about himself and Christ; Christ is the manifestation of New Being and, through belief in Him, He reassures man that there is meaning in existence (Tillich 1951:62).

Daly is involved in both philosophical and theological tasks but in *Beyond God the Father* she moves beyond traditional symbols for answers. She explains her method as follows:

First of all it obviously is not that of a “kerygmatic theology,” which supposes some unique and changeless revelation peculiar to Christianity or to any religion. Neither is my approach that of a disinterested observer who claims to have an “objective knowledge about” reality. Nor is it an attempt to correlate with the existing cultural situation certain “eternal truths” which are presumed to have been captured as adequately as possible in a fixed and limited set of symbols (Daly 1985:7).

Daly states that one of the false gods of theologians, philosophers and other academics is called “Method” and the “tyranny of methodolatry” hinders new discoveries and prevents people from asking the questions that have not been asked before (Daly 1985:11). “Worshippers of Method” use data effectively in a way that does not fit into the “Respectable Categories of Questions and Answers”. Daly goes on to say, “the god Method is a subordinate deity, serving Higher Powers” (Daly 1985:11).

Although Daly denies using a method of correlation, Stenger points out that she uses it in two ways: one from a philosophical side, the other from a theological side. Stenger (1984:221) states:

Philosophical side: There is an analysis of the present situation, and out of that requires that we ask several existential questions. Daly

deals only indirectly with the situation of humankind as a whole, but for women as having been, the present situation is a situation of alienation from the patriarchal word. Examples: a) The existential question of transcendence is asked by women in their efforts to go beyond the present situation and the traditional patriarchal meanings, b) The existential question of the source of courage and hope is asked by women in their efforts to face alienation, c) Also, in the face of alienation, women are seeking New Being.

Theological side: Daly not only shows that spiritual/religious questions are asked in the women's revolution but that they also discuss religious values and meanings which answer those questions. In the "process of women becoming," they experience the religious values and meanings of the power of being and New Being.

Schneider remarks that Daly's work is not without method and characterises Daly's method as "movement" (Schneider 2000:59), whereas Daly prefers to call it "a method of liberation" that involves a "castration of language and images" that reflect and keep the structures of a sexist world alive (Daly 1985:8-9).

On Tillich's method of correlations, Daly says:

Although I find it less inadequate than the methods of other systematic theologians of this century, it clearly does not offer the radical critique of patriarchal religion that can only come from women, the primordial outsider (Daly 1985:200).

Daly views Tillich's ontological theology as potentially liberating in a radical sense but she argues that his speaking about God as ground and power of being would be difficult to use for the legitimating of any sort of oppression (Schneider 2000:59). Daly also states that:

It is becoming clear that if God-language is even implicitly compatible with oppressiveness, failing to make clear the relation between intellection and liberation, then it will either have to be developed in such a way that it becomes explicitly relevant to the problem of sexism or else dismissed (Daly 1985:21).

According to both Tillich and Daly, the methods of classical theology are insufficient to explain and to deal with evil within contemporary life. Both use philosophy, sociology and psychology to map out a direction towards a whole and healed existence (Schneider 2000:60). Daly, however, argues that her use and approach of philosophy

and theology differ from Tillich's because he always stayed within the boundaries of patriarchal religion (Daly 1985:21).

4.4.2.2 Kairos

Tillich's concept of kairos gives a new understanding of the meaning of history as a key to his Christological understanding of history (Tavard 1962:88). Kairos is God's time, not what we, as humans understand as time. Kairos is a moment in time related to the 'Unconditioned' as the point in history in which time is disturbed by eternity (Tavard 1962:89). Kairos is in Tillich's words:

... a moment at which history has matured to the point of being able to receive the breakthrough of the manifestation of God (Tillich 1951:369).

To Tillich, "kairos is a fulfilled and creative moment of time; a time of decision which involves the historical period in which knowledge is formed and which demands a decision in relation to the Unconditioned" (Stenger 1984:222).

Tavard (1962:89) says that Tillich refers to the New Testament concept to describe this moment as the 'fulfilment of time' in the words used by Jesus and John the Baptist when they announced the fulfilment of time with respect to the Kingdom of God, which is 'at hand' (Tillich 1951:369). Tavard states that Tillich believes that kairos is:

... all-decisive time, a meaningful and qualitatively fulfilled moment in time, the manifestation of the divine dimension of the moment, when the new reality has come, the time of the New Being, and it is the divine time of God's overcoming of all the ambiguities of being, life and history in Jesus as the Christ (Tavard 1962:89).

Although Daly does not use the term kairos in her reference to the historical situation she is living in, Stenger argues that one finds characteristics of Tillich's idea of kairos in Daly's description of the feminist situation (Stenger 1984:223). Daly states:

The women's revolution, insofar as it is true to its own essential dynamics, is ontological, spiritual revolution, pointing beyond the idolatries of sexist society and sparking creative action in and toward

transcendence. The becoming of women implies universal human becoming. It has everything to do with the search for ultimate meaning and reality, which some would call God (Daly 1985:6).

As the women's movement begins to have its effect upon the fabric of society, transforming it from patriarchy to something that never existed before – into a diarchal situation that is radically new – it can become the greatest single challenge to the major religions of the world. Western and Eastern Beliefs and values that have held sway from thousands of years will be questioned as never before. This revolution may well be also the greatest single hope for survival of spiritual consciousness on this planet (Daly 1985:13-14).

Daly proposes that the emergence of the communal vocational self-awareness of women is a “creative political ontophany”³⁰ (Daly 1985:34). Stenger (1984:223) states:

Daly's views that the present situation is a time for something new, a creative moment in history, a time for the development and fulfilment of spiritual consciousness, a time in which the ultimate, the sacred, is becoming manifest. ... Daly speaks of women as bearers of New Being. Her experience is an involved experience. The time for her, in short, a kairos.

For Tillich, the Cross of Christ is the absolute criterion of all kairoi. Daly, however, rejects the male symbol of Christ as New Being and, therefore, rejects the idea of the manifestation of New Being in Christ as the central kairos (Stenger 1984:224).

4.4.2.3 Development of a theological norm

In the development of a theological norm, both Tillich and Daly consider past and present norms as well as the specific situations these occur within. Tillich engages critically with Catholic and Protestant norms in religion and with the current human situation of despair and meaninglessness. Tillich claims:

Our ultimate concern is that which determines our being or not-being. Only those statements are theological which deal with their object in

³⁰ Manifestation of Be-ing in the living of Radical Feminism; Realization of Final Causality in successions of creative political Acts (Daly 1982:86).

so far as it can become a matter of being or not-being for us (Tillich 1951:62).

Daly follows suit in critically engaging in present and past theologies, but relates them directly to the current situation of women. Daly rejects the patriarchal view of God, the patriarchal interpretation of the Fall and the male symbol for Jesus Christ. She rejects all and anything that she suspects of being compatible with patriarchal structures and values (Stenger 1984:224).

Daly admits that although Tillich tries to avoid hypostatisation of God – something she also does – he is not completely successful because he does not address the issue of sexual oppression (Daly 1985:20). Tillich's discussion of God is detached, as is the rest of his theology (Daly 1985:21). Tillich's theory is detached from the problem of relevance of God-language, to the struggle against demonic power structures, and Tillich, like other male theoreticians, developed a relatively non-sexist language for transcendence (Daly 1985:21). Daly tries to avoid the hypostatisation of God by stating:

... it is not necessary to anthropomorphize or to reify transcendence in order to relate to this personally. In fact, the process is demonic in some of its consequences. This dichotomizing-reifying-projecting syndrome has been characteristic of patriarchal consciousness ... Why indeed must "God" be a noun? Why not a verb – the most active and dynamic of all? Hasn't the naming of "God" as a noun been an act of murdering the dynamic Verb? (Daly 1985:33).

Like Tillich, Daly recognises that the logical conclusion to the deconstruction of god-talk is the awareness that:

... the truth of a religious symbol has nothing to do with the truth of the empirical assertion involved in it (Tillich 1951:240).

4.4.2.4 God as the Power of Being

Daly and Tillich held similar views on God in theism. Tillich moves from a God of theism to a God above theism (Tillich 1953:182-190) and Daly moves away from the

idea of a Supreme Being (Daly 1985:18). For Daly, a new understanding of God is important, as her understanding is that God is the supreme patriarch (Daly 1985:16-22). To Daly, the Supreme Being is an entity that is distinctive from the world, who plans and controls the world and who keeps humans in a state of infantile subjection (Daly 1985:18). Both Tillich and Daly view theological theism as bad theology (Stenger 1984:226). To Tillich, theological theism presents an argument for the existence of God and presents a doctrine of God as a reality independent of human beings. This bad theology, according to Tillich, makes God an object but also the subject. This means that a person becomes a mere object (Tillich 1953:184-185). Tillich states:

He deprives me of my subjectivity because he is all-powerful and all-knowing. I revolt and try to make him into an object, but the revolt fails and becomes desperate. God appears as the invincible tyrant, the being in contrast with whom all other beings are without freedom and subjectivity. He is equated with the recent tyrants who with the help of terror try to transform everything into a mere object, a thing among things, a cog in the machine they control (Tillich 1953:184).

Daly's argument resembles that of Tillich's. Daly states:

The widespread conception of the Supreme Being as an entity distinct from this world but controlling it according to plan and keeping human beings in a state of infantile subjection has been a not too subtle mask of the divine patriarch (Daly 1985:18).

Daly believes that the women's movement has to put an end to the oppressive elements within theism. The women's movement, therefore, has to leave God behind (Daly 1985:18).

Both Tillich and Daly reject God as the Supreme Being and as one who reduces His subjects to powerless objects (Stenger 1984:226). Tillich sees God as the power of being. He also believes that it is courage that allows humans to resolve their own anxieties (Stenger 1984:226).

Both Tillich and Daly move beyond the concept of a patriarchal Being to the ideal of God as the power of being (Stenger 1984:226). Daly sees God as the power of being

and as the root of the experience of transcendence, courage, and hope. These experiences of transcendence, courage, and hope, however, lie in women's experiences and their alienation from the androcentric world (Daly 1985:28, 32).

The dynamic character of God as the power of being finds expression in the idea of being-itself eternally overcoming nonbeing (Tillich 1953:180-181). To Daly, God should become the "dynamic Verb and not a static word". Tillich's treatment of God as power of being is more universal than Daly's, as her idea of power of being is limited to women's experiences (Stenger 1984:226).

4.4.2.5 Courage

Courage, and more specifically, existential courage, is another concept that Daly and Tillich share. Daly acknowledges that she was inspired by Tillich's book, *The Courage to Be* (1952) (Daly 1993:136). In her article, *The Courage to See* (1971b:1109-1110), Daly took Tillich's views on existential courage into another context: the omnipresent sexual caste system of patriarchy. She did this to transform the concept of existential courage and to apply it to the struggle against the sexual hierarchy that exists in theology and culture (Daly 1993:136).

Tillich sees courage as being grounded in the power of being-itself and that it has a religious basis. He believes that courage enables people to face the threats of non-being and he goes on to say that courage is in relation to the existential anxieties of non-being in the forms of death, emptiness, meaninglessness and guilt (Tillich 1953:155). Tillich states:

... few concepts are so useful for the analysis of the human situation. Courage is an ethical reality, but it is rooted in the whole breadth of human existence and ultimately in the structure of being itself (Tillich 1953:1).

Daly defines courage as the ability to confront the experience of nothingness (Daly 1985:23). Using Tillich's understanding of courage, Daly believes, however, that although Tillich analyses courage in universalist humanist categories his views are inadequate because he does not link these to the women's struggle against

structured patriarchy (Daly 1985:23). Daly goes on to define courage as those women who have become the bearers of existential courage in society. When women show existential courage, they will be able to liberate themselves from the patriarchal structures of the world and to develop new religious meaning free from sexism (Daly 1985:23-24).

The core and basic thesis of Daly's philosophy in *Beyond God the Father* is the realisation that the women's revolution is about the participation in Being as an ontological movement (Daly 1993:159).

4.5. Daly's case against the church

Over time, Daly's passion for knowing God turned into perplexity as she endlessly struggled against the Church. She was hurt, detested, and rejected in her efforts to search out the knowledge of God and she eventually decided that the message to women was clear: women are not worthy of spiritual knowledge as this is the exclusive right of men.

In Daly's *Church and the Second Sex* (1968), her primary task was to argue for equality for men and women as church members. She exposed the masculine bias of Christian theology against women and demonstrated the practical and psychological consequences it bestowed upon women in the church. To Daly, the Catholic Church is an oppressively male-dominated institution, the last stronghold of anachronism and prejudice. She believes that the church continues to refuse to reconcile its dualistic views on women as both virgin and whore (Daly 1975:54). Daly sees the Catholic Church as the enemy of women; it idealises women on one side and on the other, it humiliates them. Daly argues that women are tied to immanence, materiality, and are symbolised as the embodiment of temptation, lust and sin by the Catholic Church (Daly 1975:53). She also contends that the Catholic Church pretends to put women on a pedestal but in reality, women are actually prevented from gaining active self-fulfilment within society because the Church influence and control the media, political, religious and social organisations (Daly 1975:53).

In her analysis of Christian documents, Daly states that they contain outright contradictions. She points out that a conflict exists between Christian teachings on the worth of all human beings and the oppressive misogynistic ideas that stem from cultural conditioning. To Daly, this presents a dialectic tension between the pseudo-glorifications of women and the degrading teachings and practices about women. The views and practices in Christianity regarding women are therefore, completely contradictory (Daly 1975:74).

Daly states that the Bible shows us that women lived in miserable conditions in ancient times and that the authors of the Bible were prejudiced men of their time. It would, therefore, be impossible to construct an idea of the feminine nature or what God's plan is for women (1975b:75).

Daly believes that the Old Testament writings portray women as subjugated and inferior beings. When wives addressed their husbands, they did so in a subordinate manner. When women were said to have misbehaved, the Old Testament reflects that they were severely punished; but men were only punished when they violated another man's rights by taking his wife. Whilst women gained respect through motherhood, especially when they produced male children, they were blamed for childless marriages. The Old Testament also reflects that fathers had the right to sell their daughters into slavery (Daly 1975:76). The Old Testament is portrays Eve as a temptress, as immutably inferior and as unintelligent and immoral. Daly sees the myth of the Fall as a misogynistic attempt to perpetuate the widely-held belief that women are inferior (Daly 1975:78-79). The Old Testament depicts men as conquerors whereas it depicts women as breeders (Daly 1975:79).

In her analysis of the New Testament, Daly states that the Catholic Church uses the examples of Jesus and Paul to keep women in a dominated and inferior state. In the 1969 edition of *The Church and the Second Sex*, Daly initially granted that there is no record to prove that Jesus ever said anything negative about women (Daly 1975:79). She states that Jesus was open towards women and that he treated them as people. Daly refers to Jesus' behaviour towards the Samaritan woman, the adulterous

woman, the prostitute as well as his close friendships with other women. These women were his friends who gave him “the gift of his brotherhood” (Daly 1975:80). Daly’s views about Jesus changed dramatically in her later works and will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Pauline texts are the most striking examples of antifeminist passages. Paul, concerned and preoccupied with order in society, also deemed it necessary to sustain a good image of the Church. Therefore, women could not hold prominent places in Christian assemblies; he did not allow them to speak and he ordered women to keep their heads veiled. Daly believes that Paul did this to protect the new Church from scandal and he insisted that women behave demurely and passively. Daly strongly believes that it would be perverse if Pauline texts were used in modern times as a means of subjugating women (Daly 1975:80).

Daly believes that the writings of the Church fathers also pose a problem for women within the Church. She quotes and discusses Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Ambrosias and Origen’s views on women and concludes that the fathers’ views and attitudes towards women were derogatory and fiercely misogynistic (Daly 1975:85-88). Daly sees a recurring theme of the Church fathers in their belief that women can only transcend their sexual limitations by faith, something they did not say about men. When women achieve transcendence, it is because they have been given a supernatural gift and never through their own efforts. This supernatural gift is given as a compliment for being part of humankind. Daly goes on to say that in the Church fathers’ opinion, dignity and value in human nature are characteristics of men; women are not acknowledged as being fully human (Daly 1975:89).

Theological opinion of women remained unfavourable in the Middle Ages (Daly 1975:90). Daly discusses the opinions of Peter Lombard, Bonaventure and Aquinas who all viewed women as sexual beings. They believed that men reflected the image of God more fully than women, and as such, men were born to rule over women (Daly 1975:90-93). Daly contends that the lower status of women was created by canon law

and custom. For example, according to canon law, a husband could beat his wife and only the dowry system was allowed for matrimony. This left women defenceless under this system because as they were viewed legally incompetent, women were not allowed to give testimony in court (Daly 1975:97). In short, women were the property of men and the Church's complicated marriage laws offered many opportunities for men to abuse women. Women remained the victims of hypocrisy and oppression (Daly 1975:98).

In the *Church and the Second Sex with A New Feminist Postchristian Introduction*, (1975) Daly criticises the views she held in the 1969 edition. Daly states that she was genuinely baffled by the "puzzling ambiguity if not an outright contradiction" in the Church's views on women. She prefers to call her then record of contradictions, "A Record of Hypocrisy" or a "History: A Record of Legitimized Sexism". Daly points out that in 1969, she was aware of the contradictions between the glorification of women and the real social oppression of women but that she was also clear about the hypocritical idea of the glorified women, and how it functioned to conceal social reality (Daly 1975:20). In 1969, Daly was aware of the oppression of women but remained a Catholic Christian. Daly could not admit that the Christian doctrine was oppressive because it would have isolated her and threatened her career (Daly 1975:20). Daly states that her analysis was devastating but that she was ambivalent in her expressions of dismay towards the Church, theologians and preachers. The message of the Bible became a myth in her later works and its patriarchal character cannot change (Daly 1975:21). Whilst Daly had tried to avoid a break from Christianity and the Church in 1969, she broke away from them in 1975b.

In the following section, I will turn to Daly's vision of women's liberation as articulated in her concept of sisterhood.

4.5.1 Sisterhood as Antichurch

The Church became Daly's enemy, and in her opinion, the enemy of all women. In her book *Beyond God the Father*, she declares the "Sisterhood as Antichurch" (Daly 1985:132). To Daly, the Sisterhood is the being of women, a way to bond women in a

new way. The Sisterhood was to fight the prevailing view that women are not equal to men within Christianity. The sisterhood is in conflict with the church and is a new threat to authoritarian religion as it stands in opposition to the sexist church (Daly 1985:133). Daly describes the Sisterhood as a “Cosmic Covenant” that will fulfil a new space for women who are against sexism within the church as well as moving beyond the Christian tradition to a new Being (Daly 1985:155). The Sisterhood has four important concepts in which it is envisaged as being beyond the church. Daly calls these a space set apart, an exodus community, a charismatic community and a communicating community (Daly 1985:156-169).

4.5.2 The Church as a space set apart

The Church sees itself as a space set apart from the rest of the world and as being a haven and a sanctuary. To Daly, the space set apart in sisterhood is a place wherein women can escape to and it gives them a chance to reflect on life. Within the space set apart women can remove themselves to a “sacred canopy” without the disapproval of a sexist society. It is not only a self apart from a patriarchal reality but from a false nonreality of alienation (Daly 1985:156). Daly states:

Since the new space is set apart precisely from the nonreality of sexist alienation and since we are in it only insofar as we confront nonreality, it is not static space but constantly moving. ... its centre is on the boundaries of patriarchy's space, that is, it is not contained (Daly 1985:157).

