



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

Mutterschaft im Patriarchat

Ausgabe 1

Herbst 2015

Herausgegeben von FIPAZ – Forschungsinstitut für Patriarchatskritik und alternative Zivilisationen, Innsbruck

Redaktion: Dr. Irene Mariam Tazi-Preve (Verantwortlich für diese Nummer), Dr. Ursula Scheiber, Univ.Prof. Dr. Claudia von Werlhof, MMag. Simone Wörer



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

Inhaltsverzeichnis

| | |
|---|-----|
| EDITORIAL <i>Mariam Irene Tazi-Preve</i> | 1 |
| LETZTE MELDUNG <i>Claudia von Werlhof</i> | 9 |
| LEITARTIKEL | |
| <i>Die Mutterfalle. Mariam Irene Tazi-Preve</i> | 12 |
| <i>The Mother Trap (English version). Mariam Irene Tazi-Preve</i> | 33 |
| I. MUTTERSCHAFT, POLITIK UND KAPITALISMUS | |
| <i>Patriarchal Procreation and Destruction of the Good and the Bad Mother.</i> <i>MechthildHart</i> | 53 |
| <i>The Gender Impact of Alchemical Politics and Exchange. The Fate of the Finnish</i> <i>Welfare Society and Gift Labor. Kaarina Kailo</i> | 69 |
| <i>The Maternal Gift, Patriarchy and the Value Form of the Commodity.</i> <i>Genevieve Vaughan</i> | 87 |
| II. DIE LAUFENDE ABSCHAFFUNG DER MUTTER | |
| <i>Verkehrte Verhältnisse (Wiederabdruck). Hilde Schmölzer</i> | 101 |
| <i>Das globale Patriarchat als Feind der Mutterschaft. Christa Mulack</i> | 121 |
| <i>Mütter-Folter. Ursula Fassbender</i> | 143 |
| <i>Die Milch macht's. Süddeutsche Zeitung</i> | 149 |
| <i>From Test-Tube Women to Bodies without Women (reprint). Renate Klein</i> | 150 |
| <i>Stop Surrogacy now Kampagne</i> | 187 |
| <i>Initiative Stop Surrogacy NOW (English version)</i> | 188 |
| III. MUTTERSCHAFT, LEIB UND MATRIARCHAT | |
| <i>Die Innanna - INNANNA Schild auf der Altstadt-Brücke in Innsbruck.</i> <i>Uschi Beiler</i> | 191 |
| <i>Il Concetto di Maternità. Angela Giuffrida</i> | 193 |
| <i>The Concept of Maternity (English version). Angela Giuffrida</i> | 202 |
| <i>La maternità e i valori de principio materno della società del Moso.</i> <i>Francesca Rosati Freeman</i> | 212 |
| <i>Kontinuität der Mutterlinie (Wiederabdruck). Ursula Fournier</i> | 224 |



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

| | |
|--|-----|
| KOMMENTAR UND FRAGEN ZU EINIGEN BEITRÄGEN AUS SICHT DER „KRITISCHEN PATRIARCHATSTHEORIE“ | |
| <i>Claudia von Werlhof</i> | 227 |
| <i>BUCHREZENSION</i> | |
| Silvia Federici: Caliban und die Hexe (Claudia von Werlhof)..... | 235 |
| <i>BERICHTE</i> | 246 |
| <i>NEUE PUBLIKATIONEN</i> | 247 |
| <i>NEUE PROJEKTE/INITIATIVEN</i> | 249 |
| <i>ANKÜNDIGUNGEN</i> | 253 |
| <i>AUTORINNEN</i> | 255 |
| <i>CALL BUMERANG NR. 2</i> | 259 |

Impressum:

Bumerang – Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

Ausgabe 1

Herbst 2015

Herausgegeben von FIPAZ – Forschungsinstitut für Patriarchatskritik und alternative Zivilisationen, Innsbruck

Redaktion: Dr. Ursula Scheiber, Dr. Irene Mariam Tazi-Preve, Univ.Prof. em. Dr. Claudia von Werlhof, MMag. Simone Woerer

ISSN 2413-8002 /Bib-ID: 2498920



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

The Gender Impact of Alchemical Politics and Exchange. The Fate of the Finnish Welfare Society⁵⁰ and Gift Labor
Kaarina Kailo, Finland

Abstract. Efficiency, productivity, economic growth and competitiveness are the masculated hardcore of neoliberalism, impacting harmfully on all the hard-to-measure dimensions of women's emotional and nurturing gift labor. They are in sharp contradiction with the key values of public care. I analyze Finland's current neoliberal government and its austerity measures as a case study of the masculated logic and values of capitalistic patriarchy in its neoliberal form. I draw on theories of the Gift and alchemical modernity.

