

PROLETARIAN FEMINISM 101 STUDY PACKET

People's Liberation University, 2012

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COURSE 1: ALEXANDRA KOLLANTAI- Communism and the Family (1920)

Women's role in production: its effect upon the family

Will the family continue to exist under communism? Will the family remain in the same form? These questions are troubling many women of the working class and worrying their menfolk as well. Life is changing before our very eyes; old habits and customs are dying out, and the whole life of the proletarian family is developing in a way that is new and unfamiliar and, in the eyes of some, "bizarre". No wonder that working women are beginning to think these questions over. Another fact that invites attention is that divorce has been made easier in Soviet Russia. The decree of the Council of People's Commissars issued on 18 December 1917 means that divorce is, no longer a luxury that only the rich can afford; henceforth, a working woman will not have to petition for months or even for years to secure the right to live separately from a husband who beats her and makes her life a misery with his drunkenness and uncouth behaviour. Divorce by mutual agreement now takes no more than a week or two to obtain. Women who are unhappy in their married life welcome this easy divorce. But others, particularly those who are used to looking upon their husband as "breadwinners", are frightened. They have not yet understood that a woman must accustom herself to seek and find support in the collective and in society, and not from the individual man.

There is no point in not facing up to the truth: the old family in which the man was everything and the woman nothing, the typical family where the woman had no will of her own, no time of her own and no money of her own, is changing before our very eyes. But there is no need for alarm. It is only our ignorance that leads us to think that the things we are used to can never change. Nothing could be less true than the saying "as it was, so it shall be". We have only to read how people lived in the past to see that everything is subject to change and that no customs, political organisations or moral principles are fixed and inviolable. In the course of history, the structure of the family has changed many times; it was once quite different from the family of today. There was a time when the kinship family was considered the norm: the mother headed a family consisting of her children,

grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who lived and worked together. At another period the patriarchal family was the rule. In this case it was the father whose will was law for all the other members of the family: even today such families may be found among the peasantry in the Russian villages. Here the morals and customs of family life are not those of the urban proletariat. In the countryside, they observe norms which the worker has long forgotten. The structure of the family and the customs of family life also vary from nation to nation. Among some peoples such as the Turks, Arabs and Persians, a man is allowed to have several wives. There have been and there still are tribes where the woman may have several husbands. We are used to the fact that a young girl is expected to remain a virgin until marriage; however, there are tribes where it is a matter of pride to have had many lovers and where the women decorate their arms and legs with the corresponding number of bracelets. Many practices which might astonish us and which might even seem immoral are considered by other peoples to be quite normal and they, in their turn, consider our laws and customs "sinful". There is, therefore, no reason to be frightened of the fact that the family is in the process of change, and that outdated and unnecessary things are being discarded and new relations between men and women developing our job is to decide which aspects of our family system are outdated and to determine what relations, between the men and women of the working and peasant classes and which rights and duties would best harmonise with the conditions of life in the new workers' Russia. That which is in being with the new life should be maintained, while all that is old and outdated and derives from the cursed epoch of servitude and domination, of landed proprietors and capitalists, should be swept aside together with the exploiting class itself and the other enemies of the proletariat and the poor.

The type of family to which the urban and rural proletariat has grown accustomed is one of these, legacies of the past. There was a time when the isolated, firmly-knit family, based on a church wedding, was equally necessary to all its members. If there had been no family, who would have fed, clothed and brought up the children? Who would have given them advice? In days gone by, to be an orphan was one of the worst fates imaginable. In the family of old, the husband earns and ords his wife and children. The wife for her part is occupied

with housekeeping and with bringing up the children as best she can. But over the last hundred years this customary family structure has been falling apart in all the countries where capitalism is dominant and where the number of factories and other enterprises which employ hired labour is increasing. The customs and moral principles of family life are changing as the general conditions of life change. It is the universal spread of female labour that has contributed most of all to the radical change in family life. Formerly only the man was considered a breadwinner. But Russian women have for the past fifty or sixty years (and in other capitalist countries for a somewhat longer period of time) been forced to seek paid work outside the family and outside the home. The wages of the "breadwinner" being insufficient for the needs of the family, the woman found herself obliged to look for a wage and to knock at the factory door. With every year the number of working-class women starting work outside the home as day labourers, saleswomen, clerks, washerwomen and servants increased. Statistics show that in 1914, before the outbreak of the First World War, there were about sixty million women earning their own living in the countries of Europe and America, and during the war this number increased considerably. Almost half of these women are married. What kind of family life they must have can easily be imagined. What kind of "family life" can there be if the wife and mother is out at work for at least eight hours and, counting the travelling, is away from home for ten hours a day? Her home is neglected; the children grow up without any maternal care, spending most of the time out on the streets, exposed to all the dangers of this environment. The woman who is wife, mother and worker has to expend every ounce of energy to fulfil these roles. She has to work the same hours as her husband in some factory, printing-house or commercial establishment and then on top of that she has to find the time to attend to her household and look after her children. Capitalism has placed a crushing burden on woman's shoulders: it has made her a wage-worker without having reduced her cares as housekeeper or mother. Woman staggers beneath the weight of this triple load. She suffers, her face is always wet with tears. Life has never been easy for woman, but never has her lot been harder and more desperate than that of the millions of working women under the capitalist yoke in this heyday of factory production.

The family breaks down as more and more women go out to work. How can one talk about family life when the man and woman work different shifts, and where the wife does not even have the time to prepare a decent meal for her offspring? How can one talk of parents when the mother and father are out working all day and cannot find the time to spend even a few minutes with their children? It was quite different in the old days. The mother remained at home and occupied herself with her household duties; her children were at her side, under her watchful eye. Nowadays the working woman hastens out of the house early in the morning when the factory whistle blows. When evening comes and the whistle sounds again, she hurries home to scramble through the most pressing of her domestic tasks. Then it's off to work again the next morning, and she is tired from lack of sleep. For the married working woman, life is as hard as the workhouse. It is not surprising therefore that family ties should loosen and the family begin to fall apart. The circumstances that held the family together no longer exist. The family is ceasing *to be necessary either to its members or to the nation as a whole*. The old family structure is now merely a hindrance. What used to make the old family so strong? First, because the husband and father was the family's breadwinner; secondly, because the family economy was necessary to all its members: and thirdly, because children were brought up by their parents. What is left of this former type of family? The husband, as we have just seen, has ceased to be the sole breadwinner. The wife who goes to work earns wages. She has learned to earn her own living, to support her children and not infrequently her husband. The family now only serves as the primary economic unit of society and the supporter and educator of young children. Let us examine the matter in more detail, to see whether or not the family is about to be relieved of these tasks as well.

Housework ceases to be necessary

There was a time when the women of the poorer classes in city and country spent their entire lives within the four walls of the home. A woman knew nothing beyond the threshold of her own home, and in most cases had no wish to know anything. After all, in her own home, there was so much to do, and this

work was most necessary and useful not only for the family itself but also for the state as a whole. The woman did everything that the modern working and peasant woman has to do, but besides this cooking, washing, cleaning and mending, she spun wool and linen, wove cloth and garments, knitted stockings, made lace, prepared – as far as her resources permitted – all sorts of pickles, jams and other preserves for winter, and manufactured, her own candles. It is difficult to make a complete list of all her duties. That is how our mothers and grandmothers lived. Even today you may still come across remote villages deep in the country, far from the railroads and the big rivers, where this mode of life has been preserved and where the mistress of the house is overburdened with all kinds of chores over which the working woman of the big cities and of the populous industrial regions has long ceased to worry.

In our grandmother's day, all this domestic work was necessary and beneficial; it ensured the well-being of the family. The more the mistress of the house applied herself, the better the peasant or craftsman's family lived. Even the national economy benefited from the housewife's activity, for the woman did not limit herself to making soup and cooking potatoes (i.e. satisfying the immediate needs of the family), she also produced such things as cloth, thread, butter, etc. which had a value as commodities that could be sold on the market. And every man, whether peasant or worker, tried to find a wife who had "hands of gold", for he knew that a family could not get along without this "domestic labour". The interests of the whole nation were involved, for the more work the woman and the other members of the family put into making cloth, leather and wool (the surplus of which was sold in the neighbouring market), the greater the economic prosperity of the country as a whole.

But capitalism has changed all this. All that was formerly produced in the bosom of the family is now being manufactured on a mass scale in workshops and factories. The machine has superseded the wife. What housekeeper would now bother to make candles, spin wool or weave, cloth? All these products can be bought in the shop next door, formerly every girl would learn to knit stockings. Nowadays, what working woman would think of making her own? In the first place she doesn't have the time. Time is money, and no one wants to waste time in an unproductive and useless manner. Few working

women would start to pickle cucumbers or make other preserves when all these things can be bought in the shop. Even if the products sold in the store are of an inferior quality and not prepared with the care of the home-made equivalent the working woman has neither the time nor the energy needed to 1 perform these domestic operations. First and foremost she is a hired worker. Thus the family economy is gradually being deprived of all the domestic work without which our grandmothers could hardly have imagined a family. What was formerly produced in the family is now produced by the collective labour of working men and women in the factories.

The family no longer produces; it only consumes. The housework that remains consists of cleaning (cleaning the floors, dusting, heating water, care of the lamps etc.), cooking (preparation of dinners and suppers), washing and the care of the linen and clothing of the “family (darning and mending). These are difficult and exhausting tasks and they absorb all the spare time and energy of the working woman who must, in addition, put in her hours at a factory. But this work is different in one important way from the work our grandmothers did: the four tasks enumerated above, which still serve to keep the family together, are of no value to the state and the national economy, for they do not create any new values or make any contribution to the prosperity of the country. The housewife may spend all day, from morning to evening, cleaning her home, she may wash and iron the linen daily, make every effort to keep her clothing in good order and prepare whatever dishes she pleases and her modest resources allow, and she will still end the day without having created any values. Despite her industry she would not have made anything that could be considered a commodity. Even if a working woman were to live a thousand years, she would still have to begin every day from the beginning. There would always be a new layer of dust to be removed from the mantelpiece, her husband would always come in hungry and her children bring in mud on their shoes.

Women’s work is becoming less useful to the community as a whole. It is becoming unproductive. The individual household is dying. It is giving way in our society to collective housekeeping. Instead of the working woman cleaning her flat, the communist society can arrange for men and women whose job it is to go round in the morning cleaning rooms. The wives of the rich have long since

been freed from these irritating and tiring domestic duties. Why should working woman continue to be burdened with them? In Soviet Russia the working woman should be surrounded by the same ease and light, hygiene and beauty that previously only the very rich could afford. Instead of the working woman having to struggle with the cooking and spend her last free hours in the kitchen preparing dinner and supper, communist society will organise public restaurants and communal kitchens.

Even under capitalism such establishments have begun to appear. In fact over the last half a century the number of restaurants and cafes in all the great cities of Europe has been growing daily; they are springing up like mushrooms after the autumn rain. But under capitalism only people with well-lined purses can afford to take their meals in restaurants, while under communism everyone will be able to eat in the communal kitchens and dining-rooms. The working woman will not have to slave over the washtub any longer, or ruin her eyes in darning her stockings and mending her linen; she will simply take these things to the central laundries each week and collect the washed and ironed garments later. That will be another job less to do. Special clothes-mending centres will free the working woman from the hours spent on mending and give her the opportunity to devote her evenings to reading, attending meetings and concerts. Thus the four categories of housework are doomed to extinction with the victory of communism. And the working woman will surely have no cause to regret this. Communism liberates woman from her domestic slavery and makes her life richer and happier.

The state is responsible for the upbringing of children

But even if housework disappears, you may argue, there are still the children to look after. But here too, the workers' state will come to replace the family, society will gradually take upon itself all the tasks that before the revolution fell to the individual parents. Even before the revolution, the instruction of the child had ceased to be the duty of the parents. Once the children had attained school age the parents could breathe more freely, for they were no longer responsible for the intellectual development of their offspring. But there

were still plenty of obligations to fulfil. There was still the matter of feeding the children, buying them shoes and clothes and seeing that they developed into skilled and honest workers able, when the time came, to earn their own living and feed and support their parents in old age. Few workers' families however, were able to fulfil these obligations. Their low wages did not enable them to give the children enough to eat, while lack of free time prevented them from devoting the necessary attention to the education of the rising generation. The family is supposed to bring up the children, but in reality proletarian children grow up on the streets. Our forefathers knew some family life, but the children of the proletariat know none. Furthermore, the parents' small income and the precarious position in which the family is placed financially often force the child to become an independent worker at scarcely ten years of age. And when children begin, to earn their own money they consider themselves their own masters, and the words and counsels of the parents are no longer law; the authority of the parents weakens, and obedience is at an end.

Just as housework withers away, so the obligations of parents to their children wither away gradually until finally society assumes the full responsibility. Under capitalism children were frequently, too frequently, a heavy and unbearable burden on the proletarian family. Communist society will come to the aid of the parents. In Soviet Russia the Commissariats of Public Education and of Social Welfare are already doing much to assist the family. We already have homes for very small babies, creches, kindergartens, children's colonies and homes, hospitals and health resorts for sick children. restaurants, free lunches at school and free distribution of text books, warm clothing and shoes to schoolchildren. All this goes to show that the responsibility for the child is passing from the family to the collective.

The parental care of children in the family could be divided into three parts: (a) the care of the very young baby, (b) the bringing up of the child, and (c) the instruction of the child. Even in capitalist society the education of the child in primary schools and later in secondary and higher educational establishments became the responsibility of the state. Even in capitalist society the needs of the workers were to some extent met by the provision of playgrounds, kindergartens, play groups, etc. The more the workers became conscious of their rights and the

better they were organised, the more society had to relieve the family of the care of the children. But bourgeois society was afraid of going too far towards meeting the interests of the working class, lest this contribute to the break-up of the family. For the capitalists are well aware that the old type of family, where the woman is a slave and where the husband is responsible for the well-being of his wife and children, constitutes the best weapon in the struggle to stifle the desire of the working class for freedom and to weaken the revolutionary spirit of the working man and working woman. The worker is weighed down by his family cares and is obliged to compromise with capital. The father and mother are ready to agree to any terms when their children are hungry. Capitalist society has not been able to transform education into a truly social and state matter because the property owners, the bourgeoisie, have been against this.

Communist society considers the social education of the rising generation to be one of the fundamental aspects of the new life. The old family, narrow and petty, where the parents quarrel and are only interested in their own offspring, is not capable of educating the "new person". The playgrounds, gardens, homes and other amenities where the child will spend the greater part of the day under the supervision of qualified educators will, on the other hand, offer an environment in which the child can grow up a conscious communist who recognises the need for solidarity, comradeship, mutual help and loyalty to the collective. What responsibilities are left to the parents, when they no longer have to take charge of upbringing and education? The very small baby, you might answer, while it is still learning to walk and clinging to its mother's skirt, still needs her attention. Here again the communist state hastens to the aid of the working mother. No longer will there be any women who are alone. The workers' state aims to support every mother, married or unmarried, while she is suckling her child, and to establish maternity homes, day nurseries and other such facilities in every city and village, in order to give women the opportunity to combine work in society with maternity.

Working mothers have no need to be alarmed; communist not intending to take children away from their parents or to tear the baby from the breast of its mother, and neither is it planning to take, violent measures to destroy the family. No such thing! The aims of communist society are quite different. Communist

society sees that the old type of family is breaking up, and that all the old pillars which supported the family as a social unit are being removed: the domestic economy is dying, and working-class parents are unable to take care of their children or provide them with sustenance and education. Parents and children suffer equally from this situation. Communist society has this to say to the working woman and working man: "You are young, you love each other. Everyone has the right to happiness. Therefore live your life. Do not flee happiness. Do not fear marriage, even though under capitalism marriage was truly a chain of sorrow. Do not be afraid of having children. Society needs more workers and rejoices at the birth of every child. You do not have to worry about the future of your child; your child will know neither hunger nor cold." Communist society takes care of every child and guarantees both him and his mother material and moral support. Society will feed, bring up and educate the child. At the same time, those parents who desire to participate in the education of their children will by no means be prevented from doing so. Communist society will take upon itself all the duties involved in the education of the child, but the joys of parenthood will not be taken away from those who are capable of appreciating them. Such are the plans of communist society and they can hardly be interpreted as the forcible destruction of the family and the forcible separation of child from mother.

There is no escaping the fact: the old type of family has had its day. The family is withering away not because it is being forcibly destroyed by the state, but because the family is ceasing to be a necessity. The state does not need the family, because the domestic economy is no longer profitable: the family distracts the worker from more useful and productive labour. The members of the family do not need the family either, because the task of bringing up the children which was formerly theirs is passing more and more into the hands of the collective. In place of the old relationship between men and women, a new one is developing: a union of affection and comradeship, a union of two equal members of communist society, both of them free, both of them independent and both of them workers. No more domestic bondage for women. No more inequality within the family. No need for women to fear being left without support and with children to bring up. The woman in communist society no longer depends upon her husband but on

her work. It is not in her husband but in her capacity for work that she will find support. She need have no anxiety about her children. The workers' state will assume responsibility for them. Marriage will lose all the elements of material calculation which cripple family life. Marriage will be a union of two persons who love and trust each other. Such a union promises to the working men and women who understand themselves and the world around them the most complete happiness and the maximum satisfaction. Instead of the conjugal slavery of the past, communist society offers women and men a free union which is strong in the comradeship which inspired it. Once the conditions of labour have been transformed and the material security of the working women has increased, and once marriage such as the church used to perform it – this so-called indissoluble marriage which was at bottom merely a fraud – has given place to the free and honest union of men and women who are lovers and comrades, prostitution will disappear. This evil, which is a stain on humanity and the scourge of hungry working women, has its roots in commodity production and the institution of private property. Once these economic forms are superseded, the trade in women will automatically disappear. The women of the working class, therefore, need not worry over the fact that the family is doomed to disappear. They should, on the contrary, welcome the dawn of a new society which will liberate women from domestic servitude, lighten the burden of motherhood and finally put an end to the terrible curse of prostitution.

The woman who takes up the struggle for the liberation of the working class must learn to understand that there is no more room for the old proprietary attitude which says: "These are my children, I owe them all my maternal solicitude and affection; those are your children, they are no concern of mine and I don't care if they go hungry and cold – I have no time for other children." The worker-mother must learn not to differentiate between yours and mine; she must remember that there are only our children, the children of Russia's communist workers.

The workers' state needs new relations between the sexes, just as the narrow and exclusive affection of the mother for her own children must expand until it extends to all the children of the great, proletarian family, the indissoluble marriage based on the servitude of women is replaced by a free union of two

equal members of the workers' state who are united by love and mutual respect. In place of the individual and egoistic family, a great universal family of workers will develop, in which all the workers, men and women, will above all be comrades. This is what relations between men and women, in the communist society will be like. These new relations will ensure for humanity all the joys of a love unknown in the commercial society of a love that is free and based on the true social equality of the partners.

Communist society wants bright healthy children and strong, happy young people, free in their feelings and affections. In the name of equality, liberty and the comradely love of the new marriage we call upon the working and peasant men and women, to apply themselves courageously and with faith to the work of rebuilding human society, in order to render it more perfect, more just and more capable of ensuring the individual the happiness which he or she deserves. The red flag of the social revolution which flies above Russia and is now being hoisted aloft in other countries of the world proclaim the approach of the heaven on earth to which humanity has been aspiring for centuries.

Prostitution and Ways of Fighting It (1921)

Comrades, the question of prostitution is a difficult and thorny subject that has received too little attention in Soviet Russia. This sinister legacy of our bourgeois capitalist past continues to poison the atmosphere of the workers' republic and affects the physical and moral health of the working people of Soviet Russia. It is true that in the three years of the revolution the nature of prostitution has, under the pressure of the changing economic and social conditions altered somewhat. But we are still far from being rid of this evil. Prostitution continues to exist and threatens the feeling of solidarity and comradeship between working men and women, the members of the workers' republic. And this feeling is the foundation and the basis of the communist society we are building and making a reality. It is time that we faced up to this problem. It is time that we gave thought and attention to the reasons behind prostitution. It is time that we found ways and means of ridding ourselves once and for all of this evil, which has no place in a workers' republic.

Our workers' republic has so far passed no laws directed at the elimination of prostitution, and has not even issued a clear and scientific formulation of the view that prostitution is something that injures the collective. We know that prostitution is an evil, we even acknowledge that at the moment, in this transitional period with its many problems, prostitution has become extremely widespread. But we have brushed the issue aside, we have been silent about it. Partly this is because of the hypocritical attitudes we have inherited from the bourgeoisie, and partly it is because of our reluctance to consider and come to terms with the harm which the widespread mass scale of prostitution does to the work collective. And our lack of enthusiasm in the struggle against prostitution has been reflected in our legislation.

We have so far passed no statutes recognising prostitution as a harmful social phenomenon. When the old tsarist laws were revoked by the Council of People's Commissars, all the statutes concerning prostitution were abolished. But no new measures based on the interests of the work collective were introduced. Thus the politics of the Soviet authorities towards prostitutes and prostitution has been characterised by diversity and contradictions. In some areas the police still help to round up prostitutes just as in the old days. In other places, brothels exist quite openly. (The Interdepartmental Commission on the Struggle against Prostitution has data on this.) And there are yet other areas where prostitutes are considered criminals and thrown into forced labour camps. The different attitudes of the local authorities thus highlight the absence of a clearly worded statute. Our vague attitude to this complex social phenomenon is responsible, for a number of distortions of and diversions from the principles underlying our legislation and morality.