Women's space becomes the life source wherein they are free to refute patriarchal structures and objective oppression (Daly 1985:156-157).

4.5.3 The Church as Exodus Community

Daly calls the space of the women's revolution an exodus community. It is a journey towards achieving individuation and participation; it is the leaving behind of the false self and of a sexist society (Daly 1985:158). The exodus is not only a spiritual one but also a physical and social exodus formed by a new covenant. The new covenant is an agreement present within the self and other selves. Daly describes this as a space

where women are in harmony with the environment, one that is beyond patriarchal splits and barriers (Daly 1985:159).

4.5.4 The Church as Charismatic Community

The church sees itself as a charismatic community in which people experience, amongst other gifts, the gifts of healing and prophecy. The church provides healing through the sacraments, such as confession, and pastoral counselling all given by male priests as instruments of God. Through Sisterhood, women can heal themselves by bonding together and reminding each other of their womanhood. Thus, Daly believes that women must transfer their primary force of supportiveness to the self and to other women without coming to the point of self-sacrifice (Daly 1985:162).

The role of prophesy in the church is primarily a function of the priesthood; as most prophets were men, they never criticised patriarchy. Daly states that the prophets in the Old Testament were sexist and uses examples where prophets spoke of Zion as a harlot (Isaiah 1:21) and Israel as a harlot and a whore who had abandoned Yahweh for false gods (Jeremiah 2:20). In Ezekiel 36 Israel is described as a prostitute whose conduct was unclean as a woman's menstruation (Daly 1985:162). This, to Daly, is proof the patriarchal prophets did not challenge sexual oppression nor did they convey a liberating message to women (Daly 1985:163).

The words prophet, prophecy, or prophetic cannot convey the full impact of the Sisterhood phenomenon but it can be useful, according to Daly. The prophets never received their mission from human agency but have seized it themselves. Thus, through Sisterhood the women's revolution can claim, seize and take back what is rightfully and ontologically theirs: their own identity and a new naming of reality (Daly 1985:164). The prophets established a breakthrough to a better cultural order and claimed it to be morally legitimate. However, this breakthrough still supported sexual hierarchical destructive structures (Daly 1985:164). The prophets invoked a source of moral authority that led to the problem of the conceptions of meaning and order, which makes their language inadequate for the community of feminism (Daly 1985:165). Daly makes a distinction between ethical and exemplary prophecy. The

ethical concept is inapplicable for naming the foretelling power of feminism, because the prophets themselves think that they are instruments of the divine will, and their language is phallic, whether intentional or not. The prophet is an archetypal male, an extension of the archetypal male God, and he forces his will upon others without sharing in other's experiences and concerns (Daly 1985:165). The prophet, as an exemplary type, sees himself as a vessel standing in relation to the divine. This type of prophet participates in an immanent, pantheistic principle of divinity and invites other to participate in it. To Daly, the exemplary type of prophet is more appropriate to describe feminism's foretelling function but they remain purely individual bearers of charisma (Daly 1985:166). Thus, healing and prophesy functioned ambiguously and not in a liberating manner; they served male-made structures of oppression and even "coerce God Himself" (Daly 1985:167).

4.5.5 The Church as Communicating Community

Daly states that the Church identifies itself as a community with a mission. According to Daly, Moltmann suggested that God's promise to act in the future implies the Church's mission to all nations. Daly uses Moltmann's idea, but in a different way and without getting into a discussion with Moltmann (Daly 1985:168). To Daly, a promise which was handed down from an anthropomorphic deity to the forefathers does not imply a mission because the Christian mission often meant bloody conquests for Christ, such as those which occurred during the conversion of barbarians in Europe (Daly 1985: 168). Daly associates mission with military action and sees it not as communication but rather compulsion. Thus, Daly states:

Since the promise which is the source of sisterhood is within women's being and since the cosmic covenant based on that promise is an agreement that is discovered, the mode of communication of this community cannot be expressed adequately by the term "mission". The truth embodied in the term is the "sending" aspect of communication, but this is a relatively superficial aspect of communication, and the word "mission" is essentially wrong because it one-sidedly stresses this aspect (Daly 1985:168).

When women expand their awareness of new space, it does not imply that they push back others' territories. When being confronted with nothingness, women have to leave the patriarchal space within which their identities are alienated. Once they do this, they enter new space. Whereas the Catholic Church has excommunicated those who opposed its dogmas, the Sisterhood has no such hierarchy or dogmas. When one discovers the covenant, one finds oneself in a new space and leaves behind the promise of becoming an integrated, transformed and androgynous being (Daly 1985:168-169).

Daly blames Christianity for labelling women as inferior, weak, and viscous and holds Christianity responsible for the crushed lives of so many women. Therefore, she sees the Second Coming of women as synonymous with the Antichrist (Daly 1985:95). I will turn to Daly's concept of the Church as the Antichrist.

4.5.6 The Church as Antichrist

Daly does not speak of the Sisterhood on a denominational level but on a level where the human psyche struggles to free itself from destructive social forces. Daly is adamant that those who advocate that one has to place one's faith in Jesus Christ, is saying one thing: "to be human is to be male is to be the Son of God" (Daly 1985:138-139). This, to Daly, is a religious struggle in conflict with being versus nonbeing. The being of women is a religious affirmation and a confrontation with the archaic heritage that denied women their humanity. Antichurch to Daly is a means to bring forth a New Being that will annihilate the Christian myths. The church is wrong and closed to new information (Daly 1985:139).

Daly also condemns the view of the church as the "bride of Christ". It conveys the "extension of the Incarnation" with which she disagrees because it implies that the wife of the patriarch is merely an extension of her husband. The divinity of Jesus gives men the right to claim that they are representatives of the "God-Man". The Pope for instance is called "the vicar of Christ on earth" and the church participates in this identification (Daly 1985:139).

The women's revolution as Antichrist and Antichurch is a spiritual uprising that goes beyond sexist myths. Antichrist correlates with the coming of the Antichurch and to Daly this means an uprising against the male Incarnation myth. Daly views the Sisterhood as the "Second Coming of female presence as Antichurch and Antichrist" (Daly 1985:140).

4.6 Christian and Postchristian Myth

Daly states that there is a perception that exists which sees women's liberation as focusing on the generation of a new consciousness without thinking or worrying about God. Daly contest that this is a fallacy because it can cut off the radical potential of the movement (Daly 1985:28). Women have to partake in ultimate reality in order to free themselves from Christian idolatry that has been imposed on them. The new wave of feminism:

desperately needs to be not only many-faceted, but cosmic and ultimately religious in its vision. This means reaching outward and inward toward the God beyond and beneath the gods who have stolen our identity (Daly 1985:29).

Daly urges women to think more creatively. This includes the breaking of, and cracking through, idolatrous thoughts such as the belief that humans are created in the image of God. This idol breaking can be done on the level of "internalized images of male superiority" and will exorcise one from one's consciousness and from the culture one was bred from. Women, therefore, have to dethrone religious false gods as well as the ideas and symbols of God which have been imposed upon the human spirit (Daly 1985:29).

In *Beyond God the Father*, Daly identifies three false deities in Christianity: the "God of explanation", the "God of otherworldliness" and the "God as the Judge of sin". The "God of explanation" is the one to whom we turn to explain, and thus to justify, something which is unexplainable such as the death or suffering of a child where it is explained as the will of God. Daly states that this deity does not commit to the task of erasing social, economic and psychological suffering and injustice. Women have to

be aware that “God’s plan” is a way in which men cover up their inadequacy, ignorance and evil (Daly 1985:30). Daly describes the “God of otherworldliness” as the “Judge, the one who rewards and punishes after death”. Women must become liberated from this idol by rising to a deeper awareness of “otherworldliness” as a process of creating a counter world for themselves in order to counterfeit “this world”. Stated simply, Daly says that this idol can be dethroned when women live a full and rich life in this world (Daly 1985:30-31). The “God who is the Judge of sin” is one who promotes self-destructive guilty feelings, especially in women. Women suffer “mentally and physically from this deity”. For example, Daly states that women are told that birth control and abortion are wrong and that they should be submissive to their husband. She believes that church rituals and services degrade women and force them to be verbally and symbolically passive (Daly 1985:31).

Daly rejects the androcentric term God, and argues that a God who is construed as a fixable and definable thing is a “Deadly Deception”. Daly states that she moved away from speaking about God, androgyny and homosexuality. Whereas she used to write and speak anthropologically, she moved on to write and speak “gynomorphically”. This she does because God represents the necrophilia of patriarchy and the Goddess affirms the life-loving being of women and nature (Daly 1978: xi).

What follows is Daly’s use of mythology in her discussion of the symbols of the Christian faith and her views on the myth of the Triune God, Christolatry, Mariology and the myth of the Fall will receive special attention.

4.6.1 The Myth of the Triune God

In *Gyn/Ecology* the patriarchal society revolves around myths of “Processions within the triune godhead”. The son proceeds from the father and the “holy ghost” proceeds from the father and son. All creatures take part in this procession. They proceed from the eternal processing “god” who is their “Last End”, through the sacrament of Baptism. Through this sacrament, they seek reconciliation with the father because they were alienated from him through the sin of Adam and Eve (Daly 1978:38). The father is the origin who thinks “fourth” the second person, the son, the word. The son

is the perfect image of the father and is co-external and consubstantial. In their total unity, they express their mutual love by the procession of a third person called the "holy ghost" (Daly 1978:38).

To Daly the triune god is an act of eternal self-absorption and self-love and states that:

The "Processions of Divine Persons" is the most sensational one-act play of the centuries, the original *Love Story*, performed by the Supreme All Male Cast. ... the epitome of male bonding, ... It is "sublime" (and therefore disguised) erotic male homosexual *mythos*, the perfect all-male marriage, the ideal all-male family, the best boys' club ... (Daly 1978:38).

This mythic paradigm of the trinity is what Daly calls the product of Christian culture and is expressive of a patriarchal society (Daly 1978:38).

According to Daly, Christian myths did not spring out of nowhere but have parallels with chronologically antecedent androcratic myths. She states that the "misogynist Mix-Masters stole and reversed, contorted and distorted" antecedent myths and symbols. To Daly, the Christian concept of the "trinity" is assimilated in the Triple Goddess in early mythology (Daly 1978:75).

Athena, who was the Triple Goddess is also identified as Neith, the Triple Goddess of Libya, and lived in an era in which the fatherhood was not acknowledged. The Pre-Hellenic Triple God is also known as Hera-Demeter-Korê. In Irish mythology, the Triple Goddess's names include Fodha, Eire, and Banbha. The Triple Moon Goddess, Thetis, Amphitrite, and Nereis also existed in Hellenic mythology. Daly states that there were many Goddesses known as Maiden, Nymph, and Crone, or Maiden, Mother and Moon (Daly 1978:76).

Patriarchy became the dominant social structure with the forced marriage of the Triple Goddess to a trinity of gods: Hera with Zeus, Demeter with Poseidon and Korê with Hades (Daly 1978:76).

According to Daly's analysis of the Triple Goddess, She is the foreshadow of the Christian "trinity" and Christian symbols. Eurynome, whose Sumerian name was also Lahu (meaning "exalted dove") in the Pelasgian creation myth, and who was also referred to as the Goddess of All Things, took on the form of a dove and laid a Universal Egg. Her title, Lahu, was passed on to the Yahweh as creator. To Daly, against this background, the traditional symbol of the "holy ghost" as a dove becomes absurd (Daly 1978:76).

Daly also describes the ritual positioning of the fingers of Catholic priests when giving blessings as symbolic of the Phrygian blessing. Priests raise their thumb, index finger and middle finger whilst the other two fingers point downwards. This is symbolic of, and represents, the "trinity". But, according to Daly, this Phrygian blessing was given in the name of Myrine, also known as Ay-Mari, Marian, Mariamne, Marienna, the Asian Minor Great Moon-Goddess, who was the counterpart of Neith or Athena before she was reborn from Zeus's head. Myrine, as the Mother of the Gods, of which the Christian trinity is a distorted image, is according to Daly, the gruesome reversal in the honouring of Mary as the Mother of God (Daly 1978:77).

Daly uses the Goddess of Trivia, equivalently used with Hectate, Artemis and Diana, to point out its relevance to the Christian myth. Hectate, also known as the Goddess of Witches, had faces that could turn in three directions. Statues of Hectate were set up at the crossings of three roads. The crossing of the three roads was a cosmic symbol because it pointed to the division of the world into three parts. Hesiod praised the Goddess as the Mistress of the three realms, these being earth, heaven and sea. During the Middle Ages, people believed that the crossroads were the loci of preternatural visions and happenings. Daly, in her discussion of the term trivia, describes the crossing of the three roads, the Goddess and the definitions and meaning of the word trivia as common, ordinary, flimsy and of little worth. She points out that in a patriarchal society, values that are commonplace are of little worth, but in a competitive hierarchical society, that which is scarce has intrinsically more worth. She states that the Christian "trinity" is seen as omnipresent through its dogma and is not associated with triviality. Daly sees this as a contradiction because androcracy

makes scarcity an inherent requisite for great worth, but still finds it fitting to name the infinite, perfect, supreme “god” as omnipresent (Daly 1978:78).

Daly contends that the omnipresent God is not commonplace because he has no place. She argues that his omni-presence is omni-absence and that to refer to his absence as presence is false. Absence is the essence of the patriarchal god, and the infinite absence of divinity in the patriarchal God is the ultimate scarcity. Daly sees in this, the hidden meaning of his being Omega, which she decodes as “Ultimate Nothing” (Daly 1978:79).

Daly claims that trivia should function as a constant reminder of the patriarchal religions’ reduction of real multi-dimensional presence of the Nothingness, created by the fathers in their own image and likeness. Trivia should also remind women of the omnipresence of Reversal. Reversal means the reversing of life-engendering energy as symbolised by the Goddess, into necrophiliac Nothing-loving. Hags (women) can be free in the time/space of trivia to find their own cosmic triviality and creative power (Daly 1978:79).

4.6.2 Christolatry

In Daly’s discussion on the doctrine of Jesus, she claims that it confirms the existence of the sexist hierarchy because the Christian faith does not accept that Jesus was a limited human being. She states that if women want liberation they will have to reject Christological formulas as idolatry. As God becomes limited in women’s consciousness the more they will be able to stop thinking about Jesus as the “Second Person of the Trinity” who has historically being assumed to have had a human nature in a “unique hypostatic union” (Daly 1985:69). The uniqueness and supereminence of Jesus will become meaningless when liberated women reject the God who became incarnated as a unique male. Daly states:

I am proposing that Christian idolatry concerning the person of Jesus is not likely to be overcome except through the revolution that is going on in women’s consciousness. It will, I think, become increasingly evident that exclusively masculine symbols for the ideal of

“incarnation” or for the ideal of the human search for the fulfilment will not do. As a uniquely masculine image and language for divinity loses credibility, so also the idea of a single divine incarnation in a human being of the male sex may give way in the religious consciousness to an increased awareness of the power of Being in all persons (Daly 1985:71).

Women cannot accept the idea of a redemptive incarnation in the unique form of a male saviour. Women also cannot accept that “a patriarchal divinity or his son” is in a position to save them from the horrors they experience in a patriarchal world.

Daly identifies four methods that society and the Church used to avoid insight into the conflict between feminism and Christianity and applies them specifically to the problem of Christolatry. These categories are universalisation, particularisation, spiritualisation and trivialisation (Daly 1985:78-81).

Firstly, the problem of Christology was avoided through universalisation. Daly states that it is universally accepted that Jesus is not “a women, a black, or Chinese, etcetera” which implies that women are not the only “outsiders”. For Daly, the problem of universalisation does not lie in the fact that Jesus was male, young and a Semite, but in the exclusive identification of Jesus with God. This implies that Jesus’ divinity and his being the “image of God” makes Jesus the “God-man”, something which Jesus is not (Daly 1985:79). Daly sees having faith in Jesus as “God-man” as inauthentic and as an idolatry (Daly 1985:79). For Daly, the problem lies in the process where the “particularity of Jesus’ maleness” does not function in the same way as the “particularity of his Semitic identity”. This means that priests did not exclude men from the priesthood regardless of race or age whilst they excluded all women. The universalisation of Jesus legitimates sexual hierarchy, something women must refuse (Daly 1985:70).

Secondly, Christological issues are avoided by particularisation, which limits oppression to a particular time, place, institution and area of activity. Particularisation is used to escape Christological issues “by shifting the emphasis to a specific set of conditions” and the refusal to see the “universality of the conditioning process” (Daly

1985:79). Particularisation fails to come to terms with the sexist bias against women (Daly 1985:80).

Thirdly, spiritualisation is used to steer away from the patriarchal implications of Christolatry. Daly rejects the Pauline texts "In Christ there is no male or female" as a spiritualised example and contends that these are not true because Jesus remains a male. For Daly, Christ is synonymous with the name "Male". Spiritualisation also offers the fallacy of a future, a future wherein women will finally have equality, but spiritualisation detracts from the fact that women are currently still oppressed (Daly 1985:80).

The fourth method is trivialisation, which is accompanied by the aforementioned methods. Daly states:

It is possible to universalize, particularize, and spiritualize away the conflict between women's becoming and Christolatry precisely because female aspirations to humanity are not being taken seriously. Women who raise the problem are frequently told to turn their minds to "more serious questions" (Daly 1985:80-81).

Daly states that cosmic energy is symbolised in the Tree of Life, the Sacred Tree, which is the Goddess, in order to transform her idea into the cross of Jesus Christ. The tree of life belongs to the cult of all Great Mothers and is sacred. The tree, as a symbol, represents not only fertility but also cosmic energy. In Ancient Egypt, art was depicted as the bringing forth of the Sun itself. To Daly, The Cosmic Tree is a symbol of the Christian cross as a dead wooden rack to which a dying body is fastened with nails; this becomes the torture cross of the entire world of Christianity (Daly 1978:79). Odin, known too as Hanging God, The Dangling One, and Lord of the Gallows was worshipped by the Germans. According to Neumann, Odin facilitated the conversion of Germans to Christianity because of the similarity of their hanged god to the crucified Christ (Neumann 1972:251). The tree of life, the cross and the gallows tree were all forms of the maternal tree. Neumann analysed the Tree of Live as:

Christ, hanging from the tree of death, is the fruit of suffering and hence the pledge of the promised land, the beatitude to come; and at the same time He is the tree of life as the god of the grape. Like

Dionysus, he is endendros, the life at work in the tree, and fulfils the mysterious twofold and contradictory nature of the three (Neumann 1972:252).

Daly rejected Neumann's bland objective scholarly style and questions why he equates the fruit of the tree of death to a pledge of the Promised Land and how Christ can be the life of work in the tree. According to her, the tree is dead and He (Jesus) is on his way to this same state (Daly 1978:80). Daly sees the tree as mysterious but not contradictory. Daly does see a contradiction in the "Reversal Religions reduction/reversal of the Tree of Life" to a torture cross. The cross is many things: a bed, Christ's marriage bed, a crib, a cradle, a nest, a bed of birth and the deathbed (Neumann 1972:256). The femininity of Christ is incorporated in that of Dionysus. This is the role to which patriarchy expects women to conform, therefore the equation of a marriage bed and deathbed makes sense to Daly which she claims to be unintended gallows humour (Daly 1978:81).

