

# Part 2

## Chapter 9 Patriarchy and the differentiation principle

"What women want to accomplish through their care work and domestic work is appreciation. They carefully reject any interpretations of their acts that may turn their human services into commodities." (Haavind and Andenæs 1990:13).

"Value excludes no use value (..) the universalising tendency of capital distinguishes it from all earlier stages of production." (Marx 1973:541,50).

Aristotle, discussing the necessity of educating women and children in the constitutional obligations:

"And it must necessarily make a difference [whether they become educated and good or not], for the women are half of the free population, and the children grow up to be the partners in the government of the state." (*Pol.* 1.I.5).

## Introduction

Through the earlier chapters of this text, I have discussed the complex relationship between the gender system and the family sphere on the one hand, and the commodity form and exchange relations on the other. We have seen that the gender system includes all three verbs defined initially; gender is given, exchanged and shared and cannot be categorised only through one of these. Gift patterns in the family sphere have been interpreted as counter-strategies as well as social class and status markers. Gender relations exist both in contradistinction to social class and other economic-political relations, and as a confirmation of them.

At each level and in many areas, we have seen a 'duality' that combines opposition and integration. One main problem approaching this duality is its constantly shifting character, changing the meaning of gender. These shifts occur in the 'terrain' itself; they are not contingent on one specific 'map' or theory. They appeared also in the debate about women's position in patriarchal society: in addition to the dyadic and not necessarily patriarchal positioning 'beside' men, there are at least three main theory traditions outlining women's position 'below', 'beyond' and 'between' men. None of these seem quite able to make the others go away; all four encompass aspects of women's situation in modern society.<sup>1</sup>

Is there a sense in which modern society itself creates this shifting duality? Is it possible to analyse the opposition, integration, and shifts within it on a more systematic basis? This is the topic approached in the present chapter, through an initial affirmative hypothesis. The hypothesis concerns a broad but also specific

tendency of societies dominated by the commodity form, including our own. I call it *the differentiation principle*. The meaning of this principle is discussed in the present chapter, and evaluated in light of other patriarchy theories in the next one.

In brief terms, the differentiation principle says that commodity production has a problem. It must recreate its own agents, and that cannot be done directly within its own framework. As long as commodity production itself is limited, this problem may be hidden or latent. When it embraces society at large, as it does in capitalism, it becomes manifest. Now a division must exist that ensures that there are *two* fields of activity that are dissimilar, not ruled by the same kind of rules, but instead opposed to each other - and yet within one coherent and integrated whole. Why this is so, is further explained in this chapter.

The differentiation principle is discussed as an approach to the main subject of part two of this text, patriarchy. The differentiation principle may help explain the background processes that hinder equality today. On a wider level it may also be relevant for understanding the persistent patriarchal character of commodity form societies, compared to the varying and often more egalitarian conditions that have existed in gift- and redistribution-oriented societies.

In my own work, I started out examining commodity aspects of gender that could not easily be explained according to the conventional gift or use value view. The direct link, gender *as* a commodity, was my main topic. Throughout part one, I have discussed why this direct link is important but also by itself too limited. The differentiation argument presented here leads to a different framework, extending what has been said earlier about gender as a counter-position. At the same time, it offers a way out of the impasse of 'absolute difference'.

In part one, the gender system was discussed primarily as a relationship between masculine and feminine positions. In this sense it was a 'closed' system, even if I also emphasised that this is not all there is to it. The gender dyad is itself positioned within a broader setting of the gendered vis-à-vis the neutral, a context that must be included if we are to understand what happens inside the dyad. Now, in part two, this 'outside' context is placed on the agenda as a main matter.

The scope of the task thereby widens. In part one, some traditions of feminist theory were criticised, mainly for a closure in terms of gender. Other traditions survive very well through this critique, however, and these are both used and examined here. Instead, the critical and Marxist traditions increasingly come into question. If it is true that 'value' connects to 'gender', and that commodity logic operates so to speak behind the back of gender, this second part questions the commodity category itself. We shall find, even at the outset, that a certain sense of 'gender' comes into commodity relations and into the related concepts of alienation, reification, use value, production, abstract and concrete labour.

Indeed, the analysis will show that none of these critical categories can be applied as is - not just in an analysis of patriarchy, but also regarding capitalism itself. The differentiation of the commodity economy is not a peripheral matter. It creates what I shall call a 'firsness' and an 'otherness' sphere.<sup>2</sup> Critical and Marxist theories have addressed the first only, largely ignoring the second, for the same kinds of reasons

that women's particular activities have mainly been ignored. The result, I hold, is a theoretical framework that has been misleading on the overall level, not just in one specific area.

All this may seem like a rather heavy burden assigned to one fairly abstract logical 'principle' involving the differentiation of two categories of activity within the commodity form. Showing that this principle is in fact *socially* relevant, applying the rules of social forms analysis discussed in chapter 7, is a project that can only be initiated in the present framework. Yet I shall present theoretical as well as empirical evidence indicating that the differentiation principle holds good not only on a logical level, but also in any conceivable formation dominated by the commodity form. Theoretically there is no possibility that commodity owners might reproduce themselves *as* commodities while upholding the basic commodity rules. Empirically this becomes an interesting proposition when we recognise that the consequent need for differentiation may take very dissimilar forms and be operative in quite different ways in changing historical contexts.

The following chapters may also be read as a 'critique of the critique', building on a recent tradition where feminist and men's studies approaches are applied towards critical and Marxist theory itself (Carver, T 1994; Pilgrim, V 1990; Holter 1991k). I ask whether Marx's and later theorists' overlooking a major principle of commodity economy is incidental or instead a consequence of a particular epistemological position, connected to certain formations of masculinity.

The chapter starts with a discussion of methods of patriarchy analysis. I point out some problems of a formal approach and discuss why critical gender analysis must be a point of departure.

I approach the differentiation principle first in empirical terms, outlining some main traits concerning segregation in modern society. Then I turn to a theoretical discussion, showing the impossibility of a commodity economy reproducing itself according to its own rules. In the next sections the differentiation tendency is given more substance as a sociological proposition. I outline its main institutional forms and some of their historical connections. The result is a framework for understanding patriarchal organisation and its major historical changes.

## First definitions

We may define patriarchal relations in a formal manner, i.e. as a form of stratification, a hierarchy that puts women in a secondary societal position. According to the analysis in the first part of this text, patriarchal social organisation may be defined as *organisation that enables the recreation of male dominance and related asymmetrical relationships on a societal level*.

This definition is useful for an initial approach, but it is also thin and abstract. The problems of abstractism discussed earlier reappear: we face the typical initial choice between a too vague notion and one that is more specific but also more misleading in some contexts. What is true of patriarchy in modern society is often not true of earlier epochs – and vice versa.

In the definition made above, two more specific traits are brought out. The first concerns the relationship of patriarchy to power in the gender system ('enabling' male dominance), while the second concerns the fact that dominance within each sex may be connected to cross-sex dominance ('related' asymmetrical relationships). This creates a broader definition, yet the focus remains on gender, with 'oppression of women' as the base line. It may be argued, instead, that the central dynamics of patriarchy through history often have concerned same-sex dominance, among men especially. Further, one may object that patriarchal structures may enable other forms of power besides male dominance. In some views, the latter represents a fairly anachronistic appreciation of the history of Western patriarchy. These objections are not unfounded, as is shown in later chapters. They also illustrate the difference between the formal approach and one where the definition of patriarchy instead is the result of a *sui generis* analysis the subject at hand, its history, character and dynamics. Where, then, do we begin?

If patriarchy in many ways is an 'unknown' in modern society, the same is true of some latent aspects of the gender system, especially the gender-as-woman level. So a similar methodological approach may be warranted. What appears in the first initial approach is even more likely to be misleading here than in the case of gender, if there is any truth to the argument that patriarchal relations in our society are relatively submerged and hidden. Yet we have to start with the appearances and immediate practices. In part one, I initially argued that a critical analysis of gender would have to be 'grounded' in terms of family formation and the family sphere, and a next step is proposed here. This was implied already in the discussion of gender as a theme in social science (chapter 8). Contemporary feminist views of gender emerged through critiques of earlier family and role theory. Perspectives on patriarchy represent a further widening of the gender question, and must build on critiques of gender. Patriarchy analysis therefore must be grounded in terms of the modern gender system. By gender I do not refer to the transhistorical notions discussed earlier ('sexed organisation'), but the specific modern gender arrangement. Nor do I primarily refer to the dyadic level where gender appears as a closed system of masculine and feminine, or mainly is perceived as a private life question. Instead it is the gender system as it 'transcends' into a higher-level issue of the gendered and the neutral which is relevant here.

At this level, most of society is involved. That is not what we want, for identifying patriarchy as 'society in general' brings us no further. It may look good as a declaration but it is of no real help. What we want, instead, is to be able to *identify* processes in society that has *consequences* for the rest, which is a very different matter.

In this perspective, the differentiation principle briefly outlined above may be seen not only as a 'substantial' pattern but also as part of a *methodology* for solving this problem. It retains the wider scope while allowing further specification. Instead of starting from a formal notion of patriarchy, therefore, I start by discussing this principle as it emerges in a modern-day context, uncovered through critical gender analysis. This approach does not imply an *a priori* assumption that commodity form principles and patriarchal principles are one and the same. It only means that such an 'assertive' step brings us out of the formal definition problem and into some more substantial matters that are undoubtedly of *some* importance for understanding

patriarchy. By making this step, we can afterwards compare it to other possibilities. - I turn, therefore, to differentiation as we first meet it in modern society.

## Difference as segregation

No other single historical feature seems more relevant for understanding the modern organisation of femininity and masculinity and the activity divisions related to it, than the creation of a separate 'sphere of reproduction'. Although this sphere has been defined somewhat differently in different feminist traditions, its centrality is a commonly assumed, as is the case in family history, economic history, and other fields. Basically, pre-modern societies were characterised by a continuity of human- and non-human-oriented work processes located mainly in the household, whereas the growth of wage labour and industry in modern society split the two off from each other.<sup>3</sup>

Why did this split occur? Why did not all activities follow along, on the wagon of capital and industry? There has been curiously little research and debate on this central issue. The answers lead in two opposed directions: either capitalism is so barbaric that it just had to be opposed at the threshold of the home, or it is so civilised that it created, for the first time in history, a sphere of personal sentiment and freedom. Ethics replaces theory, usually with 'nature' close at hand in both points of view.

In some perspectives, this split entailed an 'emptying' of the household in terms of labour. With the concurrent changes towards a nuclear family, the home became a site of consumption. Yet time use studies as well as studies of women's activities, as discussed in chapter 5, have shown a very different picture. Even if externally oriented labour and commodity production in particular were removed from the household, mainly to the manufacture and the factory, internally oriented or human resource-creative labour remained, and have only comparatively recently emerged as a main field of wage work outside the household *in addition* to the work that continues there. The latter changes reflect the growing needs for qualification and reproduction of labour with more advanced production. The result is an increasing proportion of reproductive labour vis-à-vis productive labour, i.e. a quite different picture from the one that was often presented along with the 'emptying of functions' argument.

Historically, the growth of the household-separated sphere of production and the deepening split between productive and reproductive activity can be traced in labour market and industry statistics, and in the decline of the proportion of 'non-split' households associated mainly with the primary sector.

At the same time, however, a marked *genderisation* of this split is visible in statistics from the early 19th. century onwards. This is illustrated by the X-shaped diagram that appears if one measures the proportion of men in office work on the one hand, and the proportion of women in industrial work on the other. While office work initially emerged mainly as a men's occupation, over the last 120 years or so it has gradually become feminised. Factory work, on the other hand, which employed a large

proportion of women, perhaps even a majority in the beginning, gradually became heavily masculinised.<sup>4</sup>

Since official statistics do not allow a broad-range historical comparison of the sex proportions in outer- versus inner-directed wage labour, 'office work', consisting mainly of secretarial work, will have to do as an approximation of the latter. When reproductive labour from the 1960s especially emerged as a large component of wage labour, connected to the increased 'welfare' emphasis in the politics and economic activity of the state, larger obligations towards the ill and the elderly, etc., it was as a rather late creation in an already strongly genderised wage work organisation, and so the proportion of women was often in the '90 percent plus' region. Later, we have seen the creation of a major 'information technology' branch that (excepting the lowest manual levels mainly output to developing countries and a sprinkling of human resource-oriented jobs like secretaries) has been heavily masculinised right from the start - even in this age of supposed greater gender egalitarianism.

It should be emphasised that this genderisation was *not* just 'there' from the beginning; rather, men appear as rather slow and reluctant recruits of a factory system that did indeed follow the gentlemen's slogan of 'women and children first'. It is also noteworthy that the tendencies described above can be found throughout the capitalist age world, with only minor variations, regardless of whether the political system called itself capitalist or socialist or was more or less state-oriented.<sup>5</sup>

In an earlier work I have theorised this change in terms of a shift from a patriarchal order that was mainly *hierarchical* towards a more *functional* kind of division. This has meant greater emphasis on the differences on the 'horizontal' level of different work functions. These two orders, I have argued, can also be found in contemporary work life, where men sometimes appear *above* women in terms of authority position, other times beside them - and yet there, also, in a favoured position, due to the stronger functional position of their tasks.

This functional dominance (which has nothing to do with functionalism in the traditional sociological sense) relates to the fact that some jobs, branches and sectors count for more in our society than others. It is connected to the amount of constant capital and technology in a job, its closeness to surplus value creation, especially 'strategic' (means of production) value creation, and other factors. These job measures are in turn closely connected to the proportion of men among the job holders (Holter 1989a:257-82).

The hierarchy / work function perspective resembles the distinction between vertical and horizontal dominance sometimes used in economic theory. It seems promising for analysing why, for example, data experts do not need much hierarchical 'authority' while doctors do, why men in health care and other reproductive fields are especially prone to put hierarchical barriers between themselves and the women they work with, and similar traits. The two mechanisms often appear as equivalents in functionalist sense, so that a lack of one creates a scramble for the other.<sup>6</sup>

I find it indicative that studies of discrimination of women in work life have only comparatively recently begun to concentrate on the *main* issue of work function or sector division, i.e. to approach the production / reproduction dimension. For a long

time, studies *within* one sector or branch have been used to indicate, quite misleadingly, that wage (and other) differences between men and women have now become very small and are getting even smaller.

When all one has is a hammer, nails are what one finds; when the perspective is only on yesterday's hierarchical oppression, results do indeed show an overall improvement. I agree with Petersen and Morgan (1995:361) who, after documenting the major role played by occupational segregation for the wage gap between men and women, write that "in terms of policy, allocative and valutive processes should be given most attention, and within-job wage discrimination (..) should be given less." While ranking of jobs and hierarchical differences remain important, 'horizontal' differentiation is the main background pattern. Further, the two forms should be seen in combination, with a main causal link from the latter to the former.

In another context I have outlined the functional / hierarchic 'pyramid' that emerges from such studies, hypothesising an upwards flow of benefits (a) from reproduction to production and (b) through ranking or class levels, and (c) a contrary downwards flow of burdens (Holter 1989a:273-5). More will be said of this pyramid later.

The broad wage labour patterns described here are associated with similarly broad family work patterns and with a broad range of cultural, communicational and psychological phenomena in modern society. When women communicate, for example in informal family or private life settings, the 'subject' is often the person, while among men, it is the thing or the object connected to persons, the 'project'. Men tend to 'externalise' the focus of communication in this sense, while women tend to 'internalise' it in the sense of directing it towards personal aspects. Similar patterns can be found regarding conflict resolution in work life (Holter 1990h).

Further indications of differentiation exist on many levels and in a great number of areas. If the woman, in a symbolic sense, 'is' the house (Solheim, J 1995), or the food, as objects of inner- or human-directed activity, the man 'is' the technology, the means of production, the objects of outer-directed activity. The gender fixation described above may be interpreted as two opposed patterns: if *her* gender is about persons, *his* is about things.

The above arguments should suffice as an indication that the differentiation, whatever its character as a wider 'principle', does represent something more than a formal abstraction in modern society. Indeed, the main problem does not consist in establishing its cultural, social and psychological reality, which most of us know only too well, but in the tendency towards making it into a universal principle of the social as such.

The distinction between a 'gender perspective' and a 'patriarchy perspective' may also be somewhat further outlined and substantiated in this context. Whereas a gender perspective (in the conventional meaning of the term, i.e. as a masculine / feminine relationship) tendentially leads towards one side of the differentiation, the side of women and 'overt' gender institutionalisation, the patriarchy perspective retains a focus on the men's side and the 'neutral' institutionalisation associated with it.

The differentiation discussed above does not rely on whether people make the sex difference socially relevant or not; a whole number of neutral and economic factors come into it. For example, we may ask whether an employer displays 'masculine' traits when s/he asks for effective employees who are willing and able to work long overtime hours on short notice. Should such demands be analysed as expressions of hegemonic masculinity, since in fact, like few other things, they *create* a basis for such a psychological-cultural orientation? As discussed earlier, I believe such examples indicate the need for orienting the map after the terrain. When a number of studies of gender discrimination in wage work show that indirect discrimination, with no overt reference to gender, is of main importance, we may interpret these studies as saying that even if the *gender system* discrimination is not a main factor, the *patriarchal* discrimination remains important. The latter does not rely on discriminatory attitudes. Here we can actually put our 'formal' definition into use: economic measures that *in effect* discriminate women, are patriarchal. It does not matter whether anyone thought or acted in terms of gender or not. On another level, it is true that this patriarchal discrimination is also in a sense 'gendered', or as shall be shown later, that it 'implicates' gender. Yet it is *not* gendered in the common use of that word, and the idea that it is 'really' a masculine phenomenon, etc., creates the kind of stretching of gender categories that I have criticised earlier. We have only started looking at patriarchy, and in order to analyse the deeper implications we have a long way to go.

It is clear that the differentiation discussed here cuts across the dyadic and asymmetrical levels of the gender system, and extends into the wider level where 'gender' appears as the opposite of the 'neutral'. It appears, therefore, as a main matter not only of gender analysis, but of patriarchy analysis as well, according to the analytical approach discussed above. What emerges does not resemble a basis / superstructure with activities and transfers as basis, but rather a broad-spectred *polarisation process* creating a bipolar structure where social, cultural, economic and psychological traits are intertwined.

According to Marx's theory, this should not happen. It is not what we would expect, unless there is in fact a major blind spot in his perspective. The same is the case with most Marx-inspired critical perspectives. What should occur, according to these views, is instead a further *homogenisation* through the development of capitalism. A basic notion here is that exchange relations emphasise *qualitative social equality*, since people are in practice 'homogenised' in the exchange. This is the wider background process of capitalism that makes class conflicts and other disputes different from the particularistic issues of pre-capitalist societies. Indeed, the main legitimisation of Marxism as 'science' was located precisely on that basis. This was also the main reason why Marx and Engels and many Marxists later believed that advanced, large-scale industrial capitalism would do away with traditional relations of oppression like those associated with patriarchy.

What we find, instead, is a process of polarisation that is visible throughout the economic field, a process that occurs on different social class and power levels, extending also into the organisation of 'use values' and 'needs'. It is fairly well known that Marx and Engels sometimes approached another view, especially on the metaphorical level, comparing the husband to the bourgeois, the wife to the

proletarian, etc. Also, Marx' theory of the reproduction of capital does allow for perspectives on exploitation in the regeneration of labour power.

Marx explicitly says that the matter of individual consumption "takes quite another aspect" when one considers capital as a whole: the 'total' capitalist "profits *not only on what he receives from, but also what he gives to, the labourer* (..) The individual consumption of the labourer (..) forms therefore a factor of the production and reproduction of capital. (..) The fact that the labourer consumes his means of subsistence for his own purposes, and not to please the capitalist, has no bearing on the matter. (..) The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must be, a necessary condition to the reproduction of capital (Marx, K 1970:536-7).

I suspect a *vacillation* behind Marx's writing regarding the domestic sphere and the existence of exploitative relations there. This is interesting also in view of the 'regulatory' role of theory (cf. chapter 7). It occurs in the present case: no sooner has Marx opened the door for a two-sphere perspective before closing it resoundingly. As regards the reproduction of the working class, "the capitalist may safely leave its fulfilment to the labourer's instinct of self-preservation and of propagation" (ibid.). Next, however, he writes all the more strongly of how capital rules the worker in reproduction also. It seems like a compensatory manoeuvre; Marx was not one who easily attributed social traits to natural instinct. He goes on to write of how the worker is bound to capital by "invisible threads" like the fetters of the Roman slave (op.cit. 538) and "belongs to capital before he has sold himself to capital" (op.cit. 542). He never clarifies how this dual belonging to capital and natural instinct is combined.

The fact that *women* never show up in these arguments does not mean they were not there, quite the contrary. It remains the case, however, that later Marxists *could* have used many insights in his writings in order to uncover exploitation of women, had they chosen that line of approach, which they did not. For example, they might have combined his idea that "the individual consumption of the labourer is (..) productive to the capitalist and the State" (op.cit. 538) with his notion of the man as the bourgeois of the family, the woman as the proletarian.

This omission was partly caused by the fact that establishing a home and family of one's own eventually became a main motive of the workers' movement, and by its general 'masculinistic' orientation. In addition there was the idea that it was all soon gone anyway, that patriarchy would wither away not just through socialist struggle, but through capitalism's own development.

## The differentiation principle

Four main issues appear in an analytical approach to the differentiation principle and its relation to patriarchy. These are presented in the next sections, partly as an introduction to later discussions.

The first issue involves theoretical and logical questions of commodity economy and differentiation on a general level. The second is institutional and sociological, concerning how the differentiation principle may be approached as a social pattern and process. The third is an extension of the second, relating to how the

differentiation principle may be explored in a historical perspective. The fourth is the patriarchal issue, concerning the relationship of differentiation and patriarchal social structure.

In a discussion of the first issue, the differentiation principle as a general rule of commodity societies, we may start with the notion of the 'putting-out' system that was important especially in the pre-industrial and early industrial phase of capitalism. In this system, capitalists based their enterprise on non-capitalist labour primarily in rural peasant households. They did not ask whether the labour regime was capitalist or not; what mattered was the families' ability to deliver products beneath a certain cost level.

In a wider perspective, commodity economy can be seen as dependent on a much broader arrangement of 'putting out'. What matters here is not only a placement outside the commodity sphere proper, but also a principal difference from this sphere. Some kinds of activities are continually *excluded*, and *can not take place*, directly within the commodity economy itself. If they did, the commodity form itself would cease to exist, turning into a redistributive and / or gift-dominated arrangement.

The problem concerns the labour needed in order to recreate the agents or subjects of a commodity economy, and its kernel is the following: *if* every activity, including the activity that creates commodity owners, should count as commodity-creative activity, the category 'commodity owner' could not exist. Commodity owners might be turned into 'wandering share companies'; they would not be 'private individuals' in the commodity economy sense (Holter 1991i:15pp.). The basis-divisions of commodity economy, including 'private owners' and 'private ownership' would disappear. There would be an *infinite regress* in which private ownership itself would collapse; no-one, in this system, could own anything, since everyone would him- or herself be owned in an endless backwards chain.

This logical argument does not only concern the specific labour input required to create the category of 'owners'. In much economic theory, this input is not needed anyway, since commodity owners are seen as self-creative, appearing so to speak 'with the idea'. It concerns the wider category of *human resources*, including labour power or labour capacities. If the work creating these capacities should count as commodity-creative work and be treated according to the standard commodity rules, the results would undermine the whole economic order. The work results could appear as commodities only in a passing moment of dissolution of the commodity category as such.

As we shall see, the differentiation principle tends to change most conventional notions within the critique of political economy. This includes the definition of the category 'commodity' itself, to which we may now add:

*A commodity represents a social relation that by reproducing itself requires or creates a barrier between the labour directly doing so and the labour that cannot directly do so.*

Why does the commodity need two kinds of labour, not one? Some further general traits of the principle shall be considered here.

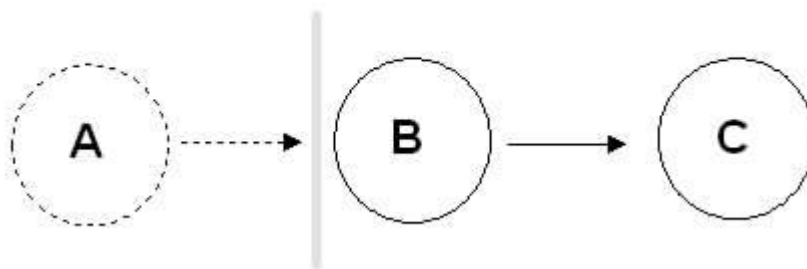
The differentiation principle can be inferred from all the basic traits of commodity production. It is most easily approached by considering the private owners, but it concerns labour and exchange also. The main contention has the form of a 'modus tollens' argument: if the division did not exist, commodity production would be impossible (and so since it is possible, it follows that the division exists).<sup>7</sup>

If the labour creating the commodity had been able to recreate itself *as* commodity labour, no commodities could exist, since there would be no-one around to own them, *nor* any private labour to produce them, *nor* any independent exchangers to exchange them.

It should also be noted that the argument does not depend on an 'ideal' state of affairs in which each commodity producer owns the full value of the product; the degree of exploitation, or how production sphere agents 'split the cake', does not matter, for what is involved here the fact that reproducers cannot be allowed as owners into this sphere on principal grounds.

We may examine the argument more closely in terms of three units, A, B and C, pictured in the following figure.

### The differentiation principle



This figure is a *work flow diagram*, with two labours: that of A creating B, and that of B creating C. The *logical* argument goes the other way, from right to left, starting with C. We assume that C is a *commodity created by B*, and for the sake of simplicity that B owns this commodity. Whether B actually does so or not has no bearing on the argument, it only makes it easier to understand; the point is that C is a commodity *presupposing* some owner. In order to make the argument less abstract, we may think of A as a domestic labourer, B as the production labour capacity created by A's work, and C as the industrial commodity created by B. Once more this concrete setting is not presupposed or in any way necessary for the argument. There are, anyway, two links in the chain - A creating B and B creating C.

The differentiation principle says: A and B *can not be of the same kind*. The two labours can not *both* count as commodity-producing labour. This is the minimum requirement, and it is important to keep to that level first: we know nothing, initially, about what *kind* of difference is involved. We only know it *must exist*. Why is this?

If the labour A, creating the labour capacity B that in turn creates the commodity C, should itself have the same status as labour B, its result would be a commodity, in the full, privately owned, realisable sense. This means that B would be an 'object', a thing owned. That, in turn, means that B could not be an owner, not a 'subject' in the commodity economy understanding of that term. Instead A would own B, and the commodity B would now encompass not just B the (former) subject, but also whatever was further created by B, i.e. the product C.

Therefore, if A and B were *both* treated as commodity-producing labours, the result would be that B disappeared, or was now only counted as an extension of A. The performer of A would own the performer of B and its result C. We may imagine a large circle around B and C in the figure for illustrating this. This whole circle would now be the commodity or property of A.

It may be objected that this situation is not so alien to commodity economy after all - it is usually called *slavery*. This is not a true objection, however. Slavery no more than any other commodity economic arrangement can allow the labour creating slave owners, or other human resources, an economic subject status. What happens here, instead, is that slaves' reproductive (human resource creative) as well productive (other resource creative) work is counted as part of the slave master's ownership or object sphere.

If, instead, we argue that this differentiation principle does *not* exist, we might argue, backwards, that the labour A presupposes a labour capacity also, and once more - given that the principle is invalid - that the labour creating this capacity must count a commodity-producing labour. But this would entail that the performer of A would disappear as a private subject also, along with B, since A's capacities would then also be the commodity product of the labourer creating them.

Whatever way these links are analysed, we get an *infinite regress* in which private production, ownership and exchange *disappear*. No-one, in such a non-differentiated, all-is-commodity-labour system could, *in consequence*, 'produce', 'own' or 'exchange' anything, since as I said, instead everyone would be owned in an *endless backwards chain*. With no private owners, no private labourers, and no private exchangers there is scarcely any doubt, at least on this logical level, that commodity economy itself would come to an absolute halt. It follows, therefore, that it cannot exist without the *inner differential* that I call the commodity differentiation principle. Its existence requires that there is an arrangement securing that the reproductive (human resource-creative) labour A does *not* count on par with the productive (other resource-creative) labour B.

As far as I can see, the only way that this logical argument can be shown to be invalid would be through a movement to a more practical, social level of argumentation, where one might identify *other* division patterns that ensured the same result, i.e. the exclusion of reproduction from the standard field of commodity activity. This is indeed a possibility, yet it does not invalidate the argument, which as mentioned has a basic minimal form. This minimum requirement is something other, just something else, some social arrangement that can take care of its reproduction needs. Is it possible that A in the example above could be entangled in some other form of interdependency? Yes, that is obviously possible, since thereby we go *outside* the very

logic that forms the premise of the argument. Gift or redistributive systems might ensure this. It may obviously be fulfilled in various ways, and for now, in the logical approach, that is precisely the point; *whatever way*, it does not matter, as far as it is not *inside* the commodity field, since that is impossible.

As we turn to a more sociological or institutional approach, the focus changes: we become interested in *how* this very general minimum condition is fulfilled. I shall argue that we find an increasingly *structured* differential system with the development of commodity economy, one in which the reproductive field of activity is gradually more specifically positioned vis-à-vis the commodity field proper. It develops into a polarised, opposed 'otherness' - and it is in this context we can understand the emergence of the modern gender system. In this *evolved form*, the differentiation principle means that for anything to exist as commodity-creative power, there must be a *contrary* position, which may be empowered in terms external to the commodity form, but powerless (not granted subject status) within it.

For now, the two main positions are the main topic. I call them a position of *commodity firstness* and one of *commodity otherness*. Since the causal chain goes from right to left in the model above, from the commodity C, to its maker's labour capacity B, and to the labour A creating that capacity, the firstness sphere in the figure contains B and C, while the otherness sphere contains A.

Four traits emerge:

1. This dual positioning is internal to commodity production, yet the requirement of the differentiation principle may be fulfilled through system-external means. In simple terms, the commodity does not ask *why* some activity does not count as commodity-producing activity, it only requires its presence. It is *not* required that the commodity sphere itself casts a shadow of 'otherness', but simply that such a sphere exists, so to speak in its own light.
2. Yet even when this non-economic sphere exists for external reasons, it now becomes part of an opposition that has the character of an inner contradiction, i.e. two sides presupposing each other, being necessary for each other. Once more, this is a fact regardless of external circumstances, but there is no implication that this structural trait is of major importance in society as a whole. The opposition is logically required but it may not count for much in social terms, since - once again - all that is required is *some* other sphere outside the commodity production sphere. Its commodity-related otherness character may be subdued or latent.
3. The internal link between the two spheres involves *stratification* or asymmetrical social control. As far as the differentiation principle is socially effective, there is an empowerment of the firstness position that exists relatively to the a loss of power of the otherness position. In other words, the differentiation principle even in its minimal form (identification of commodity field, unstructured exclusion, described below) is also a stratification principle. It has characteristics commonly associated with 'social class' vis-à-vis other forms of stratification: it is fully 'economic', impersonal, non-particularistic, abstract and absolute. In any given societal context, things may be wholly different, and so the two positions and the two forms of labour may be perceived as undifferentiated, or as positioned beside each other, and much else.

Again: as far as the principle goes, they are placed not only apart, but also one above the other, to the extent that only one counts as labour, or *exists* in the commodity perspective. The one is subject, the other object. The subject status of the firstness and the object status of the otherness are interconnected. If this whole relation is itself only of minor importance in society, however, the situation may be quite different regarding society at large. For example, commodity roles like that of the trader may be despised, associated with dishonesty and corruption, given low status, etc.

4. Not only is the otherness field in an 'object' position, it is also an object in a qualitatively different sense from the object definition *within* the commodity field 'proper' - that is, the firstness sphere. One type of 'objectification' concerns a position within the field, another concerns being cast off from it. We saw that the work creating commodity owners cannot be treated as commodity work, or positioned according to the rules within the firstness field. We know that the inside rules may be very harsh: the labourer in the firstness field may have no control over the result of the labour, over the process, or even over her- or himself. The 'firstness labourer' may become an 'object', alienated *within* a relationship of exploitation and allowed to 'subjectify' him- or herself only to the extent that the results of the labour do in fact belong to him or her. The situation of the otherness labourer is qualitatively different.

In Marx's terms, relating to the firstness sphere, the producer's labour in an exploitative regime like capitalism can be subdivided into two parts, 'necessary' labour and 'surplus' labour. The degree of subject *versus* object status of the labourer is related to the proportion between these two. Yet the otherness labourer in principle has *neither* this subject nor this object existence, since the whole process is located outside of the economic field proper.

What emerges, instead, is a position which is both '*below*' the firstness field of the commodity economy, and '*beyond*' or outside it, and further, as far as those within it are in fact dependent on the work of those in the otherness field on an individual level, also a position '*between*' each economic field agent. The earlier discussion (in chapter 8) of three main ideas of the position of women thereby comes into a new perspective.

A last objection to the differentiation argument should be addressed briefly before turning to a more sociological framework. This relates to the factual existence, today, of reproducers or human resource-oriented labourers as economic subjects within the economic field, i.e. as wage earners. For the sake of the argument, the otherness field is identified with 'reproducers' (more will be said of that shortly). My answer to this objection is that people in this category, even if they are subjects in the sense of wage earners, are not subjects *as* reproducers, which is what would be required to disprove the argument. Nurses and doctors do not own their patients; teachers do not own their pupils - not as a matter of degree, but as a matter of a very real principle. Unlike productive workers, reproductive workers *are not paid by some proportion of the value created* and realised by the sale of their labour result. Instead, they are paid either by a direct *redistributive* arrangement, i.e. through taxes and state budgeting, or by an indirect one, for example in privately organised health care, where production workers and others perform this selfsame redistributive operation through a service payment on an individual basis. In sum, therefore, regardless of the degree of public or private organisation of wage-labour reproduction, reproducers are in principle paid by a proportion of the value realised *elsewhere* - in production. The same goes for

domestic reproduction. Although the differences between the three ways of compensation may be of major importance to the worker (cf. T.S. Dahl in Haukaa et. al. 1982), it does not change the position of reproduction sphere itself.

It should be clear from the above discussion that the logical arguments concerning the differentiation principle lead into an economic theory and economic categories debate. When we say there is an inner differential or differentiation principle in the commodity relationship, we are also saying there is an inner differential in value. Value, as we now see it, is a polarity with a thesis / antithesis structure, with *two forms of abstraction*; value is created through a differentiation of two types of labour, not just by one of them.

If this is true, the conventional idea of value as one abstract principle vis-à-vis the chaotic concreteness of 'use value' becomes dubious. Once more I must emphasise that the two logical forms of abstraction does not imply that both are fully socially realised. The firstness does not care, so to speak, if the otherness is abstract or not, as long as it is 'abstracted away', kept apart. Yet the principle is clear enough, and given certain conditions that we shall soon examine, it may be socially realised as two opposed forms of abstraction.

In sum, then, many traditional critical theory notions become questionable, including the standard conceptions of concrete versus abstract labour, exploitation and social class. For example, it would seem that any exploitation theory of workers in capitalism worthy of its name would have to include an explanation of how and why a specific subclass of 'worker-workers' or 'otherness labourers' are included in each cycle or pattern of exploitation, and how this sphere of exploitation differs and is yet related to that of the 'immediate' or 'officially (in this tradition) acknowledged' sphere of exploitation.

One last point before we leave this rather formal 'commodity economy as such' level: the two spheres of activities outlined here, with two kinds of performers, economically speaking, within them, are *not* the same as 'producers' and 'reproducers' in the modern context. It is true that the firstness position relates in some way to the first of these two categories, and the otherness position to the second. *How* they relate, however, remains to be explored, and it is highly important to disentangle the two sets of categories from each other.

Commodity production 'as such' *may* entail patriarchal organisation; it *may* be right that the differentiation principle is a kernel dynamic within it - but it does *not* necessarily entail a major societal split between productive labour on the one hand, and reproductive labour on the other. That, as discussed initially, is mainly a characteristic of one form of commodity production, associated with wage labour and capital.

## Institutional perspectives

In the institutional perspective, the logical argument becomes less interesting than the social reality. The argument may be logically sound, yet if it has little observable impact on social organisation, it disappears from the sociological agenda. That is not

the case, however. Value differentiation is a topic connected to major sociological traits. The present section represents a first approach to some of these traits.

As mentioned, the differentiation principle may be approached as a 'putting-out system'. If non-commodity spheres exist within society, able to take care of its requirements, there is no need to put anything out, as has been maintained through the last section. It is clear, therefore, that the differentiation principle requirement may be met by a *variety* of institutional patterns.

In principle there are two main possibilities. *Either* the reproduction of commodity economy agents is taken care of by non-commodity arrangements that already exist ('minimal form'), *or* it is specifically 'put out' by the interaction within the commodity form itself ('evolved form'). There may also be a mixture of the two. The earlier discussion of gender and gender / neutral differentiation in contemporary society is meaningful, I believe, primarily in the second evolved context.

It may be argued that the very first or minimal requirement does not so much consist of exclusion of anything, as of an inclusion and separation of the activity specifically regulated by commodity economic rules. This is relevant in historical and anthropological perspectives on societies where the commodity field often exists 'embedded' within larger patterns of redistribution or gift-giving. The 'sociological' problem here emerges as one of disentanglement and the creation of a field-congruent institutional basis.

However, when the commodity field has achieved a certain minimal institutional self-sufficiency, an 'exclusion' tendency may become more marked. The differentiation principle may now be expressed mainly as a matter of exclusion. Again this tendency can be found in a wide variety of circumstances. It is relevant also in a modern (and especially early modern) context. As we saw, the gender-related differentiation of the modern work organisation shows signs of being fairly recent, developing from a more 'hierarchical' order into a more 'functional' or 'horizontal' one. The two may be further identified as two different forms of differentiation, the first more 'excluding' in character, the second more 'bipolar'. There is no requirement that the differentiation *must* be specifically organised on a dyadic level; it does not imply an organisation of 'duality'.

I am emphasising this also on the background of what has been said regarding the gender fixation - we should be very careful *not* to treat this principle *as if* it existed only in its evolved, polarised form. In pre-modern society it may be more relevant to think in terms of an expulsion form of the principle, or a seclusion form. The firstness only says: "there must be something else", "there must exist some other activity framework in order to solve these tasks of recreating the commodity owners"; "this activity cannot count as commodity labour". Nothing more is implied; yet *indirectly* there is always a broad range of implications, since the commodity field does not exist in isolation. It has an impact on the world around it and vice versa. So if we say that the differentiation principle comes into its own first as disentanglement, then as exclusion, usually in fairly overt terms of power and stratification, there is also a *component* of more specific differentiation, the more *specific* 'putting-out' system that was described above, even if only in kernel form.

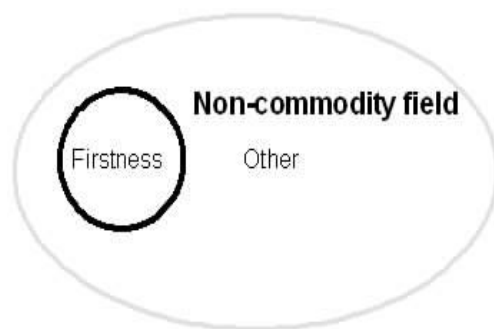
Thereby it also becomes evident that power and authority questions are not 'indifferent' to the main institutional forms of differentiation. On the contrary we should expect some institutional arrangements to be characterised by a main emphasis on the 'below' or stratification aspect, while in others this has been replaced by a 'beside' or structured differentiation arrangement. The earlier definition of modern gender as a system of 'stratificational differentiation' becomes relevant here. Some forms of putting 'beside' do not involve any open aspects of power, authority, or stratification at all, while others do. This is further discussed in chapter 12 where I focus on forms of power *as* differentiation strategies.

These considerations can be summed up in the following rule: the more 'economic' the production of things, the more 'contra-economic' the production of people.

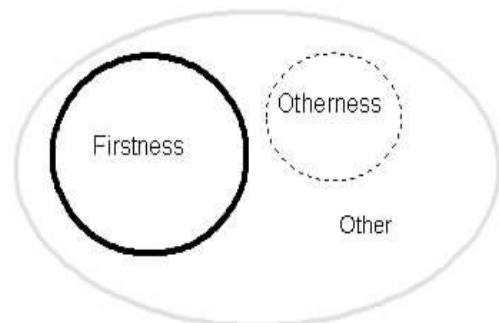
A sociological discussion of the differentiation principle involves a very broad panorama of institutional arrangements. Therefore the notion of meta-institutional patterns discussed in the last chapter becomes relevant. These may be approached in different ways, and the following figure offers one framework. Even if nothing has been shown so far regarding the relevance of the differentiation principle for interpreting the historical development of oppression of women, the figure may be more intelligible with that perspective in mind.

#### Four main forms of the differentiation principle

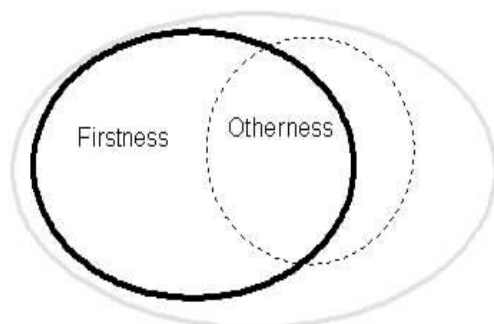
##### 1 Identification



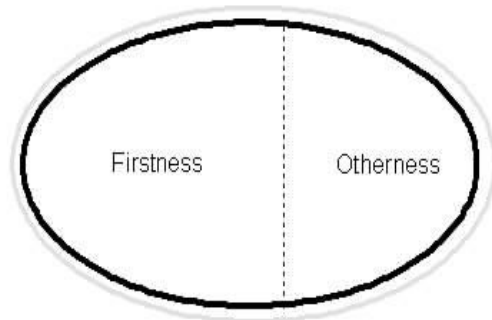
##### 2 Exclusion/seclusion



##### 3 Inclusion



##### 4 Polarisation



First, it should be noted that all four models in this figure are presented in reverse left-right order of the last one. There, we started with the work flow, A to B to C, arriving

at the causal link C-B-A. So the firstness sphere (C-B) is here presented at the left-hand side, the otherness sphere A at the right-hand side. The firstness field represents commodity relations, the otherness field those relations that cannot be within it, yet are inseparably connected to it.

In each of the four models, the larger grey circle represents society as a whole or the social formation. The sizes of the black circles are only meant to illustrate a broad tendency.

1. In the first identification model, the commodity field is basically struggling for itself, establishing its identity or institutional framework. There is no scarcity of 'other' relations; on the contrary, commodity relations are themselves situated in other forms of reciprocity and entangled with these.
2. In the second exclusion / seclusion model, three fields appear. The otherness of commodity is to some extent established *as* an otherness field, as against society at large, or other reciprocity relations. The postmodernist term 'radical other' can be used of these other relations, logically speaking, even if this larger sphere in historical and sociological terms is *traditional* vis-à-vis the commodity field. We may also call it the 'wider' other. The double designation 'exclusion / seclusion' itself implies that many different institutional arrangements may be involved in this phase. The otherness field may simply be excluded from the firstness, for example by rules saying that its participants have no right or limited access to market exchange. They may also be secluded or held *within* the units of the firstness field.
3. In the third inclusion model, the commodity economy increasingly relies on its own counterpoised reproduction field, not on the wider other, and the otherness field is increasingly itself incorporated into the economy.
4. In the last polarisation model, most of society is implicated in the split between the two fields. Not only has the firstness field now disconnected from the wider other, relying on its specific otherness field, it also dominates society much more extensively than before. The model brings us back to the differentiation tendencies in contemporary society discussed initially. In a system of polarisation, the difference between the two opposed fields has been incorporated in both of them. They presuppose and tendentially recreate each other.<sup>8</sup>

## Historical perspectives

In the capitalist era, relations and activities associated with the commodity form reach a level of general societal dominance never seen before. While people were involved as subjects or as objects in the commodity economy long before the modern age, their involvement on *both* levels, through each person's ownership and sale of her- or himself, was mainly a new phenomenon. This self-directed sale of labour power on a mass scale was in many ways the central feature of the new society. It created a new twofold position of being subject as well as object of the economy, a new sense of self, new concepts of the world, and much else.

While this is common knowledge, other aspects are not. This process included the commodity differentiation principle as a principle of individual reproduction. The duality of subject and object within the firstness field rested on another kind of objectivity in its background, the field of otherness or 'secondness'. We may think of Heidegger's a notion of the 'thrown' (cast out) part of the real, or of Kristeva's (1986) category of the abject. This second field that may have existed for a long time as a potential, now comes into its own as all the former 'wider other' forms of reciprocity are dissolved by the new industrious society.

In comparison, pre-modern societies display a rich variety of non-commodity relationships surrounding the economic field proper, to the extent that this field may itself be seen as halfway submerged, first in a political pattern (antiquity), and later in a religious one (feudalism). In these settings we may also possibly identify a discrimination of the 'indirect' or otherness labour, mainly connected to seclusion. Yet this 'indirectness' was not yet fully mediated by commodity production and commodified (wage) labour, and thereby comparatively invisible *sui generis*, for example in the sense of a separate 'woman's question' or as a separate field of women's activities. In this broad sense a patriarchal system based on the differentiation principle only comes into its own as commodity production embraces most of the activities in society, in the modern epoch.

If this is right, it would also help explain why we find a patriarchal *gender* system mainly as a *tendency* in the pre-modern age, a tendency that is often better understood as an aspect of other systems than a set of organising principles working on their own, and why Western history does not display a general conflict of a male versus female class-like categories before the modern age. The gender system, as a relatively late arrival in the scenery of capitalism, may thereby be interpreted in terms of a differentiation principle that only *becomes manifest when the world at large has become 'undifferentiated'*, i.e. when activities in general receive their primary meaning and evaluation from commodity production logic.

In a wide historical perspective the differentiation principle is often best approached as a *stratification principle*, with women as *stratified* from certain categories of men, by exclusion and / or seclusion, rather than being *diversified* from men in general in terms of activities, even if the latter element was also present. The differentiation mainly existed so to speak *under the shadow* of stratification and power. Further, this leads to the a main argument approached in part one of this text, namely that it is mainly in modern times that we find women depowered primarily *through* a differentiation of sex; here the biological classification of half of humanity as 'representative of sex', i.e. as *women* in the modern sense, becomes socially and institutionally effective - first as *the* sex, later with some to both. Earlier, in comparison, we more often find women in roles of dependency due to their being counted among the dependants of *other categories*, like the dependants of the household, the non-heads of families, or a judicial category on par with children. In general, we are somewhat better able to approach the curious paradox that while patriarchy has existed for a long time, the specifically gendered opposition and problematisation of it are mostly of recent origin. This overlooked time gap is further discussed later (chapter 11 and 12).

## Perspectives on patriarchy

The differentiation thesis does not only concern a tendency towards discrimination of human-oriented labour within the commodity form. It may also be argued that it creates a wider activity framework that tendentially excludes *women* as less active than men.

A standard approach in this 'emergence of patriarchy' context has the form of a 'society meets nature' argument, bringing us back to the balancing of the natural and the social discussed earlier. It may also be expressed as a meeting of older differentiation with new stratification. In the present perspective, however, it need not be the case that the commodity form only 'incidentally' connects to an earlier labour division or sex-related differentiation. It is also possible that asymmetrical sex differentiation is implied in the activity principle of the commodity form itself. Commodity economy puts the focus on activity as outgoing activity, resulting in practically realisable or 'alienable' commodities. If the activity does not result in a realisable commodity, commodity owners will tend not to classify it as 'activity'. This does indeed emerge as one main aspect of the treatment of women's activities throughout patriarchal societies, even if it is most noticeable when 'activity' itself becomes the focal matter, i.e. in the modern context. Women's specific activity here becomes associated with passivity, or as de Beauvoir said, 'immanence'; it does not *transcend* into the economical realm. Before the modern period, the emphasis on activity mainly meant an emphasis on power over activities, and women were seen as incapable and given a minor status in this regard. - This argument is further examined in chapter 11.

We saw that the differentiation principle involves power, an empowerment of the firstness position that exists relatively to the loss of power of the otherness position. If the commodity-owner-producing labour were itself to be treated as commodity-producing labour, the owner, the exchanger, and the labourer would all in principle disappear. The implication is that a break with the differentiation principle would hit all the three main categories of commodity production equally. That may not be the case however.

Over the last decades, we have seen the gradual development of an understanding of domestic labour as *work*, as activity that should count for some on its own. For example, home workers should perhaps receive pension points for their activity, even if they do not receive wages; wage work reproducers should be paid and treated like other wage workers, even if their payment, in the commodity form of 'householding', is perceived as detracted from production work profits (discussed in chapter 13). Further, we may interpret the gender market and associated gender system developments as indications, on a broad level, that reproducers should be granted some form of 'exchange' power related to their activity. They should at least be allowed to exchange themselves, their own capacities, if not the products of their reproductive labour. The abortion debate is a *minimal rights* debate in this context, the minimal right *not* to reproduce when one does not want to.

However, the idea that reproducers should *own* the results of their activity, i.e. the standard commodity economy rule, is not only 'controversial', it is *unheard of* on a much more basic level. It seems that the social psychological ledge of gender discussed earlier would in that case come tumbling down, along with most other notions of individuality.

On the other hand, it may be argued that this idea of 'otherness ownership' or latent pattern does exist as a kind of informal shadow economy at least in psychological and symbolical forms. If children do not 'owe' their parents, and mothers especially, in commodity economic terms, and men not their wives or partners, the psychological debt may be all the greater. Many psychological symptoms may be interpreted as attempts to make the two forms of reckoning come to terms with each other. Such informal ownership or debt patterns, often conceived as traditional elements, should therefore not be expected to vanish or be weakened with greater emphasis on individuality and market relations elsewhere in society.

A contrary rule appears: the greater the light of ownership, the deeper the shadow of the owned. The stronger the manifest independence, the stronger the latent dependence. The differentiation principle now concerns the 'shadowy' - or economically non-recognisable - structuring of this 'owned' territory, including the *people* who to some degree reside in it. We see that the differentiation principle does not necessarily 'hit' or affect all the categories the political economy in a fair and equal manner; if it is allowed some overt influence on a labour level, and some backwards 'gendered' influence on an exchange level, admitting its existence on the owner level seems impossible.

## Some feminist views

On a more concrete level, these observations may help explain some of the more puzzling results that emerge in studies of men and family relations. The debate brought up in chapter 6 can be taken further. A view of marriages and couple relationships as exploitative relations favouring men does make some economic sense, as noted. On a psychological level, however, the complaint of men that their female partners are more 'demanding' than they are, or that they have to concede to demands which they do not really agree with, is so common that it has led some men's researchers to conclude that inequality is a myth (Farrell, W 1987). The question of why men, supposedly in the dominant role, should instead often feel dominated in their close relationships, has become a common theme in this field. From research like the *Men's Life Patterns* study discussed earlier, it appears that if coming to terms with the father relationship is difficult, coming to terms with the mother relationship is more difficult still.

I referred Helene Aarseth's observations to the effect that 'the mother figure' in the minds of today's young fathers is non-figurative, a 'background carpet', a taken-for-granted ground of activity, a mother experienced even *as* incessant unspecified background activity rather than as a person (Holter & Aarseth 1993; Aarseth, H 1994). This 'background' nevertheless tends to appear as demanding, as best kept on a distance, also when it emerges in the form of the demands for closeness, love and attention from the female partner in the present relationship. In the present perspective such tendencies may be explained without presupposing a particularly twisted socialisation path of men, like the "becoming an *I* by being not-mother" mechanism discussed by Nancy Chodorow (1978). We may consider a sociological pattern that appears in different psychological versions through the life course. Aarseth (1995:56, my trans.) writes:

"Thereby, the superior responsibility and caring for the family do not only emerge as a question of time and energy used in non-status-enhancing and unpaid work. Neither is it only a question of her needs for confirmation of her own identity as a woman. The superior responsibility and the function of 'acting on behalf of' also contains a qualitatively different form of influence, with different expressions and consequences. While power and dominance within the capitalist logic are linked to resources in which others have interests, dominance in a system of redistribution and gift relations is not connected to the question of who profits from the interaction. Dominance is not mediated by alienable values, but is instead connected to being able to define the other by one's subjectivity. The gift contains a qualitatively different form of influence, a form which in many ways may be even deeper and more alienative than power based on exchange."

These gift and redistributive elements may not, however, be fully unconnected to the 'externalising' logic that Aarseth describes. As outlined earlier, the weaker party in a power relationship has certain basic interests not only in refuting the view of the powerful, but also in creating a wider shift of terrain. In the differentiation perspective, assuming that present-day capitalism does in fact contain an 'evolved' form of the principle, the differences that Aarseth describes are linked to each other in a bipolar structure, and I believe that the contradiction itself indicates that they are not only externally related. Is it an 'inner other' or just something else, something wholly foreign? The two positions are understandable, even if contrary, in terms of each other, so that they can continually be translated into common 'negotiation' terms in the couple relationship. Their 'alienness' is of the 'counterpoised' type, not simply of the 'contrary' type, that is, they belong to the type of contradiction where each side presupposes the other and is built on that premise.

When Haavind and Andenæs, quoted initially, argue that women "carefully reject any interpretations of their acts that may turn their human services into commodities", it shows that women do not act within an exchange paradigm. Yet the differentiation principle and even traditional critical economic analysis presuppose this. As a capitalist, I may certainly 'carefully reject' all notions that my products were commodities - *inside* the production unit, and I might favour a similar attitude among my workers. It would be quite a different matter if these workers tried to stop my sale of the products *outside* that unit. The household does not create 'services', economically speaking, but capacities for the labour market, and the workers inside the household cannot legitimately stop this end result of their labour from being turned into commodities (cf. chapter 13).

I have three main reasons for holding on to an integration rather than an 'absolute difference' view. First, I find it hard to understand how men and women could come to terms at all, or how these two logics could coexist, unless the integration aspect was important. Secondly, an emphasis on the gift may, as I said, have other reasons than the factual existence of a gift relationship, and there are many sociological and historical traits pointing in that direction. In brief, men as well as women may prefer to see families as 'outside' gift systems, constituting a different mode of production, and similar, and until recently, such views were associated with non-feminist attitudes. Thirdly, every example known to me of what has happened when capitalism actually *has* met outside gift systems have very much more drastic and dramatic

traits than what can be found in the modern family context (examples are discussed in Ch. 7, 11, and 12 in the context of European colonialism).

This is why I disagree, also, with Hanne Heen (1995) when she portrays 'soft' (gift-associated) values as externally opposed to 'hard' (commodity) values. I agree with the 'soft' part, or some of it, with the 'opposition' part, but not with the 'external' part. The differentiation perspective suggests, instead, that redistributive and gift relations are specifically *formed* by the larger opposition in which they exist, developing many unique traits as a consequence. They also function as a 'shadow economy', and therefore the softness may have some hard edges. The differentiation principle does not imply that women's family activity is simply counterpoised to wage labour, or that no conflict is involved; rather, it implies that there are major tensions in this area. We would expect to find, for example, socialisation patterns where gift relations and problems connected to alienation are intertwined, also in the sense of gifts expressing commodity sentiment. Together with the attempt to 'shift the terrain' and locate family relationships in gift and sharing terms, there is the tendency that the ground-rules of the old terrain *reinsert themselves* - not as a matter of men or the world out there, but as part of the family itself.

It is often taken for granted that the influence or 'background power' of women in families derives from the gift and sharing forms in which it is expressed. I am not sure that is the case. It also derives from the differentiation principle itself, which by its very exclusion of reproductive labour in a context where labour is generally accorded social power, always *implicates* a similar position for the reproducers. In other words, if the differentiatial 'householding' *denies* precisely this power and subjectivity, it simultaneously, in the background, *demand*s it. There is a larger boomerang effect.

This may be more important for understanding the perceived 'demanding' character of women precisely in the minds of men and production sphere agents, than gift and redistributive rules by themselves. If the differentiation principle holds true, the impossibility that the reproducer should attain 'power' in the standard economic sense points to the background *dependency* of the whole economic system on precisely such a power and the activity creating it.

## Absolute difference and the emancipatory minimum

If the commodity economy engenders its own split, being unable to extend itself directly on equal terms to all of society, might there not also, or instead, be other, more absolute human barriers against it? The fact that socialisation requires a certain minimal intersubjectivity, human contact and respect have been the starting point of many feminist theories regarding women's difference as primary socialisers. I shall limit the discussion to one recent contribution in this area, Elisabeth L'orange Fürst's (1995:124pp.) development of the notion of the '*emancipatory minimum*'. This is a minimum of intersubjectivity, or social symmetry, which must be there, for socialisation to take place. Children can not be treated as things.

While various theorists<sup>9</sup> have discussed the idea, in general terms, that socialisation cannot conform directly to market exchange work, Fürst takes it some steps further, and explicitly builds a theory of women's subjectivity on that principle. She also sees

it as a use value principle, as against an exchange value economy. In this context she argues against my view, as is discussed later (chap. 13). Here, I focus on her proposal, first in terms of work, then in economic terms, and lastly as an explanatory category.

Does the character of an activity make a difference? Yes, it seems obvious that it does, especially when the difference does not only concern what kinds of objects are made, but the fact that this 'object' is another human being. While I am sceptical to a rule saying that this *must* make a major difference in all kinds of social settings, it is important in our society. Norwegian feminist research, extending the relational approach mentioned earlier, has created analyses of women mainly based on this difference, concerning the 'rationality of responsibility' (Sørensen, B 1982) and the relational character of the work itself. In fact, my reason for a scepticism towards making a *general* difference rule out of this, by itself extends this kind of view - I shall argue, later, that *all* 'work' is more or less 'relational' in some societal contexts, discussing early historical societies in particular (chap. 11). We may note, in passing, the idea even in classical Athens that an animal might be judged in court as well as a human being. In the context of contemporary equality as well as work life issues, understanding the relational character of work is of major importance.

Now the second question: is the emancipatory minimum the kind of difference that "makes a difference" (Gregory Bateson) on the economic level? Here my agreement is only partial. It probably influences economic conditions, including how far the logic that Fürst calls "exchange logic" can be taken, or how directly it can be involved. Yet when Fürst argues that it is an *absolute* barrier, I disagree. It does not make socialisation into "use value work" in this sense. She says that the emancipatory minimum, or traits connected to it, like psychic and physical health considerations, imply that:

"The system rationality of capital can not develop into a general one. This points to the difference between human being and commodity form: people are living beings, not things produced for sale on exchange principles." (op.cit.126, my trans.).

I am not sure what being produced "for" means, here, but unless Fürst would argue that people do not sell their labour capacities, created through socialisation (etc.), this statement is misleading. In order to bring this out, we may consider the 'wholesale' exchange of people, not just the partial one as in our society. This is the case of slavery in capitalism, as in the US before the civil war, and still existing on an extensive scale in parts of the poor world. In this context, it is obvious that the reproduction of people takes place *within* the economic system, and so the absolute barrier idea is untrue. The power of the slave owner, as women in particular have experienced, does not end by the door to the slave hut.

It is not the case, therefore, that women and children and their dyadic relationship are *per se* situated outside the economic sphere. When Fürst and many others discuss the *triadic* relationship between parents and child *as if* it was a dyadic mother-child relationship, it is the 'shadow economy' that speaks, and not any 'wider other'; this line of thought is the 'productionist' labour thesis applied in a different sphere.

This integration does not mean that there are no differences; not even a slave owner can treat human beings and things fully in the same way. Some kind of 'minimum'

considerations exist everywhere, whatever the material character of the work process; a capitalist cannot pour sand into his machine, nor can he have the workers starve, if he wants the process to continue. The question, however, is whether this difference is "emancipatory". Although it may have wider implications in the relational direction discussed above, I think the emancipatory minimum category is misleading in the economic context, at least as used here. Fürst makes it the basis of an argument to the effect that economic logic is not present in the domestic sphere, which gives the impression of an absolute barrier. Much would have been different through history - no slave trade, no Nazi state, no poor world economies with children on the streets, etc. - if such an absolute barrier had existed.<sup>10</sup> So I think it is better analysed as an area of conflict, for example in the history of workers' struggles, and in many other contexts.

In modern society, social relationships are constantly *attributed to* concrete, sensual appearances, and *especially* to work-related matters, to work "itself", and so many think, for example, that having a top leader job "gives" responsibility, like money "creating" new money. I have discussed this before under the term fetishism. The social context is attributed to the activity or thing itself. In work life as well as in families this can be found, in more concrete versions, as power strategies ("it was not *me*, I *had to*, due to my job", etc.). In the sphere of production, whole ideologies have existed concerning how technology or production in its material, sensual self is what moves society. A strange (and under-communicated) fact, in worklife studies, is how we often find quite "feminine" logics right in the centre, in the background, in this environment. This relates to what I said earlier about implication and explication of gender: silence may be all the more effective, as means of communication (chap. 8). - I think these considerations apply to socialisation and the sphere of reproduction also.<sup>11</sup>

The third point concerns the kinds of explanations and interpretations that can be built around such a principle, which Fürst also describes as an "anthropological constant in primary socialisation" (op.cit. 126). This constant may possibly contribute to an understanding why the human race has in fact survived through various hardships, yet it does not tell us much about the historical and social *changes* of women's status, nor the changing conditions of childhood.

The differentiation principle as discussed in this chapter does not say that commodity economy is especially humanitarian or non-humanitarian; the point of departure, instead, is the development of historically and socially located categories in order to understand the dynamics of a process. It does not say that a category like women can not be part of the commodity economy, or that some people are ten percent involved, others ninety; what it says, instead, is that all people can not be included *on the same terms*. Those who are included on opposed terms may in fact be *more* deeply involved than the rest, or less involved, or this may change; I would prefer keeping such possibilities open for investigation. In such a framework, however, or in other contextual, historical approaches, the emancipatory or human aspects discussed by Fürst may be important.

Throughout the 'difference' approaches discussed in this section and the last one, I find a picture of economic relations as something quite concrete, to be found in association with men's world and wage labour. Metaphorically speaking it is a world

of darkness compared to the alternative women's world of light. In chapter 13, I discuss how similar views have been used the other way around, in order to keep women out of men's world of economy, rationality and enlightenment.

## Related differentiation principles

Differentiation analysis suggests that the oppositions discussed above do not only exist in the family sphere or in the relations that are manifestly associated with gender. If the 'gendered' sphere is specifically structured as part of a bipolar system, so is the 'neutral' sphere itself, as was mentioned in connection to theoretical categories like 'value'. What is implied is an association of specific opposition and a two-way relationship of causation within it, rather than a model where the gendered sphere or the sphere of reproduction passively follows in the wake of ever-developing production. In this sense, there is both value 'in' gender and gender 'in' value.

Further, there is the possibility that the differentiation principle is important not only for understanding the patriarchal dimension of capitalism and other commodity form societies, but also the centrality dimension, today mainly expressed in terms of ethnicity / 'race'. Patriarchy theory, as distinct from gender theory, involves not only gender and its relationship to sexuality and dominance, nor only the connection between gender and class, but also a connection to the ethnicity / 'race' relationship.

Two main interpretations seem possible here. We may argue that the centrality and patriarchy dimensions are both parts of the differentiation principle. Or there may be similar principles existing in the outskirts of the rich world economic sphere, expressed for example in the devaluation of raw materials from the third world, creating a centrality / periphery logic expressed in centralism and racism. A full inquiry into this important subject lies outside of the present framework. What I shall attempt to show, however, is that the *theme* of political economy, including Marx's and other critical appraisals of it, has been a *structured* theme from the very beginning. What emerges when one focuses on the gendered aspects of use value and other economic categories, is not only gender on its own, but also other 'subdued' matters like white and rich world supremacy (chapter 13).

## Conclusion

Throughout the discussion in this chapter, the differentiation of outer- and inner-objectivating activity has been treated as a matter specific to the commodity form. The arguments have concerned an identification of a differentiation principle within this form, possible objections to it, and ways of exploring its existence and expressions in an institutional and historical approach. I have also, in the last part of the chapter, somewhat in advance of the main argumentation, debated some issues as if the patriarchy link was established; this hypothesis will be further examined in the next chapter.

Yet the *main* problem, here as earlier, may not reside at this level at all; rather, the model may work a little too well for its own sake. In other words, the differentiation principle may be relevant for understanding commodity and patriarchy co-

developments, yet it may be equally important for understanding such developments within other forms. It is so helpful, basically, that nothing comes out of it.

In that case, a main part of the social forms argument of the present thesis falls apart, since even if we may have brought some *specific* associations of the commodity form and patriarchal social structure into view, there is no reason, on the whole, to believe that the general association between the two is any way *particular* or stronger here, than that between patriarchy and gift systems, or redistributive systems. Theorising patriarchy in terms of an internal differentiation principle of the commodity form, in that case, must be evaluated as directly misleading, since this differentiation may be found in the other forms also.

Clearly, this objection can only fully be answered by a full survey of the social forms (or at least form elements) in question, based on one consistent definition of patriarchy and of social form. It can safely be said that such an enormous cross-cultural and historical task is only in its beginning stage today, regarding this research area as a whole. Due to new research as well as more nuanced and gender-critical interpretation of what exists, new evidence has been emerging, especially over the last five to ten years, that supports the present thesis. For example, even in the case of one of the more hierarchical and militaristic non-western cultures known, the Aztecs [*Nahua*, also: Mexica], researchers now argue that the subordination of women was limited to the external-political sphere, or to some of the public executive functions of power (Clendinnen, I 1995). Yet on the whole, the material is fragmentary, and best approached as indications of probability.

Is it *probable*, according to the existing state of the evidence, that patriarchal organisation is as closely associated with gift systems and redistributive systems as it is to commodity systems? Does it seem likely that a similar discriminatory differentiation mechanism is operative in each type of system? In the following chapters, I argue that none of these assumptions are probable; on the whole, there is a much stronger association between patriarchal societal organisation and commodity form societies than between the former and gift- and redistribution-oriented societies, *nota bene* as the latter have existed on their own, or only peripherally influenced by commodity exchange. Further, I shall attempt to strengthen this argument by identifying a similar strong and 'robust' association on the institutional and structural level of modern society, i.e. that the commodity economic sphere and its institutions are notably more closely linked to patriarchal patterns than others.

Before going into this, some theoretical points are presented here as concluding remarks.

Three main traits emerge in an approach to differentiation in non-commodity contexts: in key words, the permeability of transfers, the interdependency of selves, and the non-separated orientation of labour.

The first trait concerns the permeability or 'non-economic' character of the activity and transfer field, its relative 'diffuseness' as a field of its own and its existence, instead, as part of what, to the modern mind, is non-economic aspects of interaction. We may argue, for example, that marriage arrangements in non-modern contexts usually have important economic aspects, yet the latter seldom exist as separated or as

identified *as* an economic sphere on their own. As far as I know, anthropologists have generally left the technicist (or 'transfer fetishist') stage of 'bride "price"' reckoning in favour of a 'marital gifts as part of wider obligations' view. The primary characteristic of the differentiation principle of the commodity economy, 'identification', here re-emerges, i.e. the creation of a separate economic field that, broadly speaking, seems unique for this social form. This argument, if correct, would tend to undermine the existence, also, of separated economic principles like the one in focus; we may imagine *many* forms of differentiation, including differentiation connected to sex, yet the purely 'economic' basis of these would be less relevant than their basis in a complex conglomerate of 'fields' including family and kinship rules, religion, (proto-)political considerations, cultural imperatives, and much else.

Secondly, non-commodity systems commonly present conceptions of the self and the individual that are fairly different from those of modernity in particular and the commodity form in general. This discussion was approached in terms of 'interdependent selves' above (chapter 7). On a theoretical level, it may be argued that whereas the exchange relation in principle excludes the self, or creates a 'subject' or economic 'agent' sphere in contradistinction to the 'object' sphere which is the object of exchange, the gift and the redistributive relationship do not, or present comparatively weak tendencies in this direction.

In other words, since my subjectivity in a gift relationship is not, in principle, lodged at a level separate from the transfer, I may '*give myself*' - *and yet remain a subject*, according to the subject definition in this sphere. If the spirit, as Mauss repeatedly emphasised, 'follows' the gift, subjectivity in a certain sense also does.

This view seems warranted also by a whole number of everyday observations in our own society, including our use of language; we do not subtract from a person's subjectivity by perceiving her or him as 'gifted'. 'Exchanged' would be quite another matter!

In the exchange relationship, instead, my subjectivity is in principle dependent on my own person, or some aspects of it, being principally positioned *outside* the transfer itself, clearly demarcated from its object level. - If this is true, as a broad yet relevant distinction between commodity and non-commodity contexts, it would tend to weaken a 'trans-social-form' version of the differentiation argument further, since the differentiation thesis rests on the principal division between the subject and the object of transfers.

Finally, it may be argued that non-commodity systems do not commonly differentiate between human- and non-human-oriented activities in the manner of commodity systems. This does not, it should be emphasised, imply that there is no such differentiation, rather the point is that the specifically *economic* distinction is weak or non-existing, or in other words that as far as the gift or redistributive system goes, these activities are treated on a common basis. This 'common basis' view can be found in a wide variety of sources stretching from Herodotus's (1960) portrayal of the Persian 'large-household' economic paradigm, to Chayanov's (1925) description of the householding principles of Russian peasants. The common element is a view where material resources, means of production, foodstuff etc. is seen *on par* with human beings, and not in contradistinction to the latter (and so work is generally "relational")

in this sense). Marx's emphasis on the form of wealth is relevant here; wealth is conceived as non-human *and* human resources, quite different from the modern form of householding where the former counts as 'plus' factors, while the human being and the activities needed to recreate it emerge on the 'minus' side (see chapter 13).

These three arguments, concerning the non-isolated character of economic interaction in gift and redistribution systems, the conception of subjectivity as part of transfers, and the conception of human resources on par with other resources, are presented here in very broad terms, focused on the contrast vis-à-vis commodity economy. Obviously a whole number of variations on these themes exist also within non-commodity contexts.

On the whole, however, they substantiate the following three theses:

- **Commodity economy *tendentially* discriminates certain subject-reproduction-related forms of activity, whereas other social forms do not necessarily do so.**
- **This inner discrimination may be explained in terms of the commodity economy's own differentiation principle.**
- **Such an investigation helps explain *why* practically all commodity-oriented societies are also quite clearly patriarchal societies, whereas societies dominated by other forms present a much more varied and uncertain picture.**

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<sup>1</sup> Faced with such difficulties, one may argue that 'dualistic' thought itself is at fault, or that the mode of thinking about such oppositions must itself be changed, since the present mode is unable to grasp their character or interconnection. This is probably right, yet postulating a holistic view (e.g. "the wholeness of female consciousness" (Rich, A 1977:80)) has not, to my mind, been of much specific help in clarifying the real issues in this area.

<sup>2</sup> 'Secondness' might be more appropriate (and more specific), even if it means stretching the language. The second of the Norwegian terms [*førsteth* and *annethet*] means both 'other' and 'second'.

<sup>3</sup> For an early but still informative view in the discussion of this shift cf. Middleton, C 1979, 1981.

<sup>4</sup> Holter 1989a:267,306, based on ILO, UN and other historical statistics. See next note.

<sup>5</sup> A picture of genderisation as a *recent* process within work life, mainly during the last 150 years or so, emerges as one considers the overall statistical picture. Since I have never seen these statistics collected, I did so myself (in 1986-7), creating a database of aggregate (statistical year book type) statistics for 15 comparatively advanced countries from 1800 to 1985, with work life, family, and other relevant information ordered by year, country and sex. The base has ca. 300 variables. Although this large project remains unfinished, with many empty cells in the matrix, the overall picture is clear enough. Sex divisions existed earlier also, yet the main pattern, then, was one of ranking, i.e. *power* divisions, with work divisions, comparatively speaking, in the background.

<sup>6</sup> For example, studies have shown men's hierarchy mechanisms in woman-dominated environment (e.g. Sandnes og Tanem 1991).

<sup>7</sup> Gullvåg, I 1990:160.

<sup>8</sup> The last model may be compared to the chapter 7 model distinguishing between sexed, gendered and patriarchal organisation. The areas A, C1, C2 and C3 of that figure = the otherness field here, while B and C4 = the firstness field.

<sup>9</sup> Fürst refers to Alfred Kroeber and Oscar Negt & Alexander Kluge.

<sup>10</sup> "We need not resort to the evidence offered by social historians (e.g. Philippe Aries and Lawrence Stone) on the harsh treatment and neglect of spouses and children in the history of the Western family, for we need only read our local newspaper to learn of similar abuses in contemporary families." (Collier et.al. in Thorne & Yalom 1982:33). Along with much other research over the last fifteen years, these social anthropologists argue that the universalised concept of 'the' nurturing family was created in the 19th century; that it presupposed a market background; that families in other contexts are built on entirely different principles and can be centres of oppression (like the Roman family) more than nurturance; and that the idea of 'capitalisation of reproduction', or market forces attacking the home, has been with us from the early 19th century at least.

Some traditions, notably "psychohistory", have gone even further in portraying the absolute *lack* of an emancipatory or even human minimum through history. "The history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only recently begun to awaken." Through history, children have been "killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorised and sexually abused" Lloyd de Mause (1979:1) argues in a work on this subject .

<sup>11</sup> Fürst also opposes "human being" to "commodity form" in a way that I find superficial: this is precisely a *form*, not a non-human substance. Also, I think that the absolute otherness she wants to investigate is better considered in some other terrain than that denoted by *use value*, since this category is in fact deeply involved in *value*, as is discussed in chapter 13.

## Chapter 10 Theories of patriarchy

### Introduction

The last chapter presented a 'differentiation principle' argument starting from the impossibility of commodity owners being created as commodities. Two forms of creation must exist; commodity-associated activity has an inherent dual character, and given certain circumstances, this split develops into a 'firstness' and 'otherness' field.

Can a theory based on the differentiation principle help explain the comparatively close connection between the commodity form and patriarchal organisation? A 'strong' form of such an argument says that various forms and phases of patriarchal organisation should simply be seen *as* the arrangements resulting from the differentiation. Perhaps the differentiation does not account for all patriarchal arrangements known, but it is closely related to most of them – especially if we reserve the term 'patriarchy' for societies where male dominance is a general societal trait beyond dispute. As the commodity economy evolved, the inner differentiation changed form, creating different main patriarchal frameworks in Western civilisation, eventually resulting in the modern-day gender-segregated and bipolar gender / neutral societal structure.

In sum, discrimination of reproduction is inherent in the commodity form, and this is the main basis of patriarchy in the full, consolidated, state-level sense. We may add

spice to the argument by viewing transhistorical notions of patriarchy as examples of gender fixation and abstractist theory.

This strong argument does have a kernel of truth, yet it is also misleading, and it is not representative of the view presented in this thesis. Outlining it, however, is useful, since it serves to bring up objections to the line of analysis.

In this chapter, I take two steps back, and evaluate the differentiation argument in view of other theories and contemporary debate about patriarchy. Some main objections to the strong form of the argument shall be mentioned first.

Firstly, if it is true that analyses of patriarchy must be 'grounded' in critical gender analysis, it is also possible that the character of this critique (due to its commodity focus in my own case, or for other reasons) may be utterly misleading. Although it runs counter to our modern intuition, it *may* be the case that critical gender analysis is less directly relevant for understanding patriarchy than implied here.

Secondly, some substantial empirical problems emerge. For the strong version argument to fit, one would have to define the patriarchal organisation in a very strict manner, while the commodity form would perhaps have to be defined in a too wide way (this is discussed in chapter 11). On the whole, one might consider the patterns related to the differentiation principle as a *subset* of a wider category of patriarchy, a category that cannot be validly understood in the commodity form context alone.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the strong argument represents a procedure that breaks just about all the methodological rules discussed earlier (chapter 7). These rules said, for example, that the subject at hand should as far as possible be investigated in its own terms or on its own terrain, instead of being hastily categorised in terms of a greater principle. No sooner did I address patriarchy, before this – as I argued - in many ways *new* topic of analysis was brought under the sway of the commodity form!

This was done for a reason, however. As we shall see, the research area associated with patriarchy is so broad and also partly diffuse that some more specific line of approach must be selected. It cannot be avoided. Not doing so in reality usually means using the gender line of approach, which has a number of problems of its own.

In Sartre's terms, a 'project' is needed in order to traverse the wide 'facticity' at hand (cf. Hem, L 1971:15pp.,172). The strong form argument has some merits as a project, since it goes beyond the gender fixation and contains some substantial truth on its own. It helps focus the debate on what is at least one important area for understanding patriarchy.

In a 'weaker' form the thesis may perhaps survive. A more cautious argument says that the internal commodity differentiation has been one important factor in the development of patriarchal organisation, although not the only one. My starting point – or brief summary of existing research – is that the weak argument is true: there is no doubt that a connection exists in this area. What is in dispute is its strength and character. In this and subsequent chapters, my angle is mainly empirical. I examine whether the differentiation principle contributes to an understanding of main problems

of patriarchy studies. I also turn to its implications for critical economic theory and for power theory.

In this chapter, however, the subject is the patriarchy field itself. What exactly is meant by 'patriarchy'? What kind of definitions and theories exist in the field? How can patriarchy be identified in more satisfying ways than as an unknown 'cause' category, behind the discrimination and oppression of women? How do power, exploitation, work and sexuality come into different definitions of patriarchy? If patriarchal organisation includes same-sex as well as cross-sex (between the sexes) discrimination, how are these linked? What can be said of the dynamics of this system, its limits, and its relationship to class, ethnicity / 'race' and other main relationships of power? These questions form the subject of the present chapter.

Throughout, a superficially simple question will reappear - namely *understanding* patriarchy's existence in its own terms. Is it simply 'gender' in disguise, or a 'bad case' of gender? Does it exist at all? Why is it absorbed, so to speak, by a gender question?

In an attempt to outline the development of studies of patriarchy, I did a mini-survey of published papers on the subject. I found three interesting tendencies. First, the research and debate focusing *specifically* on patriarchy are very small, compared to the gender research and debate (as mentioned earlier, I found c. 14000 references to gender, 400 to patriarchy, i.e. about three percent of the former). Yet it is growing, with about four times as many papers in the 1980s compared to the decade before, and a similar growth in the 1990s. Also, it is an area where male researchers have been better represented than elsewhere in women's and gender studies, especially in the early periods (about a third of the 1990s contributions are from men).

At first sight, then, patriarchy studies seem a peripheral corner of gender studies. That impression is very misleading, however. As shall be shown, a more qualitative, in-depth approach gives a very different picture of the importance of patriarchy research for gender studies and feminist theory in general. Its impact has been much larger than the figures would suggest. Still, the figures are interesting for conveying the 'behind the scenes' character of the subject - even in gender-related research. I believe it is often the case that what we write about is gender, yet what we think of is patriarchy, or inequality. The point of most of this writing is patriarchy: what is it? Does it exist or not? And so the question arises how we appraise these phenomena that we meet at the outset, on the threshold. Is patriarchy gender's refraction? Or is gender the transferential circumscription of patriarchal reality?

Anyway, this backstage situation is certainly not improved by the kind of 'common agreement' that rests over the whole field: any moderately enlightened person agrees that patriarchy is '*bad*'. This is perhaps especially marked in equal status-minded areas like Scandinavia, but it is mainly a general trend. Texts *defending* patriarchy are generally hard to find in the research debate. Moreover, when it is done, the burden is usually put on nature, biology, and made into a universal fact, and so not much comes to light regarding patriarchy as a *social* arrangement.

In this perspective, one should perhaps applaud a researcher like Steven Goldberg who stands by his patriarchy defence, even if his recent statements (like his "Final Summation, including Responses to Fifteen Years of Criticism", 1989) appear

somewhat tired. Goldberg maintains that biology not only creates difference, but also that this difference entails social asymmetry regardless of context. Sociological attempts to explain these universalities are doomed, he writes. His way of picturing the universal biology / patriarchy link, however, can be read as a sign of the times (as can his convoluted wording) - patriarchy is now 'elicited' by the ladies:

"Members of the other sex elicit from males, more readily and more strongly than from females, the tendency toward dominance and attainment" (Goldberg, S 1989).

This situation has several interesting aspects. - After all, a good case can be made that patriarchy is alive and well, and so a good social defence might be illuminating, whatever one's view. One wonders why the term is often viewed as halfway illegitimate, not to be used in official gender-related documents, for example in Norway, if no-one defends it anyway? Why the insistence (further outlined below) on describing patriarchy, *when* that concept is used, only in a '*farewell setting*', i.e. as 'old', vanishing, soon gone (e.g. Sjørup, K 1994) - as if its use had to be excused or watered out? What is the hidden controversy here?<sup>1</sup>

If 'patriarchy studies' is indeed a new field, one that *differs* from gender studies, the fact that its problems are *not* so easily solved by theories already developed elsewhere becomes a point of note. If gender studies represent inquiries into people's behaviours and experiences as feminine and masculine, patriarchy studies represent an inquiry into the cultural and societal *reasons for inequality*. If we do not exactly know what the difference between these two kinds of study 'means', our problems of understanding it may, in this perspective, themselves be of some importance.

Why is it, even if the difference of 'gender' and 'inequality' is perfectly clear on the logical level, that the latter seems opaque, the former obvious? What kinds of resistances are encountered here, and what kind of knowledge appears when we try to remove them? These obstacles are not to be seen just as disturbances or incidental phenomena; on the contrary, they should be addressed as significant in their own right. If there is any truth to the formula that '*gender is the symptom, patriarchy the cause*', this is what we have to 'perceive *with*', this is how we may be able to orient the observation system.

I shall approach the development of patriarchy theory and research over the last twenty years, a development which has mainly taken place among feminist and society-oriented researchers in a variety of fields.

## A subject beyond gender

Two main images of patriarchy has existed in social science. One is universalistic in tendency, connecting patriarchal traits to the relationship between men and women or to attributes of men that have existed in most or all societies. The other is particularistic in tendency; patriarchy is seen as connected to specific social and historical circumstances.

What is probably the most wide-spread view today combines these two in a specific version: patriarchy *was* fairly universal, but it no longer is. Modern society has broken

its links, or almost so, even if there may be some remnants in the corners. These are corners where we find backwards, traditional elements, mostly outside the modern world. So this patriarchy view is a larger case of the tendency I described in partner selection ('*sjekking*') - not *me*, not *us*, but *they*. The tendency to see 'our' dissolution of patriarchy as index of civilisation's progress vis-à-vis the poorer parts of the world is as much in evidence today as it was in John Stuart Mills' time.

Is this a well-founded view in terms of research? According to one definition, yes. "*Patriarchy* - 1. a form of social organisation in which the father or the eldest male is recognised as the head of the family or tribe (...) 2. government, rule or domination by men."<sup>2</sup> Under (1) we also find other meanings where 'patriarchy' is defined as a set of particularistic relations. In this perspective, the 19th. century idea that patriarchy would soon whither away is understandable. It is not so easily defended in sense (2), however, or in another, related sense (3), a 'system of relative discrimination of women vis-à-vis men'.

One reason why 'patriarchy' often is not perceived as relevant today is connected to a trend discussed earlier: a dislike of *general* equal status formulations also among many who support *concrete* demands (chapter 5). Although most men in Norway would probably agree to a view that patriarchy in general terms is gone and done with, they give other kinds of answers when presented with a more concrete list.

In the 1988 survey, such a list was presented under the heading '*select the factors that you think are especially important as barriers against equality between women and men*'. The items, in prioritised order (the men could select several), were:

- **Women's work is not properly evaluated (selected by 51 percent)**
- **Women have the main responsibility for the family and home (45 percent)**
- **'Hard' values dominate (30 percent)**
- **'Men oppose further equal status development (27 percent)**
- **'Women oppose further equal status development (8 percent).**

Interestingly, only a small minority found it difficult to answer this question. This fact, as well as the proportions (and items) in this list, are relevant in a patriarchy debate context for several reasons.

Firstly, people do know what one is talking about and are able to give a reasonable picture, if presented with alternatives using common language. The *ideas* involved in these items are no less complex than the main matters of the patriarchy debate (where 'the woman / man in the street' is seldom, if ever, asked what she or he thinks). This is interesting also in light of the fact that one academic argument fairly frequently used against patriarchy theory is that the category is so opaque, and / or the whole terrain so difficult, that it is best avoided. What we asked in terms of content was '*what do you think are the main reasons why patriarchy still exists*'. My overall impression from this study and others is that such a questioning is perceived as *more realistic* than much else that goes on in the name of gender and equal status. In some form, using other words, this is a subject that many people are in fact familiar with.

Secondly, the proportions of answers to the items, when seen together, point in the direction of '*society*' for explaining barriers against equality. Although the above list

was presented to men only, we know from other studies that women give a roughly similar picture, with only slightly more emphasis on men's opposition to equality items. In the 1994 survey (also presented in chapter 5), thirteen percent of the men fully agreed that 'most men are in practice opposing gender equality'. The increase among women was two percent – only fifteen percent of the women fully agreed with the statement.

These results are clearly out of tune with a main media conception of patriarchy as a gender class question, square and simple. The results have additional interest in the Norwegian context where the main attention has been given to gender and to men in particular rather than to societal conditions, both in the research and media debate and in most official documents on this issue. Societal issues and gender questions are of course related, yet the difference of emphasis is nevertheless clear.

The emerging *gap* between an official view (and also a frequent academic view) narrowly focused on gender, and a popular view focusing more on society, seems mainly related to *social class* differences. In the 1994 survey, the 'most men are in practice opposing gender equality' item received almost *twice* as much support from the best-paid income group, compared to the lowest-paid group. Interestingly, education decreased the support for this item, while income strongly increased it. In other words, we got fairly strong indications that *money* is a negative factor regarding men's behaviour, while *education* is a positive factor – a contrast that is noteworthy since the two factors often point in the same direction in other areas.

By emphasising broader societal matters more than a 'men (or gender) mainly' view, the barriers to equality are indirectly posited as a subject of inquiry and studies on its own, distinct from gender.

In the next section, I give a brief outline of the ways in which 'reasons for inequality' or patriarchy became part of the contemporary social research agenda.<sup>3</sup>

## Variants of 'patriarchy'

(1) Before the 1970s, patriarchy was often used in the *particularistic* sense defined above ("the father or the eldest male is recognised as the head of the family", etc.), for example among family researchers contrasting 'patriarchal' and 'modern' or egalitarian families.

(2) This survived in the view of patriarchy as a specifically *family-related* category, for example in socialist feminists' debate where patriarchy was identified with the 'patriarchal family' (e.g.. "the subservient position of women remains an integral part of the institution of marriage... the foundations of wife beating are built into the marriage contract and into the marital hierarchy, which is patriarchal in form." (Dobash et. al. 1977)). Often the patriarchal family was described in a fully timeless manner, yet with concepts typical of the 1970s debate - the family that had existed from "ancient" and "primitive" times "made every husband an 'owner' of his wife's productivity, energy and time"; its features as an "embryonic class formation (..) are hard to ignore." (Holder, A 1981:21-2).

(3) A *widening* of the patriarchy concept, still with a family kernel, was a marked trait in the 1970s debate; for feminists, patriarchy had now become what one lived 'under' (e.g.. "under patriarchy, mothers and daughters are related within the context of the power of the father." (Westkott, M 1978)). Patriarchy, then, *is* the family. The problem with this concept, and the reason why it mostly fell out of usage in the 1980s feminist debate, was not that families were not seen as patriarchal, but that other institutions also were.

(4) The first type of extension of the concept seems to have been broadly *cultural* - once more with some ground in earlier usage. Patriarchy was often described as a broad and pervasive cultural and ideological pattern, as in Barbara Ehrenreich's paper 'The Manufacture of Housework' (1975) which concludes that "patriarchy, scientific management, the germ theory of disease, and home economics combined into a new ideology that was often racist and ethnocentric", a patriarchal culture in the US in the early decades of our century which also usurped feminist ideals - "the new image of the home was combined with feminist ideals by promising to lessen the burden of housework and to dignify the roles of housewife and mother. The combination of perspectives thus formed an ideology that could legitimate continued restriction of women to the home and reformulate housework around new tasks." This broad concept of patriarchy allowed researchers to investigate, for example, patriarchal / racist connections (e.g. Scott, A 1974). Together with the broad culturalism, however, there was also often a declared (and declaration-level) universalism - e.g. "patriarchy is the rule in any historical society, and no psychological or physical distinction between the sexes can suffice to explain the automatic privileges granted to males." (Fortier, L 1975).

(5) The cultural usage was often connected to radical *psychodynamic* traditions reaching back to the work of Wilhelm Reich (and, in Norway, Ingjald Nissen, later Erik Grønseth), as in Bullen (1976): "viewing the work of Freud within the scientific context in which it was formed [means psychoanalysis] can explain the relationship of patriarchy to the unconscious". Jessica Benjamin's (1978; 1988) work is a notable high quality example in this tradition.

(6) In the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, more institutional and *sociological* concepts of patriarchy became central, as in works of Hartmann (1979) and others. This is the main direction of patriarchy studies in a sociological perspective, and it is discussed later in this chapter. It is partially structuralist, yet it is not deterministic. As Arnlaug Leira (1992:183, my transl.) argues, "patriarchy studies (..) do not only concern forms of male dominance and power methods, but also women's resistance and coping strategies.

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Before attempting to identify the patriarchy studies field in more precise terms, I shall note some traits that often are more overt in early efforts than in later ones. A sense of *background force* is fairly evident throughout the literature, yet seldom clearly spelled out, as if a causal model (patriarchy as cause of women's oppression) would be misleading. What appears is often a cluster of three meanings - *cause*, *general trait*, and *worst case*. This mixture reappears also in institutional analysis, which in the

beginning was mainly classificatory, trying to identify the main institutions involved in patriarchal organisation.

Beyond the more specialised debates, the wider women's and gender studies field developed with the term 'patriarchy' more in the background. The term was typically evoked in negative contexts with the cluster of meanings mentioned, sometimes with a conspiratorial 'the' in front - *the* patriarchy behind it all. The common basic idea was one of gender and power combined, which was also one main reason why its use did not become more widespread. Why not *use* simpler terms like gender and power, if that is the meaning? In the 1980s, this kind of objection resulted in innumerable variants of combinatory terms like 'gender / power system'.

Interestingly, one of the main challenges to this gender-like view of patriarchy came precisely from the 'particularistic' direction of its own origin - that is, from historical studies. What historians met here often did not live up to the gender expectation. Not only were women often absent in the sources; there was also a problem of emphasis, noted earlier, with not so much said about male-female relations as such. This created a problem of a 'specific' / direct method or a more 'wholistic' / indirect one. Should one use what historical sources said directly about women and male-female relationships, or were other matters relevant also, perhaps more relevant? As we shall see, this dilemma in turn extends into a question of patriarchy as same-sex relations as well as cross-sex relations. An example may illustrate the methodological problem.

In an attempt to uncover the pro- or anti-patriarchal views of Kant and Hegel, David MacGregor (1992:95-137) employs the direct or specific method, using what the two wrote of women. He presents a view of Hegel as a fairly liberal pro-feminist, respectful of marriage and of women, by quoting Hegel on this subject, and discussing how Hegel's family view built on Hippel's work ("*without Eve, Adam is but an animal*"). He criticises Carol Pateman's more negative (and more indirect or holistic method-based) view of Hegel, and in particular her overlooking Hegel's *Philosophy Of Rights* which he finds "scathingly critical of women's oppression" (op.cit. 117). Kant, rather than Hegel, should be the focus of critique, according to MacGregor. For the unmarried Kant, marriage remained the exchange of sexual organs (ibid., with ref. to Kant's *Philosophy of Law*), while for Hegel, marriage was no exchange, but a change of consciousness.

The problems with this approach concern the fact that neither Kant nor Hegel put their opinions of women or marriage in the centre of their philosophical systems. What is openly said about women is at the periphery - and may therefore not be a very good guide to the real issue of the debate, namely whether these men's philosophies were patriarchal or not. For example, if it can be shown that Hegel's main category of *being* at the outset disables women's being, his explicit writings about women matter very little, and, further, come into a quite different light.

Much of the debate about Hegel, Kant, Marx and others has proceeded from the direct and, I believe, fairly naive method idea that the sociological interest of their views, in a patriarchy perspective, resides mainly in what they wrote of men and women. Yet this may be the *least* important and interesting part of their theories. Once more, the importance of a critical gender analysis that extends into the realm of '*neutrality*' comes to the forefront. - A more recent 'intermediate' approach consists in asking why

various thinkers or philosophers did not address cross-sex discrimination more fully, or as Mike Gane (1993:82) writes of Marx: "why there is no original contribution to the question of gender oppression from such an original and daring, and one must insist, dangerous thinker". Gane's answers, studying the personal biographies of Marx and others, are interesting, yet still couched within the cross-sex frame.

Clearly, a more holistic and indirect method must be applied; for evaluating patriarchal tendencies in a given society (or philosophy) we cannot rely only on what sources tell us about male-female relationships, since other matters may be as indicative, all the more so since written sources were mainly created by men in power positions. Yet this brings us to a major matter: these two methods, and the direct one especially, are related to what has been said earlier about the gender framework; *they are direct or indirect for us*, in a modern setting. What about the things that were direct or of main importance *for them*?

As we examine these matters in an oppression of women perspective, some strange things happen. What we face, in the typical source case, is a *relationship between men*.<sup>4</sup> Not only does it 'seem' patriarchal, according to our suspicions, our idea that the man-man relations have a background link to oppression of women. Quite the contrary: it is *declared* patriarchal in the sources themselves, openly discussed in terms of patriarchal power, either simply by using that term, or by connecting closely to it.

Why is this strange? We went in through a front door marked '*Patriarchy may not exist, and if it exists, its kernel is cross-sex discrimination*'. Yet we come into a room where there is a big sign with a quite different message: '*Patriarchy surely exists and its kernel is same-sex discrimination mainly between men*'. We may of course choose to see this as *their* ideology, which in a certain sense is true. That does not help us much, however, since we still have to account for why this ideology is so often remarkably effective, why it *is* in fact related to most of what goes on. It is hard to escape the conclusion that patriarchy contains both same-sex and cross-sex dominance, and that the one becomes relatively manifest, the other latent and hidden, depending on social conditions.

## Studies of patriarchy: four main traits

Four main traits, here formulated as rules, are of help in order to identify and establish the subject of patriarchy as a research field *sui generis*.

(1) Studies of patriarchy concern stratification leading to women's secondary position in society and related same-sex or not sex-specific stratification. They also concern differentiation forms connected to the stratification. While patriarchy theories differ in their emphasis on these elements, the *association* between them is a main trait defining the field as a whole.

(2) Patriarchy is a subject that concerns social relations where people interact and relate in many ways, not only *as* men or women. Once more, theories differ regarding what, exactly, this means and what it implies, and many theories do not distinguish explicitly between gender-related behaviour and patriarchal behaviour. However, they

almost always do so in practice, by focusing on patriarchal relations as such, not as *contingent* on a gender signification form. The fact that gendered signification is often *implied* (for reasons discussed above) does not define the patriarchy study area.

Therefore, when patriarchy analysis discusses, for example, the feudal landlord, there is no requirement of proof that the landlord acts as a man, motivated by his masculinity, or due to his gender status. Nor is his direct relationship to women necessarily the main matter. Rather, the analysis concerns the character and background of oppression itself, direct or indirect, and *in practice* makes this the main subject, rather than gender, so that, for example, the landlord's behaviours *as landlord*, his or her social class motives, centrality position, kinship, etc. may all be found to be important.

If we use class theory as a parallel, the analysis is not restricted to 'class for us', or class as subjectively perceived. It extends to 'class in itself', class as objectively existing beyond the perceptions of its members.

(3) Patriarchy is situated as a causal factor behind the oppression of women and the related same-sex (and non-sex-associated) oppression. Yet it is also (through rules 1 and 2) a system of its own, with other links and potential effects.

The first part of this rule is important for acknowledging that patriarchy is not *isolated* from sexed or gendered organisation, even if it should be distinguished analytically. As discussed earlier, the fact that patriarchy always includes *some* connection to sexed organisation does not mean that it necessarily involves the kind of modern link we associate with gender, nor that the connection to sex is always of main importance.

The second part, that patriarchy is a system on its own, is important for establishing patriarchy as a subject beyond any purely formal 'causal link' consideration. We might, for example, argue that capitalism (or some other social system) exists due to a number of background factors or causes; these might in turn deserve their own terms and status as subject of inquiry. While not denying such possibilities, it is clear that patriarchy theories on the whole go further, and collectively make a much stronger claim. Patriarchy is not just a case of the kind of 'background system' that may be conceivably be imagined in any context (and even in an endless backwards chain). According to what is known of the oppression and discrimination of women, we are faced with *real* object of study, not just a formal concept. So the parallel is not to a 'background system' of capitalism, but to capitalism itself, while gender oppression, as the effect of patriarchy, parallels class oppression as effect of capitalism. This parallel should not be taken too far, but it is valid here.

It is true that oppression of women can also be seen as a system that needs no further background inquiry, for example in line with the postmodernist slogan that the truth is in the surface. Patriarchy theories basically do not agree. Instead, there is the *tendency*, even if not always fully explicit, of moving towards a *substantive account of a process and structure* on its own, one that has its own historical, structural and cultural dynamics.

(4) While the subject of patriarchy is thereby analytically distinguished from its effects, including gender signification as situated in a context of men's primary and

women's secondary societal status, it remains connected to them. It is commonly agreed that patriarchal organisation can be identified through its effects, especially by empirically observable traits of discrimination and oppression of women. Although this approach once again may become too narrow, since other (same-sex, etc.) patterns may be as relevant, it does have two important methodological consequences. It situates patriarchy studies and debate broadly within an empirical perspective ('empirical' as in *realist*, not empiricist, quantitative only, or similar). It also makes the empirical existence of oppression and of patriarchal patterns connected to it into main issues.

Patriarchy analysis asks, '*what are the possible background patterns (a, b, c, d, etc.) of the observed trait (x1)*'. Today this observed trait commonly consists of cross-sex stratification, and it may thereby be conceived as a gender trait. Still, the method in principle is *different* from the gender analysis method. Gender analysis asks a different question: '*how is gender related (or: how do men and women as men and women, in that specific capacity, relate) to the observed trait (x1)*'. In patriarchy analysis, representing a widening of the field of inquiry, it is often possible to reinterpret gender analysis as an inquiry into the interrelationships of various observed oppression traits (x1, x2, x3, etc.). Gender analysis often represents a partial analysis of these matters, since they are studied as far as they are perceived as connected to gender.

These four basic rules, concerning

- **the presence of same-sex as well as cross-sex relations,**
- **relations beyond those directly related to gender,**
- **a structure of relations with its own dynamics, and**
- **the empirical verification of this structure,**

together establish patriarchy as a subject on its own. It is related to sex and gender, and yet not to be reduced to the latter. We may also call this field *equal status studies*, 'reasons for inequality studies' and much else. I prefer the term that has now become common, even if it has some associations that may obscure the issues (like monocausal or conspiratorial ideas, discussed below). The main matter is the *factual existence* of an important field of research.

This is important also for approaching the bewildering state of the art regarding *terminology*. Due to the explorative and underdeveloped character of the field, its broadness and complexity, as well as the problems of the modern gender perspective discussed earlier, the terminology can hardly be called consistent. A main trait, as mentioned, is that much of the discussion about patriarchy is in fact couched in terms of sex or gender.

This may be confusing, yet there is usually a kernel matter which is clear regardless of the terms selected. If I write, say, of a 'gender / power system' as a category of oppression of women, my theme does not only concern the effects of this oppression, nor is it necessarily one that involves relations between men and women. Usually, translating the system term with 'patriarchy' will work fine. In most texts these terms are anyway only used in the wide sense, meaning *how society including men treats women and the relations connected to this treatment*. It is not confined to (1) how

women are treated by men or others *as* women, i.e. the gender system as defined earlier, and neither, usually, to (2) how *men* treat women. When system terms are used, it is instead *the overall impact and its background* which is the subject.

It is no coincidence that the necessity of maintaining a distinction between patriarchy and gender appears more clearly in historical studies than elsewhere. As we saw, the 'direct' method of studying what is said of women for example in philosophical systems tends to close the door on further discovery. Historians often start with sources that do not thematise gender, and therefore this 'gender' must at least be seen in a wider context of 'latent' gender. This 'lost and found' aspect is not all, since these sources often *do* say quite a few things about patriarchy, presenting manifest same-sex stratification between men especially together with latent or less directly addressed cross-sex stratification. A typical example illustrates this. In the twenty-volume collected works of Thomas Aquinas' (1900), male-female relations are addressed in some places, perhaps five percent of the text. The rest is largely about male-male relationships, a fatherly power descending down on men and the rest of society and nature (a structure that later was formalised, in 'archaised' form, in Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (1949)). Much of it has indirect consequences for women's status. Simply as a matter of *method*, therefore, disregarding theoretical views, the researcher is forced to *start* with the central, overt relationships, trying to find out *how women are implicated* in them.

This is not only a matter of 'translation problems'; it is also a method with a larger significance, being broadly *congruent* with the situation in many of the patriarchal societies studied. In other words, the method of looking at other things than just the overt man-woman relationships, and, often, starting from relations between men, not only tendentially breaks out of the gender fixation, it also points to a basic fact of patriarchal organisation itself, namely (a) that women *are* implicated, and, turning this around, (b) that *relations between men* and other same-sex relations *are implicated also*. While point (a) seems obvious today, but not in many of the sources, point (b) is often obvious in the sources, while it is not in the modern conception. Historical analyses thereby strengthen the claim that patriarchy rests on two power dimensions, or should itself be understood *as* the relationship between these two, rather than being located within one of them.

I emphasise the matter of the two signs mentioned above, pointing to the dual character of patriarchy. In the modern setting, it is usually examination of cross-sex oppression that leads to some form of patriarchy analysis, while in the historical setting, studies of same-sex ranking lead the same way. None of these are 'false'. In the historical setting, power relations between men are usually of general importance for power and wealth in the society at hand, and for women's roles. This is the case in our world also, yet today this theme is usually not clearly connected to patriarchy, since 'of course' patriarchy is a cross-sex relation. These matters are spelled out in order to show the importance of disentangling the object of study from the very dissimilar *perspectives* on that object.

Two steps are common in the historical analysis. The first, as mentioned, consists in studying how *same-sex* (primarily male) *ranking implicates cross-sex ranking* (going the other way around is still rare). The second step concerns the fact that the same-sex hierarchy, primarily of men, often contains a *common basis*, even if the extent of this

basis varies. Does it include all men? Free men? Men of power? - This was illustrated in the philosophical example above, concerning categories like 'being' in the case of Hegel, or 'work' and 'production' in the case of Marx. These *basis-categories* and the processes they refer to become a topic of special interest, usually because they *simultaneously exclude and implicate women* in specific, important ways.

The earlier discussion regarding the older 'unisex' view of the body versus the modern gendered one (chapter 8) is relevant here. We saw that both views, not just the first one, depart from photographic realism; they both contain an ideological element. In the current matter of same-sex versus cross-sex stratification we come to a similar (and related) *main historical division line*, a shift of perspective. It is fairly easy to recognise a certain 'ideological' stance behind the first, pre-modern and early modern type of view. Here, women often were not perceived as subjects of civilisation or society, as defined by those in power. It remains a fact, however, that women were not always excluded, that they also sometimes appeared in power positions, although not usually addressed primarily *as* women in those roles. An interpretation of the old view as *only* 'androcentric' means overlooking substantial evidence in this respect. And further: if *their* view was not *only* 'ideological', this more balanced interpretation must also be used towards *our* own, modern view, which is not *only* the full and simple truth. This modern view places the oppression of women and cross-sex stratification into the central definition of patriarchy, as *a matter of reflex*, a tendency that should be avoided.

What appears as the common ground of the two different views is one system of interlinked stratification within two main areas, that of cross-sex and same-sex relations. Understanding this linkage appears as the main issue. Attempts to establish the relative priority of the two may be important, but also easily misleading until we know more of the connection itself. Also, our tendency towards reflex or *a priori* judgements in these matters calls for caution. I shall present evidence that shows, broadly, that both areas are important, although their manifest social emphasis has changed. On the other hand, attempts to present the one as *the* central one, the other as peripheral, or the one as cause, the other as effect, lead to problems, regardless of whether it is the cross-sex or the same-sex area which is put in the centre. Here as elsewhere an approach to the 'balance' or quantity question depends on an understanding of the qualities involved, the character of the connection.

The theories that address the subject of patriarchy, as defined above, have certain common traits that are 'formal', in terms of the way the argument proceeds, as well as 'substantial' in terms of the subject matter. Before turning to existing views and theories, some further criteria for creating patriarchy theory shall be outlined, even if these are on the level of Weber's (1964) 'pure types' – and somewhat idealistic in the current situation.

A first criterion, discussed above, concerns *subject identification*; a theory of patriarchy must make its subject intelligible and distinct, even if it is a wide one.

A second criterion concerns the establishment of *key dynamics*, or central processes, within the subject. Typologies may be used as a means of approach, yet a classificatory framework by itself is not enough. We may argue, for example, that

*sexuality* is a key dynamic of patriarchy, or *labour*; many suggestions exist (as outlined below), and the theory should identify these.

Thirdly, the theory should be able to make some sense of the *relationship* between the key factor(s) and others. I use the broad term 'some sense' for a reason, against the idea that a new theory will have to disprove whatever else exists, or outflank rival theories. I find this generally misleading above a certain level of complexity in social science, and singularly inappropriate here. It certainly *helps* a theory if it is better able to explain the phenomena at hand than its alternatives, yet it also has a say on its own. In patriarchy (and gender) studies the main situation is one of huge complexity and many contributing viewpoints (in this context, I have yet to find a patriarchy theory that does not contain *some* interesting and valid points).

This leads to a last criterion, *operationalisation and empirical verification*. I share the view recently put forward by Sylvia Walby (1994a) that patriarchy studies are 'modernist' in the sense of having an empirical emphasis. This does not entail a dismissal of all the 'interpretational' issues uncovered by postmodernist, hermeneutic and other interpretation-oriented fields and the feminists efforts within them over the last fifteen years (or the valid parts of these efforts). Quite the contrary: it is precisely when one does realise that signs point to something beyond themselves, that the real interpretational issues begin. The social forms approach may itself be regarded as an attempt to incorporate such issues into the 'observation system' methodology, along with an emphasis on process- and institutional orientation.

In broad terms, then, we shall have to evaluate different theories of patriarchy according to how they fit with the evidence and how well they let us interpret it. This means 'evidence' in the broad yet not chaotic sense of 'observable patterns of oppression of women *and* same-sex (or non-sexed) patriarchal oppression'. Ideally we want the widest possible assessment of qualitative and quantitative studies of the positions of women and men in society and culture as well as an in-depth look and a critical evaluation of different types of evidence, including a continuous effort to correct for probable 'local distortion', like the two historical ideologies of patriarchy discussed above.