We must therefore not only confront the problem of prostitution but seek a solution that is in line with our basic principles and the programme of social and economic change adhered to by the party of the communists. We must, above all, clearly define what prostitution is. Prostitution is a phenomenon which is closely linked with unearned income, and it thrives in the epoch dominated by capital and private property. Prostitutes, from our point of view, are those women who sell their bodies for material benefit – for decent food, for clothes and other advantages; prostitutes are all those who avoid the necessity of working by giving

themselves to a man, either on a temporary basis or for life.

Our Soviet workers' republic has inherited prostitution from the bourgeois capitalist past, when only a small number of women were involved in work within the national economy and the majority relied on the "male breadwinner", on the father or the husband. Prostitution arose with the first states as the inevitable shadow of the official institution of marriage, which was designed to preserve the rights of private property and to guarantee property inheritance through a line of lawful heirs. The institution of marriage made it possible to prevent the wealth that had been accumulated from being scattered amongst a vast number of "heirs". But there is a great difference between the prostitution of Greece and Rome and the prostitution we know today. In ancient times the number of prostitutes was small, and there was not that hypocrisy which colours the morality of the bourgeois world and compels bourgeois society to raise its hat respectfully to the 'lawful wife' of an industrial magnate who has obviously sold herself to a husband she does not love, and, to turn away in disgust from a girl forced into the streets by poverty, homelessness, unemployment and other social circumstances which derive from the existence of capitalism and private property. The ancient world regarded prostitution as the legal complement to exclusive family relationships. Aspasia [the mistress of Pericles] was respected by her contemporaries far more than the colourless wives of the breeding apparatus.

In the Middle Ages, when artisan, production predominated, prostitution was accepted as something natural and lawful. Prostitutes had their own guilds and took part in festivals and local events just like the other guilds. The prostitute guaranteed that the daughters of the respectable citizens remained chaste and their wives faithful, since single men could (for a consideration) turn to the members of the guild for comfort. Prostitution was thus to the advantage of the worthy propertied citizens and was openly accepted by them.

With the rise of capitalism, the picture changes. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries prostitution assumes threatening proportions for the first time. The sale of women's labour, which is closely and inseparably connected with the sale of the female, body, steadily increases, leading to a situation where the respected wife of a worker, and not just the abandoned and "dishonoured" girl,

joins the ranks of the prostitutes: a mother for the sake of her children, or a young girl like Sonya Marmeladova for the sake of her family. This is the horror and hopelessness that results from the exploitation of labour by capital. When a woman's wages are insufficient to keep her alive, the sale of favours seems a possible subsidiary occupation. The hypocritical morality of bourgeois society encourages prostitution by the structure of its exploitative economy, while at the same time mercilessly covering with contempt any girl or woman who is forced to take this path.

The black shadow of prostitution stalks the legal marriage of bourgeois society. History has never before witnessed such a growth of prostitution as occurred in the last part of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In Berlin there is one prostitute for every twenty so-called honest women. In Paris the ratio is one to eighteen and in London one to nine. There are different types of prostitution: there is open prostitution that is legal and subject to regulation, and there is the secret, "seasonal" type. All forms of prostitution flourish like a poisonous flower in the swamps of the bourgeois way of life.

The world of the bourgeoisie does not even spare children, forcing young girls of nine and ten into the sordid embraces of wealthy and depraved old men. In the capitalist countries there are brothels which specialise exclusively in very young girls. In this present post-war period every woman faces the possibility of unemployment. Unemployment hits women in particular, and causes an enormous increase in the army of "street women". Hungry crowds of women seeking out the buyers of "white slaves" flood the evening streets of Berlin. Paris and the other civilised centres of the capitalist states. The trade in women's flesh is conducted quite openly, which is not surprising when you consider that the whole bourgeois way of life is based on buying and selling. There is an undeniable element of material and economic considerations even the most legal of marriages. Prostitution is the way out for the woman who fails to find herself a permanent breadwinner. Prostitution, under capitalism provides men with the opportunity of having sexual relationships without having to take upon themselves the responsibility of caring materially for the women until the grave.

But if prostitution has such a hold and is so widespread even in Russia, how are we to struggle against it? In order to answer this question we must first

analyse in more detail the factors giving rise to prostitution. Bourgeois science and its academics love to prove to the world, that prostitution is a pathological phenomenon, i.e. that it is the result of the abnormalities of certain women, just as some people are criminal by nature, some women, it is argued, are prostitutes by nature. Regardless of where or how such women might have lived, they would have turned to a life of sin. Marxists and the more conscientious scholars, doctors and statisticians have shown clearly that the idea of “inborn disposition” is false. Prostitution is above all a social *phenomenon*; it is closely connected to the needy position of woman and her economic dependence on man in marriage and the family. The roots of prostitution are in economics. Woman is on the one hand placed in an economically vulnerable position, and on the other hand has been conditioned by centuries of education to expect material favours from a man in return for sexual favours – whether these are given within or outside the marriage tie. This is the root of the problem. Here is the reason for prostitution.

If the bourgeois academics of the Lombroso-Tarnovsky school were correct in maintaining that prostitutes are born with the marks of corruption and sexual abnormality, how would one explain the well-known fact that in a time of crisis and unemployment the number of prostitutes immediately increases? How would one explain the fact that the purveyors of “living merchandise” who travelled to tsarist Russia from the other countries of western Europe always found a rich harvest in areas where crops had failed and the population was suffering from famine, whereas they came away with few recruits from areas of plenty? Why do so many of the women who are allegedly doomed by nature to ruin only take to prostitution in years of hunger and unemployment?

It is also significant that in the capitalist countries prostitution recruits its servants from the propertyless sections of the population. Low-paid work, homelessness, acute poverty and the need to support younger brothers and sisters: these are the factors that produce the largest percentage of prostitutes. If the bourgeois theories about the corrupt and criminal disposition were true, then all classes of the population ought to contribute equally to prostitution. There ought to be the same proportion of corrupt women among the rich as among the poor. But professional prostitutes, women who live by their bodies, are with rare exceptions recruited from the poorer classes. Poverty, hunger, deprivation and

the glaring social inequalities that are the basis of the bourgeois system drive these women to prostitution.

Or again one might point to the fact that prostitutes in the capitalist countries are drawn, according to the statistics, from the thirteen to twenty-three age-group. Children and young women, in other words. And the majority of these girls are alone and without a home. Girls from wealthy backgrounds who have the excellent bourgeois family to protect them turn to prostitution only very occasionally. The exceptions are usually victims of tragic circumstances. More often than not they are victims of the hypocritical “double morality”. The bourgeois family abandons the girl who has “sinned” and she – alone, without support and branded by the scorn of society – sees prostitution as the only way out.

We can therefore list as factors responsible for prostitution: low wages, social inequalities, the economic dependence of women upon men, and the unhealthy custom by which women expect to be supported in return for sexual favours instead of in return for their labour.

The workers’ revolution in Russia has shattered the basis of capitalism and has struck a blow at the former dependence of women upon men. All citizens are equal before the work collective. They are equally obliged to work for the common good and are equally eligible to the support of the collective when they need it. A woman provides for herself not by marriage but by the part she plays in production and the contribution she makes to the people’s wealth.

Relations between the sexes are being transformed. But we are still bound by the old ideas. Furthermore, the economic structure is far from being completely re-arranged in the new way, and communism is still a long way off. In this transitional period prostitution naturally enough keeps a strong hold. After all, even though the main sources of prostitution – private property and the policy of strengthening the family – have been eliminated, other factors are still in force. Homelessness, neglect, bad housing conditions, loneliness and low wages for women are still with us. Our productive apparatus is still in a state of collapse, and the dislocation of the national economy continues. These and other economic and social conditions lead women to prostitute their bodies.

To struggle against prostitution chiefly means to struggle against these conditions – in other words, it means to support the general policy of the Soviet

government – which is directed towards strengthening the basis of communism and the organisation of production.

Some people might say that since prostitution will have no place once the power of the workers and the basis of communism are strengthened, no special campaign is necessary. This type of argument fails to take into account the harmful and disuniting effect that prostitution has on the construction of a new communist society.

The correct slogan was formulated at the first All-Russian Congress of Peasant and Working Woman: “A woman of the Soviet labour republic is a free citizen with equal rights, and cannot and must not be the object of buying and selling.” The slogan was proclaimed, but nothing was done. Above all, prostitution harms the national economy and hinders the further development of the productive forces. We know that we can only overcome chaos and improve industry if we harness the efforts and energies of the workers and if we organise the available labour power of both men and women in the most rational way. Down with the unproductive labour of housework and child-minding! Make way for work that is organised and productive and serves the work collective! These are the slogans we must take up.

And what, after all, is the professional prostitute? She is a person whose energy is not used for the collective; a person who lives off others, by taking from the rations of others. Can this sort of thing be allowed in a workers’ republic? No, it cannot. It cannot be allowed, because it reduces the reserves of energy and the number of working hands that are creating the national wealth and the general welfare, from the point of view of the national economy the professional prostitute is a labour deserter. For this reason we must ruthlessly oppose prostitution. In the interests of the economy we must start an immediate fight to reduce the number of prostitutes and eliminate prostitution in all its forms.

It is time we understood that the existence of prostitution contradicts the basic principles of a workers’ republic which fights all forms of unearned wages. In the three years of the revolution our ideas on this subject have changed greatly. A new philosophy, which has little in common with the old ideas, is in the making. Three years ago we regarded a merchant as a completely respectable person. Provided his accounts were in order and he did not cheat or dupe his

customer too obviously, he was rewarded with the title of “merchant of the first guild”, “respected citizen”, etc.

Since the revolution attitudes, to trade and merchants have changed radically. We now call the “honest merchant” a speculator, and instead of awarding him honorary titles we drag him before a special committee and put him in a forced labour camp. Why do we do this? Because we know that we can only build a new communist economy if all adult citizens are involved in *productive labour*. The person who does not work and who lives off someone else or on an unearned wage harms the collective and the republic. We, therefore, hunt down the speculators, the traders and the hoarders who all live off unearned income. We must fight prostitution as another form of labour desertion.

We do not, therefore, condemn prostitution and fight against it as a special category but as an aspect of labour desertion. To us in the workers’ republic it is not important whether a woman sells herself to one man or to many, whether she is classed as a professional prostitute selling her favours to a succession of clients or as a wife selling herself to her husband. All women who avoid work and do not take part in production or in caring for children are liable, on the same basis as prostitutes, to be forced to work. We cannot make a difference between a prostitute and a lawful wife kept by her husband, whoever her husband is – even if he is a “commissar”. It is failure to take part in productive work that is the common thread connecting all labour deserters. The workers’ collective condemns the prostitute not because she gives her body to many men but because, like the legal wife who stays at home, she does no useful work for the society.

The second reason for organising a deliberate and well-planned campaign against prostitution is in order to safeguard the people’s health. Soviet Russia does not want illness and disease to cripple and weaken its citizens and reduce their work capacity. And prostitution spreads venereal disease. Of course, it is not the only means by which the disease is transmitted. Crowded living conditions, the absence of standards of hygiene, communal crockery and towels also play a part. Furthermore, in this time of changing moral norms and particularly when there is also a continual movement of troops from place to place, a sharp rise in the number of cases of venereal disease occurs

independently of commercial prostitution. The civil war, for example, is raging in the fertile southern regions. The Cossack men have been beaten and have retreated with the Whites. Only the women are left behind in the villages. They have plenty of everything except husbands. The Red Army troops enter the village. They are billeted out and stay several weeks. Free relationships develop between the soldiers and the women. These relationships have nothing to do with prostitution: the woman goes with the man voluntarily because she is attracted to him, and there is no thought on her part of material gain. It is not the Red Army soldier who provides for the woman but rather the opposite. The woman looks after him for the period that the troops are quartered in the village. The troops move away, but they leave venereal disease behind. Infection spreads. The diseases develop, multiply, and threaten to maim the younger generation.

At a joint meeting of the department of maternity protection and the women's department, Professor Kol'tsov spoke about eugenics, the science of maintaining and improving the health of humanity. Prostitution is closely connected with this problem, since it is one of the main ways in which infections are spread. The theses of the interdepartmental commission on the struggle against prostitution point out that the development of special measures to fight venereal diseases is an urgent task. Steps must of course be taken to deal with all sources of the diseases, and not solely with prostitution in the way that hypocritical bourgeois society does. But although the diseases are spread to some extent by everyday circumstances, it is nevertheless essential to give everyone a clear idea of the role prostitution plays. The correct organisation of sexual education for young people is especially important. We must arm young people with accurate information allowing them to enter life with their eyes open. We must not remain silent any longer over questions connected with sexual life; we must break with false and bigoted bourgeois morality.

Prostitution is not compatible with the Soviet workers' republic for a third reason: it does not contribute to the development and strengthening of the basic class character and of the proletariat and its new morality.

What is the fundamental quality of the working class? What is its strongest moral weapon in the struggle? Solidarity and comradeship is the basis

of communism. Unless this sense is strongly developed amongst working people, the building of a truly communist society is inconceivable. Politically conscious communists should therefore logically be encouraging the development of solidarity in every way and fighting against all that hinders its development – Prostitution destroys the equality, solidarity and comradeship of the two halves of the working class. A man who buys the favours of a woman does not see her as a comrade or as a person with equal rights. He sees the woman as dependent upon himself and as an unequal creature of a lower order who is of less worth to the workers' state. The contempt he has for the prostitute, whose favours he has bought, affects his attitude to all women. The further development of prostitution, instead of allowing for the growth of comradely feeling and solidarity, strengthens the inequality of the relationships between the sexes.

Prostitution is alien and harmful to the new communist morality which is in the process of forming. The task of the party as a whole and of the women's departments in particular must be to launch a broad and resolute campaign against this legacy from the past. In bourgeois capitalist society all attempts at fighting prostitution were a useless waste of energy, since the two circumstances which gave rise to the phenomenon – private property and the direct material dependence of the majority of women upon men – were firmly established. In a workers' republic the situation has changed. Private property has been abolished and all citizens of the republic are obliged to work. Marriage has ceased to be a method by which a woman can find herself a "breadwinner" and thus avoid the necessity of working or providing for herself by her own labour. The major social factors giving rise to prostitution are, in Soviet Russia, being eliminated. A number of secondary economic and social reasons remain with which it is easier to come to terms. The women's departments must approach the struggle energetically, and they will find a wide field for activity.

On the Central Department's initiative, an interdepartmental commission for the struggle against prostitution was organised last year. For a number of reasons the work of the commission was neglected for a time, but since the autumn of this year there have been signs of life, and with the co-operation of Dr Gol'man and the Central (Women's) Department some work has been planned and organised. Representatives from the People's Commissariats

of health, labour, social security and industry, the women's department and the union of communist youth are all involved. The commission has printed the theses in bulletin no. 4, distributes circulars to all regional departments of social security outlining a plan to establish similar commissions all over the country, and has set about working out a number of concrete measures to tackle the circumstances which give rise to prostitution.

The interdepartmental commission considers it necessary that the women's departments take an active part in this work, since prostitution affects the propertyless women of the working class. It is our job it is the job of the women's departments – to organise a mass campaign around the question of prostitution. We must approach this issue with the interests of the work collective in mind and ensure that the revolution within the family is completed, and that relationships between the sexes are put on a more human footing.

The interdepartmental commission, as the theses make clear, takes the view that the struggle against prostitution is connected in a fundamental way with the realisation of our Soviet politics in the sphere of economics and general construction. Prostitution will be finally eliminated when the basis of communism is strengthened. This is the truth which determines our actions. But we also need to understand the importance of creating a communist morality. The two tasks are closely connected: the new morality is created by a new economy, but we will not build a new communist economy without the support of a new morality. Clarity and precise thinking are essential in this matter, and we have nothing to fear from the truth. Communists must openly accept that unprecedented changes in the nature of sexual relationships are taking place. This revolution is called into being by the change in the economic structure and by the new role which women play in the productive activity of the workers' state. In this difficult transition period, when the old is being destroyed and the new is in the process of being created, relations between the sexes sometimes develop that are not compatible with the interests of the collective. But there is also something healthy in the variety of relationships practised.

Our party and the women's departments in particular must analyse the different forms in order to ascertain which are compatible with the general tasks of the revolutionary class and serve to strengthen the collective and its interests.

Behaviour that is harmful to the collective must be rejected and condemned by communists. This is how the Central Women's Department has understood the task of the interdepartmental commission. It is not only necessary to take practical measures to fight the situation and the circumstances that nourish prostitution and to solve the problems of housing and loneliness etc., but also to help the working class to establish its morality alongside its dictatorship.

The interdepartmental commission points to the fact that in Soviet Russia prostitution is practised (a) as a profession and (b) as a means of earning supplementary income. The first form of prostitution is less common and in Petrograd, for example, the number of prostitutes has not been significantly reduced by round-ups of the professionals. The second type of prostitution is widespread in bourgeois capitalist countries (in Petrograd; before the revolution, out of a total of fifty thousand prostitutes only about six or seven thousand were registered), and continues under various guises in our Russia, Soviet ladies exchange their favours for a pair of high-heeled boots; working women and mothers of families sell their favours for flour. Peasant women sleep with the heads of the anti-profiteer detachments in the hope of saving their boarded food, and office workers sleep with their bosses in return for rations, shoes and in the hope of promotion.

How should we fight this situation? The interdepartmental commission had to tackle the important question of *whether or not prostitution should be made a criminal offence*. Many of the representatives of the commission were inclined to the view that prostitution should be an offence, arguing that professional prostitutes are dearly labour deserters. If such a law were passed, the round-up and placing of prostitutes in forced labour camps would become accepted policy.

The Central Department spoke in firm and absolute opposition to such, a step, pointing out that if prostitutes were to be arrested on such grounds, then so ought all legal wives who are maintained by their husbands and do not contribute to society. The prostitute and the house-wife are both labour deserters, and you cannot send one to a forced labour camp without sending the other. This was the position the Central Department took, and it was supported by the representative of the Commissariat of justice. If we take labour desertion as our

criterion, we cannot help punishing all forms of labour desertion. Marriage or the existence of certain relationships between the sexes is of no significance and can play no role in defining criminal offences in a labour republic.

In bourgeois society a woman is condemned to persecution not when she does no work that is useful to the collective or because she sells herself for material gain (two-thirds of women in bourgeois society sell themselves to their legal husbands), but when her sexual relationships are informal and of short duration. Marriage in bourgeois society is characterised *by its duration and by the official nature of its registration*. Property inheritance is preserved in this way. Relationships that are of a temporary nature and lack official sanction are considered by the bigots and hypocritical upholders of bourgeois morality to be shameful.

Can we who uphold the interests of working people define relationships that are temporary and unregistered as criminal? Of course we cannot. Freedom in relationships between the sexes does not contradict communist ideology. The interests of the work collective are not affected by the temporary or lasting nature of a relationship or by its basis in love, passion or passing physical attraction.

A relationship is harmful and alien to the collective only if *material bargaining between the sexes is involved*, only when *worldly calculations* are a substitute for mutual attraction. Whether the bargaining takes the form of prostitution or of a legal marriage relationship is not important. Such unhealthy relationships cannot be permitted, since they threaten equality and solidarity. We must therefore condemn all prostitution, and go as far as explaining to these legal wives are “kept women” what a sad and intolerable part they are playing in the worker’s state.

Can the presence or otherwise of material bargaining be used as a criterion in determining what is and what is not a criminal offence? can we really persuade a couple to admit whether or not there is an element of calculation in their relationship? Would such a law be workable, particularly in view of the fact that at the present time a great variety of relationships are practised among working people and ideas on sexual morality are in constant flux? Where does prostitution end and the marriage of convenience begin? The interdepartmental commission opposed the suggestion that prostitutes be punished for prostituting,

i.e. for buying and selling. They confined themselves to suggesting that all people convicted of work desertion be directed to the social security network and from there either to the section of the Commissariat that deals with the deployment of the labour force or to sanatoria and hospitals. A prostitute is not a special case; as with other categories of deserter, she is only sent to do forced labour if she repeatedly avoids work. Prostitutes are not treated any differently from other labour deserters. This is an important and courageous step, worthy of the world's first labour republic.

The question of prostitution as an offence was set out in thesis no. 15. The next problem that had to be tackled was whether or not the law should punish the prostitute's clients. There were some on the commission who were in favour of this, but they had to give up the idea, which did not follow on logically from our basic premises. How is a client to be defined? Is he someone who buys a woman's favours? In that case the husbands of many legal wives will be guilty. Who is to decide who is a client and who is not? It was suggested that this problem be studied further before a decision was made, but the Central Department and the majority of the commission were against this. As the representative of the Commissariat of justice, admitted, if it were not possible to define exactly when a crime had been committed, then the idea of punishing clients was untenable. The position of the Central Department was once again adopted.

But while the commission accepted that clients cannot be punished by the law, it spoke out for the moral condemnation of those who visit prostitutes or in any way make a business out of prostitution. In fact the commission's theses point out that all go-betweens who make money out of prostitution can be prosecuted as persons making money other than by their own labour. Legislative proposals to this effect have been drawn up by the interdepartmental commission and put before the Council, of People's Commissars. They will come into force in the near future.

It remains for me to indicate the purely practical measures which can help to reduce prostitution, and in the implementation of which the women's departments can play an active role. It cannot be doubted that the poor and inadequate wages that women receive continue to serve as one of the real

factors pushing women into prostitution. According to the law the Wages of male and female workers are equal, but in practice most women are engaged in unskilled work. The problem of improving their skills through the development of a network of special courses must be tackled. The task of the women's departments must be to bring influence to bear on, the education authorities to step up the provision of vocational training for working women.

The political backwardness of women and their lack of social awareness is a second reason for prostitution. The women's departments should increase their work amongst proletarian women. The best way to fight prostitution is to raise the political consciousness of the broad masses of women and to draw them into the revolutionary struggle to build communism.