Daly contends that the Christian myth of Christ devours the Goddess, and that the Goddess, as the Tree of Live, becomes Christ, and as the life at work in the tree, Christ becomes the sap. Taking into consideration that the tree was the body of the Goddess, Daly claims that the violence of these assimilations can be understood as the gentle Jesus who, when he offers his body to eat and his blood to drink, becomes and plays Mother Goddess. Daly both calls and identifies Jesus as a "fetal-identified male behind the Goddess mask that is saying let me eat and drink you alive – a crude cannibalism and veiled vampirism" (Daly 1978:81).

Daly offers her interpretation of the blood-drinking syndrome of the Christian ritual and explains her views on the origin of the chalice and the belief that the wine it contains transforms into Christ's blood. Daly states that according to Rich (1976:99) women invented pottery making, and that the cauldron was associated with the Mother Goddess, the Priestess-Potter, the Wisewoman and Maker. When the Church stole the cauldron of women-identified transforming power, it reversed it into the chalice as a symbol of the transforming power of all-male priesthood. This resulted in patriarchal powers over others in the name of a male "god". A priest plays at being a

priestess, and hides behind her symbol as he attempts to change wine into sacred blood. Daly sees this as the Christian version of “male menstruation”. The chalice becomes a “cannibalistic/necrophagous” ritual and its contents, the blood of Jesus Christ, are consumed by the pseudopriestess (Daly 1978:83).

Daly states that in order for the male god to become the Goddess, he has to be reborn. Unlike Dionysus, who was born from the thigh of Zeus, Christ did not require a paternal thigh to be born of, nor did his mother Mary need to drink a portion of his heart as Semele, Dionysus’ mother had to do. She states that Christ, in the Christian myth, existed in his own incarnation as Christ and that the consubstantial Holy Ghost impregnated Mary spiritually (Daly 1978:83). This, according to Daly, was such a spiritual affair, that Mary remained a virgin, before, during and after his death (Daly 1978:83).

In the “Androcratic invasion of the gynocentric realm”, the female presence is replaced by male femininity. This to Daly, is evident in the multiple rebirths of the divine son, such as in his baptism and his resurrection. These rebirths are also present in the myths of the Goddess. Persephone had to spend three months of each year in the underworld realm of her husband Hades, who raped and abducted her. Daly sees these myths as having been male-manipulated and that they functioned to “legitimate” the transition to patriarchal control (Daly 1978:87).

In the Christian myth, the feminine male god replaced the “Daughter/Self” of the Goddess. When he descended to hell, he emerged on his own without any female presence in what Daly calls the “Monogender Male Auto-motherhood” (Daly 1978:87).

Daly calls Jesus’ ascension into heaven “a second growing up”, the rejoining with his father – himself. Like Dionysus’ ascension into heaven where he sat on the right hand of Zeus, Christ, as the Christian Dionysus, has done the same thing.

On the basic intentionality of the “Word made Flesh” Daly states:

The “Word” is doublespeak that drives women M-A-D, violating cognitive boundaries, preparing the way for a phallogenic Second

Coming. It is the announcement of the ultimate Armageddon, where armies of cloned Jesus Freaks (Christian and/or nonchristian) will range themselves against Hags/Crones, attempting the Final Solution to the “problem” of Female Force (Daly 1978:89).

4.6.3 Mariology

Mary, as mother of God, is one of the Catholic Church’s important doctrines and without her, their sacred history is impossible. Mary is an important figure who points towards the mystery of Christ and the Church and who is a norm against which new theological conceptions have to be measured (Hauke 1995:180).

I have already discussed de Beauvoir’s influence on Daly in the *Church and the Second Sex* (1968) and their shared views on women not being born but becoming women. According to the evolution theory, both women are convinced that one can no longer speak of an essence of man or women, or of an unchangeable God who grounds immutable orders of things. Daly was again inspired by DeBeauvoir who pointed out the contrast that exist between the ancient goddess and Mary. The goddess had power and autonomy over men whilst Mary is portrayed as a servant of God (Hauke 1995:182).

Not only does Daly refer to Mary as a “domesticated goddess”, she also strives to free Mary from her relationship with Christ. The Catholic dogma, according to which Mary was taken up into heaven, is symbolic of the Greek god who conferred immortality upon his mother Semite, and who, in a rage, took her to heaven (Daly 1978:87). Mary’s virginity becomes a paraphrase for female autonomy - women have to become independent of men and must not define themselves through their relationships with men (Hauke 1995:184).

According to Daly, the Catholic Church offered women compensation and reflected glory by equating them to Mary. Daly sees the Marian symbol as one whose function is the perpetuation of the façade of semi-identification (by relation) of females with the Christ, and is used to deflect female outrage and to inhibit their insight and hope (Daly 1985:32).

The symbol of Mary in Catholic doctrine is only good when it is seen in relation to Jesus. Through the doctrine of Immaculate Conception, Mary is conceived without original sin, and is placed on an unreachable pedestal setting her apart from other real women. The Catholic Church uses Mary as a symbol to reinforce sexual hierarchy because “the Immaculate Conception occurred in anticipation of Christ’s divinity” (Daly 1985:82). What is involved here for Daly is the negation of female evil and a rejection of patriarchy. Women need not be redeemed by men (Daly 1984:87) and through Immaculate Conception as a metaphor, parthenogenetic powers are evoked; it represents “the process of a women creating herself free of fathers and chains” (Daly 1984:113-114). According to Daly, the Assumption dogma, where Christ actively ascended into heaven and where Mary was taken up into heaven, reinforces patriarchalism (Hauke 1995:186).

Daly observes that Mariology creates serious division between Protestants and Catholics, but that they are in accord with her subordinate role in “Redemption” (Daly 1985:82). Daly states that Protestants object to a Catholic Mary who is almost equal or more important than Jesus is. Protestants’ objections serve the purpose of reducing women’s roles in marriage to those of wife and mother, (Daly 1985:83) safely domesticated within patriarchal family boundaries (Daly 1985:85).

Although Daly criticises the Catholic Church’s dogma of Mariology, she does not want to reinstate Mariology because it belongs to the patriarchal past. Mary, as a symbol, was used, according to Daly, as a two-edged sword by its male promoters and that the God-like status of Mary is remnant of the ancient image of the Mother Goddess (1985:83).

Daly criticises, amongst others, the views of Gordon Kaufmann and John Macquarrie on the Image of Mary as Virgin. Daly argues that Kaufmann states that the virgin birth is one of the most unfortunate confusions in the Church, and that the doctrine “attempts to understand the theological fact that for faith, Jesus Christ is Son of God”. Daly finds Kaufmann’s views on the doctrine of the virgin birth more absurd than the idea of Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Daly 1985:84). Macquarrie perceives the

doctrine of the virgin birth as purely relational and questions whether the doctrine is helpful in explaining the person of Christ and whether it enables one to see Jesus as the Incarnate word. To Macquarrie, the virgin birth points to Jesus Christ's origin in God, something Daly contests (Mary Daly 1985:84). Daly argues that these theologians uphold the most non-relational aspect of Mary, her virginity, and that they tie this to the male saviour and the male God (Daly 1985:84).

By taking the virgin symbol out of context, women are defined on a biological level with a kind of "inverse sexual and relational definition", and to think that Mary was a virgin "before, during, and after" the birth of Jesus is absurd and says something about "female autonomy in the context of sexual and parental relationships" (Daly 1985:85).

The virgin model in Catholicism is not liberating to women; nuns are still dominated by men and are dominated and confined by the physical, psychological and social powers of patriarchy. In contrast, Protestant women have only Jesus, whereas Catholic women have the "nun". Protestant women have "the minister's wife" as a more "liberating picture". Daly concludes that women cannot be liberated within either Catholicism or Protestantism (Daly 1985:85).

Daly contends that the virgin birth of the Christian myth confuses people by the deceptive equation of the myth with parthenogenesis. To Daly, the Catholic Mary is not the Goddess creating parthenogenetically on her own, but is "portrayed/betrayed as a Rape Victim". Therefore, the myth of the virgin birth is deceptive and parthenogenetic; this was not a normal impregnation (Daly 1978:84).

The "Rape of the Goddess" in Christian myth is "mind/spirit rape". When Gabriel appeared to Mary (as a terrified young girl), he announced that she had been chosen to become the mother of God; She put up no resistance. This, to Daly, is religious rape. Mary, as the victim, was impregnated with the "Supreme Seminal Idea", who became the Word Made Flesh. The role of Mary is minimal; she gives unqualified consent, bears the son, adores him, and according to Catholic theology, she was saved by him (Daly 1978:85).

Daly describes Mary as “catatonic, dutifully dull and derivative and drained of divinity”. Her only reward was “perpetual paralysis in patriarchal paradise” (Daly 1978:88). Mary is an after shadow of the Great Moon-Goddess, Marian. Mary is remnant of “Haggard Holiness” in patriarchal history, a crushed Crone, the symbol of women’s tamed Fury (Daly 1978:88). Mary’s image of the tamed Goddess was expedient of medieval Christianity and still functions in Catholicism. Mary, as the symbol of the mother of God, was according to Daly “a sales gimmick” and “religious rapism” used to eliminate female presence. By demolishing the Goddess, and establishing a male divinity, Christianity also paved the way for the technological elimination of women (Daly 1978:88).

Not only does Daly focus on the Virgin Mary but also on the Fall. Daly blames the patriarchal Christian religion for creating what she calls the Myth of the Fall. I will turn my attention to her views regarding original sin.

4.6.4 The Myth of the Fall

The narrative of Adam and Eve is often interpreted as Eve being responsible for original sin. Daly uses this narrative to point to the significant role patriarchal religion plays in the oppression of women.

Daly sees the birth of Eve as an absurd story and blatantly silly. She views it as an excellent example of how men have treated women throughout the history of patriarchy (Daly 1985:95). Daly questions the idea that women should be blamed for all of humanity’s evil. The projection of guilt upon women is Patriarchy’s Fall, and Daly calls it the primordial lie. The theology of original sin, according to Daly, reveals the Fall of religion into the role of patriarchy’s prostitute, and with the aid of religion patriarchy, women have become the primordial scapegoat (Daly 1985:47)

Daly argues that the story of the Fall was a male-dominated attempt to make sense out of the tragedy of the human condition. The great achievement of this myth was that it created sexual oppression and bestowed inferiority upon women universally (Daly 1985:47).

The myth of the Fall is a “prototypic case of false naming” and the foundation of the structure of phallic Christian ideology has been built upon it (Daly 1985:47). Daly contends that the Fall of man should be called the Fall of women because, as a result of this myth, women have been blamed for all the sins of the world (Daly 1985:48). Daly states:

The attitude of negativity on the part of the male is directed against women. This, clearly, was the prevailing psychological climate which engendered the myth and sustained its credibility. However, there is more to the problem than this. The myth has provided legitimation not only for the direction of the self-hatred of the male outward against women, but also for the direction of self-hatred inward on the part of women (Daly 1985:48).

Daly suggests that people should re-read the Genesis text in order for women to gain liberation. She states:

... the original myth revealed the essential defect or “sin” of patriarchal religion – its justifying of sexual caste. I am now suggesting that there were intimations in the original myth – not consciously intended – a dreaded future. That is, one could see the myth as prophetic of the real Fall that was yet on its way, dimly glimpsed. In that dreaded event, women reach for knowledge and, finding it, share it with men, so that together we can leave the delusory paradise of false consciousness and alienation. In ripping the image of the Fall from its old context we are also transvaluating it (Daly 1985:67).

For women to receive healing from the myth of the Fall in which they are blamed for original sin, their feelings of guilt, inferiority and self-hatred must be exorcised. Women must realise that this has created demonic-possessed power in their psyche (Daly 1985:50). Women will become liberated once they realise that they are plagued by insecurity and feelings of guilt when they stand up to men. These feelings are “part of the original sin syndrome of complicity in sexism” (Daly 1985:51).

Daly names several side effects that the myth of original sin has had on women. Firstly, she refers to “psychological paralysis” which women experience from feelings of hopelessness, guilt and anxiety over social disapproval (Daly 1985:51). To overcome these paralyses, women need to take outward action by joining and becoming involved in, amongst others, organised religion, the media, and education

institutions. Women should use these as platforms to make their voices known (Daly 1985:52). The second side effect of this Daly calls “feminine antifeminism”. Antifeminist women identify with existing power structures and feel threatened by feminists. They disapprove, and are hostile, towards feminists and antifeminists, particularly those who have achieved success in a male-dominated world. Daly calls women who behave in this way “puppets of patriarchy”. To overcome this, Daly believes that women need to make a conscious effort to bond with each other in order to support collective liberation (Daly 1985:52). The third side effect of the myth of original sin is “false humility”. False humility is the internalisation of male opinions in an androcentric society. Women often do not aspire to succeed; they feel guilty and fear that they might threaten the male ego. Women need to break through this attitude of self-depreciation bestowed upon them by the myth of original sin (Daly 1985:53). She explains that women will have to build a new image with pride and by so doing, they will dedicate their energy to a truly revolutionary movement: the eradication of evil actions aimed at women (Daly 1985:54). The fourth side effect is “women complicity in their own mutilation is emotional dependency”. Emotional dependency extends into intellectual life and it hinders women’s free and creative thought (Daly 1985:54). Women need to take risks in order to gain their independence; in this process they will uncover and analyse those oppressive social mechanisms that have been used against them (Daly 1985:55).

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I traced Daly’s development as theologian and philosopher and her contributions to feminism. It is clear that Daly encountered serious problems, and in my opinion, she was extremely angry towards the Church which she viewed as patriarchal to its core. Daly argues that Christianity did not provide a viable setting for women’s liberation. She viewed women’s liberation as a growing threat to patriarchal religion and in her feminist view, she offers women no possibility to accommodate Christianity. To Daly, the patriarchal god became redundant for women, and she challenges Christianity in her uncompromising language. She challenged Christian symbols and terminologies in a deliberately antagonistic and confrontational manner

and her vision for a women's movement placed her in direct conflict with the Church. In the following chapter, I will go on to discuss Daly's beliefs from a Christian point of view and will challenge her views on Christianity.

CHAPTER FIVE

PATRIARCHY, FEMINISM AND MARY DALY: A CRITICAL EVALUATION

5.1 Introduction

My research journey set out with two seemingly irreconcilable positions. On the one hand, to examine patriarchy with its kaleidoscope of views and interpretations as experienced by women throughout history. On the other, the development of feminism as a movement against this oppressive, male-dominated patriarchal system. Chapters two and three set the background for the discussion of Daly's development as a theologian and as a philosopher in chapter four. The exposition of patriarchy and feminism clearly reflects the difficulty women experienced in the past, as they still do, in their quest for equality in its full depth and breadth. These various views on patriarchy and feminism highlight and explore how women have struggled with patriarchy and in its expression within the Christian faith.

Chapter two examines the views held by the Church fathers and Medieval and Reformation theologians on women throughout history and explores how women were dominated in all aspects of their lives. Women were oppressed, marginalised and dominated in a male-centered world. In a patriarchal system, society views men as superior, stronger and more rational than women, and that God created men to dominate. In the same patriarchal system, society views women as deviant, incomplete, physically mutilated, emotionally dependant, unstable, naturally weaker, unintelligent and rationally inferior. In short, patriarchy is a system in which women experience discrimination, subordination, physical, mental and spiritual violence as well as abuse and oppression.

It is against this backdrop that women began to challenge the very existence of patriarchy as an evil and humiliating system. Feminists have developed many

theories³¹ of patriarchy in order to address these issues. Although not all feminists agree in their interpretation of patriarchy, their penetrating views and critical engagement with patriarchy have highlighted their common goal: the liberation of women and the overturn of women's oppression.

In their critical engagement with patriarchy, feminists have postulated that Scripture, the Church and society in general, are all patriarchal in nature. In all these theories, women's social and political positions throughout history play a major and central role in the formation of their patriarchal theories. Feminists also grappled with the question as to whether or not patriarchy has always been dominant in society and whether or not a matriarchy has ever existed; a theory of matriarchy³² became a prominent topic within feminist theory. The question, however, as to whether a matriarchy ever existed remains contentious.

The Church fathers³³ were deeply influenced on their views on women by Aristotle and Plato, and how they both understood male and female identity. Aristotle and Plato's dualistic views of the soul, the body, God and nature conditioned the views of the Church fathers. The Church fathers believed that women were responsible for original sin, and as such, viewed them as the inferior, weaker sex who had not been created in the image of God. These beliefs led them to silence women, both privately and publicly. Little changed for women during the Middle Ages and Greek philosophy continued to influence the way people like Aquinas, Bonaventure and Scotus perceived women. Their teachings reinforced these beliefs and, as such, women remained marginalised and oppressed during the Middle Ages. During the

³¹ See chapter two for gender difference theories, gender inequality theories, gender oppression theories, structural oppression theories, gender reform feminist theories, gender resistant feminist theories, and gender revolution/resistance theories. Other theories that were discussed are radical feminist theories, revolutionary feminist theories, and material feminist theories, Christian feminist theories, egalitarian theories, and complimentary theories.

³² See chapter two for the two opposing views on the existence of a matriarchy, namely that from a traditionalist feminist's point of view and that from a feminist anthropologist point of view.

³³ See Church fathers in chapter two.

Reformation, theologians such as Luther, and Knox continued with the traditional teachings about women and excluded them from public teaching and leadership. Women remained oppressed, marginalised and viewed as inferior as the revealed will of God.

In Chapter three, the development of feminism was sketched for the period between the 12th and 20th centuries. In this discussion on feminism, it became clear that women experienced oppression and subjection because of their sexuality, race and class, and within all spheres of life including education, religion, politics and economics. With the emergence of feminist voices during the 20th century, the issue of gender discrimination came to the forefront.

Although women struggled with gender inequality prior to the 20th century, this struggle received explicit recognition during the 20th century. What characterised the explicit recognition was the very way in which earlier theology had silenced women and supported women's oppression (Muers 2005:431). Feminists became suspicious of patriarchal theology as it limited women's full participation in theology and this motivated their challenge of the traditions of patriarchal theology. Isherwood and McEwan (2001:33) for example observe:

Patriarchal theology stands in need of critical reassessment as to make visible the richness of scripture, the all-inclusiveness of teaching and the all-embracing vision of participation by everybody.

Feminists began to argue that patriarchy is not a localised or an occasional evil, but that it is a political structure, which supports men at the expense of women. As Watkins (2000:ix) observed "males as a group have and do benefit the most from patriarchy, from the assumption that they are superior to females and should rule over us".

Although feminists differ in opinion about the history of female oppression, women's lives and rights are the central point of all feminist studies. Many different voices proclaimed the good news of the Christian Gospel for both men and women and

taught that all human beings need liberation from sin; feminists, however, started to question the existence of sexism as a structural sin that needed serious change.

Throughout the discussion of the wave metaphor, I explored the stories of women's campaigns and how these stories unfolded as critical interpretations of oppressive and sexist societal structures (public and private) and in the doctrines of the Church. One cannot refer to feminism as a single unitary concept because so many different forms of feminism developed throughout the course of history. The feminist movement, by its very nature, remains ever changing and unstructured. Muers (2005:431) points out that:

As the concepts of feminism, sex, and gender have become more problematic and complex, so also "feminist theology" has become more complex...

Although various streams of feminism exist with many different views, they adhere to a common presupposition and that is for absolute equality for women. As feminism continued to develop, many voices and different perspectives emerged with an inescapable reality that human beings differ from each other.

Feminists started to analyse idolatries such as the idolatry of patriarchy and the male God, oppression in its many forms, and, of course, sexism. When Feminists look at sexism in relation to the Church, they recognise that Christianity has failed to fight against the oppression of women.

