turies there were, within the Mediterranean world, female priests and bishops—a phenomenon that Tertullian of Carthage branded "heresy." Far more common, and almost as threatening to most Church Fathers, were the many wealthy female patrons of various Christian communities and churches. Monasteries housing both men and women, such as the one founded by St. Brigit in fifth-century Ireland, and spiritual marriages between male and female celibates were but two institutions that involved women in the culture of learning.

But with the increasing militarization of the church during the Carolingian period and the reforms of Pope Gregory VII in the late 11th century (which strengthened papal authority and weakened lay influence), women were effectively cut off from the intellectual life of Western Christendom. Their exclusion was nowhere more noticeable than in the new universities of Paris, Padua, and Oxford. From the 13th century on, observed historian Friedrich Heer, "there was no satisfaction for [women's] spiritual and intellectual yearnings."

Noble tells how the anti-female bias survived among the New Philosophers, those thinkers from Francis Bacon (1561–1626) to Roger Boyle (1627–91) who retained a religious outlook even as they laid the foundations of modern science. Universities and scientific societies in the early modern world were full of such men who shared Isaac Newton's monkish horror of women's potentially corrupting influence upon the life of the mind. Yet Noble does not ignore the heterodox tendencies within late Christendom that allowed women, particularly in America, slowly to infiltrate realms deemed properly masculine. How slowly hardly needs saying. England's Mary Somerville (1780–1872), hailed as the "premier scientific lady" of her day, saw her book on astronomy adopted as a set text at Cambridge. Yet neither she nor her daughters were permitted to study within its hallowed, masculine halls.

WHEN TIME SHALL BE NO MORE:
Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture.
By Paul Boyer. Harvard. 468 pp. $29.95

"Many Arguments . . . persuade us," Cotton Mather told his Boston congregation in 1709, "that our glorious LORD will have an Holy city in AMERICA . . . ." The belief that ancient biblical prophecies would be fulfilled in America has inspired some of the best minds of this country, observes Boyer, a historian at the University of Wisconsin. As late as the 19th century, the narratives of America's then-premier historian, George Bancroft, indirectly gained momentum from his belief that the hand of God was at work in the country's affairs. But as American culture became increasingly secular, what had once been a fertile line of thinking degenerated into eccentricity and crankiness. A debased form of prophetic writing continued as if in a parallel universe. Expositors offered "scientific" readings of the Bible to explain everything from World War I to global warming. Boyer is not entirely dismissive of this thinking: The doomsday visions of environmentalists, he points out, are essentially secularized versions of the Apocalypse. Biblically inspired superstitions circulate even among America's high and mighty. Ronald Wilson Reagan was so painfully aware that the Bible assigned the number 666 to the Antichrist—and that each of his names has six letters—that at one time he had the street number of his California home changed from 666 to 668.

Arts & Letters

THE ANALYST AND THE MYSTIC:
Psychoanalytic Reflections on Religion and Mysticism. By Sudhir Kakar. Univ. of Chicago. 83 pp. $15.95

Psychoanalysis was born partly in hostile reaction to religion. In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), Sigmund Freud dismissed the religious inclination as a regressive, infantile wish to return to the mother's breast or to the cozy womb. True to the positivistic climate in which he began writing, Freud was determined to make psychoanalysis a science. And just as the sciences treated surface phenomena as expressions of underlying laws, so psychoanalysis reduced human behavior, including religious behavior, to manifestations of biological drives.

Kakar, who practices psychoanalysis in New Delhi and teaches at the University of Chicago, offers an explanation for that early hostility: