

Special seminar week on matriarchal societies at International Academy HAGIA on Modern Matriarchal Studies July 19 – 25, 2010

(zie ook verkort Nederlands verslag 'studieweek modern matriarchaten juli 2010' op website www.academiepansofia.nl onder publicaties en verslagen)

A Report made by Dr. Annine van der Meer, Holland.

The International Academy HAGIA on Modern Matriarchal Studies announced a special seminar week on matriarchal societies. The seminar was open for women from all over the world who want to attend the teachings.

The teachings included the topics: *matriarchal economic patterns; the Gift Economy; the lifestyle of matriarchal women and men; matriarchal education of children and youth; diverse traditional matriarchal political patterns; conflicts and conflict solving in matriarchal societies; diverse patterns of matriarchal spirituality; diversity of actual matriarchal societies; diverse patterns of resistance of matriarchal societies against patriarchal aggressions; matriarchal elements in patriarchal cultures, especially in the Western ones.*

Theoretical topics: *methodology of modern Matriarchal Studies; relationship of Matriarchal Studies to Western theoretical concepts, like Marxism, Theory of Anarchy, Gender Studies, and others.*

Lecturers:

Dr. Heide Göttner-Abendroth and Genevieve Vaughan.

Dr. Heide Goettner-Abendroth is the founding mother of matriarchal studies and the Internationale Akademie Hagia or international academy Hagia in Germany. See www.akademiehagia.de.

Mrs. Genevieve Vaughan is the founding mother of the Gift-Economy. Gen is an American feminist but for many years she lives in Italy. She is active in the international network of feminists for Gift-Economy en also in antiglobalisation- and peacemovements. Zij wrote *For-Giving, A Feminist Criticism of Exchange* (1997) en *Homo Donans* (2006). She edited two books with articles of international feminists and scientists on the Gift-Economy. She wrote two children books in 2006 en 2007. About her work Giving for Giving a film was made. See www.gift-economy.com.

Participants (17):

Lydia Ruyle(USA), Joan Cichon (USA),Letecia Leyson (USA-Philippines), Gudrun Frank-Wissmann (Germany), Kaarina Kailo (Finland), Bhanu Natarajan (India-Norway), Bernedette Muthien (South-Africa), Angela Miles (Canada), Linda Ruffmann (Canada), Erella Shadmi (Israel), Irene Tazi-Preve (Austria), Malika Grasshoff (North-Africa-Germany), Annine van der Meer (The Netherlands), Genevieve Vaughan (Italy-USA), Marguerite Rigoglioso (USA), Cecil Keller (Switzerland-Germany), Heide Göttner-Abenroth (Germany).

Three people had to cancel: Pilwha Chang (Malaysia), Vicky Noble (USA), Barbara Mann (USA).

Report

The participants of the conference of the international matriarchal study group are housed in a village called 'Frauendorf' in a hotel called 'am Frauenhof'. In the halls and rooms and even in the pool you find huge Venus statues; they are all over the place. We could only find one statue of a David, he was hiding himself behind a palm in the pool. In the neighbourhood there was 'a Frauenhill', 'a Frauental' and 'a Frauenmountain' and 'Frauenmountainchapel'. Close by the hotel you could pass seven small rivers over seven bridges to the chapel of Mary. In the Middle Ages it was a pilgrimage. People in the Middle Ages kept on venerating 'die Fraue or the Lady'. She represented Mother Nature and Mother Earth, who gave people life, life force and light. People felt her in the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. Nowadays Mary had the name of die Fraue of the Lady. The Lady of Central Europe once was called Frau Hulda or Frau Holle. So everything in our direct environment remembers us to her.

Programme

July 19, Monday morning: Welcome ritual.

On Monday morning

On a bright Monday morning under a clear blue sky, Heide leads us around her holy green mountain. There is a quite magic, birds are singing and butterflies are flying around. In the 25 years she has lived here, she did not change anything in the landscape. In the middle of the lower ground you find a small lake surrounded by a green triangle of trees and reed. The two sloping hills of her mountain run down into this triangle; to Heide this is the vulva of her holy land.