While all anatomically intact males have a penis, no one has a phallus—the mythic, permanently erect archetypal monolith of masculine omnipotence that signifies untrammelled growth, invulnerability, and freedom from all dependency. One who appears to possess the phallus is seen as lacking nothing and no one. He seems to wield a talisman that protects against all feminine danger, especially that which arises from within. (Ducat 2004, 2)

The ultimate result of unchecked, terminal patriarchy will be ecological catastrophe or nuclear holocaust, Petra Kelly

By restoring gift giving to the many areas of life in which it has been unrecognised or concealed, we can begin to bring the gift paradigm to consciousness. Gift giving underlies the synonymy of "meaning in language" and the "meaning of life." (Vaughan 2002, 2)

The women's movements worldwide have taken issue with the ever more predatory neoliberal and technocapitalistic agenda that is threatening women's hard-won rights from the Nordic welfare states to the overexploited countries of the South. The new socio-economic order of the globalized world can be seen as the alchemical apex of capitalistic exchange economy—or whatever name is given to the new regimes of austerity. The naming of the problem is actually most important for we cannot repair

⁵⁰This article is based on two papers I delivered in Rome at two gift economy or motherhood – related conferences: Kailo 2015a, 2015b. I wish to thank Genevieve Vaughan for inviting me to these conferences and supporting my research in many ways.



the alchemical machine of patriarchal “maldevelopment” unless we can detect and locate the flaws accurately.

This article has as its goal to discuss the appropriation and demise of the gifts of the welfare society by neoliberal forces, with Finland as a case in point. I will use the notion of “gift economy” as an epistemological tool for analyzing the tension between the gift-circulating welfare state and the gift-appropriating “exchange economy”. I will outline some of the key ideological claims (and their consequences) behind the neoliberal market economy from the point of view of women’s changing status in the new global economic order. At the same time, I embrace Claudia von Werlhof’s mind-sobering and lucid analysis of all patriarchal regimes, including the Nordic welfare state, as subtle, concealed structures and processes of alchemical transformation towards a utopian motherless/natureless future (Von Werlhof 2011, 2015). I provide a few examples of how this metaphoric ‘quest for the alchemist’s Gold’ manifests itself in Finland. Werlhof’s writings provide a deep ecological analysis of how seemingly disparate realms from the Church to patriarchal economics share an unrecognized core of “alchemical beliefs”—efforts to replace biology, Nature and women’s birth-giving power with their mechanical replacements, reproductive technology as a prime example (2011). Von Werlhof well captures both what blocks and what heals the ecosocially sustainable future. Initiator of the Planetary movement for Mother Earth, she has stressed that one must theorize and analyze patriarchy AND capitalism together: failing to perceive their interconnections means failing to identify the core of the civilizational crises of modernity (2011). For her, capitalism and patriarchy not only share a time of being together on this earth for 500 years now, but are deeply related to each other as modes of masculated (Vaughan 1997) competition, ego-centeredness, alienated individuality and a short-sighted emphasis on “progress” and “development.” It is one of the paradoxes of the alchemical process whereby one creates something “new and innovative” by destroying something natural.

While there are numerous studies of the gender impact of NPM (New public management) and neoliberal restructuring in Finland (Eg. Eräsaari 2000) and elsewhere, the theories based on the gift and exchange economies or “alchemical patriarchy” are not well-known in the North, at least not in Finland.

The global agenda of neoliberal restructuring/austerity and the on-going outsourcing of public services have not left the Nordic welfare states intact. When the leader of the



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

Social Democratic Party in Finland, Paavo Lipponen, sought the approval of the Finnish people to join the EU in the 1990s, he was met with resistance by many women's groups. Minister Lipponen argued that the European Union member states would follow the Nordic model and its good record of women's rights and socio-economic stability. Today, 30 years later (Finland joined the EU in 1995), the worst fears of Finnish feminists are coming true. The recently appointed government is described by the Left as "using an axe to hack the welfare state to pieces" (Left Alliance, 5.6.2015, party website). This is the end result of the corporate efforts to turn the welfare society into a corporate battle-ground of business interests and their endless quest for Money-making innovations. While the welfare state is a far cry from the ideal gift-circulating societies like the Iroquoian democracy (Mann 2000), in relative terms losing even this social system has dramatic consequences for women seeking to combine family and work.

Prime Minister Juha Sipilä, a millionaire telecom engineer who won the April parliamentary elections in Finland, formed a right wing bourgeois government consisting of the Center Party, the eurosceptic True Finns (a populist party with a strong anti-immigration agenda) and the National Coalition, the most right wing Finnish party representing the business elite. Nordic women now fear losing many of the hard-won rights that were fought in the course of history, including subjective rights to day-care. The plan of the new government, indeed, as of 28th May, is to slash 6 billion mostly from the public services, day-care services, elderly care, social benefits and education (alone 600 million) leading to the most radical tightening of austerity measures in recent history. The harsh measures are aimed especially at the woman-dominated fields of working life while this is the first government in a long while to totally leave out of the government's program any and all gender equality agendas. While gender equality as a liberal aim may not solve the challenges of the planet and its most vulnerable populations, equal pay and other issues are still necessary for women to be able to survive in the ever more corporate-run world with its laws of the Jungle. The right wing opposes any but insignificant, symbolic reforms regarding more progressive taxation. Workers are expected to sacrifice for the "common good", but the business elite and the wealthy have been merely encouraged to "help out" on a volunteer basis. Prime Minister Sipilä responded to the "whiners" protests by noting that the rich peoples' taxes have not been increased because that would weaken Finland's "competitiveness" and "there are so few rich taxpayers". The suggestion is that the poor benefit from this "courageous" political line. Yet, the wealth



has not trickled down, as the ideological claim goes. Finland has never had so many millionaires or corporations avoiding taxes through “creative book keeping” and tax havens. The “rights” and “justice” discourse of human rights and feminist movements have thus been appropriated by the Right wing who now make “solidarity” and other Leftish terms refer to the needs of banks in trouble rather than citizens. On Sept. 9th, the government further shocked particularly the women working with minimal pay in the social and health care sector that dictatorial special legislation aims at cutting their income through historic changes to employee entitlements (eg. Sunday overtime pay, sick leave, holiday pay). According to estimates, this means a historic four to ten per cent slash in their pay.⁵¹ Women often get flus and other diseases from the children in day care centers. Now they are made to pay themselves for the first day of sick leave. Women are thus punished for their Gift labor although their pay in this field is among the lowest.

How then does the welfare society relate to the gift economy? What is meant by an exchange economy and logic? The initiator of the research/activist group, the International network of Feminists for a Gift Economy, Genevieve Vaughan (www.gift-economy.com) describes the gift economy as a submerged human logic of responding unilaterally to needs, of giving value to another, a form of rationality of care that has been made invisible by the masculated exchange economy. In contrast with the gift, the hegemonic norm of the human is *homo economicus*, ego-oriented and self-centred transactions and a metalogic that does not value in concrete terms the giving and the circulation of care (Vaughan 1997, 2015).⁵²

One might argue that the American and Nordic welfare systems differ on the basis of the extent to which they adhere to either the gift or the exchange logic, or the norm of the human as *homo donans* or *homo economicus*. According to Genevieve Vaughan in *The Gift in the Heart of Language – The Maternal Source of Meaning* (2015), patriarchal capitalism and its ideology have eliminated mothering and the gift economy from a world view that validates the market. In Western society, mothering

⁵¹ Under pressure from citizens and trade unions, the government now has now given in to make some of the wealthy and members of Parliament participate in some small measure in the “rescue of Finland’s competitiveness” by paying 2 percent more capital taxes and other small “sacrifices”. However, this does not alter the misogyny of the government and the fact that employer groups contribute 30 million while employees give 2700 million to “help save the welfare state”. (Kansan Uutiset, pääkirjoitus, 11.9.2015).

⁵²For my own articles on the Gift, what I call the Gift imaginary, see Kailo 2004a, b, c and 2008.



is discredited and often identified with the argument of essentialism, while instances of the wider gift economy seem to have nothing to do with mothering, or even with women. Vaughan believes that in fact humanity is maternal – we are all mothered. It is the generalization of the logic of mothering to the wider social sphere that permits gifts to circulate within a community without an immediate return, satisfying needs and creating and maintaining the bonds that form the community itself. If society does not honor women and motherhood, the gift economy becomes difficult to practice, a mere unrealistic add-on to a supposedly more basic principle of exchange. One way to divide people is mind-colonization that naturalizes only the masculated, dominant economy (exchange, the market) leading women and other gifters themselves to give more value to Exchange. The women who look upon their gift labor as just biological and “natural” fail to form alliances with each other, and even collude with denigrating the feminists who question the asymmetrical power relations between the public and private realms of economy.

While the current neoliberal politics is based on an unrecognised, asymmetrical unilaterality of taking, the Gift economy stresses the value of unilateral giving, when the gift recipients are not in a position to give back. In the exchange economy, profits motivate the “giving”, while in the Gift economy it is a response to the satisfaction of needs--basic needs to which all are entitled (Vaughan 2007, 2015). The exchange attitude cancels an important part of human life: “the denial of the importance of the mothering economy is made necessary because the market and gift giving are configured in a structural relation of ‘parasite’ and ‘host’ that organizes society at many levels. It permeates daily life as well as race, class, national and international relations. If the parasitic relation were visible the ‘host’ would struggle to be free so it is kept hidden as such to the people involved. What we do see of it, is the suffering of women and girl children worldwide which we consider in terms of intersectional oppressions, injustice, underdevelopment, second class citizenship. But **it** ((which)) is actually the condition of being, along with their impoverished fathers, sons and brothers, the hosts, the matter from which the mechanism of capitalism daily draws its sustenance” (Vaughan 2015, 12-13). The gift economy works best in a situation of abundance. The gigantic social mechanism of the Patriarchal Capitalistic system itself creates the scarcity that is necessary to keep the gift economy in a situation of difficulty (2015, 13). It becomes a forced gift creating surplus value to the capitalist. Vaughan stresses that it is thus not the maternal values, we must criticize for making us self-sacrifice, but the artificially created context of scarcity that starves the Gift. It



is only by changing the system that mothers and other motherers of any gender can find the abundance necessary to do their jobs and ensure this abundance to future mothers and others as well.