The fact that the housing situation is still not solved also encourages prostitution. The women's department and the commission for the struggle against prostitution can and must have their say over the solution of this problem. The interdepartmental commission is working out a project on the provision of house communes for young working people and on the establishment of houses that will provide accommodation for women when they are newly arrived in any area. However, unless the women's departments and the komsomols in the provinces show some initiative and take independent action in this matter, all the directives of the commission will remain beautiful and benevolent resolutions – but they will remain on paper. And there is so much we can and must do. The local women's departments must work in conjunction with the education commissions to raise the issue of the correct organisation of sex education in schools. They could also hold a series of discussions and lectures on marriage, the family and the history of relationships between the sexes, highlighting the dependence of these phenomena and of sexual morality itself on economic factors.

It is time we were clear on the question of sexual relationships. It is time we approached this question in a spirit of ruthless and scientific criticism. I already said that the interdepartmental commission has accepted that professional prostitutes are to be treated in the same way as labour deserters. It therefore follows that women who have a work-book but are practising prostitution as a secondary source of income cannot be prosecuted. But this

does not mean that we do not fight against prostitution. We are aware, as I have already pointed out more than once today, that prostitution harm the work collective, negatively affecting the psychology of men and women and distorting feelings of equality and solidarity. Our task is to re-educate the work collective and to bring its psychology into line with the economic tasks of the working class. We must ruthlessly discard the old ideas and attitudes to which we cling through habit Economics has outstripped ideology. The old economic structure is disintegrating and with it the old type of marriage, but we cling to bourgeois life styles. We are ready to reject all the aspects of the old system and welcome the revolution in all spheres of life, only . . . don't touch the family, don't try to change the family! Even politically aware communists are afraid to look squarely at the truth, they brush aside the evidence which clearly shows that the old family ties are weakening and that new forms of economy dictate new forms of relationships between the sexes. Soviet power recognises that woman has a part to play in the national economy and has placed her on an equal footing with the man in this respect, but in everyday life we still hold to the "old ways" and are prepared to accept as normal marriages which are based on the material dependency of a woman on a man. In our struggle against prostitution we must clarify our attitude to marital relations that are based on the same principles of "buying and selling". We must learn to be ruthless over this issue; we must not be deflected from our purpose by sentimental complaints that "by your criticism and scientific preaching you encroach on sacred family ties". We have to explain unequivocally that the old form of the family has been outstripped. Communist, society has no need of it. The bourgeois world gave its blessing to the exclusiveness and isolation of the married couple from the collective; in the atomised and individualistic bourgeois society, the family was the only protection from the storm of life, a quiet harbour in a sea of hostility and competition. The family was an independent and enclosed collective. In communist society this cannot be. Communist society presupposes such a strong sense of the collective that any possibility of the existence of the isolated, introspective family group is excluded. At the present moment ties of kinship, family and even of married life can be seen to be weakening. New ties between working people are being forged and comradeship, common interests, collective responsibility and faith in the collective are

establishing themselves as the highest principles of morality.

I will not take it upon myself to prophesy the form that marriage or relationships between the sexes will assume in the future. But of one thing there is no doubt: under communism all dependence of women upon men and all the elements of material calculation found in modern marriage will be absent. Sexual relationships will be based on a healthy instinct for reproduction prompted by the abandon of young love, or by fervent passion, or by a blaze of physical attraction or by a soft light of intellectual and emotional harmony. Such sexual relationships have nothing in common with prostitution. Prostitution is terrible because it is an act of violence by the woman upon herself in the name of material gain. Prostitution is the naked act of material calculation which leaves no room for considerations of love and passion. Where passion and attraction begin, prostitution ends. Under communism, prostitution and the contemporary family will disappear. Healthy, joyful and free relationships between the sexes will develop. A new generation will come into being, independent and courageous and with a strong sense of the collective: a generation which places the good of the collective above all else.

Comrades! We are laying the foundations for this communist future. It is in our power to hasten the advent of this future. We must strengthen the sense of solidarity within the working class. We must encourage this sense of togetherness. Prostitution hinders the development of solidarity, and we therefore call upon the women's departments to begin an immediate campaign to root out his evil.

Comrades! Our task is to cut out the roots that feed prostitution. Our task is to wage a merciless struggle against all the remnants of individualism and of the former, type of marriage. Our task is to revolutionise, attitudes in the sphere of sexual relationships, to bring them into line with the interest of the working collective. When the communist collective has eliminated the contemporary forms of marriage and the family, the problem of prostitution will cease to exist.

Let us get to work, comrades. The new family is already in the process of creation, and the great family of the triumphant world proletariat is developing and growing stronger.

COURSE 2: MARIA MIES- Colonization and Housewifization (1986) *

***This is chapter three from the book *Patriarchy and Capital Accumulation on a World Scale*.**

The Dialectics of 'Progress and Retrogression'

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, it is possible to formulate a tentative thesis which will guide my further discussion.

The historical development of the division of labour in general, and the sexual division of labour in particular, was/is not an evolutionary and peaceful process, based on the ever-progressing development of productive forces (mainly technology) and specialization, but a violent one by which first certain categories of men, later certain peoples, were able mainly by virtue of arms and warfare to establish an exploitative relationship between themselves and women, and other peoples and classes.

Within such a predatory mode of production, which is intrinsically patriarchal, warfare and conquest become the most 'productive' modes of production. The quick accumulation of material wealth – not based on regular subsistence work in one's own community, but on looting and robbery – facilitates the faster development of technology in those societies which are based on conquest and warfare. This technological development, however, again is not oriented principally towards the satisfaction of subsistence needs of the community as a whole, but towards further warfare, conquest and accumulation. The development of arms and transport technology has been a driving force for technological innovation in all patriarchal societies, but particularly in the modern capitalist European one which has conquered and subjected the whole world since the fifteenth century. The concept of 'progress' which emerged in this particular patriarchal civilization is historically unthinkable without the one-sided development of the technology of warfare and conquest. All subsistence technology (for conservation and production of food, clothes and shelter, etc.) henceforth appears to be 'backward' in comparison to the 'wonders' of the modern technology of warfare and conquest (navigation, the compass, gunpowder, etc.).

The predatory patriarchal division of labour is based, from the outset, on a structural separation and subordination of human beings: men are separated from women, whom they have subordinated, the 'own' people are separated from the 'foreigners' or 'heathens'. Whereas in the old patriarchies this separation could never be total, in the modern 'western' patriarchy this separation has been extended to a separation between MAN and NATURE. In the old patriarchies (China, India, Arabia), men could not conceive of themselves as totally independent from Mother Earth. Even the conquered and subjected peoples, slaves, pariahs, etc., were still visibly present and were not thought of as lying totally outside the oikos or the 'economy' (the hierarchically structured social universe which was seen as a living organism (cf. Merchant, 1983)). And women, though they were exploited and subordinated, were crucially important as mothers of sons for all patriarchal societies. Therefore, I think it is correct when B. Ehrenreich and D. English call these pre-modern patriarchies gynocentric. Without the human mother and Mother Earth no patriarchy could exist (Ehrenreich/English, 1979: 7-8). With the rise of capitalism as a world-system, based on large-scale conquest and colonial plunder, and the emergence of the world-market (Wallerstein, 1974), it becomes possible to externalize or exterritorialize those whom the new patriarchs wanted to exploit. The colonies were no longer seen as part of the economy or society, they were lying outside 'civilized society'. In the same measure as European conquerors and invaders 'penetrated' those 'virgin lands', these lands and their inhabitants were 'naturalized', declared as wild, savage nature, waiting to be exploited and tamed by the male civilizers.

Similarly, the relationship between human beings and external nature or the earth was radically changed. As Carolyn Merchant has convincingly shown, the rise of modern science and technology was based on the violent attack and rape of Mother Earth – hitherto conceived as a living organism. Francis Bacon, the father of modern science, was one of those who advocated the same violent means to rob Mother Nature of her secrets – namely, torture and inquisition – as were used by Church and State to get at the secrets of the witches. The taboos against mining, digging holes in the womb of Mother Earth, were broken by force, because the new patriarchs wanted to get at the precious metals and

other 'raw-materials' hidden in the 'womb of the earth'. The rise of modern science, a mechanistic and physical world-view, was based on the killing of nature as a living organism and its transformation into a huge reservoir of 'natural resources' or 'matter', which could be analysed and synthesized by Man into his new machines by which he could make himself independent of Mother Nature.

Only now, the dualism, or rather the polarization, between the patriarchs and nature, and between men and women could develop its full and permanent destructive potential. From now on science and technology became the main 'productive forces' through which men could 'emancipate' themselves from nature, as well as from women.

Carolyn Merchant has shown that the destruction of nature as a living organism – and the rise of modern science and technology, together with the rise of male scientists as the new high priests – had its close parallel in the violent attack on women during the witch hunt which raged through Europe for some four centuries.

Merchant does not extend her analysis to the relation of the New Men to their colonies. Yet an understanding of this relation is absolutely necessary, because we cannot understand the modern developments, including our present problems, unless we include all those who were 'defined into nature' by the modern capitalist patriarchs: Mother Earth, Women and Colonies.

The modern European patriarchs made themselves independent of their European Mother Earth, by conquering first the Americas, later Asia and Africa, and by extracting gold and silver from the mines of Bolivia, Mexico and Peru and other 'raw materials' and luxury items from the other lands. They 'emancipated' themselves, on the one hand, from their dependence on European women for the production of labourers by destroying the witches, as well as their knowledge of contraceptives and birth control. On the other hand, by subordinating grown African men and women into slavery, they thus acquired the necessary labour power for their plantations in America and the Caribbean.

Thus, the progress of European Big Men is based on the subordination and exploitation of their own women, on the exploitation and killing of Nature, on the exploitation and subordination of other peoples and their lands. Hence, the

law of this 'progress' is always a contradictory and not an evolutionary one: progress for some means retrogression for the other side; 'evolution' for some means 'devolution' for others; 'humanization' for some means 'de-humanization' for others; development of productive forces for some means underdevelopment and retrogression for others. The rise of some means the fall of others. Wealth for some means poverty for others, The reason why there cannot be unilinear progress is the fact that, as was said earlier, the predatory patriarchal mode of production constitutes a non-reciprocal, exploitative relationship. Within such a relationship no general progress for all, no 'trickling down', no development for all is possible.

Engels had attributed this antagonistic relationship between progress and retrogression to the emergence of private property and the exploitation of one class by the other. Thus, he wrote in 1884:

Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilization, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the exploited class, that is of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class (Engels, 1976: 333).

Engels speaks only of the relationship between exploiting and exploited classes, he does not include the relationship between men and women, that of colonial masters to their colonies or of Civilized Man in general to Nature. But these relationships constitute, in fact, the hidden foundation of civilized society, He hopes to change this necessarily polarized relationship by extending what is good for the ruling class to all classes: 'What is good for the ruling class should be good for the whole of the society with which the ruling class identifies itself (Engels. 1976: 333).

But this is precisely the logical flaw in this strategy: in a contradictory and exploitative relationship, the privileges of the exploiters can never become the privileges of all. If the wealth of the metro poles is based on the exploitation of colonies, then the colonies cannot achieve wealth unless they also have colonies. If the emancipation of men is based on the subordination of women, then women cannot achieve 'equal rights' with men, which would necessarily include the right to exploit others. [1]

Hence, a feminist strategy for liberation cannot but aim at the total abolition of all these relationships of retrogressive progress. This means it must aim at an end of all exploitation of women by men, of nature by man, of colonies by colonizers, of one class by the other. As long as exploitation of one of these remains the precondition for the advance (development, evolution, progress, humanization, etc.) of one section of people, feminists cannot speak of liberation or 'socialism.'

Subordination of Women, Nature and Colonies: The underground of capitalist patriarchy or civilized society

In the following, I shall try to trace the contradictory process, briefly sketched out above, by which, in the course of the last four or five centuries women, nature and colonies were externalized, declared to be outside civilized society, pushed down. and thus made invisible as the under-water part of an iceberg is invisible, yet constitute the base of the whole.

Methodologically. I shall try as far as possible to undo the division of those poles of the exploitative relations which are usually analysed as separate entities. Our understanding of scholarly work or research follows exactly the same logic as that of the colonizers and scientists: they cut apart and separate parts which constitute a whole, isolate these parts. analyse them under laboratory conditions and synthesize them again in a new, man-made, artificial model.

I shall not follow this logic. I shall rather try to trace the 'underground connections' that link the processes by which nature was exploited and put under man's domination to the processes by which women in Europe were subordinated. and examine the processes by which these two were linked to the conquest and colonization of other lands and people. Hence, the historical emergence of European science and technology. and its mastery over nature have to be linked to the persecution of the European witches. And both the persecution of the witches and the rise of modern science have to be linked to the slave trade and the destruction of subsistence economies in the colonies. This cannot be a comprehensive history of this whole period. desirable though

this might be. I shall mainly highlight some important connections which were crucial for the construction of capitalist patriarchal production relations. One is the connection between the persecution of the witches in Europe and the rise of the new bourgeoisie and modern science, and the subordination of nature. This has already been dealt with by several researchers (Merchant, 1983; Heinsohn, Knieper, Steiger, 1979; Ehrenreich, English, 1979; Becker et al, 1977). The following analysis is based on their work.

The historical connections between these processes and the subordination and exploitation of colonial peoples in general, and of women in the colonies in particular, has not yet been adequately studied. Therefore. I shall deal with this history more extensively.

The Persecution of the Witches and the Rise of Modern Society Women's productive record at the end of the Middle Ages

Among the Germanic tribes who occupied Europe, the house-father (*pater familias*) had power over everything and everybody in the house. This power, called *munt* (Old High German) (*mundium* = *manus* = hand), implied that he could sell, bill, etc., wife, children, slaves, etc. The *munt* of the man over the woman was established through marriage. The relationship was one of property rights over things, which was founded on occupation (kidnapping of women), or purchase (sale of women). According to Germanic law, the marriage was a sales-contract between the two families. The woman was only the object in this transaction. By acquiring the *munt-power*, the husband acquired the right over the wife's belongings, as she was his property. Women were lifelong under the ,mum of their men – husband, father, son. The origin of this *munt* was to exclude women from the use of arms. With the rise of the cities since the thirteenth century' and the emergence of an urban bourgeoisie, the 'whole house' – the earlier Germanic form of the extended family and kinship – began to dissolve. The old *potestas patriae*, the power of the father over sons and daughters, ended when they left the house. Wives were put under the *munt* or guardianship of the husband. However, if unmarried women had property of their own, they were sometimes considered *mundig* (major) before the law. In

Cologne, unmarried women who followed some craft were called *selbsländig* in 1291 (Becker et al, 1977: 41). The laws prevailing in the cities, as well as some laws for the countryside, freed women in the crafts from the *mund* or dependence on a father or husband.

The reason for this liberalization of sexual bondage has to be seen in the need to allow women in the cities to carry on their crafts and businesses independently. This was due to several factors:

1. With the extension of trade and commerce the demand for manufactured goods, particularly clothes and other consumer goods, grew. These goods were almost exclusively produced in the household of craftsmen and women. With the growth of money-supply in the hands of the patricians, their consumption of luxury goods also grew. Costly clothes of velvet and silk, lace collars, girdles, etc., became the fashion. In many of these crafts women were predominant.

However, in Germany, married women were not allowed to carry out their business or any property transaction without the consent of their husband, who continued to be their guardian and master. However, craftswomen or businesswomen could appear before a court as witnesses or complainants, without a guardian. In some cities the businesswomen or market-women were given equal rights with the men. In Munich it was stated that 'a woman who stands in the market, buys and sells, has all rights her husband has'. But she could not sell his property.

The independence of the medieval crafts- and market-women was not unlimited; it was a concession given to them because the rising bourgeoisie needed them. But within the family the husband retained his master role.

2. The second reason for this relative freedom for women in commerce and crafts was a shortage of men at the end of the Middle Ages. In Frankfurt the sex ratio was 1,100 women for 1,000 men, according to a thirteenth-century census; in Nuremberg (fifteenth century), the sex ratio was 1,000 men to 1,207 women. The number of men had diminished due to the crusades and constant warfare between the feudal states. Moreover, male mortality seems to have been higher than female mortality 'because of the men's intemperance in all sorts of revelries' (Bucher, quoted in Becker et al, 1977: 63).

Among the peasants in South Germany, only the eldest son was allowed to marry because otherwise the land would have been divided into holdings too small to be viable. Journeymen were not allowed to marry before they became masters. The serfs of the feudal lords could not marry without the consent of their lords. When the cities opened their doors, many serfs, men and women, ran away to the cities; 'city air makes men free' was the slogan. The poor people in the countryside had to send their daughters away to fend for themselves as maidservants because they could not feed them until they were married.

This all resulted in an increase in the number of unattached, single or widowed women who had to be economically active. The cities, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries did not exclude women from any craft or business which they wanted to take up. This was necessary as, without their contribution, trade and commerce could not have been expanded. But the attitude towards the economically independent women was always contradictory. In the beginning the crafts' guilds were exclusively men's associations. It seems they had to admit some craftswomen later. In Germany this did not occur before the fourteenth century. Mainly weaver-women and spinsters and women engaged in other branches of textile manufacture were allowed to join guilds. Weaving had been in the hands of the men since the twelfth century, but women did a number of ancillary jobs, and later also female master weavers are mentioned for certain branches like veil-weaving, linen-weaving, silk-weaving, gold-weaving, etc., which were only done by women. In Cologne there were even female guilds from the fourteenth century.

Apart from the crafts, women were mainly engaged in *petty trade* in fruits, chicken, eggs, herrings, flowers, cheese, milk, salt, oil, feathers, jams, etc, Women were very successful as peddlers and hawkers, and constituted a certain challenge to male traders. But they did not engage in foreign trade though they advanced money to merchants who traded with the outside markets.

The silk-spinners of Cologne often were married to rich merchants who sold the precious products of their wives in far-off markets In Flanders, England, at the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, at the big fairs in Leipzig and Frankfurt (Becker et al, 1977: 66-67).

Only one merchant woman is mentioned who herself travelled to England

in the fifteenth century: Katherine Ysenmengerde from Danzig (Becker et al, 1977: 66-67).

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, the old European order collapsed and 'there came to be a European world economy based on the capitalist mode of production' (Wallerstein, 1974: 67). This period is characterized by a tremendous expansion and penetration of the rising bourgeoisie into the 'New Worlds', and by pauperization, wars, epidemics and turbulence within the old core states.

According to Wallerstein this world economy included, by the end of the sixteenth century, north-west Europe, the Christian Mediterranean, Central Europe, the Baltic region, certain regions of America, New Spain, the Antilles, Peru, Chile and Brazil. Excluded at that time were India, the Far East, the Ottoman Empire, Russia and China.

Between 1535 and 1540, Spain achieved control over more than half the population of the Western Hemisphere. Between 1670-1680, the area under European control went up from about three million square kilometres to about seven million (Wallerstein, 1974: 68). The expansion made possible the large-scale accumulation of private capital 'which was used to finance the rationalization of agricultural production' (Wallerstein, 1974: 69). 'One of the most obvious characteristics of this sixteenth century European World Economy was a secular inflation, the so-called price revolution' (Wallerstein, 1974: 69). This inflation has been attributed, in one way or the other, to the influx of precious metals, bullion, from Hispano America. Its effect was mainly felt in the supply of foodgrains available at cheaper prices. 'In those countries where industry expanded, it was necessary to turn over a larger proportion of the land to the needs of horses'. Grain then had to be bought in the Baltic at higher prices. At the same time, wages remained stagnant in England and France because of institutional rigidities, and even a decline in real wages took place. This meant greater poverty for the masses.

According to Wallerstein, sixteenth-century Europe had several core areas: northern Europe (Netherlands, England, France) where trade flourished, and where land was used mainly for pastoral purposes, not for grain. Rural wagelabour became the dominant form of labour control. Grain was imported

from Eastern Europe and the Baltics – the periphery – where ‘secondary serfdom’ or ‘feudalism’ emerged as the main labour control. In northern and central Europe this process led to great pauperization of peasants. There seems to have been population growth in the sixteenth century and the pressure on the towns grew. Wallerstein sees this population pressure as reason for out-migration. ‘In Western Europe there was emigration to the towns and a growing vagabondage that was “endemic” , (Wallerstein, 1974: 117). There was not only the rural exodus due to eviction and the enclosure system (of the yeomen in England), ‘there was also the vagabondage “caused by the decline of feudal bodies of retainers and the disbanding of the swollen armies which had flocked to serve the kings against their vassals” , (Marx, quoted by Wallerstein, 1974: 117).

These wanderers – before they were recruited as labourers into the new industries – lived from hand to mouth. They were the impoverished masses who flocked around the various prophets and heretic sects. Most of the radical and utopian ideas of the time are concerned with these poor masses. Many poor women were among these vagabonds. They earned their living as dancers, tricksters, singers and prostitutes. They flocked to the annual fairs, the church councils, etc. For the Diet of Frankfurt, 1394, 800 women came; for the Council of Constance and Basle, 1500 (Becker et al, 1977; 76). These women also followed the armies. They were not only prostitutes for the soldiers but they also had to dig trenches, nurse the sick and wounded, and sell commodities.

These women were not despised in the beginning, they formed part of medieval society. The bigger cities put them into special ‘women’s houses’. The church tried to control the increasing prostitution, but poverty drove too many poor women into the ‘women’s houses’. In many cities these prostitutes had their own associations. In Church processions and public feasts they had their own banners and place – even a patron saint, St Magdalene. This shows that up to the fourteenth century prostitution was not considered a bad thing. But at the end of the fourteenth century, the Statutes of Meran rule that prostitutes should stay away from public feasts and dances where ‘burgers women and other honorable women are’. They should have a yellow ribbon on their shoes so that everyone could distinguish them from the ‘decent women’ (Becker et al, 1977: 79).