Feminists also attempt to de-construct male perceptions of women. In the early stages of the feminist movement, the idea of a "single experience" for all women was criticised as being a white-middle class movement for North American and European heterosexual women (Muers 2005:433). Not only was the feminist movement criticised for being race-blind, but also for not taking into account the multiplicity of women's experiences (Muers 2005:433).

Feminists began to claim that theology is political and embedded in power structures and that Scripture has been used either to support or to reject women's theological discourse (Muers 2005:433). Feminists such as Keane (1998:122-123) postulate that

“The task of feminist theologians today, therefore is to criticize abuses in the church which seriously effect them.”

Feminists, and feminist theologians, began to analyse the idolatries that pervade Christian dogmas such as the male God who supports patriarchal ideology, and the use of exclusive male language and masculine imagery for God, which places it next to the material and cultural subjugation of women. Women started re-reading the Bible and began to use feminist philosophy and critique in their deconstruction thereof. Muers (2005:435) states that this re-reading made Christian feminist theologians question the sacredness of Bible texts because of their perceived patriarchy. Biblical authority remains a problematic theme for feminist thinkers because they believe it demands that women submit themselves under the governance of a male God and his male representatives. Isherwood and McEwan (1993:60-61) state that to correct such perspectives two things need to happen. They are:

The structures which inhibit equality have to be identified and denounced and then positive steps must be taken to device and promote strategies that enhance equality.

and

Religion is not about standing still, repeating established ‘truths’ being limited by accepted interpretations, religion is about the communion of community in the present, the interrelatedness of everybody, connecting and networking, carrying and caring. Thus feminist theology presents a radical critique of religious and theological thinking stuck in notions of patriarchal supremacy.

Gender issues became important in the debates of feminist theology. Feminists began to question the traditional association of women with nature/matter and men with culture/spirit, which shape relationships, hierarchies and the world we live in. Feminists justifiably started to recognise the oppressive nature of male structures and that within these structures women are associated with sinfulness and chaos, and that women are more emotional and less rational. Feminists, furthermore, started to

argue that the male God is accustomed to upholding these existing oppressive structures.

Against this background, the aim of this chapter is to evaluate Daly's post-Christian feminist understanding of the person of God, and more specifically, on the issue of patriarchy. Daly's views on God, and what influenced her understanding of God, stand central to this thesis. However, what this thesis grapples with is what the implications and consequences of Daly's critique on God and the Christian faith have for the further development of Christian teaching.

Daly undoubtedly contributed to the discussion on gender issues in the Christian faith and specifically, on God as male. Her focus on androcentrism and her interpretations of Scripture led her to abandon the Christian faith eventually. Daly did not see the redeeming qualities of the Christian faith and completely rejected other interpretations of a God whose person embraces both male and female qualities.

5.2 Daly's Quadripartite Theological and Philosophical Paradigm

Durham³⁴ (1997:46) in her doctoral discourse of Daly's patriarchal religion, makes an interesting observation about Daly having a tripartite psychological paradigm. Durham refers to these three paradigms as the sadistic patriarchal male, the masochistic patriarchal female, and the Biophilic woman. Drawing on Durham's discourse (a psychologist), I propose that Daly has a quadripartite theological and philosophical paradigm. The four main players in Daly's patriarchal theological and philosophical paradigm are the patriarchal male, the patriarchal female, the patriarchal God and the Biophilic women³⁵. Let me start to explicate these role players.

³⁴ Paula Hope Durham is a Canadian psychologist who did her doctoral thesis on "*Patriarchy and Self-hate: Mary Daly's Assessment of Patriarchal Religion Appraised and Evaluated in the Context of Karen Horney's Psychoanalytic Theory*".

³⁵ Daly states in *Gyn/Ecology* (1978:15): "By biophilic I mean life-loving. This term is not in the dictionary, although the term necrophilic is there, and is commonly used." Biophilic woman is thus life-loving.

5.2.1 An overview of Daly's patriarchal male

Daly serves as a good example of a person for whom the core symbol of the Christian tradition of God as Father, and the maleness of God and Christ legitimate and reinforce male power in society – something she believed women could not identify with. Daly argued that patriarchy, with its misogynistic agenda, works through theology, metaphysics and language in order to victimise women in every sphere of their lives. Women throughout the ages had only role model crafted by patriarchal men.

Daly's hermeneutical approach lay in her belief that men used their imagination to construct God as male, and in so doing, provided themselves with the basis of patriarchy and the consequential oppression of women (Bickley 2011:42). Daly saw women as having been subjected to "sex role socialization" and she believed that patriarchal male paradigms dominated women's experience (Bickley 2011:41). Daly pushed feminist philosophy to the point of rejecting religious patriarchy and blamed patriarchal institutions, which serve the interests of men at the expense of women (Daly 1973:3).

The patriarchal males referred to by Daly are religious clerical males (representing the Church), and males in other social professions she encountered. Daly applied her thoughts on the patriarchal male throughout her books.

Daly presented all males as patriarchs and as the vehicle for the Church's patriarchal teachings on the nature of women and the nature of God. We noted in chapter four that Daly claimed that women are kept in place by Church symbols imbedded in the Church's masochistic response to women with its eternal feminine-divine plan but that women are to remain submissive, meek, and obedient (Daly 1975:54). The Church is guilty because it serves a patriarchal society and applies double moral standards to women. On the one hand, the Church wants to keep patrimony intact but on the other hand it dichotomises women as either virgins or whores (prostitution) as a tool to keep patriarchy intact (Daly 1975:63). Daly argued that the teachings of the patriarchal clergy and Christianity generally encourage self-hate and feelings of

inferiority in women by their portrayal of women as evil and men as innocent (Daly 1987:46).

Misogynist churchmen such as Jerome, Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, Bonaventure, and Aquinas, to name a few, perpetuated the views of women as sinful and inferior and thus contributed to women's masochism (Daly 1975: 62, 76-88). For Daly, these male patriarchs projected their own sexual weaknesses on women. This was because male patriarchs were "hyper-susceptible to sexual stimulation and suggestion were transferred to the 'other' the 'guilty' sex" (Daly 1975:89). The views of the patriarchal male in which they regarded Mary and all women as symbolic objects is "fundamentally hostile and egoistic" (Daly 1985:81-82) and the doctrine of the Assumption and Immaculate Conception are patriarchal males' attempts to placate women whilst keeping them suppressed (Daly 1985:87-88).

There is no question that Daly hated men. In an interview with the *What is Enlightenment Magazine* (Bridle 1999:3), Daly states:

As I wrote in *Gyn/Ecology*: All patriarchal religions are patriarchal – right? They take different forms. What would I think? There is nothing to think about. It has taken another form - seductive, probably, because Christianity is so overtly warlike and abusive. And furthermore, I don't know what enlightenment means. It is not a word that's in my vocabulary. This is like a Christian woman being upset over something that Paul said, instead of seeing that of course he's an asshole. He's one more very macho asshole described as a saint and as enlightened, and once you get over that, you get over it. You see it for what it is and you don't worry about why he would say such a thing. Of course he would say such a thing. That's what he is. It's really extremely simple. Stop wrestling with it; it's not interesting. Get out of it. That would be my approach to it. Misogynists! Hateful! All of them! I studied them. And finally I just didn't try to reason with it anymore. Boston College was most enlightening to me. The experience of being fired for writing *The Church and the Second Sex* introduced me to the idea that it's not going to change. That's the way it is – leave it.

In the same interview, Daly made it clear that she did not think about men and when pushed to answer a question about the differences between women and men Daly categorically stated:

You know, I don't mean to be unpleasant, but we're coming from different worlds. I was trained in that world of thinking, a certain christian or Western philosophical way, but I don't want to be drawn into talking that way because I don't relate to it and it irritates me.

In addition, when asked whether her idea of an idyllic prehistoric culture could be interpreted as romanticisation, Daly responded:

... we live in hell. This is called hell. H-E-L-L – patriarchy. ... I think the question comes from not looking deeply enough at the horror of phallocracy, penocracy, jockocracy, cococracy, call it whatever – patriarchy.

The mental, spiritual, and physical horror which women experience, is an unbearable situation for Daly, and therefore she believed that women need a new kind of dream – the dream of escaping from the patriarchal male. Daly also emphasised her belief that in order for women, and other forms of life to survive, the Earth needs to be decontaminated; her solution to this was a drastic reduction of the male population³⁶.

In *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly takes Christian virtues and turns them into “the deadly sins of the Paternal Parasites” who hide their “vampirizing of female energy by deceptive posturing in the form of processions”. “Paternal Parasites” is a term that she coined to name the deceptions of the fathers as “demons wearing multiple forms of masks”. The eight deadly sins of male patriarchy are Processions³⁷, Professions³⁸, Possession³⁹, Aggression⁴⁰, Obsession⁴¹, Assimilation⁴², Elimination⁴³, and Fragmentation⁴⁴ (Daly 1978:30).

³⁶ For the full interview with Mary Daly see Bridle, S. “No Man’s Land”. EnlightenNext Magazine. (Fall/Winter 1999).

³⁷ “The basic Sin of Phallocracy is *deception* – the destruction of process through patriarchal procession, which are frozen mirror images of Spinning Process” (Daly 1978:30).

³⁸ “Deadly *pride* is epitomized in patriarchal professions, which condense the process of know-ing an inert the mystifying thing (“body of knowledge”)” (Daly 1978:30).

³⁹ “Androcratic *avarice* is demonic possession of female spirit and energy, accomplished not only through political and economic means, but, more deeply, through male myth” (Daly 1978:30-31).

Daly blames men for not recognising that their misogynistic and evil patriarchal religion that they portray as the will of God has actually harmed women so deeply.

5.2.2 An overview of Daly's patriarchal female

Throughout Daly's works, it is clear that she favoured women, but one is surprised when Daly's shows some bias against certain women, especially those who did not share her radical women's liberation vision. In *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly stated that she found it to be a delicate choice between the two pronouns "we" and "they" when she was referring to women. Daly came to realise that she was unable to identify with certain women, even those who described themselves as feminists, and therefore she felt that they did not warrant the pronoun "we" (Daly 1978:25). Daly states:

... as the extent of the risk of radical feminism becomes more evident, it becomes clear that there are women, including some who would describe themselves as "feminists," with whom I do not feel enough identification to warrant the pronoun we (Daly 1978:25).

Daly stated that using the label "anti-male" has intimidated certain women who then felt a false need to make distinctions such as "I am anti-patriarchal but not anti-male" (Daly 1978:28). Daly criticised women who resisted her labelling of males, stating that they imply that their husbands are the exceptions, which she argued, makes these women see themselves as the exception amongst other women. To Daly, this is a

⁴⁰ "The malevolence of male *violence* (which is, in fact, usually dispassionate) is misnamed *anger*, masking the fact that women are The Enemy against whom all patriarchal wars are waged, and muting righteous female anger" (Daly 1978:31).

⁴¹ "Male *lust* specializes in genital fixation and fetishism, reflecting a broken integrity of consciousness, generating masculine and feminine role constructs legitimated by sadospiritual religion" (Daly 1978:31).

⁴² "Gynocidal *gluttony* expresses itself in vampirism/cannibalism – feeding upon the living flesh, blood, spirit of women, while tokenism disguises the devastation of the victims" (Daly 1978:31).

⁴³ "Misogynist *envy* tends inherently toward the elimination of all Self-identified women, accomplishing this end through the re-conception/re-forming of some women into Athena-like accomplices" (Daly 1978:31).

⁴⁴ "Patriarchal *sloth* has enslaved women, whose creativity is confined by mandatory menial labor and by deceptively glorified subservient social activities, resulting in "busy" and enforced feminine sloth" (Daly 1978:31).

superficial and self-destructive approach and she sees it as one where many women “hide even from themselves” (Daly 1978:29).

The patriarchal woman is forced to project self-hatred onto herself and she becomes the victim of herself and other women. In their silence, patriarchal women live through men and against those women who feel the need to be free from patriarchal oppression. Daly blames the “demonic power structures which induce women to internalize false identities” (Daly 1985:49). Women who are content within patriarchal religions “are leaping over inequalities instead of working through them” (Daly 1985:153).

Patriarchal women work towards their own self-destruction, turning women against themselves and their sisters and ultimately suffocate themselves in the process. Daly states that a patriarchal woman “sides with her invaders and her possessors” and her “false selves possesses her genuine Self” (Daly 1978:337). A patriarchal woman:

... turns against her sisters who, themselves invade and carried into the State of Possession, turn against her Self and against their Selves. The divided ones, the Self-Selves, shelve of sell their Selves. They become ever-hardening shells of their Selves, suffocation their own process. They become iron masks, choking their own becoming, hiding their own know-ing, substituting deception for know-ing (Daly 1978:337).

The patriarchal woman is timid and is useful to man – “domesticated, harnessed, meek, humble, subdued, cultivated, lacking in spirit, zest, dull, mild and insipid”. These women are “dedicated to the cult of male divinity” (Daly 1979:344). In *Pure Lust* Daly writes:

In the society of sado-sublimation, pseudo-feminism is also sado-feminism, the father’s final solution to the problem of female be-ing (Daly 1984:193).

Daly comments that women without a sense of self-fulfilment cannot live with the emotion of joy. They become depressed and crave romantic love, marriage, and religion. They seek professional help and turn to alcohol, pills and other man-made

substances – Daly describes these types of women as psychically impotent (Daly 1984:204).

Daly later distanced herself from what she called the patriarchal woman as they did not share her radical vision of women's liberation. I will now continue to examine Daly's perspective on the patriarchal God.

5.2.3 An overview of Daly's patriarchal God

Daly challenged the core of Christianity and what she believed was a patriarchal male God. She did not only seek to reinterpret Scripture but also confronted the very idea of the person of God. Daly saw the image of God the Father as portrayed in Christian literature, as the epitome of patriarchy. Daly blamed the patriarchal Church for creating the symbol of God the Father in our imagination as a means of oppressing women (Daly173:13).

In Daly's works *The Church and the Second Sex* (1968) and *Beyond God The Father* (1973) she described the Christian Church as sexist and as being the cornerstone of all oppressive patriarchal institutions. In her opinion, the Church either demonises (for example Eve) or idolises (for example the Virgin Mary) women. Echoing de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Daly proposed the equality of women in the Church, and, influenced by existentialism, she called for a genderless concept of the divine that would enable a "human becoming" (Daly 1973:13). In *Beyond God The Father* Daly declared God as a static, despotic male figure (Daly 1973:13) who was the creator of an oppressive symbolic system. Daly went on to say that patriarchal male language has acted as a "gang rape on women's bodies and minds" (Daly 1985:152).

Throughout the ages, women have only had male role models and one of these is God. Mary Daly wanted to change these concepts.

Daly claimed that many people have distorted concepts, images, and attitudes towards God and that the symbols and images used for God grip people's imaginations, – something she rejected as primitive and inadequate (Daly 1975:180). Although she stated that no theologian or biblical scholar literally believes God is

male, she also states that evidence does exist that the “absurd idea that God is male lingers on in the mind of theologians, preachers, and simple believers that is not entirely explicit or conscious” (Daly 1975:180). Humans have been subtly conditioned into believing that God is male and in Daly’s opinion, this has had an adverse effect on women’s self-esteem and identity. For Daly the “misleading and harmful notion of God” by “de-hellenizing theologians” with their concept of the divine as “divine-omnipotence, divine-immutability, and divine-providence” is problematic because the modern man [note her use of man here] finds it alienating (Daly 1975:182). For Daly, the immutability of God is problematic because it reflects an “all-just God who evidently wills and permits oppressive conditions to exist” (Daly 1975:182). Daly thus suggests that theological awareness concerning the idea of a changeless God must be challenged to avoid evil and oppressive conditions for women. Despite efforts of the past, “a picture of God and of man’s situation remains paralysing” (Daly 1975:83).

In chapter four in my discussion on Daly, I described Daly’s use of symbols and myths for God. For Daly, God became an inadequate static concept that invites suspicion and, that God, as Father, ought to die. Daly saw this concept of God as a one-sexed symbol problematic and sexist.

Daly held God responsible for generated god-males and God’s Divine Plan, which, she believes, created sexual stereotyping, and a sense of poor self worth among women (Daly 1985:13). She saw God in the role of a judge and described the Trinity as the paradigm of all male processions and the Christian God as a “transsexed caricature of the great Hag herself” (Daly 1978:86). When Daly engaged with the Church fathers’ views on women and the concept of women’s special sinfulness, she stated that women’s subordination was inscribed in the heavens (Daly 1975:63).

Daly also reminded us that God, as a patriarchal Father works to sustain the privileged status of his sons on earth (Daly 1975:180). God is ambivalent – being both loving and jealous (Daly 1985:1). Men externalise and internalise God’s image of superiority, and use the images of the patriarchal God as the explanation, judge, and definer of sin. They use this misogynist strategy to maintain in women “a false

consciousness and self-destructive guilt feelings” (Daly 1985:30-31). For Daly, the image of Jesus as God is no longer helpful to women’s self-identity as it keeps them locked into their sado-masochistic posture of self-glorification and self-abnegation respectively. To Daly, the androgynous Christ is the “Supreme Swinging Single ... a unisex model, whose sex is male” (Daly 1978:88). She renamed Christology to Christolatry and argued that as Jesus was used as a scapegoat for the sin of the human race, so too are women the scapegoats for patriarchy as they lack the prestige of being male. Daly rejects the image of Jesus as God and claims it to be redundant. She also referred to Jesus as the foetal patriarchal male who wishes to devour the Goddess and women live (Daly 1978:81).

I also referred to Daly’s views on the Holy Spirit. She accused the Trinity of being totally in unity through their mutual love as expressed by the procession of the third person named the Holy Spirit (Daly 1978:38). The maleness of God, as contested by Daly, alienates women from his image and therefore they cannot identify with God as male. The Trinity becomes a quintessentially homo-erotic⁴⁵ procession of male self-absorption and deception. Not only did she accuse the Trinity of putting on a one-act-play as the original love story performed by the Supreme All Male Cast, but also found them responsible for the rape of the Virgin Mary. In Daly’s opinion, Mary was a servant of God, and a “domesticated goddess” who needed to be liberated from her relationship with Christ: as do all women (Daly 1978:38, 76, 83).

.5.2.4 An overview of Daly’s Biophilic⁴⁶ woman

Daly’s concept of the Biophilic woman changed over time as her attitude on patriarchy grew more intense. At first, Daly believed that it was possible for women to gain

⁴⁵ Term for a straight man with a homosexual affection
(www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=homeoerotic)

⁴⁶The reference to Biophilic women is used with reference to Biophilia. According to Daly (1987:67) Biophilia is “the Original Lust for Life that is at the core of all Elemental E-motion; Pure Lust, which is the Nemesis of patriarchy, the Necrophilic State. Several years after the publication of *Gyn/Ecology*, Biophilia was used as an elementary book title by Edward O. Wilson to promote his views on the new/old field of socio-biology.

freedom from patriarchal stereotyping by confronting patriarchy through dialogue between men and women (Daly 1975:136). In an article *The Return of the Protestant Principle*, 1969, she explained that Biophilic women will have to be willing to face meaninglessness, will have to be tolerant of ambiguity and will have to accept that there are no fixed answers to ultimate questions. All authorities are imperfect and are not able to provide answers to ultimate questions (Daly 1969:339). As Daly did, Biophilic women will have to accept that androgyny is a vacuum that sucks its victim (woman) into itself and that the patriarchal male is not redeemable (Daly 1978:388). Biophilic women, therefore, will have to become part of the sacred space (situated in the mind) to ensure self-actualisation and transcendence (Daly 1972:171-172). In Daly's concept of Sisterhood, women must bond with each other and separate themselves from men. Only then will women be able to find their own voices, and they can start to name themselves, others, and God.

