

A “matriarchal philosophy of nature” and a “patriarchy-critical philosophy of history”

Towards the foundation of a “critical theory of patriarchy”

An interdisciplinary project of political science
in light of the contemporary crisis of civilisation

Description: The project aims to provide a philosophical foundation for the patriarchy-critical theory of society employed by modern studies of matriarchies and critical research into patriarchy, by developing a “matriarchal philosophy of nature” and the “patriarchy-critical philosophy of history”. In the context of a critical engagement with the history of occidental philosophy, it aims to substantiate the thesis, developed by critical studies of patriarchy, that patriarchy is an antimatriarchal social system – indeed, ultimately a “system of war” – the goal of which is to overcome mother (and) nature through their technological replacement, or in other words, their total and transformative “re-creation”.

In this project it is the task of the “matriarchal philosophy of nature” to reveal the understandings of nature which peaceful-cooperative matriarchal societal relations are based on (interconnectedness of all being), while the “patriarchy-critical philosophy of history” intends to show how patriarchy, over the course of its development through several millennia, has moved away from this understanding of nature and the corresponding peaceful societal order. Thus the goal is to create a comprehensive theory that seeks to give entirely novel answers to the question of the “essence” of both reality and history, namely for the first time from a patriarchy-critical perspective, thus constituting a kind of last possible “grand narrative”.

Hypotheses and aims: The project’s goal is an analysis of the origin and the deeper, pre-modern causes of the contemporary crisis of civilisation, ultimately emerging with the modern machine-driven capitalist mode of production. It is the fundamental hypothesis of patriarchy-critical research that it has from the very beginning been the goal of patriarchy to replace the matri-archal social order (*mater arché* = in the beginning the mother) as well as nature *in toto* with a “higher” and “better” world created by men or fathers, respectively. But while this supposedly “higher” and “better” world had only been imagined during antiquity and the Middle Ages, the onset of modernity – in particular through “progress” in the natural sciences,

technology and economics – saw the attempt to quite properly produce it through the machine-driven, capitalist transformation of nature, thus truly “proving” that the “father” supposedly was the true and better “creator” (*pater arché* = in the beginning the father/ruler/god). The apparent goal of patriarchal development is the realisation of “pure” patriarchy, cleansed of all remnants of matriarchy. It is thus nothing less than a becoming-independent of all earthly preconditions through a “creation from destruction” beyond natural cycles and contexts that is meant to supply proof of the “benevolent” authority of apparently “creative fathers” and their archetype, the monotheistic father-god in heaven.

Method and content: This thesis of the initially purely theoretical imagination (= “patriarchal idealism”) and subsequent realisation (= “patriarchal materialism”) of a patriarchal “better world” for the purpose of legitimating patriarchal structures of domination will be substantiated with reference to the central figures and theories from the history of occidental philosophy. The latter will be decoded as an increasingly rapid history of decay, that moves ever further away from the ideas of the old matriarchal philosophies of nature and myths, and from the corresponding peaceful societal structure of matriarchy.

The first task will be to translate the content of the matriarchal myths into the language of occidental metaphysics, in order to achieve comparability between matriarchal and patriarchal philosophies of nature. A second step will be to contrast the “matriarchal philosophy of nature” (A) thus generated with the grand theories of occidental philosophy. This will then yield a “patriarchy-critical philosophy of history” (B) that reveals the entire history of European philosophy from antiquity up to the present as a monumental apparatus of legitimation: 1. of the installation of patriarchal systems of domination and 2. for the modern transformation of nature in the context of capitalist patriarchy.

The “matriarchal philosophy of nature” will be worked out here primarily through an engagement with Giordano Bruno, but also with Friedrich W. J. Schelling and a few philosophers from the so-called “pre-Socratic” period. The goal is to create a specifically matri-archal set of concepts by virtue of which it should be able to give different, i.e. patriarchy-critical responses to the central and fundamental questions of a philosophy of nature. In the context of the “patriarchy-critical philosophy of history” (B), however, all the grand occidental theories will be dealt with chronologically with respect to their distance to the “matriarchal philosophy of nature”. The history of philosophy will here be divided into five phases that will reveal, in their teleological succession, the history of the development of patriarchy as a linear, de- rather than pro-gressive process of decay:

Phase 1 comprises the pre-Socratic period, which is characterised by the conflict between matriarchal conceptions of connectedness and patriarchal conceptions of separateness. Phase 2

consists of the conceptions of the already entirely patriarchalised classical Greek philosophy. The breakthrough of patriarchal conceptions of separateness is manifested not only in the anti-body ethics of Socrates, but also in Plato's ontological dualism and in the Aristotelian logic of contradiction. Phase 3 ranges from late antiquity's escapist doctrines (Gnosis) all the way to the Christian philosophies of the early and late Middle Ages (e.g. Augustinus, St. Thomas Aquinas). These are characterised not "only" by separations *within* nature (as in the Aristotelian split between matter and spirit), but, through the installation of absolute transcendence (a patriarchal-monotheistic "beyond"), by the separation *of* nature from something Other, Beyond. Phase 4 corresponds to the mechanistic thinking of modern natural sciences, which declares nature dead matter, thus legitimating its capitalist exploitation and transformation (Bacon, Descartes, Galilei). Phase 5, then, corresponds to the idealist philosophies of transcendence that revoke from nature even its being-in-itself in the sense of an ontological realism. Nature is thus nothing but that which the "subject" has unconsciously created, that which in the context of a conscious re-creation has to be transformed into something "reasonable" – i.e. the capitalist transformation of nature into machines, commodities, money (Kant, Fichte, Hegel).

The entire project thus consists of 6 parts: 2 parts on the "matriarchal philosophy of nature" (first in comparison with Giordano Bruno, then Schelling), and 4 parts on the "patriarchy-critical philosophy of history" (1: Pre-Socratic era and classical antiquity, 2: late antiquity and Middle Ages, 3: modernity, 4: transcendental philosophy and idealism).