The witch-hunt which raged through Europe from the twelfth to the seventeenth century was one of the mechanisms to control and subordinate women, the peasant and artisan, women who in their economic and sexual independence constituted a threat for the emerging bourgeois order.

Recent feminist literature on the witches and their persecution has brought to light that women were not passively giving up their economic and sexual independence, but that they resisted in many forms the onslaught of church, state and capita. One form of resistance were the many heterodox sects in which women either played a prominent role, or which in their ideology propagated freedom and equality for women and a condemnation of sexual repression, property and monogamy. Thus the 'Brethren of the Free Spirit', a sect which existed over several hundred years, established communal living, abolished marriage, and rejected the authority of the church. Many women, some of them extraordinary scholars, belonged to this sect. Several of them were burnt as heretics (Cohn, 1970).

It seems plausible that the whole fury of the witch-hunt was not just a result of the decaying old order in its confrontation with new capitalist forces, or even a manifestation of timeless male sadism, but a reaction of the new male-dominated classes against the rebellion of women. The poor women 'freed', that is, expropriated from their means of subsistence and skills, fought back against their expropriators. Some argue that the witches had been an organized sect which met regularly at their 'witches' sabbath', where all poor people gathered and already practised the new free society without masters and serfs. When a woman denied being a witch and having anything to do with all the accusations, she was tortured and finally burnt at the stake. The witch trial, however, followed a meticulously thought-out legal procedure. In protestant countries one finds special secular witch-commissions and witch-commissars. The priests were in constant rapport with the courts and influenced the judges.

One prosecutor, Benedikt Carpzov, first a lawyer in Saxonia, later professor in Leipzig, signed 20,000 death sentences against witches. He was a faithful son of the protestant church (Dross, 1978: 204).

If someone denounced a woman as a witch, a commission was sent to that place to collect evidence. Everything was evidence: good weather or bad

weather, if she worked hard or if she was lazy, diseases or healing powers. If under torture the witch named another person, this person was also immediately arrested.

The Subordination and Breaking of the Female Body: Torture

Here are the minutes of the torture of Katherine Ups from Betzlesdorf, 1672:

After this the judgement was again read to her and she was admonished to speak the truth. But she continued to deny. She then undressed willingly. The hangman bound her hands and hung her up, let her down again. She cried: woe, woe. Again she was pulled up, Again she screamed, woe woe lord in heaven help me. Her toes were bound ... her legs were put into Spanish boots – first the left then the right leg was screwed ... she cried, 'Lord Jesus come and help me ... She said she knew nothing, even if they killed her. They pulled her up higher. She became silent, then she said she was no witch. Then they again put the screws on her legs. She again screamed and cried ... and became silent ... she continued to say she knew nothing . . . She shouted her mother should come out of the grave and help her ...

They then led her outside the room and shaved her head to find the stigma. The master came back and said they had found the stigma. He had thrust a needle into it and she had not felt it. Also, no blood had come out. Again they bound her at hand and feet and pulled her up, again she screamed and shouted she knew nothing. They should put her on the floor and kill her etc., etc., etc., ... (quoted in Becker et al, 1977; 426ff).

In 1631 Friedrich von Spee dared to write an anonymous essay against the tortures and the witch hunt. He exposed the sadistic character of the tortures and at the use the authorities, the church and the secular authorities made of the witch hysteria to find a scapegoat for all problems and disturbances and the unrest of the poor people, and to divert the wrath of the people from them against some poorwomen.

31 October 1724: Torture of Enneke Fristenares from Cocsfeld (Munster)
After the accused had been asked in vain to confess, Dr Gogravius announced the order of torture ... He asked her to tell the truth, because the painful interrogation would make her confess anyway and double the punishment ... after this the first degree of torture was applied to her.

Then the judge proceeded to the second degree of torture. She was led to the torture chamber, she was undressed, tied down and interrogated. She denied to have done anything ... As she remained stubborn they proceeded to the third degree and her thumbs were put into screws. Because she screamed so horribly they put a block into her mouth and continued screwing her thumbs. Fifty minutes this went on, the screws were loosened and tightened alternately. But she pleaded her innocence. She also did not weep but only shouted 'I am not guilty, O Jesus come and help me.'

Then, 'Your Lordship, take me and kill me.' Then they proceeded to the fourth degree, the Spanish boots ... As she did not weep, Dr Gogravius worried whether the accused might have been made insensitive against pain through sorcery. Therefore he again asked the executioner to undress her and find out whether there was anything suspicious about her body. Whereupon the executioner reported he had examined everything meticulously but had not found anything. Again he was ordered to apply the Spanish Boots. The accused however continued to assert her innocence and screamed 'O Jesus I haven't done it. I haven't done it. Your Lordship kill me I am not guilty, I am not guilty!'

This order went on for 30 minutes without result.

Then Dr Gogravius ordered the fifth degree:

The accused was hung up and beaten with two rods – up to 30 strokes. She was so exhausted that she said she would confess, but with regard to the specific accusations she continued to deny that she had committed any of the crimes. The executioner had to pull her up till her arms were twisted out of their joints. For six minutes this torture lasted. Then she was beaten up again, and again her thumbs were put in to screws and her legs into the Spanish Boots. But the accused continued to deny that she had anything to do with the devil.

As Dr Gogravius came to the conclusion that the torture had been correctly applied, according to the rules, and after the executioner stated the accused would not survive further torturing Dr Gogravius ordered the accused to be taken down and unbound. He ordered the executioner to set her limbs in the right place and nurse her (quoted in Becker et al, 1977: 433-435. transl. M.M.).

Burning of Witches, Primitive Accumulation of Capital, and the Rise of Modern Science

The persecution and burning of the midwives as witches was directly connected with the emergence of modern society: the professionalization of medicine, the rise of *medicine* as a 'natural science', the rise of *science* and of *modern economy*. The torture chambers of the witch-hunters were the laboratories where the texture, the anatomy, the resistance of the human body – mainly the female body – was studied. One may say that modern medicine and the male hegemony over this vital field were established on the basis of millions of crushed, maimed, torn, disfigured and finally burnt, female bodies. [2]

There was a calculated division of labour between Church and State in organizing the massacres and the terror against the witches. Whereas the church representatives identified witches, gave the theological justification and led the interrogations. The 'secular arm' of the state was used to carry out the tortures and finally execute the witches on the pyre.

The persecution of the witches was a manifestation of the rising modern society and not, as is usually believed, a remnant of the irrational 'dark' Middle Ages. This is most clearly shown by Jean Bodin, the French theoretician of the new mercantilist economic doctrine. Jean Bodin was the founder of the quantitative theory of money, of the modern concept of sovereignty and of mercantilist populationism. He was a staunch defender of modern rationalism, and was at the same time one of the most vocal proponents of state-ordained tortures and massacres of the witches. He held the view that for the development of new wealth after the medieval agrarian crisis, the modern state had to be invested with absolute sovereignty. This state had, moreover, the duty to provide for enough workers for the new economy. In order to do so, he demanded a strong police which above all would fight against witches and midwives who, according to him, were responsible for so many abortions, the infertility of couples, or sexual intercourse without conception. Anyone who prevented the conception or the birth of children he considered as a murderer who should be persecuted by the state. Bodin worked as a consultant of the French government in the persecution of the witches, and advocated torture and the pyre to eradicate the witches. His tract on witchcraft was one of the most brutal and sadistic of all pamphlets written against witches at that time. Like Institoris and Sprenger in Germany he singled out women for his attack. He set a ratio of 50 women to one man for the witch persecutions (Merchant, 1983: 138). This combination of modern rationality, the propagation of the new state and a direct violent attack on the witches we also find with another great master of the new era of European civilization, namely Francis Bacon (cf. Merchant, 1983: 164-177).

Similarly, there is a direct connection between the witch pogroms and the emergence of the professionalization of law. Before that period, the German law followed old Germanic custom; it was people's law or customary law, but not a discipline to be studied. But now Roman law was introduced, most of the universities established a law faculty and several universities, like the university of Frankfurt, consisted in fact only of the law faculty. Some contemporaries complain about the universities:

They are good for nothing and train only parasites who learn how to confuse the people, how to make good things bad and bad things good, who withhold what is rightful from the poor and give what is not his right to the rich (Jansen, 1903, quoted in Hammes, 1977: 243; transl. M.M.).

The reason why the sons of the rising urban class were flocking to the law faculties was the following: 'In our times jurisprudencia smiles at everybody, so that everyone wants to become a doctor in law. Most are attracted to this field of studies out of greed for money and ambition' (ibid.).

The witch trials provided employment and money for a host of lawyers, advocates, judges, councils, etc. They were able, through their complicated and learned interpretations of the authoritative texts, to prolong the trials so that the costs of the trial would go up. There was a close relationship between the worldly authorities, the church, the rulers of the small feudal states and the lawyers. The latter were responsible for an inflation of fees, and filled their coffers by squeezing money from the poor victims of the witch-hunt. The fleecing of the people was so rampant that even a man like the Elector of Trier (the Archbishop of Trier was one of the seven princes who elected the German Kaiser), Johann von Schoenburg, who had himself had several hundred people executed as witches and sorcerers, had to check the robbing of the widows and orphans by the learned jurists and all others connected with the witch trials. Some of the rulers set up accountants to check what the various officials had done with the money extracted and the fees they had demanded. Among the costs for a trial were the following:

- for the alcohol consumed by the soldiers who pursued a witch;
- for the visit the priest paid to the witch while in prison;
- for the maintenance of the private guard of the executioner. (Hammes, 1977: 243-257).

According to Canon Law, the property of the witch was to be confiscated, irrespective of whether there were heirs or not. The bulk of the confiscated

property, never less than 50 per cent, was appropriated by the government. In many cases, all that was left over after the deduction of the costs for the trial went to the state treasury. This confiscation was illegal, as the 'Constitutio Criminalis' of Emperor Charles V proclaims in 1532. But this law had only paper value.

The fact that the witch-hunt was such a lucrative source of money and wealth led in certain areas to the setting up of special commissions which had the task of denouncing ever more people as witches and sorcerers. When the accused were found guilty, they and their families had to bear all the costs of the trial, beginning with the bills for alcohol and food for the witch commission (their per diem), and ending with the costs for the firewood for the stake. Another source of money was the sums paid by the richer families to the learned judges and lawyers in order to free one of their members from the persecution if she was accused as a witch. This is also a reason why we find more poor people among those who were executed.

Manfred Hammes has brought to light yet another dimension of the 'political economy' of the witch-hunt, namely, the raising of funds by the warring European princes to finance their wars, particularly the Thirty-Year War from 1618-1648. From 1618 onwards, the Law of Charles V, prohibiting the confiscation of property of witches and sorcerers, was virtually abandoned and witch-hunts were specifically organised or encouraged by some of the princes in order to be able to confiscate the property of their subjects.

Hammes gives us the example of the city of Cologne and the dispute that arose between the city fathers and the Elector Ferdinand of Bavaria – the ruler of the diocese. The city of Cologne, a rich centre of trading and industries, had remained neutral for a long time during the Thirty-Years War. (In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the city had seen a flourishing trade – mainly in silk and textiles.) [3] Nevertheless, the city had paid considerable sums into the war fund of the Emperor. This was made possible by an increase in taxes. When foreign armies were marauding and looting the villages, many rural people fled into the free and neutral city. The result was a scarcity of food supplies which led to tensions among the people and even to open riots. At the same time the witch trial against Catherine Hernot [4] started, which was followed by an intense

witch-hunt. When the first judgements were pronounced, the Elector Ferdinand of Bavaria, who had to pay his armies, presented a bill to the city authorities. In this bill he claimed that all the property of executed witches should be confiscated and go to the exchequer. The city council tried with all means to prevent the implementation of this ordinance. They asked their lawyers to make an expert study of the law. But the Elector and his lawyers finally proclaimed that the bill was an emergency measure. Since the evil of witchcraft had assumed such dimensions in recent times, it would be politically unwise to follow the letter of the law (namely, *Constitutio Criminalis* of Charles V prohibiting confiscations) word by word. However, the lawyers of the city were not convinced and they suggested a compromise. They said it was fair and just that the persons who had been involved in the witch trial, the lawyers, executioners, etc., would get a fee as compensation 'for their hard work and the time they had spent on the trial'. The Elector, as he could not press money out of the urban witch-hunt, confiscated all the property of the witches executed in the rural areas of the diocese.

But not only the feudal class (particularly the smaller princes who could not compete with the rising bourgeoisie in the cities, or the bigger lords), but also the propertied classes in the cities were using the confiscation of witch-property as a means for capital accumulation.

Thus, in Cologne itself in 1628, ten years after the beginning of the war, the city authorities had introduced the confiscation of witch-property. One of the legitimations forwarded by the lawyers of Cologne was that the witches had received a lot of money from the devil and that it was perfectly in order that this devil's money be confiscated by the authorities to enable them to eradicate the evil breed of sorcerers and witches. In fact, it seems that in some cases the cities and the princes used witch-pogroms and confiscations as a kind of development aid for their ruined economies. The city fathers of Mainz did not make much fuss about legal niceties and simply asked their officials to confiscate all property of the witches. In 1618, the Monastery of St Clare of Hochheim had donated them 2,000 guilders for the 'eradication of witches'.

There is a report of the Bailiff Geiss who wrote to his Lord of Lindheim asking him to allow him to start with the persecution because he needed money

for the restoration of a bridge and the church. He noted that most of the people were disturbed about the spreading of the evil of witchcraft:

If only your Lordship would be willing to start the burning, we would gladly provide the firewood and bear all other costs, and your Lordship would earn so much that the bridge and also the Church could be well repaired.

Moreover, you would get so much that you could pay your servants a better salary in future, because one could confiscate whole houses and particularly the more well-to-do ones (quoted in Hammes, 1977: 254; transl. M.M.).

Apart from the big bloodsuckers – the religious authorities, the worldly governments, the feudal class, the urban authorities, the fraternity of jurists, the executioners – there grew up a whole army of smaller fry who made a living out of the burning witches. Begging monks wandered around and sold pictures of the saints which, if swallowed by the buyers, would prevent them from being afflicted by witchcraft. There were many self-appointed witch-commissars. Since the authorities paid fees for the discovery, the arrest and the interrogation of witches, they accumulated money by wandering from place to place instigating the poor people to see the cause of all their misery in the workings of the witches. Then, when everybody was in the grip of the mass psychosis, the commissar said he would come to eradicate the pest. First, the commissar would send his collector who would go from house to house to collect donations to prove that the peasants themselves had invited him. Then the commissar would come and organize two or three burnings at the stake. If someone was not ready to pay, he was suspected of being a sorcerer or a witch or a sympathizer of the witches. In some cases the villages paid a sum to the commissar in advance, so that he would not visit their village. This happened in the Eifel village of Rheinbach. But five years later the same commissar came back and, since the peasants were not ready to yield a second time to this blackmail, he added more death sentences to the record of 800 he had already achieved.

The hope of financial gains can be seen as one of the main reasons why the witch hysteria spread and why hardly any people were acquitted. The witch-hunt was business. This is clearly spelt out by Friedrich von Spee who finally had the courage, in 1633, to write a book against this sordid practice. He notes:

- the lawyers, inquisitors, etc., use torture because they want to show that they

are not superficial but responsible lawyers;

- they need many witches in order to prove that their job is necessary;
- they do not want to lose the remuneration the princes have promised for each witch.

To summarize we can quote Cornelius Laos who said the witch trials 'were a new alchemy which made gold out of human blood' (Hammes, 1977: 257). We could add, out of female blood. The capital accumulated in the process of the witch-hunt by the old ruling classes, as well as by the new rising bourgeois class is nowhere mentioned in the estimates and calculations of the economic historians of that epoch. The blood-money of the witch-hunt was used for the private enrichment of bankrupt princes, of lawyers, doctors, judges and professors, but also for such public affairs as financing wars, building up a bureaucracy, infrastructural measures, and finally the new absolute state. This blood-money fed the original process of capital accumulation, perhaps not to the same extent as the plunder and robbery of the colonies, but certainly to a much greater extent than is known today.

But the persecution and torture of witches was not only motivated by economic considerations. The interrogation of witches also provided the model for the development of the new scientific method of extracting secrets from Mother Nature. Carolyn Merchant has shown that Francis Bacon, the 'father' of modern science, the founder of the inductive method, used the same methods, the same ideology to examine nature which the witch-persecutioners used to extract the secrets from the witches, namely, torture, destruction, violence. He deliberately used the imagery of the witch-hunt to describe his new scientific method: he treated 'nature as a female. to be tortured through mechanical inventions' (Merchant, 1983: 168), as the witches were tortured by new machines. He stated that the method by which nature's secrets might be discovered consisted in investigating the secrets of witchcraft by inquisition: 'For you have but to follow, and as it were hound out nature in her wanderings, and you will be able when you like to lead and drive her afterward to the same place

again ... ' (quoted by Merchant, 1983: 168). He strongly advocated the breaking of all taboos which, in medieval society, forbade the digging of holes into Mother Earth or violating her: 'Neither ought a man to make scruple of entering and penetrating into these holes and corners, when the inquisition of truth is his whole object ... ' (Merchant, 1983: 168). He compared the inquisition of nature to both the interrogation of witches and to that of the courtroom witnesses:

I mean (according to the practice in civil causes) in this great plea or suit granted by the divine favour and providence (whereby the human race seeks to recover its right over nature) to *examine nature herself* and the arts upon interrogatories ... (Merchant, 1983: 169).

Nature would not yield her secrets unless forcibly violated by the new mechanical devices:

For like as a man's disposition is never well known or proved till he be crossed, nor Proteus ever changed shapes till he was straitened and held fast, so nature exhibits herself more clearly under the trials and vexations of art (mechanical devices) than when left to herself (quoted by Merchant, 1983: 169).

According to Bacon, nature must be 'bound into service', made a 'slave', put 'in constraint', had to be 'dissected'; much as 'woman's womb had symbolically yielded to the forceps, so nature's womb harboured secrets that through technology could be wrested from her grasp for use in the improvement of the human condition' (Merchant, 1983: 169).

Bacon's scientific method, which is still the foundation of modern science, unified knowledge with material power. Many of the technological inventions were in fact related to warfare and conquest, like gunpowder, navigation, the magnet. These 'arts of war' were combined with knowledge – like printing. Violence, therefore, was the key word and key method by which the New Man established his domination over women and nature. These means of coercion 'do not, like the old, merely exert a gentle guidance over nature's course; they have the power to conquer and subdue her, to shake her to the foundations' (Merchant, 1983: 172).

Thus, concludes Carolyn Merchant:

The interrogation of witches as symbol for the interrogation of nature, the courtroom as model for its inquisition, and torture through mechanical devices as a tool for the subjugation of disorder were fundamental to the scientific *method as power* (emphasis added) (Merchant, 1983: 172).

The class which benefited from this new scientific patriarchal dominance over women and nature was the rising protestant, capitalist class of merchants, mining industrialists, clothier capitalists. For this class, it was necessary that the old autonomy of women over their sexuality and reproductive capacities be destroyed, and that women be forcibly made to breed more workers. Similarly, nature had to be transformed into a vast reservoir of material resources to be exploited and turned into profit by this class.

Hence the church, the state, the new capitalist class and modern scientists collaborated in the violent subjugation of women and nature. The weak Victorian women of the nineteenth century were the products of the terror methods by which this class had moulded and shaped 'female nature' according to its interests (Ehrenreich, English, 1979).

Colonization and Primitive Accumulation of Capital

The period referred to so far has been called the period of *primitive accumulation of capital*. Before the capitalist mode of production could establish and maintain itself as a process of extended reproduction of capital – driven by the motor of surplus value production – enough capital had to be accumulated to start this process. The capital was largely accumulated in the colonies between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most of this capital was not accumulated through 'honest' trade by merchant capitalists but largely by way of brigandage, piracy, forced and slave labour.

Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English merchants went out to break the Venetian monopoly of the spice trade with the East. Most of the Spanish-Portuguese discoveries were inspired by the motive to find an independent sea-route to the Orient. In Europe, the result was a price revolution or inflation due to 1. the technical invention of separating copper from silver; 2. the plundering of Cuzeo and the use of slave labour. The cost of precious metal fell. This led to the ruination of the already exhausted feudal class and of the wage earning craftsmen. Mandel concludes:

The fall in real wages – particularly marked by the substitution of cheap potatoes for bread as the basic food of the people – became one of the main sources of the primitive accumulation of industrial capital between the sixteenth and eighteenth

century (Mandel, 1971: 107).

One could say that the first phase of the Primitive Accumulation was that of merchant and commercial capital ruthlessly plundering and exploiting the colonies' human and natural wealth. Thus, there had been 'a marked shortage of capital in England' about 1550:

Within a few years, the pirate expeditions against the Spanish fleet, all of which were organised in the form of joint stock companies, changed the situation ... Drake's first pirate undertaking in the years 1577-1580 was launched with a capital of £5,000 ... it brought in about £600,000 profit, half of which went to the Queen. Beard estimates that the pirates introduced some £12 million into England during the reign of Elizabeth (Mandel, 1971: 108).

The story of the Spanish Conquistadores, who depopulated regions like Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua completely, and exterminated about 15 million Indians is well known. Also, Vasco da Gama's second arrival in India in 1502-1503 was marked by the same trail of blood.

It was a kind of crusade ... by merchants of pepper, cloves and cinnamon. It was punctuated by horrible atrocities; everything seemed permissible against the hated Moslems whom the Portuguese were surprised to meet again at the other end of the world ... (quoted from Hauser in Mandel, 1971: 108).