The human needs are now submitted to the luxury needs of international shareholders and the credit rating agents. In fact, in Finland, as elsewhere, basic needs are not being met, while businesses are encouraged to invent artificial needs to create demand. If, together with the “capricious market”, the money institutions dislike the extent of Finland’s indebtedness, it risks losing its excellent credit rating. We are now hostage to non-parliamentary and non-democratic forces that weigh more in national decision-making than the basic survival needs of citizens. In terms of the powerful metaphor of alchemy, the money-making, money-controlling and debt-inducing institutions of the world have in this way succeeded in creating a kind of perverse “alchemical Gold” of fake needs, only to benefit the owners of the “alchemical means of production” . Von Wehrhof’s alchemical metaphor (2011, 2015) is useful in referring to an elite regime’s vile dealings that seek to create profit out of nothing, without investments, without jobs, just a vampirish circulation of monetary instruments. They have been compared to the atomic bomb in terms of the misery they create to the most vulnerable groups, as the subprime crises revealed. After all, the abstract philosopher’s stone of the financial innovators has caused the fall of banks and the inhuman crises of Greece while public funds are being seized to cover the banks’ self-induced losses. Making money out of money is truly a masculated fantasy of giving birth, but its consequences have been to concentrate the world’s wealth while making many lose their homes.

The market economy is according to Vaughan composed of private property owners or would-be owners and exchangers in the midst of a sea of gifts we do not recognize as such. We do not recognize them until the corporations invent ways of turning the gifts into commodities (water, seeds, genes and language itself). Von Werlhof compares this process to the alchemist’s efforts to create something higher, a philosopher’s stone or a better human, by first destroying, appropriating or privatizing Nature and using other beings as the stepping stone (or alchemist’s oven). The push to productivity overrides human needs and establishes the philosopher’s stone of Money/unequal exchange as the most important principle of human interaction. In both Sweden and Finland there have been reports of the means used by private nursing corporation to increase their profits: the elderly peoples’ diapers are



changed as seldom as possible and every single “service” from putting on socks to bathing or drawing curtains is given a quantifiable, monetary value. Some elderly have died because of the reduced care or have been found lying in their excrement for days. Gift labor is thus sacrificed to exchange, self-interest. The elderly are mere *materia prima* ab/used in the interest of productivity. Formerly in Finnish history, nurses were not allowed to marry, but had to sacrifice their lives for the care of the sick and aging. The notion of sacrifice has now been altered and includes the cancelling out of the very calling which has attracted women to the social and health fields. The personnel is not allowed to care as gift labor reduces profits.

Vaughan claims that we have distorted our concepts of who we are and what we should do by superimposing this alienated economy of exchange on a human communicative economy of the gift. Recognizing this is the first step in making the change towards an economy based on free material and linguistic communication and the elaboration of the altercentric mother-child relation (2015, 373).

While the change of dominant notions about human nature and about the propensity of humans to engage in gift rather than exchange relations is important, obviously it is not enough to prevent the onmarch of neoliberal forces. The vision of the Gift Economy network regarding the current civilizational crises is precisely to revive or make visible the already existing gift impulse and to make women recognize their concealed economic value. Internalized oppression is a powerful tool of population control.

Next, I elaborate on the Nordic welfare state, contrasting it with its competing other--the American model of need-oriented politics--which is becoming the ideal that the EU is imitating.

The welfare state - two models based on Gift or Exchange⁵³

There are two different ways of organizing a welfare state that differ in terms of the level of gift-thinking, and the logic of the “good life”: according to the first model, as in

⁵³For important debates on the welfare state in history and in different locations in Europe, see Esping-Andersen (1990), Fay, (1950), Ferragina, E. et al, (2015) and Ferragina E. (2011).



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

the United States, the state is primarily concerned with ensuring the rights of business people and corporations, while at the same time directing some tax-derived resources to “the people most in need.” This model with its light agenda of basic entitlements is rooted in a tight bureaucratic control over the people concerned, with much interference in their lives to establish those who are “in need.”

The Nordic Model

The Nordic model does not divide citizens into the needy and successful; progressive taxation serves to accumulate funds which are then distributed to all on the basis of universal rights, for example, entitlements to health, parenting, social assistance, education and culture. The Finnish regime belongs to the Nordic welfare model, which historians have defined as belonging to the most successful recent experiments in socially just political systems. The Nordic welfare state can be regarded as the type of political system that has types of gift economy practices built into it alone because of the ideology of universal rights and free or moderately priced public services accessible to all.⁵⁴ The financial crises of recent decades can be analyzed and approached as the predictable outcome of economic beliefs that deregulated capital movements, weakened their controls and thus permitted a system that rewards risk taking while rewarding greed. However, now the emotional, care and gift labor as significant dimensions of public services are becoming the luxury and privilege of only those with purchasing power, due to the current obsession with (cost)-efficiency and productivity. When money, not universal rights, forms the basis of the distribution of common assets, the wealthy lose their motivation to maintain the system. Those seen to be responsible through their higher income, jobs and wealth for the social capital being “redistributed”, dismiss the idea of social welfare; after all, they feel that do not receive anything of it while “working so much harder”. In the dominant, manipulating discourse, those in need are parasites on the system. There is no recognition that the entire society would collapse if women stopped reproducing the “workers and taxpayers”, keeping them healthy and bringing them up as healthy citizens. Vaughan

⁵⁴The labor of love practiced mostly by women in the woman-dominated fields of education and the social and health sectors is in some ways a form of Gift labor; after all, traditionally the women choosing this line of work accepted the moderate pay because of their “calling” to care. While this is changing and women being assimilated into the “alchemical processes of profit” under neoliberalism, the moral suffering of many women reported in these fields attests to the fact that the exchange logic is not easily adopted by women—if only because of their socialization.