Many of the issues addressed here are similar to those in studies of class relations and centrality/ethnicity/'race' relations. They all require cross-disciplinary efforts, an avoidance of a too narrow perspective but also an attempt to distinguish main patterns, and a broad assessment of a huge range of empirical material brought about through different methods.

## Looking for causes

As I said, the 'facticity' or field of possible relevance for patriarchy studies is a fairly wide one, and there is no way to approach it that does justice to everything. Instead a more thematic or imaginative method may be in order. The debate on the *emergence of patriarchy* which is the subject of chapter 11 has brought forth a multitude of ideas of 'key factors' of patriarchal organisation. Beyond everything else that may be said, this debate is characterised by a question mark, a greater *unknown*. Thereby it has also functioned as a kind of Rorschach test of modern attention to patriarchy and gender.

Imaginative and ingenious answers to the 'reasons why' question have often appeared more clearly in this unknown terrain than in the context of explaining modern patriarchy.

We often meet, at the outset, the idea that things once were clearer and more simple, that patriarchy can be attributed to one specific trait or factor, with less of the guarded talk about interrelated factors that characterises most approaches to the discussion about contemporary patriarchy. I am not, here, evaluating various theories' historical relevance, but simply using them as indicative of modern concerns (cf. Coward, R 1983).

'Monocausal' historical analyses exist that cover at least the following possible key elements:

- **The discovery of paternity (e.g. Stone, M 1979, and many);**
- **The introduction of the plow (cf. Lerner, G 1986:50);**
- **The introduction of the sword;**
- **The growth of the military (Hacker, B 1987);**
- **The rise of warrior culture (Arthur, M 1973);**
- **The taming of animals (Fisher, E 1979:190);**
- **The emergence of cattle-holding (Childe, G 1986:73);**
- **Nomads' rising power (Håland & Håland 1982);**
- **Indo-European expansion and invasions (Gimbutas, M 1989; 1990, and many);**
- **Kinship changes including a shift from matri- to patrilocality (many);**
- **Changes in the status of children (cf. Lerner, G 1986:50);**
- **A shift from group to pair families (Engels, F 1970), and, of course,**
- **The rise of class society**

– and probably a number of others. Fairly monocausal theories or outlines also exist in relation to the development of writing, a new mentality or rationality, and similar.

Whatever else, this list has the effect of making the observer take two steps back and reconsider the terrain as a whole.

One pattern of 'conjectural explanation' starts from men's world, as conceived today. Here we find that matters of work, production and technology rank high in importance, to the extent that a whole societal system is sometimes envisioned as brought about by a single technological innovation, like the plow.

Another pattern starts from women's world, where the human material once more is credited with quite some power on its own; discovering paternity, for example, might have represented the mental leap into a patriarchal order.

A third pattern, somewhat more diffuse, relates to 'neutral' phenomena. It is noteworthy that this pattern also often goes further than the others in a 'between' view of women (women's position conceived as a position between men). It is also often more transhistorical than the others. Levi-Strauss' view of women as the circulative medium in kinship systems is a well-known example, extending into views in which women exist between the structures of men or society in general. Postmodern

positions emphasising the patriarchal character of language and the symbolic order as such, with women lost in the 'folds', can also be regarded in this context.

A fourth explanatory pattern also appears, reminiscent of the idea that patriarchy is *their* affair, not ours (or even the male gender market slogan 'don't blame me, it's those other types', the concern about that *other* masculinity, etc.). In this line of thought, patriarchy did not originate where one might otherwise have assumed its origin, i.e. in the main centres of stratification and power. Rather, it was brought in from the outside world. Instead of shifting the location of patriarchy towards nature, it is here shifted towards the periphery. This is usually done in terms of an expanding Indo-European culture that supposedly turned the peaceful egalitarian conditions of the old centres of civilisation upside down.

A fifth pattern, sometimes related to the fourth, basically takes this overturning matter as point of departure, a view of patriarchy *as* an upside-down version of matriarchy, an order that may have collapsed for the same kinds of power reasons that makes patriarchy problematical. Although this view is not commonly held today it is relevant in the present context.

In presenting these points of view in a somewhat light vein, I am not, as I said, implying that they do not concern what they purport to concern, or can in any way be *reduced* to modern gender attitudes. My point is only that modern attitudes are *also* there, and indicative of a kind of imaginary terrain that cannot be avoided.

Turning to modern-day patriarchal structure, then, we may recognise the same main lines of explanation, although not as sharply as in the early history area, and not as overtly presented as monocausal or nearly monocausal theses. Instead, 'main orientations' of the argumentation appear. These are sketched here before turning to a discussion of the main recent institutional and sociological views.

*The reproduction orientation.* In this orientation, reproductive relationships including motherhood and sexuality appear as the centre of the main dynamics of patriarchy. This often means that the cross-sex element is given main emphasis, but not necessarily, for this orientation primarily concerns children, socialisation and related family aspects that may also be theorised in a same-sex stratification perspective.

*The production orientation.* Here, relations or forces of production appear as the central arena. Patriarchal organisation is seen as contingent on certain conditions of production, for example the fact that production work is societal, public- and politics-oriented, while reproduction work is seen as more private or secluded. The relationship between production and reproduction is also often involved. Yet the main vision here is one of one main sphere of societal dynamics surrounded by small, isolated households, and not one of two spheres.

*Dual sphere theories.* In some views, including the present one, this relationship itself becomes the main focus. The development of two-sphere theories that has occurred mainly over the last two decades can itself be seen as an expression of the current gender system changes discussed earlier, including greater emphasis on a dyadic level of interaction and exchange. Within a dual sphere view, the emphasis may be put

variously on each sphere, and their connection may be seen as a more or less close one.

*The cultural orientation.* This is a very wide designation containing many different theoretical perspectives and different discipline traditions. As the cultural orientation has developed within the gender and patriarchy studies fields especially over the last fifteen years, some common traits can also be found. One of these consists in a reaction, in the late 1980s especially, against what was conceived as too narrow materialism and/or too positivist views in the existing views and in the production-oriented traditions primarily. There was the general feeling that patriarchy was more than a handful of observable facts to be added to some already-existing theory, like Marxism, and that basic questions of science, society and 'facts' were not being addressed (Harding, S 1986). If the postmodernist, psychodynamic, hermeneutic, and text-interpretational turning of much feminist theory in the 1980s has later been criticised (e.g. Maynard 1994; Wærness, K 1995), it should also be remembered that this reaction was fairly understandable. There was indeed a need to get out of an emerging 'closure'. The exhausted state of the feminist-Marxist domestic labour debate in the early 1980s was one indication; in retrospective, it seems clear that the alternatives in this debate were all fairly 'androcentric' (cf. chapter 13).<sup>5</sup>

*The class connection.* We may distinguish between three main forms of social class argument within the field, one traditional, one intermediate, and one rather recent and underdeveloped. The traditional class argument puts class in a central role by de-emphasising cross-sex and gender aspects, seeing women as class members through the men around them, leading to a class perspective that has little to say on the specifics of patriarchy vis-à-vis those of class society in general.

A more recent (and more feminist) tradition puts class in a role of 'main addition' to the core cross-sex relations arguments. This has been a fairly common view, and I believe the main advantage and problem of this position are now also fairly widely recognised. On the one hand, this tradition does keep an emphasis on class, arguing rightly that class matters cannot be ignored or seen as peripheral. On the other hand, there remains the main difficulty of connecting gender and class and identifying the dynamics between these two power dimensions.

The third and as yet rather underdeveloped view treats class and gender as dimensions of patriarchy, or reinterprets class theory on the basis of feminist views. There is the idea that gender and class cannot be 'connected' as-is, and, especially, that class theory must be reinterpreted from its core political-economical elements and outwards. In some views, like the present one, a critique of gender conceptions is also involved in that project.

*The centrality/ethnicity/'race' connection.* This is an even more unexplored area than the ones mentioned above. Although critiques of 'white' feminism exist and even if there has been much talk about integrating global and anti-racist perspectives, I know of few, if any, theories of patriarchy that *starts* from the centrality dimension, or from the link between patriarchy and centrality, and goes on from there. The 'zone of silence' is even more obvious in related areas; as Janet Finch (in Leira, A 1993:28) says, "questions of ethnicity (..) have intruded very little into the mainstream of family sociology". There is often an underlying implication that the white, rich-world sphere

of (re)production is the centre of the world (Barret & McIntosh 1985). Since the possibilities seem fairly large that a change of perspective on this point would indeed represent a major step forward, or at least contribute to an important new dimension to the field, this is a key area for future research.

For example, I do not doubt that a restudy of the gender market today, with more third world immigrants in Norway, would find that the attractiveness system is also a racist system, one in which other traits will have to make up for the wrong skin colour. According to many reports, 'practical apartheid' is widespread, people are not allowed entrance, and similar. In current European gender politics, the patriarchal connection often becomes *manifest* precisely when 'race' is involved. Propaganda reappears: when the Norwegian state splits immigrant families and uses other patriarchal means, it is sometimes done in the name of '*their*' patriarchal culture. *We* are of course above that.

*The sexuality connection.* This differs from the reproduction orientation by focusing on the sexual file system. While it has been important for widening our understanding modern gender (discussed in chapter 8), it is generally deemed less relevant for explaining patriarchy outside of the modern context, since the sexual file system itself is usually less important (or at least less systematised) there. It deserves attention in the modern context, however, since the main causal relationship between gender and sexuality to my mind remains an open issue, and for other reasons.

*The psychodynamic/psychological connection.* Freud's theory can be used as-is for explaining patriarchy; Freud himself did that, creating a transhistorical terrain of sons, fathers, sexuality and aggression that was kept also by many early feminist efforts into this area (Mitchell, J 1974). It is noteworthy that whereas the 1970s 'marriage of feminism and Marxism' was always a contested affair, later neo-Freudian, Lacanian, etc. unions have attracted more feminine loyalty.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless it is increasingly recognised that history and sociology need not be thrown out the door when psychoanalysis is invited in, with increasingly subtle interpretations also of Freud's own theses (MacCannell, J 1991). An example is Teresa Brennan (1992:238) who argues that "the characteristics of femininity, as Freud defined them, will be more evident when the subject's need to project an immobilising image and disordered affects on the other is greater (..) this varies cross-culturally and has varied historically (..) [Today,] identity crises and narcissistic disorders figure more prominently on the therapeutic agenda. Yet these identity crises also encapsulate the disabling characteristics of femininity. The dependency on another for an image, the inability to act (..) the difficulty of maintaining a logical chain of thought (perversely, a subject of celebration in contemporary postmodern theory [!]), the unwillingness to ask too many questions, even, possibly, a weaker sense of justice, all these show that femininity remains a problem in both sexes." She could have added the considerable evidence connecting femininity and violence in men; what she says of the recent, more narcissist and less overt form of immobility corresponds to the gender marketing tendencies discussed earlier. Although this concerns gender, it indirectly shows the *factual* patriarchal overloading of gender – and not only the men's side of it.

If we go back to the *first* 'union' of psychodynamic theory and sociological views, represented by critical theorists like Fromm and Marcuse, we find a main path from supposed universal truths, drives, energies, etc. to society. Usually the union became more lively when that perspective was turned around, notably in terms of historical personality formations and new and more subtle forms of repression. The same can be said of the later feminist attempts, and the reasons why 'universalist safety mechanisms' nevertheless so often become important in this area (cf. 'regulatory theory', chapter 7) are themselves a worthy subject of investigation in psychodynamic terms. There is a need to secure the ledge all the more on the one side when it is questioned on the other.

Since no more will be said of patriarchy theories from a psychodynamic angle in this chapter, it should be emphasised that this is an important area where new developments can be made. In a discussion of patriarchy studies, Arnlaug Leira (1992:183, my trans.) argues that the question of "how we relate to the oppression inside us" was a theme that was addressed in the early (1970s) development of research in this area, "yet it was regrettably mainly left alone" later.

## Causes and connections

This brief overview brings us to the more general matter of what *kinds* of causes or connections that are implicated in the research in the directions listed above. I believe five general points can be made.

Firstly, some notion of 'cause' and some form of explanatory framework must be retained, in order to do research and create theory in this area. 'Interpretational' theory is a necessary part of this, but it does not suffice on its own. This is related to what I said concerning the 'modernist' element and the broadly realist and empirical orientation.

Secondly, monocausal theories have generally met problems in this area as elsewhere. Explanatory (as well as interpretative) attempts are usually more successful when relying on a more complex cluster of factors, even if this does not mean that 'anything goes' or that everything counts for the same.

Thirdly, connections are usually (at least) two-way relations; whatever is said to 'cause' patriarchal organisation usually becomes more plausible when discussed also in a context where this organisation 'works back on' the causal factor. Once more this does not imply that every kind of movement is equally important.

Fourthly, questions of origin differ from questions of maintenance. This is generally acknowledged in this area, to the extent that we mainly have two debates, one about 'emergence' and one about 'contemporary / modern patriarchy', with a large grey area in the middle. This leaves the impression that patriarchy resembles a *perpetuum mobile*, something that just goes on anyway, indirectly making the whole search for causes less relevant.

Origin reasons and upkeep reasons are probably not totally unconnected. I do not believe much can be said about this on a general level, or not much that is relevant in

our context. Rather it is my pragmatic view that patriarchy through different epochs entails a bit too much in the way of common features and processes to be explained by two wholly separate sets of factors.

Finally, and in relation to the fourth point: while some common causal traits are probably to be found, it is also the case, here as elsewhere, that the same result may be created by many different causes. Once more this is not mainly a formal question. I find patriarchy theories most fruitful when they both retain some wider causal notions *and* go into the given context with a view to the kinds of radical differences of social forms discussed earlier. There is often a movement here, in the research: what seemed to be the same initially, actually is quite different. As Heidi Hartmann (1979) argued in the late 1970s already, patriarchy is not "an unchanging and universal phenomenon, but [one] whose forms are subject to change".

## Theories of capitalist patriarchy

Since the historical patriarchy debate is presented in the next chapter, understanding patriarchy in a modern context forms the topic of the rest of this chapter. We turn, then, to a more specific but also major area within patriarchy research. This is often termed studies of 'capitalist patriarchy', and at the outset it should be emphasised that both words are now used in a very broad sense - capitalism meaning 'the capitalist era' (including declared socialist economies), patriarchy meaning 'social organisation creating women's secondary status and related phenomena'. While 'modernity' today is often used for the first of these categories, it is a point of some note that researchers in this area have found more reason to retain the 'capitalist' part than researchers in many other fields, including other feminist research areas. This is not mainly due to a scepticism towards 'modernity' *per se*, but more, I believe, to the kinds of paths created by the research itself.

Researchers certainly do not know *how* patriarchal organisation relates to the rest of contemporary society, but one need not read much in this area in order to notice a *general tendency* that basic traits associated with capitalism are perceived as being of major relevance. One looks for influential or 'heavy' structures, including matters of social class, and analyses of capitalism are felt to be more helpful in that regard than broader terms like 'modernity'.<sup>7</sup> So this tendency goes beyond more specific political disagreements (humanist, postmodern, radical, socialist, Marxist, materialist feminisms *et.al.*), even if it is more overt in some of the orientations outlined above than in others. The tendency to connect patriarchy to psychodynamic theory – instead of staying at a behavioural or cognitive surface – is a parallel and related phenomenon. In many fields, researchers trying to explain the reasons for oppression of women find reasons to look for 'depth structures'.

In the contemporary sociological patriarchy debate, the terrain subtly shifts, and some initial and somewhat imaginative considerations are again relevant. What is the kind of 'gestalt' that the researchers in this area go into? What kind of picture emerges, how is it framed? I discuss some problems first, turning to more positive traits later.

One trait is a '*bird's eye view*' and a certain theoretical thinness or '*high altitude effect*'. In this area, the researcher is faced not with one, but with two very complex systems,

and when the focus is on how they interact, on these two as one whole, the path to daily life events or even to mid-level theory may sometimes seem fairly long. This is an initial impression, and we shall soon find traits that do not fit that picture, but instead, interestingly, appear down on 'low ground' or right in the middle of highly concrete contexts. Initially, however, we notice a main emphasis on systems thinking and creating systems categories that are highly general in character yet also somewhat more precise than what existed before. This was marked especially in the late 1970s / early 1980s phase of this research, which was often 'classificatory' in the sense mentioned. Some of it is noticeable today also.

Nancy Hartsock (1983:176) highlights the relatively complex character of theories in this area: only through a critique of market epistemology as well as of sexuality can we "begin to understand the significance of describing contemporary Western social relations as a capitalist patriarchy". Today, thirteen years later, the *begin to understand* message is still pertinent.

This complexity also means that even if researchers usually reject both traditional positivism and a simplified standpoint position, the very task seems to engender some of both. As I said, an angle is needed. There is an understandable movement towards *simplifying* all the complexity on the one hand, and - often as a response to this - a more detached and somewhat rationalistic line of argument.<sup>8</sup>

These and other traits may be taken as indications of a research effort which in some respects is still 'preliminary', even if increasingly characterised by depth as well width. It has not yet moved to a phase with clearly distinct and internally consistent perspectives that have been operationalised and can be debated and tested out in various more concrete areas.

This assessment of the situation has a number of consequences. It means that much of what may be highly relevant probably is not seen, not recognised, mainly due to the fact that it does not immediately present itself as relevant from the systems point of view. First things first: one takes the more overt aspects of the two systems, and try to fit them together. Even some of the traditions that do exist, like the one concerning *authority, personality and capitalism*, may go largely unnoticed. There is also a connected tendency that *qualitative differences* are either passed over, or simplified as *pro et contra* phenomena that retain the same implicit basis - they are brought in as far as fits the larger system. The reader will recognise that these critical remarks are applicable also towards the differentiation thesis of the present text.

There is also a 'mimetic' problem. To understand it, we may think of the idea of the privacy of the individual, and the fact that when all is said and done about the historical, bourgeois, patriarchal (etc.) character of that privacy, there is also something more to it. Patriarchy theory breaks down such barriers, and not always for good reasons. It represents an exposure (if it is any good), and can be used in harmful ways. The portrayed capitalist-patriarchal 'system' itself, and the mode of thinking which it tends to create, is not just *there*, with no quality, no relation to the real world. On the contrary, one may argue that any attempt to bring 'life in general', 'system world' and 'life world', work and the home, and so on, into one general framework, *is associated precisely with those tendencies of patriarchy and capitalism that these*

*researchers are trying to identify and criticise.* So this 'echoing' problem is not peripheral.

I do not at all agree with those who think this invalidates the whole effort, or those who think one should rather go back to dualistic views (i.e. a view of *separate* spheres, not a 'dual sphere' view). Yet the tendency towards over-emphasis on one 'project' in order to make sense of a highly complex 'facticity' is obvious. Reverting to 'pure classification' - the family is one patriarchal institution, the work place another, and so on - is no help here. What is needed, instead, are *many* worked-out theoretical propositions that *together* create flexibility and nuance. So if this amazing flexibility (and ability to create stratified 'nuance') is in fact a main trait of the patriarchal fabric itself, we must outbid it.

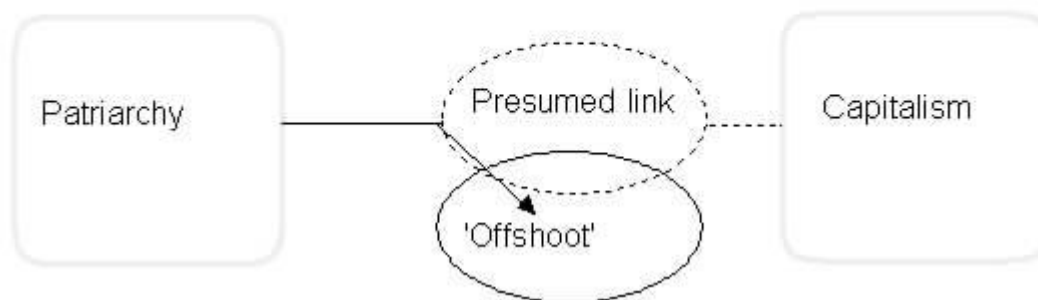
The complexity of the subject comes into all of this. There is often the idea, or at least perceived necessity, of taking the two main subcomponents of capitalism and patriarchy more or less *as they are* and then fit them together. If *this* is difficult, the idea of *changing* the interpretation of both, from bottom up, now *from* the perspective that they do indeed fit together, or perhaps never have been apart in the first place, seems to involve a truly daunting task.

It is not so strange, therefore, that various tensions and inconsistencies appear especially in the portrayal of the *link* between the two systems, i. e. 'the border zone'. We have two elements that at first sight fit together only poorly. We have come to the conclusion that they do in fact stick together, yet we are at loss for understanding how and why. It is understandable, in such a situation, that some properties of the elements change a bit in our perception of them. They become slightly mystical.

One common notion concerns *the masculine mystique*. In the pioneer efforts of Heidi Hartman, "this partnership [of capitalism and patriarchy] should be understood quite literally as an alliance between men which cuts across class boundaries and makes it possible to maintain the tangible basis of patriarchy; namely, male control over women's labour", as Højgaard (in Carlsen & Larsen 1994:17) says in a summary of Hartman's theory and the current state of the field.

Here we arrive at a very important crossroad, where the earlier picture suddenly changes. This idea of linking patriarchy and capitalism "quite literally" through masculinity can be regarded as a *paradigmatic case* of the kinds of *movements* created by the whole 'understanding contemporary patriarchy' effort. These movements are illustrated below.

### **'Offshoot' effects of patriarchy research**



A vertical dimension stretching from 'high altitude' theory at the top to 'empirical studies' at the bottom might be added to this figure. The main point is the following. In the attempt to connect patriarchy and capitalism - in this case, starting (mainly) from patriarchy, there is a hypothesised *link*, in this case masculinity. Now *two* movements appear. One is the attempt to establish the link in factual terms, of which more will be said below. This is the *intensional* movement, in social forms terminology. The other is the actual or *extensional* movement, the main effect, practically speaking, of the intended movement. As illustrated, this movement *did not quite succeed*. It went partially 'astray', into an offshoot area.

Yet if not quite succeeding in its own terms, it creates some *remarkable effects in that 'offshoot' area* - or even much of this area in the first place. This is not quite a case of fruitful mistakes (or like David Bowie once said, that the best pop music comes from errors), the 'serendipitous discoveries' phenomenon discussed in theories of science (e.g. Dean, C 1977), since there is more of a sense of direction involved. The offshoot is not quite accidental, and it does have *some* truth to it in terms of the presumed link (represented by the partial overlap of the two circles in the figure), even if its truth and relevancy mainly lie elsewhere.

This 'fruitful offshoots' tendency can be identified in a number of cases.

#### (1) Studies of men and masculinities.

Let us first look at the intensional side. Why do I claim that it did not quite reach its target? Research on men has not substantiated the major claim made, namely that the two major institutional orders are brought together solely or primarily through informal male-male relations. An alliance strong enough to play the role Hartman gives to it, supposedly at least as important as the whole institutional order that regulates the class dimension, has not yet been discovered. Declaring its existence leads into the area of conspiratorial theory, claims that capitalists, workers or other economic agents 'really' act for other reasons than those present in their capitalist relationship, and similar. I know of no evidence warranting that claim.

What *is* warranted, however, is an idea that male alliances *do play a role*, even if probably not a main role within the economic system. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, research in this area *has* established (or is busy on its way to establish) the fact that masculinities are *more important* than generally acknowledged

in economic and rational-actor theory. Secondly, on a more general level, if Hartmann's and many other feminists' arguments regarding masculinity have not succeeded in establishing *the* link between patriarchy and capitalism, the argumentation has brought *some* aspects of that link into light.

Now the extensional side. The feminist emphasis on men and behind-the-stage alliances among men was a major factor behind the studies of men emerging in the 1980s and later. It was not unproblematic, due to the 'will to proceed', so to speak, the *tension* created by the project and the facticity; men often felt overloaded with negative significance (were their friendships to be seen in this light, etc.) Yet it remains a fact that *without* this feminist insistence (e.g. Haavind & Andenæs 1990), the new research area would probably not have seen the light of day.

(2) Another case is the *labour market*, which in some views (in the early 1980s especially) was posited as a main link. Once more this was partly, and in my view mainly, misleading on the intensional level. The labour market itself became responsible for a whole range of processes, including gender-related labour segregation itself. 'Classical' economic theory, including Ricardo and Marx, instead argued that the market is more effect than cause, and this remains the probable hypothesis, also regarding patriarchy. Yet the extensional effects were once more often fruitful, creating research not only about the hierarchies, niches and 'territorial' (political, cultural, etc.) divisions within the labour market, but also studies of how these divisions extend into the work organisation itself (e.g. Rensner, U 1987).

(3) A third example is *the state* and political processes in general. Many feminists have put the main emphasis here. Once more, much is to be said for the 'classic' view that the state, while important, is not the core part of the link - and again, major new angles of research appeared (e.g. Hernes, H 1982, 1987, 1988; Jonasdottir, A 1988, 1991).

Other areas could be mentioned, like the class connection leading to new angles on how gender structures class (Acker, J 1990), the authority/personality debate, or sexuality.<sup>9</sup>

One further common trait emerges: *if the link is peripheral in same-sex terms, it is probably also peripheral in cross-sex terms* (I believe this rule goes both ways; the other is explored in chapter 13). In more concrete words, keeping to the case of men: friendship or alliances are not the main matter, even if important, regarding stratification between men. We should not expect it to be the main matter regarding cross-sex stratification either. The same goes for the labour market, the state and other areas. This common centrality dimension in both main fields, through shifting sub-areas, gives further support to the hypothesis that the two *are in fact deeply intertwined*.<sup>10</sup>

Further, the various attempts of linking patriarchy and capitalism have uncovered patterns of *conflict*. "Historians and economists have discovered ways in which the goals of men as workers are often in conflict with their goals as gendered persons or as whites in a racist, masculine-dominated society", Sandra Harding's (1986:75) argues, rightly noting that ethnicity and other aspects appear in addition to the gender / class tension. As outlined in chapter 7, institutions generally harbour different

reciprocity and transfer logics, usually including a minimal trait of 'basic redistributionism' that puts a check on whatever else goes on. Here we may go one step further, and argue that far from being incidental or peripheral, the kinds of tensions and linkages brought up in the attempts to understand how capitalism and patriarchy relate are in fact *main background realities or bases* of institutionalisation in work life and elsewhere.

In this context a common assumption in the 'masculinity link' tradition (for example in Hartmann's view) becomes questionable, namely that patriarchy builds on what *unites* men, rather than what *divides* them. Yet the idea that men have some common interests *vis-à-vis* women, indicated also by our former discussion of masculinities and the 'patriarchal dividend' (chapter 6), does not warrant the jump to 'alliance' as a main matter. (One might compare the wars between colonial powers.) There are many reasons to believe, instead, that a very basic form of split is involved in men's world also, and even that the 'brotherhood' or bonding part is comparatively superficial.

Some of these considerations also apply to theories and research within the reproduction orientation outlined earlier, where we often find an element of *feminine mystique* relating to motherhood. Once more gender comes into the argument in a rather dark and negative sense. The gender arrangements are identified with their patriarchal aspects. Nancy Chodorow's (1978) well-known view of the male sense of self emerging as a kind of anti-mother, anti-woman self can only be mentioned here (cf. Holter 1989a:85-102; further Holter & Aarseth 1993:93pp.), as well as Dorothy Dinnerstein's (1976) argument which goes even further by picturing mothers as a life-and-death-powers in early childhood (compare Kaplan, E 1992).

All these connective efforts, I argue, have some elements of 'mystique', mainly relating to gender, sometimes also to the transfer / market fetishism (cf. chapter 7), which is not surprising in the current perspective. At the same time, the traditions outlined here have been important for creating new research areas and angles, while also uncovering some of the links between patriarchy and capitalism, usually connections that point from the former to the latter. Yet we need to know *why* motherhood, and in general, human-oriented activity comes into any *special* account of capitalism. *Why* is it - if we go back to Hartman's view - that masculinity or gender plays a role in an economy supposedly *not* very interested in such 'use value' considerations? This is where the differentiation principle comes into view - not as a reverse connection from capitalism to patriarchy on the level of class, but in terms of commodity production *as* value-differential production, as creative of a firstness and an otherness when not much 'else' is around, and thus, possibly, *as* patriarchal production. Perhaps this introduces a 'commodity mystique' instead of the gendered ones; that remains to be seen.

Let me conclude some of this. Since a core connection between the two systems is not so easily identified, the whole idea that kernel elements of patriarchy and capitalism are interlinked can be rejected as essentialism. That, however, would be fully to misinterpret the state of the research, which has instead substantiated the 'historical suspicion' we started out with, namely that same-sex and cross-sex stratification belong together in the modern world also. Such a view has much broader support from interactional, structural, institutional, cultural and other studies today than it had twenty years ago.

Thereby some further criteria and problems appear. An understanding of the dynamics of capitalist patriarchy must include knowledge of the 'sui generis' aspects of each subsystem. Connections must be intelligible and congruent in both, and so a connection that presupposes patriarchal logic in the capitalist system or a capitalist reason in the patriarchal order will not do. We also saw that it must be central in each of them, and so a fairly peripheral argumentation, for example, that capitalist logic encourages labour market hierarchy, is clearly insufficient. In short, what we are looking for are patterns that connect the core elements of both systems in their own terms.

## Split modes, split powers

Some of the argumentation above might indicate that theories should focus on similarities or common elements of capitalism and patriarchy. It is possible to go the other way also, looking for connection in the sense of difference. Or simply not look for connection at all, but view the relationship as one of a split in a more absolute sense. At that point, dual sphere theories usually change to *dual mode theories*, a term selected here since the Marxist notion of mode of production is often used. They are also often called 'dual systems' theories. This change is not a minor one, since the two are now no longer seen as parts of one wider whole, spheres in one system, but principally theorised on different grounds.

The different modes view has parts of its origins in feminist notions connected to the 'beyond' position, phenomenology of family life as well as more traditional views like many Marxists' idea of the domestic sphere as backwards. Carole Pateman's (1988:135) critique of this view is relevant in the present context:

"The [traditional Marxism-derived] dual systems argument assumes that patriarchy is a feudal relic, part of the old world of status (..) But 'class' and the 'worker' can wear the trousers (..) in the 'partnership' between capitalism and patriarchy only because half the original contract is ignored. No hint is given that capitalism and class have been constructed as modern patriarchal categories. The *social* contract is about the origins of the civil sphere and capitalist relations. Without the *sexual* contract there is no indication that the 'worker' is a masculine figure or that the 'working class' is the class of men. (..) The attributes and activities of the 'worker' are constructed together with, and as the other side of, those of his feminine counterpart, the 'housewife'."

Most Marxist views of two separate modes or systems held that the other mode, the one with women, was a feudal or even slave-like system.<sup>11</sup> Yet it could also be filled with a more positive content, and its 'women outside of patriarchal society' aspect seems to have attracted hopeful feminist interest especially in the early 1980s as an alternative to the 'life *under*' kind of view mentioned earlier. A curious mirroring appears: quite different notions could all unite in terms of otherness, both an especially oppressive place - a "patriarchal mode of production" - and a path, at least, to a more positive, alternative world (cf. Halsaa & Viestad 1990). Some of this debate echoes the 1960s discussion about housewives and family values. Yet if the extensional side is fairly clear, the intensional side, or the presumed object, is strangely thin, mirror-like, as if this kind of otherness did not encourage theory-building. So we may find numerous references and many nods to such a view throughout feminist literature, but little in the way of worked-out theories of how,

exactly, the modern domestic sphere functions as a mode of production - or, in my terminology, as a social form on its own. Problems of realism appear; it seems such an argument would have to break a number of basic institutional and sociological rules. Even if we may wonder exactly what is contained in 'the housewife as other side of the worker' argument of Pateman and others, there remains the fact that our society does resemble *one* society, not two, and even less does it resemble two *vastly different* societies, as is implied in a mode of production or social form concept. Certainly modern society is a conflict-filled whole, yet it is difficult to maintain that institutions in the home sphere and the public and production sphere do *not* function as one integrated whole, that economic, class, ethnicity and other social processes are *not* running through both spheres, or that people at home and people at work are not the same kinds of people.

The dual modes view has a 'class effect' that has not been sufficiently recognised. Tendentially it absolves women of class responsibility, and the most popular version of it - households as a patriarchal mode - also absolves society, or those in power, of patriarchal responsibility. Since households belong to a different mode, capitalism's class divisions cannot exist here, or exist only in peripheral, ideological or 'echo' form. If they did, the split would no longer be a full split, and so the whole argument would be weakened. On the other hand, society at large and those in power are left out from the picture when patriarchy is identified with the private sphere. This line of development can be seen as a diversion of the growing feminist critique of capitalist patriarchy in the 1970s, with the result that a potential movement for common societal change was transformed into 'two modes, two gender classes' outlook creating private life splits and public life competition. Such a diversion, however, would not have been possible unless the critique had some major internal problems in the first place.

Four main difficulties face the domestic sphere as a patriarchal mode view. One has been mentioned already; how to explain that the two co-exist. The second relates to the existence of patriarchal patterns in the public sphere, where they should either be non-existing or fully different from private patriarchy, which is not the case. The third problem is the existence of various capitalism-related patterns, alive and well, in the domestic sphere itself, including class divisions, which are not only 'echoed' here, but dynamically recreated, as is indicated especially by the qualitative family studies that go into this matter (Holter, H 1976; Dreier, O 1978). Finally, there is the matter of the link itself in a more concrete sense.

Consider the case of *consumption*. If the dual mode view is right, *consumerism* is one thing in the public world, and something else - either gift-like or patriarchal ration-like - in the world of the home. Advertising, for example, would have to cross the threshold between the modes in order to have any effect in the home sphere. It should be very dissimilar according to whether it tried to appeal to public life persons, or private life persons in their domestic mode, since the latter presumably are motivated by wholly different considerations. Yet we all know advertising basically plays on the same register, linking gender and commerciality throughout (cf. chapter 13).

Since the dual mode view leads to strange consequences in all these areas, we may perhaps recognise a pattern of denial, for example in terms of consumerism and social class manoeuvring. Dual mode views may differ on whether the family is holy or damned, yet they agree on the larger point that it remains *outside*. Thereby they reflect

contradictory concerns that basically make sense as 'insider concerns'. What is supposedly outside is in fact highly indicative of inside conditions. – A critique of the dual mode view does not entail an argument that conditions are identical in the public and private sphere, or an ignorance of tendencies associated with other reciprocity forms. Rather, I see this as a question of retaining a wider sense of difference against the stereotypes that appear as the worlds of the home and society 'out there' are opposed to each other. In this respect, the 'sameness' and 'absolute difference' view may not be so far apart after all.

## The 'direct linkage' method

In a number of well-known passages, Marx argued that capitalism as a whole was represented in the *direct* relation of the worker to capital. Analysing that link would reveal the key to the rest. In the worker's movement this was usually understood as the worker's direct relation to the capitalist. In the patriarchy debate, this idea has often been echoed in terms of marriage; patriarchy could be deciphered simply by looking at the exploitation of the wife by the husband. For example, Carole Pateman (1988:131pp.) discusses 'the sexual contract' as if directly indicative of the connection of patriarchy and capitalism, discussing whether 'wife to husband' corresponds to 'slave to master' or rather 'worker to capitalist'.

Yet I believe Marx was basically wrong on this point, or right only if granted a very circuitous and favourable interpretation. Feminism itself is the best proof. The existence of the wife or household labourer, the whole sphere of reproduction, can *not* be directly understood by examining the relation of worker to capitalist, or even that of the worker to *capital*. Regardless of whether we accept the idea that women in the domestic sphere have been superexploited through their 'family wage'-earning husbands, or instead belong to some 'otherness mode' giving gifts and creating use values only, it is certainly true that we shall not understand what goes on as long as we only focus on the wage labour relationship. As discussed in chapter 7, the 'direct uncovering of the real situation through examining the key link' idea is easily misleading. In this case I also believe that it is wrong also on its own turf, i.e. that even *class conditions* are only partially understood in this manner, and that Marx' idea here is a case of Hegelian metaphysics, yet that argument cannot be pursued here.

Two wrongs may yet produce one right. In studies of patriarchy, the 'direct uncovering' plus the 'connection resides in similarity' idea once more were associated with important research developments. In this case the main offshoot was research on domestic activities and exploitation, further discussed in chapter 13. As Janet Finch (in Leira, A 1993:19) argues in the case of family studies, the importance of *opening for this kind of inquiry* "cannot be over-emphasised". Perhaps man-woman exploitation has no resemblance to capitalist-worker exploitation, or perhaps exploitation means something different altogether in this sphere. That is not the point. The point is that such answers could never be found as long as that kind of question was not allowed in the first place.

## Capitalism as economy, patriarchy as power

Besides the dual modes view, halfway related to it, another main tradition emerges in the search for an understanding of how patriarchy and capitalism are connected. This is the view that capitalism mainly concerns economics, while patriarchy concerns power.

For example, Sylvia Walby (in Jonasdottir & Bjørk 1994: 9, 15) sketches Zillah Eisenstein's theory as one of 'capitalism = economy, patriarchy = power', and she finds a similar tendency in Mitchell's 1975 and Hartmann's 1979 contributions.

The effect was a renewed focus on power relations. The 'mistake' part concerns the fact that capitalism and patriarchy are *both* economical processes and power regimes.

Theoretically, the idea of patriarchy as mainly a power regime goes back to the aforementioned view of patriarchy as an older remnant or mode in capitalism, in which power was more overt, less market-mediated (etc.) than in capitalism proper. It received renewed attention among feminists primarily due to the existence of men's not so (immediately) market-like uses of power in the private sphere. In the view of Eisenstein, Dinnerstein and many others, the sexual field is also a power field. What we get, then, is an impression of a special kind of 'activities' on the one hand, faced with a special kind of 'power' on the other.

Yet these activities, as Pateman argued, are contract-bound; they cannot be understood only in their immediacy, there are certain 'stories' (of the contract, the individual, not to speak of gender) that must be deconstructed first. Some of the contemporary sociological story of Pateman's 'sexual contract' was discussed in part one of the present text, leading to an analysis of the *sui generis* socio-economical character of the gender system. Regardless of the emphasis given to different transfers and reciprocities in partner selection, family / work relations, sexuality, femininity and masculinity studies, a larger picture emerges. The whole area is 'contract-bound' in the wider sense of being *socially formed*, and so an 'immediate' approach that opposes the pure praxis of women to the pure power of men or patriarchy will easily lead astray. I find this method common in many 'materialist feminist' approaches, like that of Dorothy Smith (1990), with problems that resemble those of the old materialisms, although in a new field.<sup>12</sup>

## 'Private' and 'public' patriarchy

Sylvia Walby's (1986, 1990, 1994) attempts to theorise patriarchy are among the recent important contributions to the patriarchy / capitalism debate. Arguing from a broadly modernist and empirical point of view, Walby tries to move beyond Hartmann's institutional classification (patriarchy as consisting of specific institutional areas) towards a broader and more dynamic perspective, while retaining institutional specificity as well as a distinction between capitalism and patriarchy as separate systems. As indicated, my perspective is similar to hers on a number of points, and I shall here only discuss some main areas where I disagree.

(1) Walby's (1990) argument *starts* from the assumption that capitalism and patriarchy are indeed two different systems, without really examining that idea. This is further discussed below. She also builds on a model of domestic exploitation that

resembles the dual mode view. Like other capitalist patriarchy theorists, Walby has been criticised for holding on to an exploitation view at all (since the family is so often seen as a positive place, etc., cf. Åquist in Jonasdottir & Björk 1994:73-98); and I should emphasise that I do not agree with such a critique, although I find a tendency towards a too narrow and androcentric definition of exploitation.

(2) Her definition of patriarchy ("social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women") and her general treatment of the theme do not differ between patriarchy and the gender system, and do not recognise same-sex or non-sexed oppression as major dimensions of patriarchy. It is true that the latter may be incorporated in her view, as has to some extent been done in terms of masculinities by Jeff Hearn (1993), yet it is no coincidence that it does not appear in her definition of patriarchy, since it is related to mixing gender signification and patriarchal stratification, while Hearn's work also illustrates the 'men as homogenous caste' position which is linked to this one-sided definition.

(3) While agreeing that contemporary patriarchy is in a process of *reorganisation* (cf. Holter, H 1984), *and* that private relationships have become somewhat more egalitarian, I do not agree with her central thesis that patriarchy as a whole has shifted from a 'private' to 'public' phase. Rather, her analytical framework here repeats the not-so-fruitful errors of the dual mode view, including a typical misunderstanding of what 'private' means in capitalist society.

Basically, relations of capitalism are social *through* their private character, and this goes for the family and gender relations as much as other relations. As discussed earlier, capitalism is characterised precisely through this form of mediation (Postone, M 1993) or meta-institutionalisation, even if it is not the only key pattern at this level. Arguing that work is not societal *due* to its private character is therefore fully off the mark. Walby might object that by characterising earlier patriarchy as 'private' she does not mean it was not *societal*, yet I think this only emphasises the problems with the whole public / private division. I agree with feminist historians like Leonore Davidoff who have recently put emphasis on the mythic character of the whole 'private sphere' as a 19th. century construct. Davidoff (1995:228-9) writes:

"Out of the confusion a consensus is emerging that public and private are not (and never have been) 'conceptual absolutes', but a minefield of 'huge rhetorical potential' [Ludmilla Jordanova] (..) If the 'separate spheres' of home and work, to take one derivation, was a 'trope which hid its instrumentality even from those who employed it' [Linda Kerber], then how can we retrieve more than the most partial picture 100 or 200 years later? (..) The whole edifice was predicated on an unspoken assumption about a shadow world of reproduction (..) which had come to be jettisoned from the public realm as the construct developed through the nineteenth century. Domestic, personal life, regarded as embedded in the biological, universal and pre-social, remained outside the terms of debate".

Davidoff rightly points to the central position of *property* in English society and culture in her portrait of the emergence of the private / public division. One may go further and argue that this division *is* the split of private property, and that any conceptual framework that fails to emphasise the fact that property is *both*, that private and public are phases in the life of the commodity, obscures societal realities.

Unless patriarchy is fully different from capital, any argument that it 'is' public or 'is' private is founded on a similar inconsistency.

The private/public distinction has been popular also in Norwegian women's research. In a study of care work, Torunn Hamran (1992:83) argues that this approach has created "a false division between public and private, and between formal and informal, with an *instrumental notion of work* on the one hand, and a *sentimental notion of care* on the other."

The gender system discussed in part one is not only 'private', not even within the domestic sphere. Partner selection processes and divorce processes, i.e. the entrances to and exits from the gender dyad, clearly show that this supposedly closed-off privacy is not all there is to gender relations. Instead, the gender system contains its own kinds of public *spheres*, like the commercial partner selection arenas. Gender is continually played out in public places not as some kind of 'private' package but due to its own public character in this sense. One does not have to know the other person privately in order to 'know' quite a few things about gender. All this is even more evident when we look at commercial culture.

On the other hand, the 'public' sphere of production is *also* private, regardless of the degree of private-sector versus state-sector ownership, which in this context is a surface, market-level difference. The value regime still exists; alienation and discipline are still expressed in 'economy'; the social character of labour is not changed just because capitalists have become state bureaucrats (Schanz, H 1995). This, of course, is an old discussion, yet I believe there is a certain realism involved here, whatever the political view. Arguments to the effect that 'public' today means 'beyond the age of capitalism' remain unconvincing, not least in a global perspective (Østerberg, D 1995).

In sum, therefore, the idea that patriarchy has moved from a private to a public stage is partially misleading. Like power and economy, private and public aspects are basically *intertwined* in both of Walby's stages, the one presupposing the other. I agree when Walby argues that there has been a shift of emphasis on a more concrete level, that tendencies towards exclusion of women have become less visible than tendencies towards incorporation, and similar; such arguments can contribute to a much-needed widening of perspective in gender studies.

Still, mistaking a comparatively superficial change for a basic one, one that involves a full shift of patriarchal form (or 'stage') can also lead to very undesirable analytical consequences. One may overlook the fact that 'private' forms of patriarchy are very much with us today, and no more 'traditional' than the public ones. Perhaps more than anything else, the US political scene illustrates my point: the re-emergence of 'New' Right family politics, 'Christian' appeals to the natural leadership of men in the home as well as in society, *accompanying* public and economic changes, although dressed in an archaising vocabulary (Stacey, J 1994). - A further discussion of modern patriarchal forms is presented in chapter 12.

## Conclusion: difference and the holistic view

"[Eisenstein] also states that we must recognise two systems, one economic, the other sexual, which are relatively autonomous from each other', but, she adds, 'they are completely intertwined'. *If capitalism is patriarchal, it is hard to see what is to be gained by insisting that there are two systems.* One of the advantages of approaching the question of patriarchy through the story of the sexual contract is that it reveals that civil society, including capitalist economy, has a patriarchal structure. The capacities that enable men but not women to be 'workers' are the same masculine capacities required to be an 'individual', a husband and head of a family. The story of the sexual contract thus begins with the construction of the individual." (Pateman, C 1988:38, my emphasis).

Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to keep a 'broader view' even in an area as wide as that of capitalism/patriarchy theory. Instead of a 'political correctness' evaluation, I have asked about the positive and often unintended consequences of various theoretical formulations that by themselves, in retrospective, *also* appear as more or less misleading. What emerges, then, is a number of alleys that have been 'blind' in some ways, and yet have also been extremely important for creating new research. Basically, research depends on engagement as well as curiosity; the 'whys' and 'hows' involved in understanding capitalism and patriarchy have attracted both.

Also, I have emphasised a broad power perspective which includes psychodynamic aspects, also when discussing theories; patriarchy and gender remain troublesome, and we gain further insight precisely by going into the denial and repression areas, the zones of silence, and by attempting to understand the inaudible discourses there.

Studies and theories of patriarchy have gradually moved in a direction, exemplified by Pateman's statement above, of arguing for a 'close connection' or 'integral' view of capitalism and patriarchy. I find that the movements involved here are of major significance also outside the present context, in a general theory of science perspective. There is not only the partial mistake/fruitful offshoot stepwise progress. At the same time as integral views have become clearer and better formulated, in fact at each step in this process, another kind of branching off can be observed: a re-emerging 'androcentric' tendency, opposed by a 're-feminisation' tendency, emphasising that the difference of women goes further than the former framework would allow for. One effect of all this is that the concepts of capitalism and patriarchy have more width and depth today than they had two decades ago. Throughout this process, a question of combining a holistic view and a perspective on difference has reappeared in shifting forms.

It is time, therefore, to locate the present analytical effort in this wider perspective. Like Pateman and others, I believe 'capitalism' and the categories of traditional Marxism cannot be maintained or used as-is. If the differentiation principle has some truth to it, categories like 'commodity' and 'value' have been two-sided affairs from the very start, and the unilinear scheme of Marxism is misleading. Only some further consequences of this argument can be explored in the present text, since it involves a reappraisal of most of the critique of political economy tradition (chapter 13).

Lis Højgaard (in Carlsen & Larsen 1994:21) usefully summarises some main differences between the view developed in my own work, and that found in Hartmann

and Walby's work. I take the freedom to comment on Højgaard's presentation in brackets.

"If patriarchy theory is retained as the starting point (Walby 1989), it is because gender segregation is not decreasing to any significant degree (...). Since gender segregation in society is the pivotal point of patriarchy theories, the results of recent analyses are linked to the 'old' understanding, in which the interplay between the distribution of work and in the labour market is implied. The new results are therefore not used as a springboard for adjusting or revising the theoretical basis, but are inscribed in an understanding of the oppression of women which is still built on the connection between the gender distribution of work in the family and in the labour market.

A recent variant of patriarchy theory goes one step further and starts not with the gender distribution of labour in the different sectors of society, but with the way in which gender is interwoven with the actual formation of fundamental structures of society.

Inspired by the discussion between postmodernism and modernism, Holter (1991) shows that the modernist understanding operates with a division of the world into the modern and the archaic [a part of the differentiation process described in the last chapter]. The modern part is made up of production and the masculine, whilst the rest is archaic, i.e. anything not included in the definition of modern, such as the feminine and reproduction. [In other words, the modernisation of the one and the archaisation of the other are bipolar results of one process]. This view, according to Holter, is the basis for economic theory's understanding of the primacy of production.

The theory reflects the view [but also, sad to say, the *partial* or reified *reality*] that it is production alone which creates wealth. Reproduction, on the other hand, is regarded solely as expenditure [it *is* expenditure, in this reality, even if all the more 'highly' regarded in the higher spheres, as moral good, etc.]. This economic view favours things that can be sold to generate profits above those that cannot. Reproduction's part in, or significance for, the work that produces that which is sold, is concealed. (...)

Instead of this economic perception of labour, Holter constructs what he calls a [labour] function pyramid, in which the reproductive functions form the base of the pyramid whilst the productive functions are in the top of the pyramid where profit is realised. [There are four main levels: production of means of production, production of means of reproduction (consumption, 'light' industry), reproduction of producers, and reproduction of reproducers and others. Generally, benefits pass upwards, burdens downwards through these levels]. The pyramid includes all the tasks in society. The point is that the division of functions into tasks as illustrated by the pyramid shows men and women as economic categories, not as per an interconnection of the distribution of work in working life and the family, but as per the economic paradigm by which society is organised. The function pyramid shows men and women in two main functions within the same economic cycle.

For Holter, it is not a case of two autonomous structures, a patriarchy and a capitalism."

She goes on to say that I regard capitalism as basic dynamic "which is expounded in patriarchal forms". That is not quite my approach, and she seems to mistake my view of *modern gender* (an 'expounded form' or signification form) for my view of patriarchy; I hope this difference is clarified with the present text (I cannot remember ever having written anything to the effect that 'capitalism decides' or 'production decides'.)

Højgaard goes on to compare my view to that of Joan Acker (1990), whose study of the hidden gendered aspects of the 'disembodied job' seems to fit rather well with the function pyramid analysis. She concludes that "both Holter and Acker suggest that gender [patriarchy] is so fundamental a category that even the terms we use to describe and comprehend the world in which we find ourselves already have a gender-specific structure."

Instead of a 'labour basis' argument, we may see the function pyramid as one part - but still a core part - of the differentiation process. Thereby, same-sex and cross-sex elements of current patriarchal organisation can be further specified and studied.

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<sup>1</sup> For example a recent Swedish book outlining the continued second-tier position of women in work life, with new facts about low pay and exhaustive and low-skilled work, is called *Patriarchy's Last Battlements* (Böetius, M 1995). If 'last', they have not exactly disappeared.

<sup>2</sup> Webster's New World Dictionary.

<sup>3</sup> This outline is based on the mini-survey mentioned above (using *Sociofile*) as well as on a general assessment of the literature.

<sup>4</sup> To cite one typical historical case study (of concubinage in Anglo-Saxon England): "Freedom of access to and enjoyment of the sexual services of women is usually closely correlated with socio-political status in any hierarchical society and this seems to have been the case among the Germanic peoples." (Ross, M 1985:3). In other words, the character of the historical material makes historians start with, or connect to, the mainly male hierarchy also in order to examine cross-sex relations.

<sup>5</sup> For early 1980s patriarchy debate overview cf. Carlsson, C et.al. 1983; Ganetz, H et.al. 1986.

<sup>6</sup> For a critique of Lacan's anti-feminist views - written by a man - cf. Macey, D 1988 esp. 190-209; see also Benjamin, J 1994; Lacan's theory as more 'commodified' than Freud's: Buccocine, D 1993; a defence: Gurewich, J 1993; a philosophical interpretation: Žižek 1995.

<sup>7</sup> Compare Kate Millet's definition of patriarchy, connecting to the "main avenues of power" in society, quoted in Ganetz, H et.al. 1986:29, and Nancy Hartsock 1983:261.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. Smith, D 1990, where I both find a very declared standpoint, and a fairly abstract reasoning concerning patriarchal power; or, in my own case, Holter 1982a.

<sup>9</sup> For a similar view of patriarchy and related feminist theory as main impetus to current interdisciplinary efforts cf. Clough, P 1994.

<sup>10</sup> This process also has psychodynamic aspects. In his dismissal of profeminist men, Robert Bly (1992) invokes a picture of bird-like creatures with no body feeling or substance to their theories. If 'sublimated energies' are in fact involved here, in women as well as men, their effects are more

*complex, and partially opposite of what that portrait would suggest. High altitude theories in this area do not simply disappear in thin air, on the contrary, precisely by being partially right, partially wrong, in this 'linking' effort, they go into 'depth matters'. They have a puzzling ability to evoke or provoke inquiries which become main matters also in very ordinary daily life, concrete senses, as was evidenced initially regarding questionnaire 'why do you think oppression exists' kind of items. What appears is not just something lost, 'up there', but also, curiously, something found, 'down here'.*

<sup>11</sup> The latter was the view of Lenin, who seems to have conceived of housework as the direct opposite of his Fordist ideals. For a discussion of traditional Marxist views, cf. Borchgrevink, Holter & Solheim 1982.

<sup>12</sup> While agreeing with Dorothy Smith (1990) that conceptual practices are also easily power practices, I disagree with her epistemological position, which is materialist in the sense of using Marx before his economy-critical writings. As I read Smith, she posits a pure activity as against a pure power, and although she criticises "objectification", she has nothing on commodity and value analysis. At the one hand, she wants full concreteness, full particularity: "the standpoint of women denies the Cartesian knower....the standpoint of women insists we are always located.... (op.cit. 33), on the other hand, she writes from a general "standpoint of women". How these fit together - unless body is anyway destiny - is unclear. As long as precisely this *generalisation* is left unquestioned (which is all the more the case, since commodity abstraction has no place in her argument), the critique itself may be read as a conceptual practice of power - a counter-power, true enough, but also one that keeps within the larger framework. This relates to the discussion of disembodiment and embodiment concepts: as long as both circle around gender, one at the cold mind side of it, the other on the warm body side, the gender fixation is maintained.

## Chapter 11 Problems of historical analysis

### Introduction

Historical views of patriarchy have changed according to the contemporary context. In the Middle Ages, patriarchy started with the word and God's ordering of the world: from then on, the men of authority and fatherly-masculine principles had dominated the societal agenda. In the manufacture period and early industrial modernity, a more democratic and generic 'common man's model' of patriarchy appeared in a tensioned relationship to the universalist idea of the free individual and women's equal rights. Patriarchy increasingly appeared as a system of men's rights rather than fathers' rights, like the political democracy among men which was now developing in England and elsewhere. In the historical scholarship of the 19th. century, contemporary liberal and radical thought was reflected in the idea of mankind's natural and 'primitive' early stage as a prepatriarchal stage, and in the view of modern dissolution of traditional patriarchy as a mark of civilisation.

At the same time, the concept of patriarchy turned towards gender, as an instinct rather than a rights question. In the psychology developing in industrial society, patriarchy might be a thing of the past, yet gender was not, and through gender, authority and discipline, as in Freud's theory of the oedipus complex. Patriarchal themes of law and order combined with the primacy of the masculine were no longer conceived as matters of external authority but as inner essentials in the individual's quest for a normal and functional life.

In historical research, gender became an assumed *a priori* of interpretation, yet mainly is the immediate, unreflected form of masculine gender as the normal outlook on the world. As men became producers in a way never seen before, with the nuclear family setting of wage workers and home workers, *he* being linked to *she* as an industrial-age *output/input* constellation, historical interpretation moved towards production-first, production-only history, 'realism' replacing former 'idealism' and a common assumption that the things that move modern men, are in fact the things that move history throughout any period.

It is only in the last part of the 20th. century, with the gender market and other signs of an evolved and economically integrated gender system, that a more reflected *her-story* and to some extent also a *his-story* replace this immediate assumption of the normalcy of the male view. *His-stories* are in the making in many current books on men and the male role. From the 1970s onwards, expressly gendered interpretations of history, first history from a women's view, started replacing the former neutralised masculine angle. Society now no longer appeared only as production surrounded by scattered homes, but as a two-sphere arrangement where women's sphere of reproduction was as important as the male sphere – a process of 'social recognition' going on before our eyes, as is discussed in chapter 13.

Conceptions of patriarchy have been so diverse that any historical account may seem hopeless. Yet that is not my view. Patriarchy refers to an arrangement whereby women become secondary subjects of society whatever the epoch, and it also refers to the hierarchy, authority and discipline within and across the genders related to the subordination of women. This is surely a wide category, yet its wideness concerns its importance as much as it concern any problem of categorisation, and it is distinct enough to allow us to trace patriarchal organisation historically.

This chapter focuses on the research on the early history of patriarchal organisation in 'Western' civilisation, the question of 'how patriarchy began', showing the discussion may be interpreted applying the gender and social forms view outlined in earlier chapters. I argue that historical research can provide answers that go beyond guesswork, not regarding all possible 'roots' of patriarchal organisation, nor its earliest stages (since these are prehistorical), but regarding the main line of patriarchal development in Western history. <sup>1</sup>

This view is based on an institutional interpretation of the origin of patriarchy, starting from the well-documented decline of the status of women found in the early sources, as a process characterising the pre-antiquity epoch. The earlier roots are lost in the haze, yet the patriarchal arrangements that what we see developing in the centres are still 'early' in many senses of that word. If we analyse their social dynamics and combine the centre evidence with periphery evidence as well as older centre traditions, there can be no doubt that conditions in the prehistoric epoch were fairly egalitarian or at best 'proto-patriarchal'. Although the feminist interpretation of matriarchy finds little support and is theoretically problematical, the prominence of women in the evidence cannot be ignored, as Gimbutas and others have noted.

The 'emergence of patriarchy' debate has created enthusiasm as well as scepticism, both for good reasons. Here, also, current concerns are reflected, and so a dual line of approach is needed, one of recognising modern assumptions in the historical

interpretation, and one of untangling the evidence from these assumptions and developing a methodology which is less tainted both by the normalcy-masculine angle and by the new gender stories. At each point, major historical contributions are also narratives of modern gender and individuality, and the latter is not a peripheral matter, but of interest on its own. Therefore I focus on methodological issues, leading to a 'non-gendered' but 'patriarchy-aware' institutional framework of interpretation that differs from the ones existing today. By non-gendered I mean an angle less fixed on gender, less prone to assume *our* gender in *their* kinds of relations, not that sexed organisation (or gender as a cross-cultural arrangement of difference) should be ignored. On the contrary, the link between patriarchal and sexed organisation is important. Yet the assumption that it is *the* line of interpretation of patriarchy has lead astray. Patriarchy has never rested solely on gender-related institutional circumstances, and on the whole our gender category is far more modern than we are prone to admit.

The existence of men and women in historical material does not warrant the idea that these men and women act *as* men and women rather than in other respects. The latter is a matter of inquiry, not assumption. We do not understand the history of patriarchy by assuming that men and women act as representatives of their gender and as members of their gender in the modern gender class sense, even if we are somewhat better off than by not thinking in such terms at all. We see more of the sexed organisation, yet we are constantly prone to misrepresent it *as* patriarchal organisation, in line with our contemporary conditions. Patriarchy as a father-story (basically free household heads *versus* dependants) becomes a men's versus women's story based on an assumption of male/female as a class-like or even caste-like division. We inject *stratification* where it did not exist, and on the other hand fail to recognise the forms in which it did exist. These kinds of problems are of course not peculiar to historical analysis, as should be clear from our discussion of the modern gender system; the staging involved in gender pertains to all the social sciences. Instead, the historical field has a special 'unruliness' and a way of opening paradigms which is the central topic of interest. The very idea that 'patriarchal man and woman' did indeed differ from the modern 'gendered man and woman' is one main theme of revolt. Beyond the unavoidable reflection of contemporary concerns, there is the research front where the historical material challenges our assumptions and leads to new appreciations not only of historical issues but also contemporary ones.

The social forms view of the present text would not have been developed were it not for the historical research and debate. Historical contexts cannot simply be reduced to social forms, yet social forms perspectives are important throughout, even in 'unlikely' circumstances, like the gift-sphere in the upper regions of the Roman imperial economy. Each society is a conglomerate of reciprocity relations in the wider social forms sense, with different logics of giving, sharing, redistributing and exchanging, and investigating how these are combined helps us understand them.

I focus on how recent analyses of the early centres of civilisation bring out more of the unique character of the social arrangements there. Rather than external factors, monocausal theories or narrowly sex-related hypotheses, I suggest that a holistic interpretation of the dynamics of 'large-household' societies offers a basis for understanding why and how patriarchal organisation emerged. This is connected to a

'known world' system perspective and a view that beyond 'her-story' and 'his-story' lies a wider task of appreciating *their* stories.

My sociological line of approach may be seen as radically constructivist and historicist, yet I argue that it is in fact more closely related to recent lines of historical interpretation of early civilisation than the more overtly gendered views that have been prevalent in the origin of patriarchy debate. Therefore it may bridge some of the gap that exists between the two, even if it introduces some unfamiliar terms and models in order to do so.

The idea of patriarchy as a historical system is still in many ways in its infancy. Even when historical dimensions are explored, one often gets the impression of a basically constant system, operating by the same kinds of principles through the ages, responding passively to other societal changes – an image which is not so different, in fact, from the traditional view of femininity in social science. 'Patriarchy' clings to women as a static affair, while societal dynamics and change can still often be found on men's side of the equation, in areas like production development and class conflict. Views where change and development are seen in more balanced ways are still rare, not to speak of theories where patriarchal changes may come first while other kinds of changes come second.

I have mentioned the two-stage framework that has appeared over the last twenty years, with an 'emergence of patriarchy' debate on the one hand and a 'patriarchy and capitalism' debate on the other. Presumably the periods in between are less interesting. Although the present chapter mainly keeps to the early history terrain, itself a huge epoch, it closes some of this gap. This is done through an interpretation that emphasises how patriarchal organisation changes as part of shifting societal circumstances, and how the two can be conceptualised together.

If the underdevelopment of historical perspectives on patriarchal change has contributed to 'conjectural history', this is also a field marked by considerable recent efforts, mainly inspired by feminist and other critical perspectives. It is also, in the background, a field that tends to change these perspectives themselves. The historical material is in all senses 'unruly', diverging from preconceptions and slipping away from modern images. Some fresh air seeps in. In the early historical context as elsewhere, patriarchy has mainly been operationalised in terms of gender, yet we not only meet 'gender' in the sense of *same*-sex relations and ranking, phenomena discussed in the last chapter, but also traits that break away from all our ordered notion of gender. Although continuances and similarities exist through different periods, patriarchal and 'proto-patriarchal' contexts are marked by a profound *diversity* in which few modern notions survive pure and untainted.

In the attempts to focus on a new area of research and create historical perspectives that can help make sense of it, the role of the other social sciences becomes more pronounced and overt than elsewhere. In the two main areas of early patriarchy and capitalist patriarchy debate, two of these, social anthropology and sociology respectively, have been of main importance. I discuss some problems in this area including the use of social science paradigms as 'fill-ins' where the historical material is fragmented, diffuse or altogether lacking. Generally I argue that while anthropology is more important for understanding *modern* patriarchy than commonly

acknowledged, sociology has been sorely underrepresented in the *early* historical context, and as a consequence, main lines of institutional development have not been sufficiently appreciated.

This is also where the 'general' historical views become relevant, partly in contrast to the notions that are deemed most important in the early patriarchy debate. Historians have generally emphasised the redistribution-oriented and territorial group-based character of early civilisation (e.g. Roaf 1990:61-65, 102), yet in the emergence of patriarchy debate such traits are often ignored, while kinship and gender are accentuated instead. There is a gap between the two angles, and I discuss how they can be combined and why the first is central, even if insufficient by itself.

I start this discussion by venturing into an area which is both fascinatingly rich in detail and notoriously difficult to interpret, namely early Greek traditions including the palace age (linear B) tablet texts. I re-examine some of the results from my own studies (in the mid-1980s) in this area, focusing on the topic of matrilocality, which has a cross-cultural association to egalitarian (or less patriarchal) conditions. I also discuss the importance of a *comparative* and world system historical perspective, versus an isolationist 'Greece as cradle of civilisation' position. Comparing the often ambiguous Greek material with better known developments in Asia Minor and the Middle East, I turn to the main social patterns that appear beneath diverse concrete developments.

The last part of the chapter is perhaps the most important one from a sociological point of view. I bring the social forms discussion a few steps further by attempting an outline of a non-commodity form *sui generis* – i.e. a form of society with its own kinds of dynamics, main reciprocity relationships, transfers, transference fields and cultural expressions. I find that existing concepts of modes of production – in this case a presumed 'Asiatic' mode – are at best insufficient, while the more pragmatic concepts used by historians – 'temple cities', 'palace societies' – lack sociological depth. A new terminology is therefore applied, starting with the centrality of the large household and the overseer activities of this unit.

This leads to a discussion of how to conceptualise a social form that may include commodity exchange, while being mainly oriented towards a combination of redistributive and gift patterns. I call it *focality* or *focal reciprocity*. At the outset this notion may be approached by imagining a gift pattern that is *focused* – like sacrifice – towards a distinct social and cultural *centre*; a pattern that gravitates towards this centre. I outline some of the typical dynamics, conflicts, developments and phases of focal reciprocity. Further, I show how such an initially unfamiliar framework may be useful by going beyond traditional 'early civilisations debate' positions (like those of the debate about 'temple society'), allowing more nuanced interpretations of concrete contexts. The development of patriarchal organisation is not an outside matter in the proposed framework, and I discuss how the emergence of patriarchy can be interpreted in focality terms.

In all, the historical analysis results in four main theses on the emergence of patriarchal social organisation in early civilisation.

- **Firstly, I find that although many 'origin questions' are unanswered and will probably remain so, a main line of development and consolidation of patriarchal structure can be established beyond reasonable doubt, also in the case of Greece. This includes considerable material regarding the declining status of women as well as evidence on the build-up of patriarchal power.**
- **Secondly, a broad association between patriarchal developments and a developing commodity-oriented economy emerges. This does not prove the 'strong' form of the differentiation principle argument discussed in the beginning of the last chapter, but it indicates its relevance beyond the weaker proposition mentioned there; commodity economy processes played a major role, perhaps the main role, in the establishment of patriarchal civilisation.**
- **Thirdly, I find that increasing subordination of women can generally be better explained on 'common sociological grounds' with a view to reciprocity especially, than in many existing one-factor views. The shift of emphasis between the main institutional spheres of society, related to the second factor, is of major importance.**
- **Finally, connecting to the critique of modern gendered views, I find that the creation of a patriarchal *gender system* was a very different and mainly a much later process, not to be confused with the initial build-up of patriarchal principles of social organisation.**

## Some general issues of historical analysis

Many of the problems of studying gender and patriarchy historically are common to historical research in general, while others stem from more concrete issues specific to this area.

Over the last decades, historians have debated how history may be rewritten from a more contextual and critical view, why history should be interpreted in the plural sense, as histories, and how our conceptions in this area relate to global contemporary issues. The result has been an emphasis on studies of power, ideology and conflict, and on bringing in the perspectives of common people and weak groups. Other important traits include increased emphasis on nuance, understanding of locality and variability, text and discourse interpretation, critical and contextual reading of sources, and use of other social science theory. Although longstanding disagreements remain, including the issues of the generalisability of 'objective' factors of history and the emphasis on ideal versus material factors, some common traits can also be observed. Many recent works put renewed emphasis on the 'translation barrier' that exists between the contemporary imagination and earlier historical material. Also there seems to be a wider agreement that 'objective' explanations and interpretations of subjectivity like Weber emphasised (Iggers, G 1980) work best in combination. All these trends can be found also in related areas, like the recent 'social' or systems-oriented archaeology (e.g. Renfrew, C 1984).

Substantiation of historical models therefore emerges as a more complex and multiple stepwise process than it did some generations ago. As a sociologist, I often find the most interesting recent historical works characterised by attempts to create *intermediate models*. This kind of model is not the romantic or 'simply immediate'

model where sources are supposed to speak fully in their own terms, a view that disguises what Foucault and many others have discussed in terms of the *episteme* or standpoint of the author. Nor is it quite the objectivist model of hard-edged realist approaches. Rather there is an attempt to locate the concrete story in a middle terrain.

The title and content of Barbara Tuchman's (1980) portrait of the late Middle Ages, *A Distant Mirror*, are relevant in this context. Tuchman goes quite some way into '*their* model' before turning to what moderns may think, and so what emerges is intelligible as an order in a crisis, a society being destroyed by endless wars and feuds. Yet it is a 'mirror' that keeps its distance, creating pictures that may be interpreted in different ways, not only according to what moderns have wanted to see in it, like the 'shift from feudalism to capitalism' model. There is an idea that a theme should be interpreted contextually and critically, dissolving its 'power image', but also kept apart from *our* wish to see ourselves in it. These methodological issues therefore do not only concern a more or less historicist view, or the positions on the modern dimension of realism and romanticism, materialism and idealism (cf. chapter 7), but the deeper character of 'critique' itself. The intermediate model method can be seen as an attempt to move out of the field of the thing criticised (Lyotard, J 1993).

Sociology is inherently historical; there is at least always a 'before' and 'after' involved. Yet sociology's main task has been institutional analysis in our own society, and this has meant operationalising the categories as fit for structural, phenomenological or action analyses where simplification, in the direction of modern-age qualities, is unavoidable. For historians, the problems with the other social sciences relate to their typical background narrative, the sociologist tending towards a modernist model, the anthropologist towards a 'primitive' community model, and the psychologist towards a modern psychology of the individual model. These are, in fact, important for historical interpretation, yet history as a discipline often works better on the intermediate level, even if this, to be any good, requires knowledge of different explanatory frameworks in the other social sciences. For sociology, a main problem remains its tendency to remain within a '*before*'-'*now*' framework, or even the '*now* = *always*' mode that has recently been reemphasised in neo-positivist traditions. Sociology's own categories are deeply historical, and in fact this is often most evident precisely when there is a misguided abstractist attempt to go beyond history altogether (cf. chapter 7).

An example is relevant here. In my own case, the historical character of sociological categories was brought home especially clearly while working with gender-related official statistics from the beginning of the 19th. century till today, creating a data base with aggregate figures. Naturally I wanted clear-cut and stable categories for the data. Here, however, I ran into a problem. In the case of time use studies, changes in the definitions of categories have attracted critique and debate in Norway. Yet this is only a part of a much wider phenomenon – expressed in statisticians and demographers' habit of changing definitions every other decade or so. At first I became irritated: why could not these otherwise logically minded people keep to *one* solid-state term for each kind of item? Why did the definitions change? Gradually I realised that these qualitative changes were usually made for good reasons, and that they are in fact an inseparable part of any quantitative social statistic of long-term trends, even if some common core can often be maintained. The shifts reflect real

historical changes, and it is often the case that these qualitative shifts are the most interesting part of the picture.<sup>2</sup>

## Critique and negation

Turning to 'history' in a more applied sense, and to early history in particular, one soon realises that modern societal, economic and power issues have been of main importance for interpretations, and not always only in subtle and hidden ways. This has been shown for example by Moses Finley (1983a) in the case of modern idealisation of Greek slavery, and by Martin Bernal (1991) regarding 'the fabrication of ancient Greece' as the cradle of Western civilisation.

Not much reading is required, either, in order to recognise a consistent pattern of dismissal of gender problems. "The main body of classical studies has abandoned not only the idea of matriarchy but the very extensive range of problems connected with it, and these problems have not ceased to exist", Simon Pembroke (1967:2, 4) has argued in an influential paper. After all, he writes, Herodot gave descriptions of no less than 14 matrilinear peoples in the periphery of Greece. We might add that there are quite a few unresolved issues in Greek traditions also, including the kernel themes of Athenian drama.

The main 20th. century effect of the 19th. century debate about matriarchy in early Greece was to banish the very thought from the field of classics, so that the victorious 'always-patriarchal' position could be taken as an *a priori* matter. This is still a fairly obvious pattern; in his work on Greek religion, to mention just one recent example, Walter Burkert (1985) in one arrogant sentence denies that matriarchy ever had any relevance whatsoever regarding Greece, while feeling free to use a finding of a few clay phalluses as proof of its patriarchal structure from ages old. Those who thought otherwise were either ignored (like Robert Briffault, 1927) or acknowledged 'on condition' of being very careful in their statements (like Jane Harrison, 1955). In turn, this created a major *gap* between the academic tradition and a popular (and sometimes best-selling) opposition (like Robert Graves 1977). The latter kept a focus on major patriarchy and gender issues, yet it also became filled with much speculation and wish-imagery. This situation of denial on the one hand and speculation on the other is quite a paradox for a tradition focusing, in all senses, on enlightenment.

Through the last two decades, classical studies have therefore themselves increasingly been regarded with scepticism. For example, Nancy Rabinowitz (in Rabinowitz & Richlin 1993) argues that "if feminism is a politics of change, even the word 'classics' connotes changelessness" and describes how classicists use positivism and empiricism in order to avoid feminist and sociological debate. Other contributors in this volume discuss related themes like "archaeology's androcentric, ethnocentric assumptions about gender roles as fixed" (Shelby Brown in op.cit.251). Marilyn Katz (1992) has argued that "the dominant research question in the field of the study of women in antiquity (..) has been developed without an adequate historiographic basis." There is a "missing historiography", and "ideological parameters" instead. "The constitution of the dominant research question reflects the continuing force of a paradigm influenced by patriarchy and misogyny. An examination of the ideological basis of this hegemonic discourse suggests that it derives from the nineteenth-century debate over women's place in civil society, where the example of the women of ancient Athens

served a legitimating function within a wider political framework." (For Marxist views cf. Sullivan, J 1975.)

This is not all, however, and even in the 1950s and 1960s notably more open-minded exceptions can be found, like the work of Emily Vermeule (1964). A common rule appears: the further away from the ideological 'cradle of civilisation' investment, the greater the openness. As Elise Boulding (1992:224) says, the history of classic-age Athens has been "presented to us as a trick with mirrors"<sup>3</sup>, while areas with fewer ideological ties, like early Near and Middle East studies, have been less closed off.

Beyond all this, however, there are also some good reasons why history is conservative and not so easily shifted around, and some of these emerge when we examine attempted changes. Two examples of attempted paradigmatic shifts shall be discussed here; the recent anti-racist shift represented by Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* project, and the comparable anti-sexist shift attempted by Robert Briffault's *The Mothers* in the 1920s. Interesting similarities appear. These were both large-scale projects, resulting in massive three-volume works (in the case of Bernal, only two have appeared so far), attempting a reinterpretation of main parts of ancient history. They have a similar scope and main message, although in two different areas.

On the face of it, these researchers have not succeeded in shifting the paradigm as they wanted: Bernal to an 'Africa as mother of Greece' model, and Briffault to a 'matriarchy before patriarchy, mothers in the role of fathers' model.

What emerges from this comparison is some common traits pertaining to critical history writing, notably its strength in going the first 'intermediate' step, but also its problems of reappraising modern debates from that point of view, and thereby go some steps further.

Bernal and Briffault both succeed in documenting the narrowness of, respectively, the modern-colonial prescription of Greece as basis of white-man civilisation, and patriarchy as an eternal order. Bernal establishes the *probability* that what he calls the Ancient Model was correct, that Greece was in fact deeply influenced by Asian and African (as well as other European) cultures, and that the modern isolationist model is misleading. Similarly, Briffault's overlooked work establishes the probability of more egalitarian gender relationships in pre-antiquity, even if some of his material is dubious and/or must be reinterpreted in view of later findings.

Bernal and Briffault both attempt to go one step further, however. Besides a critique of modern racism and sexism, there is the attempt to construct a *counter-model*. To my mind, this is where both fail, and the main reason, in terms of the epistemology of critique, is not so hard to find: the counter-model tends to mirror the one criticised, as an inverted image.

Although this tendency may be corrected in Bernal's still unpublished third volume of his work, his second volume has subtly shifted the terrain from the first, which started out with a well-argued critique of scientific racism and a defence of the Ancient Model. Instead of the *multiple* influences of the Ancient Model, the reader is presented with a new one-sided model, only upside down of the European one, and so most of the discussion is conducted on the line of Greek culture as product of

Egyptian and African influences. Although this critique cannot be detailed here, and even if some of his areas of discussion are unfamiliar to me, I notice a heavy-handed 'Egyptianising' in the areas I am familiar with (regarding, for example, the goddess Artemis), and this tendency is so overt in volume two that one does not need detail expertise in all areas in order to notice the slide from one model to another.

In Briffault's work a similar tendency can be found. Besides doing away with the 'patriarchalists' view that patriarchy was always there, once more a well-argued and well-founded critique, Briffault's discussion similarly slides away from what the sources say, mainly regarding more egalitarian conditions, going on to construct the very model he attacks, now inverted, a matriarchal order with mothers at the top.

In view of the fact that a rejection of matriarchy for a long period seems to have been among the informal initiation rituals for any recruit into established ancient history, I emphasise the fact that no known historical material *disproves* the possibility a weaker, 'prominence' version of the matriarchy thesis, namely that women were over-represented among those in power in pre- or even proto-historical periods. Material showing women in power has for long been either ignored or downplayed in this tradition. It should also be noted that classical studies have recently shown signs of change. For example, Peter Levi in a presentation of the field (1987:43) notes how George Thomson's work, aside from ill-found speculations on a mother goddess, has useful parts, and has on the whole been "neglected", while other scholars have used his points "often without acknowledgement". Levi argues that if Thomson was right that the Mycenaeans came from the direction of central Asia, "analogies exist there for the dominant role of women, not only among the gods but in human society, that would confirm it".

The same can be said of the Egyptian influence: possibly it was as large and important as Bernal thinks. The 'critical history' issue, however, is one of historical vision and the use of models. All too often, the counter-model remains bound by the one it counters, as is especially evident in the case of Briffault – *if* women were as powerful as he believed, it is virtually certain that they were *not* powerful in the ways envisioned in the negative-of-patriarchy model of matriarchy.

The earlier discussions of the modern gender system and the fixation on gender (chapter 8) thereby once more come into view, and an examination of the matriarchy / patriarchy debate among historians and social commentators from ca. 1850 to 1930 from this angle is highly informative.

Today, arguments often have the form that if men have position X in patriarchy, matriarchy must have consisted in women having had this position. Yet two or three generations ago it was more usual to argue in the direction that matriarchy must have meant that women's inferior position Y in patriarchy must have been the superior one in matriarchy. (The latter line of thought can of course be found today also, especially among those emphasising women's 'beyondness').

So, if classical age-society worshipped a male sky or sun deity and a female earth or moon deity, images all too familiar in the modern conception of masculinity and femininity, earlier civilisation must have done so too, only with the moon in the primary role. This sun / moon case is instructive. The moon goddess view 'fitted' so

well that Briffault (like Robert Graves in his much-sold work on Greek mythology, 1977) ignored the considerable evidence showing that women, although often in powerful religious positions, were *not* generally tied to the moon, *nor* primarily moon priestesses, *nor* moon worshippers – but, instead, among much else, fairly often connected to *the sun*. There is evidence (although only some of it was available to Briffault) that women were *at least* as often associated with the sun as with the moon in pre-antiquity cultures. This includes the the Hittite sphere of influence (Asia Minor), where a mainly female sun (it was also twin-gendered) was worshipped as main deity. Additionally, there is evidence that the moon often was seen as male (some of it collected in Holter 1987e). The *pre-assignment* in the modern gendered view thereby appears, and a parallel can probably be drawn to 'race' views (an idea that 'race' does exist, only inverted), so that the further discussion is conducted within this pre-assigned model.

Such tendencies may even be *strengthened* by the framework of critique, by the counter-energy of its rejection: there is a target, and it tends to limit periphery vision and free association. It should at once be emphasised that the historical sensitivity was probably no less among the 'matriarchalists' in the debate than among the 'patriarchalists'. Below the surface their problem was the same: an unwarranted export of modern-day assumptions into other contexts. So if society, power, family and kinship were 'matriarchal' in the view of the matriarchalists, *in tendency* they were the same *kinds* of society, power, family and kinship found later, only with women at the top.

A contemporary version of this treatment, one which – significantly – has only fairly recently become a focus of critique, is the idea that if women were once religiously powerful, religion must have been like religion later: powerful, personified, even *monotheistic*, i.e. a worship of one great goddess. Freud, already, argued that "triumphant patriarchy invented mother goddesses by way of compensation"<sup>4</sup>. This is no less relevant today, and I think parts of this process lies much closer to hand, historically speaking, than Freud believed.

The significance of the great goddess idea consists in the fact that it extends the formerly openly patriarchal view of women as *generic*, i.e. non-individualised beings, even in a setting of where women are supposed to be free and powerful. This notion has had such a seductive capability in the modern gender framework that it has been accepted even if unsupported by facts. We find the generic feminine goddess first introduced in historians' asides and footnotes in the last century, usually in a *very* vague context of 'Asiatic influence'. Later she became a celebrated figure of some traditions of feminism. Yet the monotheistic great goddess theory is utterly *unlikely* according to everything known of early historical societies, including the robust pluralism, localism and individualism of each community and the amazing *variety* of anything 'feminine' found in their religion and culture. Neither does it fit what is in fact known about the historical creation of monotheism as part of large-scale empire power.

If the 'realist' historical interpretation tends to extend a modern view directly, the 'romanticist' interpretation has often done so indirectly. It is no coincidence that we also find a specific gender opposition involved in this dimension, and in general, a dimension stretching *from* 'value' and the modern *to* 'use value' and the archaic. These

oppositions may be seen in light of what was said earlier regarding the differentiation process, with the matriarchalists' position on the idealist / archaic end of the scale.

Earlier, I argued that the problems of critique can be reduced by various means: a participative and institutional orientation of the analysis; a multidimensional framework like that of social forms analysis; a 'world' rather than an 'issue' epistemology, and a contextual interpretation and methodological examination of the unavoidable and often indirectly important tendency towards 'projection'. The latter may become fruitful if recognised and examined. The creation of an 'intermediate terrain' of historical interpretation belongs to this context. In the case of Bernal, this terrain is partly summed up in the idea of the Ancient Model, and the same might have been done by Briffault, since the ancients did in fact have a historical model of the emergence of patriarchy. They generally believed that society had developed from a fairly egalitarian setting towards a more patriarchal stage; there was a wide array of traditions supporting this interpretation. I believe both projects would have been more fruitful if the *two* modern views had been discussed in contrast to the ancient models.

Recently there has been some healthy signs of self-critique among feminists also. Bridget Hill (1993) argues that "women's history has focused on continuity rather than change" and that "class, race, and economic factors, e.g., capitalism and industrialisation, have often been ignored." This leads to isolation, says Hill, who is also sceptical to an overriding concept of patriarchy. Yet the problems of the *genderisation* of history have not yet been addressed in full.

In order to construct an intermediate portrait or 'intelligibility space' for discussing the evidence, the historian must use imagination and try to envision a whole. The interpretation of a theme includes a gestalt-like process, a pattern recognition. When the 'critique' element is too closely tied to this process, the *implied* changes of the envisioned whole is often overlooked. As I said, there is a 'tunnel effect': one does not have time for such changes; they do not appear as the main thing of importance. So, for example, many researchers in the patriarchy debate have probably asked themselves whether the family – *as such*, i.e. below various 'versions' of family – is really one and the same thing in a patriarchal and a non-patriarchal setting. Still, such questions have usually been pushed to the side, or not really posed as important on their own, as is the case of 'kinship'. Onwards to the pressing matter: what one was looking for was of course *women's status* or power! It is true that changing the understanding of many patterns at the same time is a difficult venture. Still, *not* doing so often means that basic patterns are overlooked while the more peripheral ones are misrepresented.

Since problems of using anthropological and sociological perspectives in historical analysis are highlighted in the coming sections of this chapter, it should initially be emphasised that such perspectives cannot be avoided. Historians trying to avoid the kinds of 'systems thinking' often associated with recent sociology and social anthropology usually end up repeating more conventional frameworks instead. 'Localisms' do not help; they are not purely local. Also, this is not just a 'conception of the whole' kind of problem. It reappears on all levels of analysis, including the detail work of interpreting a theme. This is perhaps especially evident in the area of ancient history, where historians, pausing to consider the *ways* in which we think about early history, have given highly interesting contributions (e.g. Frankfort, H 1948;

Landsberger, B 1965). What kind of power and economic categories are appropriate in the context that emerges? Should a state like the Hittite empire be described as a network of 'vassalage'? Did the Greeks attack Troy for 'economical' reasons? When is a later category, developed in the context of antiquity, feudalism or capitalism, appropriate, and when is it not?

Such considerations lie at the basis of more hard-edged realist and empiricist views also, not only the more interpretative, theory-associated and 'idealist' historical traditions. As applied to the ancient world, modern-day liberalism is just as prone to show its ideological character as its counter-models of collectivism – even broad categories like 'freedom' and 'the individual' become problematical if applied as-is. The idea of the generic feminine here reappears in its twin, neutralised masculine fashion. There is the 'independent' or isolated individual self (cf. chapter 7) and the concomitant vision of freedom, all in a scenery that has led to much anachronistic debate on whether the pre-classical-age ancients had free will or not.<sup>5</sup>

The reemerging problem concerns correcting local errors of the observation system, being able to grasp what is unique in a material, and avoid narrowing the issues by translating them too quickly into modern categories. If modern issues and engagements remain important, more so than usually acknowledged in this area, historical analysis must nevertheless be 'critical' primarily in this wider sense, and I also believe that the two are connected. Both are involved when historians try to uncover the realities behind the words and expressions of wealth and power, turning to matters like the uses of aggression and ideology and the everyday conditions of households and families.

Often, this is a process with three main stages, each with its own form of 'translation problem'. In the first stage the formerly unknown material is described, translated, commented upon, usually ending as a historical source publication. The next phase involves the use of multiple stage one sources for creating 'distant mirrors' like Tuchman does, intermediate level models. Beyond this, however, and related to what has been said above about general issues reappearing in local problems, there is also a third task or stage consisting of a more general interpretation. As I said, we tend to 'figure' things out whether we like it or not, and so a critique of general models *as such* is misplaced.

The next sections mainly concern issues related to the second type of task, while the third is discussed later, with the presentation of a social forms model of the early development of patriarchal organisation.

## Using the social forms framework

The social forms framework and the differentiation principle create a three-dimensional space for analysis, and some main traits shall be briefly summarised first. There is

- a "width" dimension from production and reproduction, i.e. a 'direction of activity' scale from non-human to human resources;

- a "height" or vertical stratification dimension, including exploitation as well as dominance, and
- a "depth" or reciprocity dimension.

The depth dimension is seen as the main one, leading into wider social forms differences. Its three main levels have been identified in terms of transfers and transference fields, main reciprocity relationships and social forms. Thus a social form is a nexus of main reciprocity relationships, like social class and gender, each of which is in turn constituted through main types of transfer and wider cultural transference. Three main transfer types are distinguished – exchanging (commodity transfer), giving (gift transfer) and redistributing (redistributive transfer). Transfers are associated especially with economic analysis, transference with cultural and psychological analysis, reciprocity with institutional and sociological analysis, and social form with meta-institutional, cultural and macro-sociological analysis.

This multidimensional framework may be used in order to avoid a reduction of major societal structural forces and historical patterns to social class and commodity economy traits, while retaining a connection to economic theory. As pure types, capitalism, feudalism and slave societies can all be described in social forms terms (i.e. with typical transfers and transference fields, main reciprocity relationships, typical societal formations that were widely different and yet associated with the commodity form), superseding a 'mode of production' view without denying its partial relevance.

*Approaching gift and redistributive generalisation.* In my own case, I was able to go into early historical material relating to gender and patriarchy (through a three-year research grant) with no more than 'suspicions' regarding the framework just summarised. The interdisciplinary family/work research discussed in chapter 5, historical sociology and social anthropological views were important points of departure. I soon gave up on the conventional sociological hypothesis testing idea in favour of a very broad (and in the beginning often fumbling and diffuse) 'pattern recognition' approach to historical sources.<sup>6</sup>

Some notes on my own path are relevant here.

At first I did not understand what I met. I started with the high-risk, high-interest area of early Greek traditions, and instead of trying to understand it, or force it into categories I was familiar with, I often found myself wondering, instead, what it was that made it difficult, or strange, to the modern eye. Here I often found Husserl more relevant than Marx. Where was the economic basis? Where was the infrastructure, or the 'trafficking' at least in gender/kinship terms? It was not that it was not there. It was there, in a sense, but not in *our* way, not made into central bases of society like we are used to. Instead I increasingly felt that the social fabric would have to be analysed 'their way', or at least, that such an attempt must be made. Since I was already aware that my subject had been an all too *near-by* mirror of modern gender ideas (through the thoughtful work of Rosalind Coward (1983) and others), I went for detail, burying myself in material on localities and genealogies especially (a draft result exists as Holter 1984g).

'Their way', at the outset, seemed religious (although not in the modern sense) rather than economical, with deities, heroes and cults as a kind of traffic signs. Three related traits dominated the material – (1) a rich tapestry of religious relations; (2) genealogies and family patterns which were clustered around large houses rather than being 'linear' in the modern kinship sense, and (3) the Mycenaean tablet lists which were both economic and sacral in character.

All three seemed mainly to concern gift and redistributive principles, and attempts to bring them into order through a 'materialist' or commodity-economic approach did not work too well; it did not fit the *kind* of classification that was present in the material itself. Instead, I attempted to follow the ancient lines of generalisation, leading to and from clusters combining central places and central deities. A deity like Poseidon, for example, could be seen as expressing and embodying certain aspects of societal organisation, in this case primarily connected to men's lives. A first, somewhat crude approach therefore consisted in conceiving of each main sacral figure as embodying a societal 'function'. Gradually it also became more apparent that these figures were historically changing, often in conflict, and not pure 'functions' in a static and harmonious structure, as in the structuralist vision of Dumézil and others (recently criticised by Renfrew 1992:233pp.).

A methodology of understanding men's and women's lives through sacral figures and connections, rituals, etc. was therefore developed, mainly for pragmatic reasons. Clearly, if these connections were overlooked, most of the material and especially the oral and epic traditions would simply become unintelligible. They were the main rules of the age. This approach was later further developed in a study of Artemis, generally acknowledged as the most influential Greek goddess among women especially. (It is indicative that I started out tracing the connections of Apollo and ended with a 300-page draft on Artemis). Here I found (1) elements of a coherent and in some settings (especially in Efesos) also fairly self-sufficient social system, with different versions of Artemis and connected figures embodying a variety of social functions; (2) elements of structural interconnections with other deities, parts of the pantheon, local sacral figures, etc., that were also often conflict-filled, and (3) elements of change, including signs of major changes to the whole system over time, together creating a highly interesting, if mostly indirect, picture of the changing roles and conceptions of women (Holter 1985a; 1990j).

The idea that the sacral or religious elements in this context 'stand for' some of the same connections that modern people would ascribe to economy and politics may be simplistic, yet it also contains an important kernel of truth. This has been brought out especially through studies of tablet material, an area where it is commonly recognised that material transfers and religious connections are so tightly interwoven that it is hard to distinguish an 'economic' sphere as distinct from a 'religious' one. In the social forms view, this approach is anyway not necessarily appropriate; as outlined earlier, the economic basis/religious superstructure model is replaced with one of different forms of expression related to different forms of reciprocity. Although these may not be *abstract* in the modern sense, I have emphasised that they are not only 'concrete'; instead, this idea of bare concreteness itself belongs to the commodity form horizon, and the absence of this objectivist agenda is precisely what makes early traditions strangely different from what we are used to. Religious figures represent forms of generalisation that are not serial, in Sartre's term, but clearly more 'group-like', more

representative of relational than classificatory commonality (cf. Appendix 2). Main features of the polytheistic setting, like the 'absorbent' quality of religion and the willingness to worship just about any local deity, become intelligible in a perspective where the main 'redistributive operation' as well as the more gift-like and federative connections surrounding it are seen as expressed and generalised in this sacral manner.

Some of the problems of the social forms framework itself thereby also come more clearly into view. This framework remains bound to activities and transfers, which may not be the best starting point for understanding, for example, early Greece. Here, deities may be associated with certain kinds of activities, but they are primarily described in broader terms, as expressions of certain ways or sides of life. A 'task organisation and sacral generalisation' perspective may therefore be too narrow, even if it avoids the more blatant anachronisms of the materialisms that has passed under the name of Marxism. It remains the case, however, that task, activity and transfer elements are usually parts of the wider repertoire associated with the religious figure. Also, the material element comes more clearly to light when we seek out the parts that are most practically oriented. A well-known case concerns the difference between the 'epical' traditions on the one hand, fairly ignorant of work life matters (even if Homer sometimes describes his heroes as 'multitasking' (Glotz, G 1926)), and the tablet listings on the other hand, where the task organisation appears as the central matter. This difference most probably is not only due to the later dating of the epics, but mainly to the kinds of contexts that were typical of, respectively, the epical tale and the household or magazine listing. While the tablet expresses the redistributive organisation in a fairly direct way (although here, also, with sacral connections, in sacrificial form, etc.), the epical tale has many traits of the transference level (cf. chapter 7), including the 'attempted solution' aspect. In general terms, then, it is true that the social forms framework may be misleading for example due to activity categories being inappropriate, yet it is wide enough to make sense also of 'exotic' contexts like the one described here. A view to activities and transfers does not necessarily imply that we interpret these elements in the modern way or give them the kind of emphasis they have in modern society.

## Approaching historical patriarchy

Two main problems appear as we approach the historical study of forms of patriarchal social organisation. Both relate to difficulties of identifying the subject at hand and establish it on its own turf, and thereby indirectly to difficulties of the modern outlook. The first problem has been discussed earlier in sociological terms and shall briefly be addressed in the historical context. This is the need for an 'un-genderising' of the analysis, both in the sense of escaping at least the most overt modern projections of gender, and in the sense of recognising that the patriarchal organisation of a given context or society is not quite the same as its gender system. As should be clear by now, this un-genderising does not imply a return to the traditional neutralist-masculine view; what we want to avoid, instead, is precisely the counter-critique problems discussed above, when an 'alternative' image has been established.

It is quite understandable that gender, in a modern context where its importance has much of the appearance of major discovery, is also straightaway introduced as explanatory principle throughout history. In a broad view, this is also one important

step forward. Yet the method tends to bring some misconceptions along, and these are as evident in recent historical interpretations as in sociology. Easily, a context in which women and men are present and interrelate in some way, is taken as basis for an interpretation where the two are present *as* women and men, *as* gendered in the modern sense.

I agree with Connell's (1995:67-8) recent summary of a historical view of gender systems:

"All societies have cultural accounts of gender, but not all have the concept 'masculinity'. In its modern usage the term assumes that one's behaviour results from the kind of person one is. (..) This conception presupposes a belief in individual difference and personal agency. In that sense it is built on the conception of individuality that developed in early modern Europe with the growth of colonial empires and capitalist economic relations. (..) A culture which does not treat women and men as bearers of polarised character types, at least in principle, does not have the concept of masculinity in the sense of modern European / American culture.

Historical research suggests that this was true of Europe itself before the eighteenth century. Women were certainly regarded as different from men, but different in the sense of being incomplete or inferior examples of the same character (for instance, having less of the faculty of reason). Women and men were not seen as bearers of qualitatively different characters; this conception accompanied the bourgeois ideology of 'separate spheres' in the nineteenth century."

Modern gender was created from without, from the visibly corporeal aspects of the person, sinking inwards, from anatomy to biology, from praxis to inner nature. Yet this process *appeared* in quite the contrary fashion, as a process from within, moving outwards, constraining and informing new practices that were now interpreted as ages-old, caused by nature itself. The very idea that *everyone* has the right to gender status is a historical idea in this broad sense, connected to a development where gender no longer relied on overt social relations, but seemed to reside simply in people's bodies, as their inner nature. – This is a main historical implication of the view set out in part one of this text.

It should be emphasised such a view does not imply that pre-modern patriarchy was always characterised by a low degree of sex segregation. Rather it is the form, basis and function of modern sex differentiation that differ from the segregation of traditional patriarchy, like the modern concept of race differs from older notions of locality and centrality.

One of the consequences and background issues of the ahistorical 'genderising' method is an eternalistic view. This brings us to the second major problem, namely the discussion, or lack of discussion, of how patriarchal organisation *changes over time*. Models of different phases or forms of patriarchal organisation have started to emerge only in the debate about modern patriarchy, as discussed in the last chapter. If earlier patriarchies were different, the unique trait designations are usually borrowed from elsewhere, like 'feudal patriarchy', i.e. from the broadly materialist, including Marxist, conception of historical development. According to the rule that patriarchy

incorporates same-sex as well as cross-sex subordination, such terms may be better than none. Yet they are still not derived from analyses of patriarchy as such.

Only seldom do we gain the impression that patriarchy – even if multidimensional, resilient, etc. – may also have been a *precarious* arrangement, and a process that *created* other broad changes in society for reasons related to that fact. Yet such a proposition makes sense; sociology has yet to discover a power arrangement that is not at least partially precarious and filled with tensions and conflicts for that reason. Further, it seems probable that patriarchy analysis will (1) show differences of forms, phases, etc. that do *not* just correspond to those of class and mode of production analyses, and (2) that it may eventually also change the interpretation of these more conventional categories. For example, the idea that the world of antiquity broke down for the reasons found in the conventional Marxist scheme of developing forces of production has never carried too much conviction, while the possibility that the breakdown should instead mainly be interpreted as a *patriarchal* reorganisation remains both understudied and (in view of emerging monotheism, etc.) fairly likely.

## Anthropological contributions

In a recent outline of anthropological views of the early development of patriarchal organisation, Nickie Charles (1993:42) writes:

"In egalitarian non-class societies a gender division of labour existed (..) but it was neither hierarchical nor did it deny women's autonomy. With the transition to a mode of production which made accumulation and therefore private property possible, women's reproductive capacity assumed a different significance and had an impact, in combination with specific social and historic factors, on their position in society. (..) Engels links the emergence of gender inequalities to the emergence of other social inequalities based on differential access to the means of production." Charles goes on to review the work of anthropologists who have used this theory as a starting point (Leacock, Draper, Sacks, Coontz, Henderson and others).

She finds that recent analysis "avoids the problem of arguing either that male dominance is a result of external, colonial pressures on previously egalitarian societies (..) or that it is a product of a biological drive on the part of men to endow their sons with property [as she interprets Engels' original analysis]. Instead, they see male dominance as arising from two processes: the emergence of internal ranking to many pre-class societies, and the type of property that preceded individual private property [ref. to Coontz and Henderson 1986:110]." The target of Charles' critique of the "external, colonial pressure" hypothesis is mainly Etienne & Leacock (1980); we shall see, however, that substantial evidence exists in this area, also concerning contemporary processes (cf. chapter 13).

A broad division of labour is assumed, where women perform subsistence tasks closer to the home, while men take on more long-distance and periodic activities that are difficult to reconcile with pregnancy and nursing (op.cit.46). This labour division did not presuppose inequality, but it created a context in which "the rules for redistribution of men's products are likely to be more complex than those for redistributing women's products." (Op.cit.47. I am sceptical on this latter point).

Charles then discusses Coontz and Henderson's theory that this division of labour was transformed into exploitation of women by a change from communal society into "kin corporate property owning groups" (ibid.). She notes the importance of matrilocality in this transformation. "The mechanism of the emergence of male domination is located in the contradiction between owners in a kin corporate group and those who move into the group on marriage as producers. Those who move are at a disadvantage, in terms of access to and control over the means of production, in the group they move into, while retaining ownership rights in their group of origin." (op.cit.48). On this background, Charles criticises conventional anthropological analyses (Levi-Strauss, Meillassoux and others), arguing that "the exchange of women is precisely what needs to be explained, it cannot be taken as a universal of human society." She then refers Coontz and Henderson's argument that the incentive (and possibility) to accumulate and to exert control over labour was greater in patrilocal than in matrilocal societies.

This argument is 'productionist' in a wide sense: "In patrilocal societies, men's involvement in exchange, hunting and warfare and their control over female labour within their kin group came together to give them an advantage over matrilocal societies in terms of the ability to accumulate" (op.cit.50). Not only is production the main matter, we also note how societies develop, much like competing supermarkets struggling for 'advantage'. It is not difficult to detect the aforementioned 'gender class view' behind this kind of argument. Here we have two differently gendered societal arrangements, supposedly competing, with patrilocality as the winner. One does not have to be a power theorist, or especially critically minded, in order to suspect that something may be wrong with this type of argument.

Charles, like other recent contributors, argues that even if Engels' original argument was partially biologicistic (etc.), "his theoretical schema which linked the emergence of women's oppression to the development of production for exchange, private property and class societies is largely supported, both empirically and analytically." (Op.cit.51; in this debate Engels is usually over-credited, since his work often rested on Marx's ethnological notebooks).

A similar broad association between economic surplus and commodity relations on the one hand, and a declining status of women on the other, emerges in the overview discussion of Solheim (1979:25, my trans.), who writes that with more intensive agriculture,

"The emphasis in the economic activity shifts from self-sufficiency to surplus production and economic competition, and there usually emerges ranking differences between kin groups and, in certain conditions, a development towards chieftain groups. In these circumstances, the kin collective will increasingly be centred around the economic activity of the men. It seems a common trait of primitive societies that women are tied to the household economy, while men are more connected to the economic / political level beyond that of the household. The reasons for this division may be hard to define, yet I believe they are connected to the close unity of mother and child mentioned earlier, which appears to be a material necessity in simple production circumstances. Women's work mainly is focused on a provider role towards the household which she and the children belongs to, and the work must be of a character that can be combined with pregnancy, nursing and care for small children.

In other words, I believe that women's reproductive role sets certain conditions for their productive and societal activities."

Solheim's discussion is focused on "the contradiction between social labour – for the whole, and private labour – for the family", which is "the kernel element of the oppression of women, as Engels saw it." (op. cit. 37). This contradiction is important also for contemporary analysis, while Engels' and Marx's ideas on the original status of mother-right and some other more concrete elements of their theory are either incorrect or dubious.

Solheim argues that instead of their idea of the original group family, the anthropological evidence supports a notion of the "*original family form not as a group family, but as a non-family*". By this I mean marital ties that regulate the relations between groups, but do not create family units; husband and wife primarily belong to their own kin group / production unit, and not to each other." (op.cit. 14, my trans. and emphasis). Other anthropologists have argued in the same direction: "The Family as we know it is not a 'natural' group created by the claims of 'blood' but a sphere of human relationships shaped by a State that recognises Families as units that hold property" (Collier et.al. in Thorne & Yalom 1982:33). As we shall see, this argument is of some significance in an early historical context.

The anthropological contributions to the debate on the emergence of patriarchal societal organisation are hampered by two more specific problems. One is the 'non-original' character of much of the anthropological knowledge of small-scale or 'primitive' communities. This is emphasised by Solheim: "Since most of the currently existing hunter-gatherer-communities have been in contact with more developed agricultural economies for as much as thousands of years, and have later been modified through colonial dominance and a capitalist market economy, using them as indications of an 'original' social organisation is fairly problematical" (op.cit.12). Over the last decades, the knowledge of the wide connections and 'world system' aspects of early civilisations has increased, which makes this remark all the more pertinent. A second more specific problem concerns the state of the art of quantitative analysis in this area, as represented by Murdoch's Atlas and smaller similar materials, where surprises usually result when the case material is re-examined. If a category like 'private property' is questionable, categories like male dominance and patriarchy are even more diffuse and dependent on the gender views of the researcher<sup>7</sup>.

As mentioned in the last chapter, various monocausal theories have been proposed in order to account for emerging patriarchal organisation; in broad terms, they all face a problem of evidence that does not quite fit. One of the strongest candidates seems to be *matrilocal*ity, which has recently been re-emphasised in historical and sociological as well as anthropological studies. In matrilocality kinship, men are the circulative element, not women. Anthropological evidence suggests that the locality variable may be one of the strongest predictors of women's status – in some cross-cultural studies, it emerges as the strongest of all (Johnson and Hendrix 1982; Schlegel, M 1972 Nielsen, J 1978; there is also substantial qualitative evidence here). Matrilocality tends to be associated with more egalitarian conditions, including female prominence in some areas, although not with "matriarchy". Women are usually better off in contexts where they keep access to 'local' or place-bound resources, including kinship resources, than

when this connection is weakened or broken by the woman moving into the man's household in marriage.

A shift from a woman- or mother-centred kinship organisation to one centred on the man or father, or a similar shift in marriage locality patterns, does not, of course, 'explain' patriarchal developments. We may turn the argument around and argue that the latter can as well be seen as preceding the former. The same might be said of other monocausal theories, like the introduction of the plow. What appears is instead better interpreted as 'early links' or mediating elements; elements that, even if they presuppose some form of male dominance, can in fact be seen as enhancing it, or facilitating a more general patriarchal orientation of society as a whole.

The paternity element may be another important link. Like other anthropologists, Solheim (op.cit. 21) argues that while "women's biological reproduction is simultaneously and directly a societal reproduction of the community", since "kinship through the maternal line immediately coincides with the physical / material reproduction process", "inheritance through the paternal line can only be created through the family as a societal unit. The father kin group can not reproduce itself directly through its own women (...) It requires that the family exists not only as a loose marital connection, but *as a dominant societal unit.*" (My emphasis). In other words, in any situation where generational succession and inheritance become important, men are disfavoured, *unless* a societal arrangement can make paternity (almost) as immediately clear-to-all as maternity.

I believe much historical evidence points to a very early set of '*compensatory mechanisms*' at this point. Certain forms of control, mainly external and proto-political in character, were kept mainly on men's hands, *vis-à-vis* the more 'proto-economic' form of control (over human resources especially) of women which is implied by the above argument. Although this argument can only be partially pursued in the present context, it should be mentioned that such a 'balancing' mechanism does make sense of a very common setting in early historical sources. Here, women are well represented in terms of 'inner-household' power, including religious power, while men dominate in the more externally oriented proto-political sphere. The question of emerging patriarchal organisation may, in such a perspective, be rephrased in terms of a shift of the main power basis in society, as is further discussed below.

## Aligning historical and anthropological accounts

Anthropological evidence and analyses mostly support the idea that there is an association between the emergence of commodity exchange-oriented society on the one hand, and patriarchal organisation on the other. Even if patriarchal conditions may have other important bases, this seems to be a main one. The fact that practically speaking *all* commodity economies have been patriarchal strengthens this view.

Contrary to common beliefs, many *modern* studies have found that market extensions tend to be patriarchal extensions also, reformulating or strengthening patriarchal principles rather than doing away with them. Increasing evidence of patriarchalisation together with the introduction of market economy in periphery areas have appeared as researchers have turned their attention this way, as well as evidence of more indirect

'gender restructuring' in women's disfavour for example in fourth world cultures coming into contact with modern society. The evidence regarding "the marketing of patriarchy" broadly supports the present thesis, and it is also important regarding historical interpretation (and modern misinterpretation), although I have not been able to bring it fully into the present text.<sup>8</sup>

Historical studies of how commodification and patriarchalisation are linked indicate a general problem with the use of anthropological accounts or explanatory devices for historical purposes. The problem concerns the simple yet somewhat undercommunicated fact that these accounts are not historical (Wolf, E 1982:17pp.), or not historical in the context (emergence of patriarchy in early civilisation development) in which they are used. Instead, they are used as 'help-lines' and 'fill-ins' for early periods where the archaeological or historical material seems fragmented and hard to decipher. Sociology is also used in this fashion. Before examining this problem in more detail, some general considerations are appropriate.