Commercial expansion from the beginning was based on monopoly. The Dutch drove out the Portuguese, the English, the Dutch.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered that the Dutch merchants, whose profits depended on their monopoly of spices obtained through conquests in the Indonesian archipelago went over to mass destruction of cinnamon trees in the small islands of the Moluccas as soon as prices began to fall in Europe. The 'Hongi Voyages' to destroy these trees and massacre the population which for centuries had drawn their livelihood from growing them, set a sinister mark on the history of Dutch colonization, which had, indeed, begun in the same style. Admiral J.P. Coen did not shrink from the extermination of all the male inhabitants of the Banda islands (Mandel, 1971: 108).

The trading companies – the Oost-Indische Compagnie, the English East India Company and Hudson Bay Company and the French Compagnie des Indes Orientales – all combined the spice trade with the slave trade:

Between 1636 and 1645 the Dutch West India Company sold 23,000 Negroes for 6.7 million florins in all, or about 300 florins a head, whereas the goods given in exchange for each slave were worth no more than 50 florins. Between 1728 and 1760 ships sailing from Le Havre transported to the Antilles 203,000 slaves bought in Senegal, on the Gold Coast, at Loango, etc. The sale of these slaves brought in 203 million livres. From 1783 to 1793 the slavers of Liverpool sold 300,000 slaves for 15 million, which went into the foundation of industrial enterprises (Mandel, 1971: 110).

Mandel and others, who have analysed this period, do not say much about how the colonizing process affected women in the newly established Portuguese, Dutch, English and French colonies in Africa, Asia and Latin and Central America. As the merchant capitalists depended mainly on brute force, outright robbery and looting, we can assume that the women were also victims of this process.

The recent work done by feminist scholars has shed more light on to these hidden sides of the 'civilizing process'. Rhoda Reddock's work on women and slavery in the Caribbean shows clearly that the colonizers used a diametrically opposed value system vis-a-vis the women of the subjugated peoples as that vis-a-vis their 'own' women. Slave women in the Caribbean for long periods were not allowed to marry or to have children; it was cheaper to import slaves than to pay for the reproduction of slave labour. At the same time, the bourgeois class domesticated its 'own' women into pure, monogamous breeders of their heirs, excluded them from work outside their house and from property.

The whole brutal onslaught on the peoples in Africa, Asia and America by European merchant capitalists was justified as a civilizing mission of the Christian nations. Here we see the connection between the 'civilizing' process by which poor European women were persecuted and 'disciplined' during the witch-hunt, and the 'civilizing' of the 'barbarian' peoples in the colonies. Both are defined as uncontrolled, dangerous, savage 'nature', and both have to be subdued by force and torture to break their resistance to robbery, expropriation and exploitation.

Women under Colonialism

As Rhoda Reddock (1984) has shown, the colonizers' attitude to slavery and slave women in the Caribbean was based clearly on capitalist cost-benefit calculations. This was particularly true with regard to the question whether slave women should be allowed to 'breed' more slaves or not. Throughout the centuries of the modern slave trade and slave economy (from 1655 to 1838), this

question was answered not according to the principles of Christian ethics – supposedly applicable in the ‘Motherlands’ – but according to the accumulation considerations of the capitalist planters. Thus, during the first period, from 1655 to the beginnings of the eighteenth century, when most estates were smallholdings with few slaves, these planters still depended, following the peasant model of reproduction, on the natural reproduction of the slave population. The second period is characterized by the so-called sugar revolution, the introduction of large-scale sugar production in big plantations. In this period, beginning around 1760 and lasting till about 1800 slave women were actively discouraged from bearing children or forming families. The planters, as good capitalists, held the view that ‘it was cheaper to purchase than to breed’. This was the case in all sugar colonies whether they were under catholic (French) or protestant (British, Dutch) dominion. In fact, slave women who were found pregnant were cursed and ill-treated. Moreover, the backbreaking work in the sugar plantations did not allow the slave women to nurse small babies. The reason behind this anti-natalist policy of the planters are expressed in the statement of one Mr G.M. Hall on Cuban planters:

During and after pregnancy the slave is useless for several months, and her nourishment should be more abundant and better chosen. This loss of work and added expense comes out of the master’s pocket. It is he who has to pay for the often lengthy care of the newborn. This expense is so considerable that the negro born on the plantation costs more when he is in condition to work than another of the same age bought at the public market would have cost (G.M. Hall, quoted by Reddock, 1984: 16).

In the French colony of St. Dominique the planters calculated that a slave woman’s work over a period of 18 months was worth 600 Livres. The 18 months were the time calculated for pregnancy and breast feeding. During such a time the slave woman would be able to do only half her usual work. Thus, her master would lose 300 Livres. ‘A fifteen month old slave was not worth this sum’ (Hall, quoted by Reddock, 1984: 16). The effect of this policy was, as many observers have found, that the ‘fertility’ of slave women was extremely low during this period and far into the nineteenth century (Reddock, 1984).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, it became evident that Western Africa could no longer be counted upon as fertile hunting ground for slaves. Moreover, the British colonizers saw it as more profitable to incorporate Africa

itself into their empire as a source of raw material and minerals. Therefore, the more 'progressive' sections of the British bourgeoisie advocated the abolition of the slave trade – which happened in 1807 – and the encouragement of 'local breeding'. The colonial government foresaw a number of incentives in the slave codes of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to encourage local breeding of slaves by slave women on the plantations. This sudden change of policy, however, seems to have had little effect on the slave women. As Rhoda Reddock points out, in the long years of slavery the slave women had internalized an anti-motherhood attitude as a form of resistance to the slave system; they continued a kind of birth strike till about the middle of the nineteenth century. When they became pregnant, they used bitter herbs to produce abortions or, when the children were born, 'many were allowed to die out of the women's natural dislike for bearing them to see them become slaves, destined to toil all their lives for their master's enrichment' (Moreno-Fraginals, 1976, quoted by Reddock, 1984: 17). Rhoda Reddock sees in this anti-motherhood attitude of the slave women an example of 'the way in which the ideology of the ruling classes could, for different though connected material reasons, become the accepted ideology of the oppressed' (Reddock, 1984: 17).

The colonial masters now reaped the fruits – or rather the failures – of treating African women as mere conditions of production for capital accumulation. The problem of labour shortage on the plantations in the Caribbean became so acute, due to the slave women's birth strike, that in Cuba virtual 'stud farms' were established and slave breeding became a regular business (Moreno Fraginals, quoted by Reddock, 1984: 18). Rhoda Reddock summarizes the changing policy of the colonizers regarding slave women's procreative capacities in the following manner:

As long as Africa was incorporated in the capitalist world economy only as a producer of human labour, there was no need to produce labour locally. Through the use of cost-benefit analysis the planters had taken the most profitable line of action. When this was no longer profitable for them, they were surprised by the resistance shown by the slave women who ... recognized clearly their position as the property of the plantation owners. The fact is, that for more than 100 years, the majority of slave women in the Caribbean were neither wives nor mothers and by exercising control over their reproductive capabilities were able to deeply affect the plantation economy (Reddock, 1984: 18).

These more than a hundred years that 'slave women in the Caribbean were neither wives nor mothers' were exactly the same period that women of the European bourgeoisie were domesticated and ideologically manipulated into wifehood and motherhood as their 'natural' vocation (Badinter, 1980). While one set of women was treated as pure labour force, a source of energy, the other set of women was treated as 'non-productive' breeders only.

It is, indeed, an irony of history that later in the nineteenth century the colonizers tried desperately to introduce the nuclear family and the monogamous marriage norm into the ex-slave population of the Caribbean. But both women and men saw no benefit for themselves in adopting these norms, and rejected marriage. Now their own double-faced policy boomeranged on the colonizers. In order to be able freely to exploit the slaves, they had for centuries defined them outside humanity and Christianity. In this they were supported by the ethnologists who said that the negroes did not belong to the same 'species' as the Europeans (Caldecott, 1970: 67). Hence, slaves could not become Christians because, according to the Church of England, no Christian could be a slave.

When, around 1780, the new Slave Codes began to encourage marriage among the slaves as a means to encourage local breeding of slaves, the slaves only ridiculed this 'high caste' thing and continued with their 'common law' unions. This meant that each woman could live with a man as long as she pleased; the same also applied to the man. Slave women saw the marriage tie as something that would subject them to the control of one man, who could even beat them. The men wanted more than one wife and therefore rejected marriage. The missionaries and planters who tried to introduce the European middle-class model of the man-woman relationship were exasperated. A church historian, Caldecott, eventually found an explanation for this resistance to the benefits of civilization in the fact that negroes were not able to 'control their fancy' (their sexual desires), and therefore shrank from constancy: 'With them it is the women as much as the men who are thus constituted; there is in the Negro race a nearer approach to equality between the sexes than is found in the European races ...' (Caldecott, quoted by Reddock, 1984: 47). 'Equality between the sexes', however, was seen as a sign of a primitive, backward race, a notion which was common among nineteenth-century colonizers and ethnologists.

That equality of men and women is a sign of backwardness and that it is part of the 'civilizing mission' of the British colonialists to destroy the independence of colonized women, and to teach the colonized men the 'virtues' of sexism and militarism are also clearly spelt out by one Mr Fielding Hall in his book, *A People at School*. [5] Mr Hall was Political Officer in the British colonial administration in Burma between 1887-91. He gives a vivid account of the independence of Burmese women, of the equality between the sexes, and of the peace-loving nature of the Burmese people which he ascribes to Buddhism. But, instead of trying to preserve such a happy society, Mr Hall comes to the conclusion that Burma has to be brought by force on the road of progress: 'But today the laws are ours, the power, the authority. We govern for our own subjects and we govern in our own way. Our whole presence here is against their desires.' He suggests the following measures to civilize the Burmese people:

1. The men must be taught to kill and to fight for the British colonialists: 'I can imagine nothing that could do the Burmese so much good as to have a regiment of their own to distinguish itself in our wars. It would open their eyes to new views of life' (*A People at School*, p. 264).

2. The women must surrender their liberty in the interests of man. Considering equality of the sexes a sign of backwardness, this colonial administrator warned: 'It must never be forgotten that their civilization is relatively a thousand years behind ours.' To overcome this backwardness, the Burmese men should learn to kill, to make war and to oppress their women. In the words of Mr Hall: 'What the surgeon's knife is to the diseased body that is the soldier's sword to the diseased nations'. And again:

... the gospel of progress, of knowledge, of happiness ... is taught not by book and sermon but by spear and sword ... To declare, as Buddhism does, that bravery is of no account; to say to them, as the women did, you are no better and no more than we are, and should have the same code of life; could anything be worse?

He also seeks the help of ethnologists to defend this ideology of Man the Hunter: 'Men and women are not sufficiently differentiated yet in Burma. It is the mark of a young race. Ethnologists tell us that. In the earliest peoples the difference was very slight. As a race grows older the difference increases.' Then Mr Hall describes how Burmese women are eventually 'brought down' to the

status of the civilized, dependent housewife. Local home-industries, formerly in the hands of women, are destroyed by the import of commodities from England. Women are also pushed out of trade: 'In Rangoon the large English stores are undermining the bazaars where the women used to earn an independent livelihood.'

After their loss of economic independence, Mr Hall considers it of utmost importance that the laws of marriage and inheritance be changed, so that Burma, too, may become a 'progressive' land where men rule. Woman has to understand that her independence stands in the way of progress:

With her power of independence will disappear her free will and her influence. When she is dependent on her husband she can no longer dictate to him. When he feeds her, she is not longer able to make her voice as loud as his is. It is inevitable that she should retire ... The nations who succeed are not feminine nations but the masculine. Woman's influence is good provided it does not go too far. Yet it has done so here. It has been bad for the man, bad too for the woman. It has never been good for women to be too independent, it has robbed them of many virtues. It improves a man to have to work for his wife and family, it makes a man of him. It is demoralising for both if the woman can keep herself and, if necessary, her husband too. (*A People at School*, p. 266).

That the African women brought to the Caribbean as slaves were not made slaves because they were 'backward' or less 'civilized' than the colonizers, but on the contrary were made 'savages' by slavery itself and those colonizers is now brought to light by historical research on women in Western Africa. George Brooks, for example, shows in his work on the *signares* - the women traders of eighteenth-century Senegal – that these women, particularly of the Wolof tribe, held a high position in the pre-colonial West African societies. Moreover, the first Portuguese and French merchants who came to Senegal in search of merchandise were totally dependent on the cooperation and goodwill of these powerful women, who entered into sexual and trade alliances with these European men. They not only were in possession of great wealth, accumulated through trade with the inferior parts of their regions, but had also developed such a cultured way of life, such a sense for beauty and gracefulness, that the European adventurers who first came into contact with them felt flabbergasted. Brooks quotes one Rev. John Lindsay, chaplain aboard a British ship, as having written:

As to their women, and in particular the ladies (for so I must call many of those in

Senegal), they are in a surprising degree handsome, have very fine features, are wonderfully tractable, remarkably polite both in conversation and manners; and in the point of keeping themselves neat and clean (of which we have generally strange ideas, formed to us by the beastly laziness of the slaves) they far surpass the Europeans in every respect. They bathe twice a day ... and in this particular have a hearty contempt for all white people, who they imagine must be disagreeable, to our women especially. Nor can even their men from this very notion, be brought to look upon the prettiest of our women, but with the coldest indifference, some of whom there are here, officers' ladies, who dress very showy, and who, even in England would he thought handsome (Brooks, 1976: 24).

The European men – the Portuguese and French who came to West Africa first as merchants or soldiers – came usually alone, without wives or families. Their alliances with the 'ladies' or *signares* (from the Portuguese word *senhorlis*) were so attractive to them that they married these women according to the Wolof style, and often simply adopted the African way of life. Their children, the Euroafricans, often rose to high positions in the colonial society, the daughters usually became *signares* again. Obviously, the Portuguese and the French colonizers did not yet have strong racist prejudices against sexual and marriage relationships with West African women, but found these alliances not only profitable, but also humanly satisfying.

With the advent of the British in West Africa, however, this easy-going, catholic attitude towards African women changed. The British soldiers, merchants and administrators no longer entered into marriage alliances with the *signares*, but turned African women into prostitutes. This, then, seems to be the point in history when racism proper enters the picture: the African woman is degraded and made a prostitute for the English colonizers, then theories of the racial superiority of the white male and the 'beastliness' of the African women are propagated. Obviously, British colonial history is as discreet about these aspects as the Dutch. Yet Brooks says that the institution of 'signareship' did not take root in Gambia because it was

stifled by the influx of new arrivals from Britain, few of whom, whether traders, government officials, or military officers – deviated from 'proper' British behaviour to live openly with Euroafrican or African women, whatever they might do clandestinely. British authors are discreet about such matters, but it can be discerned that in contrast to the family lives of traders and their *signares*, there developed ... a rootless bachelor community of a type found elsewhere in British areas of West Africa. Open and unrepentant racism was one characteristic of this community; two others were reckless gambling and alcoholism (Brooks, 1976: 43).

These accounts corroborate not only Walter Rodney's general thesis that 'Europe underdeveloped Africa', but also our main argument that the colonial process, as it advanced, brought the women of the colonized people progressively down from a former high position of relative power and independence to that of 'beastly' and degraded 'nature'. This 'naturalization' of colonized women is the counterpart of the 'civilizing' of the European women.

The 'defining back into nature', or the 'naturalization' of African women who were brought as slaves to the Caribbean is perhaps the clearest evidence of the double-faced, hypocritical process of European colonization: while African women were treated as 'savages', the women of the white colonizers in their fatherlands 'rose' to the status of 'ladies'. These two processes did not happen side by side, are not simply historical parallels, but are intrinsically and causally linked within this patriarchal-capitalist mode of production. This creation of 'savage' and 'civilized' women, and the polarization between the two was, and still is, the organizing structural principle also in other parts of the world subjected by capitalist colonialism. There is not yet enough historical research into the effects of the colonizing process on women. but the little evidence we have corroborates this observation. It also explains the shifts in colonial policy towards women – following the fluctuations of the accumulation process – which Rhoda Reddock observed.

Thus, Annie Stoler (1982) has found that, at the other end of the globe in Sumatra in the early 20th century, the Dutch followed a similar double-faced policy regarding women:

At certain junctures in estate expansion, for example, women ostensibly recruited from Java as estate coolies were in large part brought to Sumatra to service the domestic, including sexual, needs of unmarried male workers and management. Prostitution was not only sanctioned but encouraged ... (Stoler, 1982: 90).

The driving motive for these planters, as was the case with the French or English in the Caribbean, was profit-making, and this motive, as Annie Stoler remarks, explains the fluctuations in Dutch colonial policy vis-a-vis women. In the colonial records, the 'issues of marriage contracts, sickness, prostitution, and labour unrest appear as they relate to profit; married workers during the first decade of the century were considered too costly and therefore marriage

contracts were difficult to obtain' (Stoler, 1982: 97).

Obviously, to make women prostitutes was cheaper, but then, when almost half of the female workers in North Sumatra were racked with venereal disease, and had to be hospitalized at the company's expense, it became more profitable to encourage marriage among the estate workers. This was between the 1920s and 1930s. Whereas in the first phase, migrant women were good enough to do all hard labour on the plantations, now a process of housewifization took place to exclude resident women from wage-labour on the estates. Annie Stoler writes:

At different economic and political junctures in plantation history, the planters contended that (1) permanent female workers were too costly to maintain, because of the time they took off for child-birth and menstruation, (2) women should not and could not do 'hard' labour. and (3) women were better suited to casual work (Stoler, 1982: 98).

That this introduction of the image of the 'weak woman' was a clear ideological move which served the economic purpose of lowering women's wages and creating a casual female labour force becomes evident from the statistics. Thus, in the Coolie Budget Report of 1903, it is stated that only one percent of total available working-days were missed because of pregnancy (Stoler, 1982: 98).

Rhoda Reddock also, in the later parts of her study, gives ample evidence of this process – around the same time, in the British Crown Colony of Trinidad – of excluding women from wage-labour proper and of defining them as 'dependents' (Rhoda Reddock, 1984).

Also, in the case of the Dutch colonizers, profit-making was the overall objective, and the contradictory values and policies regarding their own 'civilized' women back home and the 'savage' women in Sumatra constituted the best mechanism to ensure this. The fact that they used two diametrically opposed sets of values to the two sets of women obviously did not give them any pangs of conscience. Prostitution became a public issue only when it was no longer profitable to recruit women as prostitutes. Again here we have to stress that the emergence of the Dutch housewife, the stress on family and homemaking 'back home', was not just a temporal coincidence but was causally linked to the disruption of families and homes among estate workers in the Dutch colonies.

Women under German Colonialism

Whereas the examples of British and Dutch colonial policy regarding women given above mainly focus on the colonial side of the picture, the following example, based on Martha Mamozai's study of the impact of German colonialism on women, includes the effect of this process also on the German women 'back home'. This account will, therefore, help us to perceive more fully the doublefaced process of colonization and housewifization.

Germany entered the race for the looting and distribution of the world rather late. The German Colonial Society was founded in 1884, and from then until the beginning of World War I – a direct result of the inter-imperialist scramble for hegemony among the European nations – the government of the German Reich encouraged the establishment of German colonies, particularly in Africa.

Mamozai's study shows that colonization did not affect men and women in the same way, but used the particular capitalist sexual division of labour to bring the labour power of Africans under the command of capital and the White Man. As usually happens with conquerors, invaders and colonizers, the Germans who first came to West Africa as planters around the 1880s came mostly as single men. As had happened with the Portuguese and French men in West Africa, they entered into sexual and matrimonial relations with African women. Many formed regular families with these women. After some time, it became evident that these marriages would eventually lead to a new generation of 'mixed blood' Euroafricans who, following the patriarchal and bourgeois family laws in Germany, would be Germans with full economic and political rights. There were heated debates about the 'colonial question' or the 'native question' in the German Reichstag which centered, on the one hand, on the question of 'mixed marriages' and 'bastards' – hence on the concern for the privileges of the white race – on the other, on the production, subjugation and disciplining of sufficient African labour power for the German estates and projects.

Governor Friedrich von Lindquist expressed the 'bastard-question in South West Africa' in the following manner:

The considerable preponderance of the white male over the white female population is a sorry state of affairs, which, for the life and the future of the country will be of great significance. This has led to a considerable number of mixed relations, which is particularly regrettable because, apart from the ill-effects of the mixing of races, the white minority in South Africa can preserve its dominance over the coloureds only by keeping its race pure (quoted by Mamozai, 1982: 125; transl. M.M.).

Therefore, in 1905 a law was passed which prohibited marriages between European men and African women. In 1907, even those marriages which had been concluded prior to this law were declared null and void. Those who lived in such unions, including their 'bastards', lost the rights of citizens in 1908, including the voting right. The objective of this law was clearly the preservation of property rights in the hands of the white minority. Had the Afro-Germans had the rights of German citizens and voting rights, they could, in the course of time, have outnumbered the 'pure' whites in the elections. The laws, however, prohibiting marriages between European men and black women did not mean that the Reichstag wanted to put restrictions on the sexual freedom of the colonizing men. On the contrary, the German men were even advised by doctors to recruit African women as concubines or prostitutes. Thus, one Dr Max Bucher, representative of the German Reich wrote:

Regarding the free intercourse with the daughters of the land – this has to be seen as advantageous rather than as damaging to health. Even under the dark skin the 'Eternal Female' is an excellent fetish against emotional deprivation which so easily occurs in the African loneliness. Apart from these psychological gains there are also practical advantages of personal security. To have an intimate black girl-friend means protection from many dangers (quoted by Mamozai, 1982: 129).