observes: “Not to be outdone by hidden givers, those who have succeeded in the exchange economy sometimes balance their egotism by dispensing a (usually not abundant) bit of charity to the underclass, or by proposing tendentious solutions to the social problems they have helped to create” (Vaughan 1991, 86).⁵⁵ Indeed, the gift is linked with fair taxation and distribution of the Commons while exchange is a model of “winner-takes-it-all” – a logic based on the survival of the fittest, on competition regardless of a level playing field, and the arguments that those not making it have themselves to blame for it. In Finland, too, the state now wishes to withdraw as much as possible from the social services agenda and focus predominantly on the promotion of entrepreneurship. This represents the core of the gendered bias in neoliberalism. After all, it is women that have held 80 per cent of the public sector jobs now being outsourced or experiencing drastic pay cuts, and it is also women that most urgently need these moderately priced or free services to be able to combine careers and family. The majority of the business class consists also of men although small businesses are often run by women. The reduction of resources from public service jobs means a parallel transfer of the “savings” to the male-dominated fields. Robot-makers benefit when nurses are being replaced by machines. Von Werlhof provides a brilliant interpretation of this process:

The modern alchemical procedures ...promise the same thing as ancient alchemy: wealth, splendor, and gold in abundance; military victory, technological superiority, control, mastery of people (particularly women) and nature through a transformation into something “higher”—eternal youth, beauty, power, good health, long life, even immortality; the good, the true, and the beautiful for everyone—the allegedly better, more perfect, more complete, guilt-free, fully developed “new man.” A key focus includes as much as a “trans-human” replacement, which, like Paracelsus’ “Homunculus,” will come out of a test tube; or like the post-human super-robot, he will no longer be “biological,” but rather an entirely artificial, predetermined, manufactured “life” form (Duden 1991). As such, it will not involve any contribution from women, mothers, bodies, wombs, or other formerly required cultural or natural conditions, such as cycles, rhythms, nor the different forms of interconnectedness and self-creative processes—forms of “natura naturans”—that these give rise to (2003, 6).⁵⁶

⁵⁵The importance of the fact that mothers give unilaterally is that is not charity, but a precondition for the infant’s survival. Giving here is not tied with being good but in being human, recognizing that humans cannot survive without giving.

⁵⁶As Tanja Djuric-Kuzmanovic summed it up at the meeting of FemAttac in Graz in 2003, the effects of the transition of the former socialist economies to the market economies until now have worsened women’s status



The insight about patriarchy as an alchemical process to create the ultimate natureless, motherless world (Werlhof 2015) can be applied to Finland's new "vision"—Anne Berner, a wealthy charity-oriented Minister recently announced the government's Top Agenda: to advance digitalization and the creation of robots to increase Finland's productivity. While it is well-known that these processes further destroy jobs and create new mass unemployment, the Left's and the Greens' demand for the "gift" of a basic income to ensure everyone's survival in this dire future has not met with the government's enthusiasm. The government wishes to speed up the replacement of nurses and care by smart floors (able to report a "client" falling), automatic do-it-yourself dinner machines, remote monitoring "care" and finally, the heartless robots. Incidentally, one robot hailed as a great innovation is blond and has botox lips! The majority of the elderly are women.

Von Werlhof would no doubt interpret this phenomenon in Finland as a prime example of the alchemical processes whereby anything smacking of motherhood, care or Nature needs to be replaced by machines and man-made innovations-as-creation: "The underlying *phobia of mothers and the natural world* goes far beyond what Max Weber described as the "demystification" of nature. In modern civilization, with the so-called development of the productive forces taking the form of mechanization as 'technification' (Genth 2002), we are drawing ever closer to the technological *overthrow of the natural order*, along with all of the related forms of cultural organization. The destruction thereby engendered could, as such, be called *destruction by procedure* or the *development of the destructive forces...*" (Werlhof 2010c). This alchemy hopes to become a generalized, and now global, program for the overall transformation of the world into "capital," or as Marx would have put it, the transformation of "Lady Nature" into "Mr. Capital" (Werlhof 2015, 12). The "gift calling" of the nurses is replaced by the ego-oriented capitalist to put exchange where once nurturing reigned highest...⁵⁷ The alchemical Gold of creating a "motherless"

on multiple levels: 1. Increasing labour insecurity and flexibility of the labour force 2. Increasing grey economy and informal labour market, 3. Increasing unemployment, 4. Decreasing wages and pensions 5. Increasing poverty, corruption and crime, 6. Increasing personal insecurity, 7. Increasing social inequalities, 8. Cutting social services and state care to education, health, family care, child care and social welfare system, 9. Decreasing role and influence of trade unions, worker's rights protection and healthy and secure working conditions, 10. Decreasing environmental protection (Conference abstracts 2003, 29). This same development has now reached the formerly egalitarian Scandinavian countries to a differing extent, but with enough similarity with Eastern Europe's developments to cause serious worry.

⁵⁷Could it be that the alchemical regime does not wish to free housewives, mothers, students, the jobless and vulnerable groups from their dependency on the state's system of controls? After all, such a freedom to enjoy



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

cyborg society free of the costly care-work is only feasible if the system destroys whatever represents an obstacle to its aims (eg. gift labor).