Consider the case of England, the first true 'capitalist' country. It is well known that socio-economic conditions in England were often *very different* from those of the 'late comers' to the capitalist enterprise. Marx, for example, made a main point of this difference in several areas, like the development of early capitalist forms of surplus exploitation. It may also be argued, based on Weber's view of the Protestant ethic and much else, that many *political* developments in England were singular (Magna Charta); similar arguments may be offered also in terms of culture and social life, generally marked by the country's emerging dual position as 'first' and as 'centre'.<sup>9</sup>

Developments elsewhere therefore were not only dissimilar in the sense of delayed, but also often *opposed* to those of the English centre. In the 'ecology' of early capitalism, England had already taken the main niche, so those who wanted to compete would have to look elsewhere and develop different methods.

In general terms, then, there are many reasons why we should *not* expect 'emergence factors' relating to patriarchy in the centres of the first civilisations to be identical to those that were operative either in the periphery, or those that can be found later in small-scale communities. The latter part of the argument becomes all the more important since these early civilisations were very different from most small-scale communities studied by anthropologists, much more different than, say, early modern England from early modern Germany. This difference consists partly in larger scale and societal complexity, but it mainly concerns the early centres' position within an emerging world system, an international world. The dual position of being first and being central does not only concern patriarchal social organisation, but a wide range of other matters also, which means that the argument presented above concerning England is all the more relevant for *many* 'systemic' reasons.

These considerations highlight the difference of historical and anthropological accounts. Even if the commodity form, in a wide definition of private exchange and property, can be seen as a cross-cultural 'variable', this remains an external and ahistorical approach. The commodity form is a *historical process*, emerging in proto-historical and early historical times in the main centres of civilisation, mainly in the Middle East. Here it created a world system that gradually came into contact with peoples in wider areas (see e.g. Sitwell, N 1986). The developments of this system,

and especially the centres within it, may have been very different from the assumed general development lines as portrayed, for example, by Coontz and Henderson (1986). This brings us to the notion of the 'really existing' patriarchy as different from the 'formal' category, which will be further examined later.

## Kinship as archaised gender

In some traditions associated with structural anthropology especially, the use of anthropological explanations has not been limited to filling in the historical unknowns, but has instead extended into reconstruction, more so in the area of patriarchy debate than in other areas. A specific misinterpretation of the sources has been influential mainly in the intersection of the two modern images discussed initially, namely the 'Greek cradle of civilisation' idea, and the 'patriarchy was always around' idea. Pre-antiquity Greek society and especially its oral, legendary traditions have been analysed as myths of what Levi-Strauss called a 'cold' society, one without history – not perhaps in all respects, but in *this* precise respect, regarding women. Monique Saliou (1986:170-2) writes:

"Refuting the concept of primeval matriarchy in Greece does not entail uncritical acceptance of the idea that 'the world has always belonged to men'. This is an idea which in contemporary France has the aspect of revealed truth. The origins of this belief are found in Lévi-Strauss (...) [who writes that] 'the fundamental fact is that men exchange women and not the other way round'. Authority is therefore always masculine: 'This masculine priority is a constant trait'. (...) When the founder of structural anthropology ventures to explain the origin of the inequality of the sexes, he resorts to 'the sexual passivity of women' (...) The method [of structural anthropology] in effect justifies the reification of a human group (...) This method is ill-suited to archaic societies that have a known history, that can only be understood in a dynamic perspective.

The interest of the Greek material is that it shows the evolution of women's oppression (...) While we reject the idea that [Greek legend and] myth is a pure projection of social reality as simplistic, we no longer accept the explanation that some authors apply, oddly, only to matriarchal sequences, the explanation that: Myth is fear, fear of a topsy-turvy world, of Chaos, of Non-being, which could not be better concretised than through women's power. This explanation, which is favoured by contemporary Hellenists, readers of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Simone de Beauvoir, explains nothing. Why are men so fearful of women if they have been subjugated since the stone age? (...) Why so much creativity [on sex conflict in Greek myth] if the subordination of women has always been 'experienced' as immediate, natural, and undisputed?"

Lévi-Strauss's goal here, as Saliou comments, was not to explain but to observe, yet the observation is faulty on its own grounds, mainly since matrilocality and other traditions where women are not 'exchanged' are erased. Lévi-Strauss was closer to the truth when he wrote of how Homeric society made "an effort to transcend (...) theoretically irreconcilable principles" (quoted in Leduc 1992:243), i.e. contained matrilocality as well as patrilocality patterns<sup>10</sup>.

In the study of ancient Greece it is still the case, as Saliou writes, that an approach which is even inconsistent by itself, not to speak of its problems of freezing or de-historising the historical material, dominates much of the scholarship. The *kinship* concept which is employed in this approach cannot only be seen as an objective explanatory device. This has in fact been recognised by many critics within anthropology (Wolf, E 1982:89). Yet there is more to be said here, for I believe that the abstract kinship category of structuralist anthropology has a major aspect of projection of modern gender circumstances, including the gender market idea of exchange. There is a presupposed, archaised version of the modern economic framework of circulating women who are sexually passive. These attraction objects, gender-as-woman-objects, now in the sense of kinship-as-women, are made into the ball bearings of the male machinery of civilisation anywhere.

This claim is of course not so easily 'proved', yet we do have indications from the master himself, as quoted, that the model *did not fit* the circumstances where, later, it has been used most frequently. So, if the idea of exchange of women as a general culture-building mechanism does not fit the facts, and belong to a 'universalistic' interpretation of kinship (Leach, E 1973:95pp.), where does it come from?

In the history of social science, the forerunner of this idea was part of the standard explanation in the patriarchy/matriarchy debate in the last part of the 19th. century. Women, in that debate, were not seen as 'exchanged', rather, they were 'taken'; civilisations started by men 'capturing' women. Even Engels (1970:50) made a concession here, although he did not make it the basis of everything, unlike his opponent Westernmarck (1925), who according to Engels (op.cit. 42) looked at the world through 'brothel glasses'.

Here we have not only one, but *two* 'curious' coincidences with modern developments, as discussed in part one of this text. While the *capture* idea corresponded to late 19th. century conditions (emancipation still a daring thing; the *gender-as-woman* emergence phase of the contemporary gender system), the *exchange* idea mirrored mid-20th. century conditions, in which the existence of women as women in a gender system in a dyadic but inferior exchange role had been firmly established and appeared as the nature of 'women as such'. When, *in addition*, these ideas only fit some of the observed facts, yet nevertheless rise to power as a ruling paradigm, there can be no reasonable doubt that modern-day ideological aspects come into it, even if only involuntarily transmitted by enthusiasm for ancient Greece.

There is the wish that the stately, philosophical and cultural centre of Athens, whose institutions, though vastly different, also resemble our own, was the origin of the blessings of civilisation only, not its curses. Problems emerge when such a wish-image closes in on reality: if patriarchy is a curse, or a measure of the low degree of civilisation, *nature*, or stone age people, not the Greeks, were responsible for it. And so if Greek traditions tend to say that patriarchal organisation *did* emerge there, these sources should themselves be mistrusted. We may note that the 'cold' treatment usually is received for women, 'the women's question', and not for men or men's areas like politics and philosophy: *here* history, inventiveness and origin is emphasised all the more (even if this was actually the 'cold' sphere, according to the Hellenistic view).<sup>11</sup>

Kinship, it has been argued, never became truly 'blue-blooded' in Middle Ages; it rose as a *system* primarily in the dissolution of feudalism, as part of the archaisation attempts of the new bourgeoisie to legitimise their power. The ideological use of kinship is not a new phenomenon and, indeed, often hard to disentangle from kinship itself. In the modern context, kinship often appears as *gender archaised*: this is what modern gender supposedly must have been like, its own 'natural history', bridging the gap between nature and society. Many portraits of 'kinship society', a place without past or future, isolated from the world around, bear this mark. Below, I shall examine some of the misleading ideas resulting from this view.<sup>12</sup>

## Redistributive and kinship organisation

In the argument of Solheim, discussed above, Marx and Engels' idea of a 'group marriage family' based on 'mother-right' should rather be interpreted on the line of 'no family', or even 'no (special) right'. What emerges is a major difference between two senses of 'kinship'. There is kinship in the sense of *affirming* what is anyway immediately visible, a given locality group, and kinship as *opposed* to this immediate reality. Here it functions as security for another kind of reality that can only be socially mediated.

I do *not* agree, however, with the all too easily made association that this difference equals the one between maternity and paternity. That would be 'transfer fetishism' once more. Instead it is a difference between a loosely group-based system and one based on a property order that in principle cuts across all such particularistic ties, male or female. The notion that men *per se* are so anxious about their paternity that a clear-cut order must be installed, *presupposes* a certain societal setting, and it also echoes some very contemporary concerns.<sup>13</sup> Also, this line of thought easily slides into a 'primitivist' arrogance towards early societies, as if they were unable to grasp or emphasise *mediated*, non-sensuous relations, which is not at all the case. Instead, I propose a view where patrilinearity became a main issue in the larger shift of kinship mainly for historical reasons. This process started with men as *sons*, sometimes emphasising their being sons of their *mothers*, with 'son' in the sense of 'group-associate', 'dependent', 'worthy follower of' – rather than with the father role. The patriarchal father role came later; I believe it was mainly created as a backwards motion by men who claimed legitimacy as followers and guardians.

Whatever the role of paternity, the group-based loose sense of kinship is a starting point that fits better with early civilisation conditions than the idea of linear kinship as organising principle. The latter sense of kinship *became* socially effective only through a prolonged process of conflict. The modern discussion of gender as *superimposed* on earlier sexed organisation (chapter 8) is relevant here. Earlier kinship was not simply 'disorganised'; rather it played a qualitatively different role than the one that was superimposed on it.

Here it is necessary to take a step back, and consider some main traits of the material as a whole.

In Coontz and Henderson's view, subordination of women should as we saw be explained in terms of changes from communal society into "kin corporate property

owning groups". Although agreeing with Murdock that "residence was more significant in the origins of stratification (both gender and class) than descent" (Coontz and Henderson 1986:111), they keep their debate within the terrain of kinship, rather than that of household and residential group, and visualise the whole shift towards patrilocal kin corporate groups as occurring in the Neolithic period (op.cit.138), i.e. long before the rise of historical civilisation in Uruk and the other cities in the lower Tigris / Euphrat valley.

A basic problem with this view, disregarding the structuralist ideas of kinship, concerns the fact that it is commonly recognised, at least *outside* the origin of patriarchy debate, that early civilisations were *not primarily organised in terms of kinship*. Indeed, it is more pertinent to ask whether these shrine- or temple-centred settlements (Roux 1980:73-4) were organised, at least on the state or macro level, through kinship principles at all. The Sumerian king list, for example, has nothing on kinship as succession principle, nor do other early tablets (Oates 1986:24pp). In Mycenaean tablets, what exists mainly concerns men listed as sons of their mothers, much in the vein of Solheim's 'immediacy' argument (Tritsch, F 1958; Billigmeier & Turner 1981).

Instead, the tablets have instead led historians to a view of a "*bureaucratically*" organised society, rather than one where leadership and other positions were defined in terms of kinship (Ventris & Chadwick 1973; Chadwick, J 1976; Renfrew & Shennan 1982; Roaf, M 1990; Hoffman, M 1979:322pp.; Oates 1986:24pp.). It is true that kinship may in practice have played greater roles than what appears in the tablet texts, yet kinship is not emphasised as main principle in the culture of the early Middle East either, at least not in the sense of a complex lineage system. What we see, instead, are household-based roles, where a term like 'sister' primarily has a household group meaning, not a lineage meaning. Many traits are intelligible in this context, like the 'absorbent' (through adoption, etc.) and loose character of the system, the frequent use of kinship terms as metaphors and the main nexus of religion emphasising 'fertility' and agricultural power in a broad social sense (though not quite the 'nature-worship' sense of early scholars like J. G. Frazer). This was not a kinship / lineage world of controlled sexuality, instead fertility came in many shapes; indeed the amazing imagination regarding 'begetting' or life-creative powers in early religion and mythology is a striking trait.

Since Gordon Childe, historians have generally considered this kind of society 'territoriality-based' rather than 'kinship-based' (Roaf, M. 1990:58f.). The main dynamic of this form of society has also generally been identified as one of increasing centralisation and dominance of a large-household organisation, with some variant of temple, palace or shrine in the middle.<sup>14</sup>

The primarily 'bureaucratic' organisational structure is well known, yet often overlooked in the fill-in debate on patriarchy, since of course *anthropology* (or what has mainly been borrowed from anthropology) has a main focus on kinship. In the Middle East there are clear indications that leaders' sons followed their fathers only from the Akkadian period by 2300 B.C. or so. For a long time, leadership institutions continued to be based mainly on sacral-bureaucratic rather than kinship rules. In the first 'epic period' sources (c. 2900 B.C.), the Sumerian city leader is portrayed as a man from the outside, like Gilgamesh, Enmerkar and others, now often thought to

have been historical persons. The leader was selected in 'the heart of the deity', probably at the end of a multi-stage recruitment process where the city nominated candidates to be chosen by the religious establishment. It is not clear whether 'sacral marriage', further discussed below, was already a main part of the recruitment process. The general idea of kinship in this culture is well conveyed by the fact that the leader customarily was described in terms of being a close *friend* and guardian, a *lover* and *spouse*, and a *brother* of the deity – all in one package. Such usage strongly suggests that kinship terms were indeed group-based and used metaphorically for that reason.

Kinship in the stricter, non-immediate sense discussed above mainly seems to have been introduced through the dynastic strivings of increasingly secular leaders in the late third millennium in Mesopotamia. In Anatolia, the existence of a sister's son succession principle at the time of the first strong Hittite king, Hattusili 1, is on record. Scholars have disagreed whether this principle was really the dominant one, yet I believe that the text makes this the most likely interpretation. Anyway it is clear that the ruler's sister was of main importance as religious leader, that a patrilinear principle only emerged by 1450 B.C. or so (Telepinus) after much conflict, and that the sister of the ruler was eclipsed in importance by his wife as late as c. 1360 (Suppiluliumas). Throughout, the kings upheld and even enhanced the older vocabulary; a common Hittite phrase was "hero, beloved of the god / goddess" (Gurney, O 1964:65). "The goddess, my lady, always held me by the hand, and since I was a divinely favoured man, and walked in the favour of the gods, I never committed the evil deeds of mankind", says Hattusili 3 c. 1260 B.C. (ibid.).

In the Levant as in early Egypt (Hoffman 1979:322pp.) *the ruling couple* often emerges as a central institution. This is the case in Greece also, and one major point where the oral traditions have been confirmed by the tablets. In the tablets, Zevs and Poseidon are coupled with feminine variants, Zevia and Poseidea. We might add Artemis and Apollo, placed as twins in tradition, yet with Artemis as the older one. Whatever else, the couple tendency has the effect of reducing the importance of any possible unilinear kinship principle in favour of a broader sense of relationship. It looks, therefore, as if the move from residential household-based kinship to dynastic / patrilinear kinship was a comparatively *late* development in many areas, of which more will be said below. It should be noted that tablet text portrayals of city leaders in the early period, including the Hittites, show them as mainly occupied with fulfilling religious obligations, keeping the favour of the central deity and thereby the population. Their interest in their successors seems to have been a personal and individualistic one, rather than informed by kinship principles in any modern sense. In other words, a leader primarily wanted to see his own position continued by his favourite, and if this person was not a relative, he might be made into one, by being called, or adopted as, a son. It also seems that more complex and distinct adoption rules only developed gradually, perhaps partly in the wake of disputes over the former issue. All this makes sense if, in fact, the state and task organisation had originally been *group- and locality-based*.

Others would prefer to see this form of organisation as a later development from some form of kinship society. An Aegean example is Ann Blasingham (in Krzyzszkowska & Nixon 1983) who argues, probably rightly, against a view of early (pre- and proto-palatial) seals of Crete as money-like tokens; instead she believes that they were

kinship signs. She notes that the existence of several seal motifs in each tomb suggests "the tombs were not the property of homogenous unilineal descent groups" (op.cit.16) and that the signs may be craft emblems or political office markers. This variety of suggestions is indicative of the general situation regarding the evidence in this early context. At that point, however, Blasingham turns to what she sees as social anthropological kinship principles, mainly to the effect that kinship becomes a presupposed 'main matter'. Although it seems strange that different kinship signs should be found in the same grave, she nevertheless feels that these principles carry enough weight to dismiss a view that the seals were mainly communal or office-related; supposedly, a tomb always represents "the integration of the deceased into the network of ancestors and, through that integration, the affirmation of the descendants' status" (op.cit.18). This is formulaic; it is what needs to be proved in the context of Minoan culture, as is the case with Blasingham's idea of a shift from "simple localised lineages or clans into stratified clans or ramages" (op.cit. 19). She sees the many new seal motifs c. 1900 B.C. as indicative of "the beginning of a ranked society and a redistributive economy", while to my mind the knowledge of early urban societies, as a whole, suggests redistributive principles *as* state principles were already quite old by that time. Typical traits of this period are more trade and commodity influence (in the east) and extended stratification processes, as is further discussed below.

There is little reason to doubt that *some* form of household organisation with some kinship-like relations existed as part of the background of the rising redistributive economy Blasingham mentions. The question is whether it should be seen mainly as a household collective, or as a lineage system more in the direction, for example, of the old Norse society where complex kinship consideration did in fact play a major role. I think that the first proposition is more likely, in view of eastern developments, the low profile of kinship considerations in palatial society, and the relative chaos ("theoretically irreconcilable principles") in Greek traditions. There is also material showing that the kinship order that did emerge was a fairly *late* phenomenon, most noticeable in the period leading to the fall of palatial society. It is probable that increasing tension between the emerging kinship/lineage principles and older palatial organisation was part of the background for the dissolution of palace culture.

In sum, the general picture of early historical civilisations, like the centres of the Minoan palace world, the Anatolian palace states and the Mesopotamian cities, does not resemble the kinship society framework borrowed from anthropology. Instead these early urbanisation centres developed a proto-political and proto-religious system and a complex task organisation based mainly on large-household membership, locality, and sacral or temple-related 'bureaucratic' principles. Besides what has been argued above, in terms of being 'first' and 'central' in an emerging world system, this difference also has fairly clear economic grounds: the increasingly large-scale *redistributive operation* (in the words of Ventris and Chadwick) that characterised these societies was very dissimilar from the economies of most kinship societies. This is recognised, for example, in the works of Colin Renfrew and other 'social archaeologists', developing 'central place' theory and centrality as the main dimension for understanding emerging stratification, rather than kinship (see for example Renfrew 1984:9pp.; 105f.).

## A study of marriage patterns in Greek legendary history

*Background.* "The Bronze Age ended around 1200 B.C, two generations after the Trojan war. Thus Homer, around 800 B.C., lived in an entirely different age as he composed his oral epics of the battles of Troy and of the difficult homeward journey of the Greeks after they had won the war. Without a doubt Homer worked from orally transmitted material; some of the objects he describes, like a helmet made of a boar's tusk, had not been seen in the Aegean for centuries, although they are now well known from archaeology. Classicists argue incessantly over how much he made up. Some have even suggested that all is fiction. But ethnologists working with oral histories learn that remarkably little of this sort of material is freely invented. The point of passing history along orally is that it contains information viewed by the tellers to be important. Making it up defeats the purpose, although embroidering it a bit from other known information can make it more fun and memorable." (Barber, E 1994:116).

"The typical rules of gift exchange are too often neglected or transgressed in the epic for it to be regarded as a faithful representation of an operating social system. (..) One direction in Homeric criticism suggests that the epics are related to an increased activity at Mycenaean graves in the Late Geometric period [around 800 B.C.] (..) [and may] have its origin in an intensification of hero cult and ancestor worship associated with the graves of the Bronze Age (...) We should consider in this context that in archaic Greece grave offerings were constructed as gifts to the dead. (..) But the question of how to use epic as source for history remains unsolved. Finley (..) claimed that the epics are historical documents only when they convey a picture which is coherent, or which makes sense to a historian (...) We must agree with Snodgrass that the poems contain an arbitrary amalgam of several value systems and conventions. If, however, we follow Parry and Lord in assuming that orally composed and transmitted literature presents a special way of interacting with the past, we must go one step further. Oral poetry, they argue, does not simply carry older material down to later periods (..) but consciously comments on the past (..) Oral epic appropriated the past to give meaning to the present. (..)

It can no longer be at issue, then, whether the poems were produced against a background of one or of several historical periods. More appropriate is the question to what extent the latest audience was able to engage in the images and institutions of the older material. (..) Studies have suggested that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are critical discussions of their own material. The poems are thematically linked, provide comments on one another and challenge the assumptions contained in formulae and older descriptions. (..) Each audience had its own Achilles, Hector or Agamemnon. Agamemnon, for example, was first Mycenaean king and then the leader of a fragmented political community; and his power was judged again in a new light in the 8th century. (..) It is now commonly assumed that by the 8th century social and political transformations had changed communal life throughout Greece." (von Reden 1995:14-16).

These two recent views of the epics, from linguist and archaeologist Elizabeth Wayland Barber (1994) writing from a work organisation perspective, and classicist and antiquity historian Sitta von Reden (1995) writing of gift-giving and exchange, illustrate the problems of interpreting a source which, potentially, contains a wealth of information not least about the changing relationships between the sexes.

What we have in the poems is a 'still' consisting of halfway superimposed pictures, created from different social perspectives. In addition to the three stages of Agamemnon mentioned by van Reden (which probably means two main stages, since there must have been little activity in the 'darkest' fragmentation period), we may also sometimes suspect an older Bronze Age background connected to some of the main heroes and themes.

Both epics and local traditions (collected especially by Pausanias) give a broad picture of increasing conflict and tension in the generations before the Troy war, and this probably explains some of the transgression mentioned above. It is clear that the traditions contain memories from the fall of the Mycenaean palace culture c. 1200-1150 B.C. and the time before, yet it is also virtually certain that the older redistributive-bureaucratic order was increasingly unintelligible to later audiences and was rearranged in order to fit contemporary understandings of society.

A local tradition was a string of stories stretching from the earliest times or even the dawn of humanity, through the older and more recent periods of the past. Local traditions, and probably also the older versions of the epics, were mainly place-bound, following the fate of a settled local group through the ages, but there are many variants, migrations, etc. When a tradition turns from cosmology and matters among sacral beings, it is clearly meant to be historical, to make people remember the past.

Each tradition can be seen as a 'camera' that operates in fairly predictive ways, even if images have later been superimposed on each other. First of all there is a feeling of centrality, a central place. It is perhaps best represented in the local histories in Pausanias' *Guide to Greece*, yet it is also in the background whenever Homer presents a worthy warrior on the battleground through his lineage, or when Hesiod or Apollodoros presents the genealogical lines of old Greece. There is a distinct centre, a perspective object, and if enshrouded in kinship lines, it is primarily a *settled group*, a *social* place. This is the collective subject of the story. This social centre, it should be noted, differs from the geographical notion of central place; the subject is the group, which may migrate, and not the place as such. This group has a cosmology of founders, stories of how it came to be, and so this is where the 'camera' starts recording, often with a delightful localistic sense of wonder of how *this* local world was founded, or even an implicit rejection of any common rule. Since the group rather than a lineage is the main subject, the resultant 'film' is usually more consistent as group story than as a lineage story, as is discussed below. The special way of 'interacting with the past' that von Reden and others highlight was itself subject to change as kinship principles rose to the forefront of society, with palace organisation break-up, immigration, increased centrality of ancestor worship, etc., resulting in the use of kinship ideas as a main explanatory device for understanding the older layer of centrality and locality conflicts. This kinship explanatory layer is typically present where much was at stake, later, regarding power and central land rights, while it is less visible in the traditions of smaller localities and, in general, in the 'periphery vision' of Greek myth.

As the 'film' moves on, the colours subtly change. It starts with cosmological matters, and keeps some of this character in the early generations, gradually becoming more realist in tone, with fewer supernatural details, less folkloristic imagination, while more historical-looking details appear, matters that are not so easily explained as part

of creating a 'good story'. Here, also, there is a typical pattern: specific events or other marked traits appear first, while their 'reasons why' often are products of later imagination (an author like Apollodorus often records several versions at this point). Later, especially in the last generation before the Troy war, the story as a whole becomes more consistent, as if more details including 'reasons why' are now based on real memories. It is noteworthy that these reasons are often fairly different from those imagined or superimposed on the earlier parts of the story.

The story-singing or telling, and especially the epical or high poetry part of it, was class-bound, male-bound, recreated under constraint, but there was also, as Barber says, an emphasis on telling the tale in the right, traditional way. It contained 'remembrance devices' like use of formula and condensation of plot besides hexameter and other rules of form. It is probable that the story-telling was from early on somewhat one-sided, representing a men's side or an 'agency' side (see below) to things, and there is a common tendency that actions embody condensed change in which some of the structural background is lost. This may have been a trait in Mycenaean times also, to the extent that story-telling was already oriented towards the heroic.

Sitta von Reden believes the epics were formed by "poetic interaction of the 8th century with past generations", influenced by the new problems of the emerging city structure and a society in transition. Here, gifts and gift giving were changing meaning, becoming idealised as matters of friendship, solidarity and peace, since the gift system was now being pushed out to the periphery of the emerging political-economic order (op.cit. 17). Not only was there a specific form of *positive* idealisation; there is also evidence that certain patterns and groups, notably women, were now described in more negative ways. I shall argue that the image of women as captives and prizes was especially involved in this shift.

Two main approaches to 'filtering' of the epic material have been influential in modern research. The more traditional method may perhaps be called 'detail filtering', while a more recent one, represented by Finley in the quote above, may be called 'holistic consistency filtering'. A variety of detail filtering methods have been attempted, mainly in two directions, excluding cases of cosmological nature, and excluding cases where it is clear that later political influence (notably in the Athenian / Attic tradition) has been at work. Although both methods are important, especially the last one, they are often only peripherally relevant for explaining the main 'legendary matrix' (see below). In general, a main problem with the detail method consists in the fact that the bottom line remains that the link or figure is 'doubtful'.

Below, an *unfiltered* approach to this material is presented, since whatever its faults, it is of some interest to all different views in the debate. Next, a sociological or institutional version of the holistic consistency method will be outlined, and some main traits of the material will be briefly discussed in terms of this method.

*A study of 306 legendary unions.* On the background of the detailed studies described earlier, I wanted to have a statistical look at the genealogy, which had not to my knowledge been attempted until that time (1984). I reread Homer, Apollodorus and other sources, recording marriages (spouses' names, locality, children, and eventual other information) in two ways; a graphical map, and a listing.

The result of the first method was a highly detailed hand-drawn map, 120 x 100 cm. large, with more than 300 Greek legendary marriages plotted, using standard kinship notation. The map has a vertical scale of 15 generations and a horizontal division according to the 29 localities listed in the catalogue of ships (commonly recognised as old) in the *Iliad*.<sup>15</sup> The plots resulted in genealogical trees stretching some 11 to 15 generations backwards (upwards on the map) from the generation of the heroes at Troy. The kinship 'trees' have many broken branches, since marriage and succession are presented as matrilineal / matrilineal as well as patrilineal / patrilineal and mixed between the two. For many other reasons also, like the former ruler being killed or ousted, there is a multitude of breaks in the kinship lines, and as I said, the locality ruler line often seems to have been blurred through a superimposition of kinship lines. The latter only approaches regularity in the last generations before the Troy war.

Some main visual impressions of this map are of importance for the following discussion. Generally, the map (and especially the earlier parts in it) confers an impression of the dominance of *great houses*, more than kinship lines as such. Many lines make sense in terms of a principle known from Hittite sources and elsewhere: if you are a distant relative or associate of a great and famous Ruler, your claim might nevertheless be stronger than the claim of someone who is a close relative of Ruler's lesser son or successor. Weber's 'charisma' comes to mind, strengthened by qualitative studies of the importance of action in Homer's scale for heroic and chieftain-like worth (Quiller, B 1981; Andersen, Ø 1989). This makes sense also in a world system perspective: if the land powers to the east and south of Greece, on the whole, represented *structural power*, the power of large states and old culture, the Achaeon chieftain system appears relatively more centred on *agency*, empowering leaders through action. We may note the repeating pattern of destabilisation, represented by the Hyksos and the Sea Peoples in this context.

As noted the genealogical map was drawn using conventional anthropological kinship lines and notation. Since most links were patrilineal, I drew patrilineal trees, and as mentioned the resulting picture was different, striving, so to speak, towards a different form. Faced with this difficulty, I tried the geometrical solution criticised by Husserl, criss-crossing the tree-bushes with help lines, creating sectors like '7th.G 21 C' meaning 7th. generation in the line of the 21st. ship company, and so a variety of partners / unions had to be posited as 'continues elsewhere' with notation like '2G3C'. Stories may stay with fathers, but as Hesiod's *Catalogues of Women* imply, the mother's lap was the lap of tradition also, and often the more secure one. Genealogy by the time of Apollodorus had for long been a critical endeavour; Apollodorus carefully compares earlier authors' alternatives regarding spouses and ancestors' names.

In the next part of the study, a list of spouses' names and unions was created, divided by three main time periods. The result, containing 306 unions, was then coded for 36 variables, resulting in a new list of marriages by traits.<sup>16</sup> While early / cosmological unions were excluded, all legendary unions were included, also those between a mortal and sacral spouse, since the point was the marriage form, not its earthly reality. The coding was based on the following variables: main typology (sacral/human spouse, ethnic origin (Greek or foreign spouse), whether further information existed, or spouse unknown); further sacral / human classification (name of deity, other sacral spouse types), name of spouse, and three-period date. In the cases where further

information existed, they were coded for 16 marriage form and succession variables. – As mentioned, none of the 36 variables were specific filter variables; rather, I wanted a first assessment of the whole, including distortion. Also, I wanted to keep variables on the level of concrete and identifiable traits.

A sub-sample of 43 marriages could be further identified on marriage type variables, including variants of marriage with near kin, incestuous marriage and group marriage. 23 marriages are recorded between women and their male kin or associates of the latter. 16 of these are with male kin: 7 to a father's brother, 9 to a father's brother's son. 7 marriages are recorded between women and the associates, sometimes distant, of their male kin. In 4 cases, she marries a man via the father, and in 3 a man via the brother. 5 marriages followed a path through female kin (compared to the 23 through male kin) – 1 to mother's son, 3 to others via a sister, 1 to others via the mother. The remaining 15 were various forms of group marriage and some incestuous unions.

36 marriages could be identified in terms of a matrilocal marriage and matrilinear succession line, where the daughter's husband succeeded her father. This is the in-moving suitor marriage or son-in-law marriage, further discussed below (since this has been a topic of controversy, the 36 were more closely examined and subdivided into 16 sure cases, 11 nearly sure, and 9 probable). The existence of 36 matrilocal marriages must be seen on the background of, perhaps, a hundred marriages where locality information is given or implied (yet it is hard to judge proportions here, since the locality is often not indicated). Among the rest, the majority seems to be patrilocal, a minority neolocal. As is further discussed below, matrilocal marriages are often presented as the old or high-status pattern. It is indicative of the whole kinship situation that a *class interpretation* of locality is often relevant, what one might call a 'stratilocal' pattern where spouses lived where it was most advantageous for them, rather than according to kinship locality rules.

A subset of 83 marriages seemed to have a complete listing of children. The average number of children was 3,8. The sex proportion was two boys per girl. There are several stories of children being left outdoors, but not much specifically about female infanticide. Girls might have dropped out by being more often forgotten (recruitment of girls to religious positions is also mentioned). Children generally receive little attention except for exceptional cases (famous persons, twins).

*Three time periods.* The 306 marriages were divided into three main groups:

- **A – 'earliest historical times', 7-12 generations before the Troy war, perhaps c. 1550-1370 B.C.;**
- **B – intermediate generations, 2-6 generations back, perhaps 1370-1300, and**
- **C – the Troy warriors and their parents, perhaps 1300-1240.**

The dates were based on the assumption that the Achaian attack corresponds to the destruction of Troy level 7a. Troy had recently been rebuilt after an earthquake c. 1300.<sup>17</sup>

The tables that resulted from crossing traits by period show some main results that correspond and contribute to knowledge from other sources. They also bring forth problems with an unfiltered approach.

First, some the broadly consistent results should be mentioned, i.e. those which fit with what is otherwise known of the three periods. Sacrally associated unions, 84 altogether, become less frequent over time. The proportion of unions with deities or half-deities fell from 50 percent in period A, to 19 in B and to 11 in C. On the other hand, there is a moderate increase in the proportion of unions with non-Hellenes. The falling proportion of unions involving a sacral being and a mortal is probably a good indicator of increasing historical realism, even if some of these unions may relate to a documented historical pattern of which more is said below. The sacral unions primarily involve the two main male deities Poseidon and Zevs, who stand for sixty percent of the 41 cases. Most of the remaining 43 were unions of men with women described as nymphs.

Further, Homer's picture of Zevs and Poseidon as quarrelling brothers before Zevs became full household head (affirmed by the Mycenaean tablets showing a more symmetrical relation between the two than became the case later), emerges also in the present material. Marriages involving Zevs or Poseidon are not recorded in period C. In A, the two are equally balanced (8 and 7 unions respectively), while in B, the emphasis is on Zevs (7 and 4). Apollo is involved in 3 unions in phase B, but on the whole, deities besides Zevs and Poseidon seem peripheral, besides the 'nymph marriages' mentioned, most frequent in A, but recurring also in the two later periods.  
[18](#)

Generally, the great majority of marriages were exogamous. As we saw, among marriages where the woman married someone in or close to either their male or female kin, the former seems most usual (23 versus 5 cases). If some fairly basic filtering is applied, the results look different, reducing the frequency of the male-oriented pattern by half or more. This is further discussed below. Here it should be mentioned that the general impression is one of endogamous or half-endogamous lines (marriages with specific categories of distant kin) playing, at best, a very secondary role.

The matrilocal marriage pattern is of special interest. These 36 cases were connected to a specific succession pattern, in which a ruler is succeeded by his daughter's husband. I had expected that these would be concentrated in the first periods, but that was not the case. They were represented fairly equally in the first two periods – 11 percent of all the 101 unions recorded for period A, 9 percent of 150 unions in period B, becoming much more frequent in period C (22 percent of 55 unions). Since a shift from patrilocality to matrilocality is very unlikely, these figures should probably rather be interpreted in the increasing realism perspective mentioned, meaning that matrilocal marriages are in fact underrepresented in earlier times, due to diffuseness and an overlay of what was common thinking by 800 B.C. or so (i.e. 'if nothing known, assume patrilinearity/locality'). We find matrilocal unions most frequent in the larger centres, with Argos, Thebes and Sparta (in that order) best represented, but many localities (including Athens) are involved.

Another initially surprising result was the virtual absence of conflict between patrilocal and matrilocal marriage patterns. As is further outlined below, there are good reasons to suppose that a dual arrangement situation, in which a son might be outclassed by his sister's husband and *vice versa*, would *either* need very clear institutional border markers, *or* create much tension and conflict.

In order to look further into this aspect, cases of conflict and violence relating to succession were recorded by type. In this area a clear pattern emerged. The material contains much evidence of increasing aggression through period B and C, with escalating territorial conflict between local centres, starting with quarrels, murders and skirmishes that sometimes ended up in local wars in the period before the expedition to Troy. Yet few of these conflicts seem related to the dual system opposition one would expect. Instead, the typical tension field – often a very marked conflict – in the matrilocal context concerns the hostility of the woman's father towards the in-moving husband.

## A shift to patrilocality

It is only fairly recently that modern scholarship has rediscovered, or reemphasised, the matrilocal element in Greek tradition (Finley, M 1983b). This was one of the themes that were pushed out of the centre of the stage of attention after the 'patriarchalists', by and large, won the debate in the established scholarship early in our century (cf. Rose, H 1911). Most modern scholars have accepted the dual arrangement situation with two marriage patterns *as is*, on face value (Leduc, C 1992), while others have maintained that traditions do reflect a broader change from matrifocality to patrilocality (Butterworth, E 1966; Hirvonen, K 1968). I shall argue that qualitative in-depth study points to the latter probability, an impression which is strengthened by institutional analysis.

In a recent paper reflecting the state of the art of the first 'dual pattern co-existence' view, Claudine Leduc (1992:244-52) distinguishes between the two patterns. There is (1) a 'patrivirilocal' pattern of daughter-in-law marriage involving the 'possessed' woman (*ktete gyne*), and (2) matrilocal son-in-law marriage involving the 'married' woman (*gamete gyne*). (It is typical that the two are presented in this order, and that Leduc has most of her attention on the first.) She points out that the matrilocal pattern may be practised also if the ruler has sons (op.cit.249), that the groom comes with *hedna*, presents, while in patrilocal marriage he is *anaednos*, and that this marriage form "excludes patrivirilocal residence and possession of wife and children" (op.cit.250).

Although she keeps clear of the older misleading terminology of 'bride-price', Leduc does not discuss how the meaning of 'give' is substantially different in the matrilocal and patrilocal patterns, since the woman is not passed along as a gift in the first one, even if her father is involved as decision maker and household head. As we shall see, Greek tradition make it clear that he seldom 'gave' on an individual basis; instead a competition or other arrangement was involved, plus the woman's parents' or father's recognition of the one selected. This father figure, as argued below, is not the same private-subject figure as the father in the *ktete gyne* pattern; instead the two seem to be culturally and historically distinct. Leduc does note that the 'gifts' that are 'given' to the groom are, in Benveniste's words, 'substantial advantages', discussing Iobates king

of Lycia who gave Bellerophon half of his royal honours when the latter marries Iobates daughter Philonoe (op.cit.251).<sup>19</sup>

For Leduc, it is not only the case that *Homer* portrays women in three statuses ("an unmistakable distinction between the freely given wife, the purchased concubine, and the captive seized in war" (op.cit. 246); these three were *also* present as functional alternatives in one society, presumably the Mycenaean one. Yet the institutional implications of such a view are not, I believe, borne out by the traditions, except in the sense of a broad shift from older matrifocal patterns to more recent patri- and virilocal ones, i.e. a transition process. Since Leduc assumes the two patterns to have coexisted, she has to face a number of problems and go to some lengths of explanation. She does this in a way reminiscent of Koschacker's (1933) 'fratriarchy' framework, describing the matrilocal pattern as basically a *brotherly* pattern:

"The son-in-law was taken into the household as consanguine brother (*kasignetos*) (...) [Iobates] was in effect proposing that the husband [of his daughter, i.e. Bellerophon] become his brother" (op.cit.251). Possibly, this is relevant for Lycia; generally brother-mediated marriage is better documented in the east (and in comparatively late contexts) than in Greece.<sup>20</sup>

The main point, discussed below, is that Leduc's explanation, to be right, *presupposes* a general emphasis on brotherhood that cannot be found in the Greek material; the 36 matrilocal marriages generally do not indicate anything in that direction.

Here, the aforementioned basic detail filtering is of some relevance, regarding the not insignificant figure of Aeolus, "son of Hellen". Most of the brother-related marriages are bound up with Aeolus. Besides being confused in terms of several persons and at least one (wind) deity, this figure is a fairly obvious case of later ancestor instalment; he connects a variety of quite different lines and arrangements (including remnants of 'strong women' traditions like the one connected to Tyro). On the genealogical map, Aeolus is the one who brings 'Hellenic' order into the world in what seems an artificial and late connection. If we agree Aeolus is a later invention, 4 of the 7 unions listed as 'the woman marries via her father / brother' in phase A fall out, and of the three remaining cases, at least two are fairly cosmological / cultic (Deucalion, Aleolus) (Holter 1984g:148). In other words, the idea that Greek matrilocal marriage patterns were side matters in a general 'brother / male kin'-orientation is seriously weakened.

Leduc recognises that "the woman's position in son-in-law marriage was much stronger than in daughter-in-law marriage. She was not her husband's possession. (...) Such a woman was presumably the *gamete gyne*, the married woman, whose husband's lack of authority Hesiod lamented." (op.cit.252; on the character of this lament cf. Sussman, L 1978). Yet this only begs the question as to how two such dissimilar patterns could have coexisted as peacefully as they supposedly did. Why is the in-coming suitor described in honoured terms? Why do not the woman's brothers get rid of him – unless they themselves were leaving the household? In general, Leduc keeps the whole portrayal of the matrilocal pattern as subcase a in a patrilocal one, explained as a ruler's option when he had daughters but no sons (again, not generally borne out by the 36 cases), besides bringing in the 'fratriarchal' framework mentioned.<sup>21</sup>

Even the words used by Greeks, placing the *lawful traditional marriage* term on the side of matrilocality, throws doubt on this method. Leduc writes that the in-marrying male "occupied the position of paternal uncle", "and therefore did not possess the children of his 'brother'" (op.cit. 252). This is a very backwards way of describing, in a male-centred terminology, a woman-centred arrangement. I find it relevant in this context that a recent study shows that "Greek virginity status had nothing to do with the presence of the hymen" (Sissa, G 1990:167).

## Institutional analysis

If many details are and will always remain obscure, the institutional method does indicate something beyond the 'still in doubt' bottom line. Rather, what appears here makes it very likely that there was a shift from matrilocal to patrilocal patterns.

The institutional method is outlined in this section. Next, I describe some of the main institutions and patterns that appear, in Greece itself, and on the wider background of Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean contemporary society.

What we look for, in the institutional framework, is 'consistency' in the broad sense discussed by Finley and other sociologically minded historians. I find six main issues of importance: (1) institutional intelligibility in Mycenaean (and other similar society) terms, including archaeological and other support there, (2) institutional congruency and detail, and (3) inter-institutional consistency. When kinship lines are involved, (4) those of the central 'legendary matrix' of the Troy war and the preceding generations that are described in congruent ways in different traditions are given emphasis vis-à-vis single, peripheral, thinly described or disputed links. Here, the detail method described above is also relevant. Besides (5) obvious later political rearrangement of kinship lines, we should recognise the probability that kinship, when not clearly bound by older tradition, was generally (6) portrayed in terms that made sense to the audience by 800 B.C. and later.

As an example of the institutional method, we may consider the case of Pelops, ancestor of Agamemnon, described by Plutarch as one who came to rule Greece not through his wealth but through his many sons. Several stories connect to Pelops, someone coming from the east, as either a person or a designation of a group or office. Pelops is a much more blurred character than Agamemnon or even Atreus, and so his person is not our focus of interest. The main institutional line is one of eastern influence or alliance, which is not improbable, if we cast a glance at the international map by 1350 B.C. or so, noting the power of the Hittite empire especially, including its record of war and conflict with insubordinate western Anatolian rulers. Now, what we find on the institutional level is mainly an institution of *sonship*. This even has its own terms in Homer, generally considered old, like Pelopidae; we note that it is the term Atreidae which is the most frequently used. The recent 'direction of Homeric criticism', mentioned by von Reden above thereby come into view: the evidence associated with grave ritual, hero cult and similar in the post-Mycenaean Greek world.

This was a praxis of reinterpreting the past *through* later conceptions of kinship, or as I wrote in a preliminary impression of the material (in 1984): "*fatherhood emerges as the externalisation of sonship*".<sup>22</sup> It is usually the sons who have stories, especially

historically congruent stories, connected to them; here is the institutional emphasis. The father appears as a backwards projection of these patterns. Moreover, we know that *contemporary customs* of addressing rulers as fathers or brothers existed in the east, for example in the Ugarith ruler's desperate plea of help from the king of Alashiya (Cyprus) against the Sea Peoples, addressing him as 'father', even using old formula as sarcasm: "To the king of Alashia. My father, thus says the King of Ugarit his son. I fall at my father's feet. Greetings to my father, to your house, your wives, your troops, to all that belongs to the king of Alashia, many, many greetings. My father, the enemy ships are already here, they have set fire to my towns and have done very great damage in my country." (Sandars, N 1985:143). Organisation on the basis of *claimed sonship* is found in a major context earlier in Anatolia, at that time (ca. 1800 B.C.) notably oriented towards the attention of a ruling *mother*. In the history of the Hittites, this was how they came to rule central Asia Minor and the main city of Kanesh. The Hittites, coming from Zalpa by the Black Sea, claimed to be sons of the ruling queen, and besides telling of how they were let into the city by marrying the queen's many 'daughters', the text has congruent detail on local custom regarding male travellers being invited in – also to the bed – as guests (Otten, H. 1973). The Greek evidence of attention to ancestors therefore has a broader background. All this does not mean we have to deny a possible historical reality of figures like Pelops; rather, we shift the focus to the institutional patterns that are most broadly documented.

Further, these patterns must be evaluated on the background of what is known, from tablets and archaeological findings, of Mycenaean society. When we turn to Greek tradition, and late sources like Apollodorus even more than Homer, genealogy appears much like a hammer, and so what is found is of course 'kinship' nails. Yet even *below* this level, i.e. within the traditions themselves, and even more so in the local non-epic traditions and periphery details, we find, as I said, a locality / household group dimension which is much better supported by the Mycenaean material than the lineage / kinship framework. I also stated that this *large-household cluster structure* appears even when we follow the strictest 'genealogical' lines and collect them on one large map, an impression which is strengthened when later political filtering is applied. There can be no doubting that this level broadly corresponds to the archaeological map of Mycenaean Greece, as was noted especially by M. P. Nilsson (1906, 1951). On this locality / centrality level, generations are dominated by different central place large-households. The household may be represented by one charismatic figure and his / her children, a constellation so culturally important that it was continuously bowed-to even in Homer's language, using children in the plural form as the old and honoured way of expression.

One main trait in this picture concerns the idea of the leader, *basileus* or *anaks*, himself. Sitta von Reden notes that these notions must have changed, but she does not emphasise this fact sufficiently. On the basis of the Mycenaean material it seems likely that the later conception of the basileus, as chieftain / king, at first had more in common with a high-level *functionary*. If we turn to Middle East sources, there is no doubt that such early leaders were, in a common (and overused but not inappropriate) term, *embedded* in the palatial / temple organisation, gradually becoming more independent and shifting their basis of power. The Hittite kings who were active also in western Anatolia (with Wilusa *alias* Ilion/Troy as ally) belong to a middle part of this long line of development. The 'embedded' aspect of Mycenaean leadership has mainly been lost to later epic bards, in the 800 and later setting where the background

of such leaders had changed considerably – no longer a communal, redistributive organisation, but an emerging private household- and trade-oriented economy. According to the studies of demographic aspects of Mycenaean organisation, it is likely that some degree of *separation* of 'basileus'-like power, or kingly power in later terms, had already occurred before the fall of the palaces, yet still within what was mainly one organisation (Lindgren, M 1973; Chadwick, J 1976).

We shall turn to some specific institutions, focusing first on the dual locality arrangement/ shifting arrangement debate. The problem, then, concerns the fact that we should see far more conflict than is in fact evidenced in Greek tradition, centred on the antagonism between the adult son of a ruler and his sister's suitor or husband. If the two arrangements coexisted, a son might be outclassed by his sister's husband, and *vice versa*.

Even a shift, perhaps a very gradual shift, from matrilocality to patrilocality will have to include some institutional coexistence. As discussed I do not believe the brotherhood framework discussed by Leduc is more than peripherally relevant in such a context. Other factors appear more important, and one of them has just been mentioned. *If* kinship was not a great issue anyway, if positions of power were generally transferred on bureaucratic / sacral basis, the two patterns may have coexisted without too much conflict. There are indications that the 'external' or 'agentic' leadership function of the *anaks* especially was in fact more associated with patrilinearity (or at least with patronyms), than the inner-palatial power structure. I find that Greek traditions generally make sense if we interpret them as saying, broadly, that this was a new principle in a process of being established. (The meaning of agency in this context is further discussed later in focality terms).

Another possibility relates to the stratification aspect of Mycenaean society. There is no doubting the 'old and honourable' position of matrilocal marriage in Homer, extending into the very structure of the main plot in the *Odyssey* (Penelope and Odysseus vs. the suitors) and the *Iliad* (Helen as heir princess). The matrilocal marriage may have been, simply, the high class form of marriage. Women who left their homes were lower-class women. A partial coexistence, or only very gradual shift, to patrilocality may be consistent with such a hypothesis, which can also be seen in light of a process towards more secular leadership positions.

There is also the possibility that other institutional markers were in force, delimiting the two arrangements. One indication in this direction has been mentioned, namely Iobates of Lycia's idea of giving half the kingly honours or inheritance to his son-in-law. (This is a pattern well-known from folk tales in wide areas, for example in Norway, where the Ash Lad, marrying matrilocally, would inherit 'half the kingdom'). However this is seldom if ever mentioned in Greece itself, while the class segregation hypothesis seems probable on several grounds.

As mentioned above, the material on escalating violence in the traditions supports the argument that these forms were not, or not mainly, patterns of one and the same functional level of Mycenaean society. As a part of the 306 unions project, the 4 most typical murder and violence patterns were recorded. These involved:

- **some form of perceived necessity that a son must move out of, or be removed from, his father's household (like an oracle prophesying to the father that his son will kill him if present);**
- **conflicts between sons;**
- **matricide and other special types of murder, and**
- **murders attributed to deities (cf. Holter 1984g:130pp.).**

The first pattern receives much emphasis (Laios, Acrisius, Catreus, Priam, etc.). What was said earlier regarding 'reasons why' here comes to the forefront. Generally, traditions present a broad range of *ex post facto* explanations as to why sons had to move out of their household of origin, which basically make sense in the matrilocal framework, as is the case of many traits of the matricide pattern. Besides Orestes, we meet Alkmaion who killed his mother Eriphyle making the very land infertile, being cleansed only when he married a river-daughter (Apollodorus 3.7.5). Besides killing the mother, killing a guest-friend emerge as a crime worse than most – Greece became infertile, Apollodorus says, due to Pelops having murdered Stymphalos, king of the Arcadians, under guise of guest-friendship (Ap.3.12.6)

The main cases of sons' wars, like the march of the Seven against Thebes, are full of matrilocal references, men who have left their own household, taken in as kings elsewhere, and similar (cf. Adrastus).

"The earlier world reflected in Greek myth seems, as far as society was concerned, to have been based on the clan. It is a world in which a man's or a woman's loyalties are, first and foremost, either to the father's or to the mother's relations (..) the household family, at any rate among the ruling class, did not exist as a unit of society. This we can see from a function of the Erinyes in Homer. Just as Phoenix' father was ready to call down dreadful punishment on his son for supporting his mother against him, and all the father's kinsmen stood by him, while the mother's relatives stayed away, so Althaea prayed for her son Meleager's death because he had killed one of her brothers." (Butterworth 1966:6). Butterworth goes on to analyse the Pelopidae or Tantalidae, the clan of Agamemnon, as matrilinear (op.cit.9), while he believed the Perseids represented a more patrilinear tradition. What is clear, beyond the details, is the existence of gyni- or matrifocal kinship (centred on the woman / mother) not as one of two alternatives but as a matter of 'observing old tradition' (op.cit.27). Butterworth's picture of a world of matrilinear clan rule may is not quite to the point, keeping to an idea of well-ordered lineages which I believe is late in the Greek context (and halfway modern), yet some of his main observations are true enough. "The attack on the matrilinear clans [rather: the gynifocal large-household settlements] destroyed the power of the clan [rather; palace] world itself, and with it its religion. It was the task of the rising cult of Apollo to form a new society of individual households, headed by a man and consisting essentially of himself, his wife and children." (op.cit.60).

In a study of the Homeric epics, Hirvonen (1968:145-6) argues that in "the accounts of the generations preceding the Trojan heroes there are numerous examples of (..) matrilocal marriages". However, she sees "the generation of the Trojan heroes [as] dominated by patrilinearity and patrilocal marriages", and thus "the courtship of Penelope" emerges as an "anachronism", even if its "authenticity (..) is attested by its basic theme and by the conservation of the original meaning of words."<sup>23</sup>

The patronymics in the linear B tablets (cf. Holter 1984g:49) which seem to relate mainly to the external leadership function (what I call 'focus position', described later), may be interpreted in terms of a kinship organisation which was of some importance in the private household sector, yet still not dominant in the meaning discussed earlier, as principles of the state. The survival of a tradition of public assembly in Mycenae having some say in the election of leaders (in Apollodorus 1946:2:157-69) fits such a context, which remains hypothetical due to the continuous problems of making sense of Mycenaean society in terms of its own texts (e.g. Krzyzszkowska & Nixon 1983). As regards the traditional 'clan' view of early Greece and the anthropological argument that men and women belonged to their own kin group rather than each other, one may say that they *did* belong to each other but on *state terms* rather than *kinship terms*; the union and couple relation was very important, as discussed below, but it was primarily located in another context. <sup>24</sup>

*The emergence of women as prizes.* We now come to a central question concerning the interpretation of the epics, namely the 'woman as prize' element. In the traditional view, if much else in Homer is in fact Mycenaean, so is this element; in the view to be proposed here, it is instead derived from conditions by 800 B.C. or so, forming a subsidiary explanatory framework basically *distinct* from the older body of tradition.

Women in the plural, in Homer, are described differently from honoured individual wives, more towards the 'exchange' endpoint of a scale from gift to exchange relations, while the relationship to the honoured wife is one of fairly symmetrical gift-giving (also among deities, notably the bed partnership of Hera and Zeus at the Olympus). Homer describes the lower-status women as prizes in specific 'raids towards the east' contexts, women won through prowess used in halfway illegal ways, pirate raids, female figures with diffuse beauty-names like Chryseis and Briseis. In my interpretation, this mainly reflects later Greek warrior culture, and functions as a major case of a superimposed 'reason why' (in the Iliad). Internally, Mycenaean culture was characterised by other traits, like a visitor having to obey locality-service rules, i.e. a period of service to the head of the household-palace (cf. the works of Herakles), before he would be allowed to 'capture' anyone as spouse. Although the raids probably reflect historical memories, possibly also captures of women, there are reasons to believe it is a late element in the Iliad. My view is consistent with the recent reinterpretation of Anatolian women in the linear B texts not as captive slaves but as specialist workers (Billigmeier & Turner 1981; Tritsch, F 1958). Let us look more closely on this issue, which has been used as a 'paradigmatic case' in much capture / exchange of women-theory.

In Homer, a man may go without a prize, unrewarded, *agerastos*, from *geras*, price, gift of honour. "The double function of a prize (*geras*) [is] as a sign of honour in life and of heroic *kleos* [renown] after death", von Reden argues (1995:22), but she fails to distinguish this sufficiently as a separate type of gifts, or, at least, *women* as prizes as a special category. She rightly interprets gifts as *friendship (philos) objects*, yet prizes basically were *kleos* objects, i.e. renown in the specific sense of warrior prowess appraisal (also different from *time*, honour, cf. Ungaretti 1978:293, Redfield, etc.). Even if both was described in friendship terms in Homer (op.cit. 48), the difference is brought out also in the setting von Reden discusses – on the one hand Patroclus's friendship with Achilles, on the other Odysseus' relationship to the suitors. von Reden, focusing on gift relations, discusses this in the following terms:

"In the figure of Patroclus we may see a *philos* person participating in the identity of the person to whom he is *philos*. We can now ask whether *philos* objects assumed an equally important role, and whether gifts in particular transferred part of the donor to the recipient." (ibid.) – I believe von Reden's wording illustrates the problems of commodity epistemology of gifts, discussed earlier; the idea of transfer as exchange-like process is probably unwarranted. Selves are not transferred, nor quite 'participating' as part of another, but rather *interdependent* (cf. chap.. 7).

Anyway, it is quite clear that this strong friend-gift *identity mechanism* is not present in many *kleos* and *geras* relations and not presupposed in them. The *philein* relationship between a man and his wedded wife is consciously used, I believe, by Homer also as a description of Achilles and his prize Briseis (cf. van Reden 1995:52, Il. 9.338pp.). von Reden writes that "he compares the status of Helen with that of Briseis, which seems at first absurd". She argues rightly that Briseis is portrayed in an *intermediate position between men*, a prize cementing the relationship between Patroclus and Achilles, and it is significant that she draws attention to the fact that this concept of prize is still unstable, vacillating, a point of strife – and in my interpretation, *still recent*. Agamemnon, she says, only gave Briseis as prize in the camp, while Patroclus would have given her as wedded wife at home (ibid.).<sup>25</sup>

"The comparison of Penelope's *kleos* with that of a king qualifies it as an example of what [Helen] Foley has called a reverse simile." (op.cit.54). The women as prize concept shows signs of a controversial institution also on a background level, by being surrounded by dispute in the *Iliad*. von Reden (1995:17) discusses a shift in the picture of a city in Homer's work, from a Mycenaean to an early *polis* portrait, indicating a similar tendency in another area.

In brief terms, then, I believe Homer's way of 'appropriating the past' in this specific context was one of using contemporary knowledge of war raids and expeditions and their connected motivations in order to make sense of older themes. The hesitancy of Achilles, paralleled by the ambivalence of Zeus, was the older theme, together with the rivalry of the Greek chieftains and Agamemnons' legitimacy problems as a leader. The women-as-prize layer was superimposed as a means of understanding and giving narrative shape to this conflict; it has no independent role in the narrative or larger structure of the plot. On the other hand, it fits very well with what is known from Homer's own world, including increasing brutality towards women (cf. the tyrant Pheidon of Argos, and, in the east, Assyrian laws legalising violence towards women in marriage). Further, the suspicion of modern scholars that Homer, through Agamemnon, departed somewhat from older tradition (if not actually insulting it) by saying he preferred his prize woman before Clytemnestra (Il. 1.113-5), his "lawful wife" (*kouridies aloxou*), "since she is no whit inferior to her, either in form (*demas*) or stature (*fyin*, also 'generativity'), or in mind (*frenas*) or anywise in handicraft (*erga*)" (Murray's trans.), fits with my view.

An Egyptian travel report from ca. 1100 B.C. or slightly later, describing Eastern Mediterranean conditions in the wake of the Sea Peoples, still portrays women in prominent or egalitarian roles. The Egyptian emissary Wen-Amon, travelling to Byblos to collect timber for a religious ceremonial ship (thereby following ancient practice, cf. Sandars 1987:170), first describes the Nile delta state created by the Sea Peoples. We meet the queen of the capital, Tanis, as an equal and co-ruler with her

man (Nesu Banebbed and Tanet Amon, "apparently his wife"); later, Wen-Amon comes to Alashia (Cyprus), where a woman rules the city, "Heteb, the princess of the city", offering hospitality by asking if he wants to stay for the night (Pritchard 1969:25-29). The text says she walks "from one of her houses to another of her houses" and summons an interpreter from the people close to her. Wen-Amon speaks of how one of the Sea Peoples, the tjeker (possibly = the Teucri, Sandars 1987:170), have tried to hinder his journey, and Heteb answers that there is [now] injustice in all cities, yet justice reigns in the land of Alashiya. This is not old formula; it seems to be a conscious reference to the changing international order. – We may note, also, that when Wen-Amon and the prince of Byblos, Zakar-Baal, see 11 tjeker ships outside the Byblos harbour, they sit down and cry (i.e. not quite the warrior response idealised in Homer), and Zakar-Baal summons his Egyptian singer in order to lighten the mood.

It is possible that the 'orientalising' influences testified both in art and mythology (on the level of the king gods Kumarbi / Chronos, etc.) around 700-600 (or even earlier) were more important for the patrilocal shift than commonly recognised (cf. Willetts 1974, Macqueen 1986). It seems that modern scholars have failed to notice the patrilocal associations of Aphrodite, who not only makes Paris choose patrilocal marriage, but also brings Helen to Paris' bed after saving his life in the *Iliad*.<sup>26</sup>

Several modern commentators have noted Homer's devaluation or downplaying of female figures, for example in his portrait of the humiliation of Artemis. It is possible that the later centrality of the Homeric epics vis-à-vis other traditions (and also other parts of the epical cycle) is itself connected to this trait. Homer referred only "seldom to the earlier close relationship between nephew and maternal uncle – a feature common in other epics. Instead, he deliberately stressed the status of the paternal uncle" (Hirvonen 1968:193). Hirvonen cites "customs like entreaty by hugging the knees and the bathing of guests by the hostess" as examples that earlier conditions (women's role in "the reception and protection of guests") surviving even in Homer. "From abundant mythological sources it is clear that many a dynast acquired his power by matrilocal marriage, benefiting from the daughter's inheritance right. (...) Even in much later times, Lists of Women [she probably means that of Hesiod] stated plainly that well-known principle" (op.cit.193-4), and she notes Homer's "idealisation of the relations (..) between 'prizes' and their captors." (ibid.).

Other material exists, supporting this conclusion, which cannot be discussed here. My study of traditions surrounding Artemis indicates that Chryseis was originally one of the many eastern Aegean figures associated with, or local versions of, this deity. Further, it confirms the supremely important role of the conflict between the Atreides as rulers of Mycenae on the one hand, and the older palatial 'potnia' establishment associated with Artemis on the other, with an alliance to local Aegean communities that created a variety of troubles for the Greek expedition.

*The paradox of the Troy conflict.* If Greek upper-class marriages were already mainly patrilocal, the main plot of the *Iliad* does not make sense as a dilemma, a paradox, which is how it is presented. This dilemma is known in many other context, as an interesting example of how a *structural* perspective may be misleading, if not connected to an individual actor-perspective. The paradox is this: although a matrilocal structure makes the woman a key link, her *personal* power and freedom of action may be larger in a patrilocal setting, all the more so if the two are opposed to

each other, which is the case here. At the centre of the conflict leading to the Troy war was Helen, the *Greek* successor princess, the main attraction subject of the in-marrying male. Now she fled with a man to his locality, or was taken there by force. Was she taken, or did she go by her free choice? This question was incessantly disputed later. *If* Helen had fled, the Greek expedition basically had legitimacy problems, *even if* in fact it represented a defence of the older, matrilocal structure; it became questionable. Yet if she had been forced to go, the Greek expedition was legitimate and moral. None of this makes sense unless we acknowledge the main role of matrilocal structure.

This view is now increasingly accepted. In a recent discussion of Helen as heir princess, Barber (1994:119) argues:

"Not only does her husband, Menelaos, carry on a ten-year war to retrieve her, but then, far from punishing her (as later Greek husbands of waywards wives were known to do – usually by death), he sits around placidly while she tells stories of her escapades to their guests! The reason that he has to fetch her back can only be a matter of succession: that the right to the throne of Sparta passed through her female bloodline, not his. Without Helen, Menelaos could not be king. This analysis is born out by every detail known of the family. Helen is the queen although she has two brothers (...) and her daughter Hermione – not one of Menelaos' sons – become the next ruler of Sparta after her death."

Although the term 'bloodline' is an example of the kind of term (here giving a pseudo-feudal association) that is *misleading* in this setting, I agree with Barber's main line interpretation. For social, not 'blood' reasons, Helen was the key figure. By attempting to reinstall Helen, therefore, Agamemnon and Menelaos could build on some support from *matrilocal* marriage structure and culture, although, as we know, a very ambivalent one. This structure was in no sense fully patriarchal, even if highly androcentric in some terms. Interpreted as an attempt to re-establish matrilocal marriage and matrilinear succession, the Greek war effort did have some legitimacy. In this perspective, the main theme of the *Iliad* makes sense also on a wider international background, where we find the same pattern of legitimising an emerging patriarchal power structure *through* existing traditions and older culture.<sup>27</sup>

*A nexus of interconnected, congruent and important institutions.* One argument for seeing the matrilocal pattern as the older one concerns the aforementioned fact that it organises the main plot of *Iliad* – and the *Odyssey*. Other patterns are peripheral in comparison. So while the patrivirilocal marriage described by Leduc that involved the possessed woman (*ktete gyne*) functions as explanatory framework for the 800-700 B.C. audience's understanding of the behaviour of Greek heroes and chieftains, the traditional / lawful position of the *gamete gyne* was surrounded by several institutional arrangements of main structural importance in the two epics and elsewhere in Greek tradition. Main threads of Greek society and culture are tied together here. These include the *suitors' band* or organisation, the *competition* and other forms of *trial* or trial period for the in-marrying male (to which, as a basis-pattern, the '*works*' of Heracles most probably is related), and the definition of action prowess or the *hero* quality through such arrangements. Other patterns, including a hero or god being introduced as son of his mother ('Apollo, son of Leto'), the mother having power (of fate, etc.) over the son, the hunter figure (like Herakles) and his special relation to

(clearly matrilinear) Artemis, the revenge and punishment following if the rules were broken (Erinyes) and much else belong to this category. There is no conceivable reason why the 800-700 B.C. poets should have made all this up, since by now society around them was clearly shifting towards emphasis on patrifocal kinship, as was the case internationally. Instead, the legends indicate that even the 'sons of Herakles' that came to dominate Greece after the fall of the palaces sometimes obeyed matrilineal marriage rules. If the centres were already conditioned towards or favourable towards external leaders, some of this 'invasion' may be more easily explained. This includes recent scholarship that sees the overturning of the palace world as caused by a combination of internal and external pressure.

*The federative and relatively egalitarian character of Greek power.* We know that Greek communities were often fiercely individualistic, that Agamemnon or his men were badly tricked trying to mobilise Troy war support, and much else to the same effect. This was a state power that mainly retained its *federative* character even by 1200 B.C. Compared to Middle East and Hittite sources, we hear very little of *tributes*, or even enforced ('vassalage') gifts; instead, the Greek discourse centre on the *prohess* of warring chieftains and heroes. In the *Iliad*, this pattern has been changed by a new venture, implying a new orientation to the world; a battle field, improper for the individualist heroes, who through Achilles participate only unwillingly, haltingly. It has been said that Homer always takes the time to honour even a soon-to-be dead hero with due mention of his kinship lines and locality, 'digressing' or 'refracting' into the story of this locality. Clearly, these were heroes made out to fight individual battles and their own background-related local causes, not the commonality represented below the walls of Ilion, a union made on trickery, the 'horse trade' element very appropriately remembered as the deadly gift that the enemy takes over.

In the traditions, the sense of communality and supralocal rule was from old associated mainly with federate arrangements that basically were 'Aegean' in character, i.e. different from the 'West versus East' view of the world that was Herodot's starting point. Here it may be relevant that many matrilineal marriages were connected with Argos and the Argives, often seen as the older designation of the mainland and neighbouring island people.

*The undeveloped character of patriarchal organisation.* The social character of the Aegean centre was closely related to the emphasis on naval contact and power in this region, including the fleet of the Minoans. Greek naval units were probably involved in the events connected to the Sea Peoples (and possibly, some centuries earlier, the Hyksos). The probable absence (or at best diffuse character) of patriarchal organisation in the Minoan social structure seems related to the fact that Crete depended on overseas influence and naval power, rather than the inland power of their Eastern and Southern neighbours.

Some general sociological points are relevant here. Until modern times, the sea has been highly effective for transporting goods, but inefficient in terms of exporting authority. Overseas authority bonds are notably prone to be broken, even aboard ships, with the strictest discipline as the typical counter-check. In the inland centres like Hatti and Assyria, power relations could be erected at steeper angles, with more exploitative commerce, more vertical dominance and stratification. This is further discussed in relation to patriarchal strategy in chapter 12.

Greece was not relatively egalitarian due to European influence, vis-à-vis the eastern empires that Marxists have classified as belonging to an 'Asiatic mode', a category that has served as a throw-in bin for modern ideas of stagnation and despotism. Rather, it is the relatively decentralised and sea power character of the Aegean culture that becomes relevant if we are to explain why Greece, despite a 'Minos' (probably a generic figure), never quite produced 'hundred-times men' like the Pharaoh of Egypt, the king of Ur with hundreds of people in his grave, or, later, the king of the Hittite Empire. The bigman-ship functions were comparatively restricted due to its sea-bound character. Thucydides seems to agree with this view; his history starts with why people in Greece in the old days, with unwallled settlements, favoured those who later were called pirates, and like Hesiod he gives the clear impression that the sea was the lifeline of Greek transfer. Women in power in the palace establishment are known from Pylos c. 1200: Erita, high priestess of Potnia, the Lady at/of palatial Pylos, leader of the Pakijana area, is mentioned in tablets; she has an assistant Eratara and is further surrounded by 14 helpers with association to 'sacred gold'; the 16 are all called with the same term.

*Ritual, festival and ceremony.* Women generally had important functions in Greek ritual and festivals (Nilsson, M 1906) also in archaic and classical times, and their role in Mycenaean and, especially, Minoan ritual is generally viewed either as primary or just very prominent (for example Nanno Marinatos (1984:71) on Thera art: "themes which revolve around nature and motherhood"). Only one of the many ritual patterns that support the institutional interpretation of above can be mentioned here, since it is of some special significance. This is the existence of '*sacral marriage*' rituals in Greece, even in old Athens itself.

*Sacral marriage.* Here, even the 'patriarchalist' Rose (1928:103) agrees: "all kinds of local rites existed involving a marriage between two deities, a holy marriage, *ieros gamos*". In the *Antheateria* or flower festival celebrated in early spring in Athens and elsewhere, what appears is a union of mortal and sacral spouse, not two deities. Sacral rituals are identified or implied in at least 9 other localities (cf. Holter 1984:116-9).

We do not have to go into assume nature worship or ambiguous 'murder of king' interpretations of rituals, in the style of James G. Frazer and other researchers in the beginning of our century, in order to recognise a broad pattern at this point. Settlements often took on a *foreign (periphery) representative* (as a friend, or a lover / spouse, or a household member) in order to 'reorient priorities', as a matter that most probably often was ritualistically confirmed as a main point in the yearly agricultural ceremony cycle. What remains of Frazer's *Golden Bough*, I believe, is the importance of the centre-periphery relationship, and a broad set of customs of seasonal festivities in order to celebrate this spatial social axis in combination with the temporary one of regeneration, usually a spring festival, in which the reaffirmation of social temporal relationships were of general importance, and often focused on the human element. This is all the more understandable if we recognise the bipolarity of what is often seen one-sidedly as 'centralisation'.

A rich variety of patterns lead in this direction, often fragmented, but consistent as a whole: the pattern of sending out human first-fruit (*vir sacrum*); the importance of the guest-friend-relationship; the misfortunes descending on he who did not open his door to a guest-friend (also Genesis 18-19); foster and adopted children ('same-milk

siblings'); love and unions described in terms of this friendship, or vice versa, as part of one nexus; a main or important pattern of matrilocality; travelling to another household as the proper role for a young marriable man; rituals and art of grooms, often in ships; the emphasis on couples, including twins, as (divine) rulers, and much else (Holter, Ø 1987e).

In the Middle East context, sacral marriage was associated with annulment of debt or other obligation, what Sumerians called *amargi*, literally 'back to the mother', which is found also in Greece (*seisachteia*), and as a wide-spread dual custom in the Near and Middle East. I have not been able to find direct evidence that the older custom behind Solon's *seisachteia* had been related to sacral unions. It is, however, situated in a general plea for sacral context, against the *hubris* or violence of evil wealth (von Reden 1995:176-7). It seems likely that the union that confirmed the centre's basic character as centre, by maintaining its relationship to the periphery, would also involve customs of putting things right (including 'catharsis' aspects), and at least a symbolical zeroing of redistributive obligations which came to include debt annulment (cf. Oates 1986:76).

Samuel Kramer (1969:49) argued that the sacral marriage ritual was celebrated "in the whole Middle East over two thousand years", and even if some of the custom gradually became used as legitimization (and archaisation) of emerging dynastic and patriarchal powers, the basic custom does seem very old, as testified by the central role of the union of Dumuzi and Inanna in Uruk.<sup>28</sup>

*The Aegean centre and the international second millennium world.* The Mycenaeans were not simply primitives vis-à-vis the Middle East palace / temple world. They represented, on the one hand, a fairly backwards chieftainship federation, and on the other hand also one that could be amazingly effective, in short 'wave' periods like that associated with the Sea Peoples. Therefore they were a force to be feared by those in power in the centres, or also paid respect to. This relationship indicated the existence of *advanced periphery functions*, generally an under-acknowledged theme in world system analysis.

It is not sufficiently recognised that peripheral peoples regularly broke into the strongholds of the day also for 'opinion' reasons – their perceived *right* to influence, which meant that walls tended to be of little permanent help. The peoples of the periphery had moral, religious and opinion strength, and we often see attacks from the outside allied with revolts on the inside. Why did such perceptions of rights arise? Early tradition and culture is filled with references to the precarious legitimacy of the centres, to how the centres, in the division of labour between centre and periphery, tended to empower and enrich themselves, and the problems and conflicts resulting from this tendency. As we shall see, many institutional traits, including religious traits, can be interpreted as attempted *counter-checks* against this tendency, created in order to keep some order and balance. A main and often overlooked point should be emphasised in this context: centralism was not just a question of power, but also of the centre's own dependency. With increasing social scale, the centre itself increasingly became dependent on achieving some form of balanced relationship with the periphery.

If left without counter-balances, the system would typically create centre tyrants as well as corruption, people stealing from the property of the deities or the community, breaking the rules. These, I think, had often been created as attempted solutions to this inherent problem of centralisation, and they can therefore be connected to the 'transference level' discussed earlier (chapter 7). Unlike the impression one sometimes gets from 'central place'-theorists (including some of Colin Renfrew's works), I do not believe that stratification *resides* in centralisation, but it certainly easily follows in its wake, if nothing is done to stop it. In order to avoid an imbalance that would endanger the system, counter-checks must be created.

In Aristotle's argument in *Politics*, there emerges an old perception that common property tended to be neglected, and so Aristotle advocates the idea of private property as best for the state; this is the most expedient principle for making people look after the property. This was part of the outlook of a 'political' world, associated with the market slavery social formation, as opposed to the city settlement formation known as the palace world in Greece and temple cities in the east.

## Counterbalanced redistribution

We now approach the question of a *sociological understanding* of these large 'inclusive household'-societies, societies that are one partially (if importantly) described through concepts related to redistribution. There is the task of appreciating their main societal dynamics in their own right, a problem which must at least be approached in any effort to understand the early historical dimension of 'Western' patriarchal organisation.

Provisionally, we may take the view of Hittitologist O. R. Gurney, who argues in terms of "emerging patriarchal principles" (personal communication, see further Gurney, O 1977) in the history of the Hittite empire. We may see this mainly as an *outcome*, together with commodity-oriented economy,<sup>29</sup> of the two well-attested general processes of centralisation on the one hand, and stratification on the other. The following model illustrates these relationships.

### Emergence of patriarchal dynamics

These four are broad but also useful categories. Centralisation means the propensity of early urban agricultural society to cluster with a centre in a leading role; stratification a process towards class differences in this centre; commodification an increased orientation towards trade and private property and exchange institutions, and patriarchalisation a sex-organisation-related form of discrimination. We know that the stratification process had solidified by c. 2100 B.C. (Ur 3 period) from state documents, from proverbs ("The poor are the silent of the land": Gordon, E 1959:196), and other sources.

There was a long and gradual process of declining influence of the palaces, temples and large-houses, and a gradually more separated private household sector, even if many strings remained attached at all times in the development of Sumerian / Babylonian culture. This process is understandable in a context of need to keep balance between periphery and centre, including a sense of compensation to the

periphery. Talcott Parsons' first social system requirement of *adaptation* is involved here (cf. Bråten, S 1988). The city was basically dependent on its surroundings, a fact that was continually made evident by the breaking of walls. (One wonders if the pegs in the walls of early Mesopotamian cities may have symbolised their connection to the world outside).

This counter-balancing and renewed centralisation dynamic gradually resulted in a build-up of a private economic sphere. Among other things, it was expressed in the proto-political power among free (less 'embedded') household heads. In Mesopotamia, this process went together with emerging inter-city conflict, first, it seems, as unusual occurrences in the 2600-2500 B.C. period, becoming regular over the next centuries. From old, Mesopotamian cities had been loosely *federated*, with a leadership function circulating between the cities, at best in the spirit of the 'one divides, the other chooses'. Federal leadership was a question of which city could eclipse the others in cultural and material influence, increasingly was resolved by aggressive enforcement of gifts and obligations (Oates 1986:27pp.). The main representative of this process was fittingly called big-man (Sumerian *lugal*). In the period around 2500, leaders still often referred to the older priestly titles, but behind the terminology, it seems clear that a new office was being created through a redefinition of older functions, an office that soon came to dominate the state (ibid.).<sup>30</sup>

In the post-Sumerian period, state power became more clearly differentiated. This happened also on an international basis, with an emerging contrast between 'secular' and 'sacral' power that later became associated with Assyria and Babylon respectively (Roaf 1990). Through the big-man dynasts of Sumer ca. 2500-2300 and their sociological descendants, the *law kings* that appeared some centuries later, secular power was consolidated in the centres. From this period onwards, the central societal orientation towards commodity economy is testified on the state law level, the state trying to fix the worth of the commodity equivalent (silver) in barley (cf. Oates 1979:44-5; Driver & Miles 1952). After the law king period, the older southern Mesopotamian centres gradually turned back to a more archaic niche in the world system, now with a more stratification-tuned and androcentric version of religion.

My interpretation of rulers surrounded by counter-checks is influenced by studies of the '*me*' or 'spirit' system surrounding a ruler of a city in Sumer, and the role of ceremonial and oracular religion in the Hittite kingdom and later empire. What appears is a ruler role that was not freely available to the role-taker; rather, it seems to be consciously constituted as a matter of bringing in 'others'. The *me* seems to be the *overseer* of the position, not so far away from the looking-into sense of 'moral' in Kant's term. Deities generally appear in the overseer role, which appears even in the old myth of Inanna's travel to Enki of Eridu in order to gain *me* for her city (Edzard 1965:86, who translates *me* = 'godly power').

For an understanding of this circle of power around the ruler, we may consider a very simple two-person system, where one person has a magazine of agricultural produce, the other not, yet must be allowed to partake in it if the system is to survive (cf. model discussions in Renfrew & Shennan 1982). The well-known centralisation process – "the city-state extended wider and wider hegemony over surrounding agricultural villages, and more and more decisions about village resources and agricultural and other activities of the villagers were made in the city-state" (Boulding 1992:199) –

therefore has another side, and this becomes even more obvious if we include a third basic position besides those of centre and periphery, namely the position of the lower strata in the centre. Centralisation threatened the system continuously; some relative stability could only be achieved through a complex web of compromises.

In my interpretation, therefore, the 'accidents' that befell Homer's Greeks on their way to Troy and back belong to the same basic institutional category. Homer tells us that the Greek expedition was opposed by a mixture of religious and local forces. The same kind of force can be found in contemporary documents showing how a Hittite ruler, like the older Sumerian one, was surrounded by religious counter-checks. Each of these had their own sacral power, even half-personality. A throne, for example, was not just a thing to sit on; it had its own deity, its own rules to be obeyed, and could not just be used as the throne-sitter pleased. In general, the ruler's means and emblems of power were made distinct and kept partially independent from him.

A leader therefore was a figure quite different from the feudal notion of a 'king'. He was not only obliged to obey ritual; his whole position was one that society around attempted to place securely within a net of religious and ritualistic duties. This is especially vividly depicted in the Hittite case, where eager war expedition leaders, contemporaries or slight predecessors of the war champions of Homer, had to stop right in the middle of their war campaigns in order to consult oracular sacral advice or observe ceremonial duties for days on end. Not doing so would mean baneful fate, misfortune, illness. Also, their enemies, like the opposition in Arzawa (in western Anatolia, probably the Efesos region), acted in congruent ways, seeking religious sanctuary in the face of the Hittite threat. When king Mursilis 2 launched a large-scale military operation against Arzawa in the late 14th. century, the inhabitants fled to the mountain of the Sun Goddess (Arinnanda), as the king relates in his annals (Holt, J 1951; Heinholdt-Kramer, S 1977).<sup>31</sup>

Religion in many senses was the first bond, appealed to and rearranged again and again. Mursili 2's expedition against Arzawa was the logical outcome of a principle first displayed in historical texts in Enmerkar of Uruk's aggression against Aratta, some 1600 years before: the centre ruler overturned the lesser locality's goddess by his own syncretising or absorbent goddess. Homer made the point that the Greeks and the Trojans worshipped the same gods; the Hittites prided themselves of their innumerable deities. In this world, religious intolerance would have been deeply 'dysfunctional', since being tolerant, absorbing lesser deities, and growing affluent were closely related phenomena. This key cluster cannot be explained unless one acknowledges the redistributive orientation of the social structure. For example, Mursili prayed fervently to the Sun Goddess, as did the Arzawans to their local version of her, which I think was the forerunner of Efesian Artemis. Battles and conflicts were carried out within circles of sacral power that were still often *structurally* defined in terms of *women*, even if men led the action. "*It was all brought home to the temple of the Sun Goddess*" had become Hittite formula of the treatment of war booty and captives by the time of Mursili 2.<sup>32</sup>

"The ruler [of Knossos in Mycenaean times] was a king, but in the distribution of grain or land a council of three taken together have an equivalent share to his and an official who ranks next after the king a similar share to theirs. It may be true, though it remains unproved, that this grandee exercised secular powers of kingship, and the

king more religious ones (Levi, P 1987:32). Aside from its content, the *form* of the argument is noteworthy. There is a 'king', *but* there are also conditions X, Y, Z. Or even another person who in fact functions as 'king'. All this corresponds well with what we would expect from the above considerations.

## The changing situation of women

Before turning to a model of the social form characterising this world and its common 'householdic' categories, some specific tendencies concerning women may be summarised. This is done first in general terms, and next in terms of a case study.

*Declining female societal and household power.* In her history of textile work, Barber (1994) gives this overall description:

"2500 years ago, the women of Athens worked at home, virtual prisoners of their husbands, expected to provide cloth and clothing for the family. 4000 years ago in ancient Mesopotamia, there was a very different picture: respectable women were in business for themselves, weaving textiles at home to be sold abroad for gold and silver".

Although 'virtual prisoners' may be too strong (a much disputed topic), this is useful for seeing the wood for the trees. There can no longer be any serious doubt that women's overall status and power *declined* through a broad process stretching from the third millennium in the Middle East (and from the Minoan period in Greece) to the classical age city state. A woman like Penelope, who sends her pleas to Artemis, portrayed by Homer, stands somewhere in between these two larger-dimension endpoints. We have seen that the legitimacy of Agamemnon's expedition and its organisation was intimately bound to matrilocal patterns that in turn were tied to the ambivalence element in Homer's portrait. I have argued that the women-as-prize level in Homer is best explained by post-Mycenaean social circumstances, and I think we should recognise, by extension, that much of what is said of women, notably when *not* placed in a context of old and honoured principles, might be of similar origin. Yet this is a difficult area, as expressed even by the ancient conflict on the subject of the beauty of Helen: she was beautiful in both modes, but in quite different senses, one related to the *oikos*, the other to her likeness to other *chremata* (which I interpret as meaning, basically, privately seized property, in general, (mainly men's) things, 'possessions', in line with von Reden 1995).

*The downwards shift in women's status had become clearly evident by 800-700 B.C.* Barber reflects what is now a common view when she (1994:119n4) argues that the low status of women "seems to have been the typical state of affairs from shortly before the time of Homer onward." Similarly, von Reden gives a picture of a main shift in Greek social structure in this period – with increasing commercialisation as a main element.

Increased subordination of women is documented in the laws of the Assyrians that had become internationally dominant in this period, including the free husband's right to punish and mutilate his wife on individual say (Driver & Miles 1975). As for Assyria, the translators of their laws envision a 'seignior' structure, and the texts tell of

a tributary pyramid, yet it appears as fairly consolidated only by the time of Shalmaneser 3 (858-824) or so. The Assyrian case, one may argue, favours seeing the discrimination of women especially in connection to military build-up and aggression, yet we shall soon see that the economic exchange orientation was a main part of its background. By 800 or so, the internal household terror legitimised by law went together with the use of the army as terror weapon, and a formerly unheard-of amassment of state power. This was the period of *tyranny* on the internal front as well as the external one. In the Aegean region, the eastern customs were copied; for example the tyrant Pheidon was associated with similar mistreatment of women. From now on, there is no doubt that the overall orientation of society was one of patriarchal, commodity-related submission, with large-scale commercial slavery as its logical outcome. From the early classical period onwards, the subordinate position of women is broadly documented.

## Early 'commuter families'

For a closer look at women's former situation we may turn to early Assyria. In the capital of Assur c. 1900 B.C., power seems more 'private', political and secular than the kinds of power that had been developed in the south of Mesopotamia. The portrait given by tablet texts of the wife-husband relationship here is comparatively detailed and interesting. Recently, it has been described by Barber (1995:164-84) whose interpretation corresponds to my own (based mainly on the material translated by Veenhof, K 1972; cf. Larsen, M 1960). A wife and husband created a co-operatively organised trade, where the woman stayed behind, while the man went trading. The trade was conducted by free private sector households in Assur, organising trade expeditions into Anatolia. Textiles went out from Assur, while silver, gold and other metals went back. These returns often or even mostly came into the hands of the women, who used them for money and jewellery.

Organising a trade expedition was a matter of acquiring many people's participation. The couple appears as part of a larger string of 'investors', longer or shorter according to the household's sphere of influence. This string seems to have contained a mixture of kinship / gift and commodity-type obligations, possibly mainly involving dependants of the extended household in a wide sense.

The overall effect of the ventures must have favoured the merchant households and the secular and private sector aspects of the social structure. The material shows that there were often conflicts between Anatolian palatial considerations of what the trade relationship should be like, and what the Assyrians wanted from it. Sometimes, law-breaking merchants were jailed by the local Anatolian palace-town authority – yet there is no indication of discrimination when they followed the law. In the main centre of *karum* Kanesh, diggings show a prosperous 'alien' quarter. Among other valuables, *potnia theon* (mistress of animals) figure casting devices, reminiscent of the later Greek Artemis, have been found (Bittel 1970).

Letters between spouses leave no doubt that they regarded each other as fairly equal subjects; they both had some say regarding how the trade should be planned and performed. The man acted on behalf of both, often asking his wife's advice. She stayed in Assur, overseeing the textile production in the household. (Later it was said that Ishtar would never herself stoop to such labour.) There was an emerging upper

class of 'free' or household-leading men and woman, the latter administering the economic production, the former with the main say in external sales matters and as the political household head. The latter position did not, however, give the husband the right to dispose of his wife's 'business'; his 'head' function did not enable him to claim the household fund as his own, unilaterally. The husbands may from old have represented the wealth of the household when it circulated in the gift-related, protopolitical sphere, a sphere where men already had a preeminence. Increasing male power can thereby be explained in terms of a broader institutional shift of emphasis towards the areas where men already were the main actors.

Barber notes that Lamassi and the other powerful women of Ashur were in business for themselves, being free to operate in the market and represent the household legally, and she cites letters showing how Lamassi administered the sending of textiles through a number of donkey drivers (Barber, E 1994:170). The letters describe caravans as co-operative arrangements involving several households. The wife and the merchant often sent gifts to each other, which Barber interprets as 'good buys' (op.cit. 173).

Barber argues that women, though powerful, nevertheless ranked as second compared to their husbands. As translated, the letters make it likely that the journeying / staying project on the whole was defined more in 'his-terms' than in 'her-terms'. Yet the *wealth* in the household is notably associated with the wife, and a lack of wealth is also the sore point for some of the women. Barber cites a letter from Waqartum, priestess and textile producer / production administrator in a relatively indebted household. Waqartum wrote to her brother complaining that he was not sending any valuables home (op.cit.173-4), showing how the sibling relation was often the important axis – here in a downwards position vis-à-vis the affluent household of Lamassi, wife of the merchant Pushu-ken, where the spouse relation was the axis.

Lamassi wrote to her husband: "About the fact that I did not send you the textiles about which you wrote, your heart should not be angry. As the girl has grown up, I had to make a pair of heavy textiles for (placing / wearing) on the wagon. Moreover I made some for the members of the household (*nisi bitim*) and the children." Barber (1994:174) discusses Veenhof's hypothesis that this was for an important ceremonial family event, arguing that others of the household, the *nisi bitim*, were already in a fairly subservient position. She also cites a letter from a Mesopotamian queen to her husband c. 1820 B.C. after a neighbouring city was sacked by Hammurabi of Babylon: "I shall take many garments with my tribute to Babylon; I have collected together all the garments that are available here, but they are not sufficient" (op.cit. 175); possibly, a connection to tribute is indicated here.

Neither Barber nor Veenhof pays sufficient attention to the fact that the basis of the trade, in the form of sheep, does not seem to have belonged to the merchant households of the city, but to periphery households, possibly more male-centred in their kinship organisation ('chieftain-and-men' households), allied with the private sector in the city through the trade contact. This may have played a role in the subsequently increasing patriarchal dominance. What we see in this case is a vigorous trade that has not yet been linked to clear economic asymmetry between husband and wife. Yet we know that *subsequently* the Assyrian kernel area developed along a line

that was notably militaristic as well as characterised by patriarchal dominance, and that this happened within what was basically the same cultural tradition.

Was the early commuter couple based, in Pateman's terms, on a *sexual contract*? One cannot say for sure, since silence may not be indicative. Yet I think that most of the imagery brought in by modern feminists' debate is misleading. True, the relationship involved a certain amount of sexed organisation. However it is generally known that Mesopotamian views of sexuality were quite different from later Western standards, and often put women in central and active roles. On the whole, the signification form and the culture were not yet 'informed' by the later kind of enlightenment regarding women. If the Assur marriages had an aspect of industriousness and partnership, similar to some traits of reformation and Lutheran ideals, its main element was missing: one great male deity as basic legitimisation ground. The early Assyrians may have had their secret brotherhoods and oaths by the knife, yet theirs was not a fully patriarchal world order.

My interpretation shares some traits with the one proposed by Elise Boulding (1992:181-2):

"As administrative roles and centralised control over resources develop for men, the marital partnership takes on a special significance among the elite. The increased resources of the successful trader, and of the increasingly permanent warrior king-temple administrator alliance, are in some significant way shared with the spouse. In general, she receives an increasing share of the ceremonial functions but not the decision-making ones, so that she remains behind in a microcosm of the earlier rank society while her spouse moves ahead into the new centralised power society.

Ability could lead to an extension of a woman's role, however. Thus we sometimes find queens in the Near East civilisations acting as governesses (..) and serving as high priestesses of the major temples, essentially a papal-type role. (..) [Yet] the roles are nearly always second-rung roles. Only in some tribal societies, which are still essentially rank societies, do we meet reigning queens who do not derive power from the positions of their husbands."

I do not, however, agree when she implies that women's status was weakened already in the transition from tribal society, and she clearly underestimates the specific dynamics of the huge period of early agricultural settlement and urbanisation when she writes that "the urbanisation, or resource centralisation, of the trading towns led directly to the development of the city state." (Boulding 1992:182). "Directly"? I think an epoch stretching over several thousand years deserves better.

An *ambivalence* appears in Boulding's as well as in Gerda Lerner's treatment of this theme, with patriarchy halfway historical, located in known historical facts of the 2500-1500 period, and halfway transhistorical, a matter of villages or tribalism as such. I read this in association with the rather un-feminine and often disagreeable picture of powerful women that appears at least when the material is seen with modern, gender-egalitarian eyes. Powerful women were administrators of a system heading towards more and more absolute forms of slavery. These figures were later strongly connected to notions of *sin* and corruption, and I am not entirely convinced that modern interpretations are untainted by deep-level associations at this point. –

This 'extensional' interpretation brings us into a very well-traced terrain of the patriarchal gendering process of Western civilisation, the connection of woman and sin.

## The two-front struggle of women

The existence of a male-dominated external production order, together with increasingly male-dominated transfers, involving both material and symbolical social identification together with more private forms of property, may explain one main feature of women's deteriorating situation: a two-front struggle.

In this context, the exclusion of women from certain parts of agriculture associated with plow farming may be important. Fragmented evidence may indicate that women, or at least some women, were markedly less compensated than men in the agricultural labour force (Hoffner, H 1974). Women's control of the main *meta-activity* (see below) of overseeing the seed and the seeding, or the extent of this control from the household to the field, emerges as one important theme. Traditions that probably go back to the (fourth millennium) Ubaid period praise the god Enki whose seed was like rain, fertilising the plains. Yet this should be interpreted in a context where all kinds of fertile powers were generously (and, in our eyes, chaotically) ascribed to women, men, animals, things, plants and the world at large.

Barber describes Iltani, queen, textile administrator, daughter of king Samu-Addu of Karana, "a couple of generations" after Lamassi and Waqartum, perhaps 1750. We note that Iltani became queen after "her husband, Aqba-hammu, had usurped the throne from her brother" (Barber, E 1994:175). Barber rightly, I think, imagines Assyria's power as one of keeping a grip on the trade links, even if this was not all there was to it; at the time of Hammurabi of Babylon, "Assyria was loosing its grip on the trade routes" (ibid.).

The role of public opinion comes to the forefront. Discussing kingly households' fates, Barber argues: "Times were tough. Samu-addu had lost his throne to an earlier usurper, and his son had got it back only to lose it to Iltani's husband when political allegiances had shifted again." (ibid.) North in Mari, Zimri-Lim, "the strongest man in Northern Mesopotamia", refused to bow to Hammurabi who "sacked the city ruthlessly" (ibid.). Still, times were almost always tough; in general, *stable* dynasties are hard to find at this early stage.<sup>33</sup>

This turbulence was connected to the declining influence of upper class, household-administrating women, or what I called a two-front struggle. On the one hand, the state increasingly favoured and became based on male-led exchange relations and a connected proto-political sphere that increasingly became the basis of the whole state order. On the other hand, the women only controlled the means of production in one stage of a longer production process, in which the first stages were under the control of (probably) male-led groups of the periphery. Although this two-front hypothesis remains conjectural, it is at least indirectly supported by the material, and it would explain why this group of women lost power and influence even in a period where their commercial 'household businesses' became gradually more important.

## Mode of production, form of society

In the preceding sections, I have examined early Greek patterns and some of their contemporary developments in an international context, confirming some of the main points of the present thesis. Scholars may debate the extent and emphasis on matrilocality and matrilinearity in the Aegean centre and elsewhere. What has been shown, in the Aegean case, is the probability of a gradual shift towards male-centred kinship organisation, with greater emphasis, through many kinds of conflicts, on male-male relations as the main basis of power. Greece was no exception to the rule of a long-term decline in women's overall status, a development that can be found all over the known world, most pronounced in the large centres. The specificity of Greek developments, rather, stemming partly from the location and geographical character of this region, consists in the federative element, the emergence of 'politicised' power, and the shift towards a commercial city-state formation while the states to the east and south remained within the large household context.

The model of 'focality' which is presented below starts out from the notion of an emerging agricultural settlement, a centre with regular surplus, material, cultural and symbolic, including a harbouring of the past in a very wide sense, objectified activities, (or in Berger and Luckman's words objectifications of subjectivities).<sup>34</sup>

There is, then, a *centre*, comparable to a main source of 'light' or social influence. If one conceives of *the epic tale* and *the tablet list* as two kinds of 'filters' for this light, or *prisms* changing it, one arrives at the notion of the *focal* dependency form, a combination of two kinds of principles and two kinds of positions: that of the centre, and that of its external representation, its presentation as epical action. These are two different pictures created by each prism or medium, counterpoised as parts of one culture. The visual analogy is useful: *light*, *prism* and *picture* correspond to *wealth*, *power* and *identity*. It is used as an initial metaphor, since it is helpful in this regard, yet the focality model is 'realist' in the sense of being based on main, well-known traits of early agricultural societies. The latter includes the importance of the settled large-household group, the increasing width and depth of redistributive centralisation, as well as the developments of various forms of counter-checks to this tendency.

Some new terms are used in the focality model. If I had been happy with what exists, I would not have attempted what is, most probably, in some senses misleading, due to its activity orientation, its naive visual analogy, its stage division resembling the value forms model, and probably much else besides. Yet for now, it remains genuinely useful, more useful than the alternatives.

By alternatives, I mean four main directions of scholarship. These are outlined and briefly discussed below, before turning to the focality alternative.

(1) A '*separate mode of production*' view. This includes Marx's 'Asiatic' mode and more recent Marxist views (like (Diakonoff 1975), and also attempts using slightly different terms, like the idea of the 'temple state'.

One main advantage of this tradition is the fact that the unique character of the social form is recognised; it is seen as a 'mode' or 'form' *sui generis*, deserving its own terms.

As should be clear, I think this is fully appropriate. Yet the problems with the 'production' and 'mode of production' view, discussed earlier, reappear in this ancient context. If there are difficulties with a *wide* activity model, a *narrow* 'productionist' model fares even worse in terms of understanding the character of culture and social relationships of a very 'un-productivistic' age even as it 'produced' wonders like the pyramids.

(2) A '*transitional society*' view. This idea is echoed in many treatments (like those of Coontz & Henderson, and Saliou, discussed above); often it is a fill-in term for lack of more precise categories. Basically I cannot agree that a social form existing longer than any later mode of production should be described as 'transitional', even if it was characterised by a *very* broad and gradual process of change (as were later modes of production).

The next two tendencies are more common within the historical studies.

(3) A '*concrete terms*' approach. Categories like temple states and palace societies are useful since they go a step further than the mode of production approach, using a key trait of the society involved. Yet they are also clearly superficial. We would not be satisfied if social researchers today had classified our society in similar terms ("sky scraper society"). If they are used as more in-depth designations, they become too narrow, easily implying that these were one-dimensional societies. We know that the economy included different transfer types, units and zones (Oates 1986:24f.). The central unit terms do not bring out the specificity of the society as a whole – not the temple or household as such, but how these and other institutions typically *interrelated*, the social order between and within units. – As a subvariant of this tendency there is a 'keep to their own terms' trend, which is understandable and sometimes works better than the 'violent translation' alternative. For example, if we call the Egyptian leader pharao instead of king we at least avoid some of the most blatantly misleading later notions of kingship. Yet we are basically left where we started; this procedure does not translate between their world and ours.

(4) A *pragmatic 'mixture of later terms' tendency*. This is probably the most common of the four. Usually, it means that one uses terms from antiquity, feudalism or capitalism as fit, often with the latter framework as the predominant one. Sometimes, this approach works well on the institutional level and in analyses of specific units, while it works less well on the general cultural and societal level. As an example, the Hittite empire is often discussed as 'feudal', with bonds of 'vassalage' (Sandars 1985); this does convey some idea of the specificity of Hittite institutions, yet on the whole, it is a misleading analogy: the dynamics of Hittite society clearly were *not* those of European feudalism.

*On the mode of production debate.* Before turning to focal theory, something more should be said of the state of the mode of production debate, since the disarray in this area is one main reason why new frameworks may be fruitful.

First, some words on the social forms view. The social forms approach enlarges the focus on institutional specificity and continuance (cf. de Ste. Croix 1987). Trans-form elements include transactional orders, or parts of them, not just single units or institutions. For example, the Western patriarchal gender system may be traced

through antiquity, feudalism and capitalism with some common elements throughout. We find gift-oriented and other transfer fields and systemic patterns, not just specific constellations of reciprocities or institutions stretching across eras of our history. Yet the social forms view maintains an emphasis on qualitative change, especially meta-institutional change, shifts in the wider fabric while the units may stay the same, or seemingly so; changes pertaining specifically to *organisation*. So in order to understand why superficially identical institutions like ancient and modern slavery nevertheless played different roles, created different forms of tension, diverging dynamics and had two quite different historical fates, we turn to society and culture as a whole, and how this whole is connected to the person as a social being.

Sociologists, also those of renown like Habermas and Giddens, are often embarrassingly superficial, static and arrogant regarding early societies. Even in recent sociological treatments like that of Anthony Giddens (e.g. 1993:181-2) we find a "tribal society" stage hypothesised as the forerunner of "class-divided society". Basically a couple of thousand years of proto- and early history are lost from view in such schemes. Giddens also argues, in contradistinction to the present view, that early civilisations were not 'world systems', since they "frequently succumbed to attacks or pressures from such [tribal] societies (op.cit. 184). This is a peculiar argument. Should we say that Vietnam was not part of the world system since it almost succumbed to the US attack?

*Kinship* cannot very well be a mode of production term, yet it has been used in that manner in some variants of Marxism, often mixed together with a *communal mode* of production. For example, Soviet ethnographers (Gailey, C et.al. 1990) argued in 1990 that "precapitalist classes and state formation processes redefined gender, which had been a pivotal dimension of the prehistoric communal mode of production. Gender hierarchy emerged as civil authorities attempted to intervene in production and reproduction, and met resistance from local clans". Static conceptions of gender as always-there, a petit-bourgeois notion of a '*common man's gender*' (read: *woman*) not to be taken away by class and capital, are frequent in this tradition (e.g. Diakonoff, also, in quite another context, Ladurie's otherwise excellent *Montaillou*). Such ideas have been encouraged by this static kinship mode concept (for a more serious attempt to historise kinship frameworks, cf. Wolf, E 1982).

The concepts 'domestic group' and 'domestic mode of production' have recently attracted well-deserved critiques. An example is Ugo Fabietti (1991), who argues, based on a study of the Bedouin of the Arabian peninsula, that these notions are often empirically inappropriate and that they are theoretically founded on "false conceptions of an ahistorical society suffering from underproductivity", diverting attention from an understanding of real dynamics of change. One might compare Rene König's (1957:116) notion of the '*ideological peasantry*'. This is relevant for ancient history also, where patrilinearity and / or patriarchy has had a tendency to pop up in the periphery and among nomads with at best scanty evidence. Bronze Age historians' recent critique of the paradigmatic case of Indo-European invasion as the basis of patriarchy can only be mentioned in passing. There is no reasonable doubt that patriarchy developed in the centres, not on the Asian steppes. The image of a somewhat stagnant communal domestic mode torn down by invaders with their patrilinear customs may usefully be contrasted with what is known of hierarchic

developments in the centres, long before anything similar can be found in the periphery. An example is Breasted's (1967:129) portrait of the situation in Egypt:

"Everywhere [in the 11th. dynasty, c. 2050 B.C.] the local nobles, the nomarchs whose gradual rise we witnessed in the Old Kingdom, were now ruling their great domains like independent sovereigns. They looked back upon a long line of ancestry reaching into the generations of their fathers, whose power had caused the fall of the Old Kingdom, and we find them repairing the fallen tombs of these founders in their households." Breasted argues that these nomarchs became miniature pharaohs, and indicates their association with patrilinear inheritance. By 1900 or so, "the inheritance by the son of his father's calling, though not uncommon in the Old Kingdom" had become "general" (op.cit.141).

When the male dynastic principle was established, it was legitimised in part-feminine terms. Nevertheless a new focus of power emerged, different from the older ones. Later, the former rulers of great households were credited with 'charismatic' powers, as 'the lesser beings of the present day' (cf. the Greek notion of the Titans of old) tried to grasp the past for use in their struggles in the present. What *emerges*, therefore, was a 'kinship' orientation towards precisely these dynasts. It was not at first conceived as patrilinear links, but more as associations with householdic greatness, to be 'kinshipped' to in the sense of connected to, with kinship used socially, not biologically. Only gradually did this turn into a more well-ordered, corporate system, 'dominant' *as against* the immediate group-based and more gynifocal reality with knowledge of the mother, often not of the father, and the whole culture built up around that fact. The idea of kinship as a static phenomenon does not fit this context. Rather kinship itself became reorganised, and transferred into a meta-institutional role that it most probably did not have in the earlier settlements. In a world system view, the further developments of kinship, also in the periphery, now become understandable as historical processes.

A 'mode of production' category may be meaningful as a subform of the commodity form, while being misleading as a categorisation of societies in general. The latter proposition was the one favoured by the Stalinist conception of Marxism as Absolute Science, with its opponents among those who saw Marxism as critique of political economy. Some recent examples of mode of production theory may be mentioned. Ernest Gellner (1988), examining the logic of industrialism, has argued that coercion and cognition can be dominant over production (cf. Langlois, R 1994). Briglio (1990), based on Sahlins, writes simply of "the historical transformation from under- to overproduction", with a dose of ecology and spiritualism in the classification of these two 'modes'. Milonakis (1993) discusses feudalism as "the prelude to the genesis of capitalism" and exposes the "limitations of approaches based on the class conflict school and on the productive forces / production relations framework", yet while mentioning the "specific features of the feudal social structure that give rise to this system's dynamism", he goes no further than defining these dynamics in terms of "feudal society's expanding productive capacity" and its "changing social structure".

Some class theorists have tried to go the full step, and dismiss any idea of technology or economy as something beyond class. Claudio Katz (1993) argues unconvincingly that the "mature" Marx developed a model of transition to capitalism based "solely on the internal dynamic of class struggle". Rather, one may say that Marx's post-1855

economy-critical writings in England (i.e. Katz's source) tendentially, though not always clearly, posit the commodity form as more important than economy or class as such, including technology. The social form, or even the mode of production, cannot be reduced to the dimension of social class; instead, this concept is itself reified by being discussed in isolation. Moreover, this isolation is a chimera, since in class theory, as elsewhere, gender and 'race' politics abound. A recent example is illustrative. Robert Ross (1991) in the journal *Rethinking Marxism* reviews Roger S. Gottlieb's book *History and Subjectivity: The Transformation of Marxism* (Philadelphia: Temple U. Press, 1987) with these words:

"Gottlieb argues that traditional Marxism recognised only one form of primacy in social determination, class, and that only competitive capitalism, not feudalism or monopoly capitalism, was an economic system with law-like regularities. He also contends that the reformulation of a transformed Marxism must recognise the primacy of gender socialisation and the politics of race if an adequate socialist politics is to be established." Gottlieb is lauded by Ross for his original attempt at revising Marxism in the wake of the politics of post New Left feminism. However, his "claim that gender relations are as powerful in social determination as class or mode of production is assailed, because such a claim, if true, *would deprive Marxism of the very features that make it a unique theoretical system.*" (My emphasis.) This is an interesting idea: that Marx' theory would be nothing without what Marx basically saw as its *result*, class and other social movement analysis. A Marxism that places as much emphasis on gender as on class analysis would somehow be tainted, no longer unique, inspiring! The brotherhood of materialist spirit is obviously not quite dead. If feminist theory often communicates class by implication, through gender devices, the same treatment is often given to gender, in class rhetoric. I agree with Lerner that "class differences were, at their very beginnings, expressed and constituted in terms of patriarchal relations" (Lerner, G 1986:213).

Today, after the demise of the Althusserian "articulations" of modes of production, the whole mode of production debate is basically in a disarray. Something new may therefore be needed.<sup>35</sup>

## Focality theory

The theory of focality was created on the basis of a conception of temple, household or palatial society as belonging to one common basic social form.

The terminology takes the intersection of two main kinds of reciprocity, gift-giving and redistribution, as its point of departure, starting from a hypothesised relationship of *focal reciprocity* or *focality*. The focal relationship is considered a kind of social interdependency *sui generis*, with its own dynamics and development. As a result of internal changes, more specific and distinct types of focality relationships develop. They may also co-exist as subforms of the overall category of focal reciprocity. These subforms are portrayed as stages in the diagram presented later.