This means black women were good enough to service the white men as prostitutes and concubines, but they should not become proper 'wives' because this would, in the long run, have changed the property relations in Africa. This becomes very clear in a statement of one Dr Karl Oetker who was Health Officer during the construction of the railroad between Dar-es-Salaam and Morogoro:

It should be a matter of course, but may be stressed again, that every European male who has intercourse with black females has to take care that such a union remains sterile in order to prevent a mixture of races, such a mixture would have the worst effect for our colonies, as this has been amply proved in the West Indies, Brasil and Madagaskar. Such relationships can and should only be considered as surrogates for marriage. Recognition and protection by the state, which marriages among whites enjoy, have to be withheld from such unions (quoted by Mamozai, 1982: 130).

Here the double-standard is very clear: marriage and family were goods to be protected for the whites, the 'Master Men' (Dominant Men). African families could be disrupted, men and women could be forced into labour gangs, women could be made prostitutes.

It is important not to look at this hypocritical colonial policy towards women only from a moralistic point of view. It is essential to understand that the rise and generalization of the 'decent' bourgeois marriage and family as protected institutions are *causally* linked to the disruption of clan and family relations of the 'natives'. The emergence of the masses of German families from 'proletarian misery', as one colonial officer put it, was directly linked to the exploitation of colonies and the subordination of colonial labour power. The development of Germany into a leading industrial nation was dependent, as many saw it in those years, on the possession of colonies. Thus, Paul von Hindenburg, the later Reichskanzler wrote: 'Without colonies no security regarding the acquisition of raw materials, without raw materials no industry, without industry no adequate standard of living and wealth. Therefore, Germans, do we need colonies' (quoted by Mamozai, 1983: 27; trans I. M.M.).

The justification for this logic of exploitation was provided by the theory that the 'natives' had 'not yet' evolved to the level of the white master race, and that colonialism was the means to develop the slumbering forces of production in these regions and thus make them contribute to the betterment of mankind. A colonial officer from South West Africa wrote:

A right of the natives, which could only be realised at the expense of the development of the white race, does not exist. The idea is absurd that Bantus, Sudan-negroes, and Hottentots in Africa have the right to live and die as they please, even when by this uncouth people among the civilized peoples of Europe were forced to remain tied to a miserable proletarian existence instead of being able, by the full use of the productive capacities of our colonial possessions to rise to a richer level of existence themselves and also to help construct the whole body of human and national welfare (quoted by Mamozai, 1983: 58; transl. M.M.)

The conviction that the white master men had the god-given mission to 'develop' the productive capacities in the colonies and thus bring the 'savages' into the orbit of civilization was also shared, as we shall see later, by the Social Democrats who likewise believed in the development of productive forces through colonialism.

The refusal of the 'native' women of South West Africa to produce children for the hated colonial masters was, therefore, seen as an attack on this policy of development of productive forces. After the rebellion of the Herero people had been brutally crushed by the German General von Trotha, the Herero women went on a virtual birth-strike. Like the slave women in the Caribbean, they refused to produce forced labour power for the planters and estate owners. Between 1892 and 1909, the Herero population decreased from 80,000 to a mere 19,962. For the German farmers this was a severe problem. One of them wrote:

After the rebellion the native, particularly the Herero, often takes the stand not to produce children. He considers himself a prisoner, which he brings to your notice at every job which he does not like. He does not like to make new labour force for his oppressor, who has deprived him of his golden laziness ... While the German farmers have been trying for years to remedy this sad state of affairs by offering a premium for each child born on the farm, for instance, a she-goat. But mostly in vain. A section of today's native women has been engaged for too long in prostitution and are spoiled for motherhood. Another part does not want children and gets rid of them, when they are pregnant, through abortion. In such cases the authorities should interfere with all severity. Each case should be investigated thoroughly and severely punished by prison, and if that is not enough by putting the culprit in chains. (quoted by Mamozai, 1982: 52; transl. M.M.).

In a number of cases the farmers took the law into their own hands and brutally punished the recalcitrant women. In the Herero women's stand we see again, as in the case of the slave women, that African women were not just helpless victims in this colonizing process, but understood precisely their relative power within the colonial relations of production, and used that power accordingly. What has to be noted, however, with regard to the comments of the German farmer quoted above, is that although it was the Herero women who went on a birth-strike, he refers only to the Herero (man). Even in their reporting, the colonizing men denied the subjected women all subjectivity and initiative. All 'natives' were 'savages', wild nature, but the most savage of all were the 'native' women.

White Women in Africa

Martha Mamozai also provides us with interesting material about the 'other side' of the colonizing process, namely, the impact the subordination of

Africans, and African women in particular, had on the German women 'back home' and on those who had joined the colonial pioneers in Africa.

As was said before, one of the problems of the white colonialists was the reproduction of the white master race in the colonies itself. This could be achieved only if white women from the 'fatherland' were ready to go to the colonies and marry 'our boys down there', and produce white children. As most planters belonged to that band of 'adventurous bachelors', a special effort had to be made to mobilize women to go to the colonies as brides. The German advocates of white supremacy saw it as a special duty of German women to save the German men in the colonies from the evil influence of the 'Kaffir females' who in the long run would alienate these men from European culture and civilization.

The call was heard by Frau Adda von Liliencron, who founded the 'Women's League of the German Colonial Society'. This association had the objective of giving girls a special training in colonial housekeeping and sending them as brides to Africa. She recruited mainly girls from the peasant or working class, many of whom had worked as maidservants in the cities. In 1898 for the first time 25 single women were sent to South West Africa as a 'Christmas gift' for 'our boys down there'. Martha Mamozai reports how many of these women 'rose' to the level of the white memsahib, the bourgeois lady who saw it as her mission to teach the African women the virtues of civilization: cleanliness, punctuality, obedience and industriousness. It is amazing to observe how soon these women, who not long ago were still among the downtrodden themselves, shared the prejudices against the 'dirty and lazy natives' which were common in colonial society.

But not only did the few European women who went to the colonies as wives and 'breeders for race and nation' rise to the level of proper housewives on the subordination and subjection of the colonized women, so too did the women 'back home'; first those of the bourgeoisie, and later also the women of the proletariat, were gradually domesticated and civilized into proper housewives. For the same period which saw the expansion of colonialism and imperialism also saw the rise of the housewife in Europe and the USA. In the following I shall deal with this side of the story.

Housewifization

1st Stage: Luxuries for the 'Ladies'

The 'other side of the story' of both the violent subordination of European women during the witch persecution, and of African, Asian and Latin American women during the colonizing process is the creation of the women first of the accumulating classes in Europe, later also in the USA, as consumers and demonstrators of luxury and wealth, and at a later stage as housewives. Let us not forget that practically all the items which were stolen, looted or traded from the colonies were not items necessary for the daily subsistence of the masses, but luxury items. Initially these items were only consumed by the privileged few who had the money to buy them: spices from the Molluecan islands; precious textiles, silk, precious stones and muslin from India; sugar, cacao and spices from the Caribbean; precious metals from Hispano America. Werner Sombart, in his study on *Luxury and Capitalism* (1922), has advanced the thesis that the market for most of these rare colonial luxury goods had been created by a class of women who had risen as mistresses of the absolutist princes and kings of France and England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Sombart, the great cocottes [coquettes] and mistresses were the ones who created new fashions in women's dress, cosmetics, eating habits, and particularly in furnishing the homes of the gentlemen. Neither the war-mongering men of the aristocracy nor the men of the merchant class would have had, if left to themselves, the imagination, the sophistication and the culture to invent such luxuries, almost all centred around women as luxury creatures. It was this class of women, according to Sombart, who created the new luxury 'needs' which gave the decisive impetus to capitalism because, with their access to the money accumulated by the absolutist state, they created the market for early capitalism.

Sombart gives us a detailed account of the development of luxury consumption at the Italian, French and English courts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He clearly identifies a trend in luxury-spending, particularly during the reign of Louis XIV. Whereas the luxury expenses of the

king of France were 2,995,000 Livres in 1542, these had steadily risen and were 28,813,955 in 1680. Sombart attributes this enormous display of luxury and splendour to the love of these feudal lords for their courtesans and mistresses. Thus, the king's fancy for La Valliere prompted Louis XIV to build Versailles. Sombart is also of the opinion that Mme de Pompadour, the representative of the culture of the ancient regime, had a bigger budget than any of the European queens ever had had. In 19 years of her reign she spent 36,327,268 Livres. Similarly Comtesse Dubarry, who reigned between 1769-1774, spent 12,481,803 Livres on luxury items (Sombart, 1922: 98–99).

Feminists will not agree with Sombart who attributes this development of luxury which first centred around the European courts and was later imitated by the nouveaux riches among the European bourgeoisie, to the great courtesans with 'their great vanity, their addiction for luxurious clothes, houses, furniture, food, cosmetics. Even if the men of these classes preferred to demonstrate their wealth by spending on their women and turning them into showpieces of their accumulated wealth, it would again mean to make the women the villains of the piece. Would it not amount to saying that it was not the men – who wielded economic and political power – who were the historical 'subjects' (in the Marxist sense), but the women, as the real power behind the scenes who pulled the strings and set the tune according to which the mighty men danced? But, apart from this, Sombart's thesis that capitalism was born out of luxury consumption and not in order to satisfy growing subsistence needs of the masses has great relevance for our discussion of the relationship between colonization and housewifization. He shows clearly that early merchant capitalism was based practically entirely on trade with luxury items from the colonies which were consumed by the European elites. The items which appear in a trading-list of the Levant trade include: *oriental medicines* (e.g., aloes, balm, ginger, camphor, cardamon, myrobalam, saffron, etc.); *spices* (pepper, cloves, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg); *perfumes* (benzoin, musk, sandalwood, incense, amber); *dyes for textiles* (e.g., indigo, lac, purple, henna); *raw materials for textiles* (silk, Egyptian flax); *precious metals and jewellery and stones* (corals, pearls, ivory, porcelain, glass, gold and silver); *textiles* (silk, brocade, velvet, fine material of linen, muslin or wool).

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many more items were added to this list, particularly items systematically produced in the new colonial plantations like sugar, coffee, cacao and tea. Sombart gives an account of the rising tea consumption in England. The average tea consumption of an English family was 6.5 pounds in 1906. This level of consumption could be afforded in:

1668 by 3 families
1710 by 2,000 families
1730 by 12,000 families
1760 by 40,000 families
1780 by 140,000 families (Source: Sombart, 1922: 146)

What did this tremendous deployment of luxury among the European rich, based on the exploitation of the peoples of Africa, Asia and America, mean for the European women? Sombart identifies certain trends in the luxury production, which he, as we have seen, attributes to the passions of a certain class of women. They are the following:

1. *a tendency towards domesticity*: Whereas medieval luxury was public, now it became private. The display of luxury does not take place in the market place or during public festivals, but inside the secluded palaces and houses of the rich.

2. *a tendency towards objectification*: In the Middle Ages wealth was expressed in the number of vassals or men a prince could count upon. Now wealth is expressed in goods and material items, commodities bought by money. Adam Smith would say: 'one moves from "unproductive" to "productive" luxury, because the former personal luxury puts "unproductive" hands to work, whereas the objectified luxury puts "productive" hands to work' (in a capitalist sense, that is, wage-workers in a capitalist enterprise) (Sombart, 1922: 119). Sombart is of the opinion that leisure class women had an interest in the development of objectified luxury (more items and commodities), because they had no use for more soldiers and vassals.

Similar trends can be observed with regard to sugar and coffee. For most people in Europe in the eighteenth century, sugar had not yet replaced honey. Sugar remained a typical luxury item for the European rich until far into the nineteenth century (Sombart, 1922: 147).

Foreign trade between Europe, America, Africa and the Orient was, until

well into the nineteenth century, mainly trade in the above-mentioned luxury goods. Imports from East India to France in 1776 were to the value of 36,241,000 Francs, distributed as follows:

coffee 3,248,000 fr.
pepper and cinnamon 2,449,000 fr.
muslin 12,000,000 fr.
Indian linen 10,000,000 fr.
porcelain 200,000 fr.
silk 1,382,000 fr.
tea 3,399,000 fr.
saltpetre 3,380,000 fr.
Total 36,241,000 fr. (Source: Sombart, 1922: 148)

Sombart also includes the profits made by the slave trade in the figures for luxury production and consumption. [6] The slave trade was totally organized along capitalist lines.

The development of wholesale and retail markets in England followed the same logic from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. The first big urban shops which came up to replace the local markets were shops dealing with luxury goods.

3. *a tendency towards contraction of time*: Whereas formerly luxury consumption was restricted to certain seasons because the indigenous production of a surplus needed a long time, now luxuries could be consumed at any time during the year and also within the span of an individual life.

Sombart again attributes this tendency – in my opinion, wrongly – to the individualism and the impatience of leisure class women who demanded immediate satisfaction of their desires as a sign of the affection of their lovers.

Of the above tendencies, the tendency towards domestication and privatization certainly had a great impact on the construction of the new image of the 'good woman' in the centres of capitalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, namely, woman as mother and housewife, and the family as her arena, the privatized arena of consumption and 'love', excluded and sheltered from the arena of production and accumulation, where men reign. In the following, I shall trace how the ideal of the domesticated privatized woman, concerned with 'love' and consumption and dependent on a male 'breadwinner', was generalized, first in the bourgeois class proper, then among the so-called

petty-bourgeoisie, and finally in the working class or the proletariat.

2nd Stage: Housewife and Nuclear Family: The 'Colony' of the Little White Men

While the Big White Men – the 'Dominant Men' (Mamozai) – appropriated land, natural resources and people in Africa, Asia and Central and South America in order to be able to extract raw materials, products and labour power which they themselves had not produced, while they disrupted all social relations created by the local people, they began to build up in their fatherlands the patriarchal nuclear family, that is, the monogamous nuclear family as we know it today. This family, which was put under the specific protection of the state, consists of the forced combination of the principles of kinship and cohabitation, and the definition of the man as 'head' of this household and 'breadwinner' for the non-earning legal wife and their children. While in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries this marriage and family form were possible only among the propertied classes of the bourgeoisie – among peasants, artisans and workers women had always to share all work – this form was made the norm for all by a number of legal reforms pushed through by the state from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, in Germany – as in other European countries – there existed a number of marriage restrictions for people without property. These were only abolished in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the state intervened to promote a pro-natalist policy for the propertyless working class (Heinsohn and Knieper, 1976).

Recent family history has revealed that even the concept 'family' became popular only towards the end of the eighteenth century in Europe, particularly in France and England, and it was not before the middle of the nineteenth century that this concept was also adopted for the households of the workers and peasants because, contrary to general opinion, 'family' had a distinct class connotation. Only classes with property could afford to have a 'family'. Propertyless people – like farm servants or urban poor – were not supposed to have a 'family' (Flandrin, 1980; Heinsohn and Knieper, 1976). But 'family' in the sense in which we understand it today – that is, as a combination of co-

residence and blood-relationship based on the patriarchal principle – was not even found among the aristocracy. The aristocratic ‘family’ did not imply co-residence of all family members. Coresidence, particularly of husband and wife and their offspring, became the crucial criterion. of the family of the bourgeoisie. Hence our present concept of family is a bourgeois one (Flandrin, 1980; Luz Tangangco, 1982).

It was the bourgeoisie which established the social and sexual division of labour, characteristic of capitalism. The bourgeoisie declared ‘family’ a private territory to contrast to the ‘public’ sphere of economic and political activity. The bourgeoisie first withdrew ‘their’ women from this public sphere and shut them into their cosy ‘homes’ from where they could not interfere in the war-mongering, moneymaking and the politicking of the men. Even the French Revolution, though fought by thousands of women, ended by excluding women from politics. The bourgeoisie, particularly the puritan English bourgeoisie, created the ideology of romantic love as a compensation for and sublimation of the sexual and economic independence women had had before the rise of this class. Malthus, one of the important theoreticians of the rising bourgeoisie, saw clearly that capitalism needed a different type of woman. The poor should curb their sexual ‘instincts’, because otherwise they would breed too many poor for the scarce food supply. On the other hand, they should not use contraceptives, a method recommended by Condoreet in France, because that would make them lazy because he saw a close connection between sexual abstinence and readiness to work. Then Malthus paints a rosy picture of a decent bourgeois home in which ‘love’ does not express itself in sexual activity, but in which the domesticated wife sublimates the sexual ‘instinct’ in order to create a cosy home for the hard-working breadwinner who has to struggle for money in a competitive and hostile world ‘outside’ (Malthus, quoted in Heinsohn, Knieper and Steiger, 1979). As Heinsohn, Knieper and Steiger point out, capitalism did not, as Engels and Marx believed, destroy the family; on the contrary, with the help of the state and its police, it created the family first among the propertied classes, later in the working class, and with it the housewife as a social category. Also, from the accounts of the composition and condition of the early industrial proletariat, it appears that the family, as we understand it today, was much less the norm than

is usually believed.

As we all know, women and children constituted the bulk of the early industrial proletariat. They were the cheapest and most manipulable labour force and could be exploited like no other worker. The capitalists understood well that a woman with children had to accept any wage if she wanted to survive. On the other hand, women were less of a problem for the capitalists than men. Their labour was also cheap because they were no longer organized, unlike the skilled men who had their associations as journeymen and a tradition of organizing from the guilds. Women had been thrown out of these organizations long ago, they had no new organizations and hence no bargaining power. For the capitalists it was, therefore, more profitable and less risky to employ women. With the rise of industrial capitalism and the decline of merchant capitalism (around 1830), the extreme exploitation of women's and child labour became a problem. Women whose health had been destroyed by overwork and appalling work conditions could not produce healthy children who could become strong workers and soldiers – as was realized after several wars later in the century.

Many of these women did not live in proper 'families', but were either unmarried, or had been deserted and lived, worked and moved around with children and young people in gangs (cf. Marx, *Capital*, vol. I). These women had no particular material interest in producing the next generation of miserable workers for the factories. But they constituted a threat to bourgeois morality with its ideal of the domesticated woman. Therefore, it was also necessary to domesticate the proletarian woman. She had to be made to breed more workers.

Contrary to what Marx thought, the production of children could not be left to the 'instincts' of the proletariat, because, as Heinsohn and Knieper point out, the propertyless proletariat had no material interest in the production of children, as children were no insurance in old age, unlike the sons of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the state had to interfere in the production of people and, through legislation, police measures and the ideological campaign of the churches, the sexual energies of the proletariat had to be channelled into the strait-jacket of the bourgeois family. The proletarian woman had to be housewifized too, in spite of the fact that she could not afford to sit at home and wait for the husband to feed her and her children. Heinsohn and Knieper (1976) analyse this process for

nineteenth-century Germany. Their main thesis is that the 'family' had to be forced upon the proletariat by police measures, because otherwise the propertyless proletarians would not have produced enough children for the next generation of workers. One of the most important measures – after the criminalization of infanticide which had already taken place – was, therefore, the law which abolished the marriage prohibition for propertyless people. This law was passed by the North German League in 1868. Now proletarians were allowed to marry and have a 'family', like the bourgeois. But this was not enough. Sexuality had to be curbed in such a way that it took place within the confines of this family. Therefore, sexual intercourse before marriage and outside it was criminalized. The owners of the means of production were given the necessary police power to watch over the morality of their workers. After the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-71, a law was passed which made abortion a crime – a law against which the new women's movement fought, with only small success. The churches, in their cooperation with the state, worked on the souls of the people. What the secular state called a crime, the churches called a sin. The churches had a wider influence than the state because they reached more people, particularly in the countryside (Heinsohn and Knieper, 1976). In this way the housewifization of women was also forced into the working class. According to Heinsohn and Knieper (1976) and others, the family had never existed among the propertyless farm servants or proletarians; it had to be created by force. This strategy worked because, by that time, women had lost most of their knowledge of contraception and because the state and church had drastically curbed women's autonomy over their bodies.

The housewifization of women, however, had not only the objective of ensuring that there were enough workers and soldiers for capital and the state. The creation of housework and the housewife as an agent of consumption became a very important strategy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By that time not only had the household been discovered as an important market for a whole range of new gadgets and items, but also scientific home-management had become a new ideology for the further domestication of women. Not only was the housewife called on to reduce the labour power costs, she was also mobilized to use her energies to create new needs. A virtual war for

cleanliness and hygiene – a war against dirt, germs, bacteria, and so on – was started in order to create a market for the new products of the chemical industry. Scientific home-making was also advocated as a means of lowering the men's wage, because the wage would last longer if the housewife used it economically (Ehrenreich and English, 1975).

The process of housewifization of women, however, was not only pushed forward by the bourgeoisie and the state. The working-class movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also made its contribution to this process. The organized working class welcomed the abolition of forced celibacy and marriage restrictions for propertyless workers. One of the demands of the German delegation to the 1863 Congress of the International Workingmen's Association was the 'freedom for workers to form a family'. Heinsohn and Knieper (1976) point out that the German working-class organizations, at that time headed by Lassalle, fought rather for the right to have a family than against the forced celibacy of propertyless people. Thus, the liberation from forced celibacy was historically achieved only by subsuming the whole propertyless class under bourgeois marriage and family laws. As bourgeois marriage and family were considered 'progressive', the accession of the working class to these standards was considered by most leaders of the working class as a progressive move. The struggles of the workers' movement for higher wages were often justified, particularly by the skilled workers who constituted the 'most advanced sections' of the working class, by the argument that the man's wage should be sufficient to maintain a family so that his wife could stay at home and look after children and household.