The US Model

The US model – or any neoliberal, capitalist-patriarchal system based more on exchange than gift-circulation-- is anti-egalitarian and anti-feminist for the Darwinist-competitive model will never benefit mothers and people made dependent on others by asymmetrical social structures and attitudes. The American model is needs-oriented rather than universal rights- based social system. It is based also on the ethos of individual entrepreneurial spirit where might is right. Its ethos of care is expressed mostly as charity, which, as already mentioned, allows the rich to ease their conscience for having robbed public resources and prevented “the needy” from being more self-determining and equal.

The American model reveals more clearly than the Nordic one how the state has come to facilitate the hegemonic control of citizens while purporting to be itself a democratic guardian of the interests of “all”. Von Werlhof writes: “alongside war as a destructive means of transformation came the imposition of an ‘order’ beneficial to the victor ‘within’ the conquered territories. It was the *state* that facilitated the ongoing domination of the oppressed. Under these conditions, oppressed civilizations, which in general were “matriarchal,” meaning adhering to ‘in the beginning is the mother’ (Göttner-Abendroth 1988), were gradually ‘patriarchalized,’ distorted, neutralized and destroyed” (2015).

The alchemical process is ultimately also a radical process of continuing privatization (Latin “privare” means to rob) whereby fewer and fewer individuals/megacorporations finally control the entire food chain and people’s survival (eg. Monsanto). Why let people drink water free, when you can charge for it and have Nature turned into the Gold of the privatizers?

from Nature’s gifts instead of the artificial and intentional politics of scarcity of the current system would deprive the Alchemist of the primal material—the malleable and useful raw material it needs to ab/use in order to accumulate capital?



The American model of society reveals what happens when money as the primal alchemical “gold” of our era is allowed to determine the fate of democracy. Jim Carter, former US president has stated that the US is currently an oligarchy of the few billionaires that have destroyed democracy through their financial influence. Not much is thus left even of ceremonial democracy. The logic of exchange as accumulation of wealth for the few has reached unprecedented levels. Donald Trump can afford to be racist and sexist and to openly brag about his role as a megafunder of politicians. Corruption on this level is not even hidden anymore. This (mal)development is now spreading to Europe, even to the Nordic welfare system. To quote recent figures on the distribution of wealth worldwide: “by next year, 1% of the world’s population will own more wealth than the other 99%. Oxfam’s research shows that the share of the world’s wealth owned by the best-off 1% has increased from 44% in 2009 to 48% in 2014, while the least well-off 80% currently own just 5.5%. It added that on current trends the richest 1% would own more than 50% of the world’s wealth by 2016. Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Oxfam International said in an interview with the Guardian, Byanyima: ‘We want to bring a message from the people in the poorest countries in the world to the forum of the most powerful business and political leaders. The message is that rising inequality is dangerous. It’s bad for growth and it’s bad for governance. We see a concentration of wealth capturing power and leaving ordinary people voiceless and their interests uncared for.’ Oxfam made headlines at Davos in 2014 with a study showing that the 85 richest people on the planet have the same wealth as the poorest 50% (3.5 billion people). The charity said this year that the comparison was now even more stark, with just 80 people owning the same amount of wealth as more than 3.5 billion people, down from 388 in 2010. Byanyima said: “Do we really want to live in a world where the 1% own more than the rest of us combined? The scale of global inequality is quite simply staggering and despite the issues shooting up the global agenda, the gap between the richest and the rest is widening fast.” (Elliot and Pilkington, 2015).

Conclusion – west end?

To conclude, a major challenge also for the feminist movement at large is to expose the psychopathology of alchemical patriarchy. How can we make its practitioners (men and women) recognize these dark underpinnings and motivations behind their delusional projects? How to rebuild the male ego as a non-dissociated Self that might



feel the pleasure of interdependency and interconnection rather than being rooted in atomistic, life-denying individualism and egoism? Some men who have returned to the “primal scene” of history/herstory, recognizing the existential value of participatory, integral beingknowing flowing from the gift logic and way of living, give us hope (Kremer 1997, 6). Indeed, anatomy is not destiny and women can identify with alchemical patriarchy while men can come to see its destructiveness to themselves as well. What indeed makes some men resist the alchemical project of maldevelopment, and what is their alternative to the “holy grail of endless economic growth” which mistreats Nature and women?

For Kremer, a profeminist philosopher-psychotherapist, the solution to the problems’ of our times is collective and personal “healing” and a return to the kinds of kin relationships, care circles and nurturing bonds that have characterized and still in part mark particularly Indigenous civilizations. Kremer’s writings promote the Gift-based worldview beyond patriarchal violence, hierarchies and binary thinking, and he engages himself at the same time in the ethics and self-reflection that are the precondition for a radical shift and transformation. While not interpreting Western science as a form of pathological alchemy, he locates its dysfunctional roots in colonial impulses: “locality, historical moment, cultural roots may matter more than Enlightenment Philosophy allowed us to acknowledge. In short: all peoples have indigenous roots that may matter more at this historical juncture than even the various postmodern strands are able to see or willing to admit” (Kremer 1997, 10-11). Kremer elaborates on our need to develop the social imagination for sustainability by recovering the matrix of values and ways of living that characterized or still characterize matriarchal, life-oriented people living in balance with nature (Kremer 2008). He believes that we can develop such imagination through the “restitution of the indigenous consciousness process, where we can inquire about and understand the needs of all participants in a particular place and time. Balance may thus be gained. The ecological crisis can be understood as the effect of a misguided epistemology” (Kremer 1997, 8).⁵⁸Kremer has defined the evolutionary trajectory of the so-called civilizing process as dissociative schismogenesis (Kremer 1997, 10-11),