*World system theory* as developed by Wallerstein, Galtung, Frank and others is an important part of the background of the model, as has been implied already. The decline of women's position and emerging centre stratification are seen together with

the centrality dimension and the centre's need to keep hold of its periphery. The importance of world system theory consists in its allowance of a divergence of histories, of history in the plural, while retaining a view to their connections, common issues and developments. Also, on a more concrete level, world system theories developed in imperialism and ecology debates especially usually retain a main emphasis on 'centrality', including modern racism and the global hierarchy, and some openness towards feminism in a triadic framework, rather than 'class' alone.

As mentioned, the focality model can be approached using a visual metaphor, in which:

- **(1) The centre = objectified activity = the source of light**
- **(2) The focal position = the overseer position = the constraint, the prism**
- **(3) The focus position = the resultant motif, picture or social identity**

The figure below gives an overview of a system of focal relationships. There are three main positions, the centre, those who oversee the centre (inner ring, focal positions), and those who act on behalf of the centre (outer ring, focus positions).

#### **A system of focal reciprocity**

Before discussing this figure in detail, we may note its resemblance to the physical layout of early urban settlements (and perhaps the Mesopotamian 'oval temple' period in particular): a city dominated by a central sacral structure. The focal relationships are illustrated by 1<--->A and 2<--->B above. People in a focal structure, it is hypothesised, see themselves as social individuals mainly through their relation towards this common symbolic / material centre, through its overseer instances, who have 'prismatic', lexical, identity-creative functions. The lines from the source, through the prism positions, to the focus positions do not imply that these peoples' identities were like films projected by the centre. Nor were they 'embedded' in this structure in any modern collective sense, for this notion is scarcely less misleading than its individualist counterpart. We just saw, from Assur, lively examples of people acting and choosing on their own, etc. It may even be that in lieu of private property, their sense of a *personal* sphere was in some respects greater than it became later. What it means, though, is that this kind of society did have quite some mobilising, identifying, culturising, etc. *influence*, creating remarkable advances over a span of

some thousand years. (An early date for this kind of system is, perhaps, 5-4000 B.C. in the lower Tigris-Euphrat valley; see below.)

Since this system gradually developed the kinds of balances and counter-checks described earlier, the overseer instances (focal or prism positions) were more complex and widely distributed than implied by the figure. Trading as well as gifts could be properties or domains of deities. Also, proto-political organisation, councils of elders, and other non-temple organisation might be added, probably connected especially to the gift aspects of the organisation. The three elemental forms of transfer are found here also, i.e. a redistributive system, a gift system, and a commodity system, usually in that order of priority, and possibly with commodity exchange mainly as a peripheral / external system in early times (and therefore drawn as the outer ring). Early evidence of traders may point that way. There is also evidence that may mean that traders had legitimacy problems from early on (from proverbs, etc.).

The focal reciprocity form is seen as a composite arrangement, and what distinguishes it from the commodity form is the internal ordering and organisation of the elemental forms, making the whole, or the social form as a unity, a very different proposition. It is this unity – different from the rules of the redistributive transfer sphere as such – that is approached in the focality concept.

If we go back to a more traditional view, the evolutionary materialist framework, the focal reciprocity forms can be more specifically located. This localisation remains on a hypothetical basis, even if there is no lack of evidence that various focal tendencies (or traits that may fruitfully be interpreted in that framework) may be located in specific periods.

Focal reciprocity becomes relevant for interpreting the societal and cultural development associated with settled agriculture, and in materialist terms, the agricultural development and its dynamics and problems are its main motive force. Focal reciprocity gradually replaced older forms, as agriculture and specialisation created more regular surpluses and more institutionalised division lines between the spheres of production and distribution. Focality is a term for the new transactional order that must have been created.

In this new context, the surplus passed through different transfer types, even if the 'embedded' character of transfers is a main common trait. We may think of long chains of various forms of lending, delayed, roundabout obligations involving many people, with a common gravitation towards the centre. Transfers usually were less isolated or distinguished from other aspects of life than they became later, in the commodity form context. As settlements evolved, centralisation and stratification became more dominant themes, and focal reciprocity organisation was a way of accommodating but also moderating these processes.

Focal reciprocity, then, combines the three transfer types of giving, exchanging and redistribution, usually with redistribution and gifts as the main combination. Redistribution generally is associated with the centre, while gift principles are associated with the periphery, even if both are found in both spheres.

A society organised along the lines of focal reciprocity is a wheel-like operation. Two main forms of transaction occur. The first is transactions going in and out from the centre ('spokes', as illustrated by 1-A and 2-B above). The second is between agents (focus positions) outside the centre, or distinct from it, even if they take places within the centres (towns, temples, palaces) themselves. In that case they principally belong to a third party ('personal', 'private' property, etc.) sphere.

A typical expression of the *focal position* is the ration. The relationship between the focal position to the centre itself is typically one of rations and offerings or duties, rights going out, obligations coming in. The focal position is moral as well as material, and structural more than action-oriented, a centre of rule-making and symbol creation more than tools creation or rule application.

The *focus position*, on the other hand, is more differentiated from cultural and material centre functions. It is more externally oriented, with more emphasis on action and application. The inventiveness and initiative of the hero are cultural expressions. The position is 'agentic' while the focal position is structural; executive while the other is judiciary.

The 'hub' of the wheel, and to a lesser extent the 'nodes' along the rim, are the main points of cultural generalisation. This is where social relations get their sacral general form. A characteristic of focal culture is the 'refractive' mode of thinking discussed in chapter 7.

By refractive thinking I do not mean a consciousness totally different from ours, only that it does have some characteristic ways of going from one to the other, of connecting things, that are different from ours. It is not, therefore, just its contents – what one thinks of – that is different, although I want to emphasise that this has nothing to do with people 'hearing' gods and similar speculations. They appear to have been fully 'normal' in this sense. Refraction is simply used as a term of a narrative form which followed the typical events of the day, not simply in a concrete sense but in a more general sense also. I put Sohn-Rethel's concept of real abstraction to use here, extended into a notion of other but just as real forms of generalisation. These people did not mainly connect through commodity exchange, and this had some impact on how they conceived of 'connecting', of being social. This has been discussed before, and I can only say that there is a middle ground between not understanding any of this, and making metaphysics out of it.<sup>36</sup>

Refraction, then, differs from commodity-associated reflection, and we can now better understand why it was organised halfway on gift lines and halfway on redistributive lines, following the main transfers and nodes. Of course this was not a mechanistic mirroring in thought and culture of lines of practical life events; it was characterised by association, transference, attempted solutions to problems and other phenomena described earlier, and therefore also by much ingenuity and creativity. On the whole, focal society was characterised by major developments; it became stagnant only when focality was subordinated to other principles.

The refraction itself was expressed in epical poetry and in many other forms, in Sumer and later. With the risk of misplaced concreteness I shall attempt to illustrate one typical pattern, using a well-known later source, Homer. It typifies how epical thought

vacillates between deities and mortals, shifting its perspective, yet maintaining a common movement or 'plot'. The example is from the *Iliad*, where the war on earth continues among the gods, the story shifting back and forth. In principal terms an event has its generalisation point or node (akin to the real abstraction in reflective thought) and its 'ring' and 'spoke' trajectories, between which epical action plots some third course; tensions are resolved through new combinations of gift and redistributive elements. The example is illustrated in the figure below.

### **Refraction in the *Iliad***

The figure illustrates a part of the plot of the *Iliad*. The Greeks are almost losing the war. The Trojans are attacking and Zevs blocks Poseidon's attempt to support the Greeks. At this point the story refracts to Olympus, where Hera fools Zevs into making love to her and fall asleep. Now the story breaks back to the action of the mortals: in Zevs' absence, the Greeks win renewed support and attack once more. It is the breaks or shifts that are in focus here; a phenomenon I believe is comparable to the picturing of deities as humans standing in the air in Mycenaean art, symbolising their refraction from the mortals who stand on the ground.

Since Homer's *Iliad* was composed in a late phase of focal organisation (where this organisation was no longer dominant), the above figure may be interpreted as an example of cultural survival. The centre has become 'theological' – yet the material underpinnings of this sphere can in fact be found in the earlier 'world of the tablets', and the connection between gift-related householding ('rim' relationships) and the 'epical world' (heroic and epical narrative) is well documented also in Homer's own time. Palace-age relationships appear both in the main outline of the story itself, and

in some of its elements, like the brotherly attachment to the main woman and her main role in the plot, as well as the fact that it is still partly an active role. The halfway- and tension-filled character of women's activity in Homer, which is a quite characteristic trait, is what we would expect according to the focality view. The more precise manner in which the *Iliad* refracts from the action and then leads back into it is probably more influenced by Homer's time than the basic pattern where 'secular' problems are 'sacrally' resolved. It is primarily the *materiality* of this kind of resolution that was lost to later epic bards as the palatial structure broke down. This must have influenced their ideas of the religious, and probably contributed to a shift from 'emblematic' to more 'personalised' deities.

The kinds of relationships identified under the term 'focality' or 'focal reciprocity' may perhaps better be called large-household relations, or the mode may be called an 'agricultural centre' mode of production. The gist of the matter is the intertwined character of redistribution and gift-giving. Each focal transfer in principle is dividable into ring-movement and spoke-movement, a portion passed along as gift, and a portion passed as sacrifice (or coming out, as ration) to (from) the centre. Therefore, gifts and sacrifices were very close associates. On the whole, the redistributive system was more recent than the gift patterns, increasing its hold as focal reciprocity developed, and if it may have created more egalitarian circumstances in the first periods, it was gradually associated with increasing stratification.

*Five types of focality.* Five main phases or submodels are included in the focality framework, outlined in table below. As mentioned, these may also be interpreted as tendencies within one period, with the period-congruent tendency dominant. There is no implication that concrete developments always followed the 'ideal type' phases of the model.

The five are: (1) incidental, shifting or fluent focality (in early agricultural society), (2) active focality with increasing development and urbanisation, (3) passive focality, based on a new kind of power balance between centre and periphery. From now on, the focal system on the whole no longer is dominant vis-à-vis the commodity system. The next phases are (4) bound focality, and (5) fixed focality.

Each type represents a 'meta-institutional' tendency, i.e. a common orientation through various institutions. Taken together, the five phases represent a movement on a dimension *from* a small to medium scale gift-oriented community with early agriculture, through increased scale and redistribution and centralisation, *to* a commodity-oriented large-scale economy. In this very broad sense, it is a model of a 'transitional' process, yet the focality model establishes one coherent and internally consistent social form through various changes, and some of the dynamics behind these changes.

*Categories of the table.* The table below presents some main traits of the focal reciprocity form model.

#### **A table of main focality categories**

<b>Focality form</b>	<b>Shifting</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Passive</b>	<b>Bound</b>	<b>Fixed</b>

<b>Main positions</b>	not differentiated	focal position focus position	focal position focus position	focal position focus position	focal position focus position
<b>Power position</b>	focal position	focal position	focus position	focus position	?
<b>Power basis</b>	'seeds for next year' meta-activity	redistributive organisation and recording	counterbalanced redistribution	centralised exchange	centralised exchange
<b>Society: Activity</b>	early agriculture	specialised agriculture, urbanisation	agricultural centres organised together with surrounding peoples, nomads, etc.	urban-led agriculture plus crafts, increasing slavery	commercial slavery, servitude
<b>Patriarchy and gender</b>	egalitarian	egalitarian, more general stratification	emergence of patriarchal power	patriarchal states, androcentric/ exclusive gender tendency	gradual emergence of patriarchal gender system
<b>Internal economic transfers</b>	older forms, gifts, small-scale redistribution	large-scale redistribution, gifts, token trade	redistribution, emerging exchange	redistribution and gifts bound by exchange relations	focal system gradually reintegrated
<b>External economic transfers</b>	symmetrical gifts, sacrifices	partially enforced gifts, sacrifices	proto-tributes and tributes	military enforced tributes, emerging taxation	taxation
<b>Plausible historical context</b>	Early settlements	Uruk period early Sumer?	Sumer, Akkad, Babylon	Assyria, Persia, Greece	Late Rome, Christianity
<b>Typical date</b>	c. 8000 to c. 4500 B.C.	4500 to c. 2800 B.C. (‘epic age’)	c. 2800 to c. 1200 B.C. (Greece: End of palace age)	c. 1200 B.C. to c. A.D. 300	A.D. 300 +

*Main positions.* The focal and focus positions are hypothesised as undifferentiated in the first shifting focality period, although older gift systems most probably evaluated meta-activities in their own ways.

*Counterbalanced redistribution* means a system of social weights and constraints put on the leadership to secure they act in the common interest (religious and sacrificial duties, periphery people as leaders, leader's power dependent on temple organisation's say-so, elder and city council checks, etc.).

*Focal and focus positions.* The focus or *agent* position is seen as associated especially with these counter-checks to the 'immediate' centralising tendency displayed in the Active focality period.

An example of agency: In Susa c. 2200 B.C., a male figure who is thought to be a god, is shown in a relief holding a temple foundation peg, while a woman, thought to be an interceding goddess, stands behind him. He represents the agency, she oversees it. She is somewhat higher than him, standing with her hands apart as (as if clapping them), probably praying; this egalitarian scene seems to speak of a common project, founding a temple (see Roaf 1990:74). Agency in the sense of bringing sacrifice was commonly associated with men.

The focal position holds the 'morality' in the sense of overview, due to control of the meta-activity (securing next harvest and next generation) attached to overseer roles. The focus appears as agent of the focal position, like the priest-leader, but also as checkpoint, a role that should also reconcile the periphery and / or the city vis-à-vis the temple and mobilise continued support for a gradually more asymmetrical and enforced redistributive operation. As I said, the focal position may be compared to judiciary power, the focus position to executive power.

*Signs and symbols.* The main argument that there is a 'light' and a 'prism' or 'overseer' position should be compared to the studies of early list and sign production, discussed earlier, leading to the texts in the great-house of Inanna of Uruk and to similar, slightly later developments in Elam and elsewhere.

*Activity and meta-activity.* A distinction between activity and meta-activity is hypothesised based on developing agricultural settlement needs. Meta-activity is that which secures the group's future beyond the consumption of today. The agricultural cycle is a main factor, including human fertility and children as much as agricultural and pastoral produce, not as production on the one hand and reproduction on the other, but on the same level. Society was organised in accordance with this cycle, and creating a balance between meta-activity and other activity emerged as a main problem, much like the differentiation principle of the commodity economy.

*Societal activity.* Activities generally become more large-scale, complex and differentiated, with technological and societal developments especially in the active locality period, before the more stagnant period in which class society developed.

*Gender and focality.* It is hypothesised that focal relations were also fairly egalitarian ones in terms of sex-related organisation. Sex never appears 'as such' in early material; instead there is a nexus of traits. The key point is that a figure like a deity is sexed (and also, as a wider category, fertile) as *part of* the manifold person, not a *presupposition* of it. So the idea is *not* that focality creates woman-power, but that it tends to create *centre influence*, and that women were often *among* the central categories of people.

I know of no case where 'female pre-eminence' does not have some kind of male answer *plus* an answer that says something like "animals also create the world", "the sun and the rain played a role too", or similar things that should make modern gender

glasses fall off – but obviously do not. A good deity, often, is one that can change its sex, or has some of both.

Yet there is also often a more specific pattern where one female figure is opposed to several male figures (woman A <--> man B, man C, man D, etc.; for example Inanna <--> Dumuzi, Enmerkar, Gilgamesh, etc.). This is common especially on the religious level, while the contrary pattern is unusual or at least less common. It is the opposite of the gender extended exchange pattern discussed earlier (chapters 3 and 4). At the same time, the main example (with Inanna/Ishtar) in the middle shows the woman as a virtual figure, while the male role is for real. Yet even if we know that the latter 'virtualised' the former, shifting the female image for their purposes, one cannot avoid the conclusion that the constellation itself says something of the old structural power of women. This is not the 'preferred' patriarchal setup. Instead it is a constellation that says that the woman stays, or is central, while men come and go, or are more peripheral. Also it is quite clear that this pattern had numerous cultural correlates. Yet we do not need to *presuppose* the modern ideology of motherhood in order to explain these traits. Women's factual central position and the emphasis given to such positions in a focal system are sufficient. We may keep to the broad empirical evidence concerning the fact that women more often than men were occupied in the immediate vicinity of the household and children, while men more often were occupied with tasks bringing them to more distant localities and contact with foreigners.

It is thereby a 'sex division plus social factors' kind of model of the emergence of patriarchy, and not original in that respect, yet it puts much more weight on the social factor than usual as well as going into a *specific* set of models of its dynamics. Women may have stayed nearer to the home, but if this 'home' is situated as the powerful instance, or even the main definition of society, the keepers of this home will also be fairly powerful.<sup>37</sup>

The cultural pattern may have been '*immediately gynifocal*' in some senses, yet such notions are easily fully misleading due to our own genderisation habits. It is notable that 'gynifocal' means something different from what we associate with it. The temple is the main thing, not the child. The culture depicting woman's activity does not centre on their role as mothers, or on the mother-child-bond in anything like the modern version of it, and one main reason is that *the whole world* was conceived as a 'fertility world' in a broad sense. The modern image of a world of production, men, death and war as the dark background of bright figure of motherhood is alien. We find women portrayed as active primarily in three roles, as sisters, spouses and priestesses, with a main emphasis (also in titles, etc.) on the sister role. 'Sister' and 'mistress of the household', (like the Aegean 'palace lady') most probably were closely associated concepts. Beyond all this, the main focus of society was not the mother or any other family figure as such, but the conglomerate of 'bureaucratic' functional groups, with the sacral personnel including priestesses among the highest-ranking groups.

Sargon's daughter Enheduanna, a main religious-literary figure of her time, is an example of a woman who had 'agency' power especially in the religious sphere, yet was also 'structurally' inferior as a daughter of the ruler. Enheduanna cannot be interpreted as a special case of a woman interested in religious matters; what she does seems more like an all-round attempt to justify Accadian rule by reinvigorating Sumerian religion and culture. In general, women's loss of status seems associated

with a shift from emphasis on their status as *sisters*, to *spouses*, and later to *daughters*, until, in classical antiquity, women were principally only to be treated as minors (see below).<sup>38</sup>

*Typical dates.* The dating in the table is tentative and approximate for the purpose of broader orientation. In many senses, Middle East civilisation was a *centrifugal process*, and so conditions in the peripheral centres like Knossos of the Aegean by 1500 B.C. may have resembled the older Sumerian ones, more than contemporary Babylonian conditions. This point is valid whatever the current state of debate, between 'culture diffusionists' and 'isolationists' regarding the Aegeans; *some* diffusion is beyond doubt. There was a considerable institutional and cultural *time lag*, varying with the conditions in the emerging centres and how they were related to the larger and older civilisations – probably larger, the smaller the contact and the greater the difference between centre and periphery locality. It is an interesting fact that the main centre of the whole process gradually moved in one fairly coherent line north-westwards, from Ubaid and Uruk in the lower part of the Tigris and Euphrat valley, north to Akkade and Babylon, towards Hittites, Assyrians, and Phoenicians, then to Persia, to Greece, and to Rome. I have seen no explanations of this fact (we could add: central Europe, later London, New York).

*Further on focality types.* Focality as such is defined as a transactional order combining redistributive, gift and exchange relationships with redistribution as the main orientation. This is divided into five main phases.

*Shifting focality.* In this setting the focal organisation principles are yet only weakly developed and the line separating activity results and activities may have been blurred. A situation where earlier organisational principles still carry the main societal weight in emerging agricultural settlements and proto-urban centres. As argued, the agricultural economy requires a differentiation of task and overseeing tasks, the latter defined as the ones securing the former.

In the second phase of *active focality* the principles of focal reciprocity have become main traits of societal and cultural organisation. The redistributive orientation now is more clearly pronounced; the meta-activity of 'guarding future activity' has become a main basis of power, together with larger-scale needs for planning, list-keeping and organisation.

In the active focality phase, the first system-specific traits or inner divisions emerge. An early trait concerns delegation. A period of 'unchecked' centralisation or tendency towards it may have existed before 'balancing mechanisms' became stronger; religion may be seen as expression of both. Active focality in tendency creates two positions, since it is a period of increasing centralism, and therefore also increased needs to check up on the overseers, to develop more binding notions of sacrality. The result is a focal position vis-à-vis an agent or focus position.

In the active focality phase, the focal position dominates, even if it is also often the passive position. The activity represented by the focus has not yet restructured society at large, and so focality is not counted as passive, or devalued. The sacrality of the woman representing the city of Uruk, civilising Gilgamesh, can be seen as an example. Instead of being deemed passive or ineffective such tasks are seen as

especially worthy and close to the deities, also in the masculine sense, as when the priest leader fights on behalf of the city deity, casting his net, ensnaring his enemy, etc. *Politics* in a more specific sense now emerges as defences against the outside, with a subdued, hidden history of the inside. From early on it contained sex-related and class elements, inner conflicts that were projected or *virtualised* on the periphery, a tendency that helps explain the peculiar sense in which the periphery, later, created a delayed mirroring of centre developments.

*Passive focality.* In the passive focality phase, the focus position has been split off more clearly from the focal position, due to the counterbalance tendencies discussed, and gradually develops its own non-focal sources of power. The focus position, in turn, has two emerging main facets – the figure of the deity and the figure of the ruler.

*Virtual foci.* Since the political and economical has not been segregated, 'religion' in focal systems differs from that of commodity systems. It is partially just a main mode of signification of activity and social bonding, and partially a way of legitimising asymmetry and exploitation. The latter aspect I call *focal virtualisation*, creating virtual foci or figures that are powerful and exploitative, like Innana of Uruk.

The creation of a woman as virtual focus is first described in the story of Innanna and her friend/lover/brother Enmerkar of Uruk, probably describing a historical 'priest-king' who ruled the city ca. 2900 B.C. Since this is the earliest clear-cut case of 'imperialism' as well as the first known mentioning of writing of tablets, the story is of some interest. In the legend, Uruk subordinates a distant periphery city (Aratta) terms of two versions of Inanna. We meet an egalitarian-minded local version, Inanna of Aratta, and the central power Inanna who wants to build herself a palace in Uruk. Enmerkar is described as the one beloved by centre-Inanna, a man who comes from the periphery, to win her favour and rule the city. He then acts on her behalf in order to subdue Aratta. It may be noted in this context that it is not quite clear who the centre figure of Inanna actually refers to, besides a deity – if there was a woman representing her, or a priestess taking this role on occasions, yet the 'voice' of the deity here and elsewhere sounds like that of the 'temple establishment' as a collective.<sup>39</sup> In this story, it says things like 'bring me lapis lazuli, gold and jewels and come here and work for me'. So the beneficence sometimes attributed to these goddesses by hopeful women today has very little historical foundation. It is all very well with women-figures in power, but it does not guarantee an egalitarian society otherwise, and although societies seem unable to keep women among those in power *beyond* a certain level of stratification, that is quite a different proposition.

From the middle of the third millennium, women increasingly appear of major importance not on their own, but as supports for emerging male dynasts, like Enheduanna the high priestess and daughter of Sargon. Even if some women also seem to have ruled these 'proto-dynasties', we have to turn the periphery to find women ruling on pair with men over the centres. There is evidence of this, however, in Anatolia, where at least seven palatial centres including the main one of Kanesh are on record as ruled by women (scattered around in Veenhof (1972), who takes no note of this), and as implied by the later Hittite and Levant (Ugarit, etc.) leadership organisation, with powerful and independent queens/high priestesses. There is evidence especially from Hatti of a woman as co-ruler as *sister* who in the Hittite case was not replaced by a wife figure before c. 1360 B.C.

*The dynast.* The dynasts were not occupied with cutting their social 'naval strings' to religion and older society. On the contrary, these strings were what they used for climbing, or, later, for legitimising their new bases of power, tributary systems and armies. They were not masculine or manly in the modern meaning discussed by Chodorow, denying their mother as a matter of establishment of self. Yet they were not 'obedient sons' in the modern sense either; their difference like that of the women around them goes beyond the gender vocabulary of modern psychology.

The dynasts, it is true, emerge as 'attached', 'embedded', and in a posture of increasingly independent, later violent, use of office. Yet the attachment, once more goes into the 'heart' matter, 'chosen in the heart of the deity' and similar, i.e. into an inclusive householdic category of friend-lover-brother as much as son. While the sister and mother were important in the centre, the male and father roles generally were more important on the federative, external level (notably the Sumerian federation god Enlil, fatherly functions of other gods, etc.). Yet it is typical that rain, for example, might be associated with both father (Enki in Sumer) and mother. Compare Hoffner's (1974:49) translation of a Hittite text: "My mother to me is the rain [...] the first [water] in the season of seeding."

*Late passive focality: compromises and 'wedges'.* A main impression of Mycenaean culture remains its relative militarisation vis-à-vis the earlier Minoan, a characteristic of the Near East also at the time (Levi, P 1987:32). I would suggest this belongs to late passive focality contexts, and that it represents the build-up of tension within that order, paving the way for a new (bound focality) order. The state power among the Hittites as well as among the Mycenaeans may plausibly be interpreted as compromise formations (Bin-Nun S 1975; Levi, *ibid.*). Another interpretation is a 'wedge state': there is the old structure, but the focus position is incorporated within it as a 'wedge' (cf. chap. 13). The forces driving the wedge, beyond warfare and campaign loot, were associated with developing private economy and the war campaigns were means of enforcing gifts, later tributes and favourable trade.

The wedge or compromise state formation may also have some relation to the ethnicity / language conflict, with increased influence of outside groups, assimilations into the centre in certain positions there, and similar, still under the mantle of the "divinely sanctioned kingship" (Levi, P 1987:32).

The fall of the palace world c. 1200 may seem like a fall of domino pieces, passivised in a turbulent world. Passive focality in its late phase may be interpreted as an old web-like institutional order that originally was mainly based on moral support, not violence or military means, even if the latter also existed; a complex system of counterbalances that had been created over many centuries. In the depth of this layer of organisation, the older focal element, and the religious and the domestic power aspects especially, became increasingly 'fossilised'. Therefore it increasingly became dependent on the external agency function, while also losing its hold over it.

*Focality and the commodity form.* In the model, commodity exchange is seen as a development trend within the focal system. In Marx' view, money and capital were not only 'modern' categories, but rather developments of the *equivalent value formation* reaching back to early sources' portrayals of 'trade peoples' and usury. Today, historians are divided regarding the dating of trade and related institutions, and

I can only mention some main traits in the present context.<sup>40</sup> Some historians believe that markets as well as trade are age-old institutions, well known by 3000 B.C. or before. They react against a one-sided emphasis on the centre, the temple and the redistribution. Some of them go further and describe trade in transhistorical terms, much like the 'formalists' in the anthropological debate (this includes Assyrologists like Aage Westenholz who want to 'drive out the spirit of Polanyi' once and for all).

Yet the main picture that I believe is supported by most Sumerian scholars is one of a very gradual build-up of commodity institutions. This is based on material in a number of areas. There is the modest extent of exchange in early sources compared to other kinds of transactions; the interdependency and halfway giftlike and redistributive character of much exchange; the existence of redistributive institutions like *amargi* that could override debt bonds and exchange balances, and the precarious character of exchange-related institutions (this material is reviewed and discussed in detail in Holter 1988a). It has also been noted that price formation often does not make sense in terms of market rules, and the state's difficulties with establishing a fixed monetary standard are well known.

Extensive *monetary* trade can be found from the early second millennium. Yet only in the beginning of the first millennium, by 800 B.C. or so, can we clearly identify *commercial capital*.

The institutional developments of patriarchal and commodity-related patterns are remarkably similar. According to the focality theory, exchange relations may in fact have been very old. As discussed earlier, elementary exchange and gift transactions are similar transfer types and many intermediate, barter-like relations can be imagined. Yet the influence of exchange was restricted and the development of more advanced exchange-based institutions was a very gradual process. Similarly, men's predominance in external, exchange-related and proto-political affairs seems very old, yet it is once more restricted on the societal level. We have to turn to the second millennium material to find clear evidence of a major institutional build-up in both areas. And only in the beginning of the first millennium can we clearly say that society as a whole has shifted towards a commodity-related organisational basis as well as a patriarchal one. Although much is unknown regarding the concrete links between the two, the broad lines of evidence support the differentiation hypothesis (chapter 9). The dissolution of redistributively dominated social structures and the shift towards more commodity-oriented ones were associated with a loss of influence and status for women.

Also, what is known of the development of tribute systems speaks against an early dating of exchange-related institutions. If the city-states of third millennium Sumer had been exchange- and commodity-based already, we would expect that centre dominance would have taken tributary rather than gift-like forms. Yet the development of tributary surplus appropriation once more was a very gradual process, only fulfilled (by the Assyrians) by 800 or so. The point here is not that external dominance was often difficult and conflict-filled, but that the shifting of older types of obligations into a private property account was more difficult still. Enforced gifts were customary; regular tribute was something else. The latter required standing armies and the use of large-scale organised aggression. Regular *taxation* does not appear until the first millennium. It has been argued that the final transformation of

the proto-monetary system into a true monetary economy (in the 800-600 period in the Aegean centre) was not mainly connected to trade developments, but to taxation needs, primarily the needs of the Lydian state. This is an interesting view that possibly says something of the birth of markets and exchange earlier also, although I cannot go into this debate here. – In general, it should be obvious that the shift from redistribution to commodity economy is meaningful as a long-term background process, with many shifts and intermediate stages. 'Plunder' is one common trait appearing here; government by war campaign plunder, as in Hatti and Assyria. The material generally shows how gifts, sacrifices and tributes were increasingly enforced by military means, with development of professional warrior groups and later of a standing army.

On this background it makes sense that that a Greek like Herodotus, looking to the east and south, found 'large-householding' principles still in force, for example in the way the Persians ran their empire as one gigantic household, everyone 'fatherly' obligated to pay some amount of tribute. In Greece, the household had increasingly been set free from the old web of obligations, and was now instead under the sway of politics and the *agora*. Although I disagree with the view that Greek culture and philosophy can be interpreted directly on the basis of the development of commodity relations, there is no doubt that this factor was of importance for the development of the antiquity social formation that took place first in Greece. Even the classical Greek view of society and the economy in many senses remained household-oriented, especially compared to modern views, as is discussed in chapter 13.

## The emergence of patriarchy

Gerda Lerner (1986:212-13) writes: "Patriarchy is a historic creation formed by men and women in a process that took nearly 2500 years to its completion. In its earliest form patriarchy appeared as the archaic state. The basic unit of its organisation was the patriarchal family (..) definitions of gender affected the formation of the state. (..) The development of agriculture in the Neolithic period fostered the inter-tribal 'exchange of women' not only as a means of avoiding incessant warfare by the cementing of marriage alliances but also because societies with more women could produce more children. In contrast to the economic needs of hunter / gathering societies, agriculturists could use the labour of children to increase production (..) Women themselves became a resource, acquired by men much as the land was acquired by men." Lerner goes on to argue that the "enslavement of women, combining both sexism and racism, preceded the formation of classes and class oppression". "Class differences were, at their very beginnings, expressed and constituted in terms of patriarchal relations." Patriarchal and class oppression, she argues, lead to further "commodification of women".

I agree with Lerner that the creation of patriarchy was a long process, and that class and patriarchal relations were closely associated. The rest, I believe, deserves Carole Pateman's (1983) term 'conjectural' history. It is based on a number of traditional notions that are at least pre-feminist, if not anti-feminist, in character. In defence of the focality theory presented above, I can only say that it seems a more nuanced and sociologically and economically 'sensible conjectural' view.

Against Lerner, I find that the proof of the family as the basic unit of the 'archaic state' is lacking. This is the case, also, with the idea of a cementing of alliances through exchange of women in the Neolithic (for a similar critique cf. Aas, K 1993). I find Lerner's ideas improbable in their intended context, while their modern context associations are very overt. Though not denying the existence of sexed organisation, including over-all categorisations of men and women, I believe she mainly projects the modern gender assumption when she argues that "men-as-a-group had rights in women which women-as-a-group did not have in men" Why is it that this kind of categorisation is, as far as I know, *absent* in Sumer? If these women wrote official religious including 'sexual' poetry, were they too limited to see such things? I read this part of Lerner's thesis as a version of the aforementioned *class* view of gender, a view that presupposes quite different circumstances from those that are in fact known. Men and women surely related as sexed beings in many circumstances, the point is that sex was not the main consideration as far as their relations concerned power and stratification.

Is it not the *modern view* that here subordinates women by treating them as sex-first, sex-only? Instead of creating some understanding of why it was that patriarchy emerged in an egalitarian context, Lerner makes the reader think that it emerged in an already gendered context, one where men acted as men, as a class, against women. This class treated women according to the cost principle, capital benefit analysis, or similar; it is the *feminist* Lerner who accords *men* the power of "evaluating women" through space and time. Why? Her idea that women "became more evaluated" in early agricultural society – presumably by men – is a backwards way of stating that certain functions in which women were well represented became more important for society.

Similarly, the evidence of a long history of enslavement of women *before* the emergence of stratification is non-existing. There are signs of discrimination of certain groups of women in the stratification process in Sumerian cities, perhaps already from the beginning of the third millennium, and a dominance of men among those with political functions. Yet as a whole the evidence does not support the two-class gender system that Lerner has in mind.

Lerner rightly draws attention to Lagash at the time of Urukagina (c. 2330), famous for his edict that includes the noteworthy statement that "*Women of former times each had two men; as regards the women of today, this practice .... has been dropped*".<sup>41</sup> Lerner argues against interpreting this as evidence of former polyandric customs, since "there is no other piece of evidence available from anywhere in Mesopotamia of the practice of polyandry in the third millennium B.C." (op.cit.63). For several reasons I do not agree with that view.

There is a great deal of *indirect* evidence that points in the direction of Urukagina's statement. We know that women could have sexual unions with several men. Moreover, the evidence of sacral marriages and priestesses' sexual roles relates to very central cultural and institutional patterns. Besides the importance of the sacral marriage, discussed above, this can be seen by the fact that the task organisation is here at its most advanced and 'bureaucratic' – in fact the first really advanced case known to me. A least 8 priestess categories, most of them with tasks including erotic relations, can be found, possibly more (and at least one male group with partially erotic tasks). In Akkadian, there were at least 16, with four or five Akkadian words

(*qadishtu*, *qaditu*, *qassatum*, *istaritu*, perhaps *kulmasitu*) for the Sumerian hierodule (*nugig*), suggesting the Akkadians knew the system from old and/or developed it further. Further, the central institutional importance is testified its being a main role both of Inanna (called *nugig* of the sky) and of Ishtar. Lerner's refusal to consider polyandry should also be seen in light of the fact that early evidence regarding monogamy is also scanty; this whole area is diffuse (or as the Assyrologist Aage Westenholz has argued (personal communication), a "very complex theme").

The traditions of antiquity generally associated the old Mesopotamian culture with temple-related sexual unions. This was the view for example of Herodotus, who described the requirement that young Babylonian women sleep with strangers as a still existing custom. In my view, the evidence has on the whole confirmed these traditions: sexual unions and/or sacral marriages between representatives of the centre and the periphery were in fact a key element of the state structure, comparable to the pyramids of Egypt in their importance. While the Egyptians created stone pyramids for the dead, the Mesopotamians specialised in sexual union pyramids for the living, creating their most advanced task organisation at this point. It was a meta-institutional pattern, part of the 'glue' of society. This interpretation is in line, for example, with Kramer's view of the importance of the sacral marriage.

Since Urukagina is generally taken to appeal to older customs, I think Lerner's refusal to consider it is an example of the cold/warm treatment discussed earlier in the case of Greek tradition. When Urukagina's statement says something improbable in modern gender eyes, the cold treatment is applied; that can not be history. Elsewhere, however, it is history, indeed it is commonly argued that Urukagina like other leaders presented his own policies in a disguise of archaising propaganda. Lerner's idea that he invented polyandry becomes extra strange in that light. – Finally: the real existence of polyandry, or something very close to it, is clearly indicated when one considers that these priestesses groups were an important part of the nobility and, with some much-discussed exceptions, also privately married.

I find the same tendency in Lerner's treatment of status and wage differences. The existence of some lower-paid groups of women is not sufficient proof for a thesis that women in general were less compensated than men. Lerner's portrayal of Lagash does not support such a thesis. The goddess Bau, described as daughter of Anu, was commonly seen as a mother figure; her epithets may partially have been derived from those of Inanna (Edzard, D 1965:45). Her temple, employing some 1100 people, and a temple for Bau's children, was resided over by queen Shagshag, wife of Urukagina (Lerner 1986:64). Discussing this not so obviously patriarchal piece of administrative evidence, Lerner notes cases where men appear as foremen and women as assistants or slaves, that the chief cowherd was a brother of the queen, and that she, and probably Urukagina, were commoners by birth (op.cit.65). Further, there is possible evidence of a rearrangement of the succession order, with a tighter hold on the royal children. The material shows a leader of a huge establishment, a woman. That case is not telling. On lower levels, there are cases of male foremen, female assistants. Those are telling. Yet one cannot jump to a general conclusion regarding sex difference from this establishment alone, or from some of the cases in it, without considering occupational and other differences that might explain the difference, or at least *discuss* such possibilities. That is not done. Lerner may be right that there was by this time a

widening gap, not improbable in light of the present thesis, yet I still notice a slant in the way the evidence is presented.

## Pre-genderised patriarchy

If explanatory models based on kinship should be used with caution in the ancient world, those based on gender, or on notions resembling the modern conception of gender as class or caste (chap. 8), have been even more misleading. Whatever one thinks of the theoretical distinction between patriarchy and gender, a historical distinction appears, indeed a wide time gap, that has not been sufficiently recognised.

Explanations of emerging patriarchy cannot be based on the existence of a patriarchal gender system that posited women as inferior and closer to nature, men as superior and closer to culture. Women were, if anything, main figures of culture, not removed from it, in the ancient large-household settlements. The patron deities of works and arts including writing were often female. What we know of misogynistic patterns, phrased in terms of women's negative character as such, emerges in force only in the first millennium B.C., often in a context of men working in the fields accusing women of living luxuriously in the palaces, and similar (cf. Hesiod, similar in the prophet Amos ca 760 B.C. in the Bible). There is some fragmentary evidence in the same direction earlier (a Hittite soldier's oath, etc.) but it can be interpreted as meaning 'do not behave like a woman in *this* field of action', not 'women are generally inferior', and all in all I have not found much.

It is true that some stratification elements may have been present in the sex-related culture and differentiation from early on. This is relevant in areas discussed earlier, mainly the proto-political and exchange-related functions dominated by men. Yet it is not true of society as a whole, since these spheres were balanced by others, and not socially dominant as in patriarchy proper, and also since the men of power were not 'masculine' in the later sense – *nota bene* not even 'lordly', since their structural power often depended on women, not only other men.

What we see of sex-related organisation and culture therefore does not conform to later patriarchal rules. This is well known regarding sexuality, and it also concerns the sacral marriage and priestess functions described above. In the second millennium these elements, along with others, were gradually transformed and consciously used in the cultural politics of the emerging patriarchal empires. This is evidenced for example in the artistic material, naked clay Ishtars, art emphasising women's naked breasts, sacral marriage bed models, and much else.

At this point, I believe the conventional gender interpretation is directly misleading. This interpretation says that patriarchy was created on the basis of an existing gender order, and was consolidated by placing women as generally inferior within that order. My view is quite the opposite: patriarchy arose in a setting that was not genderised in the modern sense, a culture where sex-related traits were less important than centrality traits. For example, the sex of the city deity varied, while the central dynamic was the same. Women were often prominent in this culture not due to their sex but mainly due to their household and overseer roles. And when patriarchal organisation emerged, these cultural traits were *used* in order to legitimise the new order. We know that

Mesopotamian society, especially Babylon, grew increasingly archaising and backwards-looking precisely for this reason. It was bound to a social structure where notions of sacrality and centrality were the key points. It is the sex-related organisation which is understandable on that basis, rather than the other way around.

The result, therefore, was leaders that used sex-related elements in quite different ways than the ones imagined in the conventional view. They did not primarily appeal to sex-related notions but to sacral notions. And *as far as* sex-related issues were relevant, they tended to make women and the feminine culturally *central*, not peripheral, more nature-like, or inferior. The main proof of this thesis is the emergence of powerful *goddesses* as the cultural emblems of *male* power, along with many similar tendencies in more peripheral areas. Proto-patriarchal leaders did not *first* declare women the inferior sex, and *then* consolidate their regime; these notions are fully misplaced in the historical context. They used existing culture as their strings and attachments to power, often emphasising the feminine element in them.

All this shows the major *gap* between the pre-antiquity order and the one that eventually came to dominate in late antiquity. The late antiquity notion of women as generally inferior beings was alien to the earlier world, and would have been very counterproductive for its leaders, much like declaring religion null and void. What we see, instead, is a developing patriarchal structure *within* a still mainly egalitarian cultural framework, a framework that was moreover continuously reemphasised as legitimisation ground. The common rule is: the greater the dynast, the greater the goddess.

Only after many centuries of development and a main shift of the societal structure towards the commercial city-state of antiquity was this framework replaced by a new one. We know from studies in many areas that it was remarkably resistant, not only in the well-known case of religion, but also in the case of family structure and in other areas. It was not fully wiped away until monotheism became state religion in late Roman times.

On this background, the notion that the gender system came first, patriarchy later, becomes highly dubious. What existed of early sex-related organisation does not fit later conceptions of gender. Instead, patriarchy emerged in a broad and gradual process over many centuries, while the development of a patriarchal *gender system* is a quite different process that came much later. For two thousand years or so, patriarchy relied on earlier, more egalitarian notions of sex difference.

At the root of the modern conception lies the idea that if women are discriminated against, it must be because women *are* first and foremost their sex. This is the gender reification that is mostly missing in pre-antiquity and even in antiquity, along with the 'race' reification. *In practice*, women gradually lost power and status even in a culture that continuously appealed to feminine figures and elements. They lost economic subject status, and the old balance between women's more internal and men's more external spheres of influence was changed in women's disfavour. Yet that happened as part of major institutional shifts in society, towards a private household and commodity exchange orientation, and not due to men's acts against women or similar fully anachronistic sex-class notions.

The larger effect of the present argument is to bring the matter of gender and patriarchy into the terrain of general power analysis, instead of isolating it in a mystical sphere of its own. Generally, very few sociological reasons exist why we should assume the existence of a patriarchal gender system *before* the emergence of patriarchal organisation itself. New forms of power do not normally *first* develop their own signification forms, institutional supports, culture, etc., and *then* go on to act in practice. On the contrary: only after subordination has been consolidated in practice can we generally expect a build-up of a full system of cultural and institutional legitimisation. It is true that such a '*practices first*' point of view may be misleading: certain kinds of *ideas* are connected to these practices, partly as forerunners. Yet the ideas in this case could not build on earlier notions of female inferiority, as has often been the case later in the history of patriarchy. The cultural elements that were emphasised were those enhancing the executive independence of the leader *as* representative of old and sacral culture. In a sense, the leaders moved forwards by going backwards, with the paradoxical result that feminine elements were sometimes emphasised more than they probably had been earlier.

Centralisation did not develop on the basis of racism; on the contrary, racism is a very late product of this process. The same rule can be found in many other areas, and my argument is that it applies to gender and patriarchy also.

Besides the cultural centrality of women and their egalitarian economic position in early sources, the *plurality* and multidimensionality of sex-related traits speak against the idea that patriarchal society was organised on the basis of gender stratification. This is often overlooked, also by many of the "matriarchalists" in the debate, i.e. proponents of a "shift from matriarchy to patriarchy" view (Holter 1987B).

*On the 'deviancy' of the pluralistic ancient model of gender.* Greek as well as Middle East traditions contains sex-related traits that do not conform to the conventional view discussed above. Although this material has not, to my knowledge, been collected anywhere, it is often striking in the sources, and some patterns may be mentioned here. – From Plutarch we have the description of Argive women wearing beards when sleeping with their husbands for the first time. Women's use of male clothes appears in the same context in Sparta; while on Kos, the bridegroom wore a woman's clothes at the wedding. James G. Frazer, always the observant collector, gives these and other examples in one of his works. He also gives a list of no less than 11 ancient cultures that institutionalised gender change (or a third gender, etc.). In addition there is a list of 12 more cultures with some temporary gender change related mostly to marriage.<sup>42</sup>

This "celebration of difference" and the extreme diversity of sex associations, reaching into the animal kingdom, inanimate nature, the creation of cosmos, and so on, show little of the uniform characteristics of modern gender.<sup>43</sup>

The notion of the universality of our notion of gender is often tied to ideas of the universality of the phallus as a main symbol, or even *the* symbolic basis, of culture. Yet there is, at best, scant evidence that pre-antiquity ever was much of a 'fallogocentric' world, i.e. one in which power was primarily invested in this symbol, and much evidence pointing elsewhere. The heroes of antiquity were commonly portrayed with somewhat diminished penises (Holter 1994g). At that time, patriarchal virility was implied, yet this is still very different from the body-shaping of the gender

system of the modern world, with its constant exaggeration of sex difference (Goffman, E 1975;1976). In fact, the *exclusion of women* (bound focality) tendency of early classical antiquity may have brought the 'unisex' tendency of art further to the forefront. Greek art now often portrayed men and women with bodily and especially facial similarity, to the extent that it sometimes rendered men's and women's facial features indistinguishable (Dover, K 1989). Similar tendencies can be found in other areas, as in poetry, where the sex of the loved one is often hard to figure and does not emerge as a main point (cf. Sappho's poems).

All this is not to say there was no awareness of sex difference, only that this difference was not, or not primarily, institutionalised as the medium of social stratification. According to focality theory, that was mainly a latent tendency and not the predominant one until the end of antiquity and the phase of fixed focality. As mentioned, the palace world with its bare-breasted priestesses must have had its own forms of sex-related 'cultural politics', yet the social meaning is as different as the iconography.

Even in the Greek archaic and early antiquity period, emerging patriarchal relations could not *rely* on a patriarchal gender system, since this was still only weakly developed. Instead, a typical line of development involved the subordination of women through the institutional stratification that *did* exist, primarily connected to *age*. A re-examination of patriarchal power as represented by Athens of the classical age shows discrimination mainly instituted not through treating women as sexed beings, but by treating them as *children* (Holter 1994g).

One may argue that any patriarchal system encourages *some* form of misogyny, or that *some* organisation of power in terms of sex is inherent in any patriarchal social form. In other words there must be a spill-over into the signification form. This objection has been addressed earlier (cf. chapter 8), and it may now be answered more fully.

We saw that even if connection between stratification and signification is always there on the logical or formal level, the real-life institutional arrangement is another matter. The link may be very indirect, meaning that women are subordinated mainly in other capacities than as women, *and* that the result may still be a patriarchal order. In addition we may now recognise the existence of powerful processes that may *counteract* any linking of subordination of women to their status as women. Several processes leading in that direction have been identified above: first in terms of the counterbalances of the focal system, later in terms of the legitimation needs and cultural basis of emerging dynasts. The notion of a 'personal', heroic form of male leadership or a 'personal-patriarchal' form is relevant here. Later, men in patriarchal positions could base their power on their relations to other men, in a structure that mainly excluded women. These early proto-patriarchs could not; instead they had to emphasise the existing bases of legitimation. So instead of a culture that, in broad terms, put women down, what we see first is one that puts them up, especially in the sense of the great goddess.

I am emphasising these issues since historical analyses often give a misleading impression, due to a lack of distinction between different social processes and the

notion that an emerging patriarchal social structure would right away correspond to an emerging patriarchal gender system.

In a paper on archaic and early classical Greece, I discuss the emergence of a new form of socially endorsed (though controversial) love, *pederasty*, in this perspective. Pederasty had of course existed earlier, yet no earlier culture had given it such a central position. This happened in a society where women were increasingly excluded. The older sex-related organisation was suspended, with an all-male public and political sphere taking its place. The result was a new emphasis on asymmetrical intimacy between men, framed in terms of age, and so in a sense 'age became gendered' or sexualised (Holter 1994g). Age traits were emphasised to the extent that relations between men and women were discussed in age terms also. Throughout all this, moral demands and norms on behaviour were often less gendered than modern researchers have supposed – including Sophocles statement that silence was the virtue of women. "Silence was also a part of the training of Spartan youths (...) [and] Plutarch's lengthy essay extolling the virtues of silence is addressed primarily to men." (Richter, D 1971:4n36).

## Conclusion

I have discussed emerging patriarchal organisation in a world where a goddess, Innana, later Ishtar, was the primary deity (Edzard, D 1965: 81), enlarged by men whose mission, in the larger perspective, was a quite different one. This basic situation where patriarchal power was legitimised by uplifting female figures is not exactly unheard of later, either, yet it never again reached similar proportions.

The origin of patriarchy is difficult to establish; what can be evidenced is some of the early developments of patriarchal societal patterns and related institutions. These do not, for example, consist of 'patrilocal marriage' *per se*, but rather of new rules in many existing arrangements, like the late Assyrian laws to the effect that a man might mutilate his wife as punishment for certain actions. Compared to that context and to classical antiquity, Sumerian and other early culture has a notion of sex that more resembles the "celebrative gender" described by Sahlins (1985) in the case of native Hawaii. There, as in the early Middle East literature (Bullough, 1971; Pritchard, J 1969), a view of women's sexuality, 'explicitly and joyfully described' rather than as sinful, dangerous, negative or best passivised, emerges as one main component.

This is one trait in a huge cultural fabric associated with a relatively redistribution-oriented social form that I have analysed in the terms of focality theory. Concretely speaking, the Greek, Anatolian and Near and Middle East patterns discussed in this chapter were often dissimilar, yet some main common long-term tendencies can be identified. In sum, the historical analysis gives substantial support both in width and in depth to the hypothesis that commodity form development and increasing subordination of women were interrelated. I have also identified a number of reasons *why* these developments were connected, and I have discussed *how* they may be analysed within *one* rather than two separated analytical frameworks.

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<sup>1</sup> A note on sources. For a general discussion of sources see Holter 1990k:203-7; on problems of legend interpretation Holter 1987e, 1987f. The chapter relies on my early civilisation to antiquity

period historical studies, of which only a few outline summaries and discussions have been published (Holter 1987b; 1990b; 1994b). The NFR (NAVF) three-year grant enabling me to do this work in the mid-eighties proved insufficient for the huge task. Approximately a thousand pages of draft manuscript exist, with some 1200 references, which I hope I shall someday be able to revise and publish as four volumes of a series on early patriarchy and gender. Only some references are reproduced here. The four are called (1) *Sumer* (developments in the main urban centre, also 'the origin of patriarchy' debate); (2) *Tribute and Empire* (on Assyria and Anatolia especially; state formation discussion); (3) *The Gifts of Poseidon* (palace-age Greece; focus on men and on pre-patriarchal mobility and exchange patterns); (4) *Artemis* (palace and post-palace age, focus on women, and on pre-patriarchal stratification forms). The latter two titles illustrate how 'practices and ideas related to sacral patterns and religious figures' became a way of interpreting the social form.

<sup>2</sup> This is an under-theorised theme with implications for the general view of sociological categories. I find it highly indicative that huge leaps of the 'categorical imagination' have often been hidden within very pragmatic, practical considerations: 'we simply had to reformulate the question so that people would understand it today'.

<sup>3</sup> This trick has included the noteworthy idea that everything Athenian tradition says on women's former power *and* what they regarding women's lack of power substantiates the 'patriarchy always' view. The logic resembles that of the water test and other witch-hunting methods discussed in chapter 14.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by N. Loraux in Pantel 1992:36.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Feyerabend 1987, discussed in chap. 13; a more informed view cf. van Reden 1995:219. The same is the case of the 'subject', a term that earlier, for example in Thomas Aquinas' work, was used in quite the opposite of the modern sense – a subject is one who is subjected, under subjection.

<sup>6</sup> My knowledge of the main languages of the material I worked with – Greek, Hittite, Akkadian and Sumerian – is fragmentary. I used bilingual editions of texts wherever possible, or translated texts, although I also worked with transcriptions of original texts especially focusing on words or phrases relevant for my subject.

<sup>7</sup> An example is a recent new attempt to measure cross-cultural correlates of the ownership of private property, including patriarchy. Rudmin (1992) uses Guy E. Swanson's data base of 39 variables coded on 50 cultures (*The Birth of the Gods: The Origin of Primitive Beliefs*, Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press, 1966, compared with G. P. Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh, 1967). Rudmin concludes: "[The] analysis shows the social institution of private ownership to be a positive correlate of social classes, agriculture in grain, supernatural sanctions for morality, primogeniture, active ancestral spirits, sovereign organisation, size of population, and a negative correlate of collecting and gathering, outgroup intimacy, and hunting. Theories that private property is a function of patriarchy are not supported, nor are arguments that property regimes are advanced by exogamy and other intimate interactions with alien peoples." Since few theories exist that private property *derives* from patriarchy and since causal relationships cannot be established by this kind of material I find 'function of patriarchy' diffuse. The classical argument, rather, goes the other way. Before I would accept a conclusion that an *association* between the two does not exist, the in-contact category discussed above must be filtered out, as must a definition of male dominance in some areas of society (as opposed to a more general patriarchal organisation), none of which seems to have been done here. The contrary idea that the two *are* associated, rests on much qualitative and process-oriented material as well as on other quantitative views. Rudmin's result therefore is perhaps best interpreted as a warning that the association may not be as close or direct as supposed, and, especially, that more-or-less patriarchal conditions can be found also in non- or not-so-commodity-oriented societies (if these terms are unclear, so is often the material on which they rest).

Another recent study comes to somewhat opposed conclusions. Results "indicate a strong correlation between patrilineal inheritance and probability of paternity (and extramarital sex restrictions for women) on the one hand, while matrilineal inheritance is strongly negatively correlated with paternity

probability (and positively related to female extramarital sex" (Hartung et.al. 1985; based on Murdock 1967)

For other quantitative approaches cf. Gary S. Becker (1993), proponent of rational choice theory, using the Human Relations Area Files (c. 70 societies). I remain doubtful of the conceptualisation and measuring of many of these variables, for example Becker's idea of using bloodwealth to powerful persons/groups as measure of "the value placed on men and women".

<sup>8</sup> These studies come from different areas like colonisation and plantation system research, third world studies, anthropological research, ecological studies, etc. In a recent example, Samira Haj (1992) argues that "contrary to developmentalist views that equate a market economy with social and economic progress, in the case of Palestinian rural women, proletarianisation under Israeli colonisation policies guaranteed neither economic freedom nor the breakdown of patriarchal relations. The introduction of the market, rather than liberating women, helped to reinforce and reproduce patriarchal relations."

Similar evidence exists regarding contemporary state intervention, for example Birgitte Hannequin (1990) who concludes, from a study in Burkina Faso, that "state interaction with village organisations, though officially sanctioning both men's and women's groups, serves in fact to perpetuate patriarchal domination". Some anthropological studies go further, and argue that the village structure is used consciously as archaising device by state authorities and that the view of its history must be reoriented on that basis, for example in Thailand; Peter Vandergeest (1991) argues that the image of capitalism and state building undermining autonomous village communities with "equalising" institutions, like mutual help and gift giving, is best seen as a modernistic dualism. Similar studies exist on the recent constructions of racism in SE Asia (Tejapira, K 1992). Other studies focus on the ideological side, as in Vir's (1981) study of the school system in Nepal and, as a 'fourth world' example, Harris (1991) who found Canadian papers to project oppression of women onto the Mohawk people during a conflict. Other recent studies show how contact has 'patriarchalised' local communal culture from within: "among [American] Indians in general and the Lakota in particular, a particular formation of gender – *bloka*, a machismo which especially emphasised women's fertility in replenishing the tribal population – came to seem, in response to the destruction of Lakota sovereignty, essential to keeping a tribal identity and place in the Indian community. Whatever the traditional origins of these views, governmental policies which threaten the very lives of American Indians, not to mention their cohesion as peoples, intensify the constriction of all Indians within a biologicistic sense, with particularly repressive implications for women (Gordon, L 1995: 103, discussing Beatrice Medicine's analysis).

<sup>9</sup> For a somewhat idealist presentation of 'the English difference' cf. Macfarlane, A 1978, 1979. There is evidence that the English individualism, commercialism and relative egalitarianism (compared to the continent) were connected to earlier Scandinavian (Danelaw, etc.) influence, and were strongest in the affected areas (Stenton, F 1920; Stenton, D 1956).

<sup>10</sup> For a recent evaluation cf. Roth, G 1993) who argues that Lévi-Strauss left his structuralist-materialist framework in the later part of his career, due to unresolved issues in his theory of kinship, or what started as a tangent. Since this tangent led to a rather metaphysical landscape of structures of the mind, and since its main unresolved issue seems to have been the 'circulative' character of the feminine, my suspicion that current gender dynamics played a main role increases.

<sup>11</sup> When evaluating traditional male classical Greek scholarship regarding women, consider the following not untypical aside in a footnote: "It was because Greek women were in fact so voluble that men reminded them so frequently that 'silence is a woman's glory'" (Richter 1971:4). In a book on the Greek way of life, written in 1990, not 1890, we find the following encouraging index entry: "masturbation – *see* self-abuse" (Garland, R 1990:373).

<sup>12</sup> I can only mention in passing the so-called inversion theory regarding women in early Greek tradition: whatever is said of women's strength is basically a ploy to entertain/frighten/consolidate classical-age people cf. Rose 1911, Tyrell 1980, and on a more theoretical level Pembroke 1967. While not disputing some truth to this, it does not explain more than some fairly late and in our context peripheral traits.

<sup>13</sup> For example, that mother and child are much closer than father and child, and that children are conceived as private property, invested in through biological parenting. We have much evidence, for example, of adoptions and even the privileged status of foster children.

<sup>14</sup> The main text source is Pritchard 1969, also Kramer, S 1972 and others; for a feminist version Goulding, E 1992:180f.; on Greek shrines cf. Hägg & Marinatos 1981.

<sup>15</sup> The ship catalogue was the Greek battle order based on Nestor's advice to Agamemnon (Il. 2.363) on how to group his forces. Nestor says he should separate his men by phyles and phratries, 'so that phratric will bear aid to phratric, and phyle to phyle'. Cf. Hogan 1979:58 with references to Page, who believe the catalogue is Mycenaean, and Kirk who is more reserved. Literature on phratries cf. Holter 1984:240 (A. Andrewes etc.)

<sup>16</sup> This work was done by a two-person team, Thorunn Songstad and myself.

<sup>17</sup> Probably reflected in Greek tradition of Apollo and Poseidon's anger towards the city for not having been paid for their wall-building work. In 13th. century there was Greek raiding against Troy, according to a story of Herakles a generation or so before the war. If we follow tradition that Troy fell in 1184, rather than 1240, the earlier figures should be adjusted downwards accordingly.

<sup>18</sup> An attempt to subdivide the 43 unions by type – man plus oceanid, nereid, naiad/river daughter or pleiad woman – show that the only type present in period C was naiad/river daughter union, which was the most frequent also earlier.

<sup>19</sup> On the 'individualist' context of chiefs' and early dynasts' motives compare Elenore Smith Bowen's portrayal of marriage among Kako's people in Nigeria (1964:295): "The chief, who knew the suitor well, demanded a fantastic sum for his daughter. The cripple, who had no kin, no farms, no resources of any sort (...) tried to persuade the chief that a man as powerful as he would not need a powerful son-in-law." This is quite in the spirit of the Greek traditions, where trickery and persuasion are close at hand when similar suitor-situations are portrayed.

<sup>20</sup> I also think the terminology of blood ('consanguine') is misplaced (this is not post-feudal France); we have clear indications that brotherhood was a social affair, for example in the relationship of the Hittites to 'vassal' rulers.

<sup>21</sup> In this context it is of interest that brothers, in what some see as 'fragmenting' land empires like the Hittite by 1300 B.C., plagued by decentralisation forces, may have become more powerful vis-à-vis the son(s) of a ruler; in c. 1282 Hattusilis 3 came to power by ousting the proclaimed son of Muwatallis, the victor of Kadesh. "Hattusilis was a successful general who had fought at Kadesh" (Sandars, N 1985:33).

<sup>22</sup> *When Alexander the Great came to Egypt, he embraced the statue of pharaoh Nektanebo and cried out "This is my father; I am this man's son!". "In this way, he legitimated his rule in Egypt", Robin Hägg (1995) writes, discussing the Alexander Romance and the legend presented there, which appealed to all kinds of folklore and tradition in order to enhance Alexander. And in my interpretation, there was a tradition on this point. – Another famous case is Pelops, who according to Plutarch ruled due to his mighty sons.*

<sup>23</sup> Hirvonen uses the term 'matriarchal' for women's structural centrality (gynifocality) and does not sufficiently distinguish between kinship and power, yet her work contains a useful collection of Homer's passages and details that broadly supports the egalitarian view.

<sup>24</sup> Possibly, comparative international considerations strengthen the view of class division as main marker between two coexisting locality patterns, in a transition period with a broader shift towards patrilocality. I am not entirely convinced by Lerner's (1986:112) attempt to distinguish between upper

class marriage by contract and lower-class marriage by 'purchase' and her connecting the latter with increased oppression of women. The Babylonian institutionalisation of the latter form (discussed by Lerner op.cit. 107) includes contrary indications like Hammurabi's law saying that in certain conditions "a husband after her heart may marry her".

<sup>25</sup> Briseis herself grew up with "my three brothers, whom a single mother bore with me, and who were closest to me, all went one day to destruction" (ibid.). This may imply that Homer still associated matrilocality with common people's households in those eastern parts.

<sup>26</sup> The presumed connection here involves Assyria as a main background factor, partly through the proto-Phoenician 'prince' cities at the coast, including the religious connection of Istar and Astarte. I think this is an underestimated factor also in Aegean development. Assyrian power shifted through the centuries, reaching its height first under Ashur-Uballit 1 c. 1320, who married his daughter to the Kassite king of Babylon; when the Babylonians revolted against her son (or grandson), he intervened to place Kurigalzu 2 on the throne. He was followed by a series of strong kings until Tukulti-Ninurta 1 was killed by his son and rebellious Assyrian nobility in 1207. The 12th century was "an age of weak kingdoms" (Roaf, M 1990:149), yet Assyria emerged once more especially in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser 1 (1114-1076), the time of Wen-Amon's travel (or slightly before it). With him, the ancient connection of the king as hunter was brought to new heights; he claimed to have killed 920 lions and was depicted in similar glorified ways (Roaf 154). Assyrian power appears to have been weaker in the west until the time of Ashurnasirpal 2 (883-859), who campaigned and collected tribute. He wrote: "I received tribute from the kings of the sea coast, from the lands of the men of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Mahallata, Maiza, Kaiza, Amurru and Arvad which is in the sea: gold, silver, bronze, a bronze cauldron, linen garments with multicoloured trimmings, a large female ape and a small female ape, ebony, boxwood, ivory and sea creatures." (op. cit. 159). This king claimed 430 lion and 390 wild bull killings; in the inauguration of his new palace in Kalhu, 14000 sheep and 10000 skins of wine were consumed, and the king or one of his associates was buried with 57 kg gold (op.cit. 161, 163). His son Shalmaneser 3 (858-824) continued his campaigns against the often rebellious western states, creating a more regular tribute system, although he did not try to establish direct rule beyond the Euphrates area (op.cit.165,167). Shalmaneser was succeeded by his chief vizier rather than a son, and from the 820s there was a period of revolt and conflict between brothers claiming the throne, ending with a new power phase under Tiglath-Pileser 3 (744-727), who established a state combining provinces and loyal tribute-paying principedoms (op.cit. 174, 176). The earliest Phoenician inscription from Cyprus has been dated to c. 850 (op.cit.177).

<sup>27</sup> In my interpretation, artistic material like the *psi* and *fi* figurines (very frequently found small clay women figures, see e.g. Vermeule, E 1964) show the unmistakable *cultural hold* or bonding of this sphere even when the material exchange was dissolving. This is important for interpreting Homer's reappraisal of older traditions as a comparatively recent phenomenon.

<sup>28</sup> We may also note Gilgamesh as a figure much like Dumuzi, as main masculine hero, civilised by the woman of Uruk, a woman who in principle = sexual priestess = representative of the city deity. (More material on sacral marriage in Holter 1984:11-14).

<sup>29</sup> Despite a 'Teshub of the market' and some other (mainly late) indications, the commodity element does not seem to have been far developed in the Hittite context.

<sup>30</sup> I have not found the establishment of the king's house as seat of power, distinct from palace/temple, clearly dated, and so one wonders if even this was gradual; in sociological terms it seems a main tendency from 2500 or so.

<sup>31</sup> In 1986, I visited the beautiful remains of ancient Greek Priene on the slope of the mountain south of Efesos, which I would guess = Arinnanda since it seems the geographically logical place to go when attacked from the east while keeping lines open to the west, besides being very steep and fort-like from the south-eastern direction especially. I believe Efesos = Apasa and Efesian Artemis = variant of Arinna deity (= Hittite Sun Deity of Arinna. See note below.

<sup>32</sup> Rich deities meant quarrelsome deities, women or not. The Aratta story has two versions of Inanna against each other. It is typical that Sumerian culture often expressed splits as conflicts between women, sisters in particular – like the mythology on the quarrels between Inanna, standing for life and that which was nearby, vis-à-vis Ereshkigal, standing for death and that which was far away.

<sup>33</sup> On the sacral marriage-related category 'the heart of the deity' we may compare the text cited of the above-mentioned Waqartum, priestess, wife of the merchant Pushu-ken in Ashur: "About the fact that I did not send you the textiles about which you wrote, your heart should not be angry." (op.cit. 174). It seems this typical turn of phrase involving the heart as symbol of judging/moral power is also used in the sense of 'you, in your heart, should not be angry'. The probable subject of 'heart' is centre, settlement-group, also in the sense of one large household. At this point we may note that the *Gemeinwesen* of Marx does not presuppose a lack of individual rights or personal property. What is found, rather, is better explained in terms of personal spheres that were arranged, or interconnected, mainly by the larger common-household-sphere of relations.

<sup>34</sup> For earlier presentations of focal reciprocity forms see Holter 1987B; Holter and Aarseth 1993; Holter 1994B.

<sup>35</sup> For a still hopeful, and also more down to earth summary, cf. Wolf, E 1982:400pp.; for an attempt to break the loud silence regarding Althusser, cf. Kaplan & Sprinkler 1993, which however does not have much in the way of a feminist reappraisal. – In a recent paper that reflects the situation of Marxism better than most, Andre Gunder Frank (1991) argues [my comments in brackets]: "'Contemporary political reality and available historical evidence, it is argued, should lead to the abandonment of the following positions, which are more ideologically than scientifically based: (1) the transition from feudalism to capitalism, (2) the transition from capitalism to socialism, (3) the process of transition itself, (4) the notion of feudal, capitalist, and socialist modes of production, and (5) the hegemonic rise and decline of Europe and the West in the modern world capitalist system. The tentative conclusion is that ideology has obscured the fact that the world political economic system long predated the rise of capitalism in Europe and its hegemony in the world [is it news, in Marx' work, that the commodity form predated capitalism?]. This rise represented a hegemonic shift from East to West within a pre-existing system [yes, *what* pre-existing system?]. If there was any transition, it was this hegemonic shift within the system rather than the formation of a new system. Another alternating period of hegemony and rivalry in the world is occurring (...). To identify the system with its dominant mode of production is a mistake [basic point, I fully agree]; there was no transition from feudalism to capitalism as such (...) [too far]. If these analytical categories of modes of production prevent us from seeing the real political economic system, it would be better to abandon them [reorient them, rather]."

Gunder Frank goes on to attack the political incorrectness of certain "recent articles by Immanuel Wallerstein." I agree that the mode of production and the whole production view is too narrow, yet the question that now is how to replace it with better views, neither by dumping production or the working class like Frank implies, nor on the basis of a metaphysics of class (Katz), nor Wallerstein's tendency towards world system eternalism, but retaining a commodity-critical view, reoriented in terms of feminist, anti-racist and other issues.

<sup>36</sup> On a broader level it may also be argued that this is what many feminists have tried to do, like Carol Gilligan's (1982) relational logic concept, Bjørg Aase Sørensen's (1982) 'rationality of responsibility', and others.

<sup>37</sup> This differs from a view of mobility and status as inherently connected. For example, anthropologists have sometimes argued that mothering is a basic factor in the evolution of male dominance, since it "alters the relationship of males and females to the mode of production. Females are unable to travel as freely as males during the years they are mothering (...) The males who are free to travel control the cultural interface between groups, discover novel people and goods, renew acquaintances, and control communication networks. This also means that males are in the best position to establish exchange relationships among groups, be these ritualistic, friendship, or economic." (Caine & Caine 1979). This is true, yet it may all pale to insignificance in a society where *centralisation* and *centre positions* are synonymous with power. The status effect of mobility and exchange obviously depend on the overall position of these institutional areas in society as a whole.

<sup>38</sup> There are general traits here. The "great battle was between siblings, not between sexual antagonists", Inga Clendinnen (1995:169) says of the non- or proto-patriarchal Aztecs' culture; "the female deities were represented as sisters as often as wives" (she finds them non-patriarchal).

<sup>39</sup> In the view of (Finkelstein, J 1974), a Mesopotamian deity's being was "coterminous" with the phenomena it controlled, Mesopotamians "submerged the self in society" and developed a "phenomenalistic" apprehension of experience.

<sup>40</sup> For an introduction to studies cf. Padgug, R 1975; further Einzig, P 1966.

<sup>41</sup> Lerner's translation of H. Steible's German text. In a variant translation (Jerrold Cooper) the text says that "women of former times each married two men, but women of today have been made to give up this crime." (cf. Lerner 1986:63,255). Based on Westenholz (pers. comm.) I put most trust in Steible.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Frazer's *The Golden Bough* 3, "Adonis, Attis og Osiris" (260pp.).

<sup>43</sup> The diversity of sex-related traits is referred to by many researchers on Greek and Middle East myth, legend and religion (Farnell, Frazer, Dover, Lefkowitz, Kramer, etc.), although as I said I know of no summary of this aspect (cf. Holter 1994g).

## Chapter 12 On patriarchal strategy

### Introduction

What emerges as distinct 'patriarchal' power from the analysis of the last chapters? While the idea that patriarchal organisation only includes men's dominance of women is too narrow, a definition based on men's dominance of women plus related dominance across sex, or simply an order of between- and within-sex dominance, is easily too wide. In this chapter, the discussion of how to identify patriarchal organisation in a historical and institutional framework is brought further, focusing on questions of power. Three main themes are addressed.

The first theme is methodological. I discuss how a formal notion of patriarchy can be transformed into a more substantial category and a framework for empirical research through a method of identifying and tracing the main, well-identified patterns.

The second theme is an exploration of one of these patterns, approached in terms of *strategy*. I use 'strategy' in the sense of Weber's *Herrschaft*, retaining its patriarchal meaning. It is a category of power connected to the legitimatory and executive functions of a developing patriarchal structure. Strategy involves a rearrangement of differentiation on the basis of stratification, and, in tendency, a division of subordinates among themselves. Some main traits of this rearrangement are explored and connected to the economic differentiation principle.

The third theme concerns strategy in the modern world. I present a model of three main patriarchal forms that can be seen as an alternative to the hierarchical

masculinities and private/public frameworks discussed earlier. The model connects main gender and economic traits, distinguishing between a 'paternatic' and a 'masculinatic' phase of modern patriarchy, and a third phase I tentatively call 'androgynatic'. I describe a development from power which was archaised in terms of the father, to one which is generalised in terms of men, and I relate it to the shift from 'formal' to 'real' gender subsumption.

Thereby, the earlier discussions of gender studies and studies of men are connected to a wider assessment of patriarchal reorganisation and societal change. Different perspectives on gender and hierarchy may be interpreted this framework. I discuss patriarchal strategy as gendered power in the modern world, connected mainly to external aggression among men and internal or self-directed aggression among women.

## Strategy and differentiation

Strategy is not dominance. Strategy is what makes dominance work.

The significance of the concept of strategy developed in this chapter, compared to most sociological categories in this area, consists in two attempted connections. The first links two perspectives that usually are kept separate, a 'public' and a 'private' dimension of power in modern terms. The second relates these two to older and 'non-split' conceptions. The general path of argumentation follows from the "Y hypothesis" presented in the first chapter. In modern society, what was formerly a comparatively open, holistic patriarchal structure and a basis of the state as well as the household, has been split off in two main directions, creating a polarised structure that becomes *manifest* in a framework of gender and privacy on the one hand, neutrality and economy on the other.

This argument is developed with a focus on power and strategy in the present chapter, and a focus on economic relations in the next one. I also connect the theoretical argument to current practical and political questions. If gender equality measures leave half of society alone, they will be inefficient measures, manifested as constant uphill work, for these two spheres reinforce each other.

Here, some remarks on the differentiation principle itself are pertinent. The main modern idea at this point is *not* that no differentiation exists, but on the contrary that it is *absolute*. While feminist theory, gender studies and family/work research have found reasons for doubting this perceived truth, it can safely be said that it involves a very wide and deep gap and that the attempts to bridge it are still in their beginning phase.

The existence of this gap may itself be interpreted mainly as a factual separation, creating two fairly autonomous spheres. I have attempted to show why such a view of modern society leads to many kinds of problems, in three main areas – gender and private relations, public sphere relations, and the connections between the two. Therefore I present a 'reconnection argument'; the two spheres are in fact related, and analyses must own up to that fact. However, the argument does not imply that the latent links are direct or immediate or that the two spheres co-exist in harmony. On

the contrary, the theoretical perspective presented leads us to expect considerable conflict as well as autonomy and systematised counter-positioning, all the more so since the differentiation principle *goes beyond* the field of political economy, implicating other reciprocity forms.

If this view is wrong, the analytical tasks of reconnecting the lines of power and economy are hopeless. If it is right, they are just very large. In different ways, these tasks lead into a huge *intermediate terrain* that mainly is *not known*, not perceived or well researched, not because it is not there, rather the contrary; it is too close for comfort, and modern identity and ideology in many ways presuppose its being kept at a distance and in the background. Besides what has been said of gender and identity, and connected to it, there is a 'last refuge of freedom' involved, so that a one-dimensional or deterministic view of society, if applied in the manner proposed here, will tendentially and for good reasons be perceived as a threat to individual freedom and choice.

Much current debate regarding structuralist *versus* individual actor views can be interpreted in this perspective. This includes the popularity of Habermas' idea of a life world threatened by system colonisation, and the often-repeated idea that structural theories hinder individual choice. Feminism and the role of women are one main background issue in this debate, though mostly implicit (which is not exactly an unknown state of affairs when these aspects are in fact of major importance). Although the present contribution may go further than most in its analytical reconnection attempts, the *tendency* to reconnect the two spheres analytically is there in most feminist theory. As Ulrike Prokop (1978) and others have argued, this is implicit in women's life patterns themselves.

The manifest debate between neo-structuralist and individual-centred views can be seen as *indirect responses* to this wider background issue. In both camps, there is an attempt to uphold the split, to keep the individual disentangled from society and vice versa. In the background, the system and the life world are both kept apart from the gender issues that threaten all such clear-cut divides with *pollution*, betraying their irreality. 'Gender theory cannot help it': the public person has a gender, therefore is not fully public; the life world is gendered, therefore is also systemic – and so on. The attempts to keep the division nicely ordered can therefore be interpreted in view of hegemonic masculinity and male socialisation theory.

Yet I have repeatedly emphasised the fact that the reconnection matter is also more complex – as is the split itself. Some of it is there for good reasons, while some forms of connection are experienced as negative, again for good reasons. For example, I mentioned the 'mimetic' problem of a form of analysis that in fact, under a critical terminology, paves the way for a tighter and more dehumanising integration of capitalism and patriarchy than what exists today. In this wide angle, the insistence on keeping the two spheres apart also in an analytical and theoretical sense represents more than a barrier against knowledge. Further, the current and mostly male debate on the split between the structural and the individual aspects of society can be seen not only as an indirect response to feminism, but also as attempts to work through these two positions on their own.

What is proposed, therefore, is not an attempt to subsume the two spheres in one grand theoretical system under the heading of 'patriarchy', or to create a closed order in an area where theory, instead, should rather help people keep it open. In terms of the Y model, the distance at the top is a real one; it is not just the connection at the bottom disguised as difference. Instead it is my view that we understand modern barriers as well as connections better by examining their historical background, and that the premodern and early modern societies that were *not* split in our sense cannot be understood unless their patriarchal structure is taken into account. Patriarchy, in this view, was neither 'always around', nor was it automatically and painlessly brought into the modern age. Rather, I think we should approach its continuous existence as an 'amazing fact' of contemporary society, and recognise the possibility that this existence is not a very secure one, even if much evidence shows that we are not done with it yet.

## Identifying patriarchal patterns

Before approaching questions of patriarchal strategy, some main issues regarding 'patriarchy' itself must be further addressed, which is done in this section.

It certainly makes sense to define patriarchy as 'subordination of women and related patterns of dominance'. Thereby we keep the door open for oppression within each sex, and so we may focus for example on dominant and less dominant femininities or masculinities, or on dominance related both to gender and age, class, or ethnicity.

Yet the larger problems discussed earlier are not solved in this manner. A definition that retains the focus on sex-related traits as indications of patriarchy, with cross-sex stratification as a connected, secondary pattern, may still keep the approach too closely tied to modern gender notions. Moreover it does not really break any new ground; we are back with sex or gender as the starting point and with a formal rather than a substantial and historical definition. On the other hand, definitions of patriarchy that do not distinguish it from power and dominance in society in general soon become too wide and diffuse to be useful.

The historical approach discussed in the last chapter is of help here, especially when we focus on the background shifts that occur when examining historical contexts. Some new ground appeared: instead of asking about men's power, or men's and women's positions in abstract terms, we became interested in the creation and change of *specific* functions and positions, both those that were mainly in the hands of men, like that of the 'free household head', and those often controlled by women, like religious offices.

An important methodological path thereby emerged. In the gender approach, we ask about the sex composition and sex-related stratification in a given context. While this remains important, as an 'immediate' path, another and more indirect avenue became more central. We start, then, with *clearly attested cases* or 'beyond doubt' specimens of patriarchal organisation. The family forms associated with classical Athens and later with Rome are examples. The method, now, is one of *tracing their history and connections* and studying the institutional shifts leading to them, like the shifts towards patrilocal and patrilinear family patterns discussed in the last chapter.

Another example is the class of 'big men' leaders in Mesopotamia, evolving into the law kings of the Babylonian period. There is scarcely any doubt that this group was associated with patriarchal developments, and so we turn to its history and origin.

This indirect method is not only historically relevant. It is also important on a structural level in a given period. Once more we start with clear-cut cases of patriarchal organisation, now tracing their institutional background and latent connections. This corresponds to the 'starting with manifest gender' approach in the first part of the current text.

One important background effect of this indirect method is a shift of attention from formal, quantitative questions (as in many traditional approaches to the 'declining status of women' issue) towards qualitative and relational traits. Often we are only able to identify patriarchal organisation quantitatively in fairly broad terms. We can say that conditions were egalitarian, partly or proto-patriarchal, or patriarchal. Yet as the *connections* between these categories in each given context become clearer, the broad quantitative distinctions and the 'degree of oppression of women' are no longer the overriding issue. True, it remains important for example to be able to pinpoint the emergence of clearly patriarchal organisation in early civilisation contexts, but the ability to identify the longer lines of development and the institutions involved in them is also significant and in some ways more so. This indirect and more holistic institutional approach also has the positive side effect of reducing tendencies towards too hasty conclusions.

What emerges through a combination of these methods is a patriarchal organisation that *involves* most of society, yet can be *identified* as distinct from society and stratification as such, even if parts of this identification remain conjectural. It is clear enough to establish the case for 'patriarchy studies' also within historical research. In general, such fields are usually not better off by all the main questions being answered or all definitions being clear-cut; what is needed, instead, is enough common ground for development of new kinds of questions and studies. This is the case here. Regarding early historical conditions, for example, we want to know how and why the cities came to develop proto-patriarchal leadership positions, we may ask about the relationship between trade, militarisation and patriarchal dominance, the reasons for women's and the religious sphere's loss of influence, or the demise of redistributive reciprocity. We may investigate the interconnections between these related processes. Thereby we focus on the developments that probably contributed most to patriarchy as it emerged in Western history.

This brings us to a problem that was briefly introduced in the last chapter, regarding the relative importance of different kinds of evidence. I used the example of England as first capitalist country. In many cross-cultural studies, all cases count the same, while in some historical approaches, very little consideration is given to cases outside the perceived central development line of Western civilisation. I believe each of these methods is misleading on its own, and that the long-term goal should be to combine them in studies of patriarchy.

In this perspective, concentrating on central, clear-cut cases is not only a methodological question. It is also a question of what exactly is meant by 'patriarchy' – the real process or the formal notion. Clearly, eventual patriarchal developments in

the history of, say, the Inuits have not had the same impact on overall patriarchal development as those of the main centres of civilisation. If the target of study is real patriarchy rather than an abstraction, the central developments become more important than those of the periphery and outside areas.

The cross-cultural approach where all cases are given equal weight often has the silent implication that patriarchy is a 'propensity' of human nature, rather than a historical form of social organisation. In other areas it is generally recognised that some form of ranking and weighing of evidence is needed, for example in the case of social class. The equal weight method also increases the possibility of erroneous results due to the contact factor (influence of patriarchal centres on local communities) discussed earlier.

If the weighing or filtering arguments are carried too far, however, we easily end up with a framework that cannot be expected to prove anything, since the connection of patriarchal and Western civilisation development is anyway already presupposed, leading to spurious or 'misplaced concrete' identifications of main links. Ideally, then, patriarchal developments should be studied in a comparative perspective with emphasis on the main centres of civilisation, including China, India, the main African centres and those of Mesoamerica, balanced with evidence from less central communities. Here as elsewhere, balance, weighing and filtering questions lead into the qualitative or relational terrain of investigating historical development and cross-cultural contact.

The present effort is not quite in line with these ideal requirements. The focus is limited to the development of patriarchal organisation in Western civilisation. Some main findings discussed in the last chapter can be summarised here. The process of increasing centralisation and internal stratification, countered by attempts to enclose or encircle the power of the centre, created a shift from what I called focal reciprocity towards commodity-oriented reciprocity as the main basis of state power. The early 'big-men' leaders and proto-dynasts emerge as a key group in the development towards more clearly patriarchal state power, extending their executive powers on a gradually more independent and secular basis. Although most third millennium traits of this process remain diffuse, a 'historical suspicion' that this group was indeed closely related to emerging private economy and household leadership is strengthened by what is known from late Sumerian (Ur 3 c. 2100 B.C.) times and later. The events are now dominated by kings extending their power through increasingly patriarchal law, attempting to regulate the commodity economy (notably through many trials and failures to establish a monetary standard), and other measures that undermined and transformed the former sacral sphere and led to a status decline among priestesses and other women.

For now, I will take this broad outline as representing *the most probable 'emergence of patriarchy' path*, and discuss later developments in terms of it. However it should be noted that most of the following analysis of strategy does not depend on any specific detailed view in the emergence debate, above a certain minimal agreement. The latter concerns the fact that a broad, multilineal and gradual but nevertheless *consistent* development path can be documented, *from* relatively egalitarian conditions (or less patriarchal conditions) of the third millennium and before, *to* the patriarchal society we meet in antiquity.

By itself, this line of development does not prove much, concerning the differentiation principle and its importance for patriarchy. Many other traits were also developed in this period; the connection between the two may be spurious, especially since detailed causal links often remain obscure. Yet the theoretical perspective presented would not lead us to put the main emphasis here, or expect too much in this direction. The emphasis, instead, is on a broad background development; the fact that the typical positions associated with women lost influence and status in a long-term process of change. The fact that the observed traits concerning devaluation and seclusion of women become intelligible on the basis of the character of this change supports the differentiation argument. Further, the fact that more specific phases and patterns of development can be identified, interpreted in a theoretical perspective (like focality theory) and linked to distinct forms of commodity differentiation, strengthens the 'robust connection' form of the argument. There was an 'inner' connection, not just an external or incidental one, between commodity differentiation and patriarchal organisation.

## On the institutional context of early patriarchal strategy

The concept of patriarchal strategy may itself be approached through the institutional and historical method discussed above. The next sections extend the analysis of the historical development of patriarchal organisation, starting from the early contexts outlined in the last chapter. The focus is on the early development of power leading to the more distinct and well-known forms of strategy in antiquity, where the Roman *divide et impera* can be seen as the paradigmatic case. I turn, therefore, to an examination of main traits, summarising earlier findings and including some more detailed discussions of strategy-relevant matters that were only implied in the last chapter.

*A shift to family-defined households, and, gradually, to more well-ordered patrilinear dynasties.* While the earliest parts of this process remain hazy, the middle and later phases are fairly clear. The establishment of the king's own household, as distinct from the temple, remains of uncertain date in the Mesopotamia. Yet a general tendency towards independence and secularisation of power is well evidenced, as is the fact that dynastic succession was unstable and surrounded by conflict in the earlier periods especially.

Developments in Asia Minor under the Hittites are an indication that this 'patrilinearisation' process was *later* than often assumed. Together with an unvoiced assumption that patrilinearity is age-old, scholars have often jumped from cases of sons following fathers as rulers to a conclusion that a patrilinear kinship principle existed. The Hittite case is especially interesting since detailed contemporary documents show a huge amount of conflict surrounding succession issues, including civil wars, with a patrilinear principle emerging only in the late 16th. century B.C. (Telepinu's edict; cf. Holt, J 1951). The significance of this matter was primarily uncovered by Shoshanna Bin-Nun (1975) who showed that the older custom of the king's *sister* being co-ruler and high priestess (of the Sun Goddess / God) probably was still in force until king Suppiluliumas in c. 1360 installed his newly-wed Babylonian princess in this office, expelling his sister, possibly to Greece (Guterbock, H 1983a; Huxley, G 1960).<sup>1</sup>

In general, early rulers seem more occupied with placing their favourites – often pronounced as sons, regardless of kinship – than with any lineal kinship principle, which was anyway at best 'approached' in real life. This includes the Atreide Agamemnon, of whom there was the variant tradition that he was in the son of some Plisthenes, not the great Atreus (while his mother was the powerful Artemis priestess Aerope: Apollodorus 1946:1:309). Once more tradition 'incidentally' smuggles in the notion that *sonship* – in this case, belonging to the great Atreidae – was a *social* rather than a biological affair.

The general institutional context is probably well brought forth by a detail in Apollodorus description at this point, relating how Aerope's father Catreus tried to establish his son Althaemenes as ruler of Rhodes – "he told them the truth but they could not hear him for the barking of the dogs, and while they pelted him Althaemes arrived and killed him with the cast of a javelin, not knowing him to be Catreus" (ibid.). Compare what was said earlier about 'reasons why'. – It is this kind of detail showing the *fragile* character of early patrilinear arrangements which has often been overlooked by modern scholars, all the more so due to a misleading 'feudal' terminology of kings, nobles and blood lines. As noted earlier, neither the Hittite empire nor the Achaian federation had more than a passing resemblance to European feudalism. The organisation and operation of the royal household was wholly different, along with its relation to the sacral powers, its conflicts and alliances with the 'nobility', external diplomacy, and much else. The same goes for the villages that were not inhabited by 'peasants' in the feudal sense, fixed to the earth, and for the character of territorial and tribute-related conflict. What emerges, instead, is a mixture of personal, household, village and sacral ownership of the means of production, including the earth and the domestic animals.<sup>2</sup>

On this background (as well as more specific studies of the Sumerian context; Holter 1988a) I agree with Pateman (1988:31) who criticises the 'patria' model of patriarchy found in many recent treatments. This includes Gerda Lerner's (1986:89-90) conjectures about the 'absolute authority of the father' in 'Mesopotamia' – presented with no date, and phrased as general statement. Lerner's note at this point refers to the Roman *patria potestas* and not to early Mesopotamian evidence – quite a different cup of tea. "Lerner's language of paternalism is a very misleading way to talk of modern contractual patriarchy," Pateman argues. I agree, and the point here is that it is also misleading in the early historical context. Religion speaks against the 'patria' model: when the foremost of all Sumerian suitors, Dumuzi, wanted to marry Inanna, he asked her *mother*, Ningal, for permission. Further, Kramer and other observers have noted that the father's power was often part of the two parents' influence, and that it was often limited.

It is true that a *practice* of a son succeeding his father in power can be evidenced in some cities from early or at least middle Sumerian times (i.e. ca. 2600-500 B.C.) and that upper-strata fathers had extensive powers at least in some important external matters. This relates to the "proto"-political-judicial field discussed earlier. Yet we find much evidence to the effect that both spouses – or, as in the Hittite case, siblings – acted together as heads. Even in a city like Lagash, which is sometimes used as paradigmatic case in order to prove the consolidated character of Sumerian-period patriarchy, the queen had considerable powers on her own (see below). Early

Sumerian grooms like Gilgamesh and Enmerkar are described both in sibling and spouse terms, and this distinction does not seem of major importance.

In this context Pateman's (1988:87) argument that *sex-right went before father-right* can be interpreted as a halfway well-placed abstractism. Pateman is right that the absolute power of the father came later, yet the early concept which puts all others in the shadow, at least in Sumer, is that of the *sister*, not, as I said, the mother, or the sexual spouse as such. The *nin* 'sister' designation was used in all kinds of connections, meaning mastery or control in general, including Innanna as sister of heaven, a main religious conflict as one between this deity and her sister (Ereshkigal), and much else to the same basic effect of emphasising the sister relationship.

Although Gerda Lerner's work is characterised by serious scholarship, it also illustrates a very common tendency in the emergence of patriarchy debate. Her patria model is an example. Clearly, this model *became* relevant, as evidenced for example by the early parts of the Bible. Lerner does in fact quote the Bible, often intermixed with Babylonian and Sumerian evidence. Yet this is like examining our own period through a mixture of antiquity, feudalism and capitalism sources. There is a lack of *awareness* of, and respect for, the time dimension involved here. The early Bible parts are about *fifteen hundred years later* than the conditions described in the earliest texts. What the Israelite priest-scribes in the period around 1000 B.C. thought about fatherhood may be very misleading indeed for understanding earlier conditions, a possibility that becomes a probability when considering the overt ideological treatment given to this theme, the need to expand life spans and much else.

While Lerner's patria model is relevant in late pre-antiquity periods, I doubt that the sexual contract as envisioned by Pateman ever had much relevance in this historical setting. This was not a contractual society, nor was it sexual in our sense.<sup>3</sup>

*A shift towards private property and trade-related transfer as main orientation of society.* Two main traits emerge at this point. First, there is no doubting the long-term trend towards increased commodity-economic orientation, although the specific stages in this development are disputed (as mentioned, this debate is not fully addressed in the present text). Secondly, I have noted that the *specific* evidence concerning *direct* connections between patriarchal organisation and commodity orientation is often non-existent, diffuse or controversial. This is obviously of some importance in the present context, and it should be emphasised that this matter has not really been looked into in detail; it largely remains an unexplored area.

This is true also for many Marxist efforts that have remained on a general level of noting the broader correspondence between the development of class society on the one hand and a more patriarchal society on the other. What we have, then, are two broad lines of evidence, concerning the rising importance of commodities and the falling status of women; many details in both areas are yet to be established, although the end points of both processes are clear and commonly accepted. The commodity-related evidence, for example regarding the development of commercial slavery (e.g. Harris, R 1975) as well as the attempts to create stable proto-monetary systems, give the general impression (like the evidence of patrilinearity) that many traits are later than often supposed. Marx may have been right in designating the Phoenicians, with Assyria in the background, as the first true "trading people". Yet even the

Phoenicians, according to Strabo, used gift strategies in foreign lands in order to sell their wares, leaving them on the beach for the natives to examine, later returning to collect the gifts placed in their stead.

*The story of Silver.* One piece of indirect yet interesting evidence concerning commodity and patriarchal development, which I have not seen discussed in this context, is the Hittite / Hurrian story of how Silver came into the world, recently translated by Hoffner (1990). The story is part of the Kumarbi cycle.

Silver appears with his mother in a time of strife and hunger, and is described as a fatherless boy (*wannumiyas DUMU*). When he strikes one of the other boys with a stick, the other asks why he does so, "*you are a fatherless boy like us*" [sic], which makes Silver run home to his mother, crying.

Silver's mother now tells him that his father is the great Kummurbi, who resolves "the lawsuits of all the lands" and that his brother is Tessub, "king in heaven". Silver now becomes king of the gods, and even "dragged the Sun and the Moon down from heaven (..) They bowed to Silver". Then they said: "'We are the luminaries ... we are the torches of what [lands] you [govern]. If you strike / kill us, you will [have to] proceed to govern the dark lands personally'."

Here the story is fragmented. Reaching some compromise through an accommodating of the older deities, Silver was nevertheless in the end dethroned, according to Hoffner's interpretation (op.cit.41), possibly by Tessub and his more aggressive brother and 'vizier' Tasmisu (op.cit.47). In a fragment, Tasmisu says to Tessub not to be weak; "our father, Kumarbi, did not defeat Silver, we will now defeat Silver" (ibid.).

*Fatherhood* is emphasised in many ways concerning Kumarbi (*alias* Kronos), including the well-known swallowing of genitals episode that may imply an establishment of a new form of fatherly power. Kumarbi, as "Father of the Gods" is contrasted with "Tessub, the Canal Inspector of Mankind" (op.cit.49) in another part of the Kumarbi cycle. As a whole, the story centres on violent father / son conflict, once more indicating that patrilinearity was at best fragile.

Fathers come and go; canal inspectors stay on. Generally I find that this cycle and other traditions make sense in view of the problems of establishing a male-centred kinship order, primarily in the name of a father, as *societally* dominant, distinct from the older household group / task organisation form.

*The emergence of systematised used of aggression, terror and 'deep symbolical / identity' forms of power.* These may be diffuse terms, but they point to real trends in the second millennium B.C. especially. Although archaeological discoveries – notably in the case of Jericho – have shown that town-level violence existed from early times, casting doubt on a modern romantic picture of proto-historical times as peaceful and beneficial, there is no doubting the *escalation* of aggression especially through the late third and second millennium. The inter-town skirmishes mentioned in Sumerian texts (ca. 2600-2400 B.C.) differ in quantity and quality from the large-scale battles between armies that had become usual in the Middle East by 1300 B.C. or so. Now, the leaders of the land empires fought for control using thousands of soldiers, armies

that were also increasingly employed in *strategic* ways, and it is indicative that this pattern emerges as one of using the army as a *terror weapon*, of which more will be said below. The importance of this development for increasing patriarchalisation has rightly been noted (Hacker, B 1987). We saw that the Homeric heroes of the *Iliad* were drawn into a battlefield that did not really fit them, with a sense of something new and unheard-of taking place. This must be seen on the general background of militarisation and the attempt to *enforce tributary empire rule* that became the main pattern in the second half of the second millennium. There is also evidence that this went together with a more conscious reworking of culture and religion as legitimisation basis for the state (the king as 'sun', and similar).

One main 'infrastructural' background change, related to the shift towards commodity exchange, was the deeper and wider forms of individual and group *debt slavery* through the second millennium and the increased obligations that the creditor could put on the debtor's household. The changing rules of children's status in slave / free relationships are one noticeable trait here, with a deepening sense of inter-generational powerlessness as well as a gradual shift towards letting the male line, alone, determine the child's status. The evidence in this area strengthens the view of a connection between patriarchal and commercial development, although it cannot be treated here.

All these developments must be seen on the background of a society in which the individual, if not 'embedded', was more deeply involved in the state than became the case later. This can be seen, for example, in the Sumerian notion of the land and animals as belonging to the city's deities, and the people working for these same deities. As argued in the last chapter, this 'large household' or focal reciprocity relationship created a very strong sense of social identification, which is what one might expect, also for more theoretical reasons, in a combination of the 'power of the gift' and the 'power of sacrifice'. Although revolts against dynastic rulers were frequent, there was also a background theme of patience, of trying to set things right 'the old way', which in my view was not really broken until the late period Roman empire when the misuse of power finally led to the breakdown of the whole cultural-religious fabric. This patience has been one main ingredient in the portrait of stagnant 'Asiatic' mode despotism. The 'old way', clustered around sacral generalisation, might not have amounted to much in the face of changing conditions and escalating violence, but it included very powerful psychological ritualistic mechanisms, including advanced uses of the 'sympathetic' magic analysed by Mauss (1972).

These kinds of bonds, I believe, form the main background of the curious paradox discussed by Moses Finley (1983a) regarding slavery in antiquity, namely that the slave / free division, although very central, did not correspond to economic realities (a slave might be a rich man and an employer, while free persons might be among his employees). It had its background in an older cultural fabric and 'householding order' whose persistence was also expressed in religion. In the second millennium leaders remained customarily 'tied' not only in their uses of power, but also in matters of succession; a royal household in the Hittite empire was traditionally required to 'pawn' or 'mortgage' a lamb for a prince to the sanctuary of the Sun Goddess until Hattusili 3 abolished this institution. The lamb appears as a symbolic life-property, or even explicit surrogate for the person (Nyström, E 1915:309) in Babylonian texts as well as in Greek traditions. The rich variety of traditions concerning the scapegoat (e.g.

Leviticus 16) is paralleled by the transfer of evil to a ram, a bull, etc. in Hittite rituals (Gurney, O 1977:48f.; cf. Greek *farmakos* 'one who is sacrificed as a purification for others, a scapegoat', Liddell & Scott 1982:752, discussed in Holter 1987e).

These glimpses of a tight weave of reciprocity are important in our context for several reasons. They can be compared to the idea of 'interdependent selves' discussed in chapter 7. Further, they bring the gradual development of strategy *as* divisioning for power reasons into perspective. The traditions concerning *victimisation* highlight this aspect. On the one hand, pre-antiquity is full of evidence of small-scale victimisation processes, including victims being stoned to death. On the other hand, a *politics* based on systematic victimisation was slow in the making. This is commonly recognised, if not quite in the present terms; it is observed, for example, that antiquity as well as pre-antiquity was remarkably 'tolerant' regarding customs, beliefs, skin colour, and much else. While all forms of harsh suppression were used, the victimisation aspect was not *built into them*, not *developed into strategy* in the later sense. I believe John Boswell (1980, using persecution of homosexuals as evidence) and others are basically right that such a development mainly took place in the late Middle Ages; *here* we see a dual form of victimisation (external heathens and internal enemies like witches) which was, on the whole, foreign to the thinking of antiquity.

*The righteous lord and the rise of monotheism.* One further case of 'proto-strategy', or at least survival strategy, shall be briefly discussed before turning to general matters. This is interesting also as a test case in terms of focality theory. As argued in the last chapter, focal reciprocity connects redistribution and gift relations, a structure that may be compared to a wheel, with two typical general forms of movement, along the 'spokes' and the 'rim'. The development of focal reciprocity not only includes increased centralisation, but also counter-developments which in some ways were necessary for the whole structure to survive. In this context we can trace the emergence and gradual separation of commodity relations *not* simply as 'technical' developments of the transfer forms, but as *power* developments. Briefly put, the private economy created a much-needed new basis for power, that in turn led to increased patriarchal developments.

Although this model is of course highly simplified, I believe it helps explain some of the basic dynamics of pre-antiquity development – in this case, that of the Jews.

Along with other peoples in the eastern Mediterranean coast lands, the Jews in the second millennium experienced increasing pressure not just from one of the large centres, but from two or three directions (Egypt, Mesopotamia, gradually also Assyria / Asia Minor). According to focality theory, periphery peoples had many kinds of reasons to establish a 'ring' kind of network against or around the centres, basically similar to the smaller 'rings' sought established even in the king's own household (by giving his means of power their own sacral status, as discussed in the last chapter). This must have become especially pertinent among the most vulnerable periphery peoples caught between the interest spheres of different centres, like the Jews.

Generally, we would expect these ring-like structures to be shifting and fluent, but also persistent, extensive and broad. They expressed the counterbalancing tendencies that kept the centralisation process, so to speak, from strangling itself, or from falling into the 'black hole' it had created in the social fabric. This is no fanciful thought: the

centres were regularly plundered and destroyed by surrounding peoples like the Gudeans in the case of Sumer and the Kaska in the case of Hatti. The hatred of the over-fat centre enriching itself that can be found as a main theme in the Old Testament was only one variant of a larger periphery cultural motif. It is even possible that many periphery structures and events should themselves be seen in this world system perspective, including the Hyksos and Sea Peoples. Without some balance, centralised powers usually broke down in a generation or two. The 'ring organisation' elements were connected proto-economically to gift relations, and proto-politically to federative leadership. In old times we also find them connected to leadership functions within the centres themselves, like the Sumerian federation where the federative leadership circled among the cities, from one 'node' to the next in the ring. These elements also make it more understandable why executive functions were commonly time-delimited and restricted through the task organisation.

We know that the Jews experienced especially heavy central structure pressure, including attempted incorporation in the case of Egypt. I believe that the two main tenets in their religion can be explained on this background, namely a very pronounced righteousness linked to gift relations, an extract of the kind of 'ring logic' just described, plus a monotheistic element that many researchers (like Breasted, J 1967:298-303) have suspected originally came from Egypt. Whatever its origin, the Jews developed it as a matter of survival and cultural identity, together with an emphasis on patrilinearity that also appear in this context, even if it may – here as elsewhere – have been less old than commonly supposed.

Although much of this is well known, the focality perspective fits the pieces together in a new way, and it emphasises the gift element, which I believe has not been sufficiently recognised. First, it should be remembered that the kind of patriarchal centre-power that surrounded the Jews was not, in modern gender terms, a power *against* women, but one constructed *through* them. We should perhaps call it 'proto-patriarchal' for this reason. The main deity of the Middle East was a woman (or a mixture of male / female aspects in the case of Egypt), and the main power figure was an aggressor exploiting the strength and legitimacy of this religion. This was the case also locally, in the Near East setting, with variants of Asherat / Ishtar, Anath (the ally of the Hittite Sun Goddess, in Ugarit) and others used by local 'prince' rulers.

In this light it becomes understandable why the Jews, pressured by increasingly absorbent centres, developed a culture marked by it, enhancing patrilinearity and endogamy in the process, a religion focused on the rightness or correctness of the Lord, directly or indirectly opposing or 'rectifying' the kinds of unions offered by the temple gates of the centres. True, things had not been like that always, and the glimpses of an older and less asymmetrical order that can be found in the Old Testament testify to the power of oral tradition memory. Like other periphery peoples, the Jews were also quite clear as to what had gone wrong in the centre; self-serving use of power, arrogance, *hubris*.

One main part of the 'sociological' kernel of this tradition can probably be described as '*absolute ingiftedness*'. This is why I call it an 'extract' of ring-associated focality logic; possibly, this element is the older one, compared both to monotheism and patrilinearity. Absolute ingiftedness was expressed for example in the belief that anyone who does not open his door to the stranger or a friend in need, would perish

from the anger of the Lord, and that gift relations must be observed absolutely. Such views were later extended into a whole formulaic corpus of sacrificial gift and cleanliness rules as a basic ingredient in the legitimacy of the early priesthood of the Israelite tribes. My view, here, is in line with the new interpretation of the Sodoma and Gomorra stories (e.g. Boswell 1980) that puts the focus on gift requirements, not on sexual preferences per se.

There is a background moral: if the gift order is not upheld, people will die, the periphery and the pastoral people will suffer. Therefore, even the great leader should obediently present his favourite child as a gift to the Lord, as in the story of Abraham and Isaac. We are not surprised that gifts give never-ending sustenance, like the jug of oil of the widow in Zarephath.

This hypothesis of an absolute ingiftedness element as a main, persistent trait in Jewish culture may also help explain something that monotheism and patrilinearity do not explain. I am referring to the fact that the Jews became associated with the supreme case of a circulating medium, always to be passed on, *money*. I think that this association originally concerned gift circulation. In many gift systems, there is an important category of objects that are to be passed on, things that should not be kept, not touch the earth, etc. These are objects that often have no immediately useful function, yet they are of main symbolic importance; passing them on keeps the *pledge* or larger moral obligations needed for the gift system as a whole.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that the Jews became associated with money and especially with money-lending on the background of this association and due to the 'uprightness' of their gift-related culture, compared to the asymmetrical affairs and the usury associated with the affairs of the large centres.

In other words I believe that the Jews came into this role because they were *preferred*. They certainly in most periods had little power to *impose* that role on others, compared to their neighbours. The elements described here, including the probable association between as special class of circulative objects and a special people taking care of it, is perhaps also entangled with the deep-seated Jewish notion of being a *chosen* people. We know that this idea must have been strengthened by the deepening contrast between emerging monotheism and surrounding polytheism, but it may also have been present earlier, if we admit the possibility that the 'ring' elements might have had more specific institutional expressions and that the Jews were connected to them.

It may be objected that the money-lender association came later and that the present interpretation remains speculative. Yet the Bible tells of Joseph, already, that he was able to collect all the money in the lands of Canaan and Egypt (Gen. 47.14). The Jews seem to have been used by the pharaoh in order to confiscate the property of the Egyptian nobles (Gen. 47.20). There are also indications that there was already a particularity or stigma attached to the Jews, since the Egyptians would not eat together with them (Gen. 43.32). Leviticus 25 details property laws that confirm the restricted role of private property. "The land must not be sold permanently"; it belongs to God, and the Jews are only its guests. The guest and gift elements are repeatedly stressed, to the extent that the text indicates that it is the model of obligation towards guests that is to be applied towards one's countrymen when they need help, not the other way around. Also, the 50-year anniversary or jubilee

described here is clearly related to the Sumerian *amargi* custom. Debt slaves are to be set free and property returned.

This whole gift-based view of Jewish culture differs entirely from the racist implications that can still often be found in conventional treatments. These traits also sometimes creep into feminist literature, where the Jews are made responsible for gender segregation and patriarchy. Elisabeth Fürst (1995:197-8) quotes Julie Kristeva to this effect. Kristeva argues that "long before the establishment of the people of Israel, the Semites of the north worshipped *mother goddesses*" (op.cit. 197, her emphasis). (This presumably refers to deities like Asherat, Anath who – as noted earlier – were mainly *sister-like*, not mother goddesses). Fürst goes on to portray the Jews as a people established "without any territory", as an "abstract, symbolic society" – now she quotes Kristeva again: – "'expelling, 'together with paganism, most of the agricultural civilisations and their ideologies: women and mothers'" (ibid.). Besides going against what is commonly known about power, namely that it usually develops in the centres rather than the periphery, we know that these centres were mainly dominated by men from at least c. 2900 B.C., i.e. some *fifteen hundred years* before there are any clear indications of Jewish monotheism.

I take issue with the notion of the Jews as the only known people with no land to live in. This noted propaganda line is a misinterpretation of the old idea of being *guests* on the earth that I just described. Further, I disagree with the improbable and undocumented notion that Jewish society invented the *abstract symbolism* that is in fact a main target of critique throughout Fürst's thesis. I especially react when she unproblematically cites Kristeva's views that the sexes are "*races*" and that *gender separation* is "*the fundamental invention of Jewry*" (op.cit. 198).