From 1830-1840 onwards – and practically until the end of the nineteenth century – the attitude of the German male workers, and of those organized in the Social Democratic Party, was characterized by what Thonnessen called 'proletarian anti-feminism' (Thonnessen, 1969: 14). Their proletarian anti-feminism was mainly concerned with the threat the entry of women into industrial production would pose to the men's wages and jobs. Repeatedly, at various congresses of the workers' associations and party congresses, a demand was raised to prohibit women's work in factories. The question of women's work in factories was also discussed at the 1866 Congress of the First International in

Geneva. Marx, who had drafted the instructions for the delegates of the General Council to the Geneva Congress, had stated that the tendency of modern industry to draw women and children into production had to be seen as a progressive tendency. The French section and also some of the Germans, however, were strongly opposed to women's work outside the house. The German section had in fact submitted the following memorandum:

Create conditions under which every grown-up man can take a wife, can found a family, secured by work, and under which none of the miserable creatures will exist any longer who, in isolation and despair, become victims, sin against themselves and against nature and tar by prostitution and trade in human flesh the civilisation ... To wives and mothers belongs the work in the family and the household. While the man is the representative of the serious public and family duties, the wife and mother should represent the comfort and the poetry of domestic life, she should bring grace and beauty to social manners and raise human enjoyment to a nobler and higher plane (Thonnessen, 1969: 19; transl. M.M.).

In this statement we find all the hypocrisy and bourgeois sentimentalism which Marx and Engels had castigated in the Communist Manifesto, this time, however, presented by male proletarians, who want to keep women in their 'proper' place. But neither did Karl Marx take a clear and unequivocal position regarding the question of women's work. Although in his instructions to the First International he had maintained that women's and children's work in factories be seen as a progressive tendency, he declared at the same time that night work, or work which would harm women's 'delicate physique' should be reduced. Of course, he also considered night work bad for men, but special protection should be given to women. The tendencies of 'proletarian anti-feminism' were most pronounced among the faction of the German Social Democrats led by Lassalle. At a party congress of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiter-Verein* (ADA-V) in 1866, it was stated:

The employment of women in the workshops and modern industry is one of the most outrageous abuses of our time. Outrageous, because the material conditions of the working class are not improved but deteriorated thereby. Due particularly to the destruction of the family, the working population ends up in such a miserable condition that they lose even the last trace of cultural and ideal values they had so far. Therefore, the tendency to further extend the labour market for women has to be condemned. Only the abolition of the rule of capital will remedy the situation, when the wage relation will be abolished through positive and organic institutions and every worker will get the full fruit of his labour (Social Democrat, no. 139, 29 November 1867, vol. 3, app. 1; quoted in Niggemann, 1981: 40; transl. M.M.).

But it was not only the 'reformists' in the Social Democratic Party who held

the view that the proletarians needed a proper family, the radicals who followed Marx's revolutionary strategy had no other concept of women and the family.

August Bebel and Clara Zetkin who belonged to this wing and who, until then, had been, with Engels, considered the most important contributors to a socialist theory of women's emancipation, advocated the maintenance of a proper family with a proper housewife and mother among the working class. Also Bebel wanted to reduce women's employment so that mothers would have more time for the education of their children. He regretted the destruction of the proletarian family:

The wife of the worker who comes home in the evening, tired and exhausted, again has her hands full of work. She has to rush to attend to the most necessary tasks. The man goes to the pub and finds there the comfort he cannot find at home, he drinks, ... perhaps he takes to the vice of gambling and loses thereby, even more than by drinking. Meanwhile the wife is sitting at home, grumbling, she has to work like a brute ... this is how disharmony begins. But if the woman is less responsible she too, after returning home tired, goes out to have her recreation and thus the household goes down the drain and the misery doubles (Bebel, 1964: 157-8; transl. M.M.).

Bebel did not conceive of a change in the sexual division of labour nor a sharing of household tasks by men. He saw woman mainly as a mother, and did not envisage a change in her role in the future.

This is also the main view held by Clara Zetkin. In spite of her struggles against 'proletarian anti-feminism', she saw the proletarian woman as a wife and mother rather than as a worker. In 1896 she gave a speech at the party congress in Gotha where she formulated the following main points of her theory:

1. the struggle for women's emancipation is identical with the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism.

2. nevertheless, working women need special protection at their place of work.

3. improvements in the conditions of working women would enable them to participate more actively in the revolutionary struggle of the whole class.

Together with Marx and Engels, she was of the opinion that capitalism had created equality of exploitation between man and woman. Therefore, the proletarian women cannot fight against men, as bourgeois feminists might do, but must fight against the capitalist class together with men:

Therefore the liberation struggle of the proletarian woman cannot be a struggle like that of the bourgeois woman against the man of her class; on the contrary, it is a struggle together with the man of her class against the class of capitalists. She need not fight against the men of her class in order to break down the barriers which limit free competition. Capital's need for exploitation and the development of the modern mode of production have done this for her. On the contrary, what is needed is to erect new barriers against the exploitation of the proletarian woman. What is needed is to give her back her rights as a wife, a mother, and to secure them. The final goal of her struggle is not free competition with man but the establishment of the political rule of the proletariat (quoted in Evans, 1978: 114; transl. M.M.).

What is striking in this statement is the emphasis on women's rights as mother and wife. She made this even more explicit later in the same speech:

By no means should it be the task of the socialist agitation of women to alienate women from their duties as mothers and wives. On the contrary, one has to see to it that she can fulfill these tasks better than hitherto, in the interest of the proletariat. The better the conditions in the family, her effectiveness in the home, the better she will be able to fight. ... So many mothers, so many wives who inspire their husbands and their children with class consciousness are doing as much as the women comrades whom we see in our meetings (quoted in Evans, 1979: 114-115; transl. M.M.).

These ideas found a very positive echo in the party, which had in any case, as we have seen, a rather bourgeois concept of women's role as mother and wife. This process of creating the bourgeois nuclear family in the working class and of the housewifization of proletarian women also was not restricted to Germany, but can be traced in all industrialized and 'civilized' countries. It was pushed forward not only by the bourgeois class and state, but also by the 'most advanced sections' of the working class, namely the male skilled labour aristocracy in the European countries. Particularly for socialists, this process points to a basic contradiction which has still not been solved, not even in socialist countries:

If entry into social production is seen as a precondition for women's emancipation or liberation, as all orthodox socialists believe, then it is a contradiction to uphold at the same time the concept of the man as breadwinner and head of the family, of woman as dependent housewife and mother, and of the nuclear family as 'progressive'.

This contradiction is, however, the result of a de facto class division between working-class men and women. I disagree with Heinsohn and Knieper (1976) when they say that the working class as a whole had no material interest

in the creation of the nuclear family and the housewifization of women. Maybe working-class women had nothing to gain, but working-class men had.

Proletarian men do have a material interest in the domestication of their female class companions. This material interest consists, on the one hand, in the man's claim to monopolize available wage-work, on the other, in the claim to have control over all money income in the family. Since money has become the main source and embodiment of power under capitalism, proletarian men fight about money not only with the capitalists, but also with their wives. Their demand for a family wage is an expression of this struggle. Here the point is not whether a proper family wage was ever paid or not (ct. Land, 1980; Barrett and McIntosh, 1980), the point is that the ideological and theoretical consequence of this concept led to the *de facto* acceptance of the bourgeois concept of the family and of women by the proletariat.

Marx's analysis of the value of labour power is also based on this concept, namely, that the worker has a 'non-working' housewife (Mies, 1981). After this all female work is devalued, whether it is wage-work or housework.

The function of housework for the process of capital accumulation has been extensively discussed by feminists in recent years. I shall omit this aspect here. But I would like to point out that housewifization means the externalization, or ex-territorialization of costs which otherwise would have to be covered by the capitalists. This means women's labour is considered a natural resource, freely available like air and water.

Housewifization means at the same time the total atomization and disorganization of these hidden workers. This is not only the reason for the lack of women's political power, but also for their lack of bargaining power. As the housewife is linked to the wage-earning breadwinner, to the 'free' proletarian as a non-free worker, the 'freedom' of the proletarian to sell his labour power is based on the non-freedom of the housewife. Proletarianization of men is based on the housewifization of women.

Thus, the Little White Man also got his 'colony', namely, the family and a domesticated housewife. This was a sign that, at last, the propertyless proletarian had risen to the 'civilized' status of a citizen, that he had become a full member of a 'culture-nation'. This rise, however, was paid for by the

subordination and housewifization of the women of his class. The extension of bourgeois laws to the working class meant that in the family the propertyless man was also lord and master.

It is my thesis that these two processes of colonization and housewifization are closely and causally interlinked. Without the ongoing exploitation of external colonies – formerly as direct colonies, today within the new international division of labour – the establishment of the ‘internal colony’, that is, a nuclear family and a woman maintained by a male ‘breadwinner’, would not have been possible.

Notes

1. The same could be said about the colonial relationship. If colonies want to follow this model of development of the metropolises, they can achieve success only by exploiting some other colonies. This has, indeed, led to the creation of internal colonies in many of the ex-colonial states.
2. The number of witches killed ranges from several hundred thousand to ten million. It is significant that European historians have so far not taken the trouble to count the number of women and men burnt at the stake during these centuries, although these executions were bureaucratically registered. West German feminists estimate that the number of witches burnt equals that of the Jews killed in Nazi Germany, namely six million. The historian Gerhard Schormann said that the killing of the witches was the ‘largest mass killing of human beings by other human beings, not caused by warfare’ (Der Spiegel, no. 43, 1984).
3. The silk spinners and weavers in Cologne were mainly the women of the rich silk merchants who traded their merchandise with England and the Netherlands.
4. Catherine Hernot had been the postmistress of Cologne. The postoffice had been a buttress of her family for many generations. When the family of Thurn and Taxis claimed the monopoly over all postal services, Catherine Hernot was accused of witchcraft and eventually burnt at the stake.
5. I found the astounding extracts from Mr Hall’s book in a text entitled *Militarism versus Feminism*, published anonymously in London in 1915 by George Allen and Unwin Ltd. The authors, most probably British feminists, had written this most remarkable analysis of the historical antagonism between militarism and feminism as a contribution to the Women’s Movement, particularly the International Women’s Peace movement which tried, together with the International Suffrage Alliance, to bring European and American women together in an antiwar effort. Due to the war situation, the authors published their investigation anonymously. They do not give complete references of the books they quote. Thus Mr

Fielding Hall's book, *A Nation at School*, is referred to only by its title and page numbers. The whole text, *Militarism versus Feminism*, is available at the Library of Congress, in Washington DC.

6. This is quite logical because the slaves produced luxury items like sugar, cacao, coffee.

COURSE 3: AVANTI- Philosophical Trends in the Feminist Movement- Avanti (2006)

See resources page at Anti-Imperialism.com or [r/peoplesliberation](https://www.reddit.com/r/peoplesliberation) for full pdf.

COURSE 4: NIKOLAI BROWN- Bell Hooks and the Western 'Left,' a Marxist Critique (2012)

Bell hooks was a leading figure in establishing 'third-wave feminism': a philosophical and practical branch of feminism centered around the history, experience, and interests of 'women of color.' Her writings are directly critical of previous feminist movements which favored white middle-class women, and she is generally critical of the standard feminist framework while finding cause in altering the scope of its discourse. Her central thesis in *Feminist Theory, from Margin to Center* is that the objective of feminism is not simply for equality between sexes but for an end to sexist oppression and the broader "ideology of domination" which supports it. In the process, she gets many things right in regards to the struggle against oppression while bringing a lot of detail and nuance into the discussion. In some regards, her critiques of feminism are applicable to nominally left-wing movements in the US today. Yet her explicit understandings of larger economic questions are lacking. Though she raises many salient points, these ideas are best understood as part of a broader yet more incisive critique of general social practice and relations between classes and groups.

Hooks' critique of bourgeois feminism

For those grounded in bourgeois feminism and other left-wing bourgeois movements, hooks' *Feminist Theory, From Margin to Center* may offer a paradigmatic shift. Though directed at the bourgeois feminists of her day, many of hooks' remarks form crucial rebuttals to many common notions and practices of today's First World left-wing political and philosophical tendencies.

Hooks sees feminism in two regards. "Feminism," she states, "has so far been a bourgeois ideology" informed by "liberal individualism" (p. 9) Secondly, through resisting this narrative surrounding feminism and by insisting it is instead "a theory in the making," (p. 10-11) she holds onto another definition: "feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression." (p. 26) For hooks, the second definition is ideal and indicates that feminism is "a struggle to eradicate the ideology of

domination that permeates Western culture on various levels, as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires.” (ibid) “This would mean,” hooks states, “that race and class oppression would be recognized as feminist issues with as much relevance as sexism.” (p.27)

This critical division between bourgeois and revolutionary aspects in movements and guiding political philosophies is not new. Often it is through such critical division that new ideas are developed which counter previously held assumptions and offer different conceptual and practical frameworks for acting within class struggle. The most famous examples of this occurred during revolutionary periods in Russia and China. The Russian Social Democratic Labor Party split before the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917. During China’s Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, what was arguably the climax of class struggle during the 20th century, the Chinese Communist Party was divided between Maoist and bourgeois factions, the latter ultimately gaining the upper hand. This division between progressive and reactionary aspects is one consistent feature of radical politics.

Hooks challenges bourgeois feminist notions of universal sisterhood and unbridled unity between all women irrespective of national, status, or class background. Responding to author Leah Fritz’s statements that “Women’s suffering under sexist tyranny is a common bond among all women..., [and] suffering cannot be measured and compared quantitatively,” hooks says,

“Fritz’s statement is another example of wishful thinking, as well as the conscious mystification of social division which has characterized much feminist expression. While it is evident that many women suffer from sexist tyranny, there is little indication that this forges a ‘common bond among all women.’ There is much evidence substantiating the reality that race and class identity creates difference in quality of life, social status, and lifestyle that take precedence over the common experiences women share- differences that are rarely transcended. The motives of materially privileged, educated white women with a variety of career and lifestyle options available to them must be questioned when they insist that ‘suffering cannot be measured.’ Fritz is by no means the first white feminist to make this statement. It is a statement that I have never heard a poor woman of any race make. Although there is much I would take issue with in Benjamin Barber’s critique of the women’s movement, *Liberating Feminism*, I agree with his assertion: ‘Suffering is not necessarily a fixed and universal experience that can be measured by a single rod: it is related to situations, needs, and aspirations. But there must be some historical and political parameters for the use of the term so that political priorities can be established and different forms and degrees of suffering can be given the most attention.’” (p. 4-5)

Hooks' statements against the 'feminist' notion that all women share a direct common bond could equally be applied to much of the Amerikan left. Much of the 'left' constructs their politics around a social base of privileged members of First World countries. Often universalizing their own experience into narratives on oppression, these one-sided abstractions of social division are imposed by the mainstream white-led left in ways that obscure the real divisions between genders, nations, and most importantly by classes (i.e., between those embodying different relationships to the process of globally-organized production and accumulation). For those on the left who advocate such vague status-as-class politics and promote the idea that all 'workers' share a common bond, the notion that "suffering [or oppression] cannot be measured" provides a convenient yet unillustrative argument. The same could be said of those who uphold vague contemporary humanist politics. As hooks points out (via quoting Benjamin Barber), noting the different types of suffering and oppression faced by people today is part of establishing political priorities and programs. Hence, when those on the American 'left' claim that some form of a familiar 'working class' or 'people' universally represents the vast majority of people's experience and aspirations, it should be pointed out that these groups are gravely divided, with one small First World section living literally at the expense of the most of the rest.

Along a similar vein, hooks rails against the tendency of white feminists to bond based on perceived victimhood:

"Bonding as 'victims,' white women liberationists were not required to assume responsibility for confronting the complexity of their own experience. They were not challenging one another to examine the sexist attitudes towards women unlike themselves or exploring the impact of race and class privilege on their relationships to women outside their race/class groups. Identifying as "victims," they could abdicate responsibility for their role in the maintenance and perpetuation of sexism, racism, and classism, which they did by insisting that only men were the enemy." (p. 46)

Hooks details how bourgeois feminism is an expression of bourgeois interest and can become a prop for the larger system,

"Feminist activism called attention to the need for social equality of the sexes, yet ruling groups of men are willing to endorse equal rights only if it is clear that the women who enter spheres of power will work to uphold and maintain the status quo." (p. 89)

While it is not hard for hooks and similar activists in third-wave feminist movements to imagine situations in which individual women are granted entrance into “spheres of power” so as to protect a more general “status quo,” a wider application of this idea in regards to whole groups of people is absent current left-wing discourse.

It could be argued that following WWII and through the Cold War, Americans and citizens of the imperialist triad were given elevated positions in consumptive power in exchange for supporting a larger status quo of imperialist supremacy. Consistent political and ideological support was secured by drastically raising the material standard of living for Americans, a larger market for the realization of profit on consumer products was created, and a showcase population was maintained to demonstrate the better side of capitalism to the Eastern Bloc and emerging Third World. By stretching hooks’ notions regarding the nature of bourgeois feminism, it is not hard to see a comparison between reactionary feminism (which seeks to grant mostly white women equal access to men’s privilege) and reactionary left-wing politics (which seeks to grant mostly white people equal access to bourgeois privilege).

Unfortunately hooks, like most who are part of nominally left-wing movements, never takes her arguments that far, nor does she tie the role of global divisions into her own analysis. This is a larger flaw of *Feminist Theory*. Nonetheless her prescriptions for a liberatory feminism, like her admonishments of bourgeois feminism, has some relevance and insight for contemporary left-wing struggles and movements.

Hooks’ liberatory feminism

Hooks sees liberatory feminism in a holistic light such that different struggles against various forms of oppression reinforce each other:

“The struggle to end sexist oppression that focuses on destroying the cultural basis for such domination strengthens other liberation struggles. Individuals who fight for the eradication of sexism without supporting struggles to end racism or classism undermine their own efforts. Individuals who fight for the eradication of racism or classism while supporting sexist oppression are helping to maintain the cultural basis of all forms of group oppression.” (p. 40)

Beginning from the Paris Commune until today, the history of revolutionary movements is one of advancements for women. In places such as China and Afghanistan, Marxist-inspired governments carried out progressive reforms in areas such as family law and gendered social codes. In places like Ghana and Nicaragua (and virtually every other revolutionary movement ever in existence), women's participation and support was fundamental for the revolutionary movements' success or failure. For those in radical movements today, the importance of linking different struggles against oppression should be self-evident.

Hooks' ideas on combating the root cultural basis of oppression are worth drawing out further. If it was simply a matter of supporting different struggles against oppression as a means to overcoming a cultural basis of domination, why stop at sexism, classism, and racism? Why not also look into and challenge other particular cultural and ideological outlooks relate to any number of oppressions which express themselves in society? Obviously, the answer has to do with setting political priorities.

In terms of clearly delineating political priorities, the struggles against different forms of oppression are most connected to the fight against capitalist-imperialism. Efforts for justice and equality in the First World without addressing the systemic injustice and inequality between the First and Third World are at best futile and at worse a prop for the larger system of global oppression (and by implication all systems of oppression).

Hooks rejects subjective identity politics and lifestyle politics in favor of active political and social engagement. In discussing her experience with bourgeois feminist movements, she notes,

"Often emphasis on identity and lifestyle is appealing because it creates the false sense that one is engaged in praxis. [...] The ethics of Western society informed by imperialism are personal rather than social. They teach us that the individual good is more important than the collective good, and consequently that individual change is of greater significant than collective change." (p. 30)

Hooks says she prefers to avoid the phrase, "I am a feminist," in favor of stating, "I advocate feminism." (p. 31) Whereas the former indicates something personal, the latter collective. Though for hooks, this distinction has practical

implications in her day to day political interactions, the notion has even wider implications for left-wing movements generally.

As with bonding as victims, notions of “feminist” and other subjective political identities tend to be expressed in a way that supposedly protects the title bearer from criticism, absolves them from the responsibility incurred by their actions and behaviors, and preempts the need for actual praxis rooted in progressive struggles and movement building. The way to fight oppression isn’t to champion oneself as a feminist or other -ist, but to critically engage in and promote the struggle against oppression. Sub-reformism, or lifestyle politics, are problematic in a similar light.

Throughout *Feminist Theory*, hooks notes the degree to which white supremacist assumptions have informed much of feminism and the ways that white women have rendered its theories and practice as something “far removed from anything resembling radical struggle.” (p. 54) “Racism,” hooks says, “teaches an inflated sense of importance and value, especially when coupled with class privilege” and gives whites a sense of entitled leadership. (ibid.)

In many nationally-oppressed and exploited communities today, bourgeois whites retain leadership positions or wield great influence through ‘progressive’ non-profits and NGOs. Deceptively named, non-profit and non-governmental organizations are always funded by for-profit or governmental entities, and rather than struggle against oppression they work to ameliorate the symptoms of oppression so as to preserve its structure. Whites are also quick to assume that they are leaders against forms of oppression for which they’ve only benefited from, and even when they have little direct experience with the struggle against such oppression. While progressive white leadership may confront some aspects of the system, they often limit their critique and practice so as to maintain their privileged position in wider society.

Where hooks goes wrong

While *Feminist Theory, from Margin to Center* offers an incisive critique of the effect of white supremacy in the Amerikan feminist movement, one that is often translatable to the Amerikan left at large, certain aspects of her work come

short of a Marxist methodological approach.

One of the most obvious deficits in hooks' work is the manner in which her terminology tends to be liberal and cedes too much to status quo assumptions and understandings of central dynamics in the world today.

Hooks is known for her descriptive terminology. "The United states is an imperialist, capitalist, patriarchal society..." she says, for example. (p. 94) Yet *Feminist Theory* doesn't attempt a deep exploration of the fundamental elements of the relationships and processes which these terms represent. In *Feminist Theory*, terms like race, exploitation, imperialism, and "cultural basis of oppression" are frequently used, yet without ever justifying their use or expanding on their full meaning. Instead, hooks often relies on the readers' background assumptions about the meanings of these terms.