⁵⁸Kremer, like Werlhof, doubts that the needed radical shift happens easily: “To presume that any such project of recovery work can arrive within one lifetime at the level of immanent conversation still practised by contemporary native peoples (even in the face of colonization), would by hubris - recovering the indigenous consciousness process after a prolonged history of dissociation is a multigenerational project” (Kremer 1997, 9).



which underlines the split psyche of the masculated way of relating and living in separation from Nature: “People of European descent, or people who have entered the eurocentered process of consciousness have split themselves off from this ongoing interaction of place, ancestry, animals, plants, spirit(s), community, story, ceremony, cycles of life, and cycles of the seasons and ages. This dissociation has created a conceptualization of social evolution, in which a major shift has occurred from prehistory to history, from oral tradition to writing civilization, from the immanent presence of spirit(s) to the transcendence of god(s)” (Kremer 2008). He further claims that the European Enlightenment Philosophy put the final touches on the development of a non-participatory, dissociative mind process, the enthronement of linear causality, and the imperial grasping of the appearances of reality in a globalizing quantitative reduction (presumably resulting in the control of what is conceived of as objective reality itself) (Kremer 2008). In these remarks Kremer implicitly joins Von Werlhof’s analysis of the diabolical nature of Western science and he expresses the pathologies of the exchange economy by exposing its underlying psychic roots. While the above analysis of what is wrong with Western “civilization” does not as such address the welfare state, including it in this article is necessary. After all, we cannot repair the failed machinery of political systems unless we can name all of the levels on which it is dysfunctional. Discussing alternatives, like the gift economies of Indigenous people, is to point in a new direction, beyond patriarchy and capitalism.

Vaughan, Von Werlhof and Kremer all give hope in different ways how being nurtured by the Gift logic, the world of mothers or our own indigenous (non-white and capitalistic) traditions and nurturing them in return represent a radical form of “damage control”. More than that, they may fill the vacuum created by the scarcity of Capitalism and help stop false, commodified romanticism, and the kind of nostalgia and desire that are being manipulated and used to create the philosopher’s stone—Profit. Being rerooted in the community ethos and way of life of gift-based societies is a powerful antidote to the alchemical imaginary, based as it is on fallacies and artificially created needs. Apffel-Marglin sums up an indigenous vision where the maternal logic and the sustainable, life-oriented values of “nature people” combine:

Nurturing conversations are a foundational aspect of participatory or indigenous consciousness and are premised on the idea that we are not primarily engaged in them for the purpose of knowing reality. They are engaged as part of the activity of *crier y*



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

dejarse crier, of nurturing (raising) and letting oneself be nurtured (raised). The verb *crier* is used to speak of raising children, animals, plants, relationships, etc. It is the activity that fosters the growth and development of any potentiality or generativity. It is a fundamentally mutual or reciprocal activity: as one nurtures one is simultaneously nurtured. (...) (Apffel-Marglin 1994, 9 qtd. in Kremer 2008).

The above views on generativity and Indigenous roots help put the Welfare state in its place—while Nordic feminists strive hard to retain what is left of its “woman-friendly policies”, it is clear that this regime’s patriarchal roots and techno-alchemical aims must be better exposed as a precondition for radical change. Finally, on the level of an ethos and epistemology that must replace the patriarchal imaginary of heroism, growth, conquest, competition and productivity Vaughan’s theory of giving provides the much-needed alternative. It is already bringing about change in the form of the spreading theories of the Gift and related practices. For Vaughan “giving is not moral or ethical, but simply the normal propensity of humans to create bonds and ensure collective survival” (2015). Finally, Vaughan points out that “We will not solve the crises of this era unless we recognize the important economic aspects of mothering as a gendered dimension of epistemology rather than reducing it ideologically to ‘biological essence’ or ‘nature’” (2015, 100). Vaughan provides many examples of the Gift. “In social incarnations of linguistic giving in symbolic gift exchange, ((and)) most recently in the maternal and linguistic aspects of the modern internet wiki economy, of volunteering, of social experiments in gifting communities, **and** of ecological initiatives like permaculture, we will find the way to a positive material economy of abundance and a culture of peace.” (2015)

A motherless, nature-less future is not an option. Hence the only revolution that can help still save the planet needs to factor in the missing link, the censored, feared thing that continues to be absent in Marxist, feminist, socialist and other “alternative” movements—the mother, Nature, sustainability. This is not an ecofeminist fantasy but a matrix of insights that all the degrowth and gift movements do well to grasp. Unless they join the blind members of the “last generation”, West End (Werlhof 2010).