## Strategy: differentiation as means of stratification

We shall turn to the main matter of the present chapter: strategy. Aristotle, discussing Plato's suggestion that free men should own their things, wives and children in common, conveys the strategical frame of mind:

"It seems more serviceable for the farmers to have this community of wives and children than the guardians, for there will be less friendship among them if their wives and children are in common, and unfriendliness in the subject classes is a good thing with a view to their being submissive to authority and not making revolution." (*Pol.* 2.1.15-16).

Instead of focusing on what *power* may achieve, like Homer did using a concept of dominance that was never far from the physical power of a man, Aristotle discusses *how to make power work*, in the sense of a burden that should as far as possible be shifted from the powerful to the powerless themselves, turning their strengths against each other.

The idea of using divisions and differences among the subordinates has probably been known in all ages. Yet in the build-up of power represented first by the armies of the late second millennium B.C. and later by the empires of antiquity, it gradually

emerged in a specific and far more effective mode than before, eventually as a main element of power.

Patriarchal strategy, in this interpretation, is later than patriarchy itself and more specific than the field of politics as such. Its point of origin is a class society oriented towards slavery and other forms of commodity production. In archaic Greece, the term *strategoí* had meant military commanders, and according to Aristotle it came into new use as Athens in 501 B.C. shifted to a system of ten *phyle* (town and hinterland category) leaders. These were called strategists, and their office, later occupied by men like Pericles and Themistocles, combined military and political leadership. In effect, this reform reduced the power of the older 'aristocratic' *polemarchos* leader, who was a yearly elected official administering foreign relations and those of foreigners in the city, even if the latter formally remained in supreme command.

The strategists were elected annually by the political assembly of free men, and the Athenian constitution displays an early awareness of a main problem of their position – its power, not only *for* the state, but potentially also against it. So if the vote did not favour the strategist in the assembly, he would go right to a court of law [!], resuming his office if acquitted (Hammond & Scullard 1970:1018).

Some elements of wider importance appear from these details. Strategy emerged as an outgrowth of patriarchal politics, yet with an attempt to keep the two distinct. It was a specific combination of political and military use of power, pointing to the dual – internal and external – functions of strategy. In turn, this extensive power created a one main problem, namely the possibility for tyranny, for strategy taking over politics.

It may be argued that antiquity never saw much in the way of strategy, as a substantial power system, until the Romans, but also that the clean sweep represented primarily by Philip and Alexander showed its potential. The discussion must be limited to general traits. Before the development of strategy, power was comparatively tactical, short term and immediate. Patriarchal strategy depends on a fairly sophisticated level of power mediation. This 'mediation' has several aspects.

One has been mentioned already: strategy represents an economising of tactical power. In this sense, the 'classical' case of the Assyrian army, crucifying a few people in a town, setting the example for the others instead of having to station soldiers in each, represents an early form. Yet what is crucial is not this practice, but its elevation to state government method. This was a later process, where leaders no longer appealed to the older order (like the Assyrian kings did), but were themselves 'strategically constituted'.

Another element concerns a twin process and a dual positioning. Strategy is not only incidentally best interpreted in a world system perspective; I think it should be further defined as that specific element of patriarchal politics that *combines* external aggression and internal stratification. This makes sense when we consider the effects of strategy. We may consider the historical map in light of what was said earlier about the main tensions created as systems of household-oriented dependency were realigned towards commodity production and commercial slavery. Strategy appears gradually, as rulers are able to create a link between internal stratification and external

aggression. The weak and unstable character of this link made empires short-lived. Although internal victimisation processes, as I said, were on the whole only weakly developed as state measures in antiquity, the *tendency* was there already, especially in late antiquity. The Roman combination is well known: 'divide and rule' principles on the external front and 'bread and circus' principles – the latter often including slaughter of victims – on the internal front.<sup>5</sup>

The rise of strategy may be more closely connected to the fall of the old, pre-antiquity order than is commonly conceived – not as an on-going economic system, which had been dissolved much earlier in the west, but as a wider cultural-religious fabric, which continued to be of major importance. Such a view may be connected to traits showing that the new order was for a long time fairly easy-going, economically speaking – "taxation, often astonishingly light in the Greek city-states and the Roman republic, increased enormously under the Roman empire" (de Ste Croix 1985:38). It is a fact that even Alexander appealed to the old order, presenting himself as Artemis' favourite, and that the Romans in their desperation when Carthage's troops and those of her Astarte-worshipping Italian allies stood at their doorsteps, turned to the east, importing a goddess (Cybele) in order to gain religious-cultural legitimacy.

This has a wider significance. As noted, patriarchal strategy connects external and internal subordination. Yet it also goes further, at least in tendency, specifically *rearranging* the wider reciprocity field beyond the political-economic structure. This obviously brings the differentiation principle into view.

## Exclusionary strategy

The development of patriarchal strategy in antiquity was monolithic in tendency, striving towards domination over the whole known world. Whereas the older forms of power could still in principle be dissolved into duels, heroic clashes where 'strength and opinion' ruled the outcome, the new ones were not. Instead of men of power legitimising their actions through a cultural infrastructure that was still in many ways egalitarian, often with women as prominent structural links, strategy was based on relations between men and an almost exclusively male political-economical structure.

I think it is correct to say that early strategy was mainly *exclusionary* in tendency, remaining so until late antiquity. Christianity represented a new inclusive view, and form of influence. Yet it was only gradually, in the later Middle Ages, that this view became a basis for *inclusive strategy* in a more precise sense.

These terms may be compared to earlier discussions of main phases of commodity differentiation (chapter 9) and dissolution of focal reciprocity (chapter 11). Exclusionary strategy means that a section of the dependants is principally kept apart from the political-economic field. It creates an early form of the 'otherness' field, even if the arrangement does not resemble the modern polarisation of two spheres. In focal reciprocity terms it corresponds to the later phase of bound focality.

The example of age discrimination of women, briefly mentioned at the end of the last chapter, is relevant here. In a study of pederasty and homoeroticism and the treatment of women in classical Athens, I conclude that 'age became gender', that the age system

became 'overloaded' by a very marked patriarchal development (Holter 1994g). The suppression of women was mainly effectuated through existing institutions built up around age authority, since little existed in this regard in terms of sex as such. Women were treated as children, and although I disagree with the 'full seclusion' thesis in this much-debated area, it is certainly correct to say that women were mainly excluded, not included, in the political-economical structure. It has been pointed out that they were all the more included in other areas, like plastic art, yet even if a kind of naturalisation of femininity on male terrain may probably be identified, this remained, on the whole, a latent process in terms of power. This is still a world in which men show little reluctance to referring to women as points of departure; philosophers like Parmenides might say they had their wisdom from women or women figures, implying that they were gifted or had their positions *as* gift-relational positions in these terms, whereas politics, negotiation, philosophical (often homoerotic) dialogue and exchange were described almost purely with reference to men. *There* women were not taken in, and a principle of *empowering* women on patriarchal conditions only appeared much later, connected to more inclusive strategy and what I called fixed focality. We may also say that the older cultural fabric represented a 'reciprocity factor' that was still too much in force for that to be allowed to happen. This statement makes sense, for example, when we examine family conditions, the behind-the-scenes power of upper class women especially in Rome, the way married women were still in many senses 'on loan' from their kin group, not fully torn out from it, and other traits. It also appears as part of the world model of antiquity authors who increasingly portray women *as* representative of this 'excluded' power, like Strabo (7.3.4), who in an aside says that "everyone agrees" that religion was founded by women. This is perhaps 'proto-genderisation', yet it differs from what came later.

This exclusion tendency in some ways reached its high point as religion itself finally became a target of political-economical change. In the 'Christology' debate in late antiquity, next to nothing is said of women or the feminine as foundation of sacrality. Instead, this debate is notable for carrying the political principle of exclusion into its logical religious-cultural conclusion. As far as I know (possibly apart from the unruly Artemisi-worshippers of Efesos, reprimanded by Paul), women were never brought in as part of the topic of this debate, although some women participated in it.

Instead, all energy went into a purely male terrain. The debate concerned how power should be divided within it: was God one, two, three or more; what should be the relationship between a (male) God, his (male) Son, and the (male) Holy Spirit. I see all this as a rather striking illustration of the exclusionary tendency, notably different from the later Middle Ages setting where the feminine figure (Maria) reemerged, now on new ground.

In the last chapter, we saw that the creation of family relationships *as* societal power relationships was in many ways the opposite of what one might imagine, taking the family in the immediate, concrete sense as point of departure. On the societal level, I argued, it was the sons that created the fathers, rather than the other way around. This is relevant in the present context also, for the Christian overturning of the world of antiquity and the Christology debate in some ways represent the fulfilment of this 'expanding sonship' tendency. The father figure in the centre of these changes was quite different from older, polytheistic notion and from the Jahve of a periphery tribe. It was a universalised figure, linked to a purely abstract notion of sacrality (holy

spirit). It was all-powerful, yet therefore also fully removed from earthly matters, and it was connected to the latter through a new kind of figure, the virtualised son. It is important to disentangle all these notions from modern ideas of masculinity; Jesus was not a 'model' in this sense, and the abstract background of fatherhood was not gendered. Yet some important contours of the later developments emerge, and I find it highly significant that the relationship between the son on earth and the father in heaven was first of all one of *sacrifice* – not the old sacrifice of agricultural produce and animals, but of the human person. This symbolic sacrifice was clearly a main ingredient in the establishment of Christianity as dominant religion. As is well known, Christianity was *inclusive* compared to the existing arrangements and became popular among the slaves and the poor for that reason; yet on another level it demanded an inner exclusion, a sacrifice of the self among its followers.

In established or political-economically consolidated strategy from the late antiquity onwards, the three institutional patterns of class, gender and 'race' should probably be seen as *tendentially* present – i.e. not as systematised in their modern forms, but as latent processes. Strategy therefore is 'triadic'. There is, in tendency, an oppressive relation first between high and low, or rich and poor, second between centre and periphery, and third between man and woman. There is also the fourth, personal oppression and sacrifice aspect just mentioned. Strategies balance these elements in different ways, involving other dominance relations also, like those of old over young. They may therefore be studied from Merton's perspective of functional equivalence – improvements in one dominance relationship may be bought at the cost of deterioration in others.

The main cross-sex patriarchal subordination principle in antiquity can be expressed as:

woman => minor / dependent => subordinate

unlike the principle that became dominant later:

woman => feminine => subordinate.<sup>6</sup>

## A main gap

In the last chapter I drew attention to the lack of historical perspectives on how patriarchal organisation has changed in major ways through different periods. Little research has been done regarding patriarchy as a dynamic force in society at large, and as a precarious and contested arrangement rather than a force of (male) nature. I am afraid not much can be done to remedy that situation in the context of the present text, even if the implications of the current theoretical perspective should enhance the possibilities for such studies. The rest of the discussion in this chapter returns us to a modern world context and discusses patriarchal power and strategy from that angle. First, however, some intermediate issues are addressed.

The gap between the early historical patriarchy debate and the modern debate may exist for other reasons than the ones mentioned above. As discussed earlier, social

forms analysis may be used in order to broaden the traditional picture of 'modes of production', yet there is no necessity that it keeps to the periodisation of the latter.

For good reasons, feminists have emphasised three main changes: the early historical development; the changes associated with monotheism; and the advent of capitalism. It is possible, therefore, that further studies will gravitate towards a notion of three major phases, one in which women were basically excluded from power, a second phase of subordination, and a third major phase of ambiguous integration.

The last of these can be seen as a tendency long before the modern epoch, as part of what I called 'inclusionist' or inclusive strategies. Missionary activities are an example. While exclusionist strategy mainly leaves the self of the other – barbarian, etc. – alone, the self-relationship of the subordinate now increasingly emerges as a main factor, to be rearranged on a religious-psychological level. This self-relationship, in turn, is connected to the inclusive agency in focality theory or what I called fixed focality.

On the whole, exclusionary strategies are part of a conception where only a minority of the people are seen as full members of society in general and the political sphere in particular. The rest were classified as things, although not quite in the modern sense: they were household dependants and property. This is further discussed in the next chapter.

Inclusive strategies, on the other hand, are associated with a notion of all mankind (or the part of it included through strategy) as part of society, at least of religious society, which increasingly meant one and the same thing, as religious society in late antiquity and early feudalism replaced the earlier political one. Inclusive strategy was based on a new constitution of the patriarchal power sphere. The following figures bring out some main differences. Religious beliefs are presented on top, realities below.

### **Ancient model of patriarchy**

The ancient model was not a two-class view in the modern sense, but a one-class view, the class of civilised owners plus that which was owned. As noted, the latter included the dependant / slave class enclosed within the households of the free household heads. These heads should, in the ideal context, decide things as equals, collectively or politically. The development of political power in antiquity can be seen on the background on the fact that the older cultural-religious fabric was often as pervasive in within-sex as in between-sex terms. Political power remained 'federative' and was continuously in conflict more strategical and absolutist tendencies. Paradoxically, the antiquity reached its most stable phase through a suspension of politics that became permanent with the Roman empire. Conflict between politicians and strategists turned into conflict between the emperor and his generals. Even under the strong emperors, state power retained a federative aspect, different from the feudal pyramid later, appearing in the form of constant splits in the ruling class. When the political power was finally broken and replaced by a more vertical authoritarian power of the centre, the old cultural fabric began to dissolve, a process that could not

be stopped by vacuous emperor cults, until the break-up became complete with the creation of Christianity as state religion under Constantin.

"During the crucial debate on the creed the emperor was himself in the chair and took an active part in guiding the proceedings" says Jones (1978:133) of this event, the Council at Nicaea in 325 A.D. It may be noted that even *implicating* women as part of the sphere of God seems to have become punishable by now. Arius (ca. 305) argued that "We are persecuted because we said: 'The Son has a beginning .. he is not part of God and not from any underlying matter'", to which Constantine answered: "An intolerable madness has gripped all Africa (..) You, Arius, imprudently made an answer (..) accept the just advice that your fellow servant gives you. And what is that? You ought not to have raised such questions at all, and if they were raised, not to have answered. For such investigations, which no legal necessity imposes (..) we should, even if they are made for the sake of a philosophical exercise, lock up within our hearts and not bring forward into public gatherings." (op.cit. 123).

The feudal model brought in by measures like the ones of Constantin, was very different:

### **Feudal model of patriarchy**

The feudal model may be described as a twofold secular and religious power *pyramid*, rather than the 'free class plus dependants' organisation of antiquity. In this pyramid, women were more involved in relationships between men, and more than earlier appeared 'between' men at various levels of society. Secular patriarchal rule became counter-balanced by a similarly patriarchal monolithic legitimation form. If opposition in early antiquity was expressed religiously as opposition to Zevs' household, in feudalism it was expressed by attempts to change or extend the religious legitimation pyramid, leading to endless conflict over beliefs, quite different from the 'tolerant' or absorbent attitude of the older age. In the feudal context, three forms of 'fixation' appear as main patterns, that of the economy to the religious, that of the peasants to the earth, and that of women to sinful / heathen nature.<sup>7</sup>

Yet this treatment also involved an inclusion. As the conditions of slavery were gradually replaced by feudal conditions, most people in society became included *as* part of society. As David Herlihy (1983, 1987) has emphasised, households eventually became 'commensurable units', while the antiquity (and early feudal) notion was reserved for the slave owners (and the *patria potestas* was the head of, not the *member* of a family: 1983:118). Herlihy's argument regarding households, it may be noted, resembles the present argument regarding gender: 'commensurable gender' as the democratic property of everyone is mainly a modern age phenomenon.

One interesting glimpse of the medieval sense of strategy is given by Adam of Bremen writing to the archbishop of Hamburg in the late 11th. century, taking resort in Lukan's words on Artemis (Ad. 44; Luk. Phars. 1.446) for his description of the former resistance to Christianity in the north: "Look now at those once so cruel Danes, Norwegians and Swedes! Those who with the words of the holy Gregor 'could

only grit their teeth like barbarians do, but now are ready to sing Halleluja in the praise of God!' Look at those pirates, who used to raid the lands of Gaul and Germania, but who are now satisfied with their own lands and say with the Apostle, 'we have no city of this life, for we seek it in the coming!' Look at that terrible land, which was always impenetrable because of its pagan worship 'and dreadful like the altar of the Scythian Artemis'! Now it has laid down its inbred wildness, and due to their competitiveness the preachers of truth win entry everywhere, while the altars are broken down and churches raised all over the land, and the name of Christ is praised by each in unison!"

It is well documented that women were often active among the early Christian converts, and were also prominent later both in the 'converted aristocracy' phase of the fourth and fifth century and later in peripheral regions like Russia and Scandinavia. I suspect the contradiction between structural empowerment and individual depowerment, discussed earlier, may have played a role here. On the one hand, the debates on the character of sacrality excluded women in principle; on the other, they were included as believers, and as such, on par with men. Pauline Pantel (1992) and others see a unisex / androcentric background as central for understanding the more specific references to women. Gradually these began to centre on the virgin theme as antidote to the "women as fairly equal yet subordinate since they are closer to Eve" line of the early apostles, as a more constructive approach to women's roles. It is this construction which generally characterises fixed focality and inclusive strategy.

## Enlisting the small men

An example can illustrate the development of early modern strategy and its patriarchal connections.

When king Carl 12 of Sweden besieged Poltava deep inside Russia in 1709, his army was organised on a mixture of feudal robber baron and capitalist trade venture principles. Plunder was used in order to encourage the men, with the shares neatly portioned according to rank: 40 Swedish *riksdaler* to a captain, 20 to a lieutenant, 2 to a sergeant and 1 to a private soldier – or 2.5 percent of the amount to the captain, as Peter Englund (1988:36) relates in his remarkable portrait of this war.

While class differences, still steeped halfway in feudal tradition, were sharp, men of all ranks were also systematically bound to the war campaign. Besides sharing in the plunder, they were allowed to take their women and children along, and the officers especially were promised land and estates in Poland and Russia if the campaign succeeded (op.cit. 62).

The Swedish noblemen, of whom no less than 80 percent had been away in foreign warfare in periods through the 17th. century, participated in the expedition basically "in order to secure the [Swedish] empire [in the east], their estates in occupied countries, and the various trade capitalist ventures that made huge profits on east European trade". They were backed by "the Swedish state that eagerly cut its share from this enormous commerce" (op.cit. 28,30).

Ordinary men and nobles alike were subjected to harsh church discipline. "The Lutheran orthodoxy that had laid its Old Testament straightjacket over Sweden brought with it thoughts and ideas that were hammered into the soldiers. Punishment and revenge were central motives (..) The blood baths of the Israelites in the Old Testament were used as excuse for the army's own misdeeds." (op.cit.18). The army's priests told the soldiers that the Swedes were God's chosen people.

The soldiers were corrupted also psychologically by being forced to participate in torture of enemies, led by officers who often had their education from the best western European universities or would go there subsequently. "A much used method was to put the peasants' fingers into the flint locks of the pistols and tighten these simple thumb screws until blood squirted. Another method which was also used by the Swedish army in Poland was to put a band around the victim's head, and then to tighten it with a stick until the eyes finally popped out of their sockets" (op.cit. 43).

These traits were not special for the Swedes, but rather typical of the armies and warfare of the day. At the same time as the soldiers were bound to capitalist national interest, class differences intervened; officers often shifted sides for better payment, and fraternised across lines.

In the aftermath of the Poltava siege, the tsar and the higher Russian officers arranged a splendid banquet right in the middle of the battle field, with thousands of corpses and wounded laying around. The higher Swedish officers who had survived were also invited, and treated in the most courteous manner (op.cit. 278).

"In the Ynglinge saga, Snorre mentions that the Swedes used to sacrifice their king in times of crop failure. It was a reconciliation sacrifice in order to mitigate harsh and cruel gods. Now the situation was reversed: the king of the Swedes sacrificed his subjects, condemning them to death." (op.cit. 194). About ten thousand men, almost half the army, were killed during the campaign.

## Patriarchy and the state

Robert Connell (1995,1993) are among the new masculinities researchers who have put emphasis not only on the role of the military for consolidating hegemonic masculinity in the modern age, but also on the importance of colonial-capitalist ventures like the one described above for *constituting* the modern sense of masculinity. This was done through the development of a systematised sense of manliness, no longer simply as a matter among lords and officers, but throughout the ranks. It was connected to the economic privilege and psychological and religious indoctrination just described. This differed from late feudal warfare which was still mainly a matter between nobles, so to speak above the heads of common men, with professional soldier groups and forcibly recruited peasants (Tuchman, B 1980).

Even Machiavelli (1985, orig. c. 1514), the strategist, mainly tells the prince that if he wants to be sure that an occupied city will stay on his hands, he has to colonise it. Machiavelli discusses the old divide and rule principles, and includes advice on how to instil fear without creating too much hatred (do not rape the women, etc.). Yet he

has little to say on how to secure the co-operation of the subjects through 'constructive' inclusion (op.cit. 37,97).

In the early modern period, however, the recruitment of common men emerged as a more important strategical principle. External colonisation, the reformation and a less aristocratic form of warfare were contributing factors. This recruitment was based on a patriarchal rule which by itself was old, now becoming more socially efficient and dominant: 'if you accept your oppressor, you will be enabled to oppress those below you' (Holter, Ø 1989a:28-32).

This development, and not simply enlarged means of power, must be taken into account in order to understand how and why early capitalism managed to organise oppression and exploitation on a previously unknown scale, like the movement of around fifteen million slaves from Africa to America (Pateman, C 1988:64). The emerging gender order emerges as a main basis of execution as well as legitimization of patriarchal interest, while detail portraits like the one given by Englund confirm the general point made earlier regarding the need to *distinguish* between masculinities and patriarchy.

Before turning to a discussion of main forms of patriarchy in modern times, some issues regarding patriarchy and the state will be briefly outlined, although this once more is a subject that goes beyond the current framework. In an earlier work, Connell (1987:126pp.) gives a useful summary of four main feminist views of the state, starting from a position that "it can hardly be denied that the state is deeply implicated in the social relations of gender". There is (a) the liberalist view of the state as neutral arbiter, which as Connell argues tends to hide the gendered (or in my words, patriarchal) character of the state administration itself; (b) the regulation view of Foucault and Donzelot, which he criticises for not really explaining gendered interests, and (c) a third 'class state' view with support from Marxist feminists as well as the Freudian left. All these remain unclear, however, on why exactly gender is essential to capitalism.

"A fourth group tackles this head-on by arguing that the state is from the start a patriarchal institution. David Fernbach proposes that the state was historically created as the institutionalisation of masculine violence. Catherine MacKinnon looks at the form of state action, in particular legal 'objectivity', as the institutionalisation of a male point of view, and shows how it impinges on sexual politics in the management of cases of rape. Zillah Eisenstein's dual systems model sees the central state as an agent in sexual politics at the same time as class politics (...) Carole Pateman proposes that the development of the liberal state was itself underpinned by a new form of patriarchy in civil society developing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." (Connell 1987:128). Connell interprets Pateman's view of the modern state as 'gendered' within a context of changing genders, recognising that "a key part of this is a change in the patterns of masculinity" (op.cit. 130).

In the social forms view, the character and role of the state, like any other social category, must be approached through institutional and historical analysis, and a discussion of the state's role 'as such' vis-à-vis patriarchy is of limited interest. States are different and their roles have varied. Yet it is clear that the main emphasis is put

on economic and other reciprocity forms, and an approach to power and the state in that more 'substantivist' context.

Further, an analysis that allows one to recognise that the market, and also more advanced capital transfer forms, may play different roles, points in that direction regarding the state also. We do not have to assume that the state 'must' be gendered in the patriarchal sense since the main burden of explanation in this context is well taken care of by the differentiation principle and the patriarchal character of the political economy itself. The state is of course a part of this structure, yet it is also partly independent and connected to counter-commodity or 'otherness sphere' regulation.

This view may perhaps be regarded as pragmatic or even opportunistic, yet there is also possible that it represents a wider and more realist assessment of the character of patriarchy in the contemporary world, compared to views that target the state as its basis or main link. Recent socialist and Marxist debate regarding the state is relevant here. Nickie Charles (1993:136), referring to Judith Stacey, Heidi Hartmann and others, argues that

"Many feminists have concluded that socialism has nothing to offer women, that changes in the economic structure have no significant impact on gender divisions and that women are in fact subordinated by a system of patriarchy which exists regardless of whether societies are feudal, capitalist or socialist."

Although I fully agree that patriarchy is a pervasive construct with an amazing ability to survive through different institutional and economic orders, a view that the latter plays no role at all is clearly misleading. Certainly contemporary welfare state questions, for example, are important for women's situation on a very concrete level. In the present perspective, these questions also have deeper connections to the basis of patriarchy, since they are entangled with the differentiation process as well as the character of the activity function pyramid. For example, feminists have noted the deterioration of women's status as part of the transition to market economy in the former eastern block (e.g. Watson, P 1993; Bertram, B 1990).

The idea that existing socialisms show that Marx's theory is irrelevant for feminism mainly reflects ignorance regarding this theory. Here I agree with Hans-Jørgen Schanz (1995:28-29,40-41, my trans.) who, in an otherwise very critical discussion of the neo-Marxism of the 1970s, writes:

"Marx' theory had nothing to do with the so-called really existing socialism. It could not be legitimated on the basis of Marx, just as little as his theory could be made responsible for its existence. Regardless of how much he was declared the father of this socialism. This was a view [that the neo-Marxists held in the 1970s] that I do not feel any need to change. Anyone who, with some openness of mind, takes the trouble to read Marx' economy-critical texts, cannot fail to discover this. Today one does not need to prove that Adam Smith was not responsible for Pinochet. Yet this kind of proof seems needed to show that Marx was not responsible for Stalin. (...)

On the basis of Marx' theory we may argue that socialism, economically speaking, has never been realised anywhere. His definition of capitalist economy was that labour was the goal of wealth and labour time its measure. Even if this goal was not very

successfully promoted under socialism, it remains inarguable that labour time remained the measure of wealth. Even an insistence on Marx's basic thought, the creation of 'disposable time' as the goal of wealth, was here incriminating. Not least because this insistence of course promoted rich and free individuality – phenomena that continually, in the really existing socialism, were lumped into petit-bourgeois ideology. What historically has seen the light of day as self-proclaimed socialism, on a basic level has nothing to do with Marx's ideas."

Although this last "nothing" is rhetorical, Schanz's main point is valid in the face of a silent rule in some academic circles, including some feminist research, to the effect that whereas other people's theories must be *studied*, Marx's can just be dismissed. I also find Schanz interpolation of Marx ('labour as the goal of wealth') well put and valid, in line with Moishe Postone (1993) and other recent attempts to take his central insights seriously, even if the reified character of social relations should also be mentioned.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, Marxists also have themselves to thank for this situation, regarding feminists' opinions. As noted initially, it is a curious sight how precisely the kind of ideological denial that Schanz attacks is itself reflected in Marxists' silence regarding patriarchy. Schanz, for example, writes as if he is unaware that main problems of existing socialism have been deeply connected to the patriarchal limits of the whole venture. Yet this critique now exists on a number of levels, from several feminist points of view. Like Judith Stacey (1983) in her important analysis of Chinese patriarchy, recent researchers (e.g. Lupher, M 1992) have fruitfully used a more Weberian concept of politics as 'patrimonial' praxis in order to understand power restructuring in socialist countries, showing how local enrichment and power strategies have gone together. In a 1984 paper on Soviet *Herrschaft*, I discuss evidence that the activity function pyramid was very much alive and well in the SU, and that the exploitation of women was one major basis for the whole economy (Holter 1984d). Recent Chinese development, which seems mainly founded on the low-cost work of women, strengthen this impression. Briefly put, these societies are patriarchal for a reason, and it is a strange fact, among Marxists, that their in-depth insights into the logics of capital at this point end up with not being able to add two and two together.<sup>9</sup>

Beyond this, there is the need to recognise that capitalist-era states and economies belong to capitalism, and not to some fictitious otherness place. This relates to an understandable yet very costly misconception of the 20th. century, a divisioning into our-world and their-world regardless of one's political attitude, *as if* the socialist attempts already represented a new era. In a wider perspective, this can be compared to an idea that whereas western Europe and the Catholic church in the Middle Ages represented one main commodity form, namely the feudal form, eastern Europe and the Orthodox church represented another one – in this case going back to slavery. Yet there is no doubt that the two belonged to *one* era and social form, and basically displayed the same tendencies, with feudalisation also in the areas controlled by Byzanz, etc., and with the two spheres interacting on that level and not as two different modes of production.

The same is the case with the variously 'mixed' economies of the present era; they exhibit the main traits mentioned by Schanz. On a more basic level, they also contain

the surplus labour extraction that Resnick & Wolff (1993) uses as a main criterium in order to conclude, reviewing seventy years of debate, that the Soviet Union was indeed a *state capitalist* formation. This is another ideological high-investment area, the *need* to construct a straw man argument of the eastern block as a look-see communism, in order to 'harmonise' free world thinking. Since the enemy itself is down and beaten, one should think it could now be defused.

This, however, is not so easily done. The black-and-white picture of 'our' world and 'theirs' that has dominated the 20th. century shows many signs of being a structural feature, to the extent that a main process of creating *new* enemy pictures when the old one was dissolved with the break-up of the eastern block has been documented in detail (Ottosen, R 1994), as if there was a deeper obligation to put others (like 'the Muslims') in this role. Once more we are reminded of the dual character of patriarchal strategy, and the social psychological victimisation element: not only the 'obey and you shall be obeyed' principle, but an extension of it, a *scapegoat* function, 'hit that nobody, and you will be somebody'.

The recent re-emergence of racism in Europe (Webber, F 1995) shows that this is no peripheral mechanism, and the need to investigate its background is a high-priority issue also in terms of equal status and gender research. The writings of researchers like Zygmunt Bauman (1993) who have called attention to the danger of rising racism, also display a need for better, more specific analyses. What Bauman calls *proteophobia* or fear of the ambiguous is at best a first step towards understanding what goes on. Such concepts easily lead to an underestimation of the calculative rationality as well as the sadistic emotionality of racism. There is evidence, for example from Norway (Holter 1989a:61-5) that fear of immigrants and/or racism is more closely connected to anti-women and anti-feminist attitudes than commonly recognised (and also evidence that this cluster is associated with certain background patterns like having experienced mobbing/victimisation in childhood; cf. chap. 6).

## Three patriarchal contexts of modern society

I shall turn to a model of three main stages of modern patriarchal organisation that was first presented in an earlier context (Holter & Aarseth 1993), distinguishing between a 'paternatic', 'masculinatic' and 'androgynatic' phase. Although the model does not invalidate other contributions in this area (discussed in chapter 10), it is more specific than, for example, Sylvia Walby's (1990) private/public patriarchy model, and I present it here in outline since I have found it useful.

At the outset some problems must be reemphasised. If patriarchy itself is a diffuse notion, dividing it into subcategories is not necessarily helpful, and may instead lead to misplaced concreteness and superficiality. When categories and models are more specified, they will easily also be misleading in some areas, since they simplify a complex. This is especially relevant in an area the present one. It may be noted at this point that the pervasive character of patriarchal organisation does not, to my mind, mean that it always *must* be complex and/or latent, halfway hidden, or similar, even in a modern context. It may appear in less complex and more direct forms, even if a certain minimal complexity is involved if we accept the view of patriarchy as a 'combinatory arrangement' presented in this text. Yet it certainly *can* be a highly

complex arrangement, and often is, and so the risk that any model will miss essential information is all the greater.

Also, any model that recognises 'stages' as well as 'tendencies', using the same terms of both – which is the case of the models to be proposed – introduces an ambiguity that may create mistakes in some contexts. This is not only because concrete developments may be quite different from the stages of the model, but also because the tendency category (and the process it points to) only resembles the stage category up to a point. Beyond this point, the difference between the two becomes a major issue.

Considering all this, one may ask why any effort should be made in this direction, and if research perhaps would be better off without it. Yet that is a type of argument that has been answered earlier; we cannot help creating what Connell (1993) calls 'big pictures'; the point is to make better ones and have more to choose from. A main issue in the present context is the ability to develop theories that can make sense of the manifold results from feminist and gender studies in wider societal terms, *creating* new terms and concepts as needed, since the old ones in many senses were made precisely in order to look away and ignore gender.

The models to be presented connect main processes in two contexts, the gender system on the one hand and society at large on the other. This resembles the general effort in this area discussed earlier (chap. 10). As regards gender, men are the point of departure rather than women. This choice was originally made for pragmatic reasons, since the framework was developed in a study of men, yet I found that it was fruitful also in general terms. Men are more directly involved in the combination of same-sex and cross-sex ranking, a key point of the present approach.

Regarding society, the point of departure is not – for reasons stated earlier – the public / private division, nor the type of class formation, nor the state. Instead it is a core aspect of the dominant reciprocity process, namely the *form of surplus creation*. This is the element emphasised in Marx's theory as well as other political economic theory, and I believe that it has stood the test of time rather well. Without it, class theory remains superficial, as is the case regarding global and 'race' theory. My assumption is that this is true of patriarchy theory also. Although such a focus may lead to a too narrow framework in social forms terms, since at first sight it mainly concerns the 'firstness' field of the economy, it may also be developed in broader and more nuanced ways.

The model has three main stages, each characterised by a typical gender order and a main political and economical trend. These are:

- (1) **Father-archaised power – *the paternate*; absolute subordination and formalisation of the patriarchal-capitalist order based mainly on absolute surplus value, colonial profit, etc.**
- (2) **Man-generalised power – *the masculine*; a shift from formal to economically realised gender subordination, based mainly on relative surplus extradition in large-scale industrial society; and**
- (3) **Gender-abstracted power – *the androgynate*; a shift towards post-industrial, information-oriented society with more horizontal but also more extensive economic relations.**

The three main phases can be further subdivided. As is clear from the following, I believe we are presently in the context of a late phase of (2), while tendencies related to (3) can also be found. It should also be mentioned initially that all these three are models of a patriarchal society, even if (3) probably entails a reduction of patriarchal power. It should also be noted that the androgynatic phase is more tentatively defined than the two others.

The paternate, masculine and androgynate may be seen as *background contexts that influence or organise masculinities and femininities*. They create the basis for the 'staging' of gender. As I said, the three categories have gender, and men in particular, as one point of departure. Therefore they are perhaps most easily recognised in a family context:

- **the pre-industrial family was 'paternatic';**
- **the nuclear family was 'masculinatic';**
- **contemporary family conditions express 'late masculinatic' and 'early androgynatic' conditions.**

Some other main connections may be mentioned before we turn to each phase. In chapter 8 and elsewhere in part one, I discussed modern gender as a system that first emerged as a 'formal' proposition (with women as '*the sex*', etc.), and was then gradually realised as main institutional form of patriarchal subordination. This realisation process can be located in the masculine, and especially the middle phase of it, with large-scale industry turning to a 'consumer society'. As the masculinatic form of patriarchy developed, with production sphere values in the centre, men and women increasingly met as political and economic subjects on a partially equal (what I called gender-dyadic) basis. This was a new world associated with a new family life, replacing the paternalistic stage before it, and the old world of lords and dependants, masters and clients in early modern times.

There was a perceived "end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations (...) all fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices" as Marx said at the threshold of this process (quoted in Forbes, I 1990:105). This end of patriarchy did not exactly happen, we know, and in terms of the cross-sex / same-sex distinction drawn earlier, we may say that while patriarchal cross-sex relations became *genderised*, same-sex relations became *neutralised*. As can be seen, this analysis puts us on the departure point in terms of the "Y" hypothesis, where the two lines break off, with none of them resembling the old one.

The three-phase view of the history of modern patriarchy is based on material relating to psychological and cultural as well as economic and sociological changes, and only some of these trends can be mentioned in the following outline.

## (1) The paternate or paternalistic modern patriarchy

The Protestants' emphasis on the industrious marriage as God's image on earth is as good a starting place as any, concerning the patriarchal organisation associated with the paternate. This family should not be mistaken for the 20th. century nuclear family, even if it represented a step in that direction. It was part of a much more authoritarian and open form of patriarchy where men in the propertied classes were household heads, hierarchically related to the world around them. Societal power could be described as this fatherly household power writ large, as was done in Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (c. 1635).

At this stage, the father was a caretaker as well as an authority; quite a lot of emotional bonding might take place within the authoritarian relationship. Children belonged to fathers not only in terms of property, but also in many ways on a social and symbolical level, John Gillis (1995:18) argues. "Historians have now documented that fathers took their patrigenic duties seriously".

The idea of all men belonging to one basic social category was not given much importance in this world, compared to ours. This was not due to a lack of attention to vertical social relationships, including oppression of women – rather the contrary. Nor was it only due to the fact that sex-related matters were often seen as fate, human nature, or prescribed by God and nature combined. Such views themselves require explanation. The social frame around sex-related activity was strict, but the sex-related organisation itself could be relatively free, especially among common people (Scandinavia: 'night courtship'). This is a tendency regarding sexual activity also. Sexuality was externally restricted, yet internally less disciplined than later.

Gender-as-woman and sex-as-nature are closely related. The overlap between sexed and patriarchal organisation which later created the gender system proper, was mainly a woman/nature substratum at this point. It was not a system with two subjects, nor was it clearly disentangled from others. Like other early modern institutional patterns, there are some traits from the old epoch, some from the new one.

One main reason why sex was thematised through the paradigm of fatherhood was the fact that hierarchical sex division was linked to other kinds of divisions mainly through the father or household head. Through their relations to households mainly led by men, women were summed up in the generalisations of the time, a background element in the main theme of hierarchical status groups, German *Stände*. It was an order that often appears halfway feudal, a ranked society with three main ranks; the old nobility, the *Bürger*s or citizens, and a rich array of dependants – peasants, serfs, servants, journeymen and workers. Sex-related horizontal divisions could be considerable, but vertical divisions were not as distinct from other stratification as later. If sex stratification was conceived as natural, that was still the case with most forms of ranking. Therefore, sex divisions seldom appeared as a matter on their own, a theme of social consciousness.

Dependents of both sexes were customarily excluded from the emerging democratic bourgeois order. In England, the Levellers of the 1640s demanded free vote to "all males over the age of twenty-one with the exception of those receiving wages (..) The movement was one of the lower middle class, the small independent men (..) The wage-earning class, although perhaps half the population, had not yet begun to appear as a political force." (Morton, A 1974:253; cf. Polanyi, K 1993).

In the paternate, new relationships were often introduced and legitimised in archaic and feudal terms. It has been argued that the ideology of blood ties became more embrative and systematised here than it ever was in the feudal ages. This 'backwards motion forward' tendency has been typical for the paternatic element later also. Today, paternatic tendencies are echoed in some of our current debate, for example in Robert Bly's (1992) *Iron-John*, where men should return to a golden age of authority and care combined, with men who are kings as well as caretakers.

In the late phase of the paternate issues related to gender as formal subordination appeared with more force on the public agenda. The sexed subject of women was characteristically introduced as an age subject – how to educate girls and young women (Rousseau, Woolstonecraft). The first discussion of femininity and women's status was a pedagogic discussion.

It is often said that a 'new womanhood' was the focus of this debate, yet that is at best halfway true. Rather, womanhood as such came to the forefront as part of the new view of humanity as such, free and equal, and only when it turned out that the seer had one eye closed. With the right education, Woolstonecraft argued, women could become as capable as men, to share democratic rights equally.

The dominant conception of femininity mainly existed vis-à-vis *some* men, household heads. It was not yet a femininity counterpositioned to men in general, men *as* a homogenous category, masculine persons. The latter was still a latent development, and it is typical that each step in that direction, for example in the writings of Rousseau, are perceived as discoveries of nature, the *natural property* of all women. According to Laqueur (1990), this was also the period where anatomy shifted from the one-sex to the two-sex view of the human body.

Much more could be said of paternalism in general in early capitalism and of the more specific paternatic form of patriarchy, including its subforms. Some of this is fairly well known, even if its *before-gender, only-women-as-gender* implications are seldom clearly recognised, and family and economic arrangements often not seen in combination. I must limit this outline to noting two main tendencies. The first has been introduced already; the wide political and cultural tendency to line up, so to speak, the men behind the heads. There was an emerging category of the 'common man', a more uniform type of men based on new economic conditions. This latent generalisation of 'masculinity' and the genderisation process as a whole mainly went on in the background, yet it was linked to emerging bourgeois aspirations and democratic tendencies and reached 'romantic' and other expressions. The earlier distinctions must be maintained here: the men of the paternate thought of themselves *as* men only in passing moments as far a patriarchy, power and society went, although they had no problem doing so as far as sexed organisation went (cf. chap. 8). Democratised manliness was not yet born, but it was in a sense prepared in the background, precisely by the kinds of homogenisation processes described above.

These were often most visible at the outer front and in the colonies. In the seventeenth century, a patrol system was created in the US south, made up of masters and overseers, enforcing the laws of slavery. It was only in the nineteenth century, however, that the duty of patrolling was extended to *all* white men, who had authority over all blacks (even free blacks) and over whites who 'conspired' with blacks. Thus a system for controlling slaves became a practice "of all whites controlling all blacks...a matter of race." The result was a "Victorian masculine role of provider and protector [that] was directly linked with violence because of plantation society's necessity of controlling a potentially explosive black population" (Jones, S 1995:44). This is indicative of the wider process; what emerged, more *recently* than commonly imagined, was an order of men in the true manner of inclusive patriarchal strategy, combining external and internal oppression. The reified objectivity of body

appearance – whites naturally superior to blacks, men to women – was the basic medium of both.

The second background factor, connected to this new sense of bodily and external materiality, was the increasing width and depth of surplus value production and the mediation of goods. The main qualitative shift was the transfer of humans: a market mechanism that eventually included the labour power of the great majority of the population. These were no longer small-scale artisans' or other specialised work relations, but a mechanism where human being increasingly transferred themselves – not only in person, but *as* increasingly capitalised, capital-connected commodities. In terms of learning, world views, culture and identity this shift is comparable to the changes in technology over the last centuries, and a central part of the social preparation for them.

Large-scale sale of labour power, becoming the rule in England from the 17th. century onwards, should probably be connected to the repression tendencies of that period. In general, paternatic forms seem characterised by a *trade-off between exploitation and protection*, often a stepwise process where increased exploitation undermines the former paternalistic regime, which is then sought reinforced with even more authoritarian methods, and so on. These are processes that are very visible today also, mainly in the poorer parts of the world. They are seldom resolved peacefully: the head is usually removed, one way or the other. The inner tendency of the paternate is masculinatic, there is a shift of force from the older form of power to the younger one.

Paternatic power became associated with repression and renewed absolutism especially in the late 16th. century and 17th. century. The pronounced emphasis on fatherly order and the archaisation of culture may be taken as indications of quite a different state of affairs below the surface of society. Although it is the later, bourgeois revolutions that have received most attention, there is evidence of a very turbulent, and in some ways 'traumatic', social shift associated with the earlier period, i.e. the onset of capitalism in the 16th. century. This is discussed in chapter 14.

## (2) The masculine

The paternate and its fatherly power did not dissolve; it was beheaded. I find it symbolic that the power of the fathers met its physical fate in a new mechanism of the rebel sons, the guillotine. From now on, paternatic power could no longer rest on its own basis, and when we later witness paternatic reaction, it is in fact founded on very different principles (Bismarck, Khomeini). One way or the other its kernel, in the century following the great Revolution, became masculinatic. 'The common man' is its symbol, with gender / woman as his inalienable right. Freud's ideas of fatherhood and the self can be seen in view of a receding paternatic background: where *it* was, *I* shall be. The Freudian man has organised his lusts and appetites in accordance to being a common man, not a lord who could do much as he pleased with his libido, and had no need for such a category. Gender, in this light, was the common man's curriculum and disciplinary order. It is characteristic that it was introduced among men as a gentlemen's order – plus a fight, all against all, especially in the lower ranks. This was the social darwinistic attitude that ran thick in late 19th. century British and other culture (e.g. in Durkheim's work). The commonality of this category of man

only showed up gradually, through class conflict. The terrain is clearly there from the start: a matter between all men.

The two phases described are perhaps better interpreted as 'introduction' and 'main act' than as two equal stages. The first was mainly a transition and preparation period for the second. Anyway, the masculine is a varied and manifold order that has shown remarkable persistence and adaptability under new circumstances. This, in turn, is due mainly to its realised character, compared to the formal notions of gender in the first phase. It solidified as a system, gaining its own dynamics of movement, including oppositional movements in the face of 'capital' and 'patriarchy' both. In the symbolism of the masculine, *the father, patriarchy, is dead*. The brotherhood of freedom and equality is all. So the man dominates the scene, now representing *all* men, and at the side of this figure, face turned away, is the woman. At the depth, or beneath this ground, are antitheses to the fragile level of free and equal negotiations between masculine subjects. This is the enigmatic figure. Moreover, the masculine in its emerging gender-systemic wisdom split it into two, and developed a Janus-like symbolism: silence here, words there; darkness there, light here. In the family figure, it is the *mother* who thrones over it all, while the father's face is turned away and the sibling element devalued. There are in principle three persons in the family, not four (even if four is the ideal family size); mother, peripheral father, child. This trinity has no relation to the feudal image of the Madonna with child and God above: there, the spectator was symbolically placed as a child of the human family, beneath Christ, while in the modern image of the nuclear family, everyone is a potential *participant* in each of its three main roles, and they are connected serially, as workers, not 'organically' as part of the Christian family.

Through the 19th. century, the old hierarchy was changed by the gradual, deeper level changes that accompanied and followed in the wake of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions. The economic terrain was fast expanding. The new brotherhood was *socially* allowed to put old ideas and inventions into development and use, so the death of the father and the heavy hand on technology can be seen as related symbolic themes. There was an extending web of wage labour and other capitalist relations in its background, a putting-out system transforming the countryside, turning into a factory system. Now the 'neutralist' character of capital, capital *as* anti-patriarchal, anti-particularistic force, was displayed with full force.

In many areas and on many levels we have seen patriarchal and capitalist concerns reinforcing each other. Those in power in one respect are also often in power in the other, and indicators tend to correlate the two. However, there is also much evidence on conflict, even if often latent and hidden. The conflict element comes to the foreground when we consider England as first case, with the US following behind and gradually taking over in the 1900-50 period.<sup>10</sup> A methodological consideration is in place: this evidence should be given much emphasis. The centre of development was *principally different* from all later cases, for example Japan. The Japanese studied the English system and borrowed the textile industry ideas, while implementing them in a very authoritarian system with factories that could resemble concentration camps. This was capitalism inside a halfway feudal framework, capitalism aligned with existing patriarchy – quite different from the 'anarchic' character of capitalism in the first centre. Although both kinds of developments are important, the latter is the central one.

For observers like Marx, this self-propelled movement remained the cognitive basis for the claims of capital's 'civilisatory tendency'. Capitalism would break apart the particularistic, unproductive relations of the past, including those of patriarchy. It is of major importance to recognise that this view was *not* altogether unfounded.

In the early phase of the development of the factory system (c. 1780-1850), the cheapest labour force, women and children, were on their way to becoming *core economic agents*. I should hasten to say that such a core position has never, by itself, spelled 'power' for anyone. One may consider the situation of slaves in slave states. Now, however, *economic power* and tendentially also *participation in production* were on the way to become the main agenda of power in society. The meta-institutional framework of power was shifting *at the same time* as women were in a majority, or close to it, in the new centre. True, they were there as exploited workers, not capitalists. Yet the *tendency*, as we know very well from later development, was to increase the power of the production sphere as such vis-à-vis the rest of society.

Thereby we obviously come to a crossroad, and we should recognise the fact that capitalism and patriarchy in this central case did not coexist harmoniously.

Early industrialisation continued the tradition of absolute surplus production, now *minus* the paternatic protection. It developed into a system favouring *direct exploitation* of the labour power that was most exploitable in the *immediate* competition context. From the middle of the 19th. century, when the first attempts to curb this early and structurally violent form of industrialism appeared, there was a background shift in patriarchal relationships, eventually leading to the realisation of the 20th. century gender system.

Work life as well as economic studies confirm that the delimiting of the working day and the consequent shift towards *indirect* or 'relative' surplus value production was indeed a change with major implications, as Marx argued. Even if it is perhaps too narrow to designate this shift alone as "the" basis of a new form of patriarchy, it does seem like a change more important than most for creating the new form of society including gender that we associate with our century.

While the principle involved in this change is simple, its consequences are complex. Absolute surplus value production simply means the ability to extract whatever can be extracted from the immediate work process. Relative surplus value production, on the other hand, puts a limit on this ability and thereby forces a change of orientation in the whole economic-political system. Without going into details or controversies regarding Marx's surplus value argument, we can observe that such a shift did in fact occur; competition increasingly became tied to technical innovation and relative advantage rather than the rougher methods of absolute surplus value production. In Marx's terms, with the labour time set, surplus value could only be increased by increasing the portion of uncompensated labour, i.e. a decrease of compensated ('necessary') labour, and consequently a pressure to decrease this compensation cost, relatively to the labour output. The shift towards technical-factor based competition was associated with a less well recognised (or sufficiently theorised) shift within the work process itself, in the work place, *from* attempts to lengthen the work day, *to* an intensification of work. This intensification of work is another way of saying that

background or 'shadow work' (chap. 5) – socialisation, education, care and regeneration – becomes important

The wider changes connected to the new principle is the important issue in the present context. The economic process was no longer focused simply on the immediate, directly available labour, but increasingly had to turn to indirect or background sources, thereby extending the political-economical field as a whole. It is this wide-reaching process that can be connected, on the one hand, to the discussion about 'capitalisation of the sphere of reproduction', and on the other hand to democratisation processes, since the delimiting of direct surplus value also *in tendency* meant the delimiting of direct authoritarianism. I am emphasising 'in tendency', since highly important retroactive processes have been at work here throughout our century, as is discussed below. In brief terms, the result was a much more extensive, but gradually also less vertical, socioeconomic order.

Like the principle of relative surplus production, the reasons for the shift towards it are fairly well known, even if they may have been somewhat exaggerated in some reports at the time: a threatening breakdown of the whole capitalist order by a destruction of the working class. I see little reason to doubt that an absolute surplus value system, left to itself, already into the 'how to squeeze an hour more from those who already work sixteen hours a day' kind of consideration, would indeed have created major troubles. We know that it created family-less portions of the working class, and that it was into a process that tendentially levelled patriarchal privileges down to zero, often with the woman and children employed while the man was unemployed. The tendency of capitalism to dismantle patriarchy, and select women for the new core process, is an important background for understanding the patriarchalism that developed in most workers' movements in the late 19th. and early 20th. century. Clearly, it was not simply the forces for or against capital that were at work in this process, where men gradually regained a secure foothold in the core production sector.

This fairly materialist yet form-oriented account remains important for understanding why families and gender developed as they did. Besides socialist responses to the crises of capitalism, the main working man's dream became one of establishing his own home, his own family; this was the cultural engine or collective transference field that gave force to family development, associated with a shorter working day, a new form of private life and a new popular culture to fill it. We recognise, at this point, that the analytical part of the present text as has a historical parallel, a 'how to get a family' project that was associated with the new gender system.

Far from 'emptying the household' of work, this process created new forms of labour, and split formerly undifferentiated activities. Eventually this differentiation process created a huge new field of reproductive or human-oriented labour, which in our time has pushed industrial labour itself into the background in terms of employment quantity. In the light of this long-term process, one wonders whether there ever was much of the 'reserve army' function of women, as Marxists declared.

Socialists' adherence to the women as reserve army thesis is a remarkable illustration of the *staging effect* mentioned earlier. Concretely speaking, women were more active than men. Empirical reports like those of the US Dept. of Labour (e.g. Stewart

& Bowen 1929) left no doubt that women usually worked more for less money, and time use studies were now also confirming what most people could see, namely that women were active also with unpaid work. Yet if the stage says something else, the eyes are not to be used.

The notion of labelling the most active part of the population as a '*reserve*' was the effect of an abstract paradigm that classified much of this activity as passivity. This was a point on which Marxists and non-Marxist economic teachings agreed, with a notable lack of opposition. The real question is not why the theoretical classification was done, but what kind of *factual* economic mechanisms *allowed* this overt patriarchalism. This is discussed in chapter 13.

It is only over the last decades that reproductive activities increasingly have become *manifest* as vital for production work itself. This broad process has been connected both to technical innovation and consequent increased requirements of 'quality' labour, and to the further development of more indirect or mediated channels of surplus.

The character and extent of the *mediation* of surplus are good indicators of masculinatic development: the more advanced the system, the wider the circuit of exploitative relations and the greater their complexity. Several other factors are connected: less vertical relations with more self-involvement; more participative orientation, and a self-directed rather than an openly authoritarian discipline.

The gradual emergence of the nuclear family with the man as producer and the woman as reproducer of labour power can be approached in this framework. I do not believe the character of surplus relations and their links to class-divided masculinities and femininities explain all the changes in the family, yet it is important for many of them. Much has been said of the danger of commodity-analysis narrowness in this text, and there is also the contrary danger of muddling up, in wider reciprocity terms, what should actually mainly be interpreted in economy-critical terms, and I think the latter applies here. Later we shall see that reciprocity questions are 'reintroduced' when we go into the heart matters of the economic paradigm.

As a whole, I see the masculine as representing a *dual realisation of capital*, both in the conventional sense of *machinery and disciplined mass production workers*, and in the sense of *gendered reproducers* – gendered private lives, intimacies no longer arranged or governed by family heads but by bodies and sexualities 'speaking for themselves'. Instead of paternal discipline, capacities came to the forefront, work capacities on the one hand and gender capacities on the other. Both function as capital commodities; capital is the relation between and among them.

This line of thought, which I developed in various contexts through the 1980s (e.g. Holter 1982b), partly based on Marx's (1978:1019-38) ideas on the transition from formal to real subsumption), is not a 'Brave New World' image of capitalism. It does not presuppose a deterioration of conditions. This is important, since the '*dual realisation*' hypothesis becomes misleading if interpreted in a typical modern frame of mind where the *alternative* to such a realisation would be, simply, freedom. The point of departure – the historical reality a century and a half ago – is quite different. What the hypothesis says is only that the older and more overt patriarchal authority *did not*

*quite vanish in thin air*, even if it was reduced in some respects; some of it remained, was *transformed* and also strengthened. The result was a new kind of *bodily objectivity* on the one hand and *technological objectivity* on the other.

With this modification, the present perspective allows us to see capitalism and patriarchy not as formally or externally connected, but as internally linked. Yet this link was not automatic or preordained. It was the result of a conflict-filled historical process. The common man of the masculine *resisted* the advance of capitalism and changed its barren absolute surplus ground to one that allowed freedom and patriarchal prerogatives to survive – as close partners. The long-term effect was a rise in the status of women, and a commodity differentiation that shed its last elements of seclusion, gradually turning inclusion into a full-scale system of polarisation.

*Regressive masculinistic tendencies.* Where sex- and class-related stratification had formerly been openly regulated, it now seemed to regulate itself, as a matter of each person's free choice. There can be no doubt that this major change had some traumatic aspects. Existential anxiety, or at least a transformation of earlier fears into a more abstract form, is a main cultural trait of the emerging consumer society in the early 20th. century, with anxiety reduction as one main role of consumption. There was the common feeling that the world, while freer, had also become a more turbulent, changing and fearful place, and this feeling was easily transformed into the quest for a more *solid order* that underlies the early fascist movements. Instead of the unnatural order of money and capital, Mussolini wanted the natural order of concrete labour, reaching back to patristic ideas of corporate work function organisation. Patriarchal strategy here and elsewhere appears as an attempt to impose an 'organic' order, a *system*, on an abstract, impersonal *process*.

The regulation of patriarchal power through the self (or, in more recent terms, a gendered self) came at a cost. Authoritarian relations were increasingly reestablished through self-control, and since capital had changed tracks, towards relative and indirect surplus sources, this sphere of self-control now also became a practical reality for those mainly outside the older order, like household servants and helpers. Women gained from this change: the *idea* of women's right to vote clearly became a *reality* where economic developments confirmed it, or made it into a necessity.

Capital cannot be neatly positioned in this process. The resistance of men went together with some tendencies of capital, creating new forms of patriarchal organisation and new barriers to emancipation. At the same time, capitalist developments tended to undermine the comparably solid-state arrangements of patriarchy. A productivity expert could dissolve the traditional patriarchal territoriality in the factory. I think fascism primarily relates to capital, a highly contradictory relationship, rather than to patriarchy as such, yet patriarchal elements are important within it.

Roger Griffin (1995:2pp.), suggesting an ideal type approach to fascism, argues that fascism has a "common mythic core", a "power to unleash strong affective energies through the evocative force of the image or vision of reality it contains for those susceptible to it." This includes most people, as far as fascists have their way, since the fascist system itself seeks to engender precisely this susceptibility as a mass phenomenon, so that the "generic mythic image, laden with potential mobilising and

even mass-mobilising force" becomes part of a self-fulfilling cycle. Griffin does not really clarify what this mythic core and its "psychological matrix" consist of. Here as elsewhere we find the patriarchal connection mentioned in parenthesis: "the fascist felt he (and it generally was a he) had been fatefully born at a watershed between national decline and national regeneration" (op.cit.3), even if Griffin writes a lot of how fascism and nazism exploit men's feelings of degradation and pollution, a theme that has been discussed especially by Klaus Theweleit (1987). In the case of nazism, it is not very difficult to identify the *main manifestation* of the 'mythic core': the image of the Bolshevik-capitalist Jew, the swindler, raping the sound Aryan wife or daughter. Yet if this is the propagandistic front stage, the back stage is different. The theme of *contempt for weakness* is a central passage to it, as the Norwegian philosopher Harald Ofstad emphasised in the 1950s already. I also think self-contempt, a violent hatred projected outwards, is a main background issue.

Many traits support a classification of the main authoritarian ideologies of the 20th. century, and nazism in particular, as regressive masculinatic forms of power, rather than paternatic forms. There is the appeal of a leader who distinctly is not a father figure, rather a big brother; not representative of the past, but of the proclaimed future. As Griffin notes, a recurring theme is the need to cleanse the body of society, now framed as the nation, although he does not note the distinct fear of femininity in this theme. Another trait is the emphasis – expressed especially clearly in many of Goebbels's speeches – on an order of the common man of the nation or the race, in this case German / Aryan men as such, each with their woman – quite different from the paternatic idea of patriarchal heads. It is probably no coincidence that the nazi mythology mainly borrowed from classicism, with some feudal imagery – Aryan knights – thrown in for good measure.

The opposition between democratic and authoritarian forces can be seen as a *main conflict* of masculinatic strategy, manifested in World War II and later in the opposition between the Western and Eastern blocks. This does not imply a ahistorical view of communism and nazism as twins. A cure for cancer differs from cancer, even when the patient dies. Socialism was the attempted cure, nazism the counter-attempt or the disease at its absurd worst. Many observers, Griffin included, seem to have forgotten that the nazis put the communists into concentration camps *first*. There can be no doubt that socialism, communism and Marxism in all variants were and are the main enemy of nazi and fascist movements, even if these movements also *recruit* on the basis of anti-capitalist feelings. Yet beyond this whole 20th. century dividing line, there is the fact that the two camps had much in common. Both belonged to the masculinatic scenery of the big brother/ leader and the common man.

This theme deserves a full discussion on its own, and only one major structural trait can be mentioned here. This is the importance of the *dual-zone economic system* of the Third Reich, which has not been sufficiently appreciated. I am not now thinking of the spheres discussed previously in this text, but of two zones of surplus value production. In the 'inner zone' of the Reich, the goal was a comparatively mild form of relative surplus extraction, 'mild' precisely due to the absolute extraction in the outer zone. The latter came to include the wartime slave labour in Germany itself. This inner zone was to be the basis of Aryan eugenics and much else. So, in tendency, *two* kinds of differentiation principles were involved, one in each zone, tendentially a vertical '*levelling*' principle in the outer zone, allowing a more *symmetrical* difference

in the inner zone. This, I think, is the core dynamic that made it possible for the nazis to attract considerable *female* support throughout. Even if this was a clearly patriarchal state, the status of the German *Frau* should be *raised*. The interconnection of external racism and *relative* internal equality certainly gives food for thought. <sup>11</sup> When we consider Europe today, it cannot be denied that there are certain *structural* resemblances to this two-zone model, a fact which is relevant in a discussion of why racism and nazism reappear as tendencies.

*"Fratriarchal" forms of power.* Some have argued that we are now seeing a transition from more traditional patriarchal power to a fratriarchal or 'brotherhood' type (e.g. Sjørup, K 1994). I believe that the sibling element has been there from the start of the masculine, and also that it must be understood as a 'fractured' element. A brotherhood of the market is not a brotherhood in the common sense. In this framework we may nevertheless recognise shifting tendencies towards 'fratriarchalism', mainly against two opponents – the older men or men of power, and against women. As I said, the masculine generally declares the father as dead, and in its reactive forms it inserts the big-brother leader in his place.

There is no doubt that the actual position of fathers has been connected to these tendencies. Father absence was theorised as a sociopsychological factor in the rise of authoritarian attitudes and nazism by Horkheimer in the 1930s already, and as discussed in chapter 6, recent studies confirm that there is some form of link here. A childhood dominated by women, especially if combined with negative attitudes to men, easily lead to idealisation of the absent father and a 'precognitive' aversion against anything tasting of the she-being that has defined one's early world. It is not so hard to see how Griffin's portrait of the mythic core may fit in here. On another level, however, it is the character of the gender arrangement itself which is the key issue here, not just the father's absence, which is expressed in the fact that this absence has often been combined with negative or controlling presence. There is a larger question of the *reality* of personal contact, and the annihilative aspects of gender contact discussed previously. This burden is heavier for men, and once more I emphasise self-sacrifice and self-contempt as main background issues. It is not creativity or positive feelings of self that make people turn to racism in order to make life more meaningful. It is a *victimisation principle* of which more will be said later. In the current debate, as in the 1930s, it is the victimisers who manage to shift the whole focus of attention, *as if* the fate of a country like Norway depended on keeping a few thousand refugees out.

Some have tried to reinterpret the Freudian personality framework in fratriarchal terms, with a narcissistic brotherly superego being installed instead of the old father (e.g. McCannell, J 1991). Freud's personality framework with the three instances was a mid-level formulation in his theory and one that in many ways was indicative for its time, i.e. the transition from the old patematic order. Yet precisely this historical character creates problems when one attempts to translate it right away into current psychological themes. Although this is only been touched upon in the present text, my discussions have one main line of approach: as in the case of Marx and the class conflict, one must go deeper and examine Freud's central categories. His personality instances cannot be understood unless the key depth category of *the unconscious* is reexamined from a perspective that includes feminist and economy-critical awareness.

The literal meaning of fratriarchy is a form of power where a man is powerful due to his connections to his brothers. The latter may be a fluent, metaphorical category. Yet describing the development as a shift *from* father-power to brother-power means ignoring the *key* issue of change, namely that none of these forms of power survived. Rather, advanced or consolidated capitalism created an *abstract* relationship between men. It is misleading, therefore, to imagine a brotherhood that was 'incidentally' broken up in market competition. On the contrary, the *metaphor* of brotherhood was constructed precisely on that basis, as were the new fatherly themes. The *meta*-institutional change is the main point. All the family figures of the paternate had the lord, the household head, in the background; in the masculine they all have the common man, the *abstract* masculinity, in the background. They are therefore entirely different phenomena, a conclusion that is further warranted when we consider the fact that such *abstract* images have indeed played a much greater role in the masculine than the paternate.

In simple terms, being a man became a matter of *models*, as something to be chosen, different from *superiors* that anyway told men what to do and not to do. This *choice* and modelling are also main points in the *creation* of gender, for masculinity and femininity were not simply moved inwards, in psychological terms, from some outer reality. They did not exist, and they came into existence through men's and women's own actions, now increasingly became *perceived* precisely as actions of their own inner nature, rather than the results of social authority. The gradual cultural shift from 'father' to 'brother' must be seen on this background. Throughout our century, the masculine has become less vertical, more competitive and market-oriented, more indirect in its surplus and oppression methods. As the psychologist Lars Hem (1985:30) has remarked, "the primary threat is no longer that the self is punished, but that it is overlooked", a "prestation principle" has become more important than the reality principle.<sup>12</sup>

### (3) The late masculine and early androgynate

The idea of using the term 'androgynate' of current tendencies is perhaps best explained by going back to the concrete context, a study of men, where this view was first developed (Holter & Aarseth 1993). We interviewed young fathers who wanted to '*be* family', not just *have* one, men who in this and many other respects criticised their own fathers for having been "emotionally handicapped", socially inadequate beings, unable to communicate with their children. In sum, they were one-sidedly production-oriented. The young men we interviewed, instead, wanted to participate and be competent in both spheres, an effort that was very much focused on their relationship to their own children (cf. chap. 6). Although these men still belong to a minority in Norway, they also represent a wider cultural tendency, which many of them were well aware of, describing the traditional type of man as if he belonged to a different, lower-level species. Further, some of the men also connected their own change efforts to changing work life conditions, in the direction of more horizontal relations, more emphasis on visibility, more personal marketing also inside the company, more 'prestation principles' tuned towards communication and co-operation, more 'flexibility' and so on. Therefore we found that the cultural and the work life / economic tendencies made good sense in terms of each other. Since these men basically attempted to combine what was traditionally segregated feminine and masculine capacities, we resorted to the social psychological research tradition

(studies of "androgyny" as personality category) at this point, creating the term 'androgynate'.

Some main economic changes were described. These included an increased sense of '*job magnetism*' on a personal level, related to a sense of *firstness* which is given further sociological substance in terms of the 'firstness field' discussed in chapter 9. Also, the category '*repressive devalorisation*' was discussed. Yet as a whole the portrait remained vague, and it was partially described only in terms of 'more of what we see' – more democratic or horizontal relations *plus* more reification.

Later I have found reasons for retreating a step from the position outlined in the men's life pattern context. One main reason why the androgynate remains vague is simply that it is not here yet, whatever it should be called. What we have mainly remains 'masculinatic'. It is even possible that a designation of the current order as a 'late' subphase is misleading. Some points regarding this issue are briefly outlined here.

*Sex segregation* in the overall activity organisation is one main indicator of masculinatic development. The masculinate is the most *economically* sex-segregated phase in history, even if *concrete* segregation may possibly have been carried further elsewhere. Where most women and men in the paternate and earlier were working towards one common goal, like the upkeep of a farm, *the work of the one now became the input of that of the other*. This is a crucial point. We may find women serving men in many patriarchal epochs; what we do not find is this servitude developed into a wide field of socialisation, education, care and 'relations' work and organised as a *main principle of economic functionality and societal division*.

The 1950s and 1960s were in many ways the *cultural* high point of this segregation, together with 'breadwinner' family ideals. Yet in more subtle, 'polarised' rather than outrightly 'segregated' levels, this principle seems as important today as it did then. There is a micro-partitioning within work processes, so that '*the one inputs, the other outputs*' principle largely remain in force as practical, activity-related phenomenon. This includes new economic areas like the information industries. It may even be questioned whether the relatively more 'subtle' workings of segregation today have been over-emphasised, and confused with another tendency, namely a relative improvement of many women's position in class terms, in the middle class and 'free' occupations especially.

The continued existence of marked sex segregation at the activity level is one main argument for the view that current patriarchal organisation should be seen as masculinatic, even if other tendencies exist, especially in cultural terms. From a historical dynamics point of view, it is noteworthy that changes have often been *earlier* in the family sphere and in the gender system than elsewhere. Family changes as well as the aforementioned upwards class mobility, are related to 'gender politics', which we shall briefly revisit.

*Women's counter-strategies.* The accusation against feminism for "stupid reductionism", as Berg Eriksen (1995) states it, was mentioned earlier. My critique of the gender fixation (chap. 8) might give a similar impression that this distortion is there for no reason – or *as* anti-reason, as Berg Eriksen says – which is not at all the case. Already in the gender epistemology context (chapter 3-4) I argued that what we

have are two partial views that both exist for good reasons. This may now be extended in the case of the feminine or equivalent position epistemology: it is also there for *counter-strategic* reasons. These are highly pertinent in a discussion of the androgynate, and I use the term 'counter-strategic' also in order to highlight the *ambiguous* character of the process involved.

Developments among women and genderisation processes have been main 'change' catalysts in many areas over the last decades. They have also so to speak engendered more androgynatic tendencies. The basic counter-strategic point of genderisation is to *shift the terrain*. It involves the 'spontaneous' deconstruction that I associated with 'immediate feminism'. If it descends on the sex organ, and thereby as a side effect (as women see it) enhances reification – so be it. Basically all the nice intellectual arguments that I am sure critics of feminism like Berg Eriksen would like, *fall apart*.

So it is, to use an old-fashioned term, a *mass* strategy, one which appeals to women far beyond the academia. Its kernel, as I see it, is not intellectual at all, but related to *women's choices*. While counter-sexism remains sexist, it also has a different character, for by interpreting men in terms of their sex, women tendentially defuse notions of *class*, status, rank or hierarchy among men, and in this important sense it is a progressive tendency.

*"Object choice" as strategic choice.* The genderisation of men tendentially shifts emphasis away from class and status. What kinds of emphases are created instead? Obviously some of these will be more related to men's gender and to women's affirmation of men as sexual beings. Do we have any indications that this is a process of any importance on the societal level, more than perhaps recognised? I think we have.

The following age / gender diagram shows a possible analytical framework (cf. Holter 1989a:120-2).

### **Women's choice of men as counter-strategy**

The main idea of this figure is simply that women, through their partner selection choices, *encourage* and legitimise certain tendencies among men, or 'pure types', tentatively called proactive, reactive and traditional. No doubt more may be found. These are background patterns that become *manifest* mainly in men's own terms, and not commonly as *effects* of what women do, for reasons described in chapter 4. The present hypothesis goes beyond the view presented earlier to the effect that women's *activity* often ends up as men's self-feeling. I also assume that a main *condition* of this activity, namely the kind of partner choice, has a major formative impact, once more one that is not commonly acknowledged. The genderisation process in society is 'keyed' by the actual couple and family formation process, including the gender market measuring of reproductive attractiveness.

The tendency which is here called 'proactive' is the one that has been most noticed, especially in one context – the radicalism and youth revolt of the late 1960s. As argued elsewhere (Holter, Ø 1986b), much cultural evidence exists to the effect that a change in what is conventionally called 'object choice' among young women *preceded* the radical activism of this period. The most overt trait was what papers termed 'mass hysteria' among young women in the UK and US especially in 1963-64 period towards the Beatles and other 'new groups', presenting a feminised and rejuvenated image of men (MacDonald, I 1995). A study of the informal communication channels of the radical student movement SDS in the US in the 1960s (Walsh, J 1993) found significant use of "interpersonal attraction channels for recruitment", confirming Shulamith Firestone's (1971) early idea that the New Left created a new reservoir of young 'available' women. My point is a change that *preceded* the changes among young men, a tendency in young women's choices of ideals and love objects, a cultural and symbolical level force in the background. This was what created the *climate* that was so important at the time, a wider sense of the "*attractiveness of rebellion*" (Spinrad, W 1990). In brief terms, women's '*proactivity*' helped create men's activism.

Similarly, I believe that a '*reactive*' tendency can be found in some contexts in the 20th. century, notably in the 1930 and the nazi take-over in Germany. The sexual attraction and gender politics aspect has recently been reemphasised as one element of Hitler's rise to power. As is well known, a majority of those who finally voted Hitler into a position of power were women. He promised them that "*in the Third Reich every woman would have a husband*" (Grunberger, R 1971:252, my emphasis; compare Stacey, J 1983 who finds similar promises in the Red Army in China in the 1930s). I interpret Hitler's public performances (as far as can be judged from documentary films) as those of a man who in a very subdued yet conscious way plays on a theme of 'sacrificial sexualisation', including a staged personal helplessness or awkwardness, a kind of male virginal modesty.

This is a man engulfed by the cause, the cause speaks through him, or as Olesen (1990:56) quotes from Heidegger, finding similar sentiment there: "The thinker has only given voice to what is voiced in him (*was sich ihm zusprach*)". One notes that Sohn-Rethel described Hitler as a figure of *absolute abstraction*: "He sees in the darkness and hears in the emptiness and is, due to his absolute impenetrability, the ideal executive medium" (1975b:82). Whatever its character, the *charge* in this phenomenon is obvious, moving women to tears of excitement, a mass phenomenon comparable to what happened in the 1960s, even if its content was quite different, indeed directly opposite.

The third, '*traditional*' pure type is less specific, and sometimes appear more like a retreat from the former two, like the tendency in the 1980s in the wake of the earlier proactivism, when mainstream culture among young people turned away from an emphasis on being young to being more adult-like, especially among boys (Lorentzen, J 1992:140).

Obviously many tendencies are connected in the 'traditional' designation used in the figure. As a whole, the model is meaningful on a cultural level, while things may be rather more complex regarding demographical patterns, the factual as opposed to the ideal age gap between partners, and much else. The main direction of approach seems

promising; it creates a terrain for analyses of strategic and counter-strategic patterns that allows specificity and operationalisation of important processes. Also, other theoretical traditions may be connected to this framework, including the critical theory view of long-term shifts between accumulation-oriented periods (increased age and masculinisation?) and more consumption-oriented ones (decreased age, increased feminisation?). Further, issues and findings in cultural studies in areas like fashion become relevant, although once more they cannot be discussed here.

*Further 'strategic deployment'.* If women's genderisation of men can be seen in a counter-strategy perspective, as an attempt to 'give back with the same coin', and further connected to more specific partner choice tendencies, we should also consider *why* it has the democratic character I mentioned – as something *common* to men, across whatever exists of class and status. This commonality is not simply a progressive terrain; it is also one that allows further 'strategic deployment'. Once more 'the beauty object' appears, now as capital object.

In a newspaper presentation of a man who is introduced as "the king of magic", David Copperfield, we are jokingly told of his fantastic exploits – "stunning the world when he got the Statue of Liberty to disappear, and when he whisked away a seven-ton wagon from the Orient Express. Once Copperfield walked right through the Chinese Wall. (...) [Yet] his greatest accomplishment was perhaps getting the super model Claudia Schiffer into his net". (*Dagbladet* 18.8.95:37).

This idea of the super model, utterly out of reach for ordinary men, as something beyond even the greatest magic, is surely a view of the beauty object as a *capital commodity*, or even the highest form of this commodity – and so what men 'see' in women, using this lens, is attractive and corruptive at the same time. It attracts from afar but is also fatal near by, not only in personal terms, but due to its wider social function. So it is an image which is 'sexualised', coveted and *feared* at the same time, even if the anxiety is often subdued. The 'class edge' of the beauty object reappears with sharper edges.

The effect of all this genderisation is not that class divisions disappear; on the contrary, studies from Norway and other, comparable countries give an impression that they have grown larger over the last one or two decades, although this material cannot be discussed here. Rather class issues are further shifted into the gender terrain, and it is this wider tendency I see as indicative of early androgynatic patterns. The 'traditional' pattern of female class mobility through marriage has not disappeared. Examining studies from seven countries, Domanski & Sawinski (1993, my emphasis) argue that "findings show that whether women's mobility is measured in terms of their own occupational careers or those of their husbands, their socio-economic status is less determined by social origin than in the case of men, implying that *social structure is more open for women*." Other studies show that women's marital mobility increases with residential mobility and community size (Shelton, B 1987). This is surprising, since the conventional view of women's greater economic self-reliance and independence would lead to contrary expectations. One possible explanation, then, is connected to the ambiguousness of the whole terrain outlined here, one where the capital character of femininity emerges as more than a metaphorical issue, as part of a truly 'inclusive' strategy.

## Conclusion

This chapter has explored a wide and mainly un-researched theme and I shall not attempt a summary. Instead I end with some further observations on patriarchal strategy in relation to men in contemporary society, and some comments on the relationship of power, complicity and pain.

Robert Connell's (1995:76-81) hierarchical masculinities model includes some ideas on the kinds of processes involved, which are useful in this context. The following figure shows my interpretation of his ideas.

### Masculinities as processes

As I interpret Connell, there are *two* kinds of processes within the power system that he associates with masculinity. One kind, discussed earlier, is the one that creates a hierarchy *among* men, with its three main positions of hegemonic, complicit and subordinate masculinity. In the present context these are best seen as processes, as is done in the figure. Yet there is also another, wider kind of process, one that creates cast-offs from the whole order, marginalised elements. Connell turns to race discrimination for examples of this cast-off process. I believe (a) that it also has a wider significance (as is also implied by Connell), and (b) that it is process that continuously occurs also within the system itself. This notion brings us back to the idea of patriarchal strategy as involving a *dual positioning*. We may perhaps approach this somewhat metaphorically by imagining the three inner positions as three worlds, and that there is also always a 'fourth world' position implied. I find Orlando Patterson's (1982) concept of *social death* useful at this point, especially since Patterson is quite clear that it refers as much to social psychological reality as anything else. My point is that the authorisation and marginalisation process is not 'social' in the common sense. Instead, the edge of authorisation also defines the horizon of the social for those within the system – including what they recognise as social within themselves. At the external front line, as much as on the internal one, this edge is marked by many kinds of cultural taboos, big signs saying, basically, 'look away', and forms of perceived deviancy and negativeness, since in a sense the *sum total* of troubles within the system is output here. In patematic terms we may say that the masculine creates a 'collective head' function that embraces many of the men of the rich, white world. In this system, like earlier patriarchy, these men are in fact in a minority, and beneath them are 'others' who are not really interesting as men or classified in that manner, since their skin colour (etc.) is wrong.

What happens on the inside, then, is inherently *connected* to such background and periphery processes. This is a path of exploration which is increasingly supported by findings from many areas. They include the new *studies of mobbing and victimisation*, research that once more can only be briefly mentioned here (cf. chapter 15). I do not think the theoretical implications of these studies have been more than approached, so far, for what emerges is an 'embeddedness' and 'interdependency of selves' which are no less important than in non-modern contexts. In other words, mobbing processes show some of what goes on *in general* in work life, education and elsewhere, only in

its more acute, crisis-filled, awkward moments. Thereby they imply that the detachment and distance assumed by rationalist and masculine thought is fictitious. It is not *only* a fiction, however: on the contrary, this divisioning and distance is precisely what I have emphasised as a main part of patriarchal strategy, it is what goes on when things are *not* brought to a head but only 'function' in the normal way.

So, put to a point, one might say that *rationality is mobbing at a distance*, or at a less rhetorical level, that modern rationality includes mobbing and victimisation as part of its normal mode of operation. This is not an agreeable view, and I believe specificity is important in this area. Yet it draws attention to an area which has a more *general* significance than usually assumed. Mobbing studies tell us about *normalcy*. For example, they highlight the self-contempt and negative sacrifice elements in masculinity and the *hatred* which is the backside of the gender system of love. Perhaps the language which is typically used when implicit victimisation becomes explicit – "you cunt/prick", etc., focusing on sex as means of degradation – by itself does not support my view at this point. Yet when we consider the fact that victims' stories generally convey a feeling that *gender identity* is where victimisation *hurts most*, a key link, we have reasons to suspect a wider connection.

Not much has been said of *pain* in this chapter, yet power and pain have always been connected. This includes the *external elevation* of masculinity and its twin *inner degradation* of men. So some final comments on this subject are in order.

Power, coming from without, may be physically painful, or mediated through violence, but it is less psychologically painful, compared to that coming from within. When power is strategic, an inner, psychological order is created, first of fear, 'terror', and later with more sophisticated perceived dangers and more advanced forms of passing them to others.

Through the exchange abstraction, immensely enlarged by the advent of capitalism, power became 'objectivised', appearing as materiality, sensuality, even with "the senses themselves as rulers", although not quite in the emancipatory manner described by Marx. In exchange, complicity goes both ways; self-control and control over others become intertwined, if not indistinguishable. Everyone, therefore, tendentially is both 'oppressor' and 'oppressed', everyone her- or himself is *in on the affair*, part of the larger framework.

Besides oppression, therefore, there is complicity, shame, guilt, a self entangled with the order of wealth and power. In victimisation systems that develop the terrorist – or as the Freudian might say, cannibalistic – aspects of strategy, everyone is in some sense sharing the spoils of the victim. A major set of techniques therefore involves implicating the subordinates in the transgressions against the victims, reforming the self-sense and destroying the pride of subordinates, always keeping those above busy exploiting and fearing those below, even as they themselves are exploited. Such systems seem unable to develop unless they put the authorisation and marginalisation process right into the middle of their 'inner' system, in a very specific form, a free-for-all *victim category* – like Jews in the Third Reich, whose teeth fillings were collected as property of the German people.

Corruption, as general aspect of economic power, here emerges with a special edge, as psychic poison, a meta-level intervention beyond any 'overt' use of power, not only as fear, but as fear tinted with knowledge of the guilty or shameful self, a knowledge of the self not as 'construct' but 'destruct'. No-one, therefore, is cleanly 'below'; no-one is in an un-compromised position of solidarity, and all attempts in this direction are continuously hindered by new forms of complicity. For many people in German concentration camps, the resulting self-hatred and extreme inner antagonism – with the nazis reaching the height of cleverness arranging things so that everyone in principle became oppressors of someone below them – were as devastating as the more direct physiological and psychological damages.

One cannot exactly say that a study of patriarchal strategies creates a bright and happy path of research. Yet we should also take a step back and look at the whole. Throughout the outline of patriarchal strategy presented in this chapter, a deeply contrary fact emerges. These developments would never have been needed in the first place, were it not for a sense of justice and a longing for freedom that were always, in the longer run, stronger than anything opposed to them.

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<sup>1</sup> In another context (Holter 1991j) I have discussed the many common traits of the early Greek Artemis and the Anatolian/Hittite Sun Goddess, including the possibility that the Greek memory of Artemis/Apollo arriving in the Aegeans by way of Leto ('lady') fleeing from persecution has its historical kernel here (a hypothesis which would also help explain the major background conflict theme of the Troy war (Artemis vs. the Atreides) discussed in the last chapter). – I have not seen anyone dismantle this hypothesis. I find it highly probable that the Arzawans in western Anatolia who fled to their holy Arinnanda mountain near their capital Apasa when attacked by the Hittites (Mursili 2), are the people who later worshipped Artemis in her main centre of Efesos. – My paper on this subject was rejected by the editors of *Arethusa*, who did not state their reasons except suggesting that I submit it to some oriental journal instead. Since this is strange, Artemis being the main female Greek deity and her origin obviously a matter of some interest, I suspect their reasons were non-scientific. The hypothesis combines two controversial matters: Asian influence and female independence. – Bin-Nun's account has been accepted by most feminist scholars, like Lerner (1986:155-6).

<sup>2</sup> With variants, I find this general line of argument in the works of researchers like Güterbock, Gurney, Bittel, Hoffner and Bin-Nun (the Hittites), N. Marinatos, R. Hägg, E. Vermeule, M. Ventris, J. Chadwick and others (the Aegeans); R. Harris, T. Jacobsen, Diakonoff, S. Kramer, L. Oppenheim, and others (the Middle East). Possibly many of these authors disagree with the controversial 'institutional embedding' analysis of Karl Polanyi (1957), or at least its concrete application towards Assyrian society, criticised by Mogens T. Larsen (1960), Aage Westenholz and others in that context, yet they all give evidence to the effect that economic relationships were interrelated with the sacral and large-household-type obligations.

<sup>3</sup> Pateman (op.cit.65) also takes other stereotypes on board, like Lerner's undocumented argument that "the first slaves were women", along with her general imagery of an order of fathers or men as against an order of women – the modern view. The truth, of course, is that "the first slavery" is unknown, and very little points to its gendered character.

<sup>4</sup> In Greek tradition, this kind of gift is referred to in the story of Atalanta (in Apollodorus; Astour thinks is a variant of Anath).

<sup>5</sup> In this context it is relevant that the mass scale human sacrifices in Carthage took place not in the early beginnings or history of the city, as was formerly believed, but in its latest and most powerful phase, during the wars against Rome (Pedley, J 1980).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Holter 1994g.

<sup>7</sup> In the view of F. L. Ganhof (1952: 110,139) this fixation is related to the 'corporeality' of early feudal notions of transfers; a transfer of a property right "required (..) the performance of some corporeal act". Generally, he believed that feudal conditions were 'realised' through a shift of power towards the vassals, the real users of the land.

<sup>8</sup> Or in Marx's words their *vergegenständliche* or *Sachliche* character (Marx 1974:170).

<sup>9</sup> Moreover this ignorance has the curious ability to unite male Marxists whatever their other views. So, for example, Ian Forbes' (1990) exposition of Marx's theory on an as-if-humanism basis, with concepts as eternally valid, which has very little in common with Schanz's (or my own) view, yet those who might suppose that the humanism would lead to women as well as men would look in vain in this book. "Women" gets one entry in the index (p. 156) while there is indeed a note (p. 164) where the author admits Marxism's inadequacy in this area. Nothing on patriarchy, of course.

<sup>10</sup> These observations rely on a number of sources that cannot be fully referred here. For economic-social developments *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* (Mathias & Postan 1978) is a good place to start, with interesting discussions of the putting-out system in Russia especially (compare Kuczynski, J 1942). Serious works going into technical innovation (Habakkuk, H 1967; Fitton & Wadsworth 1958) generally put large weight on social factors, like I do here.

<sup>11</sup> See also chapter 15 on nazism and women. – One might consider Heidegger's philosophy in this perspective, with its notable 'reproductive' orientation. His idea of 'care' which has been resurrected in contemporary care work discussions, remains problematical, since his philosophy on the whole has non-incidental Nazi connections. This has been argued convincingly by Søren Olesen (1990) and others, although the discussion cannot be pursued in the present context.

<sup>12</sup> "Brother-directedness" might be further examined as variant of Riesman's "other-directedness" (see now Riesman & Barboza 1994). Symbolic sibling elements have often been catalysts for societal change. The brotherhood element in the transition to capitalism was analysed by Weber especially (Oexle & Chaix 1992).

## Chapter 13 Households and use values

"In the social construction of care and domestic work in a marital relationship, there is an underlying principle saying that everything that is not explicitly defined and accepted as something the male partner has consented to consider and possibly participate in, rests with her. (..) Her participation is never specified. It is always taken for granted as the unspoken and unlimited totality" (Haavind and Andenæs 1990:8).

"When that chairman of the board or CEO finally retires, he suddenly learns he has lost all value. 'He becomes a non-person', in [psychiatrist Willard] Gaylin's words, shocked and overwhelmed by the fact that 'he never was someone to be cherished for his own sake but only as an instrument of power and a conduit of goods'" (Kimmel, M 1993:6)

## Introduction

'Economy' originally meant householding, its root being Greek *oikos*, household. Today, however, economic theory commonly considers the household a unit residing outside the economic field proper, or at its margin, a consumption unit. What goes on there, including the work in the household, is basically a cost, not a source of income.

In modern economy, capitalist or socialist, human resource work is tendentially positioned on the 'cost' side of the account of economic activity, whereas non-human resource work is 'income'. Only the latter participates in the production of economy proper, the kernel area that appears as the sole source of value.

This view is illustrated in the figure below.

### **A modern view of the economic field**

The figure shows the main cognitive map on which the macroeconomic 'plus / minus' account is based.<sup>1</sup> The centre of the economic field is the kernel area of profitable production on the right-hand side. The further an activity is placed to the right in the model, the more 'plus' the character of the activity, and the closer it is to realisation of profit. The further to the left, the more 'minus' the activity. This horizontal dimension is also an activity dimension: the further to the right, the more outer-directed the character of the work, the further to the left, the more inner-directed.

In a more detailed version of this model, we might also plot the positions of the four main categories discussed in chapter 10. The horizontal minus-to-plus axis is also a reproduction-to-production dimension. Starting from the left there is (1) reproduction of non-producers, (2) reproduction of producers, (3) production of means of reproduction ('light industry') and (4) production of means of production ('heavy industry'). Although the categories would still be highly simplified, there is little doubt that we would now approach a real dimension of contemporary economic life, connected to the amount of capital per worker, the strategic influence of the job and many other traits generally favouring those towards the right-hand end of the scale.<sup>2</sup>

The sex composition in the different kinds of work, along this line, varies from mainly female to mainly male. The result is a system where equality can basically only be achieved on the principle of the one (the plus side) paying for the other (the minus side). This is clearly the *breadwinner principle* writ large, as a rule of the 'societal householding'. It is no wonder, therefore, that this framework has been seen as a main problem in feminist theories that have turned to economic questions, and possibly the main barrier against full realisation of equal status in contemporary society.

Besides equal status and feminist concerns, however, there are internal reasons why the model appears as increasingly problematical. Throughout our century, and especially in the last decades, the production kernel area has been shrinking, mainly due to the *uneven character of automatisisation* of activities in the two spheres, outer-directed activities being much more easily automated than inner-directed activities. Many human-resource oriented tasks simply lose meaning if performed by technology, since human contact is a main aspect of the task. Thus the model, even if perhaps wrong in its own terms, at least *concerned* the majority of wage work by, say, 1900, with approximately four production workers per reproduction worker, while today it looks increasingly out of tune with realities, as this proportion has been turned around. All the more strange, then, if the plus side of the model is also the shrinking side (or even the 'farewell side', as technology continues to eliminate jobs), that its reduction has not meant a retreat, but rather an advance for the system as a whole. Unless kernel area production workers are 'value-creative giants', one would expect poverty rather than wealth.

In order to explain why a rising proportion of reproductive work is associated with increasing rather than decreasing wealth, one either has to give up on the issue of value creation altogether, or introduce additional hypotheses that may seem increasingly forced as the kernel area shrinks. In the first case, we are led in the direction that every activity contributes the same, which begs the question why they are not paid the same or treated in equal ways. The reproduction/production dimension is probably the most important factor for explaining the secondary position of women in wage work, including the wage gap. – In the second case, we keep to the more selective notion of value production in the 'classical' economic sense, a point of view often combined with social class arguments. Yet unless we propose some radical redefinition of value production, this path leads back into the problems mentioned above, where the workers in the diminishing sector of production becomes increasingly gigantic in value terms, while people in the growing reproduction sphere becomes increasingly dwarf-like.

In addition, it is becoming more evident that the increasing emphasis on reproduction represents an input factor, and is not only a welfare question, nor an effect of the lay-off from production, caused by automatisisation. It is an input factor in its own right, and a factor of growing importance as the production work process becomes more complex and advanced, resulting in increased demands for high-quality labour power. Characteristically, reproductive work has appeared in the scene of economists' attention in the role of '*human capital*', a category which at least is tension-filled, if not self-contradictory. With cautionary views like Braverman's (1974) thesis on the simplification of work in mind, we may recognise that the demand for high-quality labour power still concerns a fairly small part of the global labour market, yet there is no mistaking its key role in the overall development, which has been further

strengthened over the last decade through information technology development. All this creates more, not less, demand for reproductive work. From what we have seen of 'information society' so far, the dominance of production work will continue, yet the work process as a whole shifts towards human factors, with an increasing pressure for improved conditions.

Thus we are led to the conclusion that apart from any feminist or equal status consideration, there are serious problems with a model of economy that was conceived in a society very different from the one we are approaching today. We may argue that questions of work influence, benefits and burdens should be solved on other bases than the economic one, for example along ethical or welfare philosophy lines, yet in practice, the solutions are often influenced by economic paradigms that in turn rest on typical economic positions. In practice, "how much" and "to/from whom" are important background questions in work life conflict and negotiation as well as society at large.

What is needed, then, is a paradigm shift that takes the growing importance of human factors into account. Yet – what kind of account? The old one, a new and extended version of it, or something that goes deeper and examines the very idea of 'account'? A renewal of the economic agenda may mean many things, in theory as well as practice, including a further capitalisation of the family and home sphere with negative human and gender equality consequences. The alternative models proposed depend on what one conceives to be the situation today. Is it true, or has it ever been true, that the household has been shut off from the economy, as the conventional model would have us believe? If not, how has it been connected? Can the traditional account of the economy be reoriented without integrating a gender equality perspective in it? Is it true that gender has not been present in this account?

Since economy theory as it exists today often seems blind towards women, some would dismiss the whole matter, and build feminist and equal status views on other foundations instead, like a wider understanding of ecology. I have no disagreement with this, as far as ecological and other problems go, yet it does not solve the economic problems. Instead, such views may prolong a barrier situation where the economic area is notably out of tune with gender equality developments elsewhere, both in science and in society at large. On the background of the ignorance of feminist issues in most economic theory, the idea of dismissal of economic theory altogether (or classifying it simply as exercises in masculinistic neutralisation) is understandable. Yet economic theory would not have been able to hold on to its 'central area' position were it not for its ability to *address*, if not solve, some fairly important issues. The idea that economic analysis leads to determinism under a facade of market-voluntarism is certainly often correct; we may recognise the twin positions of abstract masculinity in this area, not always in subtle forms. Yet I do not agree with the assumption that economic theory *must* lead in that direction, or that this is all there is to it. Economy, in the broad sense of 'householding' of society, its spheres, sectors, branches, units, etc. is both a wider and a more important field.

My focus, then, is how the sense of the economic is entangled with gender issues. I start with an examination of how the idea of economy developed historically, using the classical Greek conception as a point of departure. Here we find notions that look strange to the modern eye, including the idea that *property* is to be defined as part of a

household. An attempt to 'reintroduce the home' to a rather homeless contemporary notion of economy is important on many levels, but it must include an understanding of how 'economy' or householding came to be conceived in that detached manner in the first place.

If economic categories are in fact entangled with the development of patriarchal organisation, as earlier discussions have indicated, we would expect a sense of 'gender' to appear even in the midst of economy, a tendency towards genderisation of the commodity that may be expressed in many ways. I shall discuss sexualisation and commercialisation in this perspective. Gender and value, sex and money, should appear as opposed and yet connected elements throughout the economic organisation. This does not imply a 'conspiratorial' view where economic relations are predetermined by male bonding or similar principles, but a focus on how economic processes themselves are constituted and regenerated *as* patriarchal processes.

Like the study of patriarchal power and strategy, the examination of the patriarchal connections of economic processes is a large task which is approached and explored rather than solved in the present chapter. I discuss some of the surprising and 'uneconomic' traits that appear when basic economic categories are seen in a social forms perspective, using phenomenological analysis as a path of approach. A main focus is use values or utilities, the 'ends' to which commodity exchange is supposed to be the 'means'.

Before going there, however, I stay on the traditional turf, and re-examine the case for domestic and gender-related exploitation, due to a conviction that qualitative and quantitative analysis must be approached in connection.<sup>3</sup> In order to create more relational and feminist views of economic phenomena, relations of exploitation must be included, and in some important senses, it goes before the wider qualitative change questions. There is a certain 'entrance door' to the economic field, with a door keeper asking if *women's work* count, *given* the kind of reciprocity that opens or shuts this door. I am not arguing that one should accept this narrow door for the full truth, yet I *am* arguing that it has some truth to it, quite a substantial one also. Metaphorically speaking a key and some oil would be of help. What I propose for a key is a theory of exploitation, while the oil is an extension and nuancing of exploitation theory in social forms and reciprocity terms. The result differs from earlier proposals where women have often been force-fitted into a 'worker' role in an exploitation framework on loan from the sphere of production.

If exploitation exists in gender relations, it seems at first to be less clear-cut than class exploitation, and also wider, more qualitative and more personal, as was outlined earlier (chapter 5). Its object, I argue, is also multi-layered, for what is involved here is a shifting cluster of relations with at least three main components – exploitation of women; of domestic or reproductive sphere activities, and of femininity or expressivity traits. I discuss how reproductive sphere arrangements may be run by rules that *per se* do not behave in the ways economists are used to, while nevertheless being of major economic importance on the general level. Exploitation may exist in gift relations outside the commodity economy proper, what I called its 'firstness' field – and yet be relevant from a commodity point of view, *if* it can be shown that the gift relations are systematically connected to economic relations, creating important economic effects thereby.

My point of departure is the existence of gender-related exploitation patterns in the wide sociological sense discussed earlier, i.e. uncompensated activity regardless of the form of compensation (Norw. *utnytting*). Secondly, I turn to the question of whether these patterns of 'asymmetrical utilisation' can also be seen as exploitation in the conventional economic sense (Norw. *utbytting*), i.e. surplus labour that is exchanged and exists in commodity form. A paradoxical picture appears: on the one hand, studies of women's benefits and burdens have substantiated a view of exploitation in the wide sense. On the other hand, economists and feminists often come to the same main conclusion, although arriving there along very different paths of approach: an agreement that exploitation in the wide sense is *not* to be seen as exploitation in the stricter economic sense. I discuss the reasons for this curious agreement, and the 'avoidance matter' that appears in this area: a taboo against connecting gender and capital analyses. The agreement is also based on a one-dimensional approach to the domestic sphere, and I discuss a multidimensional alternative view where exploitation in the abstract, economic sense coexists with *counter-processes* on other levels. The discussion extends the earlier analysis of different 'reciprocity terrains' of gender relationships in the domestic sphere and a view of families as 'compromise formations'. Thereby we may approach exploitative patterns as part of *interactional realities*, creating points of tension and conflict, with different forms of opposition and different solutions.

In order to approach these themes, however, we must also visit 'the altar of truth' of economic theory, market exchange. If exploitation exists in the domestic sphere and in the relationship between production and reproduction, why does it not appear in the economy at large? Or does it?

## 'Black gold' and clean beds

The *partial* reality of the market level, discussed earlier in the case of the gender market, has been a main element of the experience of women turning from domestic to wage work. While market-level relations have shifted in major ways, with an expansion of professionalised, wage-compensated work in the reproduction sphere, deeper-level structures have changed less, and have also been characterised by counter-processes and 'brake' factors. For women, the change from domestic to wage reproduction has been a great step forward, yet not quite as decisive as many thought it would be. Instead, one of its results has been a *double burden*, since domestic work has neither disappeared nor become equally distributed. At the overall economic level, most women's wage work remains 'paid for', not 'paying for'. As noted, this situation creates a suspicion that economic factors are a main background reason why women's struggle for equality so often remains an uphill effort, a never quite realised goal. Sometimes one even gets the impression that the terrain itself 'sinks' when more women come into it; although the sex proportion in an occupation is less decisive than its position on the plus/minus dimension, outlined above, it also plays some role of its own. Further, the background question of who pays, who creates value, puts its mark on various concrete arrangements. Money does indeed 'smell', and the smell of minus money differs from that of plus money. In reality, money is part of a wider sociocultural messaging system that surrounds this transfer medium like any other (Heen, H 1995). It would be simplistic to assume that minus money always says '*you are worth less*', but it does tend to say '*your worth must be appraised in other terms than the purely economic ones*'. Therefore, *compensatory* mechanisms often appear at

this point: if the work is seen as a cost, economically speaking, it may be all the more worthy in social terms. It may be a 'calling' or at least a highly evaluated social good. Many tendencies in reproductive, care, health, etc. wage work can be interpreted along these lines.

Although I had studied work / family interaction and the asymmetry between the two kinds of work earlier also, the background messages of plus and minus money and their reality in wage work became clear to me especially through studies of the North Sea oil industry in the 1980s. A study of the 'reproductive exception' in this productive environment, the catering work on the oil platforms, was particularly relevant (Holter, Ø 1987b). It is briefly outlined here.

Originally, the offshore industry was an all-male proposition, but by the early 1980s women were being recruited in considerable numbers to catering on the installations in Norwegian sector.<sup>4</sup> The women replaced immigrant (mainly Spanish) male workers who were forced out without overdue considerations of labour rights. A mainly female catering group was thereby established, whose jobs consisted in cleaning the rooms and preparing the meals for the various categories of workers on the platform. At the top of the platform hierarchy were the operator employees and the technical groups most directly involved in extracting the 'black gold'. The great majority of these employees were men. At the bottom were the caterers, who had a tradition of being the 'underdogs', regardless of the sex of the employee. Catering, in this context, mainly meant 'caring for', in the sense of the housewife, minus the more personal relation involved in the latter position. Thus, while intimacy between men and women was allowed in the free time, avoiding any unwanted intimacy was a main matter of regulation and an important informal aspect of the job, which characteristically was left to the women themselves, developing informal systems of control (Hetle & Solheim 1987).

A reproductive group like the catering workers were 'underdogs' not just due to their activity being seen as less close to the crucial oil extraction process than the 'real' offshore work, but also due to their being at the low end of a number of closely connected power-related dimensions. I have referred to this *clustering* of negative indicators earlier, and it was of major importance in this setting: low trade union strength, low professional and education investment, low self-determinancy in the job, comparatively simple and cheap technology, low job security, less direct access to the decision-making bodies, and other traits.

Here as elsewhere the work situation was itself influenced by gender system dynamics. In the North Sea case, the caterers, now mainly women, experienced an upwards shift at the end of the 1980s, with more solidaric action from the operator employees than had been the case earlier. In the background, the cultural model of "*he* and *she*" played a major role, since the male operators got their standard idea of a homely relationship, with the wife preparing the meal and making the bed, confirmed in a more collective manner at the oil platform. At the same time, there was a sense of community created by platform life at sea, far away from those on-shore, which became strengthened as the industry itself settled down from its first 'anarchic' period and became more normalised during the 1980s. These processes reinforced the view that standards on the platform should not be too disparate – and so what emerged was

a more complementary relationship, through a partial but not decisive status and wage raise for the 'underdogs'.

The strategic aspect of this example may be further highlighted: what could be seen here was not that a partially patriarchal dominance system was enlarged or extended when it *also* was mediated by gender, but, on the contrary, that a gap that had been larger when male immigrant workers had done the catering job, became *smaller* when the majority of caterers were women. Although some of the decrease may have been caused by extraneous circumstances, the example illustrates how male-male relations may be as asymmetrical as male-female relations, and that women may sometimes be situated 'in between' groups of men in quite concrete ways.

In a more metaphorical sense, all producers 'mine for gold', while reproducers use it up; this is a meta-level message of our economic system as a whole. It would not have been effective, had it not also been substantiated on a market level. Even if the reproducer no longer is (only) a domestic worker, but a wage worker, an employee receiving a wage, this wage is still not *created* by the work itself, as far as the market bears witness. Rather, it is subtracted from the wage bill of the producers, mainly through taxation and the state budget. This can be done in slightly different ways, according to the current political-economical climate and 'mix' of the economy. What remains, beneath this variation, is a negative 'net consequence' effect.

Is this a paradoxical appearance of the market? Is the minus position, in which reproduction appears on the *market* level, the inverted form of its plus contribution on the *activity* level? Is what we saw, regarding femininity as passivity on the gender market, only a local variant of a wider positioning of reproduction as a cost in society at large?

This is the present hypothesis. Not only is reproduction increasingly important in technical or work composition terms; it is also economically viable, due to its own internal value surplus mechanisms. Capital may extract benefits here as elsewhere, and in some contexts *more* here than elsewhere, due to the asymmetrical structuring of reproduction relationships. This line of approach obviously moves beyond the balancing act between human nature and the home on the one hand, society and the economy on the other. Instead, it leads to a *comparison of different work/family arrangements* on a dual career *versus* breadwinner scale, and to an interpretation of the shifts back and forth on this scale through our century in terms of different net economic (and social, cultural, etc.) effects. The same perspective is applied towards family/work arrangements in various concrete branches, types of companies, sectors, etc.

Detailed investigations along this line of approach will not be attempted in the present context. Before we get there, it is necessary to examine why this whole field of inquiry has been closed off in favour of a view that limits economic analysis to wage work alone. This closure, I shall argue, was a main effect of the *domestic labour debate* around 1980, where feminist views of exploitation were blocked by an alliance of seemingly 'orthodox' economic analysis and superficially 'alternativist' feminist theory. I shall reexamine some of the main issues of this debate, avoiding 'technical' detail as far as possible, focusing instead on the wider issues involved. The counter-arguments to an exploitation view have mainly strengthened my belief that an

understanding of modern patriarchy comes to a halt *unless* the case of domestic and reproductive sphere exploitation theory is opened for a reexamination. Feminist and gender studies in many areas since 1980 have strengthened the case for exploitation theory, by making it more likely that there is in fact an abstract, background economic process that disfavors women and reproduction-related traits.

Further, I shall attempt to show that the theoretical barriers erected against an exploitation view lead to self-contradictory results. The assessment of reproduction as non-creative of value is wrong also on its own turf, i.e. according to conventional critical economic theory premises. This is shown by a 'thought experiment' where we apply the main arguments used against exploitation theory in the domestic sphere on global economic relationships instead.

The closure of the exploitation issue has had much wider implications for subsequent feminist efforts than is commonly recognised. In reality, it meant that critical economic perspectives could no longer be used in order to understand the oppression of women in contemporary society. After all, this theory does not have much original to say on use value drudgery and surplus labour; its original contribution concerns reification, alienation and exploitation, i.e. surplus labour in the *value* framework, and at that point, precisely, there was a halt and a closure. Therefore, feminist efforts went elsewhere through the 1980s – to cultural analysis, psychodynamic views, texts and signs, communicational theory, postmodernism. While this turning of affairs is well known, the economic part of its background is not.

The result is a paradoxical situation where the economic area is out of step with feminist advances elsewhere. In other areas we should think of men and women as equals; here they are not, since most of those who create value are men, while women are predominant among those who use it up. Unless women copy men's work patterns, they are mainly economically irrelevant or a cost, and their work is at best a partial cost-reducing factor in capitalism. Since housewives cannot be bought, their labour is not value-creative labour, and since their services substitute for services that wage workers would otherwise have to buy through the market, they save the employer some expenses. In sum, women are less economically active than men, less creative of economic *this-world wealth*, while their 'soft' worthiness and *otherness-wealth* may be all the greater. This is a scenery where production becomes gigantic and reproduction dwarf-like; the masculine dynamic and the feminine static, etc. Such ideas were perhaps not so remarkable around 1980, for at that time they could be found in many other fields also. Yet their largely unchallenged existence in the economic area today is itself a fact of some significance.

The differentiation principle says that commodity economy can only exist as a split venture, developing into a firstness and otherness field in capitalism. As we have seen, this is also a stratification principle; one first, the other second. Yet it does not directly say that the otherness field is also an object of exploitation, or 'superexploited' in Marxist terms. This remains a *possibility*, and in view of what we have seen of this principle already, we may also see it as a probability. Yet value differentiation, even in an advanced, polarised form as in present-day society, by itself does not presuppose a flow of uncompensated value from the otherness field to the firstness field, or a macro-level exploitation relationship. Rather, it is my view that the existence of such a relationship is an empirical question in a broad sense, and that it is likely, since it

helps explain many patterns of integration between the two spheres, and why gender difference so easily turns into inequality. Yet in order to examine the empirical issues, theoretical barriers of an *a priori* character that *anyway* closes the door on the possibility of exploitation as a main basis of oppression of women must be removed.

## Analysis paths

Exploitation, then, cannot quite be left alone, and neither can the possibility that the present patriarchal and masculine dominance relations are related to it. Yet exploitation theory often turns into a narrow, quantitative framework that undermines what it was supposed to achieve. In general, the feminist critique of modern society does not only entail a shifting around of existing economic relations in women's favour, but also a qualitative change of these relations. While there are diverse opinions as to what these changes should entail, some issues are broadly supported in most or all feminist views, including a greater emphasis on care and human-oriented activity.