As Daly's concept of the Biophilic women grew more radical, she began to define it as the liberator for women, a way for them to abandon patriarchal self-alienation (Daly 1979:23).

In order for Daly's Biophilic women to participate in Be-ing, she believed that they will have to understand that self-transcendence will enable them to acknowledge that "all presently envisioned goals, life-styles, symbols, and social structures may be transitory and that they will be free from idolatry, or absolutising, even to their own individual causes (Daly 1979:29). By participating in Be-ing, Biophilic women will give up their role as "the other" without making anyone else "the other" (Daly 1979:34-40). Women's space is not a place of escapism, but a place where Biophilic women are themselves – the moving centre that could possibly move the world (Daly 1979:151).

Biophilic women have to challenge the very misogynist religious teachings, such as the Fall and must reject patriarchal oppression. She warned that the patriarchal oppressors will try to undermine women (Daly 1985:50-51) and that, therefore, Biophilic women need to be intolerably deviant (Daly 1985:65). Daly explains that Biophilic women are the patriarchally hated antichrist (Daly 1985:95-77).

Biophilic women must also ask non-questions about non-data, by replacing patriarchal males, grandiose selves with “Ludic cerebration thinking out of experience” in order to unlock “intricacies and ambivalences of the human situation” (Daly 1975:37). “Ludic cerebration” states Daly, is a “free play of intuition in our won space, giving rise to thinking that is rigorous, informed, multi-dimensional, independent, creative thought” where Biophilic women when they participate in Be-ing can be “intuiting, reasoning, loving, imagining, making, acting, whilst courage, hope, and play, is part of living” (Daly 1975:49).

However, central to Daly’s demand of Biophilic women, is that they must be aware of patriarchy in all of its manifestations in order to avoid self-sacrificing themselves for the salvation of men (Daly 1978:177-178). Biophilic women have to work at decoding patriarchal language and its myths to avoid further mutilation (Daly 1978:19-20).

Daly explained that Biophilic women are spooking⁴⁷, sparking⁴⁸, and spinning⁴⁹. Through spooking, Biophilic women defend themselves against patriarchy in their journey towards wholeness (Daly 1978:321). Sparking binds Biophilic women together in Sisterhood (Daly 1978:354) and spinning is a means through which women create their Biophilic selves and Biophilic cosmos (Daly 1978:385).

Daly’s Biophilic women have to realise that they are the source of their “own Self-esteem, with high expectations of themselves” who live apart from the sado-society.

⁴⁷ Daly (1987:229) defines spooking as the fabrication of confusion, disorientation, Self-alienation, and psychic numbing in women through the tactics of sado-sublimation.

⁴⁸ Daly (1987:165) defines sparking as speaking with tongues of Fire; igniting the divine Spark in women; lighting the Fires of Female Friendship; encouraging women to become sister Pyrotechnists; building the Fire that is fuelled by Fury – the Fire that warms and lights the place where we can Spin and Weave tapestries of Crone-centered creation.

⁴⁹ Daly (1987:96) defines spinning as 1: Gyn/Ecological creation; Discovering the lost thread of connectedness within the cosmos and repairing this thread in the process; whirling and twirling the threads of Life on the axis of Spinsters’ own be-ing. 2: turning quickly on one’s heel; moving Counterclockwise; whirling away in all directions from the death march of patriarchy.

In their world, they reverse patriarchy and ensure that they never commit violence against other women who may block their creativity (Daly 1978:216, 370).

In order for women to analyse and evaluate their conversion from patriarchy to biophilic health, women have to sense their difference from the patriarchal norm; they will pay a price for their difference; they will have to be women-identified-women and they will have to remain radical feminists. Being radical feminists, they have to be able to see through, exorcise, and renounce the “patriarchal god to avoid sliding back into the Sadostate” (Daly 1978:354).

In the next section, I will evaluate Daly’s quadripartite theological and philosophical paradigms. It will become evident that Daly’s postulations do not take women anywhere meaningful in their struggle against patriarchal oppression, at least not for Christian women, but that she has contributed to the further marginalisation of women in her views on God, men, and women.

5.3 Evaluation of Daly’s Quadripartite Theological and Philosophical Paradigm

The existence of patriarchy has had a major impact over thousands of years on people’s self-identity. It is true that society and culture, and the way they function, have conditioned the self-identity of women and men through un/spoken, un/acknowledged and un/conscious conditions and rules (Sundberg 2008:52).

Not only do society and culture have an impact on one’s self-identity, but language does as well. Through language, we, as human beings, become aware of our individuality and ourselves as conscious beings.

Language, in itself, has limitations when we speak about God. In an attempt to speak about God, we face the limitations of its accuracy and usefulness. Therefore, people created symbols, metaphors and models. McFague offers a valid argument regarding the use of metaphors in language. Metaphors, symbols and models are helpful when we think about something we do not fully understand, and offer us a way of talking

when we do not have the right words to explain a concept. However, metaphors are not neutral and to speak about God through metaphors may create pre-ordained meanings. McFague warns that language:

... can also be dangerous, for they exclude other ways of thinking and talking, in doing so they easily become literalized, that is, identified as the one and only way of understanding a subject (McFague 1975:24).

Language can be a barrier against the formation of women's self-identity when God is referred to in masculine terms as Lord, Father, or King; however, to refer to God in feminine terms as Our Lady, Mother of God or Queen Goddess may, in turn, create a barrier against men's self-identity.

If this is true, that society, culture and language affect our self-identity, they should also affect the way we think and speak about God and human beings as created in the Image of God. Let me explain.

We are taught within the Christian faith that we are created in the Image of God.

Within dogmatic discourses, the *imago Dei* evokes intense debatable spectrum of interpretations. Neither the Old nor the New Testament define the content of "image of God" (Durand 1982: 167; Bavinck 1967:494). In other words, Scripture does not clearly state what it means to be created in the "image" and "likeness" of God. When endeavouring to state the content of this concept one is confronted with, as Durand (1982:168) indicates, a lack of clear descriptions and precise definitions.

Let me refer to a few views on the *imago Dei* to support the above claim. To be created in the "image" and "likeness" of God "is clearly not a concept of being or quality, but of relationship" (Weber 1981:561). Berkouwer (1962:36) rightly states that "the mysterious character of the Biblical expression [image of God] has often been noted" and the search for the "secret of man" will be fruitless. The reason according to Berkouwer is the existence of a variety of opinions, and the many quarrels about what the Image of God means. Berkhof (1979:181) teaches that the "essence" of being human "lies in a relationship, namely the relationship with God". Weber (1981:561) rightly stresses the dynamic character of this reality in pointing out that humankind is

“in the image of God” to the degree that we as humans “stand *in* this relationship”. And this is possible only in Christ. Heyns⁵⁰ (1978:127) describes it well:

... volledige mens na Gods bedoeling, onmiskenbaar in sy sigbare verteenwoordiging van God op aarde, kan hy alleen wees wanneer hy in die geloof deel gekry het aan die versoening in Jesus Christus. Hy immers, is die nuwe Mens, die ware Beeld van God (2 Kor. 4:4; Kol.1:15) – die *sigbare Verteenwoordiger* van God op aarde.⁵¹

Heyns continues with spelling out the significance of a relationship in Christ with God:

In Hom word God se oorspronklike bedoeling met die mens duidelik – en word dit ook weer ’n werklikheid. Wie in Hom is, is self ’n nuwe mens; is self ’n sigbare verteenwoordiger van God op aarde. Dit is immers die funksie, ons kan ook sê die gevolg van die geloof: die mens word in sy bestaanswyse en handelswyse ’n deursigtige wese; hy word ’n venster op God aan die werk. Meer nog: nie net ’n *uitsig* op die werkende God nie, maar *instrument* in die hand van die werkende God. Beter gesê: die gelowige in Christus is as instrument en bewys van die werkende God, ’n uitsig op én ’n verteenwoordiger van die werkende God.⁵²

Our bodily formation and existence bears just as much as any other aspect of our being the image of God. Neither just the spiritual nor the psychological alone is capable of bearing the image of the Son of God. Our very bodies must manifest the Son’s image (Weinandy 2003:20).

⁵⁰ Note that the two Afrikaans quotes of Heyns have been translated and appear in footnotes 58 and 59 respectively.

⁵¹ ... complete in our being human according to God’s intention, fully recognisable in his visible representation of God on earth. That we participate in when we are reconciled with Jesus Christ through faith. He is after all the new human being, the true image of God (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15) - the visible representative of God on earth.

⁵² God’s original intention with us as human beings not only becomes clear in Jesus – it also becomes a reality. Those who are in Him, are new beings; a visible representative of God on earth. This is the function, and the result of faith: through our existence and practices we become transparent; he becomes a window on God at work. More over: not only a view on God at work, but an instrument in the hand of God working. Better said: the believer in Christ is an instrument and proof of the working of God, a view and a representative of God at work.

Aquinas, often called the greatest philosopher and theologian of the medieval church (Hoekema 1986:36), viewed the image of God as primarily to be found in human intellect or reason.

The image of God, according to Calvin is primarily to found in the human soul. Calvin, in Hoekema (1986: 44) states:

For although God's glory shines forth in the outer man, yet there is no doubt that the proper seat of his image is in the soul. ... although the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and the heart, or in the soul and its powers, yet there was no part of man, not even the body itself, in which some sparks did not glow.

Calvin concludes that the image of God in man includes knowledge, righteousness, and holiness according to Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24. After the Fall the image of God is not totally annihilated but frightfully deformed and the fallen human still has remnants and traces of the image of God (Calvin in Hoekema 1986:44).

Although no one has seen, heard or touched God, at least not with certainty, by "knowing God" humans have had to rely on their own experiences. Personal experience also played a major role in the formulation of the doctrine of God, amongst others.

However, it is also true that power plays a huge role in how we perceive God and each other as man and woman. It is a generally accepted that whoever is in power at a given time writes or creates the history of that era and, of course, this includes the history of Christian tradition (Sundberg 2008:65). For example, the Church fathers developed Christian theology, wrote the Creeds of Belief and decided what should be included in the Canon of Christian Scriptures. Their views on gender and the nature of God and the creation of human beings in the image of God has, and continues to, play an important role in our self identity.

Feminists argue the fact that God is presented through masculine terms and symbols has different implications for men and women. The masculine representation of God proposes no problem to males, whereas women may feel alienated from the Image of

God. The maleness of God, as reflected throughout history, has had a profound effect on some women's self identity. These women find it difficult to identify with a male God as they feel that if they have not been created in the Image of God, they are denied full humanity. Not only have women been excluded from the Image of God, they have also been denied creative expression. Historically, women have been excluded from participating in public and private spheres and naturally, this includes the church.

Some women find it difficult to relate to masculine terms for naming God such as the God of Israel, the Father of Jesus, and the Father of all believers. The idea of God as a patriarch affects society, the individual believer, as well how we perceive gender. The impact of religious identity is:

widely recognized as important in creating cultural communities, which in turn directly influence their adherent's attitudes and behaviour toward gender roles in society (Keysar & Kosmin 1995:49).

We took note in chapter two that women were historically viewed as inferior to men, and how men, in general, dealt with the role and status of women. For women like Daly, these views have had dire consequences and they find it difficult to identify with God and men. Women have been labelled many things: defective and misbegotten, sick she-asses; hideous tapeworms; the posts to hell; the most savage of beasts; full of lust; the origin of sin through Eve; merely helpmates to men; not created in the image of God; inferior and as only good for procreation. For many women, these hurtful and derogatory descriptions meant that they began to question God and whether they could bear this dominant image of God.

One can argue that those men were products of their culture and society and that they were merely following the scientific and biological beliefs of their time. One can also argue that their views are no longer relevant to women today; however, even today women remain affected by some of these hurtful and negative views. An example is that the Catholic Church in the Canon Law still does not allow women to become priests. Throughout history, women have had to grapple with derogatory

teachings in their search to identify themselves with God and to gain full humanity as people who have been created in the image of God.

For both women and men, we find our identity and that of God in the images and symbols of God.

We use language, metaphors and symbols to articulate our experience, self-identity, and views on God, ourselves, and the world at large. Language and symbols, however, can restrict our ability to speak about God.

On a personal note, and with specific reference to the gender of God, I question whether we indeed can speak about God in gender terms. Whilst Daly argues male language inseparably links male dominance and God, I contest this. When we speak of the fatherhood of God, we are using symbolism and I believe that this does not include or imply women's subordination. God's supposed maleness should, however, never permit, nor legitimise the oppression and subordination of women. The term God⁵³ implies a being without a human body; He is neither male nor female. Whilst feminists claim that male metaphors legitimise the exclusion of women's self-identity

⁵³ Origin of the word God: Our word God goes back via Germanic to Indo-European, in which a corresponding ancestor form meant, "invoked one." The word's only surviving non-Germanic relative is Sanskrit hu, invoke the gods, a form which appears in the Rig Veda, most ancient of Hindu scriptures: puru-hutas, "much invoked" epithet of the rain-and-thunder god Indra (Finder 1975:351).

"God can variously be defined as: the proper name of the one Supreme and Infinite Personal Being, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, to whom man owes obedience and worship; the common or generic name of the several supposed beings to whom, in polytheistic religions, Divine attributes are ascribed and Divine worship rendered; the name sometimes applied to an idol as the image or dwelling-place of a god" (Toner 1909).

"The root-meaning of the name (from Gothic root gheu; Sanskrit hub or emu, "to invoke or to sacrifice to") is either "the one invoked" or "the one sacrificed to." From different Indo-Germanic roots (div, "to shine" or "give light"; thes in thessasthai "to implore") come the Indo-Iranian deva, Sanskrit dyaus (gen. divas), Latin deus, Greek theos, Irish and Gaelic dia, all of which are generic names; also Greek Zeus (gen. Dios, Latin Jupiter (jovpater), Old Teutonic Tiu or Tiw (surviving in Tuesday), Latin Janus, Diana, and other proper names of pagan deities. The common name most widely used in Semitic occurs as 'el in Hebrew, 'ilu in Babylonian, 'ilah in Arabic, etc.; and though scholars are not agreed on the point, the root-meaning most probably is "the strong or mighty one" (Toner 1909)

and experience of God, the opposite can also be true – female metaphors such as the Goddess legitimise the exclusion of men's self-identity and their experience of God.

Daly has undoubtedly drawn our attention to many crucial problems that women have encountered within society and indeed within the Church. However, her attack on the Christian God does not solve the humiliation, rejection, subjugations, and pain women suffer under a patriarchal system. Whereas women were the victims of male oppression, Daly's solution to this was to remake God as the victim. Daly's total dismay and discontent with how males treated her set her on a self-righteous course to rename God. Daly could no longer differentiate between the roles of men and women, and for her, Christianity became incompatible with feminism.

An analysis neither of patriarchy nor of Daly's views on patriarchy, offers us a working hypothesis regarding women's self-identity in the Image of God. God created women and men for a purpose. Daly believes that patriarchal Christianity has assigned a single purpose for the existence of women: procreation. I contend that Daly is narrow-minded in this presumption and that she reduces women to merely sexual, biological beings. We find numerous texts in the Bible that deal with the differences between men and women and our different roles. However problematic these texts may be, they do not represent a checklist for stereotyping what each gender should do or not do. Instead, they teach us how to relate to each other in, and through, God.

Daly villainised God and all men and she distanced herself from women who did not agree with her views. We need to question whether Daly's quadripartite theological and philosophical paradigm has contributed to our understanding of gender issues in Christian theology in any way. In Daly's eyes, Christianity is male; Daly is female, and therefore cannot be a Christian. Her rather narrow view is reminiscent of those held by many of the Church fathers. Against this background I will now move on to the evaluation of her patriarchal male concept.

5.3.1 Patriarchal male

In her earlier writings, Daly wrote highly of feminist men. She also admitted that there were men who defended and assisted her both in her professional and personal life. Initially, Daly saw the possibility of a true being and becoming through the healing of conflicts between men and women on a conscious level of the androgynous being and mode of living. The split of feminine and masculine roles for the earlier Daly is a social construct and not a true reflection of individuals (Tyminski 1996: 98). The later Daly rejected the term androgyny as a function of the “fixation on humans” and discarded inclusive language.

In her later writings, however, Daly’s essentialism went even further and pushed women into occupying a completely different space from men (Knutsen 1996:171).

Daly would have considered the question ‘What about men?’ as absurd because in her method of thinking she resisted the inclusion of men (Grigg 2006:22). Daly had merely reduced men as “evil by nature” thus essentialising men just as she essentialises women (Young 1999:178).

Although Daly dismissed the labelling of other’s views of her as essentialist, Jones contend that she is a biological essentialist because of Daly’s postulation “that the source of women’s revolutionary way of being rests ‘within them’ as part of their embodied distinctiveness (Jones 2000:30). Since there is something ontologically or anthropologically essential about the nature of women that is the same, Daly’s argument is a reversal of the sexist argument that explains the origin of male dominion (Jones 2000:182).

Daly has reversed the argument against patriarchy by using the same sexist arguments those who supported patriarchy are accused of using. Daly is simply using

a sexist argument which relies on essentialism, reverses it, but retains the sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and racism implicit in a sadosociety in the first place (Rodkey 2008:296).

By devaluing males, Daly does not provide a solution to the gender dilemma that has faced women for centuries. Unfortunately, what Daly ended up contributing was a greater division in the gender debate. Ruether (1983:229-30) contests that:

Mary Daly concentrates on a passionate exposé of the inhumanity of males and their culture of rape, genocide, and war. The history of women becomes a trail of crucifixions, with males as the evil archons of an anticocosmos where women are entrapped.

Daly was naive in her portrayal of women as morally superior beings “who intrinsically possess creative values superior to any values articulated by men” (Andolsen 1981:293). Daly’s approach was “reversed female chauvinism that could cause one to lose touch with the human face of males” (Ruether 1983:188).

Daly’s ontological conclusions about males and females are depersonalising. They entail the reversal of sex-types and fail to overcome the dichotomy of sex-role stereotyping. By turning men into scapegoats and by “castrating” them she makes another the Other (Fiorenza 1975:117-118).

Whereas patriarchy postulated women’s evilness and defectiveness, Daly did the exact opposite when she postulated that men are evil and defective.

In conclusion, we can ask whether Daly was a man-hater, or did she simply withdraw from the battle of the sexes, leaving men to fend for themselves? This is a question that will always linger in one’s mind whenever Daly’s name is mentioned. As Daly became more radical in her views, she became increasingly outspoken against women who did not live up to her standards of what constitutes feminism. In the following section, I will analyse Daly’s attitude towards the women she labelled patriarchal females.

5.3.2 Patriarchal female

In my earlier discussion of Daly's patriarchal women,⁵⁴ I clearly showed that Daly had separated and marginalised those women whose different points of view did not support hers.

At this stage, it is important to point to Daly's utopian, gynocentric lesbian separatism. I concur with Tyminsky (1996:66) who states that Daly's lesbianism is the

paradigm for female sexuality insofar as it signals an overcoming of the unnatural separation of women from their archetypal and collective selves.

In her opinion, women who have not achieved this reunion are merely token women whose minds are still controlled by pallocracy (Daly 1978:382-383). Daly blames women like this for pathetically attempting to mimic role-playing into the phallic fixation factories of snoldom⁵⁵ seeking the excitement of bored boys.

