

Summaries of articles

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L'autre salut

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SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

The Other Salvation : Women and Religions

Monique Dumais

In order to introduce texts of this issue, the author uses two different meanings of the French Word "salut": salutation and salvation. Four considerations are developed. The first one: "salut, ô femmes", shows the necessity to acknowledge women's hidden work in religions. The second one, "salut par les femmes", points out salvific force that is realized by women and that they can prove in the involvement of religious traditions. The third one, "salut avec les femmes", emphasizes the collective and dynamic sisterhood shown through women's actions and research. The last one, "salut aux femmes", indicates the importance of developing many aspects of feminist research concerning religions.

Christian Religious Language and Sexual Difference : About some Evidences

Olivette Genest

Whether we speak of a God called asexual, of Jesus, Mary, characters of the Bible or of the expression of doctrine and liturgy, do we find the representation of the sexual differentiation in the religious language of traditional Christianity? In order to answer this question, the author has observed the workings of language. Starting with her own French mother-tongue, she backtracked towards the original biblical languages. Certain constant recurrences appear raising doubts concerning the effects on Christianity because of its linguistic inscription in languages which are themselves based on the category of gender. A widening of perspectives underlines the difficulty of establishing, in its proper logic, a critical feminist discourse with a linguistic instrument calibrated by and for patriarchal societies.

How to Otherwise Exist, Think, and Have Faith : Feminist Religious Thematic from *Concilium*

Denise Veillette

The author selected 118 articles from the scientific journal *Concilium*, from 1972 to 1990, based on their relevance with respect to women. From those articles, the *Recherches féministes*, vol. 3 n° 2, 1990

author analyses some themes linked to four subjects : 1) feminist theology : the knowledge and ethics; 2) the representations of God and Mary in the christian faith; 3) the remembrance and reality of women and the Church; 4) women's everyday life, particularly at work and in motherhood. Sociology questions feminist theology as an expression of feminist thinking and as the voicing of a global project of change in society and in the Church. How to otherwise exist, think and have faith; in other words, how to live in a world qualitatively different.

Lost Charismas

Micheline Dumont

Decline within religious feminine congregations in Québec, during the last twenty years, seems to question their survival for the third millenary of Christian era. This article explores many characteristics of that demographic decline and contrasts these pessimistic findings with a new model of religious women. This new model emerges from their writings concerning their own situation. This double analysis suggests that the survival of feminine religious congregations could rely on the will of the sisters to develop solidarity with women at large.

And the Flesh was made Word

Morny Joy

The work of Julia Kristeva, particularly her recent discussions of religion, is both complex and challenging. This article surveys these investigations under the headings of motherhood, the "father of personal prehistory", and religion. The main argument concerns the fact that though Kristeva may provoke our thinking on these topics, ultimately her allegiance to a Freudian interpretation is both restrictive and patriarchal.

Controversy about a Feminine Figure in some Gnostic Texts

Anne Pasquier

Among the various writings, in Coptic, from the Nag Hammadi Library, generally dated from the beginning of the second century to the middle of the fourth century A.D., some develop different traditions upon the feminine figures of the New Testament, who play an important part in it, whereas their role is often minimized in the texts of the other early Christian communities. These Coptic writings, called "gnostic", underline for example, in a polemic tone, the marked preference of the Savior for Mary

Magdalena to the detriment of Peter. Therefore, a polemic can be discerned in it against the type of Christianity which leaned on Peter's authority, who very likely symbolized, for them, a church which felt embarrassed about the authority conferred upon a woman, while one was setting up a masculine ministry. The great interest the gnostics took in the female figures of the New Testament follows from their conception of God who is often seen as an androgynous being.

Witchcraft in Québec and Feminine Imagery

Ève Gaboury

This article describes a research done with seven French-speaking neo-pagan witches in Québec. While Witchcraft as Wicca or the Old Religion is undergoing a revival and becoming very popular among English-speaking feminists, it has barely started to develop in the French community. Three main conclusions can be drawn from this first enquiry. Firstly, witches consider that spirituality is linked to politics because they both deal with the way we relate to each other. Secondly, they see the divine as being feminine, and the so-called Return of the Goddess is having profound effects on how women relate to the sacred. And thirdly, there is an emphasis put on the body as being the basic place where the spiritual empowerment of women must be achieved, through the use of rituals. This new religious practice is opening new internal space for women and giving some hints on how the feminine imaginary could be represented.

Women and Religion in American Feminine Detective Novels of the 80's

Nicole Décuré

Where does religion stand in the detective literature created by American and English women? The detective novel is not usually concerned with religious matters; but it is a "moral" novel. The American scene of detective literature has long been ruled by men. Today, within the ranks of American feminists, more and more detective novels are being produced. As for English women, they have always dominated the scene. Religion and feminism are often at war. But the readers of detective novels will occasionally be introduced to feminine characters for whom religious matters are not irrelevant. This literary genre gives a faithful echo of religious preoccupations in the lives of women and feminists.

Feminist Theology and Anti-judaism in West Germany

Marie-Theres Wacker

This article was written by a catholic feminist theologian and was part of a panel discussion on anti-judaism and feminist theology, held in September 1989, during the third Congress of the European Society of Women doing Research in Theology. It traces the development of the discussion in West Germany from its seizable beginnings in 1986, and shows the main open questions as centering around the person of Jesus Christ, the goddess spirituality and a nonpatriarchal theology of creation.

Muslim Women

Sheila Mc Donough

Today's muslim societies are undergoing rapid social change. As modern forms of education and democracy develop, women as well as men are active in schools and universities and are involved in the electoral process. The conservative religious leaders who dread any sudden social tend to fear change and they are particularly reluctant towards changes affecting status of women. They fear the loss of family values.

Women and Church at the Dawn of the Third Millennium in a Book of Hans Küng

Marie Gratton Boucher

In his book *Theology for the Third Millennium, An Ecumenical View*, Hans Küng proposes paradigms for the development of a theology resolutely historico-critic in its method and ecumenical in its project. Leaving aside certain chapters that are less in link with the challenges that confront women in the Catholic Church, the authoress has chosen to analyse this book by Hans Küng to find some elements susceptible of helping the development of a feminist theology at the dawn of the third millennium.

The Introduction of Classical Studies at the Jésus-Marie Nuns in Sillery, Based on the work of Sister Léa Drolet

Presented and Annotated by *Hélène Guay*

This research paper tells the story of women's education in Québec in the beginning of the century as seen by a Jésus-Marie nun. Sister Léa Drolet brings to

light the struggle the nuns went through to introduce classical studies for the women of Québec : the cornerstone of the admission to the University. The nuns had to manage without any government subsidies until the year 1957. The strategies deployed in order to convince the establishment can be summed up in these few words of one of the nuns : "We were the first feminists".