Bibliography

- Bartholomew, James (2015). *The Welfare of Nations*. Biteback. p. 448.
- Djuric-Kuzmanovic, Tanja. Conference abstract. Graz, Attac seminar, 2003, 9.
- Ducat, Stephen J. *The Wimp Factor. Gender Gaps, Holy Wars, and the Politics of Anxious Masculinity*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2004. (Larry Elliot, economics editor, and Ed Pilkington, 19.1.2015, theGuardian)
- Elliott, Larry and Ed Pilkington. "New Oxfam report says half of global wealth held by the 1% ". 19.1.2015, the Guardian.
- Esping-Andersen, Gosta; "The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism", Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Fay, S. B. 'Bismarck's Welfare State', *Current History*: XVIII (January 1950): 1-7.
- Ferragina, E. et al. The Four Worlds of 'Welfare Reality' – Social Risks and Outcomes in Europe, *Social Policy and Society*, 14 (2), 2015, 287-307.
- Ferragina, Emanuele and Martin Seeleib-Kaiser. "Welfare Regime Debate: Past, Present, Futures?" *Policy & Politics* 30 (2011), 4, 583-611.
- Freeland, Chrystia. *Plutocrats. The Rise of the New Global Super Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else*, 2012.
- Kailo, Kaarina. "The Demise of the Nordic Welfare State". 2015, April 25-27, The Maternal Roots of the Gift Economy – Conference, Casa delle Donne, Rome, 2015a.
- Kailo, Kaarina. "Appropriating the Gifts of the Nordic Welfare state". Maternal Subjectivities: Psychology/Psychoanalysis, Literature, Culture and the Arts, 23-24th of April. The Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (MIRCI). Casa delle Donne, Rom, 2015b.
- Kailo, Kaarina. "The New Socio-Economic Order in a Globalized World: an Overview of Women's Rights and of Women as Property ". International Workshop, "Property, Gender and the Development of the Socio-Economic Order in Western Societies and the Arab-Islamic World, Workshop organized by the University of Vienna, Austria. Dec. 4-6, 2004a. Unpublished paper. www.kaarinakailo.info.
- Kailo, Kaarina. "Globalisation Revisited. Ecospiritual Movements Reviving the Gift Imaginary." *In Search of a Humanised Globalisation. The Contribution of Spirituality based Movements*. Asia-Europe Foundation, Nanzan University, Japan, April 27-29, 2004b. 13-20.



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

- Kailo, Kaarina. "Giving Back to the Gift Paradigm—Another Worldview is Possible." *Athanor. Il Dono, The Gift. A Feminist Analysis.* (in Italian and English). Ed. Genevieve Vaughan. 39-69, 2004c, 8.
- Kansan Uutiset, pääkirjoitus, "Hallitus julisti sodan" (The Government declared a state of war) 11.9.2015.
- Kremer, Jürgen. "Bearing Obligations." *Wo/men and Bears. The Gifts of Nature, Culture, Gender Revisited*, Kaarina Kailo (ed.), Toronto: Inanna Press & Education, 2008.
- Kremer, Jürgen. "Are There 'Indigenous Epistemologies?'" San Francisco: California Institute of Integral Studies, 1997.
- Kenworthy, Lane. *Social Democratic America*. Oxford UP, Oxford, 2014.
- Kuhnle, Stein. "The Scandinavian Welfare State in the 1990s: Challenged but Viable." *West European Politics* (2000) 23#2 pp. 209–228
- Kuhnle, Stein. *Survival of the European Welfare State*. London, Routledge, 2000.
- Mann, Barbara. *Iroquoian Women, the Gantowisas*. New York, Lang, 2000.
- Vaughan, Genevieve. *The Gift in the Heart of Language: the Maternal Source of Meaning*. Mimesis International, 2015.
- Vaughan, Genevieve, ed. *Athanor. Il Dono, The Gift. A Feminist Analysis.* (in Italian and English). 39-69, 2004, 8.
- Vaughan, Genevieve. *36 Steps Toward a Gift Economy*. Austin: Texas 2002.
- Vaughan, Genevieve. *For-Giving. A Feminist Criticism of Exchange*. Texas: Plainview Press, 1997.
- Werlhof, Claudia von. "Loosing Faith in Progress: Capitalist Patriarchy as an „Alchemical System“ in Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, Nicholas Faraclas and Claudia von Werlhof (Eds.): *There is an Alternative. Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Globalization*, London 2001, Zed Press, 15-40.
- Werlhof, Claudia von. *West-End. Das Scheitern der Moderneals "kapitaistisches Patriarchat" und die Logik der Alternativen*. Köln 2010, Papy Rossa.
- Werlhof, Claudia von. *The Failure of Modern Civilization and the Struggle for a "Deep" Alternative: On Critical Theory of Patriarchy as a New Paradigm* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2011).
- Werlhof, Claudia von. *Destruction Through "Creation"—The "Critical Theory of Patriarchy" and the Collapse of Modern Civilization*. Translated by Michael Ryan. In: *CNS, Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Vol. 24, No.4, New York, Dec. 2013, 68-85. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2013.846498>



Zeitschrift für Patriarchatskritik

Werlhof, Claudia von. "A Sojourn Into the "Critical Theory of Patriarchy. Modern Society and Its Five Basic Relationships – From the Point of View of the Alchemy Thesis". Boomerang. Zero. 2015.

Web

www.akademieHagia.org

[www.http://gift-economy.com/wordpress/](http://gift-economy.com/wordpress/)