Women, heterosexual or lesbian, whose consciousness have been destroyed, may exercise free speech, but may not describe themselves as feminist and may not speak on behalf of feminists (Daly 1984:66). Women who require safety, shelter, rules, form, and love are playing in a "chic contemporary style", and are expressing self-hate and horizontal violence. These women are on a path to self-destruction and Daly names this self-destruction masosadism⁵⁶. Women who appear to be feminists are actually detrimental to feminism; it is man-made, a delusion, and not sexual liberation (Daly 1984:64). These women are on a self-destructive path (Daly 1984:109) and have a false sense of their selves that originated in a belief that males protect them (1984:142). Women who do not radically break with patriarchy are not aware of their own suffering

⁵⁴ See page 5.2.2

⁵⁵ Snoldom is, according to Daly, (1987:227) a state in which snools rule and snools are the rule: BOREDOM, FOOLDOM, DOOMDOM. Snool means "to deduce to submission: COW, BULLY ... GRINGE, COWER" – Webster's; Also, snool is "a tame, abject, or mean-spirited person" ... normal inhabitant of sadosociety, characterized by sadism and masochism combined; stereotype hero and/or saint of the sadostate (Daly 1987:227).

⁵⁶ Masosadism, according to Daly, (1987:210) is "Disorder injected into women in the sadostate, which begins with doubting the validity of one's own be-ing – a doubt experienced as Self-hatred – and, which extends to doubting the validity of other women's be-ing, expressing itself finally in acts of horizontal violence.

and become torturers of theirs and other women's identities (Daly 1984:170).

Daly's utopian, gynocentric lesbian separatism, which excludes the patriarchal female is on shaky grounds. Again, her essentialism is clear. Daly's preoccupation in defining female sensibility points to her dangerously erroneous generalisation of women, as is her case against men. The formation of women's self-identity is not only constructed by being aware of patriarchy but also is innate and socially constructed by different norms and people in the process of forming self-identity. Echols (1983:17) argues:

Yet there are differences, [amongst women] and some feminists have come to realize that those differences are important whether they spring from socialization, from biology, or from the total history of existing as a woman in a patriarchal society.

The only real difference that can change a person's "ontological placement on Daly's dichotomous map" (Alcoff 1988:436) is the difference that exists in sexuality, in which Daly excludes males and those women who do not share in her utopian gynocentric lesbian separatism. We must reject Daly's views on women as patriarchal females. I have explicated Daly's disdain of patriarchy as a concept, and of her rejection of women who she perceived to be supportive of this. Daly's anger, though, was always directed the most at God, who in her opinion was the worst patriarch of all.

5.3.3 Patriarchal God

Daly's theology is, according to her critics, bifurcating and polarising to such an extent that it is not useful in constructive theological and philosophical debates (Friedman 1998:70). Furthermore, it is too skimpy to be accurately assessed (Fulkerson 1991:662). Daly's conversations are too far out of the Christian tradition and have to be rejected because they are too difficult to enter into or engage with effectively (Grigg 2006:20-22). Kassian (1992:203) states that Daly's definition of God "contains such expletive language" that she considered it "inappropriate to repeat it".

Dale originally criticised language that refers to God in male terminology. Daly later concluded that people's perceptions about God was so grounded in physically,

spiritually and culturally patriarchal views that it had become pointless to continue in the argument about God's maleness.

Although I agree with Daly's views on the inadequacy of language, I do not find the way in which she reworked the gender of God and the renaming of Him at all helpful. I concur with Groothuis (1997:101) who offers us a good explanation about the sexuality of God when she writes:

Nowhere in the Bible is God referred to as a sexual being. Rather, especially in Old Testament Law, sexuality is kept meticulously separate from religious worship and other spiritual concerns. Completely absent from biblical religion is any hint of sexuality as a spiritual force, or of masculinity and femininity as spiritual principles in the God-head of the cosmos. Biblical religion stands distinct and apart from the pagan fertility religions in its strictly nonsexualized concept of spiritual reality and the nature of God. The nations surrounding ancient Israel believed that the fertility deities created and perpetuated human plan, and animal life through their own divine sexual activity. But Israel did not share in the divinization of sex; it was a phenomenon of the creature, not of the deity.

God cannot merely be dismissed as an androgynous being who was invented by men who sought power in their own masculinity. Neither can the many wrongs bestowed upon women through men identifying with God's maleness be defended.

Daly was chiefly concerned about the language the Church uses to describe God. She believed that women would only find themselves when they discovered God as a personal experience of wholeness and meaning, rather than as a static entity. In chapter four, and earlier in this chapter, I drew attention to Daly's rejection of a dualistic God as oppressive in nature. Daly discarded God and expected women to follow suit. Women should not attack the patriarchal God but rather leave him behind. That is exactly what Daly did, and she set herself on a quest to rename God. In order to rename God, Daly believed that women have to reach inward toward the God beyond and beneath the "gods" who have stolen their identity. In renaming God, Daly proposed that God is a verb and not a noun. Daly felt strongly that the right to name is central to women's experience of religion.

Daly believed that women could only gain spiritual liberation once masculine terms for God were removed from Scripture and theology. Therefore, Daly advances her argument for a process theology in the naming of God the Verb; in hearing and naming ourselves out of the depth, women are naming toward God, which is what theology always have been about (Schaab 2001:1).

It is clear that Daly built her theology around patriarchy in religion and she launched an assault on the completely male-dominated society. Daly blamed women's problems not only on religious patriarchy but sought to reform the Church's language about God and to revise the idea of God. But Daly's feminist ideology

is presupposed and overrides the overt teachings of Scripture so that her positions cannot be said to derive from the actual interpretation of Scripture itself (Köstenberger 2008:42).

Daly wanted to rename God and to develop new ways of interpreting the Bible. But in doing so

Daly was quick to inflate what did not fit her theology and political agenda. Patriarchy, she charged, was an omnipresent and insidious social system that sustained itself and squashed dissent (Jenkins 1997:194).

Patriarchy is responsible for the symbol of God as Father and as a mechanism for keeping women in an oppressive state (Daly 1973:13). Daly therefore:

desired to mount a challenge to the patriarchal religion of Christianity, a spiritual revolution in which the old order of sexism would be overthrown and a 'new-being' would manifest in women (Köstenberger 2008:41)

The misappropriated metaphorical language she used to replace her notion of a patriarchal God is just as ambiguous as her claim that patriarchal metaphorical language is used for God. Within Daly's concept of a patriarchal "god" lies history, religion, politics, and ideologies but so does her unstructured use of myths to replace the patriarchal god. Daly was not interested in replacing God with the Goddess concept but rather she wanted to erase the idea of God as a Supreme Being, one

who controls the world and who keeps human beings, especially woman, dependent and subjugated.

Daly's self-appointed task, the renaming and reifying God, changed her concept of God from that of "Supreme Being" to a "state of Be-ing" and as a "Verb" for women "to journey beyond patriarchal fixation" (Daly 1985:xvii).

In typical Dalyian fashion, she tells us what God is like and how she tells us remains questionable because Daly has distanced herself from the Christian faith. Her metaphors and myths are insufficient to express the complexity of God's nature, regardless of the fact that she believed that she had a better description of religious reality than that which Christianity has to offer women. Daly's metaphors for God are rooted in existentialism and neo-pagan religious philosophy. She used metaphors to speak to women's religious experience and as a theological tool to shape her own reality and ideas about God and Christianity as manmade myths. Daly redefined negative metaphors used for women, such as witches, gorgons, nags, hags, and crones into "positive metaphors for her system" (Daly 1984: 387). Again, she pirated from Alice Walker's book "The Colour Purple" wherein Shug Avery described God as "it". "It" for Daly however, is the ultimate reality for women and all Elemental creatures (Daly 1984:86-87). Netland (1991:150) makes the following remark on linguistic absurdities:

Any epistemologically acceptable theory of religious truth must recognize that beliefs are integral to religion and that truth in religion, just as in other domains, must include the notion of propositional and exclusive truth.

This remark is a valid point when one analyses Daly's language for God. I agree with Bloesch, who questions the purpose of metaphors for God-language. He questions whether the purpose of such God-language is to "give a true knowledge or merely a symbolic awareness of the ultimate reality we call God" (Bloesch 1985:13). Daly was aware that ultimate reality, as envisioned in goals, lifestyles, symbols, and societal structures may be transitory and builds a linguistic theory "concerned with the finiteness of language and its limitations in describing God" (Daly 1985:28-29).

Talbert-Wettler (1995:85) states that Daly's religious language conforms God into an object that limits Him in time and space. Daly could not expect her audience to understand the different concepts of God in her promotion of metaphorical language and the ever-changing metaphors she used in the context of women's experiences. Not even Daly can evade the descriptive limitations of language.

In Daly's attempts at changing metaphors she

obscures the fact that human language will always objectify, quantify and limit our understanding. Such feminists arbitrarily reject propositional god-language in favor of metaphorical language. On what basis do these feminists decide that god-language cannot be both metaphorical and propositional? Human language is limited, but does this necessarily mean that language cannot reveal truth? (Talbert-Wettler 1995:85)

I conclude that Daly was actually doing what she accused patriarchy of doing. Although some patriarchal societies still use their view that God is male in order to dominate women, most Christians today do not focus on God's maleness. Daly, however, remained focused on the literal aspect of God's gender and could not overcome her own fixation. They limited God in a male-metaphor and she limited God in metaphorical language – thus God becomes a loveless impersonal being, which is a reversal of the biblical message.

5.3.4 Biophilic women

Daly's sexism as the root of patriarchal evil and her dismissal of others evokes concerns, especially her creation of the Biophilic woman. Daly's Biophilic women are wild women living in the transcendent now and are inherently different from both the patriarchal male and the patriarchal female; they completely reject a patriarchal God. In her view, liberation for women is primarily spiritual; they "discover an alternative land within their inner selves" and in this alternative land "they learn to communicate with new language", breaking from old patriarchal language and transforming theirs into the dominant language (Ruether 1983:30).

These Biophilic women live in a healthy Background within the bonding of Sisterhood wherein they prioritise women's experience in order to heal and to discover the lost self. Living in the Background enables Biophilic women to withdraw their energies from patriarchy.

We can argue that for Daly's Biophilic women, living in the Background is indicative of what she believed it would mean to live in a physical world through imagination and one can also argue that we are all inclined to some extent to live through our imaginations. Through imagination, we can escape the harsh realities we face on a daily basis. Nevertheless, for Daly, the Biophilic women living in the Background was a reality – a healthy choice and an effective ethical and political choice that excluded men and women who do not form part of her vision. Daly's post-Christian reality is a gradual process. First, she indicated that the Church had entered a new era in an article *Dispensing with Trivia*, (1968), secondly, she focused on women as *An Exodus Community*, (1972). Thirdly, her book *Beyond God the Father*, (1985) promotes the full blossoming of Daly's post-Christian reality.

Durham (1997:181) in her psychological analysis of Daly states:

The villainized male is the despised self; the Biophilic woman is the idealized self; the Background is the magic circle; the Journey is the escape to the magic circle; the ethical shoulds are the tyranny of the shoulds. The dismissal of the views of others is an aggressive-vindictive strategy for putting conflicts out of action. Citing hatred of women as the sole cause of the problem between the sexes can also be considered a strategy for putting conflicts out of actions through failure to take one's share of the blame.

Daly's ideology of pure Biophilic women separates patriarchal women as non-beings and causes unnecessary dichotomy among women (Fiorenza 1983:24-26).

Daly had reversed androgyny to a gynocentric ideal wherein the mutuality between the sexes is destroyed. Daly faults all males, whereas she saw the Biophilic women as being without fault.

Placing the necrophiliac male outside the epistemologically privileged position of Biophilic women is philosophically, historically, and socially indefensible (Davaney 1987:31-49). Daly made a dire mistake by placing all of her confidence in her own intuition without consulting external references, and so do her Biophilic women (Allen 1976:67-72).

Daly's self-exaltation, self-righteousness and superiority, and that of Biophilic women invokes and invites animosity between the sexes, not reconciliation. Daly is guilty of remaking God in the image of the victim – God becomes the champion of Daly's messianic, history-bearing Biophilic women and she consigns men to hell, Daly's Biophilic women become the idealised, heroic superwomen (Brayan 1976:40-49).

In Daly's creating of the Biophilic women, and their Participating-in-Be-ing, she managed to mould a form of "suprasexual existence of self-independence, self-sufficiency, and self-integral unity" (Tong 1978:41) from which she excludes all others.

To identify with Biophilic women's experience as the ultimate experience is not possible because experience can also have some ambiguous and ambivalent qualities that can be passed up as reality. Therefore, Daly's description of Biophilic women as infinite movement, as good, true and revelatory is guilty of idolatry and inadequate because it limits women's (and men's) experience (Stenger 1986:473-474).

Daly has re-imprisoned women conceptually and according to Hewitt (1995:199):

Daly's glorification of female attributes and values mobilizes identity thinking within the walls or rigid conceptualizations that foreclose on the mystery of individual being in all its diversity and difference.

Daly has merely reversed the patriarchal glorification of the male to the ultimate glorification of Biophilic woman – this is clearly reserved for the chosen few.

Daly had created an exclusive lesbian community in her Background that has little to do with real historic women. She became imprisoned by her own gynocentric

language which points to her ultimate failure and inability to deal with the real world with its real problems and ultimately with women's struggle against patriarchy.

Daly's vision of her self-created Biophilic women is otherworldly, a denial and an escape from the patriarchal world, a place wherein only a select few are welcome. Daly, with her creation of the Biophilic women living in the Background, turned her back on women's struggle against patriarchy.

In conclusion, I concur with Heyward (1979:71-72) that Daly was "spinning off into her own space of female idolatry and isolation", she is someone who burns bridges, traumatises and pulls life lines in, and then "flees inward, for a personal exorcism of the mind".

The aim of this chapter was to evaluate Daly's post-Christian feminist understanding of the person of God, and, more specifically, the issue of patriarchy. To answer the research question, I had to establish what the implications and consequences of Daly's critique on God and the Christian faith have for the further development of Christian teaching. I contend that we can hardly accept that it is possible to engage with Daly in the further development of Christian teaching in a meaningful and constructive manner since Daly wrote and focused mainly on the Daly-story.

5.4 The Case of Mary Daly

Mary Daly told women's stories. Her work is significant in the sense that she pointed out the political, spiritual, and physical implications of oppressive patriarchy for women. Daly started to seek alternative avenues of self-expression, not only for herself, but for all women. Daly told her story to the marginalised, as a model for all marginalised women. She encouraged women to tell their own stories so that they could be heard and would be able to create a vision for their own future. Daly's stories stem from her own experience with patriarchy and her confrontation thereof.

In seeking to shape her own self, and those of other women, she acknowledges her feminine powers, and sets herself on a journey to overturn a patriarchal society that had for so long oppressed her, and other women.

I agree with Daly that male images of God, as reinforced and legitimised by men who identified with God as a male, and that their self-professing power over women in general, harmed women's views of themselves. However, Daly did not provide a solution to the problem. She merely offered us a revised form of Christianity and by spinning into her own journey, she ended up portraying the Christian tradition as a patriarchally created myth.

Daly's struggle with the assumed patriarchal nature of the Bible deserves merit when one takes into account her context as a product of the culture and society she was living in and that she was adhering to the scientific and biological truths of her time. Yet, her call for women to abandon the Christian faith does not benefit believers today. Her views are not a critical lens through which we can debate or interpret the Bible and God.

Daly's personal experience with the Church and her battle with Boston College led her away from Catholicism and into a self-created feminist philosophy. After her "graduation" from the Church, she theologically declared war on Catholicism and on the entire Western philosophical tradition perpetuated in Christian theology (Rodkey 2008:119). Daly contested that "mankind has moved into an age which can truly be called post-Christian" and that what is at stake "is the future of faith itself". In the "age of 'the death of God'⁵⁷ the traditional critiques of Christian belief and the institutional structures have become meaningless or at least irrelevant to most people" (Daly 1968:223). Daly had not only rejected the term or existence of God, but looked to kill the God as represented by patriarchy including the image, person, and gender of Jesus Christ. For Daly, the death of God also necessitated the death of Jesus, because of her perception that He fixated Christianity (Daly 1971a:7-10).

⁵⁷ Rodkey (2008:201) postulates that the Death of God movement during the 1990s influenced Daly. The first chapter of *Beyond God the Father* is titled "After the Death of God the Father" created from what Daly calls the "seeds" of an aborted book *Catholicism: Death or Rebirth? Or Catholicism: End or Beginning*. Daly gave a lecture titled "The Death of God and the Problem of Myth" and in an article "Dispensing with Trivia" she starts with the death of God theology's post-Christian interpretations of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, gives nods to Nietzsche, and then writes that the death of God theology "has come into its own".

I agree with Daly's critics that her progression from Catholic theology to post-Christian feminist heresy is tied into the progression of her theological system and ideas (Fulkerson 1991:660) and that the complex arrangements and progression of Daly's ideas show "a multiplicity of Daly's layer on layer of Daly's" (Henkin 1991:517).

Christianity was the main target of Daly's *Rage*; however, to Daly, patriarchy is bigger, older, and more difficult to kill. In *Gyn/Ecology*, she states, "all of the so-called religions legitimating patriarchy are mere sects under its vast umbrella/canopy". To Daly, all religions are patriarchal in nature from "buddhism and hinduism to islam, judaism, christianity" and that patriarchy's secular derivatives such as "freudianism, jungianism, marxism and maoism are infrastructures of patriarchy" (Daly 1978:39).

In the *Wickedary* (1987:87-88) she defines patriarchy firstly as:

society manufactured and controlled by males: FATHERLAND; society in which every legitimated institution is entirely in the hands of males and a few selected henchwomen; society characterized by oppression, repression, depression, narcissism, cruelty, racism, classism, ageism, objectification, sadomasochism, necrophilia; joyless society, ruled by Godfather, Son, and Company, society fixated on proliferation, propagation, procreation, and bent on the destruction of all Life.

and secondly as:

The prevailing religion of the entire planet, whose essential message is necrophilia.

For Daly, God is attached to patriarch and perpetuates the suppression of women. Therefore, Daly wanted to solve this problem by reconstructing God-language in what she thought was appropriately and philosophically correct.

Bickley (2011:32) states that overthrowing patriarchy "became the battle cry" for Daly.

In the following section, I will refer to a spectrum of views on how Daly is assessed as a theologian and as a philosopher.

5.4.1 Critical response

Daly is described in many different ways as a theologian and philosopher. Some describe her as a reformer, a rejectionist, a radical critic, a revolutionary, a separatist, an authoritarian, an antagonist, as being prescriptive, and as a feminist with much anger and rage. Others describe her as a prophet, a catalyst, and as cathartic in theological circles (Durham 1997:9). Raschke states (1978:55) that Daly showed great prophetic insight for the period she was living in. Evans (1980:116) believes that Daly's contributions were vital to the world and the Church. A broad range of feminist scholars believe that Daly has poignantly articulated her dissatisfaction with a male God and her critique that women have had to carry the brunt of original evil (Shield 1984). Ruether (1983:187) praises Daly's confrontation of religious sexism and the way in which she challenged women to face the painful effect that sexism has on their womanhood. Engelsman (1985:1-15) states that Daly is one of the most significant modern theologians and Heschel (1986:24) describes Daly and her writings and critique on religion as a trailblazer in feminist theory. Porterfield (1987:237) sees Daly as "the premier prophet of Goddess religion" who has "exerted enormous influence among a wide variety of feminist theologians" (Porterfield 1987:241). Although, according to Berry (1988:212), many feminist theologians no longer identify with Daly, they are grateful for her pioneering of the movement and they remain consciously dependent upon Daly's analyses and phrases. Loades (1990:162) applauds her as a doyenne of the twentieth century. Collins (1972:796) wrote:

Feminist theologians are not trying to appropriate male religious symbols for themselves, but to right an imbalance in the system, which has shaped religious consciousness since the time of the patriarchs. But in order to right this imbalance they must first upset the applecart; which is to say that the feminist theologians are not reformers but revolutionaries.