The traditional building blocks of economic theory cannot just be rearranged in order to clarify such issues, in order to explain gender or patriarchy, or do away with persistent discrimination. Showing that the current convention of minus and plus labour rests on faulty ground, even according to standard critical economic premises, does not mean that these premises are sufficient for understanding patriarchy. It is a necessary but not sufficient step. There is a more basic reappraisal of economic categories involved also. 'Value', as a central example, is not just an issue within the firstness field, i.e. a more or less slanted or exploitative relation between economic agents there; it also casts a wider 'otherness' shadow, existing also in counterpoised form, and this wider relationship cannot simply be understood by extending categories from the firstness sphere. At each point where quantitative questions are raised, we also face a wider issue of what 'economy' means, who its subjects are, and what kind of objectivity is involved.

Many tasks are involved, then, and therefore the current approach is one of exploration. This section outlines the paths of approach, and introduces two principal issues.

The following figure is a variant of the "Y hypothesis model" presented in chapter 1, showing the main connections examined.

### **Connections examined in the "Y" model**

The coming sections of this chapter contain discussions of path (1) in the figure, starting with an outline of how 'economy' was conceived before the split-off of production from the household in the modern age. I then turn to the economic system itself, especially the 'monetary' or firstness field which according to the differentiation principle only represents a part of the economy in the full sense. Exploitation theory is discussed in that context.

The argument is not that we should *stay* with an exploitation theory in the conventional, quantitative sense – but that *unless* this possibility is examined, alternative and qualitative views will remain closed. If exploitation is rejected, the analysis will remain within a quantitative framework which is also qualitatively misleading. So it represents a step which is necessary in order to move further.

In the second part of the chapter, we turn to path (2). Here, I turn from quantitative and exploitation theory issues to deeper-level qualitative and category definition issues, including the definitions of 'commodity', 'value' and 'use value'. We shall also meet a *reversal* of the 'value at the back of gender' phenomena discussed earlier; what we find here, instead, is a certain sense of gender at the back of basic economic categories and relationships.

The first principal issue concerns path (2) and a matter which is not fully resolved in the present text. What we shall find in the direction of (2) is not quite the gender discussed previously. It is not the manifest gender system (although these gender traits in practice also exist in the monetary economic field), nor is it simply patriarchal traits, at least not in the sense discussed so far. This will become clearer when we turn to the proposition that *use value* or utility is *deeply gendered*. If this is true, as shall be argued, what is the 'gender' involved here? It seems to belong to an *intermediate* field, a halfway 'distant mirror', and so I shall refer to traits in this region as gender-affined or *gender-implicative* traits, in the broad sense that these are economic traits implying gender one way or the other, not as a peripheral issue, but as a core characteristic.

This is also a point where historical and structural analyses depart, not only concretely speaking, but also in terms of the analytical framework itself. The historical discussion following path (1) in the figure above differs from a structural interpretation of the "Y" model. As I said, the 'gender-implicative' elements that belong to the deeper level in the structural interpretation (the bottom circle of the figure) differ both from the gender system proper, and from patriarchal structure as discussed previously in this text. As we shall see, the ways in which gender is implicated at this level are often surprising, leading to a view of patriarchy and capitalism as less 'harmoniously' integrated than is sometimes assumed.

The second issue concerns the differentiation principle itself, and a distinction within it that should perhaps have been emphasised more right from the start. It concerns the 'absolute differentiation' of commodity owners and the 'relative differentiation' of human-oriented work.

To recapture: chapter 9 outlined the differentiation principle on a general level, as a broad social process with four main meta-institutional forms. These forms – identification, exclusion, inclusion, polarisation – were seen as partly contingent on the *external* environment of the developing commodity economy, especially the earlier forms. In brief terms: when the commodity economy itself is emerging and fairly new on the scene, what will appear is tendencies towards identifying or securing the new field. Later, we would expect expulsion, more systematic exclusion, then seclusion, and later again more emphasis on inclusion – now as a highly construed difference. Finally, there is a reciprocal restructuring, creating a bipolar system where both poles have some system-enhancing powers on their own.

Yet there are at least *two* connected principles involved in this differentiation, not one, and these may be more dissimilar than was implied in chapter 9. One is the *absolute* condition that *commodity owners* cannot be reproduced *as* commodities, that the ownership part cannot be mixed with the owned part, that there must be a sharp and clear dividing line between the two. The other is the more *relative* (even if still, on the overall level, necessary) condition that *human beings* cannot be produced on par with other commodities. This rule has been broken and twisted in so many ways throughout history that it is better described as a broad *tendency*, as was discussed in connection to the notion of an 'emancipatory minimum'. As a tendency, it becomes more 'absolutist', the closer we get to the commodity owner category.

Once more there are questions here that will remain unresolved. The distinction between absolute and relative forms of differentiation is important for several reasons, one of them concerning the system as a whole vis-à-vis the powerful agents within it. The distinction allows a further identification of the ruling class interest of the commodity economy as distinct from the 'interest' of this economy as such, or its broad reproduction (re-creation) conditions, i.e. *class interest and power* as distinct from *economic interest and power*. The latter may be seen as the broader background of the former, yet there is no reason to suppose that the two always coincide. This framework also allows a further identification of different forms of patriarchal organisation, avoiding a collapse of patriarchal categories into power or dominance categories as such.<sup>5</sup>

As I said, these two issues remain unresolved in this text, so they are introduced here as matters of further exploration. The state of theory and evidence in this area must be considered in this context. The analysis of commodity economy *as* patriarchal economy, which is clearly suggested by what has been found so far, is mainly a 'grey area' today, partly due to the closure described above. It is not an area with many existing theories and distinct lines of interpretation of the evidence. It is also an area that involves considerable theoretical and empirical challenges, including a reinterpretation of most of the central tenets of critical economic theory. If this avenue of research is at all to be opened, we must first show 'beyond reasonable doubt' that it *needs* to be opened, including the need to recognise the current closure. If it can be shown that critical economic theory fails its own stated mission by ignoring women, reproduction and the domestic sphere, we have certainly moved a step forward. The qualitative issues involved make these challenges even greater. As noted, some forms of 'progress' are not really beneficial in this area; we do not want to lock the door behind us, and so an openness towards the wider task of reappraising the economic framework itself is important throughout.

I shall approach the examination of the relationship between patriarchal structure and monetary economy, or path (1) in the above model, by going back to the classical age conception of economic categories. I do not attempt an outline of economic history. Rather, my focus is the 'saltomortale' of the concept of economy, the way it was turned around from a household setting to a setting where the household strings have supposedly been cut off. We shall find that this 'transition' of the economic field was a very long process, not really over and done with until the advent of modern industry. Commodity economy, we know, did not start out with capitalism, yet its main historical context of the private household remains a neglected area.

## The *oikos* model of economy

The first form of economic theory was not household-less, like today. The ancient model of economy always had the household as its characteristic basis, and was, if anything, rather characterised by neglect and arrogance towards market work (Finley, M 1983b). What we have seen regarding the early historical background of classical age society – a mode of society dominated by the large household, palace or temple, one that survived in 'archaised' forms in the east – makes this persistent household orientation more understandable. Even if the position of household organisation in society at large had changed in the classical age world, the task organisation remained household-related, so much so that it usually was taken as a matter of course by the writers of the period. Women's economic rights were curtailed in the market sphere, yet women were partial economic subjects within the traditional household economy, and women kept this role even in a context where men's powers as external household heads had been extended into general political power, as was the case in Athens.

Here, the first purely 'economic' text, Xenophon's *Oikonomikos*, concerns how the head should instruct the household administrator in householding; it is a pedagogic text with job instructions for the newly married young wife. There is no mistaking the implication that a wife might often become quite powerful in this role, even if she was under the political and market-related authority of her husband, and even if her position now mainly gave an indirect or behind-the-scenes type of power. Indeed, it is possible to interpret the large age gap that had now become the fashion as an indicator of the power of this position, with the gap as a way to curtail it, rather than its powerlessness.<sup>6</sup>

The emphasis on the household emerges also if we examine the economical categories that were developed. *Property* was defined neither in terms of labour time, nor in terms of the individual's ownership, nor in exchange and market terms. Instead, Aristotle seems to have followed the conventional view of his time by starting his discussion of this category by saying that "*property is part of a household*" (*Pol.* 1.II.4, my emphasis).

It could scarcely be stated more clearly: property is a *household* category. The slave is *oiketes*, i.e. also classified by a household term (Andersen, Ø 1995:217). Other property categories were also household-related, like surplus property or value, introduced by Aristotle in the following terms:

"Some people suppose that it is the function of household management (*oikonomikes ergon*) to increase property" – and Aristotle goes on to point out that they are wrong, for not differing between unlimitedness and goodness of life (*Pol.* 1.III.18-19). We may say that business had an ethical aspect, to which we shall soon return.

Rackham's conventional translation of economical work as "household management" shows the modern difficulty of grasping an economy that is centred not in 'the world' in the modern sense, but in the household. What is emphasised in classical-age texts, concerning its main internal overseer, the woman, is certainly obedience to the household head, though not feminine obedience in the modern sense. On the whole, it is not a management that is situated on the periphery of economic action, or as a

counterdote to it; instead, it is the central economic activity. As moderns, we can imagine it being *this also* (in our abstractist way), yet what is difficult, is imagining it being this *first*, not in the modern emotional or psychodynamic sense (the home, love, etc.), but as a social economy in its own right. The centrality of the household and of women's *de facto* overseer position in it is a major background factor for understanding classical age politics and culture, including the much-debated 'seclusion' of Athenian women. What had been lost with the palace world was the dominance of household-oriented organisation in society at large, which was replaced by a political / market-oriented social fabric qualitatively different from the older order. Yet the household was still important, as were the elements of gift-giving, sacrifice and redistribution.

If Aristotle like his contemporaries believed that the main economic categories were derived from the household, what was the context of this household? The meta-institutional patterns that appear here are important for understanding the household orientation of the economy. Aristotle's main answer, beyond practical necessities like the need for partnership and regeneration, revolves around the notion of *friendship*. In social class terms, this friendship was mainly a matter between household heads of the free class and younger recruits to their positions; a class that was 'fraternally' connected, as equals, holding political power in common or through a temporary representative. The context of 'bound focality', described in chapter 11, can be seen as part of the background of Aristotle's treatment of economic categories, including property and household, and of his notions of sex and gender. For approaching the *oikos* model of economy, as in Aristotle's theory, we must start with its social context, the kinds of bonds creating the economic unit.

Gender, we then find, is surprisingly absent, or absent in the modern sense, even if sexed organisation is sometimes given more emphasis than is done in the current political-economical framework. The fact that even Aristotle, who is often (and with some right) associated with early 'genderising' or ascriptions of superiority and inferiority to sexed nature, often shows a rather surprising non-treatment of gender where we would expect it, can be seen as a confirmation of Marx and Engels' idea that "individual gender love" is indeed a historical product. It shows how 'the household' as centre of economic life, and as its periphery and counter-polarity, are principally different institutions. This is notable also in Aristotle's Athens, where households remained central even though no longer predominating in the organisation of society.

Aristotle's notion of the home is located partly in notions of friendship, and partly in his natural-political framework, which I shall not discuss in detail here, except noting its main character of being the larger *habitus* of the kind of household head city society he envisioned. Friendship is related to alliances and politics, but also to love, and it is the wider notion of friendship that 'details' love, or creates it, rather than *vice versa*. As noted earlier, the same-sex character of friendship was extended into a homoerotic or pederastic notion of love (Holter 1994g). Aristotle therefore discusses 'love' as included in 'friendship', and not in a larger framework of gender and sexual intimacy, as moderns would do. He distinguishes between several varieties of love in terms of sifting the good from the bad, much like the practical ethics of Kant, although not in the abstract language of the latter.<sup>7</sup> Aristotle portrays love between husband and wife as well as love between unspecified persons. I highlight these details in order to emphasise the larger rule that the polarity of feminine / inferior and

masculine / superior *was not yet constitutive* of the 'homes' or 'loves' themselves, even if this polarity may have existed as a tendency.

In the *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle introduces book 7, on friendship, in this way (my comments in brackets):

"After what we have said [on everything from A to Z – the virtues and vices of human life; justice, pleasure etc.] a discussion of friendship would naturally follow, since it is a virtue or implies a virtue, and is besides most necessary with a view to living.

For without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods; even rich men and those in possession of office and of dominating power are thought to need friends most of all; for what is the use of such prosperity without the opportunity of beneficence, which is exercised chiefly and in its most laudable form towards friends? Or how can prosperity be guarded and preserved without friends?" (op.cit. 192).

The need to ally, including the need to guard property on that basis, and the importance of giving as a way to alliance, power and influence comes forth here. Friendships were not private matters in our sense, distinct from city relations; they were part of the latter, with beneficence translating into influence. Friends are the ones who look after one's property and reputation. The greater the property, Aristotle goes on to argue, the greater the risk, and therefore the need for friends.

"And in poverty and in other misfortunes, men think friends are the only refuge." He goes on to elevate friendship – it holds the states together, it is important everywhere, more important than justice: "when men have friends they have no need of justice" (op.cit. 193). "The truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality" (ibid). Being a good man and a friend is the same thing.

He then goes on to say that there is quite a bit of debate about things related to friendship – especially whether 'like attracts like' or if difference is what creates friendship (a debate found in our time regarding love). Friendships may be of different kinds. "Those who think there is only one (type of friendship) because it admits of degrees have relied on an inadequate indication; for even things different in species admit of degree. We have discussed this matter previously." At this point the translators have a note: "place unknown" (op.cit. 193). What Aristotle seems to say, is that different entities may yet be compared on the same quantitative scale, probably since they have some characteristic in common, as practically exchanged, in an exchange.

This is the kind of Aristotelic 'basic abstractism' that Marx in *Capital* and elsewhere associated with the early commodity form, and it is no coincidence that it comes into the androcentric discourse on friendship and love. The ideal 'dialogic' love relationship between philosopher and pupil was also a framework for a new and more abstract view of people (Vernant in Halperin, Winkler & Zeitlin 1990), and in some senses also a precursor of the later ideas of gender love that developed in the West (Holter 1994g).

In *Capital* (vol.1, 65-6) Marx notes Aristotle's view that "5 beds = 1 house" is the same as "5 beds = so much money", and quotes him, again from *The Nichomachean Ethics*:

"'Exchange cannot take place without equality, and equality not without commensurability' [the text however has 'symmetry'; *symmetrias*]. Here, however he [Aristotle] comes to a stop, and gives up the further analysis of the form of value. 'It is, however, in reality, impossible that such unlike things can be commensurable – *i.e.*, qualitatively equal. Such an equalisation can only be something foreign to their real nature, consequently only a makeshift for practical purposes.'"

It is characteristic that Marx, even when using all his ingenuity interpreting Aristotle's rather vague first statements on market-based economic laws (like "with every article of property there is a double way of using it", *Pol.* 1.III.11) into an early version of the labour theory of value, neglects what the man actually says, that his economics is primarily an economics about *households* located between the economic-political notion of friendship and a sex-related notion of administration and task division. Here Marx is typical of the modern economists. Aristotles' statements are classified as 'information' as far as they run along with modern production-centred economic expectations, and dismissed as 'noise' when they do not. So where, for Platon and Aristotle, the placement of women was a major matter of the economy and the state (see below), by the time of Smith, Ricardo and Marx, it had become naturally determined and could be dismissed by economists as a non-economic matter or pushed out to the margins of their theoretical systems.

Even if a discussion of Aristotles' conception of nature falls outside the limits of the present framework, something must be said of it. Aristotle's ideal was not static, nor was the natural opposed to society, or sublimated to a position above it, as a way of instituting culture's laws. So it differed, for example, from the conceptions of 19th. century medicine, where one discovered that nature said no to masturbation. Nature did not appear 'socially empowered' or reified in this sense. So when Aristotle speaks of nature it is not in the sense of going to a greater authority, in order to sift the right from the wrong. *That* nature had yet to be established. Nature, in Aristotle, is primarily *creative*, a creativity of which the social is a *part*. This differs from the later (Middle Ages) *uses* of his writings, where Aristotle's basically symmetrical system was made into a stratification system, as something to be obeyed (a tendency well displayed for example in Thomas Aquinas' work). "Nature", Aristotle says, is purposive in the sense of creative, it "makes nothing without purpose or in vain" (1.III.7). As I interpret his view, this is something to be understood and classified, not adhered to, since the idea of 'going against nature' was still in its infancy, or even unborn; when Aristotle discusses wrongs, they are social wrongs, wrongs within the social subfield of the natural, to be discussed as such. Humanity is part of nature; like nature, it should perfect itself by moderation, by reaching the true limit or form. This basic line of thought is common to the age, as Foucault (1985) in particular has shown.

The Greeks, Aristotle says, have fashioned women and slaves into separate and thereby more perfect tools, and therefore the Greeks are justly rulers of barbarians. Not only does this supposedly 'naturalistic' (and misogynist) thinker put the creation of women or slaves into the lap of society, rather than that of nature – he also presents

the superiority of his own society precisely on that ground. What can be identified, however, allowing the later patriarchal use of his writings, is a more distanced and instrumental attitude. If stratification is not ascribed to nature, it is still the testing-ground of the former, by implication, nature in his work may be *made* into the order that evaluates what is perfect and what is at fault. Tentatively, we may connect the property of moderation or *sofrosyne* to this attitude, as a 'median' attitude in more ratio-like, exchange-abstracted social relationships. The main mode of cognition appearing, then, is the one of *reflection*, where the viewer is no longer part of the surroundings, with the act of seeing also as an emotional act (or one that always implies a certain stance towards the world, a concrete connection, as has been argued was the case in earlier traditions and epics); he is instead a more external evaluator. It is a more value-distanced attitude, expressed in a more generalising philosophy, as Marx noted.

Aristotle's view of how unlike may yet be like, how dissimilar things may yet be symmetrical, *posited as alike*, explains his comments on the household form of use of goods as 'limited'. The old way, now, appears as limited, mainly because its connections are not reflective; they *tendentially disappear* in the exchange frame of the reflective mind. So what appears is a duality of use which Aristotle refers to, on the one hand a limitedness or concreteness with a 'householdic' background, and on the other hand an emerging unlimitedness or generalisability in a market context. The unlimitedness or anonymous exchangeability of articles is what changes the perspective to one of reflective moderation, primarily represented by the Greek philosopher. – It follows from this argument that viewing Aristotle's thinking as simply 'reflected' by his circumstances, like Marx often did, amounts to an internal critique only; this 'reflection' (and the 'mind as mirror' or 'material reflection / correspondence' idea of cognition – cf. Ruben, D 1979) is only one link in a wider context.

What was new in Aristotle's understanding of society primarily concerns this more distanced sense of nature as testing-ground for tools that are socially made. Yet society and nature are still very much parts of each other in this picture. It is commonly assumed, for example, that Greek slave owner culture put the work of slaves close to nature, and that Aristotle represents the view of slavery as part of a natural order. Yet in Aristotle's view, the slave owner was part of this nature also, so the modern natural / cultural division does not quite apply.

In order to understand more of the *oikos* model of the economic, we may turn to its main expression, which was political rather than economic.

"Every state is as we see it a sort of partnership (*koinos*)", Aristotle starts *Politics*. People are natural partners or naturally social in this view; this is why friendship (with an embracing meaning, close to 'sociality') is so important. Characteristically, the rest of this first paragraph goes on to disentangle the notion of a state from that of a household. Aristotle criticises Socrates and Plato for not distinguishing between qualitatively different forms of sociality and authority; instead they defined the state *as* a household. This does not mean they saw the state as a 'magnified household' in the modern sense (expressed for example in Marx's work), not as private-propertyed and gendered private households writ large, but simply *as* householding, basically keeping to a *tradition* that stretched back into large-household society. This tendency

is to be expected, according to my line of argument: Aristotle criticises his older colleagues for not distinguishing between '*megalen oikian e mikran polin*'.

In the second paragraph he says:

"In this subject [the state] as in others, the best method of investigation is to study things in the process of development from the beginning.

The first coupling together of persons, then, to which necessity gives rise, is that between those who are unable to exist without one another, namely the union of female and male for the continuance of the species (and this not of deliberate purpose, but with man as with the other animals and with plants there is a natural instinct (*fytois fysikon*) to desire to leave behind one another being of the same sort as oneself), and the union of the natural ruler (*arkhon fysei*) and natural subject for the sake of security (*soteria*) (for one who can foresee with his mind is naturally ruler and naturally master, and one who can do these things with his body is subject and naturally a slave; so the master and slave have the same interest)."

(*Pol.*1.1.3-4. Rackham reads "do these things" to mean "carry out labour" but Aristotle may have meant "do these things only with his body", a person of lesser coolness of mind).

This paragraph is important from several angles:

(1) His distinction between a relationship of differentiation, i.e. *sexed organisation* in the term used earlier, and a relationship of stratification, one between rulers and ruled, which is presented as non-sexed, not to be conflated with the former.

(2) His use of distanced judgement, a 'judgement by nature' that comes across in two contexts: one of differentiation (natural instinct to regenerate), and one of stratification (natural superiority of mind to body). We note a main feature of this objectivism: superiority itself is inscribed into a greater differentiatial order. Nature distinguishes not for power purposes, but for difference purposes, creating one thing for each purpose. In this way, natural difference could become a ledge, a legitimization ground for a system of social asymmetry and dominance, even if such a process was still basically foreign to Aristotle, according to my interpretation of his writings.

Aristotle goes on to say:

"Thus the female and the slave are by nature distinct (for nature [*fysis polei*, literally natural cities, nature's groups] makes nothing as the cutlers make the Delfic knife, in a niggardly [Rackham sic] way, but one thing for one purpose; for so each tool will be turned out in the finest perfection, if it serves not many uses but one)."

He continues:

"Yet among the barbarians the female and the slave have the same rank [*taksis*, 'quota', originally a redistributinal term?], and the cause of this is that barbarians have no class of natural rulers originally, but, with them, the conjugal relationship is a partnership of female and male slave.

Rackham's translation "conjugal relationship" seems unwarranted: Aristotle says *allaginetai e koinonia auton doules kai doulou* which means, approximately, 'but instead birth (kinship) and communality is itself between female and male slave'. The meaning is partly opaque to me, not I think as a matter of wording, but due to the character of the argument itself, its circle tendency that the barbarian is slave-like anyway. This interpretation seems further warranted by the 'reflective sublimation' that now appears in the text, as Aristotle continues:

"Hence the saying of the poets –

'Tis meet that Greeks should rule barbarians'

implying that barbarian and slave are the same in nature."

(*Pol.* 1.1.5).

Aristotle thereby makes the distinction between woman and slave the very basis for Greek civilised supremacy. His statements seem to support a hypothesis that the Greeks not only instituted new traits of sex-related organisation, but were aware of doing so also, and further, that this was not a peripheral matter, but a pillar of the *politeia* itself. What appears, behind his sense of barbarians as naturally ruled, all living like slaves, is understandable both in terms of what is known of the contemporary periphery of Greece, and in terms of its own ancient large-household cultural heritage and older infrastructure. In non-Greek communities *both* servants and women were primarily associated with the household group, in what Aristotle perceived as being bound in the same way; they were not differentiated at the level of 'nature', which meant, to him, that they were both less than perfect tools. Therefore these societies did not quite rise to the natural stature of the *politeia*, city-state society. *Fysis*, once more, appears as something to be realised through differentiation.

## Householding in terms of nature

I have sketched the Greek household conception, the origin of Western economic theory, in a framework of gradually changing relationships that still had a primary 'household-oriented' aspect. The notion of the economic existed within a fabric of androcentric and fairly 'unisexual' friendships in a political, kinship and class framework that still kept the threads of economy, intimacy and love closely together, as a *nexus* property which appears also as a new order is in the making, as in the writings of Xenophon and Aristotle. How did this *social synthesis*, in Sohn-Rethel's term, change? One broad process of later (post-classical and medieval) change can be described in terms of a fracturing or break-up of earlier connections, i.e. a change that concerned the background relationship between the household and society, rather than the more manifest changes in each of these two contexts.

In its friendship and political setting, the household differentiated its human resources, and it is noteworthy that this differentiation was brought into the ancient debate *before* any discussion of differentiation of non-human resources. This is very different from the modern theory of *human needs*, to which I shall return later in this chapter. It is true that slaves, women, and other groups were often described in tool-like ways; a

youth might be described as the ideal tool for philosophy. Yet tools like other things basically belonged to households. What appears is not a 'shadow economy' in the modern sense, but a centre of the economic organisation.

To a great extent, this *oikos* base of the economical was retained in the Middle Ages also, along with the notion of profit-making as sinful, with Aristotle's and other ancient texts used for proving that it was a calling against nature. However, even if the household was still the main work setting and even if feudalism itself was draped in householdic phraseology (notably more so in its advanced and later state, with the 'heavenly family' replacing the masculine 'trinity of God' as main figure), society itself basically became *less* household-like, more removed from household authority. The changes that led to a more advanced, pyramidal state authority system, together with a new, monotheistic mode of legitimation were briefly outlined in chapter 12. As David Herlihy has emphasised, feudalism created a social sameness, including comparable households, that had not existed earlier. Paradoxically this homogeneity was bought at the cost of general ranking, with all groups of society linked to the supreme religiously conceived command, everyone below someone else. What emerges in the background of migrations and soldier-kings is a centralisation and naturalisation of power, at first precarious and likely to fragment, a change that was mainly brought about through a new form of religion. The ancient notion of 'people', mainly meaning household dependants, was transformed to the feudal notion of 'peasants', bound to the land itself. The task organisation changed less than its socioeconomic framework, which became 'fixed' not in terms of money, but in terms of land property, and gradually also in terms of biological kinship and inheritance.

Although the problems of the feudal period cannot be addressed here, one main paradox should be noted since it is important from an economic point of view. There is scarcely any doubt that late antiquity society was commercially oriented and organised around market slavery in particular. Yet the feudal organisation was in many ways a turning away from commodity relations. Superficially, feudalism was not characterised by commodity orientation at all, but rather by a 'natural' economy, where most goods and services were transferred in authority- rather than market-regulated forms. The fluid and overt character of ancient commercialism was replaced by a more inert and in a sense 'normative' social fabric. If this was a development of the commodity form, it was also a shift away from it. In my view, this enigmatic character of feudalism is a problem that was not really clarified by Marx or later critical economic theory. It is a problem that resurfaces in discussions about what, precisely, made European feudalism different from many similar religious-authoritarian settings elsewhere, including those of premodern Japan and China, that did not create conditions for a transformation to capitalism.

In the perspective of the Russian economist Isaac Ilych Rubin, Western and Eastern European developments were characterised by two main patterns in the transition from feudalism to capitalism. In the Western areas, peasant serfs evolved to free tenants renting their land, while in the East they became part of a corvée system (Rubin 1979:23). The idea of Russia as one large household, the long survival of a fatherly or tsar-like authority forms and similar 'eastern' traits, are well known in the modern debate.

Even in the West, however, economic views continued to be household-related, especially in terms of task structure. The *recent* origin of most of the modern economic view is striking when one studies economic and proto-economic texts from the 16th. century and later. As late as the early 18th. century, economists can be found to measure or discuss value in halfway 'householdic' ways that are quite foreign to the contemporary or post-Ricardo/Marx view. One may also say that they still measured value 'normatively', and primarily in land or household size – with the value of the worker's labour seen as equal "to the value of that plot of land that would be sufficient to feed him and his family", as Rubin (op.cit.75) says of Cantillon.

At this time, the early modern 'industriousness' or profit-oriented task structure was tendentially branching or separating from the household, with emerging manufacture. Still, the household continued to cast its shadow on political economy – even as, within the new conceptualisations of economy, it was itself to be put in the shadow. Thus even for Ricardo (1982:31) writing in 1817, land products, food and clothing were to be seen as the capital of the workers. The household is included in the discussion of the economic field, more so than today, yet by now it has basically become a factor in a new, non-household process, represented first by manufacture, later by industry. As noted earlier, the emerging capitalism was itself, characteristically, partly organised as a system of 'putting-out' of tasks to the older household structure. Its problems of coming to terms with this structure also appears, as we saw, in the 'household-less' character of its main agent, the worker; its threat of dissolving worker households and family organisation *as such*, especially in the English 'first case' setting where the absolute mode of surplus appropriation had to be changed through non-economic intervention. In simple but not unwarranted terms, capitalism broke the household orientation of all earlier economy by breaking down the household structure itself. A new and qualitatively different sense of households, related to the modern notion of the home, emerged through a reorientation of the mode of appropriation towards 'relative' surplus mechanisms. In the broader historical perspective, this state of affairs is of surprisingly *recent* origin, together with its many associated notions that, today, are taken for granted: class as a matter of society at large, more than households; work as something different from household service, even an 'anti-home' area; economy as homelessness, as that which is separated from households, and so on – ideas that became common as large-scale industrialisation finally broke the remnants of 'householdic orientation' retained by mercantilists and physiocrats.

There is no doubt that a branching off of two different spheres, as hypothesised in the Y model, was involved in these changes. In the view that emerged especially in the 19th. century, *nature*, not society, was the home of man, the background of his social being, a notion that was gradually extended into a framework of 'inner being' as expression of human nature. It is also fairly clear that the naturalised sphere of domesticity was created in contradistinction and as a counterproposal to the public world of the market. Yet this was not simply a political or ideological shift, in the common sense of these terms; it was how things 'appeared', from the new economic viewpoint. The objective commerciality of things in the firstness sphere created their subjective naturalness in the otherness sphere. As we shall see, the second 'use value'-associated part of this shift was no less modern than the first, 'value'-related part; the two emerged as parts of one axis. What was to be seen, when political economists briefly glanced in the direction of homes, appeared as natural, a contrast to the

artificiality of commercial economy, or as Marx said, a matter that the capitalists could safely leave to nature. As has been argued, this new human nature was in fact deeply related to the formation process of the modern gender system, a process that often does correspond to the Hegelian notion of '*becoming*' through the 19th. century, conceived as an 'elevating' and civilising influence. The gendered organisation of human nature became a mirror that society should strive towards, a great meta-economical equaliser. In this process, the treatment of '*the sex*' gradually evolved into a more dyadic system with gender-as-woman as a main background feature, a system that became realised primarily in the 20th. century.

## Abstraction as meta-institutionalisation

Modern economic theory has not just kept the view of earlier economic theory, *minus* the home. The whole view is different, and the concept of meta-institutionalisation, introduced in chapter 7, can be used to approach this difference. In the antiquity view, economic activity was framed by notions of the household, friendship, politics and the city-group. These categories did not have the abstract or 'disembodying' character of modern economic concepts. On the other hand, their reproduction-related notions were not split off from production categories, nor did they have the 'embodying' character of modern concepts in this area. It is often assumed that modern economic concepts involve a generalisation or 'seeing from above' which is unique. Yet this is only a first feature, and it is accompanied by a 'view from within', where parts of the societal householding is seen as human nature and left out of the economic account. The abstractions of modern economic theory therefore does not simply represent generalisations at an advanced and detached stage. In the background there are certain notions of the concrete involved in these abstractions.

Marx's view of the power of abstractions in capitalist society is of relevance here. In *Grundrisse*, Marx (1973:164) Marx argued (my comments in brackets):

"These *objective* (Germ. *sachlichen*, reified) dependency relations [of capitalism] also appear, in antithesis to those of *personal* dependency (..) in such a way that individuals are now ruled by *abstractions*, whereas earlier they depended on one another." He corrects himself, however, in the next paragraph (op.cit. 165), arguing against "the illusion of 'purely personal relations' in feudal times, etc.". "It is of course not to be forgotten for a moment that (1) these relations, in a certain phase, also took on an objective character within their own sphere (..) but (2) the objective relation on which they founder has still a limited, primitive character and therefore *seems* personal, while, in the modern world, personal relations flow purely out of relations of production and exchange."

This remains a remarkable insight, yet it is also easily misleading. The objective relations of former epochs are somehow known to Marx precisely in the kind of abstract mode he has just connected to capitalism – while their seemingly personal character is left unexamined. On the other hand, the embodying or 'concrete' background of modern abstractions is left alone; here, supposedly, the 'pure' exchange abstraction governs everything. These traits are further discussed below. The following passage brings the abstract objectivity of modern economic theory further into light, as well as being central for understanding Marx' view of meta-institutional change (1973:104-5, my comments in brackets):

"It was an immense step forward for Adam Smith to throw out every limiting specification of wealth-creating activity – not only manufacturing, or commercial or agricultural labour, but one as well as the others, labour in general. With the abstract universality of the wealth-creating activity we now have the universality of the object defined as wealth, the object as such or again labour as such, but labour as past, objectified [*vergegenständlichte*; reified] labour. (..) Now, it might seem that all that had been achieved thereby was to discover the abstract expression for the simplest and most ancient relation in which human beings – in whatever form of society – play the role of producers [*als produzieren auftreten*, 'appear as producers']. This is correct in one respect. Not in another.

Indifference towards any specific kind of labour presupposes a very developed totality of labour, of which no single one is any longer predominant [some of this is achieved in all social forms]. As a rule, the most general abstractions arise only in the midst of the richest [wealth, *produzieren* once more] possible development, where one thing appears as common to many, to all. Then it ceases to be thinkable in a particular form alone. On the other side, this abstraction of labour as such is not merely the mental product of a concrete totality of labours. Indifference towards specific labours corresponds to a form of society in which individuals can with ease transfer from one labour to another, and where the specific kind is a matter of chance for them, hence of indifference."

A category, then, may be general, describing a process existing in most or all societies, and still be institutionally relevant mainly in the commodity form or in capitalism. Marx, as 'pre-sociology sociologist', associates to how people actually pass between jobs in the labour market. Indifference to jobs presupposes serialised and substitutable relations between jobs and job holders; exchange practised 'with ease'.

Next, however, he draws renewed attention to the meta-institutional level:

"Not only the category, labour, but labour in reality has here become the means of creating wealth in general, and has ceased to be organically linked with particular individuals in any specific form."

Several traits are important here. First, Marx's 'indifference' or *Gleichgültigkeit* is a disciplinary trait and not just a 'technical' transfer result; it is created on the basis of power and alienation. Second, his Hegel-derived opposition between the exchange abstraction and a pure particularity or concreteness is misleading. A society where relations are only 'thinkable in a particular form' has never existed; this line of thought belongs to the metaphysics of the becoming of the Hegelian Mind. Instead of understanding modern abstractions *and* their background sense of concreteness in combination, i.e. the embodying as well as the disembodying tendency, Marx links the former to precapitalist society while the latter supposedly rules capitalism on its own. As shall be discussed later, this line of thought created the highly misleading idea that categories like 'use value' and the 'concrete' had the same meaning and could be used of non-capitalist as well as capitalist society.

These problems are related to another paradox of his discussion, the fact that while he tries to localise and identify the modern sense of abstraction, he nevertheless keeps within its framework as a greater, transhistorical framework of truth; he goes along

precisely with that which he attempted to distance his theory from. It is characteristic that this trait can be found especially when he uses Hegelianist phrases like appearing, coming forth, etc. We are well advised to ask *Appear to whom? From what position?* in these contexts. Then we also note the meta-framework of production: '*handeln als produzieren*'; to act, or even appear, come forth, is to produce.

So even if Marx here takes an important step towards a sociological framework in the true sense, one that is not posited from some above-it-all eternal position but in the real world, he does not let go of it. Although he shows that this 'labour in reality' is *not* labour as a general category, but a category corresponding to the real abstraction of the labour market, and thus part of a highly specific *kind* of reality and conceptualisation, he nevertheless remains standing on the secure cliff of his *produzieren*, a production that *nevertheless* is 'simply', as he says in the first passage quoted, "the objective relation". Who knows this objectivity? What kind of larger productional being is *presupposed* here? As is the case with all great thinkers, Marx himself supplies much guidance on exactly that kind of issue, in the numerous passages (which I will not quote here) where he argues that it is precisely *capital and capitalism* that take on this appearance of labour as such, production as such<sup>8</sup>.

The problem, then, remains a wider understanding of the *kind* of reality constituted by the transition to the capitalist era, one that does not end up echoing its own universalist claims. In a recent attempt, Moishe Postone tries this; capitalism, he argues, puts 'practice' or 'labour' in a special slot, *as* institutionalising activity. Capitalism is primarily a society of *labour-mediated institutionalisation*:

"Labour in capitalism is directly social because it acts as socially mediating activity. This social quality, which is historically unique, distinguishes labour in capitalism from labour in other societies and determines the character of social relations in the capitalist formation. (...) Marx' critique of capitalist society (...) should not be understood as a critique of the atomised mode of social existence in that society from the standpoint of the collectivity in which people are component parts. Instead, it analyses capitalist society in terms of an opposition between the isolated individuality and the social collectivity. The critique is of *both* terms; it maintains that they are structurally related and that they form an opposition specific to capitalism. Marx' critical analysis of this opposition is undertaken from the standpoint of the historical possibility of its overcoming, a standpoint represented by Marx' notion of the social individual." (Postone 1993:48)

As noted in chapter 7, the labour-mediated character of modern institutions is itself entangled with other characteristics, including the gender system. The opposition between the isolated individual and the social collectivity is only one part of this wider framework, and one that mainly applies to the firstness field of the economy as a typical expression of political conflict there.

As we have seen, the ancient conception of the economy had one main feature which is lacking in the modern view: a direct and overt focus on 'household administration' and on the relationship between man and woman in this context. This 'administration' exists today on the societal level as a split between two main spheres of labour and two main social frameworks surrounding them. Yet the split and the barriers and

filtering connected to it have disappeared from economic theory, including the critical vision of most Marxists. Our earlier methodological points are relevant here, for its disappearance, on the surface, does not mean that it is in fact a peripheral matter. On the contrary, it is its importance, including its existential and social psychological impact, that creates the slanted vision in this area.

Each time concepts of modern abstractions are used, equally modern ideas of the concrete follow. They often lie in the background, not so different from the 'mother carpet' discussed by Helene Aarseth in the family context. The labour mediation presupposes a counter-labour mediation, and conflicts in the first area, between individualist or collectivist views or between different forms of firstness sphere hierarchy therefore have non-incidental gender associations, pointing to the silently assumed background of an otherness sphere.

Before going further into the qualitative terrain that appears in an examination of economic categories, I shall turn to a discussion that starts from the other side, from questions of quantity and exploitation. If women are exploited, capital analysis might be used in order to understand gender relations. This is not done, however, and we shall first consider some peculiar phenomena surrounding this issue.

## The taboo on gender as capital

The main political strategy of workers' movements over the last century has been based on value creation and exploitation arguments, with the aim of rearranging economic relations in the workers' favour. Women's movements and feminist theories have been more occupied with qualitative questions and the limits of economic thinking itself. In several contexts we have found a pattern where women, as an oppositional category, are more often defined as *different* than as *subordinate*, a tendency that has become more evident in the development of feminist views over the last decade. This is partly related to the fact women's positions have in fact improved, yet the improvements have not been equally great in all areas. In Norway, approximately one of three political leaders is a woman, while perhaps one of ten or fifteen business leaders is a woman. If we imagine a dimension from high to low influence, we may put ideological and public opinion influence on the high end where women's influence is not much less than men's. Further down we have political influence, the media, wage work, and the economy – roughly in that order. When we look more closely at the low end of work organisation and the economy, we find that women's influence over large property and capital is especially weak.

This is a matter not only of the scale but also of the type of control. The more 'capitalist', capital-connected the form of control, the greater the chance that women are in object rather than subject positions. Women's slice of economic capital does not correspond to their part of 'cultural capital', and the lack of economic backing for other forms of influence often appears as a main barrier, especially since it is not just a problem of leaders at the top, but a tendency to be found at all levels of wage work and economic life: the more capitalised, the less feminised. Yet women in the sense of objects, including sales image objects and sex association objects, are seldom far away from the more capitalist and commercial contexts. It is the subject position that seems 'repulsive' to capital, accompanied by a leadership culture with a very masculinistic orientation. It is true that women business leaders are often blocked by

the old men at the top, and that the masculinity hierarchy is often important. Yet it mainly seems to follow in the wake of the fact; the particular repulsion of women from subject positions vis-à-vis capital, and their inclusion as objects. Various strands of leadership culture – heroic, paternal, commanding – create a masculine ideology around a factually existing economic relationship.

Two curious patterns surround this relationship. One is a taboo pattern, a marked silence and unwillingness to debate or explore. The other is 'totemic' in the sense of erecting a totem somewhere else instead of the taboo that cannot be directly addressed. It is expressed in a willingness to attribute the capital/gender relationship, using slightly different terms, to other societies, cultures and epochs. This dual tendency is reminiscent of the 19th. century idea of using 'the emancipation of women' as the measure of how civilised capitalism progressed, making the oppression in foreign parts of the world and the relative emancipation in the centre into a programmatic issue. Today, however, it concerns capital, and an inner taboo which is projected and made into a totem of other, non-modern societies.

The writings of Pierre Bourdieu (1976, 1984, 1990, 1991) may be used in order to introduce these phenomena. They are relevant since Bourdieu has been a main proponent of one type of extension of the capital concept, in the form of 'cultural capital', and due to his emphasis on social class and ranking issues. Bourdieu who is a perceptive writer in matters of culture and dominance also sometimes describes gender from a class-like perspective, including feminine and masculine marriage strategies. He uses the capital concept in a much broader and less institutionally specific way than most Marxists would do; capital mainly means resources for defending or expanding one's *habitus*. "Economic power is first and foremost a power to keep economic necessity at arm's length", he argues (1984:55). Yet he never connects gender and capital or investigates gender as a capital relationship.

In matters of 'culture', on the other hand, the capital character may be assumed in a very liberal fashion. One does not need, say, a culture industry to become a culture capitalist, nor is Bourdieu specific that exploitation must be involved for anything to become capital. Being a resource is enough, as regards 'culture'. Being a resource is not enough when it comes to 'gender', there, on the other hand, the capital angle is not even to be considered.

I find this treatment curious in view of the work and class paradigm otherwise applied in Bourdieu's texts; precisely a 'materialistic awareness', all the more so with a view to culture, should *suspect* something from *witnessing* the systematic character of gender phenomena and the associated asymmetrical labour division, the capital exclusion of women as subjects, their inclusion as sexualised objects, and other traits. The silence on gender as capital is not simply incidental, and it is displayed also in the works of his followers. I find 124 references to cultural capital in *Sociofile*, most of them relying on, or in the mode of, Bourdieu, with very little critique, although it is noted – mainly in the 1970s – that his capital concept has little to do with an institutional concept, not to speak of Marx's.

The need to investigate the *capital character of gender* including *gender as capital* is a rather obvious conclusion in view of the fact that women are especially disassociated from control over capital. Since the capital concept is used in such a

wide and liberal fashion in other areas like human resources and culture, what about gender? This is the area that does in fact have class-like characteristics *sui generis*, and thus presumably especially interesting from a capitalist analysis point of view. Yet the idea of class as the kernel of gender usually leads to an absolute halt in the face of any vision of the capital character of this kind of class – instead, gender class is brought to a more transhistorical level, and used in the sense of an absolute and static ranking, 'caste'. Clearly, the main matter here is not one of rejecting *quantitative asymmetry*, since such views may be combined with use value exploitation of women, but the *qualitative* relationship. It is the *form* of capital and the *form elements* that are associated with women that should not be associated, related or investigated.

The capital concept is used in a number of areas where it does not really fit, while the area where it does fit, according to some main characteristics (like asymmetrical labour and a probability of systematic exploitation), is marked by the absence of capital analysis. We are faced with a very systematic non-association that cannot be dismissed as incidental. In *Sociofile*, a fairly comprehensive data base of sociology and related social science papers over the last twenty years, there are some 14000 papers with reference to gender, 5000 to capital (500 of these to "human" capital). How many can be found regarding gender as capital, or gender and capital? *Not one single reference* – no discussion of this relation, as if the very thought was forbidden, *taboo*.

The taboo does not exist alone. The silence is all the more striking since many social researchers, not least those in Bourdieu's France building on structural anthropology, have no problems whatsoever in assigning women a *commodity* status in *other*, 'primitive' societies. This is a very common procedure, usually resting on scanty or misrepresented evidence. Thereby the taboo *here* becomes a totem *there*. What *we* do not want to acknowledge, can be made into what *they* follow blindly, showing their backwardness *plus* the universal character of patriarchy – all in one neat manoeuvre.

Interestingly, this is a 'cluster' taboo, meaning that it can be found in many related versions. For example, the 'taboo here, totem there' rule may also be expressed in a notion of 'sublime ideology here, base materiality there'. As an example, consider the implications of a supposedly anti-imperialist economic theory in the version advocated by Samir Amin (1980:38-9). Amin first assigns "male-female relations" *here*, in capitalism, to the "level of superstructural instances", while then going on to find that *there*, in 'primitive' etc. society, she is just a commodity, a lowly thing: "the best possible description of women's status through the ages [is] not that of an exploited producer but of a commodity."

Here as in the mode of production debate (chapter 11), the notion of gender as a common man's capital, not to be taken away by the greater powers of society, shines through. There is something to be *disowned*, or kept unrecognised in the self, which is then seen, with rather pathetic 'clarity', in others – the further away, the better. This is the gender fixation in economic action. It is both ideological and practical, for the avoidance of bringing women and capital together in theory, in feminist terms, corresponds to an avoidance of bringing them together in practice, with women as subjects. What kind of subjection of women prohibits this connection?

## Equivalence feminism

Why is it that the taboo on the capital character of gender relations has not been a main target of critique in feminism? True, we do not know precisely what this character or association entails, yet we have many reasons to assume its existence and importance. Therefore we should expect a major research effort in this area, which is not the case. The silence is not as complete as in social research at large, yet most of the feminist analyses that at all venture into this area, end where they should have started, i.e. with commodities and reification. This is not due to a lack of interest in the issue, I believe, but rather the way it is conceived, through what I called the equivalent position epistemology.

Women do indeed experience a negative relationship to capital, or some expressions of this relationship. As women's equality advance has become notable in many other areas, the lack of economic and capital power becomes a more overt trait. If we go back to the wide 'resource' sense of capital, we will generally find that the more strictly economic the resources involved, the smaller the proportion of women who are in control of them. In the private sector especially, women are deselected from the top jobs that involve control of capital, and there is also a strong negative correlation between femininity and capital control further down in the work hierarchy, with larger capital intensity (amount of constant capital) in men's jobs, and other related tendencies.

As a result, women's interests are recognised in very 'differentiated' and often ineffective manners. There is the wish to abolish gender inequality but also the need to keep to the rules of the game, including the 'obvious' fact that production matters must have priority before reproduction matters. Women politicians often experience a dilemma of 'being like men' and 'being unlike men', of acceptance and change of 'men's kinds of rules', a wider problem that differs from conventional political issues (cf. Skjeie, H 1992).

One may argue that a feminism that does not emphasise exploitation, but only dominance, and dominance mainly in the concrete form of men's dominance of women in private life, underrates the importance of societal and economic factors. I am not so sure about this, however. Things in this field are not quite what they seem, and there is more than one taboo trait to be observed here. Some epistemological considerations of the feminist and gender politics surrounding the capital/gender issue are in order.

First, there is the sense in which speaking of value, capital and exploitation in relation to gender is *derogatory* of women *per se*, a masculine way of understanding women's lives. This has been discussed previously (chap. 4), as has a radical women's version of this theme: an '*all the more*' tendency to the effect that while a case is *not* to be made out of economic exploitation, there are *all the more* non-economic kinds of extraction of women's energies, all the more reason to put emphasis on non-economic, concrete burdens, all the more male dominance around, etc. The second part of this line of argument not only compensates for the first, it also conveys a larger message of sacrifice. Yet if the burden is great, interpreting it as an economic burden is for some reason worse. Concrete burdens, whatever their size, are preferable to economic exploitation. One may at least conclude that the strategic question of terrain – gifts or commodities – seems to outweigh the more tactical question of who exploits whom.

Several interpretations of such patterns are possible: the gift framework is not simply a more favourable grounding, but primarily a question of *identity*. One is left wondering whether the feminist dismissal of exploitation theory results from underrating of it, or quite the contrary from being so deeply immersed within it that examining it threatens the feeling of subjective existence or worthiness. Pollution theory is probably relevant here, since the capital notion of gender and the whore notion of women are often associated. There is a clean worthiness of the feminine, a gender ledge with a main sexual component, not to be dragged down to the level of the beast, capital.

The equivalent epistemology discussed earlier (chapter 3-4) here reappears, as the twin of the relative position epistemology. The latter was discussed above, in the 'all is *produzieren*, and women is a minor matter within it' version of Marx. Feminism, as a view influenced by the *gender-as-woman* equivalent position, will tend to conceive of the background economic reality of exploitation only through the *subjectification* of it, through a personification of it, primarily (but not only) represented by the man, who is *the Other*, the social mirror of the woman, in this constellation. Abstraction, then, is reserved for men, keeping a men-as-value-giants view, now in negative form. Women's lack of value association, their non-relation to capital, etc., equals their worthiness.

Through this lens of subjectivity, what appears as more relevant than a theory of economy is a theory of *power*, and so what may, in fact, mainly be an *exploitation hierarchy* is interpreted as a system of personalised power and power techniques. The great majority of feminist studies over the last decades has been directed this way and not towards the economics of the arrangement.

In the equivalent epistemology, capital not only seems far away, it also becomes curiously countour-less, as if the angles of light and vision are too close for much contrast to appear. It is no coincidence that feminism in the 1975-85 period mainly turned to Marx's theory for its halfway transhistorical class and power concepts, not for its economy critique. Power and class in a depth and fairly static sense seemed most fruitful. As perceived from the equivalent position, the direct woman-man relationship is the primary site and framework of oppression of women. The personal and intimate are more important than the non-personal or non-intimate (with the associated argument that sexual exploitation is worse / more central than any other form of exploitation), and power should also be understood through this direct, personal framework, with men as abstract persons in focus. Thus, one avenue to abstraction is favoured before any other, that of positing *men* as abstract category. Gender, in this perception, is not constituted by aggregate social praxis in specific social forms but by abstract men who are negatively responsible. Yet this makes sense in a perspective that principally sets the singular relation before the serial economic ones. As argued, the beauty object 'sees' the world *as* subjectified by its opponent, 'man' in the special sense of the one in control, the masculinity associated with power. Therefore, feminist theory has kept the notion of *power* squarely in the middle even when touching on the subject of the economical character of the oppression of women. Power, in this view, 'creates' exploitation, rather than the other way round, and in front of all, *men* create power. A line of thought going from 'the man', to 'power' and then possibly (reluctantly) to 'exploitation' and 'social structure', is undoubtedly an individual-oriented, voluntaristic or anti-categorical framework. This

is not a case of categories deciding, but of men deciding. So it is a more *substantial* individualism than most of the market ideology served up by men at this point. The problem, however, is that it remains a voluntarism by sex organ, for in that respect, it is utterly non-individual, reflecting what it should explain.

Feminist debate and gender politics often give the impression that capital melts into air from the equivalent position, while solidifying from the relative position. Is this simply due to the fact that women's positions are usually further away from the workings of capital than men's positions? Is it a long distance kind of problem? Or is the distance in fact short, and the problem rather one of diffuseness, the lack of contrast I noted, due to a *similar* line of view? As shall be discussed later, this similarity question is not irrelevant, since capital itself is in some important senses a development of the equivalent position, advanced 'equivalent value'.

## The domestic labour debate revisited

On the background of the preceding discussion we would not be surprised if the dialogue between (mostly male) Marxists and feminists mainly in the 1975-85 period was characterised by many forms of counter-positioning. Among the less subtle forms there was the Marxist tendency to interpret women's difference as a resource for the working class, while feminists might interpret class as a gender issue and resource for women. Much of the argumentation had a functionalist arm's length character; gender arrangements existed *for* capital in various ways, yet they were not seriously considered *as* capital arrangements. In retrospect, it seems clear that both of the two main perspectives in the debate were characterised by an avoidance of the capital/gender issue, although in different ways. The exploitation topic of the debate was only the more overt part of this wider background pattern and explicit exploitation arguments were often made from implicit capital/gender assumptions.

In the domestic labour debate only a minority defended the unorthodox view that domestic activity and reproduction work generate value like production work and are subject to their own forms of exploitation. On the other side, only a minority of the contributions were wholly orthodox. The majority attempted some opening of the traditional economic framework in favour of reproduction, while mainly staying in line with the orthodox position on the value and surplus value creation issue. Household work did not create surplus value, and although the capitalist character of domestic arrangements and the family system was acknowledged on other accounts, it was usually rejected in this kernel matter.

This view was presented through a variety of lines of argument, and I shall not attempt to review them all here. Instead I focus on two main avenues. The two keep to each side of the 'double standard' discussed earlier in connection to 'explication' and 'implication' of gender (chap. 8). One path tendentially dispenses with qualitative aspects of gender relations, the other with their quantitative aspects. The two corresponding frameworks may perhaps be called 'realist-materialist' and 'romantic-idealist'.

As examples I use two recent contributions that illustrate these trends and also have some other traits in common. In both, the rejection of a value and exploitation view,

as represented by my own writings on this issue, is a major point in the analysis. The 'realist-materialist' example is a work on the political economy of the household by Peder Martin Lysestøl (1992), partly based on the view of Kjersti Ericsson (1986). The main thesis, here, is that women's domestic work is not value-creative but instead made for free, or, in effect, more cheaply than market services could have been made. Capitalists do not have to pay anything special in order to get labour power for less expense than would have been the case without women's domestic work. The house worker's labour creates use value, not value.

Quite the opposite path is represented by Elisabeth L'orange Fürst's (1994) work on food and women's identity, which also makes a main point of arguing against a value view, which she finds one-sided, or in consequence a hindrance for understanding women's lives. These works are in many ways as different as can be imagined – which is precisely why comparing them and looking into their curious agreement on the present issue is of some interest.

Lysestøl discusses women and households from a work-oriented, economic perspective, which if 'rationalistic' is also more lively than most, including discussions of collectives and other attempts to change the household structure. He recognises the main problem discussed earlier – "regardless of the way [reproduction] is paid for, it is in the end a cost that must be subtracted from the value creation in the enterprises". He also includes statistical material confirming the somewhat more egalitarian sharing of tasks in Scandinavian households compared, for example, to the US (Lysestøl, M 1992:114, 163).

Fürst goes into the same area from quite a different angle, discussing body symbolism and food in a theory of the subject perspective, developing views from Merleau-Ponty, Cixous, Kristeva and others, combined with anthropological gift theory. It is in this in-depth qualitative context that she finds value and exploitation views like my own to be a hindrance rather than a help, although it should be noted at the outset that Fürst clearly does not associate a "value view" with the framework presented in the current text. Rather, there seems to be an *either/or* issue, even if this is a mode of thought Fürst otherwise tries to leave behind. Whatever the case, it appears as a matter of primary importance to place gender, or at least women, in a terrain of gift giving, quite different from the exchange-rational considerations of Lysestøl, and even if Fürst uses a highly complex cultural construction of subjectivity framework, there is a noticeable tendency, perhaps all the more so beneath this complexity, towards *authenticity* as a main matter and ideal, for example in her concluding remarks where she posits the 'body mother' as the compass for life-giving and loving women (Fürst 1994:424). She assumes that *use value* is an absolute other of value and capital, rather than part of capitalism, and argues that women's domestic activities are use value activities.

So while Lysestøl (and Ericsson) misinterprets women's labour *quantitatively* by not recognising the surplus it creates, Fürst does so *qualitatively* by arguing that it is fully non-economic. Like Lysestøl and Ericsson, but from the contrary position, Fürst (op.cit.163-8) attacks commodity analysis of gender as determinism, arguing that this kind of analysis, at least in my own case, implies a basic unawareness of the power and importance of gift-giving and ignorance of non-commodity reciprocity. Since commodity analysis is unfit, capital analysis is probably even more misleading in her

view. Fürst and Lysestøl both make a main point of rejecting a value and exploitation view, combined with a lack of knowledge of what they argue against. None of them have read much of what I have written in this area.<sup>9</sup>

## Alternative and free

Despite this critique of why thinking in terms of value and exploitation is wrong at the outset – what if there is something to it? Could it possibly contribute to some new insights, perhaps *also* for explaining the character of gifts? That possibility is not discussed by Fürst, nor by Lysestøl. Lysestøl rejects the idea of value creation in the household on the basis of the character of the work there – it is not really '*exchange labour*' (op.cit.185).

Thus we are presented with two main ideas concerning the position of domestic work: it is 'alternative', external to the economy, and it is made for free. Through quite different paths these authors arrive in the same scenery of a home located in a domestic mode of production, outside capitalism proper. These lines of thought, in slightly variant versions, have been common in the international domestic labour debate.<sup>10</sup>

Such a broad agreement could of course simply be the consequence of the facts of the case, speaking so clearly that even otherwise opposed theorists come to the same conclusion. This is indeed a partial reason: the surface of economic relations often confirms such a view. Each budget transfer to the health or social sector appears as a cost, while each increase of profits in production implies a creation of value. If one is to balance a state budget, these are the realities. One can extend a 'compensatory understanding' of reproduction and create more of a 'reproductive transfer society', and / or distribute in solidarity, as a recognition of 'soft values'. Yet it remains hard to conceive of how the economic field itself should equalise the positions of producer and reproducer.

At the same time there are many traits in this perspective that do not fit together, and what one may perhaps call a gender-bending of premises. Some of these problems are empirical. If the sphere of reproduction creates no value, a row of inexplicable facts comes into view. I have mentioned that it is the richest countries of the world, not the poorest, that have the greatest proportion of reproductive work as part of total work. This is where domestic and wage "labour power input work" is most extensive and advanced. The same division, contrary to the one expected, can be found internally in each region or country: it is commonly the most demanded and best paid labour power that has the greatest amount of reproductive labour behind it, not the least demanded. The former belong to the "class A" or upper echelons of the labour market, the latter to "class B", with many studies showing substantial differences for example regarding fringe benefits between the two, which are not simply explainable in terms of solidified labour market hierarchies and niches (Holter, Ø 1990c).

Since keeping a housewife costs something from the employer point of view, a certain 'breadwinner' proportion that must be added to a one-person wage, we would expect contrary trends, since according to the view I criticise there is nothing specifically to be gained from exploitation of domestic labour. The latter does not create value that

could be added to surplus value. Although both Ericsson and Lysestøl attempt to construct an argument that household labour saves the capitalists some expenses, since their workers do not have to buy all kinds of services in the market, this scenery is a highly artificial one, as shall be shown, and it is not made more convincing by their constant use of the term 'free' for household labour, as if domestic labourers lived on air and emotions. The facts are that they do cost something, that 'class A' production workers with a breadwinner portion customarily built into their wage contracts cost substantially more than lower level, 'class B' employees (as discussed in chapter 5), and that this difference constitutes a major mobility dimension in the labour market, with many cultural, social, family value etc. patterns connected to it.

On the concrete level, at least, the breadwinner portion consumed by the domestic labourer creates the basis for a new labour process, resulting in regenerated employees or new labour power. Empirical evidence of the 'shadow' household work arrangement was discussed earlier. According to the orthodox view, this concrete pattern should not be taken as indication of an economic pattern; its traits are not to be interpreted as economically related phenomena. Yet the pattern was itself historically *created* in association with economic changes, a new householding principle where *her* input became *his* output through the sale of his labour power. This was the economic kernel of the 'nuclear family' form. If this pattern is purely concrete and non-economic, we are left in the dark as to why it emerged in force in close association with the shift of the economy towards *relative surplus creation*, while absolute surplus creation had a very different impact in the domestic sphere.

According to the view that no value is created through household work, families become more costly to capital, the greater their resources spent in this area, and less costly the greater the proportion of labour power which is instead sold and used through the market. So in the competition of capitalism, the capitals employing workers with one-career, breadwinner families should lose out against capitals employing workers in more equal two-career families. The former capitals have a stone in their bag, they support non-productive activity in the household through their wage budgets, while the latter capitals dispense with this subtraction from profits.

Instead of a clear loss and profit situation, however, the most successful, class-mobile, economically viable family/work arrangements in different periods and regions over the last century have been characterised by *varying* positions on the scale from a one-job-household to a two-jobs-household. One-job or breadwinner households surround strategical production work as well as capital power positions, and cannot simply be seen as based on non-productive concessions to patriarchy – or to a male wish to have a wife at home.

The idea that the work of housewives makes labour power cheaper comes close to a value creation argument, yet it is couched in negative form. If labour power is cheaper, it might mean that its price is below its value, a value created with the housewife's labour as one important input. Yet even if we overlook the artificiality of an alternative where the worker buys his wife's services on the market instead of receiving them in the home, the cost of keeping an adult at home is greater than the saved market expense. In other words the upkeep cost of the home worker must be greater than the assumed difference between home cost and market cost of input services, unless one goes into some very strained argumentation regarding the cost of

a washed floor. Therefore the argument that housewives 'stretch' wage budgets through their labour *either* is a backwards way of saying that they create value, *or* it is a point of view that brings no clarification, since this effect is smaller than the presumably unprofitable outlay. We are stuck within the cost framework and the question of why capitals in some circumstances prefer this cost.

Beyond these issues there is the question of *why* it is so important to show that domestic labour is not brought into a capitalist value cycle. Marxist authors like Lysestøl and Ericsson otherwise credit such cycles with much flexibility, not least on the global level, where capitals seem able to connect profitably to most kinds of local power orders and labour regimes. Here, however, rather inflexible rules are assumed and a not very capital-like behaviour is presupposed. Elsewhere in Marxist debate the burden of proof is usually on the barrier side, since it is assumed that capital extracts whatever surplus can be had unless specifically hindered from it; here, instead, it is on the connection side.

It is hard to avoid the association that the dirty business of exploitation *should* be kept away from the clean notion of the home, that the *taboo* comes first, arguments later. This is not an unwarranted assumption considering the lines of argument as a whole and the ways in which rules are reversed as fit, all in order to maintain a greater sense of a *clean division line* between the world in here, and that out there. One is reminded of Mary O'Brien's words (1981:197) against Marx and Engels: capitalism does not tear off the veil of the family, it creates it.

As a main example, the category of "mode of production" was given a new and original interpretation in order to keep the family out of the grip of capital. In its common definition, along with Marx's main usage, 'mode of production' may be a too narrow concept, yet it does concern the *main background characteristics of an age*, typical patterns of a world system, traits that are *common to different social formations* and concrete societies. Here, however, it received a much more concrete and narrow meaning, 'economic sector' or 'sphere'. Much has been said regarding the idea of a separate domestic mode already, so I limit my comments to one concrete issue – the fact that the organisation of production and reproduction has been known to shift almost fully around over short periods in our century, especially in crisis periods. One main case is the mobilisation of women to industry in the First and Second World War. Those were abrupt changes showing the *real dynamics* below the *surface of segregated rigidity* at normal times. They do not support the idea that women would have to pass from one mode of production to the other in order to be creative in industry; instead they highlight the artificial character of using the mode concept in this manner. Not only was it possible to achieve the cross-over of women from homes to industry very quickly, it is also a fact that it was done very successfully, especially in the Second World War where former housewives' industrial effort in the US, the UK and the Soviet Union was of main importance for the allied victory. Even in Nazi Germany, the 'essential dignity' of Aryan women in the home could be disrupted. In the words of Goebbels, "*Our politics of displacement of women from public life occurs solely to restore their essential dignity to them.*" Yet this was no more of an absolute barrier than that women came to constitute approximately sixty percent of the industrial work force during the war, with a work week of 60-72 hours (Grunberger, R 1971:253,257,200). After the war, as this work force was dismissed and often pushed back into the homes, the effect was not the one

to be expected from the no-value point of view, but quite the contrary; the post-war economic boom was followed by twenty years of rising affluence (c. 1953-73). Later, however, when domestic labour was transferred to wage reproduction labour, the economic development was much less stable. I am not arguing that these phenomena are directly related. Yet the tendencies are precisely the opposite from the ones to be expected from the no-value viewpoint, and the shifts to and from the 'domestic mode' should have been far less easy to achieve from that point of view, while both can be explained from the value point of view.

This is one area of many. *If* housewives were simply a minus, family patterns would be different from what they are. *If* reproduction played no positive role for value creation, the economy as a whole, including the world market and the global economic hierarchy, would look very different. – I leave these empirical issues in favour of theoretical ones.

The common tendency, when the possibility of domestic value creation is dismissed, is that one gets into problems explaining labour power itself. In turn, this leads to a row of other categories becoming problematical. I restrict the discussion to an examination of two main kinds of argument that can be seen as a 'first' and 'second' line of defence against a domestic exploitation hypothesis. The first tries to banish value creation from the home as a matter of principle. The second dismisses it by turning to the input conditions of domestic labour. Both depart from what is otherwise considered standard procedure.

In Marx's theory, labour is value-creative if a certain context is present, summarised in the concept 'abstract labour'. Labour, however, is not abstract *per se*, as Lysestøl, Ericsson and many others seem to believe to be the case in "Marxist theory"; rather, it is abstract *if* its results are abstracted in real terms, by being posited as alike in a capitalist market context. The abstract labour is there as a 'social fact', not in any other sense; it is not synonymous with labour in a transhistorical sense, expending energy, or a wide category of the use of the human body or mind.

Lysestøl (op.cit.185) instead applies this thesis backwards. Labour is equalised, or comes into exchange relations, *because* it already is abstract or homogenised. This line of argument has in fact created a well-worn path in the domestic labour debate. Labour value theory is interpreted *one way* in the production sphere: here, *the context*, i.e. the transfer of the output, *determines the character* of the labour behind it. Yet it is used the other way in the sphere of reproduction. Here, the *character* of the labour *determines the context*, the character of its output. Yet the idea that labour has a specific abstract character, an *essence* that is there, or not, depending on its sphere position, has very little basis in Marx's theory. The latter, instead, says that certain social *contexts* make social relations appear as economic relationships, in *value form*, and that *this form*, and no grain of nature, essence, etc., is what makes labour into 'abstract labour'. What Marx's theory says is simply that the social character of labour is expressed also in value form. What appears, then, as abstract labour, is not a trait of labour itself but an effect of its context.

It belongs to the lasting merits of Isaac Rubin (1972, 1978), writing in Moscow in the 1920s, to have pointed out that abstract labour in Marx's theory differs from the notion of general labour, or labour as universally present in all societies. The latter

was criticised by Rubin as a 'physiological' abstraction. This is probably what cost him his life in Stalin's camps in Siberia, his theory was "smashed" as the party line had it (cf. 1978 p. ii), for this thesis *undermined* precisely the absolutist basis of Stalinist power: the essentialist labour to be found wherever and whatever the context, ready for Komintern-type liberation. Rubin was a trouble-maker in the process of transforming the critical theory of Marx into an essentialist doctrine. If we argue that abstract labour and labour as human universals are variants of the same essential category, internal critique can be stopped since abstract characteristics are now interpreted as universal ones with the kernel matter of reification lost from view, while the doctrine becomes imperialist through its claim to universal applicability.

A similar shift towards labour essentialism can be found in the domestic labour debate, where the character of domestic labour, its inferiority as against the full sociality of wage labour, was not inferred from the context but assigned as premise of further debate<sup>[11](#)</sup>.

## 'Since housewives can not be bought'

The idea that household labour was not societal labour, and therefore anyway not accountable from an economic view, was echoed in many different forms in the debate. For example, domestic labour did not follow the law of value, it was not abstract, or private rather than public. These arguments were often based on separate mode of production views, including simple declarations of the essence of household labour as 'different', and the more empirically oriented arguments turned to a second line of thought, closer to the everyday experience of households.

This was the argument that the value issue should be determined on the basis of the *conditions of those performing the labour* and especially by the *form of compensation* to the performers. Since housewives do not circulate on the market, or at least not on the labour market as commonly conceived, and since the labour conditions on the whole differ from those of the capitalist enterprise, their labour could not be seen as value-creative. Housewives cannot be bought, and their labour differs from wage labour, therefore it is not abstract labour creating new value.

Once more this is a rule applied backwards. According to Marx and to most versions of Ricardian or production factor exploitation theory known to me, the way in which labour is recruited to a labour process and the concrete labour conditions within it do *not* decide the question of value creation. The decisive issue, instead, is the *result* of the labour: does it become part of capitalist wealth, or does it not. The logic is the same in the Ricardian argument, which usually drops notions of value form and will not be addressed here. What one has to look at, then, is the *output conditions* of the economic unit.

We may turn to gift giving: even a *potlatch* may be part of capitalist surplus value production, *if* capitalists take away the spoils on an institutional basis (cf. Christmas). The local regime may be one of slavery, feudalism, tribe rule or whatever; this is not the decisive issue. The conditions before or within the local work process do not determine the exploitation or surplus value character of the process. The main issue, instead, is the wider *effects* of the labour. If the principal effect is an increase in

surplus value, it is to be analysed as part of the surplus value creation process, since that is its real position on the macro level, whatever the local conditions.

If such a method should not be applied, economic theory itself would fall apart into 'separatisms'. The analysis of the global economy would fragment into different modes and become helplessly entangled in local political etc. questions. Yet this separatism was accepted in the domestic sphere case.

Lysestøl's idea of looking for "exchange work" in the household therefore has no bearing on the question he addresses, namely whether reproduction creates surplus value – according to the theory Lysestøl claims to use. It may be *gift work and still create surplus value*, or it may be *exchange work and not do so*; the larger context decides. This is an issue where the emphasis put earlier (chapter 7) on distinguishing between the concrete transfer and the wider reciprocity level becomes a main matter.

If the work process is part of a wider, surplus value creative cycle, like the domestic work contributing to the creation of labour power, it may contribute to the value process itself, or it may not, depending on further analysis; there are no *a priori* reasons why it does not. On the other hand, we cannot simply assign value and capital character to the process, as is done in some household economy traditions, associated with '*home economics*' (a field I can not address here). Exploitation remains a broadly empirical question. Does the product of domestic work circulate as commodities? Yes, or at least indirectly yes; as prerequisite of the labour market commodity, domestic labour is commodity-creative labour. How do we inquire into its value-creative and possibly surplus value-creative character?

We have to consider the cycle as a whole, the chain represented by domestic work or reproduction, the labour market, the production process, the sale of the product and the realisation of the profit, the new input of wages to reproduction, etc. (see figure 29, below). In my view, the economic importance of reproductive labour does *not* appear in the labour market, or it appears only in fragmented ways. The surplus from domestic and reproduction labour is not or not mainly compensated here, but makes itself felt in the next, production work process, and in the subsequent profit realisation. What do economic conditions tell us of the probabilities of such a view? Is it probable that labour power created with domestic work at its back gives capitalists the possibility to profit from two work processes, in terms of one?

It is hard to understand how anyone could conclude that the *result* of domestic labour does not circulate, is not abstracted, unless what we are presented with, is in fact a circular argument, in which, basically, women's main labour is not value-creative because it is feminine-associated, women-particular, and thus not meant for this greater abstractability. Or we go into a line of argument which in tendency is anti-feminist, saying that women's labour has no effect on the creation of labour power. Men make themselves.

Through all this, economy remains an economy minus the household. A lack in the *economic theory* is projected on to the character of household labour as minus labour. Circular argumentation leading from 'men/women' to 'abstract/concrete labour' and back again characterised much of the debate. The arguments tendentially lead into problems explaining labour power as a commodity, and a third line of thought should

be briefly noted in this context. This was the '*labour commanded*' thesis, an old idea that was here reintroduced. This thesis says that the amount of value of a commodity is not determined by the labour time having gone into its creation, but by what it 'commands in the marketplace', i.e. the labour time of the commodity with which it can be exchanged. The fact that Marx (like Ricardo) definitively distanced his theory from this labour commanded view of value was overlooked, and the argumentation moved in the direction once criticised by Sartre, the idea that labour power is 'born on the factory floor' or with the wage check, while other commodities were created in the usual sense through their creation process.

In Marx's theory, the question of whether value is at all relevant or not, as a qualitative category, depends on the wider context of the *results* of a labour process, while the magnitude of value depends on the average time used to create them. In this sense value quality is a question of output conditions, while value quantity is a question of input. Yet in our context, the contrary method was adopted, using the output to prove that zero magnitude was involved, and the input to prove that no value quality was involved either.

## Poor men, beggars, thieves

The broadly converging lines of argumentation criticised here do not only concern gender or the domestic sphere. Metaphorically speaking the closing of doors is not restricted to the kitchen door, it concerns those to the rest of the household also. Once more, now in the middle of a terrain which seemingly is far away from our earlier considerations of patriarchy as a *combinatory* arrangement of between-sex and same-sex dominance, we find the two deeply connected. Why is this? All the rules used in order to dismiss the forms of exploitation connected to the relationship between the sexes, can be used, and are used, in order to dismiss same- or non-sex exploitative relations.

In principle, the '*input decides value character, output decides value magnitude*' thesis can be applied towards *any* labour that does not quite reach up to the table of the economists, especially the labour that is transferred in the background from the poor to the rich world. Many poor world contexts do not qualify, according to the principles applied in the domestic labour debate. Here, also, we meet workers that do not make it as 'official workers', who have not circulated in the rich-country labour market kind of way, who know little of Lysestøl's civilised rules of 'exchange-labour', but work in more direct, family-related, etc. forms of servitude instead, or in addition to the wage relation. The widespread existence of child labour is a noteworthy example. If only the labour capacities circulated freely through the labour market are abstract and value-creative, many absolutistic labour regimes and forms of exploitation disappear from view, and labour value theory becomes rich world market apology.

I have argued that reification does not only mean distortion, that exchange institutions like markets do 'inform' their participants of background social conditions, if mainly in backwards ways. However, in the case of the relationship between the poor and the rich world, as well as the relationship between productive and reproductive labour, there is an *additional layer of mediation*, since the market itself must be interpreted as part of a longer chain, a wider economic cycle.

The labour market or the consumer market does not immediately tell us what is going on; they do not 'say', even in their market manner, that '*work in the poor world and the work of women are badly underpaid*' although research shows that this is the case. Global economic processes cannot be understood by assuming that all labour follows the liberal top-layer market rules; for example, rich world immigration policies give a very different testimony to the need to maintain and strengthen *extra-economic* barriers, to use *force* against the supposedly free market. The market is not at all horizontal, given the global economic organisation it expresses, and therefore one cannot allow people the freedom of using it in order to work and live where they would like.

When the larger questions of admittance to 'the economy' and of who is to be allowed status as 'workers' in it are ignored, the result is that the internal rules of the market arena of the rich world are used to analyse this very arena, a not very promising procedure. In critical traditions, this tendency is often accompanied by a compensatory exaggeration of rich-world class divisions.<sup>[12](#)</sup>

The household and reproduction labour debate should therefore also be interpreted in view of global and centre-periphery economic relationships, confirming the hypothesis that a faulty cross-sex analysis often entails an incorrect same- or non-sex analysis as well, due to the fact that patriarchy combines the two. In this case, the same kinds of misleading arguments can be applied both to the poor world and to the domestic sphere. One may 'prove' that surplus value production only takes place in the work cycles regulated through the top part of the global labour market in much the same way as one may 'prove' that domestic labour does not create surplus value. In general one may 'prove' that only the labour that manages to have its passport stamped as 'abstract labour' creates value.<sup>[13](#)</sup>

## An exploitation model

The following section contains a discussion of the model of domestic and reproduction exploitation developed in my own work. The presentation is focused on the broad line of approach rather than the details of the model, since as argued a main issue in the current situation is exploration and model development in this direction as an alternative to the *de facto* closure. Such models are needed in order to understand more of the factual economic contribution of women and reproductive sphere work, and in order to reopen a dialogue between feminist and critical economic theory. They are relevant in more specific contexts also, like the task of creating sociological and socioeconomic 'maps of patriarchy', a project under way in the EC.<sup>[14](#)</sup>

The figure below shows a place to start. The model first introduces standard exploitation analysis categories that are used both for reproduction and production labour, as shown in the figure. A wider reciprocity framework is introduced as a second step.

The starting point is the relationship of (a) inequality and (b) value transformation that exists between the production and reproduction spheres, including the reproduction of labour power in non-wage or domestic form. The latter must be included if a model of

patriarchal exploitation is to have any feminist credibility or general explanatory potential.

We start, therefore, with a value cycle between two main spheres or macro-level units. As a first approximation, production may be translated as 'jobs', reproduction as 'household work'. This is a pure type 'breadwinner arrangement' approach, with women at home, men at work. Besides making the model more intelligible, there are two methodological issues involved here.

If it can be shown that the presumably "impossible" case of exploitation in the home can be made, it can probably also be made in the more "possible" area of wage work itself. Reproduction carried out for wages is not usually seen as belonging to another mode of production, and so it is the non-wage domestic part which is the hard case. Further, if it can be shown that a clear-cut breadwinner household arrangement with the woman at home and the man as job-holder can be an exploitation relationship, it can probably also be shown in less clear-cut cases (Holter 1982a).

### **A domestic exploitation model**

This figure shows a capital cycle and its main value components. The cycle combines two main processes, one (at the top) recreating the non-human factors of the economy, the other (at the bottom) the human factors. If we follow the cycle, starting at the top, the starting point is the capital created in the process of production, consisting of surplus, variable and constant capital. A portion, the variable capital, is paid to the employees as wages. This value passes (counter-clock-wise, left) into the process of reproduction. After the work process in this sphere, there is a flow (right) of new labour power back into the process of production.

The notation in the model concerns the value composition:

$P_c$  = production sphere constant value,

$P_v$  = production sphere variable value,

$P_s$  = production sphere surplus value,  
with similar notation ( $R_c$ ,  $R_s$ ,  $R_v$ ) for the three components of reproduction sphere value.

The model assumes that the variable capital from the sphere of production ( $P_v$ ) is divided into two different components in the sphere of reproduction ( $R_c + R_v$ ). The input value performs two principally different economic roles, according to whether it creates new labour in the reproduction sphere, i.e. is used for the upkeep of reproductive labour power there, or not. The first part is variable capital in reproduction sphere form, while the second is constant capital.

In critical economic theory there is no dispute that the labour power that equals the wages represent a value which is variable in the work process in the sphere of

production. Instead, the question is if a portion of this value, that going to the upkeep of reproduction labour power, is variable or value-creative in the sphere of reproduction. Since it engenders a fresh work process on an asymmetrical basis, this is assumed to be the case. Therefore, reproduction output equals  $R_c + R_v + R_s$ ; the process creates a surplus. The value-creative process in the reproduction sphere is indicated in the figure by the two arrows  $c+v$  and  $s$ , meaning that input value is recreated and a surplus created. The figure gives the impression that the full value of the 'reproduct' passes on to the sphere of production, yet that need not be the case.

Two main problems must be clarified for this model to make sense. The first concerns reproduction itself, while the other concerns its output. The first problem is whether this is a *capital* value process, as assumed. The second is whether the value passes to the sphere of production wholly or only partially, and in which form. We would not expect this surplus transfer to be immediately evident, yet it should be possible to map its existence through indirect measures. The first of these questions is the most important one. If an affirmative answer can be given concerning the capital character of the reproduction of labour power, the second question of output proportions and value forms may be left partially unresolved, as a matter of further investigation and more detailed models. At the outset it should be emphasised that value and exploitation theory generally rests on probabilities, like most other things social, and not on narrowly conceived empirical proof. This is well known concerning the 'transformation problem' or the fact that the correlation between values and prices is only partial.

The question is not whether domestic *labour* exists in a value cycle, but whether it exists as an economic, value-creative element in it, or is simply a use value or concrete phenomenon. According to Marx's view, labour *transfers* existing value in its concrete capacity, while it *creates* new value as abstract labour. This is a dual character of *capitalist* labour, however; it concerns two sides of one and the same labour process of capitalism. A labour process carried out in a different mode of production is not concrete in this inner sense, it does not necessarily transfer any value; instead it is different in a wider and more principal sense. This is further discussed later. If women's labour is 'concrete' in the separate mode of production sense, 'fully outside' the value framework, we might as well expect it to dissolve value altogether, a kind of negative Midas touch. This *extreme* use value position says that not only does reproduction not contribute to value, it actively *takes away* whatever was there. New labour power, being touched, has *no value* as it passes through the labour market and into the sphere of production. Although this idea was seldom explicit in the debate, it lies in the background of the 'labour commanded' thesis and the 'birth on the factory floor' tendency, and it is interesting from a pollution perspective. It is also hard to see how some of the argumentation criticised above can *avoid* arriving in this corner, yet I cannot go into this here. Suffice to say that the household must be *part* of the value cycle, or what is sometimes called the '*soup station*' view, it must be part of the transfer of value to new labour power.

Yet if household labour *transfers value* which is capitalist at the input end, becoming so on the output end also, it is already entangled with capital, and cannot be conceived as existing outside in a different mode. It displays the 'inner capability' of maintaining value – for capital as much as for the household members. From the point of view of capital in society as a whole, it is in fact part of the constant capital in the sphere of

reproduction, and therefore there are no *a priori* reasons why it should not be part of the *variable* capital. *Unless* we accept the 'negative Midas touch', reproduction must preserve value; yet thereby its value character is admitted and the question becomes what kind of value relation is involved, does it increase the value, or does it not.

In critical economic theory including most versions of Marxism, this question and the question of exploitation are based on the matter of *value composition*, or *organic composition of capital*. This is not a technical or transfer matter, but a social issue. Do we find indications of a *social split* between two forms of value, a constant and a variable form? Is this split characterised by a disciplinary regime that activates a labour process? Is there a surplus that can be identified, existing also in the most direct capitalist form of profit? Is the labour process characterised by alienation in the sense, among others, that the result does not belong to its creator? These are the socioeconomic questions that determine this issue.<sup>15</sup>

We would not expect the *value composition* in the sphere of reproduction to be concretely similar to the one in the sphere of production. Rather, it should be *economically similar*, i.e. a split on the *abstract level*, across households and wage-labour reproduction units. It should be possible to identify two main components of the input of value, an input first represented first by wages, then by consumer goods, creating the basis for domestic activities. Although this is mainly an issue on the abstract, 'typical tendency' level, it should make sense also in concrete cases. Further, the value composition should be identifiable in material or use value terms. This is what Marx called the *technical* composition of value, referring to the existence of the value components in different material factors.

The technical composition is less clear in the reproduction sphere than it is in the sphere of production, as I have discussed in another context (Holter, Ø 1982a). If we simplify matters by focusing on the household alone, we recognise that there is not a clear split between

(a) the 'variable' input to the domestic worker, i.e. value which may increase due to the use of labour power, as against

(b) the 'constant' input or value which is simply replaced, without a change of magnitude, through the work process.

In terms of the technical composition of capital, these two elements correspond to the part of the input that recreates the reproducer, and the part that recreates the means of reproduction. We may argue that consumption does indeed mean two different things, according to whether it is consumed by people who are economically passive in the domestic sphere, versus those who are economically active. In principle, a portion of the input value engenders new labour, while another does not. Yet these two do not exist separated, like the means of production and the producers in the sphere of production.

This somewhat more confusing state of affairs is not unique for the household; it may be found in other contexts also, including much human-input wage work. If we keep to the 'classical' economic theory framework, the larger question is whether the service or activity at hand contributes to the capacity for economic activity, or not.

The degree of separated material existence of variable and constant capital is not the decisive issue, but the probable macro level contribution. This is similar to a rule that was pointedly emphasised by Marx on a number of occasions: it does not matter for capital whether it produces sausages or ideas as long as the product can be sold for profit. Capital cannot leave reproduction matters to 'nature', but to arrangements that enhances its profits indirectly, through the 'reproductive' use of wages and the consequent intensification of the production work process. We do not need to assume that such arrangements are beneficial only for one of the involved parties; instead it seems likely that capitals connected to specific family/work arrangements rise or fall in more complex ways.

My conclusion, then, is affirmative: it is indeed possible to analyse the sphere of reproduction as part of capitalism, rather than outside it, and as a work process that contributes to capitalist wealth, although in less direct ways than the sphere of production. The economic split between constant and variable capital can be found as a typical tendency throughout the reproductive sphere, regardless of whether it is compensated directly in wages or not.

However, the character of value production and the differentiation principle discussed earlier transform this split between value components and changes the whole relationship. This is not simply a change of form of appearance, but a shift of orientation, as illustrated in the figure below. While the model proposes that capital consists of surplus from both spheres, the next step is a recognition of the fact that domestic organisation and institutions of the otherness sphere are created on other bases also. As part of a polarisation, they are clustered around counter-economic principles in general and contra-monetary or contra-short-term market principles in particular. Further, non-commodity reciprocity principles are also present, often enhanced through the former opposition.

### **Gender position and value composition**

The figure shows the value cycle and the main direction of segregation. Following the cycle from the top left position, we come into the kernel area of the gender system, its family formation centre, and a split of passive or constant value associated with masculinity and variable or value-increasing value associated with femininity. The two are activated and passivised in two different directions, regulated through the system of polarity.

Two *institutional centres* are present, reproduction- and gender-related institutions on the one hand and production and class-related institutions on the other. The divisions of class and gender run through both, yet their direct institutional relevance varies according to the centre position. Each centre can be seen as consisting of an 'input area' (dotted circle) and main activity area (box). The entrance to reproduction, including the gender market, is the centre of the gender system; here we find its rules in their most directly effective and advanced form. The entrance to production includes the labour market where class interest and conflict become most overt and advanced. In value terms, the main value composition is expressed in the form of class relations in the sphere of production centre, and in gender relations in the sphere of reproduction centre. This gives further meaning to the idea that the gender system

and the monetary system are polarised in the economy as a whole. The surplus from the full cycle depends on local circumstances in each sphere, and on the way in which the two are integrated.

The model builds on the premise that gender-related polarisation can also be seen as economic differentiation in the stricter sense: a framework that combines the main factors of a new activity process. The model does not imply that gender has no other role, nor does it lead us to expect uniform patterns. The gender segregation of activities in our society is composed and regulated through different kinds of considerations, and some of them have little economic meaning. Gender dyads are 'meters' that measure many trends. Households, families and gender relations are better compared to a stream, a wide and many-sided process which is changed, renewed, changed again. Some institutions are washed away by its changing course, like family heads deciding marriages, or they become empty, like betrothal, while in other areas, like divorce, the current runs fast and new institutions have not yet been created. This movement is the long-term historical process, distinct from the more short-term cyclic movements of economic character.

The economic model outlined above is relevant on the level of abstraction of economic theorists like Ricardo and Marx. The two main sectors within the sphere of production, production for production and production for consumption/reproduction, are already implied in the value composition, and can be further examined as part of the production sphere part of the cycle. The model implies that there is a basis for 'sector conflict' in the sphere of reproduction also, including conflicts between short-term and long-term priorities and between production-oriented and reproduction-oriented reproduction sphere investment.

Yet the model is neither equally relevant, nor relevant in the same ways, on different levels of economic abstraction. Many family and household norms and informal rules are clearly at odds with 'capital' in the concrete sense, the enterprise trying to maximise its short-term market profits. Whether they are at odds with 'capital' meaning big corporations' strategical planning is another question, as can be seen for example from the entanglement of family patriarchy and worker protection among large Japanese corporations. Their link to capital on a national level is a third matter. Here things are more complex and connections between nation-building, capital accumulation and family policy appear.

Radical as well as reactionary movements through the 20th. century have included 'family policies' on a formal or informal level. This element has usually been clearer, at least from a liberal point of view, the more authoritarian the movement, with the Aryan family vision of the Nazi movement as a primary case. The basis of national liberation movements like the Chinese communists before the revolution included family politics and new forms of rural and urban patriarchal organisation (Stacey, J 1983). Many political movements in our century have combined national enterprise or nation-building and family investment as part of a wider capital accumulation strategy. The main economic and political conflicts have not just been production-related, but also reproduction- and family-related, often all the more so by the latter issues being kept informal and in the background. Families are flexible compromises, and their economic-political filiation and ability to intervene in the heart of such matters show the artificial character of a paradigm that ignores their economic role.

In some respects, household, gender and family relations develop in contradistinction to economic paradigms, in others they conform to them. The economy that influences families and is sometimes opposed on family grounds, is primarily the one which is immediately there, in the form of a need to sell labour power successfully and maintain a good relation to an employer. It is primarily 'economy' in a narrow, market-related and monetary sense that gets into conflicts with the more long-term schedule of the family, while 'economy' in the 'production first' sense is a more latent or background problem. Here family considerations are more varied and the opposition less clear. Also, the notion of 'economy' as long-term investment has more similarities within households and in society at large.

An accumulation period, according to the model, is a period in which there is considerable investment in the cycle as a whole. A 'consumption period' is a term conventionally used of periods where reproductive sphere investment is high. It is easily a misleading category; one might believe that capital was holding a *potlatch*, or throwing value away. The need to destroy surplus was in fact a main theme of US critical economists like Baran and Sweezy writing in the 1960s. Yet their 'consumption society' was mainly a capital accumulation society, although more focused on reproduction than before, and I do not believe that US (or other capitalist) strategies including the war in Vietnam are well explained by a need for destruction of capital. Rather, it seems to be one of several artificial 'economisms' or fetishes of conventional crisis theory, like the falling rate of profit, which generally undervalues the element of social tension and overemphasises some specific transfer-technical problem instead. It may be mentioned, however, that the emphasis on 'consumption society' against 'accumulation society' made more sense in 1960 than today. As discussed in relation to patriarchal organisation, there is in fact a clustering of consumption emphasis and democratic-liberal development in many contexts of our century ('democratic masculine'), which especially in the first part was opposed by more authoritarian and more narrowly production-related accumulation forms.

The main economic trend, however, is that investments in the two spheres have gone together; production sphere depression translating to lower wages and more poverty in households, development and boom periods to improved wages and home conditions. The model does not imply that all consumption is an investment. This is an empirical question; it is an investment if it contributes to the total capital of the cycle. This is the case with the main consumption of the economically active classes, according to most class theory. The model can be operationalised in class terms in different ways. Given such further qualifications and restrictions, wages and household sphere benefits are investments in one of the two main phases of the capital cycle.

The model does not distinguish clearly between the division between homes and jobs on the one hand, and reproduction and production work on the other. The first is the monetary and gender level of analysis, the second is the wider economic level. The intermediate case of wage labour reproduction is relevant here, since it shows the coexistence of gender and capital principles. This coexistence may be found also in production itself, yet if we keep to the conventional view, it is more overt here. Reproduction performed through the labour market qualifies or maintains labour power, thereby increasing its subsequent productivity and contributing to the surplus eventually created from its use. In tendency, less intense and less complex labour is transformed to more intense and more complex labour, with an obvious possibility of

a net gain to the system. This benefit may also be present on the immediate level of the individual capital, the enterprise looking for high-quality employees, unless the employees take away all the added surplus through their personal benefits. Even then, however, the reproductive process has objectively added to the production process value creation.

The higher the level of capital analysis, the greater the possible overlap between considerations that are often opposed in an immediate sense. Since these higher levels probably include corporations, monopoly tendencies, sector and branch level arrangements up to the level of national and regional capital, they do not lead into thin air; the model does not imply a view of capital as a background 'essential force'.

When reproduction is performed as wage labour, the channel to profit is still usually *longer* than it is in the sphere of production, since the 'reproduct' or labour power cannot be owned or sold directly by all those whose work contribute to its creation; teachers cannot sell their pupils, etc. Yet this channel is now also *clearer*. If a dollar in educational investment results in two dollars of productivity increase, there is a surplus, and it is obvious that the fresh labour put in along the way plays a role, even if it may be difficult to quantify its contribution. We now recognise that it *should* be brought into the account, and this is one important difference from domestic, non-wage reproduction. Since the activities that increase the productive human resources indirectly help increase productivity and profits, they cannot be dismissed from economic analysis. Further, it now becomes clearer that their contribution to wealth is an economic contribution. The profit is the same whether it stems from improved machines or more capable people.

The overlap of gender and wage organisation principles in reproductive occupations indicates that the two forms of value composition represent analogue economic functions. As discussed in the case of catering work, the domestic and wage labour settings often show many concretely similar patterns also. The abstract division is one between variable and constant value, with femininity and reproduction-oriented labour on the one hand, masculinity and production-oriented labour on the other. In the shift from the production sphere to the reproduction sphere, the two change first seat. The one that was passive, or a constant in value terms, becomes active or variable, while the formerly active component becomes passive. The two main forms of labour power are activated in two different directions and also in partially opposed ways.

A detail mentioned in chapter 5 can illustrate some of these issues: a family work division where the husband cleaned the outside of the windows, the wife the inside. Such patterns may be interpreted as cultural or symbolic, yet they also bring forth the *abstract* character of the activity division in the domestic sphere. We do not need to presuppose a specific, concrete link to activities. Instead, 'his' job may be everything – in its orientation towards production. 'Her' job, also, is everything – in its orientation towards reproduction. Further, we may recognise that 'her' and 'his' stand for tendencies, femininity and masculinity as traits across persons, as is further discussed below. As we saw, genderisation can be analysed as *valorisation* with the standard meaning of that category intact, all the more so as the fairly *concrete* 'production' of gender by task is supplanted by more abstract forms.<sup>16</sup> The existence of gift and

sharing relations does not dissolve the segregation, although it may make the division less sharp and somewhat more favourable for women.

The gender division of activities in the domestic sphere as well as elsewhere in society is a subtle matter of tendencies with much variation. Yet I agree with Yvonne Hirdman and others who emphasise that it is also, when seen as a whole, a massive system of segregation. In some specific respects it corresponds to the 'organic composition' of capital, a value split that engenders asymmetrical labour and new value. It is not capitalist in the immediate sense, and not always capitalist in any corporate, societal or 'total' capital sense. The gender system is oppositional and troublesome in many ways and has never simply been conformist towards patriarchy and capitalism. Instead, exploitation analysis helps clarify why there are conflicts in these areas and why they appear in the way they do. The gender system *is* capitalist in the sense of imposing an abstract and asymmetrical ordering of activities as part of the total organisation of labour in capitalism. This ordering is somewhat more difficult to understand as a capitalist order than, say, wage work or share speculation, since it is non-economic on some levels as well as superimposed on a sexed organisation that itself has some uniform traits and typical patterns. It is seldom economically distinct, there is no 'gender money', and although more overt trouble spots like prostitution exist, gender relations mainly appear with only 'incidental' commodity associations and translations to and from monetary value.

We may give a 'sociological' body to this model by way of the function pyramid discussed earlier. Thereby, different forms of exploitation and related dominance may be outlined, and the probability of dislocations and conflict between capitalist and patriarchal interests becomes clearer. The hypothesised extraction channels are longer and more diversified than they are in the case of sphere of production exploitation. In a sense, the latter is only the relatively *immediate* part of the former, and also a minor part that becomes smaller as the production component of total labour diminishes. The assumption is not that the 'economic volume' or value-creativity of each worker shifts according to the proportions of production and reproduction labour in society as a whole; production workers do not become ten times more productive due to their being a minority of ten percent of the whole labour force, or similar; there is no fixed ratio here. Instead I assume that workers contribute the same, given the same input, whatever the orientation of their labour. Although I disagree with the non-critical character of some home economy theory, I see no reason to disbelieve that socialisation and education plays a role for productivity, and the model may be further nuanced in these terms, and related to qualification theory, complex and simple labour, and so on, matters that cannot be discussed here.

If we consider how working-class women contribute to working class labour power, and how this enlarged power creates surplus capital, we recognise that the resulting surplus value passes through a variety of levels. Four main levels were introduced earlier and can be further outlined and divided here. From the top down, we have;

- Development of the conditions of production and of the economy as a whole. The top layer consists of infrastructural, strategical and administrative work for the system as a whole, especially for the production sphere.
- Production of the means of production. This is dominated by the sphere of projects involving large, production-oriented capital, or 'heavy industry' in traditional industry society terms.<sup>17</sup>

- Production of means of reproduction, or 'light industry' in traditional terms. The early masculine was characterised by emphasis on heavy industry, while the development of 'consumer society' and increasing influence of some parts of light industry is a more recent phenomenon.
- Reproduction of producers, as a favoured or higher-level part of the educational system, the health and care sectors, etc.
- Reproduction of reproducers, as a disfavoured or lower-level element in these areas. The reproduction of reproductive capacities includes main parts of informal activities in the domestic sphere, kindergartens and lower level education, and parts of the health and care sectors.
- Reproduction of *non-active*, disabled, permanently ill and the elderly, as a bottom layer of the whole structure.

The division between the two main forms of reproduction is entangled and halfway disguised by another stratification principle, a rule giving priority to reproductive work which is close to the market. The greater the proximity of a reproductive job to the market realisation of its labour power product, the higher the socioeconomic level of the job, other factors being constant. Thus the educational system combines 'stratification by orientation' with 'stratification by market proximity'. Basis-level investments in labour capacities are paid less well than higher-level inputs, and reproductive investments less well than productive investments. These main rules are common to the educational system, health and care work, and other parts of wage reproduction.

I am not arguing that such principles exist in identical forms in the domestic sphere, nor that they are simply transferred through spill-over or copying, yet there is no doubt that gender has its own 'activity aspect', focused on production and reproduction in the male and female version respectively. There is a tendency that the 'caste-less' bottom category of people and capacities that do not count in the activity system as a whole gets the least attention, yet it coexists with a counter-tendency to create a sense of family and home precisely around such utterly 'un-activating' aspects.

As can be seen, the exploitative relations that are connected to gender segregation pass through several levels and exist in several forms in models of the type above. We combine three main elements: exploitation, differentiation, and institutionalisation including work organisation. The result is a model of a value cycle that may give rise to many possible forms of patriarchal 'dividends' or 'outtakes', including men as husbands or partners, these men's superiors in wage work, further class relations, the state, etc. For example, there are principal differences between a 'dividend' which is subtracted (a) *before* the creation of the 'reproduct', (b) after this creation, but before its use in new processes, especially its use as new labour power<sup>18</sup>, (c) the part subtracted after the new labour power has been used, resulting in new products, and (d) more indirect effects as these products are in turn used, etc. The model can be further outlined and specified, and I shall only discuss this in one area, family interest and orientation.

## Exploitation and family interaction

Initially, I noted that exploitation relations in the domestic sphere may be approached as 'interactional realities' and points of tension. As argued in the commuter study case of imbalanced and disproportional gift-giving, "this kind of inequality cannot be 'measured', yet it may be *experienced* as a qualitative difference" (Solheim, Heen & Holter 1986:133).

The current model can be used to interpret such experiences. Often, there is a background tendency of inequality, and foreground phenomena that compensate for it. I have also discussed the tendency to shift the relationship towards a reciprocity framework where its exploitation aspect becomes smaller or at least less visible. Hanne Haavind's thesis that "the essence of femininity is to make inequality appear egalitarian" (Haavind in Haukaa et. al. 1982:151, my trans.) may be interpreted in this context.

The capital character of reproduction sphere relationships is on not a character 'on loan' from the sphere of production. Instead, capital itself is a two-sphere arrangement, and includes the gender dimension as well as class and global dimensions. We have seen that commodity value can only exist through a split, in principle a 'first' and 'other' component, and in capital forms of value, this differentiation has evolved to a two-sphere system with partly opposed traits. The implication of this analysis is not an extension of the production sphere concept of capital, but a better understanding of how the traditional capital category has been one-sided and limited from its conception. Many problems of understanding capital as a *social relationship* are connected to this narrow production orientation. Capital becomes a machine, an apparatus, a prime mover and background Thing. So it might be seen as a 'force' even behind the window-cleaning outlined above, an 'instinct of the process' even in the sphere of reproduction. Yet these notions of capital are in fact mainly misleading in the production sphere also, and belong to an economic determinist scenery that misrepresents society as a whole.

We have seen how the pervasiveness and persistence of gender-related inequality is easily attributed to gender itself, to a sexed organisation that *per se* has no relationship to capital, and yet has had the fate of becoming part of its sensuous interface. Capital is not a social relationship in the usual sense, since it appears as materiality, the use values or 'object relations' that are engaged in the surplus value cycle. It does not outright 'determine' the 'subject relations'; instead it influences the ways in which phenomena are made objective and subjective in the first place, and thus the deeper-level framework of contact, its 'social gravity'. It seldom *dictates*, at least not in its liberal forms, yet it draws the line between normalcy and deviance. In the gender system, the sex and attraction 'laws' are no more under individual control than economic patterns elsewhere. The beauty model is as far away from ordinary men as the power of the big corporation. A capital relationship is not only part of the surplus value process. It is primarily a *tendency* that creates 'normal balances' in social situations, 'social contracts' on which new activities are based. On the whole, benefits pass upwards, burdens downwards in the system, yet capital relations are *qualitative* and may exist also without much in the way of exploitation, or in very much more complex arrangements than 'the one wins, the other loses' scenery in the traditional class struggle conception.

If we disregard the contra-monetary economic form of gender, its lack of distinct economic traits from a monetary economy perspective and its gateway function to non-commodity reciprocity, we recognise that the patterns of exploitation are different from those conventionally conceptualised in the sphere of production for other reasons also. Here, it becomes impossible to overlook the difference between 'tendency' and 'person'. The person must be recognised as a complex subject, participating in all three forms of reciprocity from different positions and experiences. Household-related exploitation is meaningful as a normal statistical tendency, and by closer look, an extremely varied personalised picture appears. Some main factors appear, but these exist as tendencies, not necessarily persons. It should be noted that good wage work studies, sensitive towards work place culture, also shifts the direction from persons and external group conflict, to tendencies including psychological traits, and examines the relation between the two. We may take the 'tendency equals person' assumption is a sign of the 'socially handicapped' views developed in production; there is no reason to assume that production participants are especially enlightened regarding the character of the social process called exploitation. Domestic sphere analysis reintroduces matters of culture, motivation, belonging, family sense, etc. also in wage work analysis, uncovering new and often decisive traits.

Beyond this 'process' variation, the 'object' or economic centre of the exploitation also varies. Three main exploitation objects in the sense of 'clusters of tendencies' can be identified. Exploitative patterns do not only hit women; they also hit persons across sex according to activity, and as noted I believe there is also a third object, 'expressive traits', although less easy to define.

The three may be defined as follows. The exploitation of reproductive work is related to an asymmetry between the spheres that hits reproductive work whatever the sex of its performer. The exploitation of women is related to a clustering of asymmetrical patterns in women's disfavour wherever women happen to be, across the work dimension. Finally, there is a background asymmetry related to expressive traits in a wide sense that includes self-exploitation and is often related to self-abuse. All these, I believe, are economically meaningful and empirically probable. On different levels, they express a subordination of all that which is not 'effective', partly in the production sense, but also in a wider economic activity sense. All the three relations create the basis for new activities, and it is this activity, in sum, that creates the surplus value of the 'reproduct'. Each relation is also accompanied by more concrete traits that imply the existence of exploitation. This does not mean that the dominated side is extinguished, but that it is used in asymmetrical ways, on different levels, with benefits flowing away from the objects of exploitation and towards the corresponding subject positions, while burdens pass the other way.

Family interaction can be analysed in this perspective. In order to illustrate this point, we may turn to a family model that has often attracted critique from feminists and Marxists, the *complementary nuclear family model* of Talcott Parsons (1988). In Parsons' view, families that emphasise and develop a

'complementary' or segregated system are more 'functional' or successful than others. We may argue that this is indeed the case, given a certain orientation of the work organisation and society at large, towards the 'breadwinner' family ideal discussed as part of the masculine, yet this advantage diminishes as these conditions change, as we have seen over the last decades. Two-career families have strengthened their position and probably also their upwards mobility chances in class terms, and this is related to a variety of factors including the typical demands of career jobs. In Parsons' mid-20th. century one-career family context, we may recognise the *possibility* that the segregated arrangement may have been more exploitative and asymmetrical for women in direct terms, yet *less so* on the overall level, for example because upwards class mobility meant that the household as a whole was better compensated for its input. In other words, women may have had indirect interests of arrangements that, according to the 'immediate feminist' view, ran counter to their interest. The same may be the case of the present, more mixed family context with its greater emphasis on two-career arrangements.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, we may account for the fact that men's motives are also varied. A personal 'dividend' in a breadwinner relationship may be counterproductive to men's class and career interests in some circumstances, while it may be advantageous on these accounts in others. The difference between the older and younger generation of fathers described in the *Men's life pattern* study is relevant here, since it also involves a wider shift of the type of family arrangement associated with class mobility and social success. Further, we may consider the possibility that different capitalist interests are present in different branches and sectors.

Parsons' model concerns 'normative' clusters, not class-like interest groups. The family members have their normative worthiness and in mind, not their short-term value advantage.<sup>20</sup> We may reinterpret this normative level in view of the differentiation principle and the transference field. The feeling of worthiness is related to the situation of worth, and the latter relates to the category of the reproduction unit output, 'reproduct'. Since households are a mixture of reciprocities the reproduct is only partially related to commodities and capital as an economic category; it is also a gift and sharing category, to be defined on other lines. We are approaching the fact that capital is not the only cyclic relationship around; these other reciprocity 'elements' have their internal connections also, they are not isolated fragments in a one-dimensional capitalist social fabric.

Any exploitation theory worth its name must answer the question of why the exploited continue to maintain and help recreate the relationship. Class mobility theory does not furnish a sufficient basis in this regard. Women's gender conservatism and family traditionalism stick deeper and are entangled with the broader concept of worth. The Norwegian feminist psychologist Tone Ødegård has analysed women's lives in terms of 'worthiness lives' and argued that main feminine existential questions centre on worthiness. I see this as part of the fact that what women especially create, the 'reproduct' in the domestic sphere, is itself a matter of worth as well as value, and often more than value. The value component separated by the sale of labour power is only one of

several, and even if the means of the household are all monetary capital commodities at some point of the capital cycle, they shed this direct character within the household sphere, or mostly so.

It should be emphasised that this is *not* only due to the differentiation principle. Even if the household had been a capitalist project in the immediate, single capital sense, its rules would have been very different from the exchange rules at the outside. Principally, the functions of the value components change, since they are being employed in a new activity process where other considerations must reign.

Women's search for worthiness can be seen as a 'learning lesson', stemming from their socialisation- and people-related kinds of activities. People cannot be reached in the exchange paradigm, not in the sense needed by much of the work women do. Trust must be built on giving and sharing instead. Yet this 'concrete' learning can be used against women on the abstract economic level. There, worthiness can be exchanged with thin air, meaning that women's over-responsible, care-taking, worthiness-searching work paradigm can be used to create extra profit.

The sense of worth is different from the actual value situation, and the worth may even be greater, the lower the value. Since the family from the economic point of view represents 'otherness value', not 'firstness value', there is not only much flexibility, but also a distinct sense of *opposition* between the two. This is not an external trait, but inherent in commodity relations themselves, as shall be shown when we turn to the associated organisation of 'use value', uses and needs.

## Concluding the exploitation discussion

Is the model presented primarily a capitalist or a patriarchal model? It shows the possibility of a 'Y' pattern of exploitation, where some of the exploitation gains are used to strengthen capitalist organisation while others strengthen patriarchal organisation. This is only a starting point, since several forms of gains can be expected. The capitalist or patriarchal character of the exploitation may vary over time and is an empirical question. Principally, it has an element of both.