In some cases, terms like "race" are problematic in and of themselves. A construction of European colonialism, "race" implies static essentialist qualities exclusive to universally recognized "races." As part of a radical understanding, "race" is best seen as a purely ideological construction used to justify a kind of oppression that is clearly racialized. In terms of understanding the objective conditions bore out by this type of oppression, little is gained by adopting the terminology used to justify and explain it. Though problematic as well, the term 'nation' and 'national oppression' implies a kind of historic construction that is more appropriate to understanding the cultural, political and economic development of different oppressed and oppressor nations. Such a paradigmatic shift would require an understanding that the United States is a multi-national country in which state and economic power has primarily been in the hands of whites. It would also dispense with the idea that there are universal "races" today (i.e., globally homogeneous white, black, 'latino,' etc races) and bolster the idea of culturally distinct peoples historically constructed through interacting with each other on the basis of unequal power relations.

Similarly, hooks use of the terms "working class" and "middle class" adhere to common understandings, and throughout *Feminist Theory* little is added in the way of fundamentally comprehending their meaning in contemporary society, except that these divisions are reflected in the feminist movement. While this type of language may come off as edgy in contemporary

Amerika at large and within “bourgeois” feminism specifically, such liberal usage of terminology indicates a departure from a Marxist approach of understanding class as relational in the process of production and accumulation. Because production and accumulation is arranged globally, any view that distinguishes class purely within a single country or group of countries is flawed. Compared to terms like proletariat, labor aristocracy, comprador bourgeoisie and monopoly capitalists, hooks’ discourse relating specifically to class is narrowly descriptive and in sync with typical perspectives of the Amerikan mainstream left, but it is not explanatory on any ground-breaking or fundamental level.

Hooks descriptions of capitalism and imperialism suffer from similar problems. That the United States is an imperialist, capitalist country is assumed by many in left wing movements, yet hooks doesn’t add much to the meaning of these terms. While many of her reflections on the impact of capitalism and imperialism within the feminist movement are valid and illustrative, *Feminist Theory* doesn’t necessarily act as a bridge for the reader to a better understanding of capitalist-imperialism as the driving feature of the world today.

In contemporary society, production and distribution is primarily arranged globally to facilitate capital accumulation for a very small percentage of the population. Historically in order to accomplish the task of expanding this system of accumulation, this small percentage has drawn up groups amongst subservient classes into alliances based on national oppression and gender oppression. In reality, there is no capitalism, which is necessarily expansive, without imperialism. Likewise, there is no imperialism, which is defined as the bourgeoisie of one nation engaged in the exploitation of other nations, without national oppression. To wit, there is no national oppression, imperialism, or capitalism in which women, who dominate both the global productive workforce and are often coerced into unpaid domestic labor, don’t suffered the most. Going even further, there is no such as the aforementioned system which isn’t reliant on exhausting ecological and natural resources. In this light, the ‘interconnectedness’ between these different forms of oppression, all centering around a process of production and accumulation and the capitalist-imperialist system which embodies it, are clear.

From the perspective of a Marxist approach, hooks’ use of the words

oppression and exploitation are clunky and misapplied. While hooks defines the word oppression in relation to exploitation and discrimination early in *Feminist Theory*, these definitions seem acquired from the perspectives she is attempting to expand beyond:

“Being oppressed means absence of choices. It is the primary point of contact between the oppressed and the oppressor. Many women in this society do have choices (as inadequate as they are); therefore exploitation and discrimination are words that more accurately describe the lot of women collectively in the United States. [sic]” (p. 5)

Much later in the book, in the context of critiquing the ways in which “feminist consciousness-raising has not pushed women in the direction of revolutionary politics” nor “helped women understand capitalism,” she correctly explains that First World women (in hooks’ words, “we”) “benefit from the exploitation and oppression of women and men globally...” (p. 161)

Exploitation, which hooks leaves undefined, and oppression, which ‘absence of choices’ describes in the most apolitical manner, are crucially related.

Exploitation is best understood not by the liberal definition of ‘using another for selfish purposes.’ Rather, exploitation relates directly to the process of production and accumulation. It is the rendering of surplus value from labor. And it is oppression, the absence of collective and individual choices imposed on most peoples, which generally enforces conditions under which exploitation occurs. Whereas exploitation is objective (i.e., as part of the process of production and accumulation one either produces surplus value or absorbs it), oppression is transcendent in that it characterizes the structural [actual economics relations] and superstructural [the ideas and institutions which are expressions of such relations] conditions under which capitalism exists and exploitation occurs. Hence, a person or group may be negatively effected by oppression though not necessarily exploited.

Hooks’ focus on an undefined “cultural basis of oppression” reveals a degree of idealism. She makes no explicit attempt to distinguish between progressive class consciousness (which brings together in solidarity different struggles against oppression) and ideology (as an expression of oppressive relations). For hooks, ideology is a neutral term, and part of the solution is to build a “liberatory” one. (p. 163)

Any such cultural basis of oppression is merely the cultural expression of oppression itself. When one group of people is involved in the systemic oppression and robbery of another, there must be an explanation which justifies such a situation. This is the root of ideology: narratives and attitudes about the world which reflect the perspective of the oppressor and are widely perpetuated (often in hegemonic ways) to the effect of enforcing the situation at hand. Stated another way, ideologies are the common response the system (even in the forms of nominally radical and enlightened movements, or individual everyday actions) which ultimately serve to protect and expand the extant system and the class, national and gender relations which characterize it; expressions of relations of oppression and exploitation which, in accounting for such relations, serve to protect and extend them.

That *Feminist Theory* doesn't make these connections is unfortunate, especially given that much of the book is a critique of bourgeois white-supremacist ideology within feminist movements. That such ideology has made its way into feminist thought and practice isn't unique to feminism. Rather, ideology is pervasive and infects left wing movements in the United States generally.

In line with her general idealism and obscurantism on the material basis of oppression, hooks holds idealist solutions in high regard. She places the onus on creating "an oppositional world view" in the US, while ruling out revolution in the material sense of directly altering the relations of power. Instead, hooks' idea of revolution in the United States is one that will be "gradual and protracted" and focused on "cultural transformation." (p. 165-166)

Revolution is nothing short of the overthrow of one class by others. Hooks' liberal mischaracterization of the term widely appeals to liberal-minded Americans, who may nonetheless be positively informed in some regards by *Feminist Theory* while not driven to revolutionary understanding and engagement. Rather than working to overthrow the embodied classes which benefit from capitalist-imperialism, hooks' vague suggestion on emphasizing "eradicating systems of oppression" has some semblance of hope without offering any real answers for praxis meant to end oppression. (ibid.) If the "cultural basis" of "systems of oppression" are to be rendered to the past, the

material relations for which they reflect must be qualitatively changed.

Hooks' notion that revolution is even possible in the US absent larger international struggles, albeit in a watered-down conceptually liberal form, is due in no small part to a misreading of class relations. Oppressors rarely revolt against the systems of oppression from which they benefit. All Americans benefit in some manner from the oppression and exploitation of Third World peoples. Class, nation, and gender traitors are important contributors to the revolutionary struggle. But they are few and far between, and they do not represent the general direction members of oppressor classes, nations, and genders give their support. The general trend for First Worlders is to defend their privileged status and the system through which it is attained. This blind spot in hooks' understanding diminishes her analysis' efficacy in the face of actual global social practice.

Conclusion

Hooks' *Feminist Theory, from Margin to Center* is an incisive critique of privileged white women's influence on the feminist movement. In many ways, these critiques are translatable to the wider left in the United States, which is similarly influenced by a social base and leadership of privileged whites and limited in the degree to which its theories and praxes could be called truly radical or revolutionary.

As part of revolutionary theory, it is important to note the real divisions and contradictions in society so that realistic strategies can be conceived to address the root causes of oppression. Without a clear understanding of such divisions, the left often sets up implicit political priorities based on whim, opportunism, narrow self interest, ideological biases such as idealism, or unacknowledged chauvinism.

While hooks' does a wonderful job at exposing the ways in which privileged whites have derailed feminism as a progressive movement, her own descriptions of the modern world often conform to common assumptions. Though attempting to move feminist discourse in a more revolutionary direction, this goal is impeded by the author's limited critique of society at large and its extent

ideologies. Often the practical priorities set by hooks, though well intended, are vague and shaped by her idealistic world view. Hence, *Feminist Theory, from Margin to Center*, while providing a much needed critique of "bourgeois" feminism and by implication many other left-wing movements, doesn't itself provide a clear picture of the system at large, its constituent relations, or realistic possibilities for a truly liberatory praxis. While being a useful and illustrative in its own regard, the ideas and political impulses put forward in *Feminist Theory* are not part of a consistent challenge to capitalist-imperialism and the oppressions through which it is characterized and perpetuated.

J PAUL-MOUFAWAD- Down with the NGO-ization of Feminism (2012)

By now I am thoroughly annoyed by the "Because I am a Girl" campaign that is advertised on innumerable subway posters and represented by pleasant hipsters on street corners. Drawing on a rather liberal articulation of feminism, and claiming to be about "empowering" girls in third world countries, this NGO campaign proudly proclaims that "girls' rights are human rights" and asks people to sponsor individual girls and thus learn about "the plight" of girls at the global peripheries.

One would think that such a campaign, with all its talk about girls being the future and such, would satisfy our feminist desires. "Yes," we think when we see these advertisements, "girls' rights are indeed human rights!" And now that I am the father of a child with two x chromosomes, I am also concerned with the issue of "girls' rights" insofar as my child will be socialized as a girl, experience patriarchy, and only be able to avoid the specific "plight" of these other girls because she was born at one of the global centres of imperialism. Hell yes, the new father in me wants to proclaim, my child and other girls should indeed be accorded human rights!

But like all NGO campaigns centred around women, this is just another capitalist-sponsored dead end that is unable to change what it seeks to change because it is incapable of understanding the terms of oppression. Indeed, if

sponsoring individual children, girls or otherwise, really changed anything then groups like World Vision and Compassion Canada would have solved world hunger decades ago. Or maybe Oprah, with her girls' schools in developing countries, would have succeeded in actually making the world a better place. Indeed, this "because I am a girl" campaign proclaims the possibility of breaking "the cycle of poverty" and yet its solution is simply charity sponsorship, NGO interference, and really has no analysis of why this cycle exists in the first place.

Obviously this "cycle of poverty" exists because of imperialism, and not because kindly people at the centres of world capitalism are sponsoring girls; these girls cannot break from oppression, from this terrible cycle, unless imperialism is broken. And it is hard to imagine a campaign that is funded by such dubious pro-imperialist multinationals like Birks Diamonds, and is beloved by an imperialist country such as Canada, as being able to break from the material context upon which this poverty cycle is contingent.

Once again we are presented with a campaign to end third world poverty and oppression that is incapable of confronting the roots of this poverty and oppression because it is bound up in the cycle it pretends to critique. This campaign rightly recognizes the necessity to support girls but imagines that the horrific context in which these girls find themselves has nothing to do with the governments and corporations from which it draws money. Perhaps it is just a problem of the "backwards" cultures of these regions where "because I am a girl" campaign seeks to intervene—an evil disconnected from any supervening structure.

Yes, girls and women are super-exploited by global capitalism and thus their self-determination is a revolutionary necessity. Recent people's wars have interrogated this problem, have attempted to arm girls and women, have even begun to develop an ideology of "proletarian feminism" to interrogate this problem. But the "because I am a girl" campaign is not interested in revolutionary womens' militias that might produce the self-determination they claim to support; in their mind, I'm sure, they would believe this was tantamount to supporting child soldiers!

Nor do they seem to recognize the fact that the majority of the world's production is performed by women and children(children who are most often

girls)—so that the countries in which these NGOs persist can have the freedom to launch "because I am a girl" campaigns as if their philanthropy is not contingent on oppression to begin with—means they should be looking at girls as potential proletarian revolutionaries rather than nodes for NGO intervention.

Hell, this campaign has even made an international "girls' day" as if "girls' rights" weren't somehow a part of International Womens' Day... but hey, let's just try to separate ourselves from a global event that is connected to communism and feminism! Let's talk about third world girls as if they won't grow up to be women shut into factories owned by some imperialist multinational that is one of our sponsors!

Point being: if this campaign actually wants to change "the plight" of girls then it should endorse womens' militias and factory take-overs on the part of women and girls. Such a revolutionary agenda, though, would put it at odds with its corporate sponsors and so, like every NGO, it will remain caught within an imperialist framework.

SUPPLEMENT: NIKOLAI BROWN- Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir's Conflicting Ideas on Women's Empowerment (2012)

Betty Friedan is often credited with founding second wave feminism, what is today sometimes mockingly referred to as 'white, middle-class feminism' or 'bourgeois feminism.' Beyond whatever rhetorical value can be found in such phrases, what do they mean? What is the implication of Friedan's work in relation to other outstanding social relations besides gender? More importantly, how can she be compared to more radical, gender-based views on social issues, notably those of her predecessor, Simone de Beauvoir?

The seminal works of both Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*, 1963) and de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*, 1949) relate to women's empowerment but in different manners and contexts. Betty Friedan refers solely to a subject of a specific social background: predominantly white middle-class women in the United States. From this perspective, empowerment is sought in a narrow context, at the expense of wider struggles against oppression and at the expense of oppressed peoples generally. On the other hand, while Simone de Beauvoir uses the French woman as a focal point for her work, the ideas in *The Second Sex* are broad and transcend single identities and social contexts. Through her existentialism, a wider philosophy she subscribed to, herself being one of its more radical proponents, de Beauvoir constructs a notion regarding gender that is relatable and at times analogous to wider forms of prevalent social inequality and oppression.

It is hard to critically understand the ideas espoused by Friedan without understanding the history of social relations from which her work sprang and found relevance. Particularly, the United States by the early 1960's had emerged as the world's preeminent empire. Prior to that, the United States was a settler nation/state which widely utilized slavery and the labor of oppressed nations. Quite a bit of research has been conducted on topics like slavery, land theft and modern imperialism, yet usually its focus has been exclusively on effects such practices have had on oppressed people. Often overlooked is the social, cultural and political effect these practices have had on beneficiary populations.

What has been revealed in studies on the effects on the beneficiary subject of such phenomena is that it had a unifying impact. Land theft, genocide, slavery, and imperialism have created for the United States a level of cohesion amongst its accepted members (i.e., historically whites), widespread social and political acquiescence, and support for their own leaders' wider supremacy. To draw an analogy from Friedan, white Americans are historically the housewives in a family which draws its income largely through the extorted tribute of others.

None of this is to say that antagonisms and long-term contradictions are entirely absent amongst whites or within the United States. However, in the context of rent drawn from oppressed people, these contradictions are more easily smoothed over with minimal struggle and minor reforms. While these reforms may be progressive in some sense, more often than not they leave intact and are in fact reliant on wider systemic oppressions.

It is in this particular context which Friedan is situated. Her efforts primarily were focused at generating system-friendly national reforms, specifically in areas of ideas, culture, and most importantly, education. Beyond whatever willful neglect Friedan may have committed towards women of color, those who hadn't made it to the suburbs during the 50's and 60's, or people oppressed by patriarchal American society (the US was in between invading Korea and Vietnam during the period), the feminism Friedan espoused was part of a movement which integrated white American women into higher positions within existing powers structures, namely those directly related to global disparities in wealth and status as well as in regards to the violent enforcement of this social arrangement. Thus, one could say that Friedan was part of a movement which attained for white and American women, alongside their men, the right to dominate other people; eventually opening doors for females such as Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hilary Clinton to oversee and even direct aggression and oppression of Third World peoples. As well, Friedan was as part of a movement which allowed for greater inclusion and empowerment for females as part of the 'middle class.' The significance of this later resultant facet should not be understated.

Middle class is a fairly accurate description of the social composition of Friedan's politics, but the term itself deserves further explanation.

The term middle class is often prone to misinterpretation. While it is correct to note the concept of middle class as a group existing between two extremes, the idea that the middle class connotes either those who occupy a socially average position or otherwise is a group which is numerically predominant is false. Originally, the term was reserved for the emergent bourgeoisie during the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, which for a time inhabited a social space between the hereditary aristocracy and small producers (peasants, handicraft workers, and those dislocated and thrown into the ranks of the classical proletariat). Today, the term refers to not more than 20% of the global population who are socially favored under an extant global socio-economic system. Whereas the middle class is said to represent a larger percentage in countries such as the United States, this simply implicates the favoredness which such groups have historically enjoyed. Today, we can say the middle class exists as part of bureaucratic and tertiary sectors of global economics and maintains itself quite literally at the expense of the much larger working class.

In this regard, the middle class is and has been a parasitic element. Different methods of accounting have arrived at this conclusion. According to kind of analysis, the middle class consumes a far greater share of ecological resources, and in the regard, if everyone lived as part of the middle class, several planets such as Earth would be needed to maintain the natural resource requirements of such widespread consumption-based material living standards. More poignantly, the middle class could be defined through its uneven trade in labor, whereby it is provided with more labor resources than itself expends with the difference made up through that appropriated from those of significantly lower social and economic power. In effect, through its relationship to outstanding class relations (i.e., between capital and a global working class),

the middle class is 'transcendent' in regards to its agency vis a vis a largely Third World-centered modern proletariat and ecological limits. Stated another way, the middle class could be described as a group as immanent exploiters: largely restricted from transcendent agency yet functional exploiters of those excluded from its ranks.

For feminists such as Friedan, empowerment for women has meant securing a portion of the female sex as more equal members of the group of immanent exploiters: to get white, middle-class women out of their kitchens and homes and ultimately onto a more equal position to that of their male counterparts. With its limited goals, narrow ideals, and neglect of outstanding oppression, Friedan and the feminism she espoused is marked both by its acquiescence to larger systems of oppression and its quiet yearning for equal membership in the club of oppressors.

Simone de Beauvoir's ideas occupy a different set of feminist ideas: specifically those implicitly related to the larger systemic oppressions which are ignored in Friedan's work. In *The Second Sex*, though she is dealing with gender specifically, she frequently refers to larger ideas regarding agency and power. For Beauvoir, immanence describes a state under which one's power and agency is severely limited and expressed in petty, often symbolic ways. Transcendence describes its opposite: the result of empowerment and the state of autonomy. The notions employed by Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* amount to much more than these two ideas, yet this is the basic framework through which she interprets human behavior and relationships.

For de Beauvoir, the goal is not empowerment for females as part of a dominating group in society, but the expansion of positive agency, i.e. transcendence, for the sex most routinely and thoroughly stripped of it. In this regard, whereas Friedan is individualist and reformist, de Beauvoir is socialistic and politically radical.

De Beauvoir recognizes that a reorganization of social and economic life is the result of and a necessary condition for the realization of true transcendence. Her view lends itself to the conscious construction of social life from the ground up and the replacing of extant social relations, attitudes, beliefs, and reality itself on more equal terms. She herself hints of favoring Marxism. Thus, her analysis and argument is imagined in a way that is less exclusive to the interests of the women of the emergent late-20th century middle class.

Some have described de Beauvoir as detached from the women she writes about: that she seems to treat women as a subject she excludes herself from. Given this reasonable interpretation, perhaps it indicates her lack of allegiance to a single group of females, such as they are "constructed" through history in part by class and nation. While her detached view is no doubt part of her existentialist outlook, perhaps it as well implies a sort of applied philosophical internationalism. Perhaps it is such a detached perspective which allows her to analyze gender, make deductions regarding equal power relationships, and conceive of such radical goals. Herself also being from an imperialist country, France, perhaps this sort of detached philosophical internationalism aided her in avoiding the missteps characteristic of Friedan.

De Beauvoir's philosophy advocates changing the material world and its relationship and hence women's existence. Yet her attitude regarding social relations isn't blind to other forms of outstanding oppression. In a line which reveals both de Beauvoir's philosophy and her attitude towards other forms of oppressions, she states, "...A colonial administrator has no possibility of acting rightly towards the native, nor a general towards his soldiers; the only solution is to be neither colonist nor military chief." For de Beauvoir, "evil exists not in the perversity of individuals... it originates in a situation against which all individual action is powerless." Though de Beauvoir doesn't elaborate on any specific program for altering the social world, she does say, "A world where men and women would be equal is easy to visualize, for that is precisely what the Soviet Revolution promised...." In continuing she notes that it will take change in woman's economic condition as the "basic factor" and further moral, social and cultural permutations to achieve such an end.

In the breadth of de Beauvoir's ideas, she notes the narcissism, small mindedness, stunted ambitions and symbolic forms of resistance which characterize immanent behavior. These ideas are based on her observation of gender, yet they are stated broadly and in a manner that leaves them open to ambiguities. Insofar as your average person in the United States could be described as a mafia wife or immanent exploiter, these patterns can be seen in their actions as well. Narcissism and small-mindedness exists in epidemic proportions in the US. Even amongst social critics, their ideas often remain in the bounds of traditional notions regarding power. And most dramatic resistance to social ills, inequality, and oppression within the US often takes a largely symbolic form.

Both the works of Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir highlight problems to be overcome in gender relations. Yet their approach and the manner in which they ultimately view empowerment is starkly different.

Though Simone de Beauvoir is most contemporaneous to second wave feminism, and indeed her ideas overlap with authors such as Betty Friedan on certain topics, her larger existentialist philosophy places her convictions and interpretation outside the narrow limits of mainstream second wave feminist ideas, such as they were necessarily bound up with the privilege and experience of oppressor subjects. De Beauvoir's focus on the broader aspects of empowerment opens up room for a radical analysis which advocates social action and transcends narrow identities. She seeks a women's movement to subvert power structures entirely. By comparison, Friedan seeks for females a higher place within extant power structures and ultimately advocates an individualist, reformist politic quite in line with extant values and wider power structures themselves.

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