Wilson says (1982:74) "none has upset the applecart quite like Daly".

I will briefly discuss Daly as a reformer, rejectionist, radical critic, revolutionary, separatist, antagonist, and authoritarian. Daly's works is so provocative, blasphemous and misguided that one cannot but conclude that she merely promoted a reversed

argument against patriarchy and used the same sexist arguments that patriarchy was accused of enforcing.

5.4.1.1 Reformer

In *The Church and the Second Sex*, Daly expresses hope for the church – Daly, the reformer, is heard (Sylvester-Johnson 1980:1). Daly argued for a reformist approach in the way women were treated by the Church as a whole and advocated the possibility and the need for the review and reform of Christian theology (Pears 2004:17). Daly was initially committed to the transformation of the Church, its language and its symbols for God, but she moved increasingly away from a “feminist reformist approach to Christianity” (Pears 2004:18). Harrower describes Daly as a church reformer and a patriarchal culture transformer (Harrower 1985:7). Heyward (1979:66-72) argues that Daly was not interested in women’s reformation. She was interested in myth making and with the recreation of images and symbols. Daly was creating a “state of mind” and not social change – by implication, according to Heyward, Daly was not a reformer.

I disagree with Harrower that Daly was a Church and cultural reformer. Daly rejected traditional patriarchal Christianity and substituted it with a new religion within the Sisterhood. I contend that Daly did not have a reformist orientation. In my understanding of reformist feminists, although they reject the social context of patriarchy and do not want to identify with its patriarchal context, they do however witness to God as a Divine reality, as both transcendent and immanent and that all human beings are created in his image. This, of course, Daly rejected.

5.4.1.2 Rejectionist

From being a reformist who wanted to interpret Jesus in ways helpful to women, Daly later became a rejectionist who could not see anything salvific about Christ. Daly began to see Christology as synonymous with the destruction of women (Sasson 1990:384). According to Cochran, (2006:266) Daly was a rejectionist who denied the authority of the Bible. She saw its Christian doctrines as the source of patriarchal

oppression of woman. Kassian (1992:233) states that in Daly's spinning of her own definition of reality, as the goddess she found within, she wove "a system of being that is antithetical to the God of the Bible". Daly no longer needed God and she moved towards "a total rejection of Him" – thus becoming a rejectionist.

In Daly's *Beyond God the Father*, she rejects any kind of feminist reform of religion and "called for the recognition and acknowledgement of the death of such religion for women" (Pears 2004:18). For Daly, the inherently gendered nature of symbols, theology, practice and language of Christianity bestowed injustice upon women and she rejected any possibility of a Christian feminist theology; she called for a rejection of Christianity and all other forms of religion. Feminism and Christianity became increasingly incompatible for Daly (Pears 2004:18-19). Suchocki (1980:307) states:

It is Daly's work in *Beyond God the Father* which has inspired many women to find new ways of being as Christian who are also feminists. In *Gyn/Ecology*, however, the possibility of being both Christian and feminist is radically denied.

Osiek describes Daly as the most obvious rejectionist who rejected the Bible as authoritative and saw the Christian tradition as irredeemable (Osiek 1985:99-100).

In her rejection of the Bible and Christianity, Daly took pride in stating that she challenged the authority of a male God in all his disguises to follow her own quest for autonomous knowing.

As a rejectionist, Daly did not contribute to the theological debate on women's oppression. She acted merely in her own interest and focused on telling her own story – layered with a patriarchal coating. Her rejection of the Christian faith furthermore bears an aspect of exclusion. She excluded all men and some women in her women's community – and she alone had the right to decide who may join.

5.4.1.3 Radical critic

According to Sylvester-Johnson (1980:1), one becomes aware of Daly as a radical critic in *Beyond God the Father* wherein Daly:

created theology as well as philosophy ... in the sense of pointing beyond the God of patriarchal philosophy and religion.

According to Pears (2004:46), Daly was a radical critic of the concept of God as male, and she challenged Christianity, using uncompromising language, to change the view that God is male. As Daly moved from being a reformist to a radical critic of the Christian faith, her depictions of religion, psychology, and their relationship become more complex (Henking 1993:201). Loades (1991:114) acknowledges Daly for her critical dialogues about the compatibility or incompatibility of Christianity with feminism and states:

... it is important to recognize that although many Protestant women have contributed to the discussion of the relationship between Christianity and feminism ... it is the North American Roman Catholic tradition which has produced the most prolific and distinguished women theologians, including Mary Daly, the most formidable and uncompromising critic of them all.

Adams (1993:3) sums up Daly's radically critical influence as follows:

As a radical feminist philosopher, she provides an analysis of ontology – what smashes female Be-ing in a patriarchal world and what enables it.

In my opinion, Daly's *ad hominem* critique of the Christian faith was an attempt to silence her opponents. By telling her story of suffering, Daly slips into self-righteousness in expressing herself in a manner that points to her implied superiority, whilst she dismisses any critique from outside.

5.4.1.4 Revolutionary

Berry (2000:20) states that Daly left behind her stance as a feminist reformer to become a feminist revolutionary when she wrote her article *The Qualitative Leap Beyond Patriarchal Religion* in 1975. Daly's work in *Beyond God the Father* is also evident of her revolutionary nature. She used new images, word play, language, style and symbolism which all correlate with her epigenesis after her qualitative leap from reform to revolution (Berry 2000:31). According to both Sylvester-Johnson (1980:1) and Pears (2004:48), Daly as a revolutionist, first appears in her book *Gyn/Ecology*.

Daly developed a vision of spiritual revolution in *Gyn/Ecology* in which she outlined three stages for women's spiritual revolution. The first stage is to analyse the myths of patriarchal practices, which are responsible for the murder of women's selves. The second stage is to move away from all patriarchal religions, and the third stage is to reject all patriarchal religions because men dominate them (Pears 2004:48). Daly's language was revolutionary, and the revolutionary nature of the women's movement was to be an "exodus community beyond patriarchal religions" (Pears 2004:48).

It is my postulation that Day adopted the persona of revolutionary and her objective was to undo the effects of misogyny and patriarchy as the biggest crime committed against women. One gets a glimpse of her militant and revolutionary views when she "advices" women to become "Gorgon-identified, Gorgon-headed (Daly 1987:270) in order to "look toward the madmen and turn them to stone ... Gorgon's glare outward, refusing to serve the masters' command to peer into mirrors" (Daly 1987:282). Daly's revolutionaries are Hags, Nags, Cronos, and Witches.

5.4.1.5 Separatist

Keane (1998:123) states that Daly promoted separatism between the sexes to create an alternative female-centered community and a social life free from male control. Schneider (2000:70) says that Daly, as a philosophical separatist, did not make separatism "monolithic, reactionary, or normative, except when it implies removal from the most damaging centres and sources of phallocratic culture". To Suhonen, (2000:119) Daly's separatism means "expanding room for our own" and the parting from everything that "causes fragmentation and that which separates one from the flow of integrity within herSelf". Thus, the core of Daly's separatism was the destruction of everything that creates false selves and that which alienates one from one's Self (Daly 1984:370). Separatism is not a goal for women to achieve; it is a means for making it possible for one to be in touch with oneself (Suhonen 2000:119). Ruether (1989:127), being highly sceptical about goddess worshipping, criticises Daly for her views on separatism. According to Gross (1980:49) Daly's book *Gyn/Ecology* portrays unequivocal separatist and anti-heterosexual messages. Female energy, to

Daly, is essentially biophilic⁵⁸ and male energy is essentially necrophiliac⁵⁹. For Daly, maleness is so radically deficient that it is a completely unworkable condition. Daly's views on the future for men and women, and her solution for the problem of sexism, lay in a separate future for women (Durham 1997:194). For Daly, separatism meant that Biophilic women must name Separatism for what it is – that is, “Separatism from the patriarchal state of Separatism from one's Self” (Daly 1993:327). Daly's separatism became essential and necessary for her exorcism of the misogynist patriarchal society within which women live. Daly believed that the time-space she created for women through separatism, would enable women to withdraw all their energies from patriarchy. Women such as Payne-O'Conner (1980:341-342), Mouton (1985:11), (Howell 1989:119-124), and Thistlethwaite (1988:83-84) concur that Daly's intended separatism does not mean that women can leave the patriarchal society but that Daly's separatism is needed to end socially constructed patriarchy.

I conclude. Daly's promotion of separatism as a means wherein women can remove themselves from patriarchal oppression can mean that they find themselves trapped in a kind of spiritualisation, marginalised from the real world. Therefore, Daly's sexist separatist future for women is not a solution from patriarchal oppression.

5.4.1.6 Antagonist

According to Pears (2004:46), one becomes aware of Daly's deliberately antagonistic and confrontational elements in her vision of women's liberation as articulated in her

⁵⁸ Biophilia, according to Daly's definition, “is the Original Lust for Life that is at the core of all Elemental E-motion, Pure Lust, which is the Nemesis of patriarchy, the Necrophilic State. ... Biophilia is not in ordinary dictionaries, although the word necrophilia is. Several years after the publication of *Gyn/Ecology*, Biophilia was used as an elementary book title by Edward O. Wilson to promote his views on the new/old field of socio-biology” (Daly 1987:87).

⁵⁹ Necrophilia, according to Daly's definition, is “[fascination with the dead; *specify*: obsession with and usu. erotic attraction toward and stimulation by corpses typically evidenced by overt acts (as copulation with a corpse)” – *Webster's*]: the most fundamental characteristic and first principle of patriarchy: hatred for and envy of Life; the universal message of all patriarchal religion: death worship. *Examples*: Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God. – saint Paul (Col. 3.2-3 [R.S.V.]” (Daly 1987:83).

concept of sisterhood as “Antichurch”, which is also a fundamental notion of her rejection of Christianity. Daly is confrontational and antagonistic in her rejection of Christianity. She writes of sisterhood:

Sisterhood, then, by being unique bonding of women against our reduction to low caste is Antichurch. It is the evolution of a social reality that undercuts the credibility of sexist religion to the degree that undermines sexism itself. Even without conscious attention to the church, sisterhood is in conflict with it (Daly 1985:133).

Male religion entombs women in sepulchres of silence in order to chant its own eternal and dreary dirge to a past that never was. The silence imposed upon women echoes the structures of male hierarchies. It is important to listen to the structures of this imposed silence in order to hear the flow of the new sounds of free silence that are the sisterhood as Antichurch (Daly 1985:156).

Hewitt (1995:136) is of the opinion that Daly’s views on sexism as the root of women’s problems limits the scope of domination and reduces the problem to a basic antagonism between male and female.

I believe that Daly made it her career to antagonise Christians. If we take, for example, the manner in which she expresses herself when describing the Trinity in chapter four, it is clear that Daly was an antagonist of the Christian faith.

5.4.1.7 Prescriptive, Authoritarian

Daly is prescriptive in her belief that feminists should reject patriarchal religion and in the manner in which they should do this. She became critical of those women who had left the Christian faith but who had not, in her definition of leaving, moved decisively away from patriarchalism (Pears 2004:50). Daly (1998:147) states:

In order to escape the tyranny of Christianity, some have turned to other forms of institutionalised spirituality. ... All patriarchal religions sap female energy

Daly’s vision of it being inevitable for women to reject Christianity, as well as her clear alignment of feminist goals to achieve this, points to her commitment to the women’s

movement; however, women “were faced with hegemonous implications” in their refusal to acknowledge or allow for individual creativity and movement (Pears 2004:50). Daly was unwavering in her understanding of feminist possibilities, and this stance limited other possibilities. Daly’s uncompromising and prescriptive vision attracted criticism such as that she offered an “idealised understanding of women”, that she clearly gave priority and value to women’s experience, and that there was a clear conflict in her differentiation between men and women (Pears 2004:50). Daly’s work presents a consignment of men and all things that are male to a universal execration of males, now and forever (Segal 1987:17-18). Hewitt criticises Daly’s prescriptive and authoritative nature by stating:

The core structure of her feminist philosophy conceptualizes an authentic female Being to which all women ultimately correspond, but from which they have become alienated through the dominating and repressive practices of patriarchy (Hewitt 1995:133-134)

Hewitt (1995:140) also states that

Gynocentric feminism, as represented by Daly and as a general theory of women’s liberation, is self-defeating in that it rests on an identity [sic] logic that generates a regulatory fiction of what true femaleness is by imposing a compulsory correspondence between a transcendental female subject and individual women.

What Hewitt (1995:41) finds most disturbing are the “political implications of Daly’s theorising which is authoritarian and hierarchical”. She states:

Not only are males excluded from her [Daly’s] unifying vision of reconciliation of existence and essence, but so, it appears, are those women who do not conform to her view of real womanhood, the criteria of which are defined by Daly alone.

Hewitt (1995: 140) sees Daly’s philosophy as prescriptive, authoritarian, and limiting and one that poses a huge problem for women’s unity because of concrete differences that exist between them.

5.4.2 Daly speaking for herself

The person and viewpoints of Mary Daly have evoked mixed feelings in me as a woman. I need to state emphatically that I do have an immense endearment and empathy with her cause. This does not, however, mean that I agree with the manner in which Daly took on the “cause”, nor that I agree with the outcome of her “taking on the cause”. Our worlds are too far apart – Daly would most probably agree!

Let me allow Daly to speak for herself for a brief moment. By allowing Daly to speak for herself, I want to attempt to show how she perceived herself as well as reveal some of her experiences that served as the catalyst for her radical thoughts.

Daly described the 1940s and 1950s in America as dreary and the 1980s and 1990s as insufferable (Daly 1993:23) but that she “spasmodically made abortive efforts to conform” (Daly 1993:24). Whilst in first grade, she noticed that most first grade pupils had dirty, second-hand readers, and so she “spat and slobbered” over her own new book in an attempt “to fit in” (Daly 1993:24).

Daly describes herself as being insufferably stubborn, a quality that never failed her. She was oblivious of what society expected from her and resisted any expectation she did notice. Daly also resisted giving up her own surname and found it intolerable to become “Mrs”. Daly states that her “self-confidence and Sense of Direction never deserted her” (Daly 1993:2).

Daly describes herself as a gang leader with many friends, although some of these friends lived in books (Daly 1993:29); she was also on friendly terms with her guardian angel (Daly 1993:30).

Daly recalls an “irritating blond boy who gloated over the fact that girls could not be altar girls” and remembers being “struck by the injustice of this. I hated him for his gloating and sneering” (Daly 1993:35).

Daly describes her behaviour as sometimes outrageous, and that when her father expressed his dissatisfaction with her “tomboyish ways”, she “did not respond

positively to this obliteration of her soul” (Daly 1993:36) Daly’s mother frequently expressed her displeasure at Daly’s wearing of “boyish things”. At the age of eleven, she demanded to see her birth certificate because she was suspicious of either having being adopted or switched at birth (Daly 1993:36). Daly notes that she suffered from other anxieties such as falling pregnant and being an “unwed mother” (Daly 1993:36).

Daly loved science and maths and disrupted classes with her frequent questions, and as she was the only girl who had elected to take these subjects, Daly believed that the nun teaching these subjects wanted to drive her out of the class by humiliating her in front of the boys. This made Daly angry because as she frequently had to miss physics classes. Teachers regularly sent Daly out of class for being disruptive (Daly 1993:37).

Although Daly was popular with some boys, she became a slob, a choice she described as going in the direction of marginality by taking on the form of unattractiveness. When people labelled Daly “the brain”, she liked the “title” because she valued her brain as an important part of her anatomy (Daly 1993:38).

Daly described junior and senior proms as grim events. She felt humiliated to have to ask a boy to accompany her to such events. Daly became aware that she was a little odd and peculiar and asked herself whether she was a misfit (Daly 1992:39). Daly recalled how she received “countless subliminal messages concerning her inappropriate behaviour and style from her class mates”. Daly did not understand class snobbery and could not confront it directly and found herself in a mystified marginal situation (Daly 1993:45).

Daly found college religion courses unchallenging and believed that they reinforced traditional beliefs about women’s roles. This stirred the anger within her, which stayed with her over the years. Daly’s “Rage” later burst into “flames of Pyrogenetic Passion” that provided her with “fuel for her Be-Dazzling Voyage” (Daly 1993:46).

Suffering from an “accumulation syndrome” Daly accumulated degrees in order to climb the academic ladder. Although she “accumulated degrees”, Daly did not see this as just the gathering of information, but as a means of training her mind through which she “learned a kind of intellectual karate” (Daly 1993:59).

Daly was clear that she never wanted to be a priest or a minister. She “lusted for the Life of the Mind” and her studies at Fribourg had nothing to do with religiosity, rather she described it as “the exuberance of Intellectual/E-motional/Spiritual/Elemental Life” (Daly 1993:61). At this time, Daly began to attend church less frequently (Daly 1993:60).

Although Daly suffered numerous humiliations, she describes the attitude of her classmates towards her during her academic ventures as a combination of fear, astonishment and admiration. When she was compared to John Glenn, who was the first person to orbit the earth, the comparison struck Daly as “astronomically thought-provoking” and true because both were “firsts” in their specific fields (Daly 1993:62).

Mary Daly had been hurt, reviled, and put down by men in her search of getting to know God. To Daly, the Church viewed women as unworthy of knowing God since this was the exclusive prerogative of men. When Daly visited The Second Vatican Council during 1965, she did so in the hope that the Church would change its attitude towards women and she hoped for a breakthrough in the two thousand years in which the Church had silenced women. This did not happen, and again Daly was hurt and disappointed. She no longer believed that there was a God who actually loved women. The anger she felt towards men in general continued to be fuelled by the way many men treated women. The turmoil following Daly’s book, *The Church and the Second Sex*, was a source of intense personal pain and anguish for Daly; it took its toll on Daly’s psyche and her hope in the Church and in God were “being sapped from her heart” (Kassian 1993:228).

5.4.2.1 Daly's anger, bitterness, and rage

Daly's anger, bitterness, and rage against men, God and Christianity are clearly visible in her works. In *Pure Lust*, the reader encounters Daly's rage against patriarchy when she wrote that under the "conditions of patriarchy" women have discovered their "Original Race through the release of ontological Fury" and as "a gynergetic will to break through obstacles that blocks the flow of Female Force" (Daly 1984:5). Daly describes "Female Fury" as "Volcanic Dragonfire" which "Rage against the erasure of women and a Rage over all man-made, male-designed divisions and categories" (Daly 1984:5). Women need to be "empowered to act against patriarchy that has suppressed, oppressed, and denigrated women". To do this, women must "reach their inner power and become empowered through Re-membering". This can happen when women "unforget our potentialities – to recall the Elemental potency asleep in our ancestral Memory" (Daly 1984:6-7). "Elemental potency and power within" is through the "Archimage", which Daly pronounced as rhyming with rage (Ward 2000:18).