According to the critics of exploitation theory, an exploitation approach like the one outlined leads one to look away from use value, from gift giving, from sharing, the body, the bonded character of family relations, and much else. I believe that the opposite is the case. The main point, as argued, is not quantitative, but qualitative; it is precisely by recognising the economic aspect of gender that we can move further, and understand more of its counter-economic and non-economic elements. For example, gift relations in the domestic sphere make more sense when we recognise that they exist in an interplay with commodity relations and contain 'conservative' as well as 'radical' tendencies; that they are associated both with class mobility and with women's attempts to counter asymmetry and dominance, that they are often

used in order to improve a more 'relational' position and a sense of worthiness. Exploitation theory makes gender positions and gender identity more intelligible also in qualitative terms.

The economic argument shall be briefly summarised before turning to a phenomenological analysis of use value and gender.

I have argued that gender in our society is mainly a new form of organisation, although related to older (sexed organisation) forms, and that it is partly opposed to, but also integrated in the economic organisation of society at large. Further, this opposition has a specific polarised character connected to the differentiation principle which evolved in such a way as to allow patriarchy and capitalism to coexist. Gender is structured as a capital relationship as far as it is an asymmetrical activity relationship connected to the reproduction of labour power. Thereby, both gender-related and domestic reproduction and wage work reproduction contribute to the overall surplus creation in society; these are not different 'modes of production' but different arrangements within the same mode. Reproductive exploitation contributes to surplus value through a multitude of channels (work / home, function pyramid, etc.) and exists in different forms, creating different forms of 'gender-political' interest. The model combines an exploitation and differentiation perspective, emphasising exploitation as an identity-related, interactional pattern rather than as a purely 'instrumental' or narrowly quantitative phenomenon. It also opens for further analysis of how exploitation patterns are connected to the gender order and the masculinities hierarchy, the patriarchal order, and to different capitalist interests and arrangements. Although the model gives the coexistence of patriarchal and capitalist organisation an economic basis, it does not imply that the two exist without internal conflict.

I end this section with three 'cautionary notes'.

First, it should be pointed out that many thorny questions remain unresolved in the kind of exploitation theory approach outlined here. One question concerns how unpaid domestic labour is circulated through the labour market, an arena that presumably should involve an exchange of like for like. Should the domestic surplus labour be regarded in terms of the gap between the value of labour power and its (lower) price, or only as a background use value, not engaged in any strict economic manner until the process of use of the labour power itself?

Second, an argument that basically says that *reproduction pays*, while certainly relevant in terms of the *minus* attribution discussed earlier, does not imply that reproduction is always profitable, or that a high proportion of reproduction is necessarily more advantageous than a low proportion. This is another important research area, which also brings the current approach into a more familiar terrain of debate, regarding *the welfare state*. In order to approach real-world conditions, we may develop global models where systems with reproduction arrangements are compared. It is not difficult to recognise a 'long term / short term' dilemma in this area: economies that put emphasis on reproduction create long-term advantages, yet they are also faced with

competition from economies lower down in the global hierarchy. The latter may reap more of the short-term profits, with less reproduction investment, more absolute surplus extraction methods, etc. Although the analysis of this system as a whole, also on a global level, leaves little doubt that 'reproduction pays', it becomes a senseless proposition unless we also recognise a principle that *reproduction pays later, while production pays now*, that a long-term and short-term time horizon is often involved.

The third note concerns the importance of nuancing an exploitation theory not only regarding various forms of exploitation objects and relations, typical burdens, benefits, etc., but also in wider terms. The analysis becomes one-dimensional if it only keeps to the commodity form terrain; it slips back into an 'economistic' framework. An opening of the door of exploitation analysis may be important, and establishing feminist positions at the 'table of economic theory' even more so. Yet it is important primarily because it creates possibilities for new kinds of change. The table and the economy it refers to are not easily rearranged in women's favour, nor can one simply turn it around, as the experiences of workers' movements have shown. We must turn to the wider 'householding' that economic theory expresses, starting with the limits of the commodity and capital perspective.

The following figure is an attempt to illustrate a wider social form point of view, with the gender dyad in focus.

The gender dyad in a social form context

The figure can be seen as a close-up of the reproduction area in the last figure. Now, the gender dyad is in the centre, and a depth scale of reciprocity relations, a social forms dimension, is added. The arrows (a) and (b) illustrate main trends in the couple formation and dissolution process respectively. The couple and family formation process is a movement towards gift and sharing relations, while the dissolution means a movement back towards anonymous commodity relations. This is obviously a crude representation of manifold processes, but it illustrates how the dynamics between different reciprocity forms may be approached, and how the previous economic model may be placed in a wider framework.

## Turning to 'the other' of the economic

How do we interpret economic categories, recognising their household connection, not just as part of their historical background, but today also? What appears in the exploitation of housework context is two main labour processes that are summed up, one-sidedly, through the mechanisms of one of them, namely the wage labour market, the production process, and the sale of its products.

However, when we look at the world from that production sphere point of view, household and gender matters seem far away in the hazy distance. The differentiation principle disappears, and what appears instead is the economy in the conventional sense outlined in the beginning of the chapter. The differentiation now defines the horizon, with the economy on this side, while the other is unknown.

A theory of gender-related exploitation can be conceived as an addition to existing exploitation theory, yet its main purpose is a change of horizon, including a change of the concept of exploitation. The gender system has a centre, yet it exists throughout society, it is not a particular, separated 'place', while the economy is something that exists in another place. The two are instead intertwined as aspects of social interaction.

We do not have to turn to the home sphere in order to examine this connection; there are also other and more direct routes. Is it possible to pick up one single commodity, the typical market choice in the middle of the production sphere, and consider what we have? This commodity is not quite genderless. We may perhaps say that it has a gendered backside, or more precisely a 'differentiation precondition'. The split character of value reappears here, and although it is seldom directly gendered, it usually 'implies' gender. As noted, this implication is not so easy to define, but it involves a systematic association to gender phenomena and economic core patterns of the gender system.

A phenomenological analysis of the commodity must start with the phenomena at hand, without presupposing the gender and exploitation arguments discussed earlier. The wider value cycle, the gender segregation and the value differentiation disappear. Another kind of duality appears, much more well-known in economic theory. This is the split between the commodity's value or economic traits, and its use value or utility. We may *associate* use value with femininity, value with masculinity, yet this is not the same kind of division, and as I said we should leave such considerations behind and keep to a more naive attitude. The phenomenological method as developed by Husserl was an attempt to look at the world with fresh eyes, to suspend granted meanings and overly adult considerations, and it offers a way of examining the implications of conventional economic categories which is explored in the following sections.

For the early modern economists like Smith, Ricardo and Marx, economy was itself dependent on the separation of certain kinds of phenomena from others. As long as economic relations had been entangled with other kinds of relations, its development was hampered; only with capitalism and a 'setting free' of economic determinations, mainly brought about by unhindered commerce, could economy become a science. The subject of the separation was, first of all, the market unit, the commodity. Its background companion, like the old Norse notion of *fylgje*, a spirit that moves behind the person, was called '*value in use*' as against '*value in exchange*' in Adam Smith's theory, and *use value* in Marx's terminology. It was that which indubitably *belonged* to the

commodity, and thus was *part of* the economic, and yet not separated from economy's background.

Three main uses of this category can be found. The first, early modern use was still often overtly household-related. In the second phase, use value became *material* in a more detached sense; the greater background of which it was part was now seen as a material rather than a household foundation. In the third phase, from the marginalist revolution in the end of the 19th. century onwards, use value itself became synonymous with value or closely attached to it, in a turning from 'objective' (mainly labour-derived) value theory to 'subjective' value theory.<sup>21</sup>

A phenomenological approach to 'use value' is a project of a slightly paradoxical character, since the object of inquiry is not sensuously present as a phenomenon, but instead economically present as a non-phenomenon or even an anti-phenomenon. Use values are abstract phenomena, as part of the economic paradigm, 'use value' or 'utility' as a category, as such. Yet use values are '*concrete*', a whole tradition has argued, from Aristotle describing women and slaves as well-honed tools, to Smith, Ricardo and Marx depicting the use value factors of production. Thus generalisation here would seem to run counter to the very purpose of its objects. The 'utility' of 'utility as such' looks strange, detached or lifeless. In order to make sense of use value as an economic proposition, it must be treated as an abstract category, no less so than value – and yet this negates its function and its supposedly 'purely concrete' existence. In Marx's view, this could be attributed to an opposition of the economy itself, a continuous conflict between value and use value, yet it might also be seen as a problem of the theory. Two categories are opposed as abstract and concrete and are yet used at the same level of abstraction throughout the theory. Marx uses 'concrete' and 'abstract' for designating respectively the use value- and the value-creative character of labour, and he goes even further arguing that concrete labour preserves capital while abstract labour enhances it, a line of thought that makes no sense unless the categories are twin aspects of one abstract entity. Marx's terms for two traits of capitalist labour are easily misleading since they create confusion with the ordinary sense of abstract and concrete.

This raises new questions. Use value is not a category the leads beyond the economic framework, it is instead an 'inner' other of value. Is the fact that we may also find categories of use and utility outside this framework, any more relevant than the fact that value also extends further, as various definitions of worth? What kind of economic considerations are implied in the use value concept?

Economic theory has created many different proposals concerning value organisation, including Marx's vision of a world without capital and value. How would the world look without use value? This is more difficult to imagine; it seems obvious that some form of utility or use value must be present. This is also a place of silence in economic theory, an eye of the storm of controversy around value. True, utility is also disputed. Yet it becomes a topic of discussion in its relation to value, not on its own. The marginalist

revolution, partly against Marxism, was not about use value as such, but about relocating the value category to this area. The later Marxist and other institutional economic critique of subjective value theory once more was not about utility but what was seen as its misleading value role. Use value or utility therefore appears as a common foundation of otherwise very different theories, as well as a non-topic unless it gets entangled with value.

At the same time, use value reintroduces gender. Use values do not quite exist unless they are in fact *used*; they cannot be treated as Kant's things-by-themselves but presuppose human intervention. We may conceive of use values as chaotic fragments, yet this is only an initial impression; each use corresponds to a *need*, and the uses as well as the needs exist in some relation to each other. The organisation of use and need may be manifold and diffuse, yet there is some order to it, and this order is very different from the initial impression of use values in the market, where we see them as part of commodities, appearing as unrelated choices in a row. Here, instead, they mainly exist in a hierarchy, one above the other. This is expressed in a *hierarchy of needs* on the one hand and of use values on the other. A use value is both an *end* and a *means* to other use values, and they are used as ends and means to each other in typical patterns or chains.

The use value organisation is connected to gender in several ways. At the top of the hierarchy are use values that are no longer means to new ends, but ends in themselves. 'Love' is a primary candidate for this position in contemporary society. Women and the feminine often appear connected to the ultimate or highest-level use value, while men and the masculine are often connected to the lowest levels. Use values also appear with shifting gender associations according to their position in the wide capital cycle. In the entrance to the sphere of reproduction, they mainly appear as *feminine* vis-à-vis labour, as so-called consumption factors, while in the entrance to production, they mainly appear as *masculine* production factors.

## Use value and power

It may be hard to imagine a social world with no use values, nothing in the way of utility, yet the utilitarian world is in many ways a modern notion. 'Use value' outside the modern context refers to a reality that was more different than similar to 'use value' within it. The concept is only fully meaningful as an aspect of commodity relations; it means the inner other of value, or an aspect of the commodity, not things outside the commodity form.

This view differs from many conventional perspectives, including some presented by Marx. There, instead, the tendency is to broaden the concept, in a broadminded abstractist way: not only do all societies have use value, other societies or epochs give it even more emphasis than we do. The Middle Ages, for example, are commonly described in terms of a natural or use value economy. Yet what does this Middle Ages 'use value' have to do with 'use value' in the modern world? It is not the same category. Middle Ages 'use value' was not perceived in the same way as we do in modernity, was not treated in the same way, experienced in the same manner, put to similar uses,

etc. If it was a 'religious matter' it was not *matter* in the modern utilitarian-materialist sense. So does a modern economist like Marx deploy the "use value" for other societies due to their having been developed there? No, that does not seem true either, even if pre-capitalist society, here as in other respects, knew the generalisation. The effective, institutional abstraction called 'use value' in economic theory is primarily a modern phenomenon.

How could one do without 'use value'? The typical modern line of thought tells us that '*without being able to use his surroundings, man would be nothing*'. The gendered sense of this statement is not purely evocative; 'his surroundings' is representative of a deeper connection. We are at the edge of the social, towards nature; use value is what binds man to nature, allowing him to transcend nature, to develop, to be great. The further we move, the more masculine our metaphors. Many ages have seen heroism, while its connection to production and ever-more refined developments of use values is mainly a modern phenomenon.

The category of 'use' on which 'use value' rests usually means relate to, dispose over, behave actively towards, both in utilitarianist and in Marxist economic theory. The private character of the relation may not be explicit, but it is usually implicit, 'dispose' meaning dispose over as one's own. Use also has an aspect of change and activity, it implies a dynamic relationship, something is done with that which is used. Use values presuppose a category of *being able to use*, enabled to relate usefully. This power is the entrance to the world of utility. For many, use values are more about being used than using, and for others still it is about being useless. Use value is not a power-free concept that subsequently becomes mixed up with power and wealth; it presupposes a power to use which is closely associated with economic power.

These power premises also appear in introspection. If I try to imagine a world without use value or utility, I am aware that I am unable to fully understand what such a world would be like. I am also aware that I am easily provoked by the very attempt; it may look meaningless, and it has an association of wrongness. This is strange if a state of no utility was unimaginable anyway, there should be no negative feelings attached. And when one looks into this, *zero utility* appears as if it meant *false*, irrational, or even evil. Thus, it is utility in the sense of *order against chaos* that appears. It is not utility in an ordinary sense of getting more of it, or less of it, but in the wider sense of how this *IT* itself is necessary for the *I*, the modern subject, so that any basic questioning of it is also easily conceived as an attack on the ontology of the self; an *I* that could not exist, without utility.

This limit of the utilitarian world is not always easy to grasp, but its existence is indubitably there. The organisation of use value relates means and ends, and the further we proceed along the strings of means and ends towards the top of the needs hierarchy, the more distant, and also partially irrelevant, the notion of utility. The higher up, the more the use values are also final ends, or good as they are, for themselves. The organisation is meta-institutional, it influences institutions generally, yet it mediates more than 'production labour' and cannot

be understood only on that basis. It is connected to the differentiation principle, and it implicates gender.

As an idea, utilitarianism is very old, but as a complete world view or thought system it is part of modernity and capitalism. It differed from the antiquity city view and from the spiritual view of the Middle Ages. Commodity societies do not necessarily develop this system, which presupposes two traits mainly connected with capitalism. One was a transfer of the means of production from large numbers of people who were set free from feudal authority and instead controlled indirectly, economically, through their need for wage labour since they no longer had the direct means to a livelihood. The other was a commercialisation of most social relations, meaning that use in general became conditioned on exchange. On this background it is possible to reinterpret the use value debate along the line of *how people became useless, useful only through value relationships*.

A use value relation is a derived relation, even when it appears to be the first, immediate or self-evident one. First, a comparatively direct relationship is broken, next it is replaced by exchange, and only third comes the use value relation acquired by exchange. This first break was historically associated with early capital appropriation. Each element in this triad is hinged on power. In a deeper sense, therefore, the use value of the world spells powerlessness as well as power, the uselessness as well as the use of the human being within it. The energy and joy we feel in activities that have no "use", that are not means to something else, that are fully *gratis*, are everyday reminders of this.

## Use value as the Other

Use value, in Marx's works, has several meanings, but primarily it is "the other" of value. That is how he presents it in *Capital* – the commodity is a twofold thing, a value and a use value. It is a value by being a product of labour, and this value is expressed in different forms according to the type of exchange in which the commodity takes part. Use value, on the other hand, is a rather silent partner in this relationship. Use values are supposed to be "concrete", yet as noted Marx's use of this word is no less abstract than his use of the word "value", indeed more so, since they are also to be found beyond value relations. Still, use values play a dynamic role in Marx' theory primarily as expressions of value, while elsewhere their role is formal or classificatory only, as part of his '*produzieren* or disappear' epistemology. This is not limited to Marx. There is a common notion in economic theory that one can first assume the existence of use values or work products *as such* – which then, through specific circumstances, or in addition to their "purely concrete" determinations, become economic objects. Utilitarianist economic theory goes further than Marx by arguing that value is present in use value itself, or *is* simply utility. Yet this is a next debate; first, use value or utility emerges as the given object or *a priori* category from which theory proceeds.

Several peculiar traits appear in connection to use value in Marx's critical view. Its existence is assumed as a historical constant. Although uses vary, use as such is always there, like production as such. Marx, we know, spent most of

his life battling *value*. Yet he called the alternative use *value*, using the same word *Wert* of both categories. The target of critique and its alternative to it can be designated by the same term. Why is this, and why does he not comment upon it? One gets the impression that there was a value side to life anyway, a greater notion of value that could not be dispensed with whoever wins the battle, Marx or his opponents. There will always be a use value universe, a use value world, whatever the 'mode of production' or type of society. Mary O'Brien's (1981:179) discussion of Machiavelli's *virtu*, the natural property of manhood, is relevant here, for the 'use value' in the 19th. century economic debate was a masculine notion, having women as its main implicit object and precondition. At the same time, use value became separated in Marx's theory from its actual context of capitalism through a Hegelian category movement. The inner Other lifts itself by the hair, so to speak, in order to Become. The *negation* use value slips unasked and unexamined into the *transcendence* use value, and could be used indiscriminantly in later Marxism in order to avoid facing more radical forms of difference. Thereby Marxism echoed precisely the 'abstraction power' of capitalism that was to be replaced by a more social understanding based on democratic-communitarian ideals. Marxism became as 'materialistic' and 'productionist' as what it criticised, and increasingly played a role as 'left wing' of capital accumulation.

Utilitarian relations, as argued, are 'secondary' or derived, since they presuppose exchange and the need for exchange, a break-up of relations of a more 'primary' character. It is true that it is often difficult to pinpoint this difference, since *some* notion of use and utility can be found also in non-modern views. Comparing and ranking things in order of usefulness can also be found. Yet there is a different emphasis, and the primary sense of use value in this context is 'good as it is', 'good for being there'. In the modern world, such wider notions of utility are clustered at the top of the use value hierarchy, where ends are for themselves. Roland Barthes' (1979:222) notion of love, "*I love not what he is, but that he is*", expresses this. Also, utility in the premodern sense may mean simply "useful to my purpose".

These meanings differ from the primary utilitarianist meaning of utility *value*. Use value in the utilitarian framework is not a primary, but a secondary relation. The use value is not simply compared, but in principle only present after a series of comparisons, and the comparison is of a specific type. Two utilities are associated through exchange, one for the other. Thus the direct existence of the phenomenon is suspended, there is a principal change from 'good for being there' to 'comparable utility', and only subsequently does the quality of the phenomenon *return* to the prospective user, after a process of suspension where each concrete trait is in principle made extinct, irrelevant.

In the terms of George Herbert Mead, where social contact means to put oneself 'in the place of the other', two different kinds of 'places' are involved. When the other is a utility, a more or less useful thing in the utilitarian framework, I am no longer relating directly to its place or concrete existence; instead, I am relating to it only after having compared it to something else through symbolical (or in Marx's term 'imagined') exchange. I do not put myself in the place of the other in the way described by Mead, since *first* I

have done something different, I have put *it* 'in its place' of comparable items, its 'utility place'. There is a background value classification, although less distinct than the merchant imagining his product's value in money and giving it a price.

As a thought experiment we may consider a model of 'commodified utopia' where everything I do depend on the market. In order to sneeze, I have, first, to sell my capacity to sneeze. If no-one buys it, I will remain un-sneezed. In such a world, all my acts would be utterly useless to me, '*I can't help myself*' in a rather literal sense. In fact there would only be two useful actions left – buying and selling. And since these are useful only as means to something else (to be able to sneeze), *use* becomes a *deferred* or mediated use, so that the whole notion is turned on its head – the only way I can get to *use* myself, is by a kind of action, buying and selling, which has no concrete relationship to this use; which is not, by itself, a relation of use.

To Aristotle, "life is doing, not making" (*Pol.* 1254b). Modern life, instead, is making first, doing afterwards. In the modern world, most things relate to *use* only after having been *exchanged* for real or in symbolical terms. It is true, of course, that utility does not presuppose a concrete market exchange. I am fully free *not* to exchange whatever I regard as a utility. Nevertheless, this act is *implicit* when I change from the first, wide sense of 'useful, good' to 'utility, use *value*'.

## Colonial utility

The contrast between the utilitarian universe of capitalism and the wider notions of use and usefulness is often marked in the history of emerging capitalism's relation to the outside world. One piece of evidence which is interesting also for its early date concerns the way in which the Canari Islands were drawn into the capitalist system.

When the inhabitants of the Canary Isles (the Guanches) met the modern age in the form of Spanish discoverers, they invited them in as guest-friends, and since the visitors came from far away, they were invited in as especially loved / honoured guest-friends. When the Spaniard Avendano came to Lanzarote in 1402, Zonzamas and Fayna, king and queen of the island, offered the visitor their own palace as well as a night with the beautiful Fayna (Herrera, S 1978:106). Avendano took up the offer and made Fayna pregnant. Noble women lived in polyandric unions, i.e. with several husbands (op.cit. 74), with substantial influence; religion, for example, seems to have been led by women, even if men were dominant politically. Little did the Guanches suspect their visitors were soon to see them in the new European sense as objects of utility and sell many of them off as slaves. When the islanders discovered this, they first attempted resistance, and when this was squashed, many chose the 'utilitarian' way out of hurling themselves from high cliffs or starving themselves to death. A shipment of slaves from the Canaris never arrived since the people killed themselves on the way.

The story was substantially the same the world over, and it is the background of the fact that 'many populations were not deemed fit for slavery'. They lost the will to live. Together with the violence and new diseases, this led to a sharp population decrease in many areas. On the other hand, "all the noblemen (...) had invested the greater part of their fortunes in the enterprise", as Herrera (op.cit. 159) says in relation to the invasion of Tenerife. The European sense of utility was bound to such investment and the profit expected from it. For the natives, becoming useful in this framework was alien and traumatic, and they experienced a deeper and more radical conflict than the opposition between 'being used' and 'using' *within* the utilitarian framework, the opposition associated with class. The 'outwards' subjection of the colonial population and the 'inwards' subjection of women were presupposed as this sense of utility emerged with European capitalism, with subjection in class terms as the more visible, middle field that became the main focus of critical political economy.

## The use value hierarchy

A theory of needs like the needs hierarchy of Maslow usually takes human beings regardless of context as its point of departure. The framework here, instead, concerns the historically specific organisation of needs created in capitalism, as part of an organisation of use value. I also avoid the mainly misleading 'false needs' discussion; needs are historically created like the rest of society, and subtle on all levels.

It is to some extent recognised that the *framework* of needs was quite different in feudalism than in capitalism. For the feudal land lord, the needs of the dependants were centred on protection and obedience. If they received protection and were obedient (labour service, etc.), they could take care of their own needs. The great majority of dependants were not *separated* from the use values satisfying their needs like the workers in capitalism. One need in practice runs before any other need in the utilitarian framework, the need for wage labour. The satisfaction of needs presupposes money, and use value relations are established mainly through exchange.

At first this was still a relation with household associations. In the emerging political-economic understanding of capitalism, the worker depended on his wage and on the buying power of this wage vis-à-vis the agricultural sphere. Smith and Ricardo translated workmen's wages into corn, yet Ricardo also notes the rising affluence even in peasant cottages, and by the time of Marx, agriculture was treated as one component in a wider fund of consumption, mainly depending on light industry (means of reproduction, 'consumption goods') factors.

The 'use value organisation' of capitalism was a transactional order of economic character, replacing an older authoritarian order. Market exchange and a consumption fund are presupposed on the one hand, and consumers who must satisfy most of their needs through the market on the other. The older obligations to people are thereby partly replaced and partly mediated by obligations to uses, means, ends and needs. This was a considerable change in society at large affecting most parts of daily life, including the sense of time

and of relations to other people. It left the majority of the people dependent on market fluctuations and the economic dispositions of capitalists in agriculture and industry. This new vulnerability and the problem of the poor were a main theme for writers like Ricardo and Malthus, and political economists generally warned that the working class must be able to reproduce in order to continue the capitalist enterprise. Capitalists should not be too greedy in face of the 'natural price of labour', the work required to keep a worker alive and reproductive over the generations.

In the second half of the 19th. century, the consumption fund of the workers increased in quantitative terms and became a more important part of society in many other terms also – politically, culturally and psychologically. It became increasingly genderised, with notions of affluence, the home, and elevating femininity at the top of the hierarchy of uses, and notions of masculinity further down. The framework was further enhanced and systematised in the 'consumption society' of the 20th. century. The following figure gives a view of main categories of the contemporary use value hierarchy.

A pyramid of use values

This hierarchy is interesting from several angles, and I must restrict the discussion to some of them. Starting from the top, 'love' has meanings discussed already; it refers to the top of the pyramid, but also beyond it. It is partly a sublimation of use value, a cultural phenomenon and ideal, and partly an interactional reality sought established through specific, gender-, sexuality- and family-related forms of organisation. The next level of 'means of reproduction' might be classified along with the 'means of consumption' at the third level, yet are separated here, meaning 'that which exists as basis of love', or in line with Jonasdottir's interpretation, the immediate basis for the use of 'love power'. The *conditions* of reproduction are obviously involved here, not just the means, yet this is the case on all levels of the pyramid, if most overt here. 'Means of consumption' refers to the consumption fund in the stricter sense: that which is bought through income, or the subsistence means bought by the wage in the case of the wage worker. 'Means of production' which should be clear enough by itself, and we might have included a category 'infrastructure' below it. Finally, at the lowest level, we may place 'means of war'.

The vertical axis of this pyramid is not the amount of value or even the imagined amount of use value. The use values on a lower level may be more 'valuable' in both terms than those on some higher level; these relationships must be examined separately. The vertical dimension, instead, is one from direct to deferred use, which corresponds to the proportion of 'ends utility' and 'means utility' of each use value. The lower down in the pyramid, the further a use value is from the ultimate end of the organisation as a whole, as commonly defined in our society. It may be argued that we now analyse use value in a slightly 'focal' light, by making proximity to final ends into the main issue, and

clustering more valuable things, in the market definition, lower down, or in the periphery. Yet a social fact appears at this point, not just an ideal of love, and even if the differentiation principle does not 'detail' the use value organisation or fully correspond to it, it is in line with the main expected tendency.

Five issues are briefly explored: (1) how the hierarchy changes the market conception of utility; (2) how it relates to power and value; (3) the paradigm shift from static 'use value' to dynamic 'utility', and (4) the sexualisation of commodities. Finally, the chapter concludes with (5) a further discussion of the historical organisation of human needs.

(1) We started from a market conception including where gender and household considerations are presumed peripheral or irrelevant. Now they appear at the back door of use value instead. An examination use value connections, means and ends, shows that use values are organised along gender-related lines, including the sublime love object as that which transcends the whole order, or suspends utility as such. We may go further and argue that only ends are truly useful; the higher up in the hierarchy, the greater the use value, or at least the 'end' part of it. When I, the utilitarianist, am *utilising an object*, I am in fact *loving a subject*, only in the clumsy backwards way of the utility framework. It is at least a preparation. My utility relations are love relations transformed. – Although this is metaphorical, it is also relevant, since it is exactly the great 'uplifting' of love, gender and the family that appears at the top of the use value pyramid, and therefore also as the inmost core of the economy. Here, emotional and primary relationships, freedom and human nature are expected to meet at a point that represents the end of 'use value' as such, and is yet brought about by all uses like the roads leading to Rome.

We may say that the economic discourse on use value has 'woman' as its invisible object and that it implies gender in other ways also. Another notable point is that the *relationship to capital* also emerges here, in the 'repulsion' or 'largest possible distance' form discussed earlier in connection with the capital/gender taboo. Woman as 'love power' or love-associated persons are part of a specific polarity, with capital in the other end. It is not just that love is surrounded by utility, or has utility on the steps below it, but that it is continuously granted the 'gift' of *transcending* all utility, a gift which is also a burden, making love different from, or even beyond *life*. In a historical perspective, the development of European sentiment has a main core here. Love becomes anti-utilitarianist and yet deeply utilitarian, not to be trusted.

Also, the suppression of sexuality as part of capitalist society emerges in a different light, beyond the disciplinary needs of 'power' discussed by Foucault. Sexuality changed from 'carnality' in the obligation system, not a main theme by itself, to a key link in the reproduction of capital, and the fear of sexuality, together with the new sense of imposing materiality, can probably be understood on that basis. Sexuality was bound to the processes of capitalism in contradictory ways and became suppressed and conflict-filled. The fear of sexuality was historically connected to a fear of women, a 'folk panic' of which more is said in the next chapter. This sexual repression, surrounding the

refined European notion of love, often marked a main cultural division between expanding European capitalism and the world around, especially in comparatively egalitarian areas like Hawaii and other Pacific islands. Here, sex had mainly been part of life and not especially regulated by notions of property and propriety. As the European sexual system hardened in Victorian times, the difference became conceived as one between prudence and promiscuity. There was a 'lewdness' to the primitive way of life, first just as part of its childishness, later increasingly felt to be a problem on its own. The sexual freedom was not purely a product of the European imagination. For example, Sahlins (1985:24) has a statistic from Hawaii ca. 1840 of the 696 court cases that had been arranged over the year. Of these, no less than 70 percent of the cases concerned sex-related offences, classified as 'fornication', 'adultery', etc. Possibly, almost all the 'crime' known by the Hawaiians was to have sex with each other, since these figures include Europeans on the islands. In the European imagination, instead, such relations helped furnish some ground for the projection of woman as a *commodity* among the primitives, or implicitly a *whore* – i.e. using its own 'bordello glasses', as noted by Engels in the case of Westermarck.

Utilities are therefore also anxieties, and in the utilitarian outlook there is often a sense of *totality* which is as absolute and threatening as the *individualist* category was totally and absolutely free in the first place. If we admit that needs are not quite individual, that one satisfaction depend on others, my fulfilment on yours, etc., individuals no longer appear on their own, perhaps not even fully in situations of choice, but instead bound together by chains of needs and uses. How, then, can individuals within this utilitarian universe be "free" in the first place, or at least free in the usual utilitarianist kind of sense, free to choose? Are not individuals or individuality as such chained also, if the objects of individual action are? The problem of dependency, it seems, cannot be avoided, since it is transmitted right back, starting with the attempt to deny it. This attempt begins with the market framework, the choices spread out before the chooser, and it includes the externalisation of the other as object of utility, but then it ricochets, since utility dependency is only a mediation of dependency on other people, and it is trapped by its own objectivism, since *other people* are not fully there, yet economically all the more *there* through the objective interdependence of use values. Thus the utility traps the utilitarianist. The world, now, appears as *connected* despite the market semblance of chaos, yet this is easily a threatening connection, and it seems to be brought about by materiality itself. In short, "darker possibilities" abound in the background of enlightened utilitarianism.

The paradoxical result of this investigation is that right in the midst of what critics would call the most fragmented, individualistic market-related view, there are dependencies, all the more so for being kept in the background. The greater the individualism and the emphasis on the individual's choice, the greater, it seems, must be the weight given to the dependency of means on ends, which turn out to be new means, and so on, and thereby, in consequence, the individuals' bonds of dependency. In sum, the utilitarianist universe seems to behave much like the masculine universe, where the greatest presumed independence often hides the greatest actual dependency.

The use value organisation and the utilitarianist position and epistemology discussed can be seen as a background of many of the more concrete problems discussed earlier in this text, including the 'wall' between work and home analysis and the idea that people either have independent selves, or are utterly unfree. <sup>22</sup>

(2) I turn to the relationship of the use value hierarchy to power and value. Does a top position, a closeness to love, in this world, mean power, or strength in some sense? Or, rather, powerlessness?

Consider a utility of destruction, a mass destruction weapon. Does it have much use value? Yes, in the sense of being effective, it may be considered highly use-valuable. The same is the case with means of production; they seem to have much utility. Yet, being far away from the top of the hierarchy, they are somehow lacking also. They belong to outer parts or even the periphery of the use value world, and their use is therefore motivated not by the characteristics of this act, but by its subsequent possibilities, further up, although at this point the concept of false needs may be relevant, since the hierarchy tends to make the means themselves into ends. Quantatively speaking the weapon or the means of production may have a high use value, but qualitatively this use value is very thin, very deferred or indirect.

The use value world, therefore, is not just an extension or analogy of the value world, nor is it simply a negative mirror image of it. It is not the case that whatever is most valuable, also generally has the greatest utility or use value, or vice versa, that the most valuable has the least utility. As 'inner other' of value, use value is not only a reflection, it also points beyond the relationship. Aristotle's (1992:193) statement that "when men have friends they have no need of justice" can also mean 'when they have use values, they have no use for value'. The use value organisation does indeed differ from commodity organisation, even if it is part of it.

(3) A third question concerns the shift from static use value to dynamic utility. In Marx's theory, the relationships between value and use value is also a division of modern and archaic, development and stasis. Value is creative, abstract, developing; use value is a constant, related to concrete labour, to that which is only capable of transferring capital. In metaphorical terms, use value is treated like a virgin whose virginity should remain constant whatever the shifting circumstances of the economic conditions that this use value is subjected to. <sup>23</sup> The virginity of use value, I think, was another way of honouring the fratriarchal agreement at the bottom of the debate. There is a sense in which "*let use value remain constant*" translates to "let the economic and sexual subordination of women and the colonial or uncivilised peoples be the common criterion about which there is no debate". And on this basis, let there be all kinds of debates about which men or classes of men should have which proportions of its results and of the results of exploiting each other. Let us, therefore, discuss value controversies endlessly; after all, we are all on the same ground. Of course this is not how Marx and his opponents thought about it, even if it fits quite a few traits <sup>24</sup> of their debate, so I may be taking an

extensional reading too far. However, taking it a bit further rather implies that this line of exploration is neither imaginary nor peripheral.

This was all very different from the later treatment of utility, like a broken gentlemen's agreement. Marx's treatment of use value, like Smith and Ricardo, can be seen as 'paternatic', while the 'marginalist revolution in economics' and its treatment of use value is probably better classified as masculinistic. Utilities were 'democratised' in economic theory terms. Now, instead of being seen mainly as a constant companion of value creation, they were themselves its centre. In the marginalist theories constructed partly as an answer to Marxism (Andren, M 1990), the whole discourse on value was reframed in use value terms. There was a shift of polarity, as a formerly passive element was seen as the active and decisive one. Since subjective value theory based on utility defines value on a market basis, in circulation rather than production terms, it led away from the labour theory of value, yet also closer to the sphere of reproduction.

This was a major turning of events also in the ways in which it 'implicated' gender. Patriarchy is not a set of use values, but gender is. In the gradually more distinct reproduction sphere, the utilitarianist framework and, eventually, the marginalist revolution helped turn older paternalistic obligations into assumptions of gendered utility. Marginalism or subjective value theory was a main point of departure for Freud's libido theory, a theory of the sexual-economic channels and mechanisms of the personality, with libido in the value role.

Many threads are involved here, and one of them is the inwards turning of capitalism which is associated to the inner market or '*consumer society*' and the consolidation of the masculinatic patriarchal order (chap. 12). The new utilitarianist form of accountancy implied, even if it did not overtly show, that the creation of labour power was becoming a more extended and central economic processes. It turned to the consumer, away from production labour as the source of value. Now the use values of former political economy appeared halfway unreal, not fully realised. Marx represented the end point of the former, radical institutionalist tradition of economic theory, and from now on, value was instead perceived as the result of the total flow of utility, or identical with utility.

This is also related to the 'capitalisation of the sphere of reproduction' and to the notion of gender as patriarchy submerged in the economy'. We may consider the use value organisation as a result of a change from more 'primary' if also more 'authoritarian' relations. If these are 'traditional' relations, 'modern' relations have only one specificity, their ability to exchange the former, or make them exchangeable. They may still be inegalitarian, or not much less so, yet they are no longer authoritarian, but instead preconditioned on exchange.

(4) The sexualisation of commodities is a fourth issue. According to the preceding analysis, sexualisation of commodities and sex used as a sales element are non-incidental consequences of the gendered organisation of the economy as a whole. They represent in manifest forms traits that can be found

elsewhere also in more latent, background or symbolic forms. Sex for sale is the tip of the iceberg – or pyramid. Looking back at the use value pyramid, we also see two new rules: (a) the further from the market, the more feminine the use value; and (b) the higher up in the pyramid, the more feminine the use value. The two are related but not quite the same. Commercial sexualisation combines these, since its main object is woman as sex or beauty object, while it also serves to push the commodity further upwards in the use value hierarchy. Sex becomes the commercial substitute for love, and the need for love becomes profitable as a need for sex.

In the market vision, sex may be inherent in exchange, yet gender as in male and female should be irrelevant. However, commercial sexualisation has never been a balanced proposition in gender terms; as sexual, the commodity is overwhelmingly feminine, and its main buying public is masculine. The utility framework, as argued, was created with women as its presupposed object, while at the same time evolving as an organisation with feminine-associated use values at the top. This top is also the centre of the use value world, and should therefore be furthest away from the world of value. Now, however, its main figure reappears in commercial terms, as commodities compete for consumers' attention. Cultural changes follow, as the sexualisation becomes a matter of successful existence, not just a selling point. In this perspective, the sexualisation of commodities is not something that comes in with the market; rather it brings forth the latent patriarchal character of the economy as a whole. The *deferred* form of sexuality – '*pre-lust*' – which characterises this commercial sex, analysed by Fürst (1982) in an early work based on the Hannover school tradition, is an important trait. Further, commercial sexualisation can be connected to commodity aesthetics (Haug, W F, 1987), to the time dimension of exchange and commodities 'life stories' (Appadurai, A 1986:17), and to other themes.

## Conclusion

If one overlooks important traits, the result may be an analysis which is all the more deterministic, in the background. These traits have not disappeared; now they appear as more diffuse and threatening. The taboo against a connection of capital and gender on women's terms appear in many areas, including economic theory, where it has kept patriarchal notions of economy artificially alive. The domestic labour debate was important as a first step of a wider reorientation of economic categories that are necessary in a gender equality and feminist perspective. The notion that women do not contribute to economic wealth, or contribute only as far as they participate in traditional male production jobs is a *dogmatic* idea surrounded by theoretical contradictions and failure to explain main facts. Not only can exploitation theory be nuanced and used in order to make sense of domestic sphere, reproduction and production patterns, it is necessary to move in this direction also in order to understand many traits of women's 'difference', since the latter becomes intelligible in light of the former. The capital analysis outlined dispenses with simplistic quantitative notions of exploitation, allows us to see that different main objects are involved, and thereby understand the private life and family patterns of women and men on a more realistic basis. We may

keep qualitative and identity-related issues in focus, and yet have a framework that leads beyond 'traditions', 'norms' or 'power' as the basis of contemporary patriarchy. Instead, we can start analysing the transfers of benefits and burdens in more precise terms. Instead of the improbable proposition that women today are oppressed due to their 'minus' role, we can ask the more sensible question of *who gains*, and what kinds of gains are involved from the oppression.

The preceding analysis points to the probability that (a) patriarchal and capitalist-era social organisation is more deeply entangled than commonly realised, also on the use value level; (b) that the exploitation of women, of reproductive work, and of expressive traits is a manifold process running through most of society, including the domestic sphere (c) bringing in women and women's activities in economic analysis tendentially shifts the whole perspective towards new reciprocity forms and – by implication – new forms of change.

This brings us to the final discussion concerning human needs.

The Danish historian of ideas and philosopher Hans-Jørgen Schanz wrote an interesting and in our context relevant thesis in 1981 concerning the historical character of human needs. It is interesting since he does not *ground* his questioning on a greater *a priori*, namely that people 'must' have needs, whatever the context, *must* be 'needs beings' – an idea which is the other side of the 'must have utility' view discussed earlier. Instead he asks: how did the idea of the person as a 'needs being' (behovsvesen) arise in the first place? Was it always around?

From his history of ideas angle, he answers no to the latter question, and my own studies confirm his view on that point. 'Need' in the modern sense was not always around; there was in fact a major new meaning framework involved, corresponding to new realities. Schanz discusses how notions of 'man, in need', 'the person as needs being' come into social awareness – mainly in the period of manufacture turning into industrialism<sup>25</sup>. He highlights this by bringing in the economists' discourse on people as *void* of means of livelihood. His discussion brings in another important dimension of the use value pyramid discussed above, namely that this was not just a rearrangement of an existing structure, but mainly a new one. Further, he brings some familiar ground into this discussion, in terms of *means of production*, with the main message that people *as* needs beings were what appeared when their means of production had disappeared. Although much is to be said of problems with such a view, it has not exactly lost all importance. (Current tendencies of bringing technologies home to people, the *personal* aspect of technology, etc., are new expressions of that fact).

In this context, he writes (my translation):

"The exchange nexus, which is capitalistically mediated, shows, in relation to a tendentially class-transcending problematics of needs, among other things:

(1) That the feudal structure, which mediated individuals' reproduction, is broken down: the large households, where individuals from several generations and from different ranks (*Stende*) have reproduced themselves as a unit in a hierarchically and patriarchally ordered communality, and where the individual has not yet appeared as a radically independent, autonomous being, but only as connected to this communality, is undermined by more and more of individuals' functions being positioned outside the domain of the large households.

Thereby work functions are *externalised* and *split off* from the life nexus of the large households<sup>26</sup>. Surely they are still *functions for* it, but no longer *functions in* it. Thereby there is a spatial and temporal division of functions for the acquisition of the means of reproduction and in the reproduction negotiations themselves. The market and monetary connections are driven in like an impenetrable, imponderable wedge between the functions or actions, acquiring the conditions for reproduction, and the reproductive activity itself. This separation of the work function and the connected split between the two reproduction-related determinations is what give them their character of *work functions* and *needs functions*.

Only when the work functions win independence outside, and spatially and temporally distinct from, the reproductional communality, can the concept of need arise as complementary to that of work. Thus it is characteristic of the large household that there are no deep conflicts or contradictions between work and needs(..)

(2) That more and more of the means of livelihood – and things and relations necessary for the reproduction of life – become commodified and must pass through the market. Thereby, there is a depersonalisation and anonymisation (..) Each person now consciously disposes over, calculates and adapts his or her life and way of living, (..) individuals make themselves into objects of new considerations. (..) Through this historically created form of necessity of disposing over oneself and be an active subject, adapting one's life, the possibility of perceiving oneself as a needs being.

(3) that the degree of differentiation of possibilities for satisfying specific kinds of reproductional necessities rises. (..) The plurality [of products through expansion of the market in the 16th and 17th century] (..) contributed to the very possibility for the abstraction that is needed for the expression of the concept of need, i.e. a category that expresses the essence of what in a certain sense is common in a row of different relations and many different areas (sexual, erotic, culinary, aesthetic, etc.)."

Later, "for the production-oriented capitalist, the home market becomes the focus (..) and here, the worker is no longer a mere worker, he is also a *consumer*".

"Only when living can be reduced to a question of surviving (..) can the person be born as a needs being." "Needs", Schanz writes, examining the writings of

17th century economists like Mandeville and Petty, "are what should be calculatingly soothed, but not really satisfied".<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The drawing perhaps departs a little bit from this map: it may suggest that there is also a 'home sphere', at least it places a home on the left hand side, as if in a starting position, suggesting a possibility of seeing the economy from that point of view. In other respects, however, it corresponds to the traditional view.

<sup>2</sup> Such a fourfold diagram would correspond to a *work level* analysis, while the above figure corresponds to a *value form* (and form of compensation) level of analysis. Since these are different levels, the two figures would not fully be fully overlapping – the work in the home does not only consist of category (1) reproduction of non-producers, etc. Yet these are two different ways of approaching the same main division.

<sup>3</sup> In the 1980s, I presented a theory of exploitation first in *The Gender Market* and in the book version of the thesis, and later in more systematic form (Holter 1981, 1982b, 1989:255-86). The character of gender and the applicability of qualitative and quantitative value form theory is discussed in Holter 1982, 1984, and specifically vis-à-vis other forms in my contribution (the marital relations type analysis framework used in the chapter on marriage) in Solheim et. al. 1987, and the theory is discussed in more qualitative and single case terms in Holter 1987 (wage work) and 1990a (partner selection), as well as in social forms terms in Holter 1991i).

<sup>4</sup> The oil installations in the North Sea were created by an all-male, barrack-like, fluent and temporary work culture in the first years. In the early 1980s we were told of cases where single women were accompanied by chaperones, if at all allowed a visit on the British side.

<sup>5</sup> In terms of the emergence of patriarchy debate, this can be further clarified. I saw patriarchal institutions as a result of systemic as well as class-related processes. The redistributive system creates centralisation and stratification tendencies; these are sought balanced through a system of counter-checks. This creates the basis for an emerging upper class that in turn seeks to disentangle itself from the earlier structure by emphasising private household relations as well as patriarchal organisation. The class character of patriarchy in the early centres, evident in the Middle East shortly before the law king period, is a main trait that distinguishes these systems from male-dominant or proto-patriarchal organisations in typical anthropological contexts, leading to a much larger impact on the world system as a whole. The fact that a ruling class like the 'big-men' or 'grandees' of Sumer may develop its power bases in directions that strengthen patriarchal organisation, does not imply that it always moves this way. Instead, the framework can be used to identify tension and conflict between ruling class interests and system interests, as well as conflicts between these and different forms of patriarchal interests. The latter can be identified through exploitation analysis, as is outlined later.

<sup>6</sup> This is one reason why the portrait of women in classical age Athens as 'virtual prisoners of their husbands' (discussed in chapter 11) is one-sided and misleading.

<sup>7</sup> For Kant (1993:92), this sifting was "the only matter for practical reason" – the reason which is "nothing else but the pure moral law itself".

<sup>8</sup> Questions unresolved: Does the present framework in any decisive way go beyond this? Is it possible to let go, and would that mean creating concepts that have no attempted fixed-point frame of reference, floating along, so to speak, with the process? Since the fixed-point key word in the present context is "activity", and since this is used as meaning just about anything, could we just replace it with an empty concept, content-less, form-only, as a kind of life buoy to which anything that needed it, and could use this *form* of support, might cling?

<sup>9</sup> I criticised Fürst *ex auditorio* for her lack of sources for her claims regarding my own work. In the later book version as well in her original thesis, she refers to none of my books, only to three early and fairly peripheral papers. Lysestøl (op. cit. 184pp.) limits himself to Kjersti Ericssons (1986) mostly misleading (and also ill-informed) critique of me; his book gives no sign that he has read anything I have written. The net effect of this is a "straw man" version which makes the debate less interesting for all – or perhaps not, on another level. Fürst, first:

"Compared to these researchers' contributions, Holter's analysis emerges as one-sided, precisely because he seems to ignore the dual character of household work. He analyses household work as 'commodity', but not as 'gift'. The one-sidedness is the same as in traditional Marxism where the wage labour aspect becomes all and dispels other types of work." (Fürst 1995:141). This is clearly a *characterisation of my position as a whole*, and giving such an impression without reading my main works is clearly misleading. "Holter says that reproduction also [in addition to production], or the (re-)creation of labour power, in its totality belongs within the domain of capital....[he] places the mother-child-relation, also, within the 'logic of capital'." (op.cit.139). Do I? If she had read me, she would have found that I have never given this kind of conclusion, but instead emphasised that the capitalist relation is *one* important facet of domestic sphere and family relations. She would also have found that I use capital in the sense of *capitalism*, the era and society of capitalism, in this context, and that my target is the *double standard* kind of treatment where work belongs to this kind of society, while the home does not. For example in my book on families in a technology culture (Holter, Ø 1990c:12): "It may seem trivial to point out that we are the same people at home and at work. (...Yet) the impression one gets [from the research on work and family] is not one of connection, but of isolation, to separated spheres. I have wanted to make a hole in that wall."

Fürst again: "Holter does not seem to problematise the incapability of exchange logic as socialisation principle (..) he does not discuss the mother-child relationship, or primary socialisation" (op.cit.139). Yet I have co-written a whole book (Holter & Aarseth 1993) on this issue. It is mostly on fathers, yet I guess they are 'primary' enough? We write, for example, on how commodity logic destroys the 'good distance' between father and child, and we also write on how it indirectly influences a not-so-good closeness or 'background carpet' quality of motherhood. In other contexts I have discussed problems of exchange logic, socialisation and gender, in terms of learning (the gender market study); identity (the study of men, Holter 1989a:85-108, 130pp.), power, and others. It is true that the colonisation of childhood perspective discussed in some of these contexts differs from Fürst's, yet her point that I do not discuss these things is untrue. The impression given by her text, that I am too narrow-minded to consider such problems, is misleading. Fürst misunderstands my position, presented in the gender market study already. It was not because I was unacquainted with the use value position that I wrote the thesis and book from the study, quite the contrary. It was precisely the use value framework as part of a 'pure dualism' that made me look for alternatives.

Lysestøl also finds it important to warn against my view without having much knowledge of it. Interestingly, he attacks me for *not* doing the kinds of things that would have fitted Fürst's straw man. He also feels free to accuse me of not knowing the crudest basics of value theory, namely the difference between private/individual activity and societal activity. I have simply overlooked that household labour produces no value *since* it is not 'societal' labour (op.cit. 186) – a highly interesting line of argument of which more is said below.

Lysestøl (op.cit. 183) refers to Wally Seccombe's view that the unpaid labour of the domestic worker "is realised as part of the value the labour power achieves in the labour market", and to my own work as a defence of this view, but he has not noticed that I have never defended this part of Seccombe's thesis. It is unpaid, true, but it is not realised immediately in the output phase as seen from the household, i.e. in the sale of the new labour power in the labour market. In my view, for example in the models presented in the paper *The Valuable Patriarchy* (1982a), the unpaid labour instead primarily passes *through* the labour market and is not mainly realised there. Connell's 'patriarchal dividend' can be interpreted as the part that *is* realised there, or the 'man's benefit' from a breadwinner arrangement in a simplified model, as is discussed later. – In general Seccombe is to be applauded for being among the first who

dared to think in exploitation terms in the household, in the 1970s. Yet he stops halfway and his framework is historical materialist rather than oriented towards economy critique. In a recent work on family history, these limits appear as his family interpretation moves back to a rationalist and utilitarianist position in a conventional modes, forces and relations of production framework (Seccombe, W 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Two examples must suffice for illustrating how the Norwegian contributions discussed conform to international tendencies. In the volume *Feminism and Materialism* (Kuhn & Wolpe 1978), a work that was quite influential in the debate, Annette Kuhn argued that patriarchy is an autonomous structure = the rule of the father = inscribed in families = use value production = "the privileged place for operation of ideology" (op.cit. 66). We are back in the terrain favoured by sociology at least since Talcott Parsons; the family is primarily a normative place, halfway outside society.

Paul Smith argues that the view of families as belonging to an "outside mode of production" is the orthodox Marxist one, and he recognises that it has problems. He also cuts through the erroneous idea that something "private" in capitalism means something not societal. Then he turns against a feminist exploitation view, however. Domestic labour is not "allocated according to the law of value", housewives do not move around like employees in other branches, and even if their results *are* exchanged, in the form of labour power, their work does not "seem" like factory-type abstract labour (op. cit. 206) – and so it *is* not. His arguments also illustrate the rich world, market-rationalist implications of the present discussion, outlined below. Smith says that "every system of social production must establish qualitative equivalence between the various concrete forms of labour" (ibid.); since this is not quite clear in the domestic sphere case, it is not clear that it belongs to the system. Yet many labour regimes do *not* behave in any well-ordered fashion at this point, for example due to their absolute exploitation and overt authoritarian character. Work is not allocated in the correct British manner of a detached law of value but, for example, through a corrupt, corporativistic upper class, with slave-like conditions for the poor – etc. Such regimes are very much part of the global capitalist system, and often play a main, if indirect, role in lowering working class standards throughout.

<sup>11</sup> Makoto Itoh (1980) has an objection to Rubin that illustrates the problem of abstractism. He says: "But such a separation [between physiological and abstract labour] is confusing. (...) Even though the abstract labour becomes recognisable only when the value relation has encompassed the essential part of the social labour process, abstract labour must have existed in all forms of society." Yes, fair and true; only it *means nothing*, it has no information content beyond saying that *people* have existed in all forms of society. This is important precisely for distinguishing between critique and ideology. The former understands abstract labour as the economic expression of a social, historical, etc. reality. The latter *reinscribes* all kinds of phenomena into an abstract labour agenda.

<sup>12</sup> The adherence to class as the ruling paradigm and class matters as *a priori* more important than other matters can be seen as a main road of traditional Marxism as a whole, with the present global and domestic horizon problems among its consequences. The appreciation of a wider institutional context of capitalism is a key issue here, a field where Polanyi's work (1993) remains a pioneer effort, even if his distinction between 'capital' and 'market' may have been hazy. – For a well-reasoned recent critique of Polanyi not from the conventional point of view that he was too much of an institutionalist, but from quite the contrary position, namely that he brought too many neo-classical paradigms along, cf. Lie, J 1991, who also argues – in line with the present view – that markets may themselves be 'embedded'. For further 'embedding of exchange' sociology, connected to pollution theory, cf. Servet, J 1982.

<sup>13</sup> A fourth main line of argument against a reproduction value creation view can only be mentioned here. It is related to the separate modes of production view, with focus on the capitalist value cycle. The cycle is capitalist as it passes through the two main sectors of production, production of the means of production and of the 'means of consumption' meaning reproduction of labour power. However, when it passes through the reproduction sphere, it

regresses to *simple circulation*. For example, Jørgen Sandemose (1976:83, 92-3, my trans.) argues that "each capitalistically produced commodity" consists of the  $c + v + s$  components. Yet labour power is not a capitalistically produced commodity, the reason being that "it is a product of the worker's own consumption process, not of any value creative process" – i.e. a declaration. "If it had been, it would have a price equivalent to cost price plus average profit", yet that is not necessarily the case. A model of capitalist exploitation of the reproductive sphere does not entail seeing the workers as an exploitation class, since all or most of the surplus may pass *through* the labour market unpaid, due to a variety of conditions. Marx already argued that the price of labour power is usually lower than its value. The benefit to workers and capitalists is an open question. Sandemose goes on to argue that from the point of view of the worker, the sale of labour power "results in *simple circulation*". Yet in the next moment this is made into the view of *capital* also: "The fact that the wage worker's productive activity is the only source of value for Marx, therefore means that capital in its cycle must continuously go *outside* of this cycle to get blood in simple circulation." The first part of the statement is untrue; labour, not wage labour alone, is the source of value in Marx's theory. The second part uses a misplaced metaphor in order to attribute the worker's view to capital itself. Sandemose has not proved that the production of labour power represents simple circulation *for capital*, and in Marx's view, that was not the case. Instead, the reproduction of productive labour is itself part of the capital cycle, an element of the capitalist enterprise on the societal level, as he writes for example in the chapter on 'simple reproduction' in volume two of *Capital*. It does not appear as part of the capital process for the individual worker, nor is it obviously part of it from the point of view of each capital; yet on the societal level, concerning capital as a whole, it is.

<sup>14</sup> The creation of a *map of European patriarchy* is part of a recent EC project with participation from Sylvia Walby and others.

<sup>15</sup> Unless one reads *Capital* from a very essentialist point of view, there can be no question that it was the *empirical answers* to such questions, broadly conceived, based mainly on English industrial *labour conditions*, that was the basis of Marx's model of value composition. In the Marxist debate, this is sometimes transformed into a dialectical 'law', yet the issue remains whether the abstract approximations, the categories of constant, variable, and surplus value, are useful and workable, making sense of the process, or not. If one reads Marx's first volume one is constantly reminded of this by his use of a load of material from industrial processes and his engagement on that issue.

<sup>16</sup> It is the *realisation* of gender that creates problems for the monetary economic view, while the gender segregation in wage and non-wage work is clear for most participants in the domestic labour debate.

<sup>17</sup>

As the emphasis on reproduction increases, the emphasis on 'interfacing' this form of labour also increases. In a historical perspective, the information industry as a whole represents a change of emphasis from the tool/nature interface to the tool/human user interface.

<sup>18</sup> In the wage system, Maurice Dobbs (1948:4) argued, "the worker is in a sense his own employer, making and selling his own product, and retaining for himself any surplus or 'net revenue' above the cost of his own materials and his own subsistence."

<sup>19</sup> This reinterpretation of Parsons' model does not entail going back to a functionalist family view, i.e. an idea of the family/gender as functional for capital. In the functionalist framework, these two are externally related, while in the current view, the relation is internal. It is true that capital ownership is highly centralised, yet capital, like gender, is not a special 'centre' of society to which other phenomena relate as more or less 'functional'.

<sup>20</sup> Parsons does not only describe the removal of traditional functions from the family, but also the nuclear family's concentration on 'personality creation'. Families can be compared to small factories creating personalities (1988:126). He also notes that the economic (wage work) framework of the nuclear family makes it qualitatively different from *all* non-modern family settings (op.cit. 123). Gender differentiation is the main axis of the family, and its basis is mainly biological; since the mother 'specialises' towards small children, the father really has no other choice than specialising towards the world at large, and developing 'instrumental' capabilities (op. cit. 131). Since this complementary specialisation was a mark of the nuclear family's advanced character, Parsons saw 'no serious development' in the direction of increased female wage labour (op.cit. 125). Family members' actions are interpreted in a 'personality as action system' framework mainly along Freudian lines with Bales' group dynamic observations added. Besides the socialisation tasks, families function in order to 'regulate the balance of the personality' among the adults; the erotical relation between them is a confirmation of the pre-oedipal mother-child relation, and their interest in children is related to their own need to express childish sides of their personality (op.cit. 128-30).

<sup>21</sup> The latter is perhaps best called utilitarianist, especially when value is not only associated with utility but derived from it.

<sup>22</sup> This is such a well-know view that I shall only quote one recent example here, from Paul Feyerabend's otherwise often refreshing book *Farewell to Reason* (1987). Feyerabend, leaning on Bruno Snell's misleading idea that the Homeric Greeks had no freedom of choice, writes that they instead "find themselves" in patterns of fate. Achilles, for example, finds himself faced with the choice of battling on or go home; Snell, quoted by Feyerabend, says this is not a choice, "in Homer we never find a personal decision" (op.cit.139). In Feyerabend's context, this matter is presented as a kind of preliminary forms analysis; he wants to point out that things may be very different from what they are in our own world, that even the concepts of life, responsibility, decision and so on may be different (op.cit.138). Yet this attempt fails, since the idea of freedom that Feyerabend discusses is the market-like, utilitarianist idea of free choice, while his idea of something else is likewise limited to the modern conception of unfreedom, using "embedding" in this misleading sense, Homer's people are people with no personal identity or soul (op.cit.139).

<sup>23</sup> At this point, I am indebted to Lyotard's (1993) early 1970s discussion of desire in Marx's theory, which even if perhaps not 'successful' is an original and noteworthy piece of work. Lyotard mainly points out (as I read him) that there *is* a main matter of desire hidden between all the words on labour in Marx's works, and he *allows one* to think in terms of "little-girl Marx" sexually attracted to the dragon of capital (and much else in the same vein). 'Desire' seems neutral, or homoerotic; at least it has little of gender or women within it. Lyotard is attempting a remake of Freudian libido theory which I do not quite understand (is it intelligible?).

<sup>24</sup> For example, Marx often referred to labour power as the key commodity in capitalism, yet somehow he never got around really to investigate its production, though some believe his lost notebooks on labour power would resurrect his theory at this point.

<sup>25</sup> This is the same kind of issue which we have met before, regarding gender especially, where *each trait* (or most of them) may be older, and yet the *organisation* or totality is different.

<sup>26</sup> The large households described by Schanz were feudal households, quite different from the ones described in chapter 11, and yet with some similarities, for no more mysterious reason than that household organisation has some common traits over the ages, and the same goes for how market and exchange tend to relate to it. Also, Schanz's concrete categories are fairly broad ones; we know, for example, that many households were not in fact that large (notably through the research of Peter Lasslett); this is from a historian of ideas, and it is his main line of argument which is important and relevant.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted from Schanz, H 1981:66-9,74,77,78, my trans.

## Chapter 15 Conclusion

### Introduction

People usually read conclusions for two reasons. One is to get an impression of the text without having to read all of it. The other is to follow the most interesting arguments some steps further. Readers who want to do the second, can skip the next section, which mainly repeats things said before in a more condensed manner. I then turn to the discussion of the last chapters concerning the taboo against connecting gender and capital. What appears when this taboo is lifted, or at least disturbed bit? There is a turnaround of power, a shift of polarity, and a pattern of victimisation. The exploration of these themes is focused on implications for future research.

### Overview

Some of the main meanings of contemporary femininity and masculinity may be understood in terms of activities and orientation of activities. Accordingly, I have approached gender as an organising framework of activity, motivating some acts and constraining others, and I have turned to the primary institutional arenas of this framework.

Although gender organises activities in most spheres of society, it is most direct relevance in the sphere of domestic and private-life activities. This is a useful starting point for understanding gender both as activity organiser and as a modern cultural theme, centred on love and family formation.

Studies of partner selection and family formation show processes that are partly symmetrical, partly asymmetrical. While the symmetrical or *dyadic* level contains subject-subject relations, the asymmetrical level contains relations where the body status of the woman is associated with the economic status of the man. The exchange between men and women therefore also contains an element of exchange of women between men. The relative importance of the two levels is connected to women's income proportion, with more symmetry in a two-job family context than in a 'breadwinner' context, yet it is basically dependent on women's overall economic and social status relative to men's, which also influences women's and men's positions in the labour market and the income gap between them. Deriving gender status from the market situation alone will not do. Since the overall situation has changed less than the market situation, partner selection processes are more conservative in gender terms than often believed. The relationship between men and women does not become fully symmetrical simply because both earn a wage, and asymmetry is still found especially in research that focuses on actions rather than just stated attitudes.

At the same time, partner selection has become more market-like, as was argued in my 1980 magistergrad thesis *The Gender Market*. The theory of the gender market developed in that context and later is based on feminist and economy-critical approaches, rather than the utilitarian exchange paradigm that is often implicit in this area. It concerns the main relations and phases of a *non-monetary*, mainly *informal* market characterised by dyadic relations. These dyadic relations also have a *singular* aspect, with the one-to-one connection turning into a '*the only one*' kind of relation. At the same time, they have a highly abstract character, which is no less advanced than economic abstractions in the sphere of production or in the relations of monetary exchange. They are as *real abstractions* as anything found there, with a *price-like system* of attractiveness that '*betrays*' the general economic character of gender.

Instead of presupposing participants' exchange orientation, as the exchange paradigm does, the market is seen as the collective outcome of individual aspirations that usually consist in attempts to transcend the exchange while not straying too far from its standards. A successful exchange is marked by a shift from an evaluative relation (finding 'the best one', 'being interested') to a gift-like relation ('the right one', falling in love). The most complex, money-like function in gender exchange is associated with the 'sex object' position of women, called the beauty position in this theory.

Like other markets, the gender market often presents things upside down. It presents women's real activity in families and relationships as a passive 'being available' in the market, while masculinity now appears as activity, initiative. Like the labour market, i.e. the market for monetarily compensated work, the gender market concerns future work tasks, mainly home and family activities. The gender market deal, its *validation* of the staging of masculinity and femininity, creates a main path forward in the development of a couple relationship: as she becomes 'his' and he 'hers', he is yet more of his own person; she moves further into the centre of the activities of the relationship, while he becomes the one at its periphery, the more job-connected person. In practice, such patterns are broken in all kinds of ways, yet they remain in force as typical tendencies, especially when we consider femininity and masculinity as traits across biological sex. In the couple development they first appear as fluctuating expressions on a psychosocial level, while later they gradually become materialised in the activity organisation, especially as the couple moves together and have children.

In gender market theory like other critical economic theory, the exchange on the market level corresponds to a relationship of use on the activity level. In its 'use' stage as well as in the preceding 'exchange' stage, the gender dyad is partly symmetrical and partly asymmetrical. This means that couples are not simply characterised by the dominance of the one and the subservient position of the other. Research indicates the existence of at least *three* main gender-related forms of influence in the couple relationship, a men's sphere of influence, a women's sphere, and a wider, background sphere that situates the former two, favouring men in society as a whole, yet not necessarily within each family. Gender and family theory need patriarchy analysis in order to understand the third sphere or type of influence.

Also, social forms questions now appear. Different spheres of influence are based on qualitatively different *grounds* with dissimilar meanings of *giving*, *sharing* and *exchanging*, the 'verbs' discussed in the Foreword, and the ways these are allowed to

'stage' gender and other elements of the interaction. Against the view that men's domestic sphere strategies are simply a spillover from their general exchange orientation while women follow the rules of the gift giving, I have emphasised that gifts in our society often have to make up for commodities and that the domestic gift-oriented organisation is forced into a 'shadow economy' role. It is also connected to social class and class mobility patterns. As the couple relationship develops more committed kinds of gift giving and a wider sphere of sharing, conflicts *within* a reciprocity framework go together with conflicts regarding what *kind* of reciprocity should be dominant. The family is never 'one system' in the reciprocity sense, but rather a perpetual change of emphasis between different systems. These may be connected to different family members, yet they are mainly linked to different forms of interaction, and on a deeper level to different social forms. Here as elsewhere, social forms analysis upholds the radical or qualitative dissimilarity between different forms elements, meaning that one-dimensional (and in practice usually exchange-rational) family system theory fails to grasp the complexity of its subject.

In the critique of the gender market thesis, many men accepted the exchange hypothesis, while rejecting the dominance hypothesis, while with women it was the other way around. These silences reflect practices. In the family sphere, men are in practice often connected to dominance, while women may be more exchange-oriented *within* a terrain of giving and sharing – or behind a family facade. Different tendencies appear: women may turn to hard line negotiation in order to improve on asymmetry, and since they have less intimate experiences of the dangers of exchange, they may prefer it to the alternatives. Yet the main strategy of femininity is a counter-strategy where the gift terrain is expanded, as a two-sided answer to masculinity and to the social instances connected to masculinity. There is the attempt to create a gap to the public world, to re-scale priorities, while also an attempt to keep the family successful or at least the household viable. Thus women's household strategies partly push families *beyond* class society and partly change their position *within* it.

Throughout this, reciprocity and social forms aspects are of main importance for the power relationship. The asymmetry between the woman and the man and the character of their spheres of influence in the family create different 'preferred terrains' in reciprocity terms. A power struggle in a relationship is seldom only a question of how much to whom; usually the main question is what *kind* of relationship should this be, what kinds of world view and action systems should be granted primary status. Thereby couple conflicts influence the status and dynamics of gifts, redistribution and sharing elements.

These traits can be found in the gender system as a whole. Informal *gender politics* usually is characterised both by a *figure* kind of issue, and a *ground* or reciprocity form issue. Such conflicts therefore also involve 'accepted reality' – for example whether a woman's activity is noticed by the man, or whether his problems are noted by her, or not.

Even equality-oriented couples experience a partly non-egalitarian family framework. While the traditional gap between a masculine world of wage work and a feminine world of the home has been greatly reduced, and while wages are distributed more equally, segregation mechanisms at the level of activity orientation remain, as does many other elements of a patriarchal societal structure, tradition and culture.

A main division concerns human resource oriented tasks ('reproduction') on the one hand, and non-human resource oriented tasks ('production') on the other. This division is more basically gendered than the division between wage work and domestic work, and more resistant to change. Since segregation on the activity orientation level remains in force, changes in the form of compensation of women's work, in many concrete work conditions and in parts of the political, cultural, etc. spheres have not created full equal status. Instead, the counter-forces are considerable, even if the long-term trend is one of greater equality.

Studies of men have been proposed as a contribution to solving the problems in this situation. These studies broke out of masculine normalcy by taking the gender variable seriously and applying it on men themselves. Yet they also inherited a women's view of men, or a 'derived subject' agenda, in which men are important as far as they relate to women, or as women see them. Within the field itself, however, other trends appear. Studies of men are in no way *identical* to studies of patriarchy, yet they offer *new perspectives* on the latter, often in the sense of being more in the middle of patriarchal arrangements than women are. While 'gender' evokes a vision of *class-like* categories in many feminists' minds, patriarchy is not a *serial* or anonymous relationship in this sense; it is also a bond of *authority*, as has been explored by Jessica Benjamin and others. In studies of men we meet men who are seldom simply oppressors or allies in terms of equal status, but some of both, like the women in their environment, although in different ways, and on the average, to different degrees. Patriarchy is more *group-like* than the categorical gender, involving familiarisation also outside the overt family and gender context. Studies of men offer ways to approach patriarchal elements of social organisation, depth level structures *combining* economical, psychological and cultural patterns. One threshold has been identified, namely a recognition of the fact that gender oppression in the male world is *linked* to oppression between men and cannot be treated in isolation.

The idea that men equal patriarchy, or that nothing can be done, does not correspond to social realities. Yet it is important for showing a major cultural theme, a gender fixation that is now increasingly an *overt* hindrance for further equality work. Changes among men are important for introducing a new form of change in society at large, even if some change attempts will remain limited, uphill battles unless wider societal conditions are also changed. In Norway, studies show the impact on men of women's and equal status changes, but they also underscore the importance of male-male relations. 'Self-propelled' change processes among men include a father / son dynamic of authority, increasing emphasis on the relationship to children, and greater importance of reproductive or human-oriented work capabilities. The decrease in men's dominant wage-earner position, together with this enlarged 'post-modernised' family orientation (the PC on the one hand, the baby on the other) lead many men to support equal status demands giving priority to care, the home and the family – even when these demands are counterproductive to their own interests *as* individuals in the labour market. For example, men support an upgrading of domestic work experience in wage work recruitment, although this will decrease their own individual labour market chances vis-à-vis women.

Instead of the picture of men as a general barrier to change, studies have created a nuanced map of men's differential response to equality and feminist demands. Some men and some parts of men's changes over the last decade have helped create

increased equality. The egalitarian tendency among men is partly a 'pull effect' from women and partly a 'push effect' from men themselves. In order to understand these effects as well as the barriers to change, studies of men tendentially lead into a terrain of patriarchal organisation that is different from 'gender issues' as first conceived. The focus on relations between men is a symptom of this latent change of perspective, leading beneath gender as a categorical and in some senses surface phenomenon. I argue that men's studies need better recognition of the fact that gender and patriarchal phenomena are not the same, that masculinities may oppose as well as confirm patriarchal dominance, and that the 'derived subject' orientation is a barrier to epistemological and theoretical development in this area. Women do not hold a monopoly on understanding or experiencing patriarchy; for understanding the latter, current feminist theories are *not enough*. On the contrary, I show how the *equivalent epistemology* of the feminine gender position limits and in some ways distorts the outlook on patriarchal power. Feminine as well as masculine gender involves a *filtering* of patriarchal and other social reality, and is not simply the highway to truth.

At this point, the major analytical framework of the thesis is introduced in more explicit terms. The multidimensional and multilayered character of gender interaction can usefully be investigated in a *social forms analysis* perspective, based on a wide concept of *activity* that corresponds to the societal task structure and includes domestic and love-related activities connected to the regeneration of human resources. The social forms perspective is focused on three main levels of analysis.

At the first level, three main *transfer* patterns can be identified, exchange, giving and redistributing. Each transfer of activity results is surrounded by a wider field of '*transference*' that includes 'reworkings' of the transfer itself. The psychodynamic transference concept is thereby given a wider sociological meaning: there is a cultural, symbolic and conceptual field that is usually clustered around *attempted solutions* to the problems posed by the transfer itself. Since the latter usually concerns power and asymmetry, transference is also an 'answer' to power. Each transfer and transference field can be studied as a tendency, coexistent with the others, in a hierarchy of meaning. Activities, transfers and transferential fields, taken together, can be seen as a transactional order.

This order, as a whole, constitutes the second level of analysis. It is characterised by *main reciprocity relationships* and *institutional spheres*, like social class, ethnicity / 'race' and gender. These main reciprocity relationships are partly manifest on their own, in distinct institutional arrangements, typical arenas and relations. They are also latent patterns running through society as a whole. In modern society (and in stratified societies generally), the main reciprocity relationships are also dominance relationships, but here again – as in families – the reciprocity 'terrain' varies, so that class, on the whole, is more connected to commodity logic, gender more to gift logic, etc. Each of these main relationships has its 'preferred terrain' and contains different, more or less congruent, transfer and transference forms.

At a third level of analysis, patterns of *meta-institutionalisation* are identified, defined as core institutionalisation 'code' that is operative across different spheres of society. Labour and sex belong to the core meta-institutional traits of our own society; they are primary components of the 'glue' of social institutions generally. Modern institutions, unlike many premodern ones, have a core link to labour and the economic level; they

are '*labour-mediated*' institutions as Moishe Postone says. Yet societies do not hang together due to 'one' kind of cohesive, as can be seen, in the modern case, even by examining the labour category itself, which *presupposes* as certain relationship to sex and gender (discussed in part two of the text) and probably also to other matters like the global hierarchy.

Together, the meta-institutional patterns, the main dominance relationships and the transactional order constitute the groundwork of *the social form*. The commodity form, for example, contains a hierarchy of different transfer types, as well as the other elements mentioned. A social *formation* is seen a period- and context-specific version of a social form, like capitalism is a subvariant of the commodity form. Unlike the mode of production concept, the social form does not presuppose the dominance of one form of activity, nor does the framework contain an evolutionary theory. Instead of the traditional view of the commodity form as the form of rationality, generalisation, science and development, while everything else is backwards or simply 'concrete', the present view recognises the existence of different, complex forms of generalisation, associated with different social forms and reciprocity elements. Three main epistemological frameworks, 'reflection', 'refraction' and 'narrative' are outlined and connected to exchange, redistribution and gift giving respectively.

The modern gender system is analysed using this framework. Modern gender contains a historically unique co-organisation of two logically distinct organisational elements. These I call sexed organisation (implying difference) and patriarchal organisation (implying stratification). Although some connection to sex difference is present in any concept of patriarchy, only modern patriarchy is characterised by being expressed *mainly* through sexed organisation, i.e. *as* a gender system. Premodern forms of patriarchy are comparably direct or open, the societal order itself being seen as patriarchal. Therefore, also, the modern meaning of gender, as presupposing patriarchy, is usually fairly different both from the patriarchal relations of pre-modern society, and from their sexed organisation. Modern society is by no means unique in having a sexed organisation, nor is it unique in some of its aspects, yet it is unique in the ways in which *patriarchy* is transmitted through these relations, while the latter seldom exists in overt forms on its own. In brief terms everything known earlier was *patriarchal* while today society is *gendered*; patriarchal traits are filtered and mediated through the gender system.

Modern gender presupposes private economic individuals negotiating their futures rather than the system of household heads and dependants that was the common pre-modern rule of patriarchy. Instead of patriarchs deciding, attractiveness and sex decide; sex turns into "private life relationship law". Through the submergence of the older order in the modern economy, a new *medium* of referencing through sex, a new form of signification and meta-institutionalisation was created, even if many single elements within it were old. This included a new organisation of intimacy, characteristically called by a new term, 'sexuality', sexed intimacy. The gender sphere of signification is in a process of widening its importance further today, connected to the combination of increased competition and gradual advance of women's status and to other processes. I focus especially on how praxis-oriented studies turning towards the key form element of sexual practice have come further in denaturalising the concept of sex than gender studies themselves. The idea of sex as simply nature's part

and foundation of gender can no longer be maintained; what emerges instead are perspectives on the body / the sex organ as 'speaker' of a certain *type* of social messages.

The symptomatic aspects of contemporary sexuality confirm the importance of gender and patriarchy for understanding the sexual field, as well as the importance of commodity-related elements of interaction and their 'imprint' effect also vis-à-vis other reciprocity forms. Two main patterns are discussed in this context. The first is a wide cultural and social *gender fixation* which means that sexed organisation is constantly projected into a power and societal role, also in research. Another, darker side of our society's gender fixation is the sociocultural syndrome that links sex with violence and death.

The modern gender system creates a form of identity that can be compared to a 'ledge', an in-between existence. In terms of social psychological 'pure types', it is a ledge between the pure type '*owner*' at top, and the pure type '*owned*' at the bottom. Gender strategies can be seen as attempts to improve and broaden this ledge, guarding against the 'social death' of falling down, attempting to create a foothold higher up. The ledge and the strategies connected to it are differently located and shaped according to the individual's class, habitus, ethnicity, etc.

The patterns of gender 'confirmation', learning and socialisation show unmistakable traits of the commodity associations of the contemporary gender system. Masculinity and femininity are not 'substantiated' or modelled in the immediate, concrete sense; rather they are '*transubstantiated*' in an abstract, cross-over process that corresponds to other commodity-economic patterns. Pre-genderised patriarchal organisation is mainly characterised by substantiation rather than transubstantiation social psychological principles, and I discuss how these two very different frameworks of socialisation and identity formation coexist also in our own society.

From the discussion of the gender system, I turn to the wider question of whether patriarchy is related to the commodity form, and what *kind* of association is involved here. I outline a main *differentiation principle* of commodity production that has not been recognised in critical economic theory. In brief terms, this principle says that commodity production cannot exist without non-commodity relations. This is so since commodity owners cannot be created *as* commodities or treated or exchanged as commodities. In general, human resource-oriented work can only partially be treated as commodity-producing work.

The analysis of this value differentiation principle shows a 'twofoldness' of the commodity that differs from the one conventionally identified, i.e. that between value and use value. Instead, it consists of value and use value on the one hand, and other, non-commodity relations on the other hand. 'Use value' is a misleading category of the latter relations. Instead, I distinguish between the *firstness field* of commodity relations and the *otherness field* (or also: 'secondness field') that must be there, if the former is to exist. The relationship and tensions between these two fields have been of major importance in the history of the commodity society (not least in our own time), yet it has been neglected due to a one-sided economic theory framework that dispels the otherness field from 'proper' wealth creation and indeed from its whole horizon of

interest (it reappears in the absurd form of an *appendix* to modern economic theory, a 'sphere of consumption').

The fact that the commodity form consists of two subspheres of activity, not one, does not mean that the otherness field is established in the same manner in all kinds of commodity societies or at all *by* the firstness field. It may exist for other reasons also, for example simply because the commodity form as a whole still has a *limited* impact on society as a whole.

I identify four main historical forms of the differentiation principle, i.e. how the firstness and otherness fields are established and the relationship between the two. The first is one of *identification*, mainly characterised by establishing the commodity field and related institutions in a society that is still dominated by other reciprocity forms. The second is characterised by *exclusion* of non-commodity relations from the economy proper, often also a *seclusion* of certain activities in the household, in the religious sphere, etc. The third main form is one of *inclusion*: what was excluded from political-economic society is now gradually reintroduced *as* elements within it. The fourth and mainly modern form is a further development of this inclusive tendency: a *polarisation* creating a thoroughgoing dual organisation of society into commodity and non-commodity relations. In this last, evolved form, the firstness and otherness spheres are no longer *latent* or tendential in character. For the first time, they are *realised* on the commodity form's own premises. This realisation, I argue, corresponds to the deep split that exists in contemporary society between the *sphere of production* on the one hand and the *sphere of reproduction* on the other. Here, the firstness of the one and the secondness of the other are *linked*, and the main form of this linkage is the dyadic kernel relation of the gender system. Conventional views that one of these fields is social, the other less so (etc.) are rejected in the present approach. They are both necessary if commodity society is to exist.

Since the hypothesis is that the differentiation principle is connected to patriarchy and gender, its categories may also be discussed in gender terms. 'Gender inclusion' means that what was formerly excluded from the horizon of the social, including women as dependants and non-subjects, is now reintegrated. Further, gender polarisation means that this integration becomes a backbone of the societal anatomy and as well as a cultural paradigm able to absorb just about anything on its terms, i.e. as shifting between the neutral (first) and gendered (other). The polarised and superficially symmetrical or dyadic form of the value differentiation principle, as it has evolved in capitalism, gradually has supplanted old-style patriarchal domination with a two-sphere, two-subject arrangement of (mainly) indirect domination. In turn, the sphere of production has itself increasingly become dependent on this wider arrangement, as is expressed in the gender fixation and other phenomena.

How close is the association between commodity differentiation and patriarchal stratification? There is no doubt that commodity-oriented societies have also been patriarchal societies, and there is evidence from many areas that commodification and patriarchalisation tend to go together. I discuss the possibility that non-commodity societies, for example those dominated by gift giving or redistribution, harbour their own inner 'differentiation tendencies' that run in women's disfavour. However, these are less easily identified, less easily connected to oppression of women in particular, and less influential than the differentiation principle of commodity economy. I

conclude that commodity differentiation is a main basis of patriarchal organisation, although not the only one.

Having set out this main thesis, I turn to other theories in the area. Although studies of patriarchy is an underdeveloped field, sometimes due to the belief that causal categories behind the oppression of women are irrelevant or even inherently ideological, some main traits have been found in this field, supporting some of the preceding analysis.

All or almost all known cases of patriarchal organisation *combine inter-sex and intra-sex ranking systems*, i.e. ranking within each sex or ranking regardless of sex as well as ranking between men and women. This *dual* arrangement surrounds all or most of the asymmetrical and non-compensated activity of women. Ranking orders between men *as part of* the oppression of women is an especially noted and widespread organisational trait. Patriarchal organisation may discriminate women and other dependants in terms of sex, as today, but also in many other terms and through other kinds of institutionalisation. Patriarchal organisation therefore is entangled with systems of social status and class. Yet it can also be distinguished from other forms of stratification by identifying the forms and dynamics of its power relations, and by examining the corresponding activity structure and the surplus extraction usually associated with it.

While patriarchy theory sometimes seems to be a peripheral area for gender and equal status studies, I find quite the contrary reality. Main developments in the gender studies fields, including studies of men, the state and the labour market, would not have come about, or not as broadly, were it not for the efforts to understand patriarchy. I discuss various attempts to link patriarchy and capitalism, and find that even if none of these have been entirely successful in their own terms, they have nevertheless created fruitful offshoots in terms of research. Also, I put emphasis on common findings and what patriarchy researchers agree on, and I argue that this small field must be given more emphasis than today, since it is highly relevant for research development and for equal status questions on national as well as global levels.

From this discussion of patriarchy theory, I turn to one main area of studies and debate, concerning the historical origin of patriarchal organisation. The question of whether non-commodity societies with men in leadership positions should be classified as patriarchal or as male-dominated (or as male-dominated in some areas of society, not in others) is left open. Instead I argue in favour of focusing on the *known* and 'uncontroversial' patriarchal developments in central societies, and a methodology of tracing their main lines of development. Considered as a whole, the history of pre-antiquity civilisation shows a broad pattern *from* relatively egalitarian contexts *to* much more clearly patriarchal contexts, a development that eventually, in late antiquity, put femininity *generally* equal to inferiority. This broad pattern needs to be explained, and I discuss various attempts to do so. The historical chapter summarises main results from several years of study, and I discuss case examples (Greek traditions, early Assyria) as well as broader patterns.

The main probable background pattern that shaped patriarchal organisation in the early historical context was one of *centralisation* and *stratification*, creating a gradual dissolution of the large-household character of society and a shift towards a private

household basis of state power. I discuss the dynamics of centralisation and stratification, with various attempts to create 'counterbalanced' redistribution, leading to commodification and patriarchalisation. Thus the main historical line of development supports the hypothesis that these two are linked.

As a contribution to the discussion of how to conceive of this broad change and a way of avoiding the problems of a 'mode of production' approach in this area, I introduce a new set of terms and models for analysing household-oriented organisation, as a specific social form called 'focality' or 'focal reciprocity'. Focality is seen as a wheel-like form of interdependency combining principles of gift-giving ('rim') with those of redistribution ('spokes') to and from the centre ('hub'). The development of this combined form of organisation, its inner conflicts and centralisation problems and gradually decreasing influence vis-à-vis commodity-associated organisation, is interpreted as a process with five typical main phases. These five focal reciprocity phases are: (1) fluent or undeveloped focality (first agricultural settlement period, pre-historic, proto-urbanising civilisation), (2) active focality (more advanced, centralising, temple-building and urbanising society; earliest 'epical / mythological' traditions), (3) passive focality (first clearly historical period with 'heroic' or external household-agent leadership turning into proto-dynastic leadership, proto-state formations increasingly based on 'secular' or private household-oriented power), (4) bound focality (class society; focal organisation gradually enclosed, secluded), and (5) fixed focality (focal organisation re-employed in economic organisation). Focality theory thereby can be seen as an '*otherness field perspective*' on the commodity differentiation process, and in the historical context it provides a more specific, detailed and household-oriented angle on the development of patriarchal and commodity-related organisation than what exists today.

Patriarchy did not emerge in an already halfway discriminatory gender system; on the contrary, a mainly egalitarian culture and institutional framework where women were often prominent was actively *used* by early dynasts and proto-patriarchs as legitimation ground for developing their power. Here as elsewhere power uses what is at hand, and only subsequently builds up a new framework. There is a *major time lag* between the build-up of patriarchy in the early historical period (2500-1500 B.C. in the Middle East) and the formation period of the patriarchal gender system (late antiquity, Christianity, yet fully realised only in modern times). Even in antiquity, women were mainly dominated in terms of *age*, as minors, not in terms of sex. Misogynism became state principle only through Constantin. It is the utterly modern *pre-positioning* of people *as* gendered in a (background) patriarchal sense, plus the idea that patriarchy basically is ahistorical, that have led modern researchers to overlook this large gap. Also, a common sociological rule has been ignored, namely the fact that new circumstances and societal developments are first sought accommodated by traditional institutions and existing culture. Therefore I argue that the common notion of gender as the broader category, with patriarchy as a subcase, is misleading. This 'gender' in practice mainly means *our* modern gender, a highly specific structure with an in-depth identity imprint that makes it difficult (and unpleasant, scary) for us to recognise its limits. Yet it is in fact a subcase or local variant of patriarchy, rather than the other way around.

The following chapters on power and economy are more exploring in character. I turn to the study of *patriarchal strategy* ('Herrschaft'), conceived as the link between

differentiation and stratification in the development of patriarchal social organisation. 'Strategy' is interpreted as a way of consolidating and legitimising power and reducing its vulnerability by basing stratification on differentiation. The 'costs' of the upkeep of power are shifted to the powerless. Contrary to a common view, I do not believe that this shift towards differentiation is caused by the powerful alone ('divide and rule'). Instead, patriarchal strategy develops in a dialectic where the oppressed also have some 'differential' interests, and not just reasons for sticking together as an oppressed group. Instead, the weaker party will often try to change the relationship from one of stratification to one of more symmetrical differentiation, even when this may reduce the cohesion of the group. This was discussed in a modern family context earlier in the text. Women's attempts to recast asymmetry into difference are not only to be classified as denials of reality, they are also attempts to improve the situation by changing the terrain of the relationship.

Strategical systems involve increasing self-referencing of powerlessness *as* matters of differentiation, partly as a shift of burdens from the powerful to the powerless, partly as means of diverting and incorporating the struggles of the latter. With capitalism, the basis-context of power shifted from that of lord and peasant or master and slave to that of parties in exchange, with a split rationalisation of formerly unified strategies in two main directions, associated with the economic polarisation. Thus the study of modern gender politics in its combination with 'neutral' politics is also a study of patriarchal strategy. Although preceding (pre-modern) social relationships were neither simple, nor purely concrete, nor fully open, it remains true that power primarily was seen as a *relationship between people*, whereas with capitalism, the inherent tendency of the commodity form to attribute power to commodities' sensual-material aspects became dominant, together with the ascendancy of this rational-objectivised field as a whole, creating a shift in meta-institutionalisation breaking down the religious-hierarchical fabric of feudalism, its power emerging as relationships between people due to *relationships between objects*, including bodies or people perceived as objects.

Three main contexts of the emergence and development of the modern gender system are identified and discussed on this basis: (A) a paternalistic form ('paternate') with 'archaised' feudal kinship plus emerging absolute surplus value exploitation, (B) a masculinistic form or 'early masculine', characterised by formal systematisation of gender and sexuality and emerging relative surplus value production, and (C) a 'late masculine' and possibly more androgynatic form ('androgynate'). The latter is characterised by more advanced relative surplus production, more horizontal social relations generally in society, as well as a decrease in (but not elimination of) patriarchal and gender-related exploitation. These three patriarchal orders can be seen as formative frameworks of gender, creating different forms of gender hierarchy.

From the discussion of strategy and power, I turn to economy. Rejecting the view that economic analysis *per se* is deterministic, detached or exploitative (an understandable common view among feminists and women especially), I point to its 'householding' origin, and argue instead that economic analysis must be changed according to the real householding of our society. This means that the discrimination of women *within* the narrow production account of the economic field must be addressed simultaneously with a wider focus on the *limits* of economic theory, its constricted quality *as* social theory. 'Narrow' does not mean 'not existing'. 'Deconstructing' the

economic field depends on an understanding not only of the need for alternatives, but also of the exploitation that actually goes on within it, as the combined effect of non-gendered economic forms interacting with gendered ones. On the basis of the household discussions in part one of the text, I propose a three-level exploitation hypothesis as a point of departure, involving exploitation of women, of reproductive work, and of expressive traits. I also discuss the complex character of exploitation in this setting: the net overall economic effect may be exploitation of women, yet contrary and compensatory tendencies may be very much present within each unit, connected to the character of gift- and sharing-related organisation in the family sphere.

I also revisit the domestic labour debate of the 1975-85 period, noting its narrow and androcentric definitions. Its main effect, in the background, has not been sufficiently recognised in feminist and gender studies. There was a *closure* of qualitative, critical economy analysis from a gender-critical point of view. I review some of the debate, including the critique of my own early 1980s exploitation thesis. I conclude that the critiques of exploitation views are significant mainly for their display of *a priori* reasoning, a lack of knowledge of what one criticises, and an ideological closure. The use of critical economic theory in order to deny all possibilities of domestic exploitation led to self-contradictive perspectives and to a line of argument that basically only recognises 'official' class exploitation within the rich world.

Tracing the closure pattern, I find a *factually existing taboo* against bringing capital and gender analysis together, expressed for example in the fact that whereas "human" or "cultural" capital is accepted without much in the way of evidence (unless the capital category is collapsed into meaning 'resources in general'), the *gender* capital idea, on the other hand, that actually has a whole societal regime of segregation and dominance to back it up, is *avoided* in sociology as elsewhere. This is all the more striking since the attribution of this link to *other*, far-away places and cultures ('tribal society') is common; *there*, gender / women can be seen as commodities, especially in traditions influenced by French structuralism.

I go on to discuss and nuance my own exploitation approach in terms of new evidence and theory developments since it was originally set out in the early 1980s, arguing that a net exploitation effect from the threefold pattern mentioned (women, reproduction, expressivity) makes good sense on many levels. Such an approach is in line with recent signs of a renewed emphasis on exploitation as a main matter for research; it avoids narrow quantitativism and allows the identification of contradictory tendencies in this area. As an example I argue that a societal-level exploitation approach can even be combined with a Parsons-style 'mutual advantage of segregation' model of the family (should anyone wish so). My main point is to re-open an agenda through an examination of the closure that has surrounded it.

It is only by looking at how the patriarchal order is in fact recreated without reference to gender, or with only indirect reference, that we can take away its 'modest veil' of neutrality. Looking at gender alone will not do. I turn, therefore, to an exploration of the quality of this economic neutral field itself, in a phenomenological analysis of "value approached through use". I discuss how 'use value' or 'utility' on closer examination changes from its market surface image of *neutral-individual horizontal choice* to a *hierarchy of dependency*. There is a use value pyramid, corresponding to a

hierarchy of needs, with *love* at the top and means of *war* at the bottom. Each *end* in this pyramid is itself a *means* for fulfilling some higher-level need. Paradoxically, therefore, even the utmost utilitarianist is a love-maker at heart; indeed, these two categories only make sense in terms of each other. The differentiation principle reappears: without some *end*, the means become useless, and the chains of means and ends unavoidably lead to the terrain of gender and love, a hierarchical reality that is quite different from the fragmented market surface.

Behind this curious inversion, there is a '*needs being*' (Schanz) who is in many senses a historical creation, a being *void* of immediate use value and only able to achieve it through exchange. I find that the whole use value structuration of the economy, its 'underbelly side' (Norw. *underliv*), is deeply gender-related, although not in the overt form of the gender system; instead I call it *gender-implicative*. A commonly recognised phenomenon in this regard, namely *the sexualisation of commodities*, is only one rather overt aspect of a much wider pattern. Thereby, the claim that gender is "peripheral" in terms of economic analysis is rejected.

Finally, I go on to explore what lies behind the taboo against bringing gender / women and capital together, in research and theory as well as in practice. While capital and money are not "feminine", there are female associations in this area. Some of these are old and very important, to the extent that the pre-modern imagination in this area seems to have been dominated by two main related images – one of corruption / circulation ("whore of Babylon"), the other of accumulation / enrichment ("money-lending Jew"). Noting Marx's emphasis on capital as *equivalent power* and the structural parallel to women's position in the gender market (the beauty object as equivalent), I discuss the possibility that the shift from pre-modern to modern (capital) power should be conceived not only as a restructuring, but also as a *shift of polarity*. The main basis of power was no longer the old solidity of feudal patriarchy; instead, capital as equivalent power emerged in a terrain associated with women and other weak groups, notably the Jews. While capital is structurally 'masculinity' in the work process, it is structurally 'feminine' in the valorisation and market processes, and it is the latter that are its 'own' primary mode of appearance. Turning to the historical evidence of this shift, or what I call *the turnaround of power*, I discuss its *traumatic* aspects, clearly evidenced in the massive *victimisation* and *persecution* processes that accompanied it. In these processes, women and Jews were often 'functional equivalents'.

Both on a structural and a historical level, therefore, I find reasons to believe that capital power does have some upsetting qualities in terms of patriarchal hegemony, and that the victimisation, demarcation of '*the sex*' and oppression of women may have had this deeper-level basis. It is true that capitalism did not erase patriarchy, yet the evidence shows that it was not at all secure in the face of emerging capitalist tendencies. Further, this perspective leads to greater emphasis on the fact that the modern gender system is a *compensatory* order, including its 'identity ledges', and it leads to new views of the kinds of anxiety that lies in the background of this order. While the further terrain, here, appears hazy for the moment, it also seems to be of major importance for further studies. In general, the sense of *contradiction* in the differentiation principle is brought out, pointing to the *fragility*, not only the persistence, of patriarchal structure.

## Economic differentiation and patriarchal organisation

What, on the whole, has been found considering the main thesis, the differentiation of commodity economy and its relation to patriarchy? Is this principle logical correct and a matter of main importance in the development of commodity economy? Yes, I do not think there can be much doubt on these issues. Was patriarchy created in association with the differentiation process? Yes, that seems to be the case in our own early history, if patriarchy is defined as a general societal system of female subordination and related dominance, while it may not be the case if we consider male dominance in a more restricted sense – in some areas in society and / or on a less developed level. Is the former association a strong one? Yes, that seems to be the case also, on a broad level, yet direct links are more diffuse and not so easy to identify. Can the strong version of the hypothesis be proved, i.e. that patriarchy and the differentiation process are one and the same? No, and it does not seem probable. Has the present thesis gone into that area? Yes, but not in the sense of proving or disproving it, since on the whole, that is premature, considering the state of the patriarchy studies field and the world-wide scope that would be necessary for such an investigation.

Does this mean that the hypothesis can only be considered in the weak sense discussed, i.e. as one of many possible factors of patriarchal development? No, I think the evidence on the whole warrants a middle proposition: the differentiation process is one of the major background factors, possibly the main one. This is supported by the fact that a connection between patriarchalisation and commodification is not an isolated early history issue, but appears in many other areas also. This includes later historical developments, the meeting of pre- or proto-patriarchal cultures and Western society, and the patterns displayed as commodity economy became capital economy. Finally, there is substantial evidence connecting the two on a structural and institutional level in our own society.

It may be the case, then, that the differentiation-related processes are of limited relevance for understanding male dominance in contexts outside 'Western' tradition, yet important for analyses of what went on within it. As a whole, this theme therefore contributes to a 'substantial' argument for patriarchy studies, beyond the formal one that gender and patriarchy are not identical subjects. The theme clearly differs from studies of men's and women's lives and interaction, even if it is related to those subjects.

## Capital, gender and victimisation

It may well be, when texts like the present one are read a generation or two from now, that most of it will be seen as a beating around the bush. Why did not these theorists go directly to the heart of the matter? Why are they only slightly less symptomatic than what they criticise? In this sense, perhaps, the text mainly shows the strength of a taboo. It resembles trying to bring two magnets together, one with a "man" and "woman" pole, the other with a "capital" and "non-capital" pole. They attract one another when brought together in this way, while trying to turn one of them around is just about impossible; then they repulse on another.

Could we imagine buying and selling without masculine and feminine? Possibly not, or not much of it, not as we find it in the commodity form *as* dominant societal form, the socially leading force that became established in pre-antiquity, leading to a world of commercial slavery. And not in capitalism. The *polarity of capital* and the *polarity of gender* are certainly different, yet I think the metaphor of two magnets is relevant here – it is the *same* poles (negative to negative, positive to positive) that repulse each other. Before asking why this is so, this *social fact* should be acknowledged. As discussed earlier, the amount of capital in a job predicts the sex of its performer, especially when combined with an indicator of the orientation of the work. The closer to capital, and the more capital in the job, the more masculine the job itself. This connection is even stronger when we examine *property*, especially large-scale, capital property, where the extreme underrepresentation of women is well known. It is a broad tendency that can be found in most areas of our culture and society.

As equivalence-power, capital is not 'feminine' in the current gender sense, nor do I want to invoke some essential notion of its 'femaleness'. Yet unless the preceding historical analysis is false, and also the structural considerations that back it up, there *are* what can be called *feminine implications* related to capital. *Before* capital rose to power in society, this association was more overt than it became, later on. Would we expect it to lay open to the light of day, as a self-evident truth for all to see in our society? Would it not, rather, be a deeply hidden matter, with social sanctions and strange dislocations surrounding it? I think the last proposition is the likely one.

Was it because capital was solidly patriarchal or masculine that it rose to power in Europe through the greatest victimising process ever seen till then, one targeting *women* and *Jews* especially? Or quite the contrary, because it did *not* furnish a solid basis in this respect? Does not the fact that the victim did not matter that much, a Jew was as good as a woman, point back at the equivalent, circulative character of capital power itself?<sup>1</sup> There was a 'transubstantiation' on the victim side, indicating what created the process.<sup>2</sup>

Let us look more closely on the worst example of this type of process known so far. It is not a coincidence that the most aggressive attempt to speedily establish world hegemony in modern times, not just through *blitzkrieg* but also by the enthusiastic support of part of the population, i.e. Nazi Germany, was also characterised by a rationalised modern version of the victimisation process. It has not been sufficiently recognised that this Nazi ideology created, and was itself fuelled by, a '*mobbing principle*'<sup>3</sup> throughout society, resulting in the mass execution of Jews, communists and other negative equivalents'.

Brian Levack (1987) brings the not insignificant detail that Heinrich Himmler, the master planner of this process, created a huge data base in the 1930s with details of persecution of witches in the 1500-1700 period, which in fact is still used today by historians in order to estimate the number of executions. When Himmler visited the camps, he honoured the SS guards for their great sacrifices for humanity: no anger, no emotion, just the rationality of wiping out the vermin.<sup>4</sup>

We may note, further, that Himmler himself was raised by a father who employed the then popular "Schreber method" of child rearing, combining harassment, sadism and strict authoritarianism. It says something of German culture that the fate of Schreber's

two sons, one becoming insane while the other committed suicide, did not prevent the method's popularity (Dortmund, E. 1978). Rene König's (1957:112) category of *patriarchalism by counterthrust* is relevant here. He explains this category in terms of the defeat of the German bourgeoisie in 1848 and the squashing of liberal movements, with "the effect that paternal authority, having failed to impose itself in determining public affairs, withdrew into the intimacy of the family". However there is more than a failure in one area, compensated in another, which is involved here.

Soon after the Nazis came to power in 1933, "Jews were attacked as the embodiments of capitalism, and department store were boycotted (..) [this] enabled the Nazis to claim implementation of the key cause in their Programme, demanding 'the abolition of the thralldom of interest'", Richard Grunberger (1971:44-5) argues.<sup>5</sup> Grunberger also documents that this period was marked more by a *use* of sexuality than an absolute suppression of it, as supposed in some critical theory. "Premarital sexual intercourse was very widespread in the Third Reich, varying from 51 percent in Saxony to over 90 percent in Germany" (op.cit. 242). Hitler saw "sex as a subject/object relationship with the male cast in a relentlessly active role vis-à-vis the helpless playthings of his desires" (op.cit. 244). The divorce rate was high and it rose through the 1930s, as Aryan/non-Aryan marriages were dissolved and "the notion of infertility in marriage was not all that dissimilar from political opposition gained ground" (ibid.) Companies like the Dresdner Bank included figures on marriage and fertility among its employees in their annual balance sheets (op.cit. 237). The Honour Cross of the German Mother was awarded in three classes: bronze for more than four children, silver for more than six, and gold for more than eight (op.cit. 236). Characteristically, the divorce laws were changed in a direction favouring men leaving their wives for other women. "The term 'family' was given aristocratic rarity-value by being reserved for parents with four children and over." (op.cit.235).

"Anti-feminism served as a non-lethal variant of anti-Semitism", Grunberger observes (op.cit. 253). We may note the beyondness argument as presented by Goebbels:

"Our politics of displacement of women from public life occurs solely to restore their essential dignity to them." And: "It is not because we did not respect women enough but because we respected them too much that we kept them out of the miasma of parliamentary democracy." (op.cit.253).

The Jews constituted less than 1 percent of the German population, and their fertility rate was lower than that of the Germans (op.cit.456). "Without anti-semitism, Nazism would have been inconceivable, both as ideology and as catalyst of the emotions". During the war, "the physical removal of the Jews went largely unremarked because the Germans had long since removed them from their hearts and minds" (op.cit. 466). "There is a great deal of morbid sexuality in Hitler's ravings about the Jews. (..) [In *Mein Kampf*] Hitler can write of the 'nightmare vision of the seduction of hundreds of thousands of girls by repulsive, crooked-legged Jewish bastards'". (Shirer, W 1968:43)

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The Nazi case is an extreme example of how mobbing and victimisation processes can be turned into strategic principles of the state. In less extreme and extensive forms,

however, such processes can be found also in contemporary society. It should be noted that this is still a surprisingly understudied area, especially as regards the societal background and impact of mobbing processes.<sup>6</sup>

In the present perspective, some main traits of these victimisation processes can be identified, concerning their main gender-related dynamics. These traits include:

- **(A) There is a context characterised either by a build-up of a masculinities hierarchy on unstable ground, and / or by a patriarchal order which is vulnerable or endangered.**
- **(B) There is a major component of capital-like, commercial-type power, and often a shift where the hierarchy (A) must find some grounding in this terrain if it is to survive. While the hierarchy (A) is substantial and concrete, the process associated with (B) is transubstantial and abstract, and also often anxiety-inducing.**
- **(C) There is an attempt to 'resubstantiate' (B), to create a bridge between (A) and (B), to keep (B) under the control of (A), or redress the problems of (B) through (A). The Nazi ideology of 'Blut and Boden' is an example of this resubstantiation effort. It often has the character of a *reaction* against the perceived and threatening developments associated with (B). The "mythic core" of fascism discussed by Roger Griffin (1995) is an example: there is the perception that the social body is diseased, and that the plague must be driven out.**
- **(D) The attempted reestablishment and resubstantiation of (A) in the face of (B) are brought about by a pinpointing of targets of anxiety, thereby transforming the anxiety into aggression. The result is a victimisation process that combines a wide range of motives among the victimisers – avoidance of anxiety, increased feeling of power and worthiness, a yearning to be part of a larger collective, etc. Unlike 'ordinary' dominance where the existence of the dominated is presupposed as part of a dyadic relationship, the victimisation process is 'cannibalistic' and triadic; the power order between dominant and dominated is rearranged on the basis of a third element which in principle is exterminated.**

Many conflicts of our society have *some aspects* of this triadic victimisation pattern. Surveys and qualitative studies have uncovered mobbing and victimisation elements among adults as well as youth and children, especially in connection with work place conflicts (Leymann, H 1990; Kile, S 1990; Roland, E 1987). Family dynamics also often have victimisation aspects, as was emphasised by the radical 'anti-psychiatrists' Ronald Laing, David Cooper and others in the 1960s already ('black sheep of the family'). The 'muscle hierarchy' (Norw. '*styrkevelde*': Holter 1989a:132) among boys that serves as a kind of bridge to the adult world hierarchy may be seen in light of the traits outlined above. Physical strength is emphasised precisely since it is 'substantial', beyond doubt. Later, as school results and other adult-world criteria come to count for more than muscles, there is a small-scale version of the 'turnaround of power' described in a historical perspective in the last chapter. Yet this bridging attempt by itself does not engender victimisation; rather, the latter seems to be a typical result when the bridge breaks down, or does not work for some reason or other. At that point, an order which is 'resubstantiating' in a quite different and more negative sense is imposed, with a main element of repressive devalorisation – *as if* it was possible, for example, to turn back to an order of 'race'. The typical recruitment base of current racist and neo-Nazi movements, young men extending the muscle hierarchy into a violence hierarchy, is one component of this picture.

We would expect the resubstantiation to target or cluster especially around the overt symbols of transubstantiation – and that does indeed seem to be the case. *Money* and everything associated with it become main points of conflict – not just in the everyday

sense of class (etc.) society, but in a much more pronounced way. It is no coincidence, in this perspective, that school problems and mathematics problems often go together. Nor is it a coincidence that family breakdowns commonly turn to fights about money, much more than is 'rational' in any sense. For many divorcing spouses there is an emotional shock when the substantial order of the private world breaks down, with a resulting chaos that can be stabilised by transforming it into a money conflict. We can probably find many examples also on a wider, societal scale, like the *extra* embitterment caused by the debt put upon Germany after the First World War, a debt that became *the* symbol of unbearable disgrace and the need for Nazi-type 'renewal'.

## Unresolved questions

Whatever else, the above analysis shows that the differentiation principle should be seen as a *contradiction*, and it may well be that further studies of the gender as capital and capital as gendered connection will revise some of the preceding analysis. As the differentiation principle is 'fulfilled', it also seems to become more precarious and unstable. There is more involved, here, than the fragile and tensioned-filled character of patriarchal orders beneath their surface, a trait that can be found in most epochs. By transcending the existing feudalised commodity economy, capitalism did not only extend an otherness field that already existed. Nor did it only create a new one, or a split, or a 'use value pyramid' that did not exist before.

In a work quoted initially, Slavoj Žižek (1995:51) makes short work of the 'materialist' evolutionism attributed to Marx, where the forces of production simply break through inhibiting relations of production. Then he says:

"Marx himself is of course far from such a simplistic evolutionary idea. If we need convincing of this, we have only to look at the passages in *Capital* where he deals with the relation between formal and real subsumption of the process of production under capital: the formal subsumption *precedes* the real one; that is, capital first subsumes the process of production as it is found (..) and only subsequently does it change the productive forces step by step".