Daly also claimed that when a woman recognises her experiences of real anger, "Rage", at her "oppressor/suppressor she is moved to action by her Rage". Women who experience this "Rage" are labelled as "hostile, bitter, or resentful". This makes women often reluctant to act against patriarchal injustice and leaves them with feelings of "anxiety, depression, guilt, and frustration"; Daly, therefore, encouraged women to "resign" from this labelling (Daly 1984:203). Women who do not have an outlet for fear and rage are driven into a "frantic devotion to male ideologies" (Daly 1984:231). However, when women partake in the "powers of Nemesis, spinning gynocentric ways of be-ing", they are not trapped in reactive rage, but are "Actively Raging" (Daly 1984:278). To break out of the "patriarchal circle", they need to feel angry, and since women are dealing with "demonic power relationships" they need rage as the "creative force to break into new be-ing and new life" (Daly 1985:43). "Righteous Rage makes love, desire, and joy realistic unsentimental ... Freed Fury makes hate, aversion, and sorrow Biophilic" (Daly 1985:257). To Daly, "Rage is not a stage or something to be gotten over" (Daly 1985:375).

In analysing the anger and bitterness that leaps out of Daly's writings, one realises that Daly is unsurpassed in bringing these emotions into linguistic expression (Gross 1980:49). I concur with Gross in her critique of Daly's anger and rage. Daly did not combine other emotions with feminist anger and bitterness. Daly's anger, bitterness, and rage against patriarchy took over her emotions completely, with little room for anything else. One gets the impression that Daly's rage, bitterness, and anger became her all-consuming message against patriarchy. Although it is necessary to express anger against patriarchy, it should not become the most important, or only, component of one's emotional and intellectual life (Gross 1980:50).

5.5. Reflections and Conclusion

Daly's works are rebellious, provocative, anarchic and disruptive and stop just short of being transgressive. Daly's works are also ambiguous, anti-Christian, and anti-rationalist. In Kristeva's (1986:83) opinion, Daly's language is a "practical philosophy doing battle with idealism and religious metaphysics" and it "constitutes the social and political thought of an era fighting against theology, against law, and against the definition of a psychic universe" (Kristeva 1986:84).

Using this description, Fonda states:

We might well claim that Daly's writing is contemplative. Her social position is certainly characteristic of contemplation: she is an intellectual in exile who involves herself in symbolic patricide. She is a self-proclaimed member of the opposite sex/sexuality to that which constitutes the norm of society. Further, one might argue that since she involves herself in writing books for more-or-less mass consumption, Daly is tamed negative whose work inadvertently may help society to purge itself. Moreover, Daly's writings over time contain shifts in styles, plays on phonic similarities, obsolete turn of phrases and the like (Fonda 2002:7)

In her quest to eradicate patriarchal religious myths, Daly promoted a female-based autonomy in a women-only community through female-based rituals, in which the female will is dominant, and which promotes the divinity of woman herself. Daly wanted to create a new world-order for women only, in which patriarchy and all its

manifestations, whether it be in God, men or women, are replaced. Daly's use of metaphors is insufficient to express the nature of God and by merely replacing the metaphors in Scripture, she could not solve the problem of patriarchy.

Whilst many scholars refer to Daly as a theologian, she did not consider herself as such. In *Outercourse* (Daly 1993:342) she clearly states that she had solved her inner struggle between being a theologian or a philosopher and that she did not "merely choose" philosophy over theology but that she "engulfed both in her Elemental Feminist Philosophy".

However, Daly has pointed out two theological mistakes that, in her opinion, needed correction. The first is an erroneous concept about God's existence, and the second is the wrong views that exist concerning Biblical revelation.

Let me firstly elaborate on what Daly means by the wrong ideas about God's existence. Daly's postulation that "Since God is male, the male is God," implies that men have a natural godlike superiority and women a natural inferiority. In my point of view, she gave way to the wrong ideas of the Church fathers pertaining to women. Granted that the Church fathers are responsible for the existence of wrong ideas about women and that their views on women resulted in women being oppressed and dominated, Daly does not engage with them theologically on this issue. She merely rejects the male patriarchal God as redundant and replaces Him with a utopian vision of a Biophilic women's community.

Daly has succumbed to her anger and rage against the patriarchal structures that oppressed her – and other women – placing the blame squarely on God. Daly rejected God as divine omnipotent, divine immutable and divine providence and objected to the fact that God is viewed as being changeless. The wrong ideas of God's existence were a result of androcentric theological teachings and doctrines.

In her lashing out at a patriarchal system, Daly chose not to play the ball but the man. For example, she was very aware of the fact that by attacking the Personhood of Jesus Christ she was attacking the core of Christianity. Since the church effectively

promotes patriarchy through its doctrine about God, as being male and as being Divine, Daly rejected the doctrine of Christology.

Daly did not engage with other theologians or biblical scholars in her perceived wrong ideas of God's existence, but as she admits herself, she merely used them as springboards and twisted and turned their views to fit her new theology. Thus, Daly's work was eclectic.

Daly's desire to re-mythologise religion, places her in the Gnostic religion and she replaces the Christian God with a feminist replica, the goddess as symbol for women's absolute centre of being. Daly and her views can be described as that of a separatist pagan.

Let me turn to Daly's second theological mistake: the wrong views that exist concerning Biblical revelation. The idea that divine revelation was given to man in the past, "once and for all," and that it was "closed" at the end of the apostolic age" needs revision (Daly 1975:183). Divine revelation needs reconsideration because we find ourselves in a different situation from that which existed in Biblical times (Daly 1975:183). Daly proposed a new direction for women in *Sisterhood as Antichurch and Antichrist* (Daly 1975:184).

For Daly, the divine revelation was a closed event. The Bible texts about women were outdated and contained misogynistic dogma. For Daly, women have the same right to direct current theology, for example, how Paul did in his time. Daly claimed that since no Divine plan exists for women, women themselves have to act as prophets. Although I agree with Daly that some Biblical texts are difficult and problematic, I do not agree with her that Divine revelation does not include women.

Although Daly has pointed out these supposed mistakes, she did not develop a theology to correct it (Kassian 1992:49). The core of Daly's post-Christian views on the Christian faith was the existence of patriarchy and that her purpose was to point out that the Judeo-Christian theology was incompatible with feminist philosophy.

Daly's total disillusionment with the Church (males) and God as being hopelessly patriarchal left her outside the boundaries of Christianity.

In light of the above opinions, I will move on to evaluate Daly as philosopher and Daly as metaphorical linguist, and will then follow with my concluding remarks.

5.5.1 Daly the philosopher

Daly is not regarded as a philosopher and no reference of her work is to be found in traditional philosophical indexes (Durham 1997:41). Nevertheless, Daly built her own philosophy around patriarchy. In doing so, she used ontology, memory, the Journey, Naming, and the Transvaluation of Values as themes against patriarchy.

In Daly's philosophical quest against patriarchy, she marginalises women in her concept of Biophilic women-bonding and in the radical aloneness of Sisterhood. The Presence of Presence in women becomes their ontological-self-affirmation. In Sisterhood, women enter a New-Space of a Biophilic be-ing, in a new Time of Biophilic woman, into a new invisible and inviolable centre where they engage in the Presence-of-Presence and in the Absence of Presence of men (Daly 1985:36, 38, 40). Women's ontological struggle of be-ing versus non-being is a religious struggle as New-Beings of Anti-church and Anti-Christ. Women in Sisterhood possess existential courage to be, to see, and to sin in their Revelatory powers in the women's revolution. For women, salvation occurs through the second coming of women. Women's ontology can be classified under the rubric of Sisterhood as the divine spark in the self and other selves, whilst accepting the Sisterhood (Durham 1997:28).

Women in the Sisterhood ask radical ontological questions, not only about evil and pain that have been inflicted upon them, but also because they have lived under the reign of fathers, sons, and "holy ghost" (Daly 1978:347).

In Daly's ontology, women have to struggle for Elemental participation in Be-ing with absolute passion for what is innate and ultimate, for depth and transcendence and for the recalling of original wholeness (Daly 1979, 2, 20, 81, 138, 175, 389). Daly described a woman's soul as her purposive centre and source. It is not her Self – it is

every part of her being that gives her “an essential integrity at the very core of her Self (Daly 1978:345).

Daly’s Sisterhood is radical Aloneness, but also a radical connectivity to others in the Sisterhood, where they create a common language and a Metabeing of the “common bonding of lusty women” takes place (1978:27). Daly marginalised women in a New Time and Space where they do not have to struggle against patriarchy and where they enter into the realms of Elemental Reality as an ontological depth (Daly 1978:6).

Ontological courage is to be, to see, and to sin and to refute patriarchy. This courage will unite reason and passion that transforms, transvalues, virtues and desires through Volcanic Virtue (Daly 1978:311).

Ontology is also a metamorphosis of Biophilic women expressed in Be-friending, Be-laughing, and Be-witching in order to exorcise patriarchal demons. Daly devised a long list of labels for patriarchal ontology, such as fixers, tricksters, and snools, to name a few, where men live in a self-created sado-society and sado-spirituality that blocks their own ontological self-realization and that of others (Daly 1978:35). This she labels as the Sado-Spiritual Syndrome – as the problem of naming the deep mystery of evil (Daly 1978:48).

Patriarchy is also responsible for the creation of false memories to keep women from remembering their real pasts (Daly 1985:142). Therefore, women struggle to remember their Selves in history, but this can be regained by sustaining and by intensifying biophilic consciousness (1985:ix). Women need to assess patriarchy through Metamemory (Daly 1978:357). Women’s Elemental Memory “stirs deep passion” (Daly 1978:170) and their Tidal Memory enable women to reconnect with the cosmos (Daly 1978:357).

The Journey is in Sisterhood, a creative leap into a new women’s world – the anti-patriarchal world – where women rename their own world with their own names, and participate in Be-ing (Daly 1978: 138, 158). Journeying to the Background is the moving centre of the self (Daly 1978:15); it is a women’s place of radical being,

governed by the witch within (Daly 1978:15). The vehicles of this journey are metaphors.

Daly saw naming as both a theological and philosophical act. She stated that “to exist humanly is to name the self, the world, and God” and this can only be done by women to counter false naming⁶⁰ found in patriarchal myths (Daly 1985:55).

Whilst Daly was obsessed with naming, she was also obsessed with constantly reminding the reader that it is only the right of Biophilic women to name (Daly 1979:194).

Daly also linked the courage to be, to see, and to sin to her definition of the transvaluation of values. This courage needs to transcend sexual stereotyping of patriarchy. Women have to make decisions for themselves, and for their own moral authority: not through patriarchal ethics (Daly 1973:165).

Through love, power, and justice, women can overcome rape, genocide, and war (Daly 1973:131). Daly used medieval discussions on passion and virtue as the

⁶⁰ Examples of naming that occur in her works are:

- The virgin Mary must be re-named as the veiled goddess as negation of female evil;
- Rape must be re-named as the primordial act of violence against women that alienated them from their own psyche and society;
- Christo-centric cosmos must be renamed as a shelter for patriarchal men from anomie;
- Sisterhood must rename the cosmos;
- Naming of the self;
- Naming evil that has been misnamed;
- Naming myths and language used for and against women.
- Naming of the Christian Trinity as the perfect all-male marriage, the ideal all-male family, the best boy’s club;
- Naming Biggest Lies as omniabsent god and Jesus as pseudo mother goddess;
- Naming of the Deadly sins of patriarchy.

springboard for a passion that moves women to love, joy, hatred, aversion and sorrow (Daly 1978:198). For Daly, patriarchy's transvalued virtues are depression, hostility, bitterness, resentment, boredom and resignation. Daly's Biophilic virtues are obtained through Nemesis, Courage, and Distemperance (Daly 1978:274).

Daly has built her Elemental Philosophy around patriarchy and has fallen into biological reductionism. She merely exchanged one idolatry for another by excluding males as a human element. Daly presented her philosophy and ethics by excluding men, in the same dehumanising and destructive way as women were in patriarchal religion.

In my understanding of Daly, she is a metaphorical linguist and I will explain this in the following section by referring to her exceptional use of language.

5.5.2 Daly the metaphorical linguist

The way in which Daly experienced reality led her to be critical of language and concepts that convey that experience. In *Gyn/Ecology* (1978:24) she states:

Since the language and style of patriarchal writings simply cannot contain or carry the energy of the women's exorcism and ecstasy, ... I invent, discover, re-member ... I make up words. ... I unmask deceptive word by dividing them and employing alternative meanings for prefixes. ... I also unmask their hidden reversals.

Daly's language changed over time and her books reflect terminologies and jargons that are ever changing and organised into "stages, spiral galaxies and many journeys" (Rodkey 2008:200).

Daly's style of writing is "impressionable with a clear signal of brilliance and insight at her command that evokes contrary conversion of conventional terminology into feminist critique" (Gross 1980:49). Gross also admits that Daly's style of writing is extremely and unnecessarily difficult and that her coining of new words becomes too much, "especially when it is encountered several times on almost every page". Daly's communication becomes ineffective by the over-use of words and her word play. Daly's language style is evocative and her use of strong language makes one

question whether or not academics can take her works seriously. Daly also does not always present enough information to the reader about what she is actually alleging (Gross 1980:49).

I am of the opinion that Daly's first two books *The Church and The Second Sex*, and *Beyond God The Father* are the only two books with which one can go into some theological and philosophical debate. Daly's later works are more concerned with the development of a Radical Post-Christian feminist language. In these later works, she continuously created new words and language, so much so that she had to write a dictionary, *The Wickedary*, wherein she explains some of her many terms and terminologies. I do not intend to give a layer-upon-layer in a Dalyian style to describe her metaphorical language, and will only refer to a few examples to support my view of Daly as a metaphorical linguist.

When reading Daly's later works the reader finds many examples of Daly's powerful, yet draining, philosophical language. Her tendency to use multiple words for something does not meet a realistic transformation of symbols or metaphors. For example, whilst Daly continuously referred to patriarchy in its many forms through symbols or metaphors, she did not bear witness or testimony of being guilty of her own kind of imperial symbol-condescension. Morey-Gains (1982:342) states that to attend to the different roles of symbol and metaphor

is not to be flogging some sort of faddish topological distinction, but rather to urge that such a distinction will give us some insight into the dynamics of language and the process of cultural change.

Metaphors and symbols are, however, important in how we define and express others, and the world, and ourselves, and we deliberately create and construct new ones. However, when they do not contribute to our understanding of something new, they merely become a medium for self-expression. People are the objects of language when we speak about ourselves and as "speakers we are the object of both symbol and as the symbol in it" (Morey-Gains 1982:343).

I have already stated that Daly's works are difficult to critique. The reader is often at risk of conducting an *ad hominem* discussion thereof (Booth 1975:65). In my argument that Daly is a metaphorical linguist, I will refer to her work in *Gyn/Ecology* as an example of how passionately Daly used language and metaphors. Daly described these three books, *The Church and The Second Sex*, *Beyond God The Father* and *Gyn/Ecology* as chronicles of personal growth, each book a "light year" leap beyond the receding. Davidson (1975:31) rightly states:

This problem is complicated by the fact that Daly so frequently engages in self-protective rhetoric that to hesitate or halt before her visionary doors is to be a patriarchal puppet, and by definition, unfit to comment upon her work.

Daly's first books have a sparkle of her use of metaphors and it ignites into flames in *Gyn/Ecology* (Morey-Gains 1982:345). Although the idea of god-being as a process, growth and movement was an important step, Daly's use of "Verb" for God in *Beyond God The Father* is an example of a metaphoric over-reach because this metaphor was not a popular "metaphorical vehicle"; the idea was not close enough to experience to be meaningful (Morey-Gains 1982:345).

The "Verb", however, becomes a movement, a "journey of women becoming", reworked into a journey of spinning, sparking, sailing, painting, and burning. In her exposition of patriarchal language, Daly's metaphors become a retaliatory language (Morey-Gains 1982:346).

Spinning, as a movement, is spun off in metaphysical directions, and as it suddenly turns around, it becomes a dizzy dame to patriarchy. It creates new frontiers through which women can exit. This free-wheeling, free-spirited new world, is of course, invincible to patriarchy and its demons; it is a haven for the truly creative and has a repetitive and laborious nature.

Spooking and its fire are light, security, warmth, energy, power, friendship and divinity. It recalls the historical use of women's energy against her, such as medieval witch burning. Therefore, women start fires of friendship in order to rebel against those patriarchal males who have always sought to extinguish such fires.

The word spinning is sometimes used in a negative way, such as “tailspin” or “spinning one’s wheels” but such spinings are the products of necrophiliac technology and not part of the true gynocentric meaning of the word.

Daly used the metaphor of the painted bird⁶¹ to express her feelings about patriarchal women. She used this to claim that it is not the painted bird who is victimised by her unusual “self”, but that it is the natural birds who are victimised for refusing to participate in the artificial corruption of the self by society. The paint on the bird is a disease, it is poisonous and infectious, and it is the painted bird who transmits it to the natural bird. The painted bird is a cosmetised, tokenised Daddy’s girl, an agent of the patriarch who sends it to destroy natural women. Thus, the painted bird functions in the anti-process of double-crossing her sisters, polluting them with poisonous paint. Mutants, these man-made women, attack courageous natural women.

In conclusion, it is clear that Daly used language and metaphors to encapsulate her never-ending struggle against patriarchy. As Morey-Gains (1982:348) observes:

Daly does try to spell out everything we are supposed to think and learn from the metaphor [and language]. In doing so, she absolutizes the terms of the metaphor into one-dimensional outlines, draining it of the tensive ambiguity that promised such richness of understanding. The complexity of the metaphors, which originally might have contained compassionate as well as critical insight ... has been flattened by polemic.

5.5 Closing remarks

There were three primary aims of this thesis. The first aim sought to explain the development of patriarchy as perceived by feminists; the second was to explain the development of feminism because of women’s resistance to patriarchy. The third aim was to debate with Daly who denounced God and Christianity purely on the postulation that God is male. On my research journey all three aims have at this point been reached.

⁶¹ Daly pirates Jerzy Kosinski’s novel, *The Painted Bird* about a man who vents his sexual frustration upon birds by painting their feathers (Daly 1978:333-334).

Feminists have played a gargantuan role in the conscious awareness of women's marginalisation and dominance in a male-centered world. They have focused on deeply significant questions about who we are as women within society and the church. Feminists have confronted male perceptions of women where they are neither equal to them nor worthy of being created in the image of God. In their quest to emancipate women, they have unmasked the domination and suppression of women in the course of history within all spheres of society. Without these feminists' conscious raising of women's oppression, women might still be under patriarchal domination, oppression, marginalisation, and domination; in fact, many still are.

Today, many women can reject the views that men are superior, stronger, and more rational than women, and that God created men to dominate. Women can now strongly protest patriarchal views held of women as being deviant, uncompleted, physically mutilated, emotionally dependant, unstable, naturally weaker, unintelligent, and rationally inferior.

However, in their fight against patriarchy, some feminists began changing Biblical images and language for God. This resulted in the mere switching from masculine images of God to feminine images, presenting God as androgynous and not as a Deity who transcends sexuality. In their quest to rename God, they depersonalised Him through their language and metaphors; God became an impersonal loveless force who had placed women under patriarchal domination.

Through creating new language and metaphors for God, His identity became obscured and feminists lost touch with the fact that one cannot assign a specific gender to the person of God. Thus, it is patriarchy, and feminism, which have both contributed to our experiencing difficulties when we try to identify with a loving and caring God.

Daly, as the 'champion' to determine the cause of patriarchy, and her bitterness, anger, and hatred towards men and God, and her separatist world wherein only Biophilic women are welcome had only her personal interest in mind in her quarrel with patriarchy.

I conclude that since Daly could only point out perceived changes in the development of theological thought, and the fact that she did not herself propose how these developments should take place, she positioned herself outside the Christian theological debate.

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