This was discussed in chapter 11, where I found a similar pattern regarding patriarchy – which did not start out from a reproductive gender arrangement comparable to what existed later, but started with what was at hand, a fairly egalitarian arrangement.

Žižek's analysis also highlights the 'feminine-implicative' aspects of capitalisation: not quite a case of male sweat congealing into money, not the so-called 'realist' historical picture so often given of how capitalism emerged, where the forces of production (we hear the men hammering in the background) gradually were laying the basis for a new society. There was a *shift of sides*, and this was the trauma, I think, the basic reason why the figure of Woman could only come into modernity *as* Witch, *as* suspect of absolute evil. This, and not Rousseau, was what created the basis for modern femininity. Žižek might have mentioned that the first 'formal' stage of affairs commonly seems to be introduced through violence.

Another pattern that gains a larger significance in this context is the well-known fact, as seen in isolation, that early industry favoured women. In the English context where

capital first got free reign (and, as argued, in some important senses also the *only* such context), we find a notable dual repulsion – men resisting factories, factories resisting men. Both tendencies can be observed. The idea that this first attraction of women was not simply a question of cheaper labour, but also of a kind of energy that was seen as more fit for factory work is borne out by qualitative reports from the early factories in the UK, US and elsewhere. Why this fitness? A thought attributed to Christine Delphy in the early 1980s domestic labour debate seems relevant here: women do not even think themselves worthy of being exploited. Women in the factories became a problem for male authorities, yet even if conditions were sometimes extreme, most of the women themselves experienced an improvement.

In a new history of American manhood, Michael Kimmel (1996:30,35) describes the old-time fraternal and gradually more masculinistic reactions of artisans and craftsmen against the new factory system. "These organisations' rhetoric was saturated with equations of autonomy and manhood. Loss of autonomy was equated with emasculation; economic dependency on wages paid by an employer was equivalent to social and sexual dependency." Interestingly, Kimmel also connects this reactive formation to subsequent victimisation of the native Americans. The "fears of dependency" were projected "onto the Indians, who were cast as the passive, helpless children that the Heroic Artisan was attempting to avoid becoming. A simple pattern emerged: Appropriate their land and abridge their freedom because you see them as passive and helpless. This makes them passive and helpless, which in turn allows you to justify the whole thing by referring to the passivity and helplessness you have just created."

I think that the most significant trait in this picture is the fact that dependency on capital was associated with sexual dependency, implicating *capital* as *feminine*. Likewise, the *sexual* component may have been even more important in the background than the age agenda regarding the native Americans. Surely it is more than a coincidence that the world's foremost capitalist culture is also one where the *violence* connection of masculinity is very much in evidence, along with a constant preoccupation with potency and continuous mass commercial culture attempts to 'resubstantiate' male potency by tying sexuality to violence.

Inquiring into the meanings of paternity, Mary O'Brien (1981:177) was on the right track when she wrote: "Marx is able to see the economic realm as the sole progenitor of consciousness precisely because of capital's capacity to *disguise itself as progenitor*." But then she goes on to argue that Marx only saw capital as a creator of fetishism on this account, which is not quite true; in fact, in *this* terrain, O'Brien is the one who draws Marx back into the more 'solid' materialist position that she otherwise criticises! I find this highly indicative. Perhaps the paternal and masculine connection of capital is indeed a fetish, a disguise of *very* different connections? We should not think of *capital* as weak, should we? There is an 'owning up', or something like it, which is not done here, but projected instead. I associate to the common radical 1970s sentiment of 'living under' the power of capital. There was an attribution of absolute power (and potency) that was very much in evidence in the radical thinking of that period, later surviving in some feminist traditions regarding men or patriarchy; an absoluteness that subsequently justified unethical and regressive practices. First capital, then men – an absolute issue or 'back bone reflex', and so when this will not work, the result is often full conformity, a breakdown of any real critique. I find it

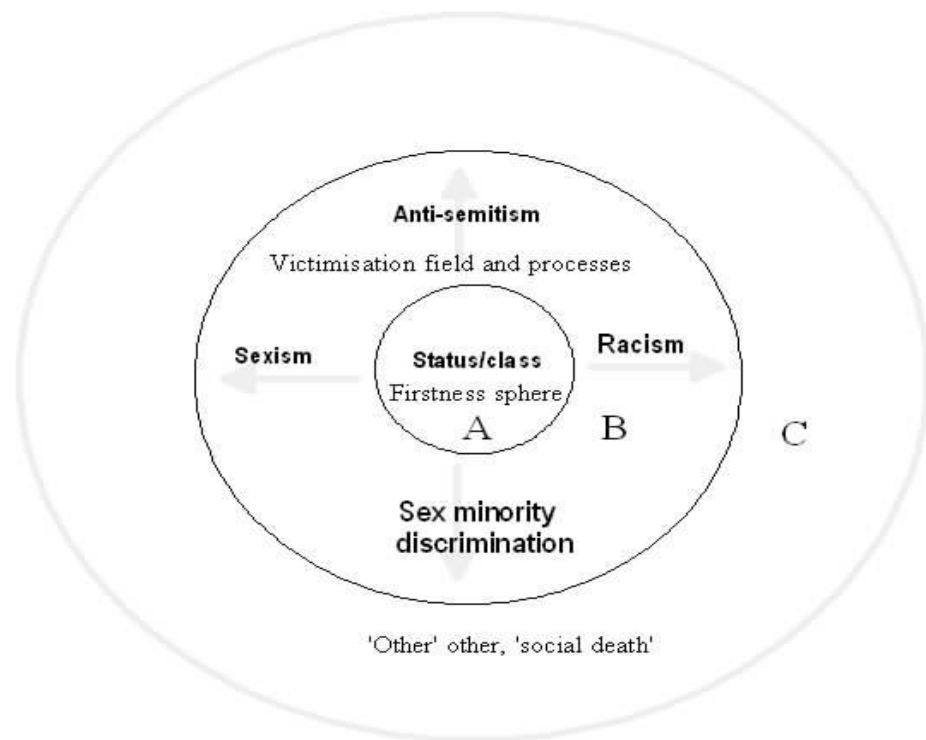
significant that many of those who actually *experience* what it means to 'live under' express something very different from these sentiments. In Norway, those who had *not* suffered from the Nazi occupation were notably more revenge-minded and involved in the subsequent victimisation process than those who had. A more recent example is Nelson Mandela (1995:751), who after having spent more than twenty years in prison for his views, writes: "I know as well as I know anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed."

O'Brien is right, I think, in the sense that capital power is not automatically patriarchal power. Not only must it 'disguise' itself as progenitor, there is indeed a deeper uncertainty involved. As a first step, we may recognise that this uncertainty does have some resemblance to the uncertainty that has been connected to fatherhood through the ages ('that man is wise, who knows he is the father'). Yet I do not believe that the uncertainty and the 'feminine-implicative' aspects of capital should be regarded as 'concrete' in this sense. I

The turnaround of power does not only involve a patriarchal order being 'upset' in some specific concrete respect, like the traditional arrangements connected to paternity. Nor does it simply involve the wider process described by Parsons and many others, a shift from relations of ascription to those of achievement. It is not 'concrete' in this sense. Already in 1941, Sohn-Rethel's (1975b:128, my emphasis) wrote that the discussion about the class origin of Nazi ideology was mainly meaningless, precisely because it did not have any, it was *abstract* and could be found in all classes: "National socialism is still only movement, onslaught, advance and ideology. If this is broken, it is expelled into empty space. Since it embraces all strata and classes, and is not identical with any of these, *it is not sociologically embodied* in any part of the societal structure." What was brought out here, in extreme consequence, was not 'substantial', but 'transubstantial'.

The main traits of victimisation processes that were outlined above can be seen in light of the model of 'authorisation' and 'marginalisation' discussed earlier, in relation to Connell's theory of the masculinities hierarchy (at the end of chapter 12). There we saw that the 'inner sphere' conflicts between different masculinities are associated with background processes at the 'outer' perimeter of the system, processes that define what is socially visible in the system ('authorised') and what is not ('marginalised'). The following figure gives an outline of how this perspective can be combined with a view of victimisation.

### **Main 20th. century 'power problems'**



The masculinities hierarchy mainly belongs in the firstness sphere in the model. This is the inner circle. Throughout the 20th. century, the limit of this circle has corresponded to the officially accepted agenda of politics and the 'table of economy' discussed in chapter 13. However, quite a few processes, including racism, sexism, sexual minority discrimination, anti-semitism and other forms of discrimination, lead *out* of this inner field, towards the middle and outer perimeter.

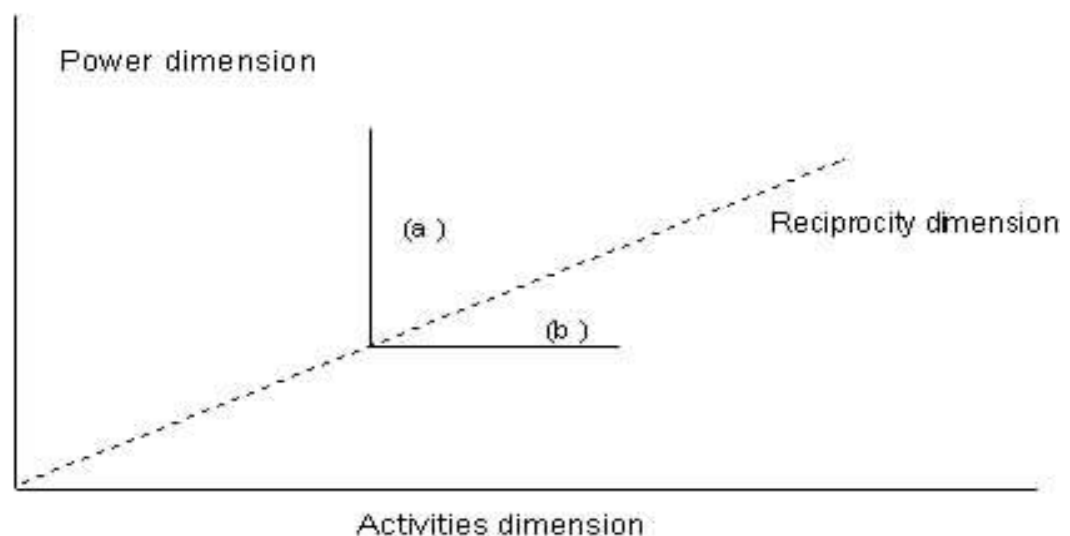
A main point, related to what has been said above, is to understand the continuously *shifting* configurations within this model. There are three main positions: that of the One (A), the Other (B), and the Absolute or 'Other other' (C). The absolute other is in principle below the horizon of the social, or 'socially dead' as Orlando Patterson (1982) argues. In victimisation processes, the three positions are expressed as the victimisers, the public, and the victims. All groups positioned in (B) are also *potentially* expelled to the outer (C) area, and in victimising systems, their own position in (B) depends on their *participation* in the expulsion of other groups to (C). For example, the Jews became absolute others in Nazi Germany, with women as well as other groups in (B) as participants, or at least as a silently accepting public. Today, the poor in the Third World, or black and coloured people, become absolute others in some contexts, while women become absolute others in other contexts. In this perspective, some main research tasks emerge. There is a need to identify the processes that lead to an *increase* in the victimisation pressure; to identify the dynamics that lead to the creation of *specific* targets, and the background relationship to *other* potential target groups.

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Possibly, the present issues lead beyond the reciprocity dimension as discussed so far. Perhaps the whole social forms framework can be shown to be misleading on this

account, while other objections<sup>7</sup> are less serious. Whatever the reciprocity form, there is a dimension of subjectivity, or what we approach in terms of subjectivity, which is not sufficiently addressed in a social forms framework. Arguing that different 'verbs' connect to different kinds of thinking may be all very well, but perhaps only as one step towards ceasing to 'verbalise' in this manner at all, for as long as we do so, there remains a sense in which reality is forced through a filter, a sieve. This may not mean that the framework is irrelevant, but that it must itself become more 'continuously reconfigurable' in order to grasp the kinds of processes just discussed.

### Exploring social forms



This figure illustrates the discussion of multiple analysis spaces at the end of chapter 7. Instead of assuming 'power' and 'activities' as invariant dimensions, there is the assumption that shifts on the reciprocity dimension may create more radically different circumstances, where other dimensions become more relevant – (a) and (b) in the figure. For example, the early Greek setting discussed in chapter 11 might perhaps be better approached by using 'sacralisation' as the vertical dimension and 'heroisation' as the horizontal one. – Similarly, we may consider the possibility that radically different meanings of reciprocity or interdependency is involved at each position on the power / activity dimensions.

The victimisation model presented in the last figure can also be conceived as a bird's eye view of a pyramidal or cone-like social structure, with the inner 'firstness' area at the top. In the first half of our century, a main conflict concerned the admittance of working class political representation and the issues of social class into this inner sphere. Gradually, the processes surrounding the inner sphere have become more manifest on the societal agenda. There is a long-term democratisation process in the background of various concrete issues, from a situation in the beginning of our century where democracy was a very secluded, formal and limited affair in a small inner circle.

The danger of the commodity and the upsetting quality of capital may be connected to these long-term trends. Victimisation processes basically signify a lack of democracy,

a compensatory form where the problems of being 'other' is not solved or given true expression but is instead shifted downwards in the hierarchy towards some third group which is expelled from the social horizon. When historians and social researchers in a couple of generations from now look back at our century, I believe that they will describe the democratisation process as still very limited, still quite 'thin' and formal in real-life terms, and interpret our contemporary problems from that angle.

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<sup>1</sup> Julius Carlebach has argued that there is a 'forgotten connection' here (cf. Borchgrevink & Holter 1995:15). For recent research see Frumer & Merchant 1994, also Stein, H 1994, who argues that "ironically, anti-Semitism is a way non-Jews protect themselves from the vulnerability of realising that, at some level, we are all Jews."

<sup>2</sup> I have not seen Marx discuss the transubstantiation concept as different from its Catholic meaning. The Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation was one main issue of the Protestant revolt, to the extent that peace attempts broke down due to disagreements at this point. In England and elsewhere, Catholic authorities of the 16th. century instituted "savage penalties for denial of transubstantiation", while the concept at this time or slightly later became incorporated in the "uppermost forms of doctrine" in the Orthodox church in the east (Chadwick, O 1982:115,356-7). – Marx (1973:308; cf. 1974:216) writes: "Therefore, those who demonstrate that the productive force ascribed to capital is a *displacement* [Verrückung], a *transposition of the productive force* of labour, forget precisely that capital is essentially this *displacement, this transposition*, and that wage labour as such presupposes capital, so that, from its standpoint as well, capital is this *transubstantiation; the necessary process of positing its own powers as alien* to the worker."

<sup>3</sup> Mobbing: 'to attack violently or riotously', related to mob in the sense of 'a crowd bent on or engaged in lawless violence' (Webster); in current research, mugging is sometimes used with the same meaning.

<sup>4</sup> Himmler, like other members of the Nazi party hierarchy, was a convert to Ernst Haeckel's religious teachings (the Monist League), based on a social Darwinistic version of scientific materialism. It asserted the superiority of the German race, with an evolutionary scale that placed Germans on top and blacks at the bottom, excluding Jews completely (Walton, R 1994).

<sup>5</sup> This is not a singular case. One could add the terrors of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, again associated with an attempt to do away with the absolute evils of money.

<sup>6</sup> For example, *Sociofile* has only 14 references to "victimisation" and 2 to "mobbing", as compared to 18000 to "class" and 400 to "class conflict".

<sup>7</sup> Objections like: the activity focus; the presupposition of reality where there is not much of it, as if a 'gift form' existed on par with the commodity form; the tendency to rewrite these other forms into the commodity form; the lack of a clear analysis of interrelationships between the different forms, etc.

## Appendix 1 On Marx's value form analysis

## A blind spot

"The very analysis of the commodity – such as it is found at the very beginning of *Capital* – has not exactly met with great success among Marxists. One cannot exactly say that it has been understood. The proof is the silence in which the theory of fetishism or alienation has always been enshrouded from Engels onwards." (Colletti 1979:281).

The denial of the commodity relation, especially its human implications, is the curious blind spot of Marxism. I believe it may be regarded also as a 'symptom' in the psychodynamic sense, a matter of the 'collective unconsciousness' connected to basic questions of identity and social recognition. It is related to the 'ledge' aspect of gender and individuality, in which the individual emerges distinct from an 'it', a commodity to be used, through being 'masculine' or 'feminine'. It is a complex symptom or syndrome to be treated in its own right. What is at stake is an investigation of the code of the commodity, versus a closure of such investigation through the code itself.

"Nothing is more alien to a normative conception of the theory of value than the first pages of *Capital* (the 'analysis' of exchange value) or, an even better example, the arguments about the value form, which invite us to scrutinise the relation of equality constituted by a relation of exchange in order to disengage its implicit significances. The language of commodities is hardly clear, but it is a language all the same." Catherine Colliot-Thélène (1979:391) argues. It was difficult also for Marx, who himself "succumbed in several instances to the dangers of reification, empiricism, and determinism, rendering his epistemology as a materialist metaphysics" (Clain, O 1983).

## Preliminary definition

A value form, in the conventional definition, is a form of commodity exchange. The value form framework of Marx consists of models of four forms. The *first, simple or elementary* form is gift-like in the sense of two commodity owners being placed in a singular relationship of reciprocity. The next two are gradually more 'economic' models of *extended* and *total* exchange, leading to the fourth, *monetary* form, which presupposes the establishment of *money* and money prices throughout the system, and thereby the establishment of the 'economic' as distinct social sphere as linked to a state 'political' system.

The disengagement of implicit significances in value forms leads to transfer, transference and reciprocity analysis, according to the social form framework. Generally, Marx and other analysts here stands at the border of sociology, economy and other social sciences, the language of commodities having parts of its vocabulary in each. I shall argue that Marx's and Weber's sociological analyses of exchange forms are often similar; although Weber is not a good guide to the economic parts of the argument, he often developed and emphasised the sociological framework of exchange, as well as its power content:

"An exchange economy involves a complete network of contractual relationships, each of which originates in a deliberately planned process of acquisition of power of control and disposal" (Weber 1964:163).

Marx's value forms are ideal forms in the sense of a general historical typology, and I shall show that it is best disentangled from Hegel's philosophy, even if the latter helped Marx formulate his type models. In substance, Marx viewed commodity exchange as an ideal (transferential, psychological, etc.) process as well as a practical process, to the extent that practices in it often depend of ideal measures.

## The value form as an identity nexus

In the conventional assessment, the value forms model is about the background of money. It is difficult to understand and furthermore mainly concerned with a somewhat technical aspect of economy. In a less conventional interpretation, yet one which has good support in Marx' writings, the value forms analysis instead mainly represents an attempt to bring Hegel's analysis of the master and slave dialectic further, to bring it into the terrain of critical-economic study (which today would also be translated as 'sociological study').

The ultimate dilemma of this dialectic, the death of the One due to the killing of the Other, is well known: "complete domination of the other means that the master may find himself alone because the other has ceased to be a person at all" (Hartsock, N 1983:176 referring Jessica Benjamin's study of the sadist-sexualist novel *The Story of O*, basically a novel which operates on an *as-if* level, a world with one hundred percent market sexualisation *plus* a one hundred percent authoritarian frame). The bourgeois revolution had failed in its equality claim; the master / slave dialectic had been recreated rather than abolished, and recreated in a new historical terrain, one of surface equality, *as* a market dialectic. Marx more or less correctly assumed that this new terrain had some relevancy through history, that its own genesis must be sought even in very early changes. His starting point, then, for understanding the commodity form, was capitalism, and so there is also a tendency to ascribe capitalist realities to the earlier form, mainly through tacit assumption (for example of individuals living mainly *off* their exchange, being isolated in other ways), though Marx was also to an extent aware of this danger. His main form of argument was, if the master / slave dialectic survives, if capitalism undoubtedly shows that it can survive on its own in the new and supposedly equal-for-all economical terrain, it also shows, in the background, an economic terrain that also existed earlier, in pre-capitalist society; in that sense, capitalism furnished the basis of 'economic science' as distinct from its own ideology.

How can two parties meet as free agents in exchange, under the conditions of commodity economy, and still remain master and slave? How did the exchange logic develop historically, as part of master / slave and other more openly authoritarian societies? What are the distinctive features of this logic, and its main lines of development? This is the object of Marx's value forms models.

In modern terms, the whole analysis is couched in a highly generalised (but not transhistorical) probability space. It concerns the probable development of positions in

exchange relationships, positions that are not use-value-specific, i.e. just the specific positions of some goods, or some aspects of people, like strength or ingenuity, but *organisers* or 'deep structures' of the former. A value form is a *use value organiser* and constraint pattern, i.e. a meta-level of organisation, including a meta-level of symbolic and imaginary organisation. A value form may involve different products or use values and yet have the same main rules, whereas one concrete pattern of activity and transfer of activity results may be regulated on the meta-level by different value forms, or different combinations of value forms, in different contexts.

Value forms analysis is a meeting point of sociology and economy, but psychology (and law, etc.) appear there also. As seen from the angle of the economic agent, it is a framework that concerns *social identity*. Further, it is situated beyond 'the critical position' as usually defined today, and, especially, beyond the negations of value *as such* – alienation / authenticity, value / other, which is the common idea of Marx's theory in among many people.

It is true that something might be said for 'dialectics', studying the value forms analysis; Marx certainly made heavy use of Hegelian logic. Yet the primary reason was not Hegel's excellency but the new terrain he ventured into and the challenges he faced in a situation where, for example, sociology mainly was still unknown. There can be little doubt that the models of the analysis are based on broad empirical interpretations. They are sociological-historical models, and make sense given such considerations, even if the level of generalisation is very high-level or 'thin'. Hegelian logic helped Marx follow his objective, yet it also means the dynamics of the models and especially their succession is not really satisfyingly discussed. It is not true, for example, that extended exchange "becomes" (is a process of being / nothing / becoming) total exchange in the Hegelian sense, but rather of wide historical and sociological analysis which is indeed *implicated* by the framework, yet not fully brought in by Marx. Basically, however, the logics of his model survives without Hegel. It simply concerns the main probable lines of development of the commodity form, with a lot of question marks and grey areas.

## Marx as early Weberian

One primary point of interest in the value forms analysis of Marx', therefore, is its sociological character, indeed major implications for sociology as a whole. This is not, however, immediately evident; not only is the analysis itself presented in somewhat 'hieroglyphic' ways, as a logical-dialectical operation (even something of a 'show-off'), it is also both condensed and draft-like.

Read on a wider level, as a message to science, it parallels Freud's sketches of the instances of the personality in more than one way. For both, it constituted a kernel part of their theory, yet it was also a troublesome spot, not just by itself, but rather because it cast doubts and *implicitly reoriented* other parts of the theory. Like Freud's personality configuration, the value form configuration of Marx was subject to its author's self-rejection, worry, and constant changes. In the latter case, this was mainly discussed as a problem of presentation, yet Marx was aware that there were major conceptual challenges involved that bore main responsibility for the how-to-present-it-qualms, resulting in several versions of the analysis. The forms analysis and the analysis of the instances can both be regarded as *discoveries* in the sense of creating

an 'abrupt or spontaneous relativisation', what was supposed solid was now solid no more; both created the 'shock effect' that typically occur with important discoveries. Through the pluralistic, qualitative framework which was necessitated in Marx's project of value forms analysis, even if only halfway brought out there, commodities emerge as *institutional, sociological entities*, not just as self-propelled *economic objects*. Transfers and activities, and most similar categories, including the more commodity-specific concepts like 'alienation', are held to be *modified* by the social engagement that is summarised under the heading 'value form'.

The value forms analysis therefore also points to a concept of economic action which is far closer to Max Weber than to most of the ideologised conceptions of Marx, with their ideas of the proletariat as superior production force, etc. Weber's concept was interpretational, concerned with the subjective meaning, and although value forms analysis is not 'idealistically' oriented, this is *a priori* no less important in it than any 'materialist' assumption. Weber divided economic action into economic action proper plus economically oriented action, allowing the existence of indirect economic patterning, which is highly relevant in terms of value forms analysis, where, for example, a monetary relationship may be mediated by an elementary / dyadic relationship. Further, it accords with Weber's statement that "it is essential to include the criterion of power of control and disposal (*Verfügungsgewalt*) in the sociological concept of economical action" (Weber, M 1964:163). This does not mean, as Parsons says in a note (op.cit. 163:n7) that 'economic action depends on a system of property relations', for what Weber emphasised, and as implied by Marx' analysis, was the internal relation, the fact that economic activity like wage labour *is* also a power relationship and a property relationship. In Marx' terms, labour is a power and disciplinary process as part of the *valorization* process, the process that posits a thing as a value, distinct from the *production* process that creates these things. Yet this distinction is itself form-dependent.

Value forms analysis is therefore also more in line with Weber's 'sociologistic' price theory: "Money prices are the product of *conflicts of interest and compromises* [in our words: the outcome of agents acting in a context of different value forms]; they thus result from systems of power relationships." (1964:211). "Money, even as a unit of account, is essentially significant as a means of quantitative expression of estimated opportunities and risks met in the pursuit of competitive advantages." (1964:211). This is Weber's way of rephrasing Marx; capitalist prices are determined not by individual commodities etc. but by agents acting on the basis of *societal* capital, a system of 'competitive advantages' for owners; this in the key of his price-determinating *economic action*. Pricing systems may exist also outside the monetary value form, and therefore Weber's term 'money prices' is correct. The system of power relationships, including the "system of imperatively co-ordinated relationships" necessary for capital (ibid.), is *part of the economic*, even if also more or less differentiated within it as a specifically *economic-political* kind of political structure, the one that became associated with 'politics as such' in modernity – different, for example, from the feudal blood tie and alliance politics.

## The diversity of value forms

Like the distinction of valorisation versus production, this differentiation of power and activity itself *depends on the value form context*. It is fully brought out in some

contexts, only hazily and implied in others, and brought out also in very different ways in different contexts. As a first approach, we may say that "politics" is hardly differentiated in the dyadic elementary relation, but it is implied, more and more, in more complex value forms, for example in the "monopolising of the series" and the establishment of a monetary commodity throughout the market. Strategies of control and resistance have different contextual bases in different value forms.

We may say, then, that a value form is a type of commodity transfer, and that value forms analysis concerns its subtypes. Value forms have some common ground, and yet what is mainly brought out in the analysis is that they may be extremely *diverse*, ranging from one-to-one exchange to complex exchange systems, from personal barter to global finance deals.

This variation allows value propositions to be better sociologically specified, nuanced, operationalised and tested. We can study, for example, not only whether "alienation" and "communicational barriers" are associated in modern work organisations, but also the more specific *forms* of alienation and different problems of communication, like "somatisation", including the empathic or emotional 'levels'.

It is true that the value forms analysis, from Marx' hand, only exists in a condensed fashion, hidden away as part of a somewhat technical economic argument of understanding the mechanisms creating money. Yet it is a more nuanced alternative than the well-known kind of value analysis that instead *ends* at the commodity as such vis-à-vis 'other', for example in the thesis that *modern society is characterised by a contradiction between 'value' and 'use value' patterns*. This conventional alternative operates within the critical position, and hinders further understanding of the multidimensional reality of commodities; value has only existed as *socially formed* value, and use value only as socially formed use value.

## The status of the value forms theory in Marx' general framework

Perhaps the value forms analysis was a bit more formed by Marx' unconscious than other parts of his theory. What is obvious is that it was placed very far indeed from the centre of consciousness by Marxists thereafter. For all practical purposes this was what Marxism was *not* about, as if distinguishing the modes of the commodity would in tendency *deconstruct* Marxism's own ideological claims – which is true; those who went into this alley, regularly fell out of favour of Marxist power holders. Yet this remains puzzling, since after all commodities as the subject to be divided, analysed, was specified right at the start of Marxism's main work, and so one would think the division model would be ABC, and not an area of silence.

The short and condensed character of the value forms text may lead to the conclusion it is peripheral, yet there is no serious doubt that the forms analysis, leading into the form analysis of capital in its specificity, became a central matter for Marx, *the* central matter if we disregard the political context. In Marx texts, any question of 'understanding the form' is apt to bring out a writer who is, basically, *curious*, even if this curiosity was all too often restricted and brought into the parade of the logical

model. The importance of value forms is attested and partly directly referenced throughout his works from the mid-1850s onwards (ref).

The value forms text also had a unusual troubled fate in Marx' own hands and in Engels. In the later editions of *Capital*, the value forms analysis had been shortened down to an introduction to money, and the presentation is partly held in an abstractist language: "Objects in themselves are external to man, and consequently alienable by him", as if a general proposition of societies, rather than mainly a commodity context statement (1972:91). The earlier, first edition version, is longer, more informative, and more clearly sociological.

In all versions the value forms analysis, Marx initially presents his problem as one of understanding the development of money, the monetary form of value. We may say, today, that this was a remarkably narrow way of stating it. What can be traced, however, is how his attempts to understanding the genesis of money required a *qualitative relativisation* of value, a distinction between *value* and *exchange value*, where 'exchange value' is value *realised* in a social context, and further, the distinction into *forms of exchange value*.

## The intersection of gifts and commodities

Through the first, incidental, or elementary form of exchange, especially, the value forms framework stretches into a terrain where it meets *other*, non-commodity forms, primarily gift transaction. In general we may say that commodities had three main levels of abstraction in Marx' view – a level of elementary exchange, a level of *money*, and, further, the level where monetary abstraction develop into capital abstraction.. It may be argued that we also find singular and serial abstraction forms, and possibly other types. In terms of commonality (cf. Appendix 2), Marx generally distinguish between the kind of classificatory commonality established by evolving value forms, as against the relational commonality patterns of non-commodity relations.

There are many reasons why the sociological importance was not clear to Marx, most of them related to the time the analysis was created, to the fact that sociology itself mainly did not exist, etc. Today we can argue that his model, developed in his most fruitful study period at the British Library, preparing *Grundrisse* and, then, *Capital*, with its heading 'forms of value' was an opening towards a sociological, anthropological and psychological orientation or *reconnection* of economic theory; at Marx' time, mostly these sciences did not exist, and economy itself was more open and holistic. Instead of presenting sociological circumstances to the reader, discussing them, Marx stumbles through them, sometimes with a sense of short-temperedness (when do I get to *capital*, my pressing subject), as something to be dealt with later.

## Value forms as historical and logical types

As mentioned, Marx value forms analysis is best presented in the first edition of *Capital* 1 (Marx 1975), yet this presentation was later revised, shortened by half or so, and also rephrased somewhat. It seems three versions were written, a first condensed version or outline, then the more expanded version the first edition, and finally the

later re-condensed text which became the 'officially' (by Engels) endorsed version of *Capital*. We know Marx found this part harder to write than anything else in *Capital*, and we may interpret this as a result that most of sociology, anthropology and psychology was unknown or in the making at the time. Further, this 'qualitative' view may have been difficult to hold on to also for more immediate, psycho-social reasons, as implied above. A third problem, I shall argue, was the manner in which Marx' sought to solve the two first, through the partial mysticism of Hegelian logic.

Value forms, despite what Marx may himself have believed, since in a letter he praises *Logic* for being able to create the model, clearly remain *empirical* patterns for Marx; condensed, but broad historical developments related to the institutionalisation of commodity economy. His division of four rather than three or five value forms (see the model below) is arrived at mainly by assuming certain empirical patterns developed as 'common benefits' to commodity institution participants. They have no special relation to Hegel and do not derive from some inner movement of the system or of the materialised Hegelian concept. When Marx talk of the inner laws of value as analysed through the value forms, we should reverse the real direction: value forms summarises empirical economical activity, and in *some* of these empirical contexts, the value form relations *contribute* or 'found' general concepts like 'value'.

Put simply, an elementary value form society will tend to 'know' about value in the dyadic, poly-relational and not 'purely quantitative' sense, since the dyadic, elementary relations are the *real-life 'laboratory'* in which such concepts are continually tested and practically validated. An extended form society will know value also in the extended, serial sense; in the total form, value concepts become totalised, and in the monetary form monetarised, until value as such emerged in the universal claim of capital, and, later, labour *as such* as its twin child.

There is no necessary implication of  $A = B$ , the elementary form, that there is a 'next step'  $A = B, C$ , the extended form, with Hegelian development as a hand at the back of it all – since we might as well have, for example, a group,  $A-B-C$ , an alliance,  $A-B = C$ , or some other configuration. The Hegelian modelling instead is adapted, and clearly taken away from its original terrain, in order to function as broad categorisation and shorthand notation for the historical movement of exchange-oriented relations and institutions.

When the relationship between logic and history in the value forms scheme is discussed, it is implied that there is a special logic to it, which I believe there is not, apart from the peculiarity of the commodity form, i.e. apart from the way anything has its own particularity and thus a 'logic'. The value form connections are post-Hegelian, not really anti-Hegelian (turned on head, etc.) but *models* in the sociological sense. As mentioned, they were based primarily on Marx'extensive reading of social, economic and historical works in the 1850s, including his studies of antiquity (Padgug 1975; de Ste Croix 1985). They are shorthand for a broader theoretical presentation of main lines of commodity form development as a 'species' within the social universe, which Marx never attempted to do, focusing instead on what he perceived as the main contemporary problem, the formation of commodities as capital, and capital's dominance over the workers.

## The four forms

Instead of a full exposition, we get a condensed logical model, with commodity owners who seem to "happen" to be in this or that position.

First, therefore

(1) the *elementary*, simple or incidental form of value happens. Marx presented this form in terms of one commodity positioned as exchangeable (=) with one other commodity,

A commodity z = B commodity y.

Next

(2) the *extended* form

x1 commodity A = y1 commodity B, or y2 commodity C, or y3 of D, E, F etc. in a series, like the seriality of Sartre.

Then

(3) the common (allgemein) or *total* form where (2) is turned around,

y's of commodity B,C,D, E etc. = x of one particular commodity, A

Leading to

(4) the *monetary* or price form of value, where

y's of commodities B, C, D, E (price series) = x of money

Each of the four value forms have two distinct *positions*, *relative* position and *equivalent* position, which are respectively to the left and the right of the equal sign in his notation. This division is of main importance in his analysis; he calls each position a "form", so that in

A = B

the commodity A "is on relative form" while the commodity B is on equivalent form.

I believe 'position' is equally true and a less confusing word in this context of a division common to various value forms. Yet an important point, that the good is also socially identified through this positioning, is thereby also implied. The relative form of A is the one *created* by being in a position where value is to be expressed, an initiator position, an active position vis-à-vis the other. Yet it is created in a zigzag manner, by first placing B in a position of service, as a mirror of its own value, in the equivalent form, a being whose *use value* expresses the value of the first being. This process is called *reification*, and its cognitive result Marx called *fetishism*. In the first, elementary dyadic relation, A and B may change position without any change to the model; in later forms, this is not the case. Money, and capital, he primarily explains as

a development of the *equivalent form*, i.e. the right-hand side of the model notation above.

Whatever the problems of this model, it clearly indicates that commodities do not exist as such, but in quite different forms, where they and their owners are related to others in fairly different ways. Hegel alone, as noted, would not have sufficed for making such a model, even if the turning around of (2) to (3) has some dialectical resemblance. Sociology is hidden in the 'practical circumstances' that Marx introduces in order to explain why exchange developed; circumstances make exchangers select one rather than several equivalents, gold rather than wood, etc.

## Definition of the social individual

What is not clearly said by Marx, is that the model introduces a typology of the identification of the individual agent vis-à-vis society. This is hidden away as implication and brought out only now and then, as in his discussion of the elementary relation with only two commodities, emphasising how the relative commodity becomes 'like' the equivalent, and acquires a greater social being and meta-sensuality in its connection to the equivalent. In a society in which wood is regularly traded for iron, the wood becomes 'iron-like' and the iron becomes 'wood-like', and these are traits that the commodity seems to retain also outside this connection. The 'classic' case here is that of gold, which appears as money also outside monetary connections. In the dyadic relationship, the sensuality of the equivalent commodity functions as expression of the value of the first, relative position commodity.

It should be clear, on this background, that sociological interpretations based on value forms analysis requires an understanding of its communicational and identity-creative aspects, as well as an understanding that the value forms framework does in fact go further, qualitatively speaking, than fits the conventional value-as-such quantitative view. We may safely say that most of Marx' own categories remain un-theorised in terms of a more qualitative and sociological conception.

As mentioned, we do not meet *alienation* or *reification* etc. as such; there is instead the implication that each value form, and combination of forms (see below), will create very different forms of alienation and reification, so different that they may no longer deserve the same name. Alienation may be discussed as one form of 'offset' from objectivated labour, comparable to some aspects of 'obligation' in gift relations. Alienation differs in kind within different value forms, and extends into other, non-commodity transfer processes especially through the 'elementary' value form, which emerges as the larger limit of the commodity form vis-à-vis other forms. We may therefore, for example, conceive of redistributive systems that also have exchange-related positions, or are in fact redistributive mainly on that basis; each 'cell' in a gift or redistributive system may contain a relationship similar to Marx' starting point, A versus B, one exchanged for the other. In *Results of the immediate process of production*, the finishing chapter to *Capital I* which once more contained 'difficult stuff' and did not make it through Engels' editing, Marx returned to the elementary form, but now in its main context as the most abstract expression of the capital commodity, i.e. in the midst of capitalism. In the value forms analysis, on the other hand, one may read him as if elementary exchange came about more or less spontaneously some time in the stone age. This simplified point of departure,

resembling the "Robinsonnades" (see below) that Marx himself criticised, may be another effect of his impatience to get around to developing the analysis of money and capital, for it should be evident, by now, that the value forms analysis may as well lead in many other directions and to other kinds of studies of qualitative social difference. The value forms model is a framework for understanding the *variation* of the commodity form, the historically immense span of different, even if in some initial ways similar, commodity-related institutions, processes, or patterns.

## The coexistence of forms

The coexistence of value forms is another implicated theme which once more is not fully spelled out.

The link

$A = B$  (elementary form)

is contained in the series

$A = B, A = C, A = D$  etc. (extended form).

In the total, monetary and capital forms, the elementary form is contained 'in nuce', while the extended form is included only as implication (the total form in principle turns the extended around).

The inclusion and tensions between different value forms, more and less manifest aspects of these, and so on, make broad sociological sense, as a framework for studying what actually goes on in exchange-oriented interaction, the multilevel and multidimensional experiences and forms of communication, and similar. Basically we know that when agents engage in monetary connections, they also relate to each other and experience each other on many other levels; often, it is fruitful to consider these other patterns as influenced by 'subdued' value form connections, stretching into the tension between the value forms as a group and other kinds of transfer and transference.

When we meet someone through a monetary relation, we also often see the other as someone, as Goffman argued, who is *distant* from the role, an 'individual' even if under the sign of anonymity. We may create a dyad as a kind of alliance against the rest of the world, if only based on the idea that there is some special advantage to be found in this relation compared to others. Thereby the monetary form, in its realisation, involves the elementary form, and is expressed through it.

Each form is in a direct or indirect ('virtual', upside-down) way included in the one above it, so that the monetary form includes the elementary, the extended and the total form. This is the background of Marx' idea that the most abstract trait may also be the most singular, local, unique trait of modernity, an idea he used in his critique of the classical political economists and elsewhere. The "Robinsonnade", for example, he saw as the unhampered *export of modern capitalism* in the guise of the *simple commodity form*. There is a gift argument hidden in Marx' proposition that not an

atom of nature comes into the object's existence as value object, in its socio-historical specificity, as *commodity*.

## Value forms analysis *versus* use value essentialism

When *value as such* is opposed to *use value*, the exchange condition of value, the realisation condition, is not self-reflected in the theory; rather, a modern context of objectivated versus living activity is perpetuated. Yet it is exactly this condition that amounts to the sociological relevancy of Marx today; if the awareness that the context is itself forms-mediated is forgotten, what results is an ideological and projective theory. Much of the neo-Marxism of the 1970s revolved on this axis of abstract versus concrete, value versus the human aspect, etc., extending into the ways things authentically are and what is simply natural. Yet the natural is also part of the social and it is never 'simple' in this social sense, where it usually means '*reassuring*'. Most social relations are not well explained by this opposition alone, which also ignores the close attachment of value and use value as expressions of one dimension or social form.

We may also say that value forms analysis brings in a sociological filter between the *essentialism* which is partially there in Marx' view, for example in some of his as-such presentations of 'value', and *what actually happens* in society. The difference of 'exchange value' from 'value', and especially the further differentiation – beyond Sartre's *series* – of the different forms of exchange value, resurrect the analysis at least from outright essentialism. We may, as argued, be atheists or agnostics in terms of 'value' as such, if it determines prices or instead is an irrelevant or even fictitious category. Value is of continued perceived importance in our society, whether in the Marxist terms or in non-Marxist terms like 'utility', due to conditions that create the impression that it is indeed relevant, and, further, conditions in which such a view is continually validated. "Money can't buy me love", but most things may still be imagined as belonging to value categories. Prices and money go only so far, and economic considerations, while not identical to the social, do reach further within the social of contemporary society. Monetary phenomena are constantly reinterpreted from other *value form considerations*, shifting between them.

An exchange context, then, is a multi-layered affair. Many relations, and also different value forms, are present. Often, these are only 'implied', not clearly 'working', yet sometimes they are also of increased importance precisely due to this latent character. Sometimes this is also perceived in the background, they are 'out of work' but all the more clearly 'there', like the phenomenon of someone's physical absence increasing her or his psychological presence.

A main particularity of exchange, in Marx view, was its 'objective' or 'objectivating' quality. It materialises interaction in a specific way, it is 'externalising' in a special manner. The category of reification is used here. A commodity's value can only be expressed by another commodity, and this is brought about, Marx argues, by the value of the one commodity expressing itself not only *in* but *as* the use value of the other commodity. The prerequisites for this assumption of denied self-expression is not brought out, and neither are the reasons why a search for some outwards expression should land precisely in the use value, or utility image, of the other commodity, though both propositions become more intelligible from the rest of Marx' theory.

Denied self-expression is not, as may be thought in the value forms framework, a consequence of the transfer itself; rather it is the need for expressions outside the self which is established here, the need for social recognition.

Different forms of oppressed and alienated labour, disciplined through changing systems of stratification, are presupposed in the background of his analysis. The alienation which can here sometimes be interpreted as a consequence of the market itself, depends on a background context, including an organisation of work and of power. Individual units are no more alienated *per se* by becoming dependent on the market than they are by becoming dependent on other forms of transfer, like gift giving; here it is necessary to disentangle from the 'demonic tendency' or transfer fetishism in Marx' commodity portrait.

## Reification

Reification as a commodity-specific process involves a material that substitutes for the social, expressing the social as material. The materiality involved here is however not the materiality of 'dialectical materialism'. It is commodity-matter, regardless of the ideal or material content according to the latter view. A commodity may consist of different matters, like a used car or a 'used dream'; it is not the material existence but the perceived impact of the commodity which is the main point – simply: the selling point – here.

Marx' main statement on reification stems from the analysis of the first form of value, which in principle has only two commodity owners opposed to each other. Here, as mentioned, two distinct positions can be identified, *the relative position* – where the commodity's value *is being expressed* by another commodity, i.e. the active position in the valorisation process, and *the equivalent position* – where some other commodity's value is expressed in this commodity, i.e. the passive position.

## Some further problems

*Relevance of the models.* Generally Marx wrote in a mode where 'life' and 'livelihood' were closely connected; if commodity exchange is the main means of creating one's livelihood, it also has a main impact of life in general. It may be argued that isolation, no other important form of contact, is among the 'silent sociological premises' of the value form models. If people's activities were *anyway* socially connected (or 'organically' connected in Marx's term), the 'backwards' reification connection would not only less important, it might be fully counteracted by the other relations. There could be no larger organisational message to tell; the background sociality of the individual activities would then anyway be established.

In short, we might have exchange as a transfer channel, but not as a meta-institutional 'message conveyor' or information channel. Thus reification would be a misleading angle. – However, I do not think such an argument invalidates the analysis; it primarily emphasises that value forms must be studied in context.

Throughout this text, I have argued that reification is a relative matter, along with the influence of commodity exchange or value forms in the wider transactional order.

Further, I have emphasised that the extent and dynamics of reification cannot be deduced directly from any given exchange context, but must be evaluated on the basis of the larger reciprocity relationship and social form of which this context is a part.

So, in principle, state-run capitalism may give more emphasis to reification processes than private-run capitalism; the social context as a whole, and not just the local exchange context, determines that issue. This was discussed under the heading 'transfer fetishism' in chapter 7. Value forms, including markets, if conceived by themselves, simply *as* transfers, have only limited powers of reification; reification is a social process expressed in things and thus not primarily dependent on those things, or on the transfer's technical form, or similar, but on the wider character of society. The attribution of the negative aspects of capitalism to the market as such is precisely a case of fetishism, a negative twin version of the glorification of the market.

*A problem of notation.* In the expression 'A commodity x = B commodity y', Marx' economical focus on the amount of value is expressed.

From the qualitative side, however, the relationship is better notated as A = B, C etc. for commodities and y1, y2, x1, x2, x3 etc. as amounts. These are not amounts of the same quality.

The extended relation therefore could be written as

Y of commodity A = X1 of commodity B, X2 of commodity C, etc.

Y is not just the amount of A, but the way A is socially validated, *as* use value for others. Y is the value form of A, created by the X series.

## Conclusion

The value forms analysis is of interest as a link, condensed and (partly misguidedly) Hegelian in Marx' hands, and yet an important link to social science, qualitative analyses, and non-commodity economic systems theory. The transfer / identity logic may be 'mechanistic' but it remains important, structuring discourse and interaction.

It follows from Marx' value forms analysis that the materials of society become perceived as responsible for its social tensions, that capitalism, gradually realising the exchange order *as* social order in a way never done before, also made them executive in ways in which they had not been before; the modern idea of 'materialism' thus was based on local historical conditions that proved it true, becoming self-fulfilling; further, the reification background of materialism also created its opposite, 'idealism': two views that basically have only tangential relations to pre-modern ideas while deeply related to, respectively, the value and use value sides of the modern economic relation. In short, value forms and reification analysis should orient the analysis of 'idealism' and 'materialism' rather than *vice versa*.

In Marx theory, the commodity exists only as brought about through a specific social act, or string of acts, of owning and exchanging. There is no inherent reason in Marx' framework why commodities are mainly non-human, rather than consisting of human

resources, yet the focus is usually on the non-human or external resource side of the affair. The changing human identity through changing exchange orders are mainly described in short-hand. Like other economic theory, it goes beyond 'learning' or socialisation in the usual sense; individuals learn market logic through past labour's constraints; the market represents a dictate that runs through analog learning processes. The symbolic world, after the birth of money, is turned around, changed as a matter of structure, yet Marx tendentially confuses the creation of more general forms with the creation of more reified and abstracted forms of interaction.

Although it has not been attempted in the present text, the value forms *as* identity analysis framework can be further developed in terms of perception, sensuality, empathy and cognition. We are on a fragile yet useful general level of analysis: from such-and-such position of a model, like being one in a series of commodities in the total value form, we would *expect* such and such human imprinting to take place. As money appears, as my social being is expressed in the particular way of money, my eye not only 'grows colder', I also become more realist, more able to generalise, more aware of general justice (in Marx's view); new sensibilities arise, new ways of filtering perceptions. Further, one may argue that the image and the symbol here plays different roles, that exchange relationships are 'imaginative within' and symbolic primarily in their external borders, or 'symbolic at the outside'. While Marx does describe the appearance of specific acts (and, sometimes, forms) of imagination connected to exchange, and often discusses reification as an imaginary order (in terms of fetishism), the deeper symbolical layer is often only very implicitly brought out. This, in turn, points to the two main weaknesses of his analysis, as discussed in the present text; his failure to view exchange in a wider context of reciprocity (and naive evolutionism with 'other forms' often just classified as backwards), and his failure to recognise the inner differentiation necessitated by commodity production, or – if we admit Marx was to some extent aware of it – to follow up its major implications. Thus each value form model, though immensely more useful than the naive value / use value opposition which is often taken as Marx's theory, is also misleading. Although the preceding text approaches some ways in which the value forms models can be reoriented on this wider terrain, a re-modelling of the models themselves remain a future task.

## Appendix 2 Abstraction and generalisation

How can abstraction be identified as a specific form of generalisation?

First I shall discuss a common sense approach, where we examine the possibility that generalisation is in fact situational and varying. Since a sociological treatment of generalisation may, nevertheless, be dismissed as external and not relevant to the basic logical traits involved, I shall then turn to a more formal outline of the properties of different forms of generalisation.

Consider these two generalisations:

(1) I am choosing commodities at the market. I select A over B due to its quality and price; I generalise the two in terms of quality and price.

(2) I am faced with the possible ruin of my relationship since my partner has fallen in love with someone else. I am trying to choose what to do – A to stay on, B to initiate a break. I generalise the two as possible responses to the situation. (Or I may be a sociologist studying these and other 'alternative reactions to infidelity').

On a common sense level, the two forms of generalisation seem fairly different. As a first approach, we note that the market situation (1) is not an emotional situation in the same sense as (2), even if my survival, physically and emotionally, may be involved in both situations. Emotional considerations are indirect, or suspended, in the market situation. In the love context, on the other hand, these emerge as primary matters, and they have another meaning.

When I consider 'alternative reactions' in the love context, a main point may be that *I* do not want to become an 'alternative', nor do I want to alienate myself from the other by using this framework towards her or him. If I love the other, and want the other to love me, there is a limit to the degree that such alternatives are relevant. Beyond detachment, strategy and tactics, there comes a point where I must be 'true to myself', for if not, the love relationship itself disappears or becomes meaningless.

We may go one step further, and say that although generalisation appears in both contexts, it is 'wholistic' in a special sense in the second context. The general level does not exist 'as such', but only as 'our' generality; you and I are not detached from it. Yet one may object that this involvement is true of the market situation also, since my needs and the needs of others do come into it. Still they exist indirectly, in a postponed background fashion, and not in the context of the generalisation itself. Rather, these needs are presupposed; I am looking for a certain kind of commodity, knowing that the seller will accept my money. So if we go further, and look at needs, and the ways our mutual interdependency is expressed by those needs, to conclude that this is also a 'wholistic' situation as much as a love relationship, we also go beyond the market context as ordinarily conceived.

A first conclusion, then, is that even if the generalisation has some formal traits in common in both situations, it is *in reality* two quite different phenomena, and using the rules of one will often be misleading in the other.

We should halt here a moment longer. Not only are these two forms of generalisation different. One of them may also, easily, be conceived as alien to the other, as when I reduce my partner to one in a series of potential lovers – or 'the other of my other'. My partner might say, "I do not care how I rank on that list, for the very list means you no longer love *me*", and be right, since love should go beyond the the first form of generalisation and withdraw both the self and the other from circulation. – On the other hand, applying the logic of love in the commercial relationship would not help my survival in them, as many people discover. Once more the generalisation, in practice, works out as dissimilar, not the same. Not only, then, are we faced with

difference and antagonism, but a one-sided antagonism, or contours of a *hierarchy* that also involves different forms of generalisation.

## Relational and classificatory generalisation

We may argue that such differences are important in a sociological context, yet they do not touch the logical level. There, on the contrary, the same form of generalisation characterises all forms of human contact, it is only the setting, or the application of it, that differs.

The first formal or logical level is one where two phenomena A and B are seen as equal in terms of some common quality C. Even as – in a love relationship – I want the other, uniquely, to be *my* other, and my self to be the other of the other, I act according to a multitude of generalisations that say, for example, *this* is a self, this is another self, this is a love relationship, and so on. Each word I use may be conceived as embodying a generalisation. The conclusion that this generalisation is present in all kinds of conceptualisation, and the actions accompanying them, seems inescapable.

Yet is it true? If we agree that a basic trait of generalisation consists in experiencing some concrete phenomena as having some more general property in common – what is meant by 'in common'? I look at blue and red, and see 'colour' as the general trait of both, what they have in common. Yet I may also see the two 'in common' in the sense of being in a relationship; red and blue as opposites. We may distinguish between a 'relational' commonality, and a more external or 'classificatory' commonality.

It is true that the third trait may be of different kinds. But does it change the logic of generalisation?

In classificatory commonality, there are three relations:

A and B are concrete phenomena, C is the commonality trait.

1. A to C
2. B to C
3. A to B

Relationship 1 and 2 are direct, while 3 is indirect.

In relational commonality, it is opposite. Again there are three relations:

1. A to B
2. A to C
3. B to C

Here 1 is direct, 2 and 3 are indirect.

A main point is that the indirect relations are not really necessary in these two forms. They are background matters.

In the first form, the relationship of A to B is not of interest, it is only an implied consequence, it does not matter. It is an 'artificial' relationship in the sense that it is a bi-product of the way we determine A and B as members of C. In the second form, on the contrary, it matters, and it is rather the relationships (2) and (3) that are implied, 'artificial'.

At first hand, it may be noted that even this quite broad distinction between relational and classificatory communality is of some relevance, for example historically. The very word 'communality', as a principle of generalisation, itself implies that we are on shifting ground. Greek philosophy and, later, Christian religion were characterised by a form of generalisation that seems to have received far less emphasis in earlier thought – here, for the first time, religion was discussed as a classificatory rather than mainly a relational matter. This was brought fully out in the first centuries of Christianity, where, instead of *relations between deities*, we meet a debate about *which expressions should be allowed of the one supreme deity*. The debate centred on the question of the instances of God, their relative ranking and degree of holiness. Sacrality here had become a general matter, like C in the model above, to be more or less closely associated with various concrete instances like A and B.

Such debates are notably absent in the earlier polytheistic thought; instead, it is the relationships themselves that are the main matter, and not the classifications and their limits. To the later eye, therefore, polytheism often seems 'limitless', and we may say that instead of the emphasis on formal limits, the limits are present in the relationships themselves. The *capacity* for classificatory generalisation certainly was present here also, we may find it for example in Homer's differentiation between deities and mortals ('as such'), yet the emphasis is not on 'drawing the line', but on describing relationships. *Through* these relationships, manifold and complex, a huge system emerges, indirectly a classificatory system to the modern eye, but certainly no less embracing than our own generalisation form.

If we agree that generalisation depends on phenomena having characteristics 'in common', the conclusion seems inescapable that generalisation itself cannot be uplifted to a 'purely' logical level above the shifting contexts and meanings of communality – or, in other words, that generalisation does indeed depend on reciprocity. If 'in common' means different things in different situations, generalisation also has a shifting character.

These different formal aspects are also involved in the modern example. Relational commonality is of main importance in a love relationship context, not in a market context. In the love relationship, my alternatives A and B are *not* to be treated as variants of C – or only so initially, before I have really considered the relationship, not just between the two, but also the way in which my partner and I come into this situation. This is one reason why the love relationship, as Barthes (1979) says, turns 'mystic' – I may have 'alternatives', but only at the expense of being inauthentic; as I perceive myself and the other, there emerges a 'boundness', there is really only *one* alternative. *This* is what I must do, in order to be true to myself and my love; right or wrong, I am beyond the stage of selecting from a repository of alternatives. So while

this availability of alternatives is associated with freedom in the market context, it is rather associated with pain here; this is not the kind of 'choosing' I would like to go through.

So relational communality is 'embrative' and 'participative'; unlike classificatory generalisation, they do not leave the person alone, they tend to relate the person also, or make this relationship important. What is 'background' in classification, comes forth as 'figure' in relational communality and vice versa.

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The notion that A and B can be generalised by finding some trait C that they have in common, or that they belong to a more general class C for that reason, therefore is more ambiguous and complex than is first apparent. When we say 'in common', do we mean that there is a relationship between the two? Do they live and breathe for each other? Does one follow the other, or cause the other? Or do we only mean that there is some third, larger trait involved, which perhaps may be fairly external to the two, like saying A and B are related as consumers?

My proposition *against* the formal conception of generalisation, then, is that A and B cannot be seen as 'members' of a more general class C without considering a larger matter D, the world at large, other circumstances, including the way the cognisers themselves come into it. The rationalist her- or himself is doing so, by differing between more or less 'true' generalisation in the cases discussed above. If a generalisation can be 'false', we are already at the threshold of admitting its very form can *vary*.

(Was Auschwitz 'false'? No, it 'worked'.)

In the modern love relationship my generalisations have this peculiar form: they turn into the singular – as if the general, turning full circle, becomes meaningful for me only as it changes into something more than the suspended concrete, evoking them all in a new larger fashion, as the generalised unique, the single one who could be anyone and yet precisely therefore is no other.

Roland Barthes on the position of the lover:

"Like the early mystic, scarcely tolerated by the ecclesiastical society in which he lived, as an amorous subject I neither confront nor contest: quite simply, I have no dialogue: with the instruments of power, of thought, of knowledge, of action, etc.; I am not necessarily 'depoliticized': my deviation consists in not being 'excited'. In return, society subjects me to a strange, public repression: no censure, no prohibition: I am merely suspended *a humanis*, far from human things, by a tacit decree of insignificance: I belong to no repertoire, participate in no asylum." (Barthes, R 1979:212-3)

Yet love, or the modern context of love, has a repertoire, which comes across also in Barthes' text, since it sort of forgets gender and reification, phenomena that nevertheless reappear many places, as when the anguished lover asks "what am I worth" (op.cit.214). If the scene, the lover's quarrel, "is that language whose object is

lost" (op.cit. 205) it is also a struggle for subjectivity, against a certain form of objectivity.

"I am just here, '*think me*', I just happen to be around." My presence is presupposed. – This is the language of commodity, or the meta-language, beyond its insistence on 'buy me', 'sell me'. Yet there is also a contrary syntax, beyond this, a turning towards singularity, a '*love me*' present in the most anonymous commodity relation, and perhaps mainly there. The commodity, as generality, is suspended singularity, as much as modern love suspends anonymity. The truth of these 'philosophical' propositions is experienced in partly traumatic psychical terms under headings like family break-up and divorce. The opposition described here, therefore, is deeply sociological and historical.

Bringing 'love' into a discussion of the formal properties of 'generalisation' may be seen as a disturbance. Yet besides what people think of generalisation, here is where they try to *do it*, this is where their general *means* should achieve their *end*, here is the end-point of all their considerations, so in this sense, love is very generalising and therefore of relevance. (This is further discussed in chapter 13, on use value organisation). Love is only a vivid case of the fact that 'generalisation' always has been entangled with social context anyway.

## Abstraction or exchange identity generalisation

The exchange-related form of generalisation has been termed 'abstraction' in this text. We have seen that exchange contexts vary and create different value forms, and so there are different forms of abstraction involved also.

Above, we saw that exchange involves a form of generalisation that is focused on 'classificatory' than to 'relational' commonality. I discussed three relations of classification, in a simple model of the concrete phenomena A and B and the general phenomenon C, finding that relationship 1 (A to C) and 2 (B to C) are direct, whereas 3 (A to B) is indirect or mediated in this form.

What is brought forth here, however, is mainly a relationship of *redistribution*, or one which accords more closely to that form, than to gift or exchange patterns. This is so even if no redistribution is concretely present. Consider the notion that the membership in C decides the 'fate' of A or B, which seems age-old, and related to the 'framing idea', as Goffman might say, of a *list* as an inventory of the household resources. If A and B belong to one 'over-seeing' or more generalised category, they have one fate, if they do not, another fate meets them. In early classical Greece a notion of fate embraced animals also, the ox tried before a court, etc. The idea of C determining A and B, the higher order deciding over the lower, runs through most classificatory systems.

In value phenomena, brought out in the exchange-related interaction of people as commodity owners, this classificatory sense of generalisation is present. Relational generalisation is also present, however, and the relationship between the two, which points to the unique character of exchange, is not so easily distinguished.

Compare Marx, from the manuscript *Die Wertform* (1844):

"The labour of the tailor which one finds [in the market], i.e. the equivalent coat, does not incidentally have the general property of being human labour within its value-relation as coat. On the contrary; to be human labour is its very essence, to be the labour of the tailor is only the phenomenal or determinate form taken by this essence in its realisation. (...) [Only essence expressing itself? This is the overturned Hegelianist speaking. Yet the next is crucial:] This total reversal and overturning, which means that the *concrete-sensate counts only as the phenomenal form of the abstract-universal*, and not contrariwise the abstract-universal as property of the concrete, characterises the expression of value.

This is what makes its understanding difficult. If I say that Roman law and German law are both forms of law, this is obvious. If, however, I say the law, this abstraction, translates itself into reality in Roman law or German law – these concrete forms of law – then what emerges is a mystical connexion." (Quoted by Colletti 1979: 281-2). Colletti comments:

"*Die Wertform* was added by Marx to the first edition of Capital while the work was already in press. It is a fact that the page which we have taken from it reproduces to the letter the arguments with which Marx first criticised Hegel's dialectic in his early writing, the *Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts*.

The abstract-universal, which ought to be the predicate – i.e. a 'property of the concrete or the sensate' – becomes the subject, a self-subsisting entity; 'contrariwise the concrete-sensate counts merely as the phenomenal form of the abstract-universal' – i.e. as the predicate of its own substantified predicate. This overturning, the *quid pro quo*, this *Umkehrung*, which, according to Marx, rules Hegel's *Logic*, rules also, long before the *Logic*, the objective mechanisms of this society – beginning right from the relation of 'equivalence' and the exchange of commodities" (282).

This is very perceptive, even if it is only in the last pages of his work Colletti comes to this stage. He quotes Marx (*Werke* 1, 287, probably *Kritik Heg. Staatsr.*) on "This acriticism (Unkritik), this mysticism is both the riddle of modern constitutions as well as the mystery of Hegelian philosophy." (282) And again, Marx: "To be sure, this perspective is an abstract one, but it is the 'abstraction' of the political state as Hegel himself develops it. It is also atomistic, but it is the atomism of the society itself. The 'perspective' cannot be concrete when the object (Gegenstand) of the perspective is 'abstract' (in *Werke* 1, 283; here 282). "Hegel is not to be blamed because he describes the essence of the modern State as it exists, but rather because he passes off what exists for the essence of the state" (*Werke* 1, 266; here 283). Colletti, like Postone and others, calls this a 'process of hypostatization' (ibid.)

This process of overturning may be described in the terms presented above. Relational commonality, now, is based on a certain type of classificatory commonality.

## Commonality and exchange

The exchange relationship may be approached as a specific combination of relational and classificatory commonality. In the relation where A is exchanged with B, A is B-like as related to B, and B is A-like as related to A, if we keep to the elementary form of value where the positions are interchangeable. Yet A and B are simultaneously posited as one, as qualitatively same, not in these two relations, but by the exchange itself, and so this unity seems best described as categorical more than relational, even if it is brought about through specific relations. What appears, then, is the similarity of A and B as having something in common, not in the sense of being part of something larger, but in the individual sense that Aristotle calls being part 'each severally' as against 'collectively' (*Pol.* 2.1.8).

Some wider sociological associations are relevant here, explored in the table below.

### **Relational and classificatory commonality**

<i>Commonality</i>	<i>Relational</i>	<i>Classificatory</i>
<i>Logical form</i>	<u>A-B</u> C	<u>A B</u> C
<i>Sociological form</i>	Group	Category
<i>Type of relation</i>	Collective (AB together have C)	Individual/serial (AB each has C)
<i>Association</i>	Other-directed (AB part of C)	Self-directed (C part of AB)

As sociological fact, or 'cultural material' expressed in sign systems, classificatory commonality mainly seems to go back to listing, inventory and redistributive practices in very wide sense. In this sense, also, a classificatory scheme or typology may be interpreted as a flowchart, with more general categories closer to the centre, and their subcategories further towards the periphery.

"Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" brings out the difference between self- and other-directed classificatory commonality. One is distinct from the other, and distinction here as elsewhere also implies relation, some kind of partnership; here the other should not be seen in the self-directed way, as part of the one, but the opposite way, so the individual one becomes part of the other. Ranking and asymmetry are also obvious here.

If exchange may be seen as relational commonality based on classificatory commonality, gift and redistributive systems may be analysed the other way, in terms of classificatory commonality based on relational commonality. The marketplace and the kinship system of non-modern societies may broadly be considered as examples.

In the market context, A first is connected to B as anonymously same, on the basis of A and B both having C; there is a classificatory connection before any real relation. In the kinship system, on the contrary, classificatory connections are made on the basis of relations. A and B are related, relatives; these relations are manifold and create a vast possibility of classificatory systems. What is common is their classificatory *tendency*, like an abstract rule concerning cross-cousin coupling, based on relations rather than the other way round. Market interaction instead is relational in tendency.

This change does not correspond to the notion of a movement from particularity to universality, like Parsons suggested, since different transfer contexts with different predominant forms of commonality all exhibit these two tendencies. What is implied, instead, is a movement in Western civilisation towards a certain form of polarity between the particular and the universal.

Sociological analysis has often mistaken what goes on inside a non-modern relationship for this relationship itself. Since, therefore, the patron and client (etc.) are bound to each other in highly particularistic ways, at least compared with the modern context, the relationship itself becomes particularistic. This is often true only in a narrow way however. In antiquity as well as in feudalism these particularistic relationships were commonly generalised 'on the outside', in the wider context. So, for example, rights in persons were let out, sold, or fought over and exchanged with the land, as in feudalism, in not especially particularistic ways.

## More on 'real abstractions'

As argued the current gender system is 'modern' primarily in its organisational and institutional patterns, not in its individual traits. This gender market, then, can be seen a fairly clear-cut case of relational commonality based on classificatory commonality: A relates to B if the 'classification' is OK. Yet sexed organisation by itself contains relationships, as does the practice of gender; A and B may relate more in terms of sharing or partnership from the outset, market attraction may not be a major matter, etc. In sum, therefore, this commonality is contested, a terrain of some inner tension, creating part of the basis for what some call 'different rationalities' different conceptions of 'main reality', diverging communicational styles, etc.

The importance of distinguishing between commonality as *created* by exchange relations, as distinct from the one *implied* by it, thereby also emerges. The category of *real abstraction* must be reexamined in such a perspective. If not, critical theory easily makes the real abstraction absolute, as can be seen in much 1970s literature, as well as in later postmodernism – people live 'under' the force of the abstract; actions become 'simulacra' of the real, and so on; one simply *assumes* the overriding importance of *the capital commodity*, instead of looking at real exchanges and real abstraction forms; the lower-level value forms and patterns do not matter much anyway. Yet this overriding abstraction is not 'implied' in anything by declaration. When a subordinate transfer zone exist in a wider economic cycle, *two different forms* of real abstractions occur, one immediate, the other mediated. The immediate level is formed by the zone itself, the mediated level by its wider position and function. Many problems of my own gender analysis in the 1980s stem from difficulties with distinguishing these two.

## Conclusion

If '*the* animal', as Marx argued, seems to impose itself over all concrete animals, or *the* abstraction over various concrete phenomena – is this an illusion, or a reality in the commodity form? I believe the preceding appendix and the text as a whole has established the case that generalisations are in fact different in real terms, as patterns of social life. The philosophical and logical case has perhaps not been conclusively proven, yet it seems probable that different real-terms definitions of generality extend into different logical schemes also, at least as far as the latter is relevant for understanding social life.

I identified two different versions of generalisation, based on relational and classificatory commonality, arguing that this framework, simple as it is, does bring out some main differences for example in the history of religion. The shifts associated with patriarchal monotheism did not only substitute one sacral panorama for the other, it changed the whole idea of this panorama, along with its societal functions and cultural status. Relational and classificatory commonality may also be studied in contemporary terms, including the 'communication problems' between the genders.

Against the present emphasis on classificatory commonality in the commodity form, it may be held that exchange is itself a relation, and that the classificatory commonality between commodities is established *ex post facto*, in the exchange, and is not a 'substance' inherent in them. Or one may argue, along with a social forms argument, that even if there is a common property, exchange goods being 'activity results', this common property is only trivially related to exchange (any transfer involving some past activity, etc.), it does not tell us much of what goes on. The uniqueness of exchange pertains to how it *combines* classification and relationality, not simply in its emphasis on one of them; all transfers combine the two. The discussion of the creation of the 'needs being' (chap. 13) may be taken as an illustration: there is a breakup of 'primary' attachments, a loss of comparatively direct relationality, means of production, etc.; a classification on the zero level of pure need – and a new relationality created on that basis.

## Appendix 3 Sociology and reciprocity

### Introduction

This appendix discusses some methodological points of social forms analysis, and some sociological perspectives on reciprocity, including Gouldner's and Baudrillard's views. Due to considerations of length, a draft on various sociological traditions concerning reciprocity (Simmel's reciprocity, Weber's rationality, Parsons' normativity, action-theory and life-gift views, neo-positivists, Habermasianists, materialist feminists, etc.), has not been included here.

## Structures, reciprocities and life worlds

During the 1980s it became common to criticise structuralist and institutionalist views, and the radical 1970s structuralism especially, for neglecting the individual actor, to the extent that 'structure' itself became disreputable. It is still often argued that a structural view, must include an assumption that individuals are 'determined' and can do nothing to change their world (Skjeie 1992:19). I disagree with this view for several reasons.

Much of what came into disrepute as structural determinism was simply *another line of action*, usually a more radical one than the ones favoured by the individualist critics. This is fair and well, but it concerns two lines of action, not inaction versus action.

No amount of structural theorising by itself negates or opposes individual action. The argument that there is rough terrain ahead does not by itself translate into an argument that people should not attempt to move forwards, or are not doing so already. That idea is comparable to opposing *diagnosis* to *treatment* as if contradictory in principle. Structural views must be evaluated on their own grounds. What do they tell us of society's structure? Is this true, or is it not? Their capabilities for interpreting individual action is a different issue. The diagnosis may be bad, the treatment good, or vice versa; we cannot directly infer one from the other, even if there is often a correspondence.

A structuralist view easily becomes misleading if not connected to a view of institutionalisation and interaction. The link between individual existence and societal structure becomes meaningful and comparatively directly observable mainly on the institutional level, or what Robert Merton (1949) called the 'middle range'.

It may be objected that structural categories are also easily static categories. In view of the radical structuralist and critical theory of the 1960s and 1970s, the problem was not that it discouraged action, but that it did not sufficiently focus on the responsibility of the individual and on individuals' actions, pointing to its lack of emphasis on *democracy* in this and in many other related respects. Yet nothing of this does away with social structure as such.

Analyses oriented towards individual action always *presuppose* some concept of interdependency; if this is not stated, it usually means that a market-rational or utilitarianist framework is brought along as a matter of course. In other variants, especially mid-century sociology, a normative framework with more redistributive aspects lie in the background. Whatever the case, these must be made explicit, and this issue becomes acute in gender studies, where the conflict, precisely, is often one of different reciprocity conceptions. So actor- and individual-focused methods may certainly be of help explaining gender-related actions, but less so if structural constraints, including reciprocity patterns, are ignored.

Structure by itself, in the sense of the 'structuralist school', is not a main issue in social forms analysis, which instead is process-focused and activity-oriented, using 'code' and structure categories mainly in that context. By investigating transfer and

reciprocity patterns in social interaction, the focus is shifted towards the background foundations of institutions, not as a matter of (natural) *stasis* but as historical processes. This is combined with minimalism regarding supposedly universal categories, since these are always to some extent misleading and easily projective. While the 'kernel code' should be as small and generic as possible, theories can be seen as 'modular', made up of modules around this kernel. Why should the kernel be small? Social life has a bad habit of departing from any pre-given category or notion.

This approach is very different from the traditional structuralist view, including much critical theory and many interpretations of Marxism. It is the social and historical *engagement* of a category that mainly points to its usefulness, and not its pretensions towards universality, which is usually where the ideological aspect comes into it. True, even a minimalist view, in the sense described, contains some pretensions in this regard, as discussed in the text (chap. 7), yet the emphasis and line of approach is different. The idea is not to find a holy grail of conceptuality, everlasting categories that stand above life and history. It is not to 'subordinate' current gender or other phenomena into some larger, enlightened ordering of gender, as a subcase. On the contrary, an 'extensional' or contextual interpretation of social concepts is used precisely to move beyond that stage.

What we often find, then, behind a separated higher stratum of abstract reasoning, performing a work which is basically of 'heroic' nature, claiming eternal truth-value, is masculinity 'neutralised', abstracted, or sublimated, with a real life pattern and social context behind it. Unlike some feminists, I am not saying that nothing good comes out of this, and unlike 'total' relativists or theoretical nihilists, I am not saying general categories are simply fictitious. On the contrary, we can appreciate their true generality better by moving beneath their abstractist layer, uncovering the engagement, concern and struggle that usually lie behind it.

Whereas traditional materialists argue that individuals are dictated by material circumstances and interests, the social forms approach to materialism is more complex. Social life indubitably is material, yet the material as such has no pre-eminence in this framework. Instead tradition or culture in the wide sense of 'past results of human activities' is granted influence, since it tends to pattern action, or create a meta-layer of precedents. This 'sociomaterial' (as Dag Østerberg calls it), however, becomes more or less effective through its ability to link up with current processes. It has no weight on its own, and the same is the case with ideas. We do not stay *within* the materialist/idealist framework of discussion; rather, this whole framework is interpreted as part of a specific social form context. Although material circumstances are important on a general level, not much can be said, or inferred, at that level, due to its 'abstractism'.

The 'elemental' logic of this link is the transfer, not narrowly defined as the transactions necessary for life, or as distribution, but as a wider concept of the connecting of past life for creating present and future life conditions. The entities transferred are past life in fragment form, through a certain 'code'. Many social contexts can be understood by examining these transfer codes as well as the attempts to transcend them; what they mean, how they work, how they act together, what is pushed upwards or 'sublimated', 'abstracted', and what is hidden below.

Therefore, the present text might also be approached from a methodological individualism angle. I start with not only with individuals, but with individuals doing their best to be or become '*really* individual', to get out of the queue of anonymous existence, for the purpose of loving one other person uniquely and personally. Yet all this individual uniqueness, brought together, 'publicised' in partner selection patterns, has not straightaway taken off from society. It remains dependent on structural constraints, being significantly influenced both by exchange patterns, which is what people commonly start off from, and by gift and sharing patterns, which is where they want to go. "Gender", in this perspective, is what people make out *as*, in a certain setting where choices are limited and structured in a specific reciprocity context, extending into a cultural and societal cycle of opposed reciprocities, what I call a 'polarised' structure.

Social forms analysis does not conceptualise life patterns or 'life worlds' as virginal areas or petit-bourgeois zones about to be intruded on by society's systems, like some currently popular paradigms. Once more, an idea which is 'latently' misleading becomes acutely awkward in the gender area. Jürgen Habermas' portrayal of a life world outside society – besides being an updated version of the Victorian theme of the home / the woman as 'moral elevator' for the man / the market – tendentially absolves individuals of societal responsibility. I also find that it represents the neutralised masculinity theme introduced above. Although indirectly quite indicative, therefore, of a certain gender-related development, it remains the case that Habermas' theory (e.g. Habermas, J 1989) is somewhat 'blind', to put it mildly, on that point (for a Marxist critique cf. Postone, M 1993:235; for a defence cf. Bohman, J 1989; Carleheden, M 1994). In some feminist views (e.g. Fürst, E 1994:164) the colonisation of the life world is another term for 'the increased dominance of exchange value'. Others (e.g.. Carleheden, M 1994) find 'the paternalistic state' in this role. Whatever the case, it is 'out there', and it is precisely this kind of theorising that makes it anti-feminist in tendency.

Life worlds change with social worlds, and are as much a part of the latter as any 'macro' phenomenon of society. Families and factories, as we know them, in their modern sense, were created together, closely interlinked, in tandem. The idea that human nature stays apart, as a subject to be located in some ahistorical realm, while society changes historically, is one main barrier that hinders an understanding of how they change together and how they influence each other. Society never 'intrudes' in this sense: it is there all the time.

## Functionalist sociology and Gouldner's 'norm of reciprocity'

One of the main contributions to the sociological understanding of reciprocity come from Alwin Gouldner's well-known papers on the subject (Gouldner 1975). Before I discuss these, something should be said of Gouldner's general approach (or his approach until the mid-1970s), and the way it differs from a social forms approach. Today, functionalism is often criticised in an 'as such'-approach, as if functionalism as such lead research astray; yet I believe that a functionalism like Gouldner's may often be more insight-giving and imaginative than the later alternatives (that in fact also often turn functionalist when they try to explain anything). It often precisely where I

disagree with functionalist explanation that I find it most fruitful in this wider sense. For example, in the case of Gouldner, society is basically explained in terms of social norms, which is not my view. Yet one cannot fail to see that this is where his associations become most interesting, here he is free, so to speak, on his home turf. He is often better discussing the normative level of reciprocity (or the transference level in my terms) than he is discussing reciprocity (the transfer level) itself.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Gouldner's radical functionalism advocated a critical, political, humanist sociology. Gouldner argued against value-free, positivist theories of science (1975:3pp.). Yet his method is *meta-positivist* in the sense that even if it arrives in a critical or radical position, the approach itself in major respects does not differ from that of the positivists. Consider the following statement:

"Generically, the norm of reciprocity may be conceived as a dimension to be found in all value systems [by which he means normative systems] and, in particular, as one among a *number* of 'Principal Components' universally present in moral codes. (The task of the sociologist, in this regard, parallels that of the physicist who seeks to identify the basic particles of matter, the conditions under which they vary, and their relations to one another.)" (Gouldner 1975:242).

The method of Gouldner (and of his opponents) is brought forth here.

1. There is the implication, first of all, that the social is not what is changing, but that which does not change. Change is secondary, a dependent variable or property of the social, after the sociologist has identified patterns that exist above the level of historical change.
2. Since the social, in this concept, does not change, it is not principally distant from, or different from, that part of the social that the sociologist happens to be in. The text is not to be read as an expression of its real context, the actual context of the sociologist writing it. Instead, the sociologist has an *immediate conceptual access* to a room of unchanging, universal traits, an *as such-space* which is beyond historical time and space. Certainly, for Gouldner, more than for his opponents, sociological theory *reflected* the conditions of the sociological theorist; this was one of his main points. Yet it remains a very limited 'reflection'; it is not a property of the basic epistemology, but rather the ways in which it is used. Therefore the debate was *not* about the as-such-space itself, but rather one such space posited against others, like Parson's view of normative congruency (one universalist space) as against Gouldner's view allowing more conflict, discongruence, dysfunctions, etc. (another universalist space).

I believe that this presumed immediate access has been a main *temptation* for many sociologists, a conceptual 'stairway to heaven'. As argued, it is not just a false-leading temptation, but also often one that makes their work interesting reading. The results may in fact be more interesting and indicative when the sociologist tries to universalise, say, American middle-class 20th century values and lifestyle, than when she or he is at pains not to do so – and often for the reason noticed; one is 'securely grounded', some imagination is therefore allowed also. Yet there remains a basic problem with this approach. There is a false security involved; the method does not require a continuous self-correction and critique as part of the process towards approaching more general traits of social systems. Gouldner, for example, does not

conceive of the sociologist looking for basis-traits of people, like the physicists looking for basic particles, as *reflective* of something beyond itself, as indicative of a particular context of people, and those about to 'know' them; rather it just *is*, as *the* way to scientific knowledge.

3. Therefore Gouldner does not feel the need to ask himself how it is that this method – which even at the face of it is somewhat awkward, since people change all the time – seems true and natural. There are no *checks* in this kind of theory, between the real context, and the assumed universal context. This kind of checks, signals of when to stop, to reconsider, is what social forms analysis tries to contribute to, by extending a critical approach, by building on the best of Marx' value form theory but also going beyond it, by incorporating gender and a broader, multidimensional participatory view.

4. When considering the norms of reciprocity and beneficence, therefore, Gouldner's method does not tell him, *first*, to carefully trace the modern connections of his analytical apparatus; there is no idea that what *seems* most universal, on this horizon, may be, precisely, the *least* universal part of it, due to the abstraction process of capitalism or for other reasons. So, for example, Gouldner in discussing the reciprocity relationship argues that whether the donor gets the economic equivalent back is simply an empirical question (1975:243), failing to see that this question lies at the back of his own analysis, indeed that it often appears as the greater 'anxiety' to which the analysis is an 'answer', in the sense of 'symptom'. Gouldner's method does not lead him to question the commodity form framework of his own sociological imagination, *before* dealing with presumably 'other' kinds of relations – even if he would probably agree to the centrality of the commodity in the modern world.

The idea that societies are 'value systems' generated by norms is idealist. Yet Gouldner might as well be a materialist arguing that norms are governed by material factors (and in a way he is, since in functionalist theory norms are generated by 'system needs' that are at least semi-material). It is not what or who governs, but this governing of social life itself which is the basic issue.

5. Thereby, also, the *political* aspect of meta-positivism comes to the forefront, as a science of variation *within* the status quo, or as some would say, co-opted change, allowing endless transformations within the larger stasis. Whereas people live their lives, i.e. change, the sociologist is the one whose 'direct access' turns into a power access, an access to the powers that be, that hinders change. The ideological, legitimatory 'function' of meta-positivist sociology thereby becomes clearer, as the 'universal' space of discussion, surprisingly, also turns into the 'power place' of discussion.

I shall turn to Gouldner's portrait of reciprocity, which he sees as a norm existing together with two other norms, one of beneficence, and another of moral absolutism or supernatural sanctioning, which primarily enforces the two former norms. The three, he believed, are present in various degrees in all social systems. From this perspective, he criticised Mauss for overlooking 'the norm of beneficence' and for not distinguishing between the intention of the donor, which may be beneficence, giving something for nothing, and the common consequence of giving, a reciprocal relationship of 'something for something else' (1975:298-9).

The history of how Mauss and the anthropologists after him changed a 'giving' perspective into an 'exchange' perspective on the gift, is highly interesting, as Gouldner (1975:298) retells it:

"Bronislaw Malinowski had, in his earlier work, spoken of the gifts given by a husband to his wife as 'free' or 'pure' gifts. Mauss, however, in re-examining Malinowski's own data, had noticed that, in due time, some return was in fact given the husband: women returned their husbands' gifts with sexual favours. Consequently, said Mauss, the husband's gift could not be called 'free' or pure since it did bring a return.

In his own *Essay on the Gift*, Mauss stressed that there is a culturally pervasive rule which requires that those who accept a gift must later return it. He therefore concluded that what had appeared to Malinowski to be a case of beneficence was, in reality, a case of reciprocity. Interestingly enough (..) Malinowski accepted Mauss' criticism (..), the only party that might have suffered from this *entente cordiale* was social theory. [Gouldner goes on to comment on a scientist agreeing to "deeply dubious" criticisms of his own work as if that was "a very unusual case"]. Basically, Mauss had correctly sensed the functional interconnection between beneficence and reciprocity; but he failed to see and to work out the conceptual distinctions between the two."

One would agree with Gouldner that this criticism is deeply dubious, even if it is not at all unusual that conventions, power, etc., make researchers turn their back on earlier discoveries (cf. Barry's paper on Otto Rank). Moreover, the whole case of the enlightened liberal gentlemen's agreement on this point – i.e. a point where *women* make pure gifts into something more merchandise-like, by their returning 'sexual favours', is probably better explained by the modern context of these men and their theories and their views of women and sexuality, than anything else. Those who seek, will find – in a love relationship there is of course 'returns' of all kinds; anything can be seen as a 'return'. If Gouldner is right, *giving* as the logical verb of 'gift' was turned into *exchange* due to this 'minor matter' of women's 'sexual favours'.

Gouldner's (1975:277) portrait of the relationship between the norms of reciprocity and beneficence is of relevance for the distinction between transfer and transference. After describing various system-enhancing functions of the norm of beneficence (turning "domination into hegemony" and "merely powerful strata into a legitimate elite"; creating "outstanding obligations" and "social debts yet to be discharged"; preventing the "squaring of accounts" and "vicious cycles" of retaliation; and serving as a starting mechanism or "ignition key" for the "motor" of reciprocity), Gouldner notes the paradox that

"there is no gift that brings a higher return than the free gift, the gift given with no strings attached. For that which is truly given freely moves men deeply and makes them most indebted to their benefactors. In the end, if it is reciprocity that holds the mundane world together, it is beneficence that transcends this world and can make weep the tears of reconciliation."

This describes a special type of transference, in a particular transfer context, yet it serves to illustrate the general principle that people are indeed moved by transference

patterns beyond the transfer itself. It is not the act of giving, by itself, which is special in the case he discusses, but the larger meaning given to it. The transference level of analysis points to the fact that this meaning is always *there*, even when there are no 'tears of reconciliation'.

Although Gouldner's writings on reciprocity went beyond the 'exchange' perspective of Mauss and Malinowski, he is still focused on one main question, namely what the gift can return, what it will bring back. The free gift, as we just saw, can be the one of the highest return. As mentioned Gouldner does not address how such assumptions are part of a specific moral universe. He discusses reciprocity on an implicit background of commodity exchange, a world of scarcity and individual actors whose obligations are centred on the dyadic reciprocity relation. The natural consideration of a donor, therefore, is *what he gets back*, if only in terms of the further effects of beneficence. Yet this may be a very secondary consideration if the donor's context is, indeed, that of a gift system, a redistributive system, or some combination of the two. In that case, the 'receiving back' function is often already taken care of by an elaborate set of rules that ensures, for example, that the donor anyway receives his part of the daily consumption, for example as part of the sacrificial offering which is 'given' to the deities and yet mainly consumed by the sacrificers.

This is also the reason why Mauss' presumed universal rule, "that those who accept a gift must later return it" (op.cit. 298), is true only of some types of gifts; in early Greek traditions, for example, we find gifts that should be passed on to a third party (following a 'not to touch the ground' principle, not to be stored), gifts from the far periphery that were not returned, one-way sacrificial gifts, and much else, that was object to other rules. Westermarck's more cautious observation (quoted on p. 242) that "to requite a benefit (..) is probably everywhere, at least under certain circumstances, regarded as a duty" seems more correct. The point, however, is that this 'requital' does not need not be in the form of a return, or conceptualised in that manner, and it does not need to be directed towards the original donor(s).

Gouldner does admit that the "reciprocity complex" is more extensive than the part of it that he examines, "the generalised *norm* of reciprocity" (op. cit. 246). Yet within this framework his reciprocity relationship resembles a 'delayed commodity exchange', with a loose and rough account rather than precise reckoning. It remains within a universe where the stress is on the direct relationship, donor to recipient, A to B, and not this relation as one of many others in a socially organised whole. In the latter case, "receiving back" is often irrelevant, since there is a whole string of gifts and redistributions, and a "politics" which is far more complex than this question would imply. A gives to B, B to C, and so on; simultaneously there may be a redistributive relationships between them; it is easy to see that such a complex pattern of interaction – beyond the dyadic logic of commodity exchange – also calls for far more complex strategies a considerations. The premise of scarcity, and the connected idea of utility (in a reciprocity relationship, Gouldner believes the self's "right to exist is dependent upon and must be continually renewed by its demonstrated utility" (1975:269)) aren't independent of the social form and cannot be taken as a priori ground rules.

If the transfer relation is often a dyadic relation between two parties, we may say that the transference field relation is in principle triadic. And that is even a poor way of

stating it, for it is not only that a transfer relation A-B is here conceptualised in relation to some third matter C, but more, that the whole dyadic relation is *reinscribed* within a larger and much more complex relationship C. "Reinscribed" seems a fitting word here, for the dyadic character of many transfers may indeed be seen as "expressions", or fragments, of a larger whole. This redefinition in terms of larger matters do not imply that transference is necessarily a more abstract level (chap. 7); it is not necessarily the case that A and B become 'carriers' of the larger matter C (and appear as Ca and Cb); rather it is a more general and embracive level, encompassing much more complex social relations. The psychodynamic connotations to "transference" once more is of relevance. The transference level, which Gouldner places (in the case of beneficence) on the level of ideals, transcendence, art etc. may be compared to the way in which daily-life transfers are reinterpreted in dreams – imbued with more or less mysterious meanings that are always *there* in a very real and effective sense. The transfer may be seen as an artificial insulation from this wider and more complex 'meaning universe', recreating it through fragmented actions.

As a consequence of the utilitarian and abstractist framework, Gouldner's analysis of reciprocity does not really bring out the *differences* of many reciprocity forms and the commodity reciprocity form (and between the former). His idea that the norm of reciprocity is founded on egoism (p. 245f.) illustrates this. Egoism, we are told, exists everywhere, to the extent that "there can be no adequate systematic sociological theory which boggles at the issue"; Parsons is credited with squarely confronting "the egoism problem". Beneath these manly stances we find the idea that the egoism of American middle-class men in the 20th. century is the same ("the egoism problem") as what can be found elsewhere. Reciprocity, therefore, is a way to "control egoism". Yet this is a solution in search of a question, which is not raised, a larger questioning of the whole framework of analysis, which is, "why is it that the actors, whenever nothing else is said, is attributed with commodity form logic of action". Like Bentham's idea of the larger benefits of the market, Gouldner finds "altruism in egoism, made possible through reciprocity" (246). The commodity background of Gouldner's reciprocity also shines through in his treatment of the actors as individuals, so that even if the possibility that they might be groups is mentioned ("reciprocity institutes obligations between *individuals* (or groups)", p. 282), this is not explored, and we are left with the portrait of lone actors, as in a market setting. Further, this explains Gouldner's historical belief that the "norm of beneficence crystallises and develops historically in polemical reaction against the norm of reciprocity", with the Church's polemic against rent and profit in mind (282-3). As in market exchange, "the crux of action under the norm of reciprocity (...) [is] the prior classification of self and others into latent *debtor-creditor* roles" (288). No wonder, therefore, that when Gouldner comes to consider the possible *dysfunctions* of reciprocity, we meet "dyad-centrism" and the tendency "to break down in the direction of utilitarian expedience" (289).

Gouldner's and Mauss' stress on the return of a gift is not a universal rule, but rather one which is true in special circumstances. In fact there is a contradiction between the two main rules of the reciprocity relationship, as portrayed by them – first, that giving represents power, that it places an obligation on the receiver, and secondly, that a gift has to be returned. The failure to see this contradiction stems, I believe, from the 'scarcity economy' implied in the background of gift giving. In a modern setting, 'resources' by implication are privately owned resources; if an individual 'has'

resources, she or he can do whatever is pleased with them. The problem, therefore, is one of 'scarce resources'. This line of thought, as argued in chap. 13, although not purely a modern idea, is nevertheless mainly part of the utilitarian modern framework, presupposing a split between economy and the household, human and non-human resources, and a needs being split off from the main means of livelihood.

Gouldner's framework may be misleading not only in non-modern contexts, but also, below the surface, in the modern world. This, as I said, already follows if one examines the relationship between the two rules of Mauss. The first rule does not say that the donor is 'at a loss' for having given something away; on the contrary – and this is one main strength of Mauss' analysis in *The Gift* – having given something away often places the donor in a position of *power*. And if that is true, the last thing the donor may want would be to have the gift *returned*, since that would mean the loss of this power. Receiving a gift, therefore, as Mauss amply illustrates, often means coming under the influence of the donor, or into a position of gratitude which means serving the donor. It is often precisely by giving gifts that *can not be returned* that the rich or powerful exert this kind of influence. In this context, the problem is not the modern problem of 'scarce resources'. There are no resources of this kind around – things 'as such', awaiting private ownership and use. The problem, instead, is one of 'resource' and 'influence' being interlinked, and therefore, often, how to *avoid* coming into contact with them. Not scarce resources, but an abundance of 'resources' in the sense of power spheres, or zones of influence, 'centralities' with dangerous gravitational force. Consider the world of the Odyssey – not only the Sirens, but most of the creatures and places the Greeks encounter have this background dangerous 'centrality' which means the travellers will easily get stuck there. It is true, in a very wide sense, that this may be seen as a confirmation of Mauss' second rule, since staying under the influence of the donor, doing service to the donor, may be seen as a way of returning the gift. Sometimes this is also explicit in the arrangement, like the service to be performed by the in-marrying male (like Jacob in the Bible) before he retains or is granted his full rights. But there remains the important fact that the main wish of the donor, and a main point of gift relations, may be precisely that the gift is not returned. In many gift systems, the importance of this kind of gift is primarily as an entrance ticket to a different, internal, system; one of redistribution. Here, also, the point is seldom to 'pay back', and not even to 'stay in debt'. Rather we may say that these are 'dependency resources'; they do not exist in the modern form of freely owned, independent things. Accepting them means accepting the dependency. "How can I ever pay you back" may therefore be translated to "how can we / I get out or keep out of this relationship".

This is even more clearly illustrated if we consider the opposite case, where a person accepts something as a gift which is not ordinarily seen as a gift. This is often a fairy tale element, as in the Norwegian stories of the Ash lad (Askeladden), who unlike his older brothers Per and Pål listen to poor people and take note of seemingly insignificant things. The Ash lad 'lets himself be given' things like the advice of an old woman, and much similar, whereas his brothers hasten on towards fame and success. This makes him an adventure hero. By accepting these unworthy things as gifts, he places others as worthy, as donors, and the main idea here is not the one that the gift must be returned, but that the acceptance of a gift is *by itself* a greater gift, a 'meta gift', on the transference level.

## Baudrillard on gifts

In a polemic against the modern idea of gifts, Baudrillard (1993:48) writes:

"The gift, under the sign of gift-exchange, has been made into the distinguishing mark of primitive 'economies', and at the same time into the alternative principle to the law of value and political economy. There is no worse mystification. The gift is our myth, the idealist myth correlative to our materialist myth, and we bury the primitives under both myths at the same time."

This is partly correct, only that Baudrillard fails to state that there is also something *beyond* these myths in the studies of gifts. He then goes on to construct his own version of a gift universalism:

"The primitive symbolic process knows nothing of the gratuity of the gift, it knows only the challenge and the reversibility of exchanges." I take issue with the subject here, the 'symbolic' that knows this, but not that, etc., which I think belongs more to Baudrillard's context than that of his 'primitives'. Surely gratuity, as much as 'challenge', even if not in its modern form, is present in most gift systems. He goes on to compare the idea of giving, one-sidedly, with the idea of stockpiling capital, a not entirely successful comparison, and then goes on to say:

"The primitives know that this possibility [of a one-directional relation] does not exist, that the arresting of value on one term, the very possibility of isolating a segment of exchange, one side of the exchange, is unthinkable, that everything has a compensation, not in the contractual sense but in the sense that the process of exchange is unavoidably reversible. They base all their relations on this incessant backfire (..) whereas we base our order on the possibility of separating the two distinct poles of exchange and making them autonomous. There follows either the equivalent exchange (the contract) or the inequivalent exchange that has no compensation (the gift)." (Baudrillard 1993:48-9).

Surely the *difference* – especially for a postmodernist upholding this very concept – between 'primitive' and capitalist exchange is *not* just that capitalism inserts artificial breaks where the other just sees one connected process. The two forms of 'exchange' are different *in kind*. Modern thought does not only 'isolate' moments or polarities of exchange that the 'primitive' sees in connection; modern capitalism inserts *another kind of process altogether*. This is elementary. Baudrillard is quite right that the modern analysis of reciprocity, as discussed in the case of Gouldner, tends to isolate 'segments of exchange', yet these are segments of modern exchange, which accounts for some of these theorists' problems with grasping its alternatives, their anxiety over the 'return' on the gift 'outlay' and so on. It is not exchange as such.

Here and elsewhere in Baudrillard's writings, and also in Lyotard's, we are *first* presented with a massive condemnation of capital and / or modernity, as in this case, only to be presented, *later*, to a highly abstracted, universalist idea of this very capitalist exchange that one was out to abolish, usually couched in symbolic, referential, signified, or some other term that mainly serves to make the analysis seem deeper than it actually is. I appreciate that Baudrillard tells us that the 'primitives' do

not think of the return of gifts in a *contractual* manner, yet he does so only in order to argue, in plain words, that to the 'primitive', thinking in terms of returns is *natural*. It is always there. 'They' build all their relations on it. Yet this is a 'white man's thinking' as good as any, not very different from the idea of the 'primitives' as capital accumulators and the like. This kind of turning-around can be found in other contexts of Baudrillard's also, for example in the analysis of seduction, where the supposed transcendence of exchange and other stale principles of political economy (etc.) is postulated only to be replaced with a seduction that under closer scrutiny turns out to be a system of exchange, exchange in the modern, 'banal' fashion. In Lyotard's (1987) *The Postmodern Condition*, after a condemnation of the meta-narratives of modern science and declarations about how postmodernism is supposed to change all that, we are back to the old terrain of a game theory of social interaction.

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## Abstract of thesis

**Øystein Gullvåg Holter**

### **Gender, Patriarchy and Capitalism**

#### **– A Social Forms Analysis**

Critical gender theory and social forms theory are discussed as a basis for developing studies of patriarchy. The association between patriarchal organisation and the commodity form is investigated and substantiated.

*Øystein Gullvåg Holter August 1997*

### **Gender, Patriarchy and Capitalism - A Social Forms Analysis**

#### **ERRATA AND CORRECTIONS** (by page, paragraph)

**General:** "/" slashes have a small space before and after in order to help break the lines better, yet these spaces sometimes show up as large spaces in the printout (example: "palace / temple world" on p. 348 line 2 should read "palace/temple world").

**Contents list:** a couple of illustrations have been shifted one page by the desktop program and have wrong page numbers in the list. Figure 20 is on p. 362, 21 on p. 365, 22 on p. 367, 25 on p. 422 and 26 on p. 425.

**Text:** Page 7, paragraph 2 addition to last sentence ".....different reality (see further especially pp. 451-66 and 499-511)."

8, 6 should end with "."

18, 5 "as" instead of "is": "...with gender fetishism as one case." End of paragraph: replace "that" with "which" - "...dimension of power which is applicable everywhere."

19, 4 add in line 5 so it reads "...the denial matter so often found also within 'critical theory', which is my topic..."

21, 5 rephrasing from line 3: "...gender-related organisation of use value appears, throwing doubt on the established 'neutrality' of the market and putting the sexualisation of commodities in advertising etc. in a new light. I connect..."

22, 1 Rephrase from line 1: "..The last part continues the exploration of the turnaround of power described in the last chapter and discusses a gender-related shift of polarity involved in capital processes. Finally, I discuss some possibilities.."

22, 3 line 2 replace "are" with "is".

22, 6 line 1 replace to read: "...the proportion of the population that does..." and on line 2 "...two thirds of all adults (Holter...". Line 6 replace "is changed" with "often changes", line 7 add at end "...how much" aspect of gender politics."

23, 4 last sentence should read: "Each rape or abuse case that becomes a media event (cf. the Bjugn case in Norway) feeds into this larger cultural dynamic, an event which is not just about 'uncovering reality' but also about gender anxiety the need to renew the 'safety' of gender stereotypes."

23,5 first line change to "..the grim picture.."

26, 5 change line 11 to read "not outright sex-for-money, prostitution or pornography.."

27, 1 add to end of paragraph "....this framework. (See further esp. p. 202, ...)"

31, 3 end split sentence "...has not disappeared. It is related..."

32, 2 line 3 drop comma "...on the one hand and gender..."

33, 4 rephrase "At this point, the various forms of contact that participants seek lead to more separate paths forward, and the different reciprocity considerations in partner selection also come more clearly into view. A participant's..."

33,5 line 5 replace "...scenery." with "...context as well as phenomenological scenery."

33,6 add last line "...comparative framework; there is kind of 'desublimation'.

33, 8 add note after first sentence: "...overt market logic." NOTE 6: "The lack of institutional distinction between emerging 'one night' connections and potential life long unions is partly specific to the Norwegian context of the study, but also a general tendency associated with greater gender equality, sexual freedom etc." NOTE END.

35, 4 line 5 rephrase "..the ideal was characterised by purity and.."

36, 2 change line 7 and 8 so it reads "...specific institutions, everyday interaction and public life"

36, 3 change end to read "..established couples, those focused on finding a partner, and those for more short-term contacts; often, all three patterns are present."

37, 1 line two. Period after .."own terms. This is a..." line three period after "...in general. It is characterised...". Change line 4 and 5: "Clearly, what happens here is of

general importance..." Line 6 "The comparative silence in gender and feminist theory regarding this issue is therefore curious."

39, 2 change end to read: "...bought and sold. They do not represent objects for their owners that can legitimately serve as wage labour objects, and they are (or should be) clearly demarkated from the latter. This partially effective ideal of love is wider than the notion of 'power'."

41 drop headings "A balancing act" and p. 42 and p. 43 headings so text runs as one subchapter headed "Introduction" down to p. 45.

41, 3 line 4 drop "the" in "the two main" and in "the four.."

42, 6 line 1 "conclusions" ends with small s.

43, 1 line 5 insert "one type of" so it reads "...*overloading* of one type of body.."

45 heading, 47 heading, 48 heading and p. 50 heading to be removed, and replaced by one subchapter (that runs to "Non-monetary exchange" on p. 51) with the heading "The gender market in a social forms perspective" (p. 45, replacing "Three centres".)

58, 4 last sentence drop "the" so it reads "...postures, facial trait..."

60, 2 last sentence rephrase to read "Formalist logic and 'egalitarian good..."

60, 4, line 4 "gender" in italics: "...that *gender* tends to..."

60, 5, line 4 rephrase "Once more, this specific sphere of control, identified by its specific equality to or exchangeability into a particular feminine presence, is a key.."

60, note 13 change to end "...that the imbalance is wrong or create an artificially balanced analysis we should ask why the factual imbalance exists and why it takes this specific *form* of gender, and, on closer look, a form of polarity of the gendered and the gender-neutral, that which is specifically non-gendered and not simply neutral."

91, 4 add "directly" in last sentence: "...no longer directly related to it."

91, 5 combine with next paragraph. "...yet oppressive in class terms. Still, the complaint over beauty at this point often resembles the complaint over money in purely quantitative terms, as a matter of having little or much of it. The gender market view of beauty does not explain the money functions associated with it or the monetary unit as such. Nor does it say why social class..."

103, 4 change last sentence (now: "If my idea...") to read: "The main division between productive and reproductive roles was confirmed by these close-up studies of work organisations."

105, 3 drop "The": "...*contractuality*. 'Contractuality' is high if..."

113, 2 replace "of" with "to": second sentence ends ...."specific to the ARFA case)."

113, 3 replace "with" with "in": "Most of the men were engaged in technical.."

113, 5 insert "research": "In the family/work life research tradition..."

113, 5 last word on page "one" should be "ones"

114, 1 add sentence: ".....are part of its background. Rewarding jobs give more 'volume learning' in the sense of a greater spill-over of job traits to home traits and a greater general connectivity - but not necessarily more 'qualitative' or 'critical' learning."

114,3 replace "have" with "having" - "children and the home, having a positive ..."  
and add last sentence "There was a reduction of old barriers, but also a reorganisation of patriarchal elements."

114,5 add last sentence "On the other hand the material and social benefits in ARFA were larger than normal, and the marriage and family complaints of the employees and their partners were commonly not brought to the point of wishing for a divorce or taking an actual divorce initiative."

115,5 insert "were": "For example, many women who were married..."

116, 6 replace "in" with "to": "...agreed to a general statement..."

130,6 missing "is" - "This is connected to the more complex..."

131,1 rephrase - "...a situation where such theories are not easily created in that field either, although notable exceptions have recently appeared."

133 note 62 missing "by" - "....confirmed by later studies..."

134, 9 "In our case also" should read "In the 1988 representative survey of men, we found that...."

135, 2 insert before last sentence, so end reads: "It is also possible that these patterns among the sons relate to authoritarian traits among the fathers. Whatever else, this result..."

141, 4 missing "that" and "it is" in second line: "pattern that was of major importance even if it is hard to pinpoint."

192, 2 additional sentence. End now reads: "...patterns (Holter 1995a). Further, the three patterns may be investigated as 'interest formations' (ways in which 'interest' is conceived and pursued), with a probable association between gift relations and 'follow-interests' ('følgeinteresser'), between exchange relations and 'identity interests' (or a certain type of identity interest based on a particular form of equivalence), and between redistributive relations and sharing and solidaric interests."

222, 5 replace "one" with "pattern": Second sentence now reads "...the most central pattern until fairly recently in our own history."

319, 6 line 4 insert so it reads: ".. accumulate" (op.cit.50). I think there is some truth to this, yet it also conveys a view of early societies competing much like supermarkets..."

343, 3 line 10 change to "...and that she summons..."

344, 3 line 3 change to "...is presented. It is a conflict well known in other contexts, and an interesting example of how a *structural*..."

345 note 173 line 1 change to "...figurines (small clay sculptures of women that are very frequent in the archeological findings, see e.g...."

347, 5 last line change "which" to "that": "...that came to..."

349, 3 line 3 change to "...class differences in this system and especially in its centre; commodification means an increased..."

351, 3 line 2 add note after "...again and again." and shift subsequent note numbers in chapter. NOTE: Theories of the origin of religion cannot be discussed here, yet I note that the combination of social empowerment and power in the asymmetric sense often seems to be what makes early civilisation religion difficult to interpret. Witness the Uruk legend of Enmerkar, where the empowerment represented by the first use of clay tablets is coupled, even for conscious effect, with the use of asymmetrical power (a tablet text demanding the service of the peripheral city of Aratta to the central city of Uruk)."

351, 3 line 4 add "the use of" so it reads "...goddess by the use of his own syncretising or absorbant goddess." Then add new sentence: "She seems to have been effective in what some have seen as the 'opinion wars' (or opinion wars with skirmishes) of the time. Homer made the..."

394, 5 replace "Tthis" with "This".

395, note 193 insert "A.": "Astour thinks A. is..."

396, 7 replace "yearly" with "annually": "...annually elected..."

398, 1 replace "were" with "could": "...new ones could not."

399, 1 third line should read "...apart from the unruly worshippers of Artemis..."

400, 1 replace "discusses": "...and turns to patriarchal power..."

401, 1 line 7 add "with": "...in conflict with more..." line 8 drop "the": "Paradoxically, antiquity..."

407, note 198 drop "which": "...valid, has very little..."

408, 2 add "and": "...experienced mobbing and victimisation.."

408, 4 add "reality" and "like": "..since they simplify a complex reality. This is especially relevant in an area like the present one."

410, 1 add "a": "..as a main institutional.."

410, 2 change start of second sentence to "This expected end of patriarchy did not come about..."

411, 1 line two: "clearly disentangled from other social arrangements."

411, 6 change last line to: "..as men, sharing democratic rights equally."

412, 3 replace "human being" with "human beings"

415, 3 add "turned": "and that it was turned into a process..."

415, 4 add "nuclear" and put in single quotes: "..that gave force to 'nuclear family' development.."

416, 6 replace "and" with "yet": "...narrowness in this text, yet there is also.."

419, 3 add "outlined": "my discussions have outlined one main line.."

420, 2 change "became" to "becoming": "..now increasingly becoming.."

423, 2 change "1930" to "1930s"

442, 6 replace "comes" with "come" ("...and influence come forth here") and "looks" with "look" ("...the ones who look after").

491, 4 drop "including" in first line, add an "of" in third: "..examination of use.."

556, 3 last line: "stem from the difficulties of distinguishing between these two."

565, 3 replace "a" with "and": "...complex strategies and considerations."