Heide plays the drum and we follow her in a long row, rhythmically moving to the penetrating sound of the magical drum. We feel connected to the landscape and begin to feel at home.

She is relaxed and it is good to see how happy and strong she is in her own goddesses like environment. Her big green garden is really a small untouched paradise of Mother Earth.

The opening ritual takes place symbolically close to the house and around an apple tree high on one of the green hills. Red ribbons are used to make a circle around the tree and then a cross is made in the circle. Next the ancestors are invoked in the four wind directions, successively north, west, south and east, and they are invited to attend this week.

We are asked to take our place in the wind directions quadrant and choose the quadrant where we belong. The four directions are praised for their specific qualities: north for the cold and the brightness, west for the moist winds, south for the light of the sun and the fertility, and east for the dawn.

We sing a song, followed by one tone humming and singing mm, and when we are asked to release our bottom jaw it ends in a collective Ma, the oldest word of mankind. Water is poured out and we say thanks.

During the closing ritual at the end of the week we repeated this ritual. Again everyone is asked to take her place in her own wind direction. Heide, holding in her hand the central candle, thanked everyone personally for their specific contributions.

On Monday and Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday, Friday and Saturday all day, we are taught by Heide. She managed to lecture non-stop from 9.00 – 18.00 with a lunch break of two hours. We sit in a circle in the – sometimes sweltering - attic, the lecture room of the Hagia academy. Heide only uses a small notepad on which she regularly writes a keyword. During the lessons and discussions Heide never used an educational tool, like a drawing board, power point presentation or film. Not even notes of her own. She does not need this; she speaks fluently on both the theory and practice of matriarchal societies. Her international students may interrupt her and ask questions whenever they want, which makes the lessons lively and engaging.

July 19, Monday afternoon first seminar led by Heide: *the lifestyle of matriarchal women and men; matriarchal education of children and youth*

We look at the lifestyle in traditional classical forms in clan groups of matrilineal clans. Home is the house of the clan mother; her family consists out of her relatives and her children, sisters and brothers. Sexuality is outside the clan; they know the visiting marriage. The mothers' brothers are the social fathers. The children do not have the name of the father; the maternal uncle is their social father. The men have an assured place in the clan. Everybody is at home in the clan. Selfishness is an illness which develops in a hostile society. In these modern times it is advisable to look for a new clan and to form a community together.

Brothers and sisters have distinct functions and spheres of action. Sisters share the same sphere, and brothers too.

Change of gender is made easy. In Juchitán a man changes –when he wants to become a woman- his sphere of action. Now he becomes the daughter of his mother. Veronica Bennoldt-Thomsen calls the man who becomes a woman a Muche and a woman who becomes a man Macha Lila (*Gesellschaft in Balance*, 137; *Societies of Peace*, 70). Gender is not defined by sexuality. Gender is seen as a kind of polarity and polarities can change. This is not a duality, but a polarity and a dyad. In yin-yang is the one included in the other.

Gilgamesj posed a huge problem. He strived for eternal life and from this moment on the individual wanted live eternally. But this is a fixated state because Gilgamesj denied the cycle of life. So the goddess is thrown away. A cluster of new ideas enter human consciousness.

In traditional societies the young women of the clan give rebirth to the old members of the clan. The ancestors will be reborn; this is the worldview in goddess cultures. In academic discourse this is wrongly called 'ancestor cult', but it really is a religion of rebirth.

Banu: in India the children get three names: the second one is the name of the grandmother- father.

Heide: in the German word 'Enkel' is hidden the word ancestor.

Heide: it is a prejudice that matriarchal clans are against individual freedom. Sisters look after each other's children. Individual women have the free choice to become mother or not.

Heide: another example of this freedom is that men can become women and vice versa. The focus is on the community. The community protects the individuals.

One is free to leave the community. In the society of the Mosuo this does not happen very often. When it happens, it happens with men; they become attracted by patriarchal societies, money and career. The women are safer in their own clan than outside in the patriarchal world. People are free to come back.

With the society of the Minangkabau this is the same. They consider the diversity of the clan their true richness. This diversity must be protected. Heide seems to regard Western individuality more negative. At this point Annine posed the question about evolution of consciousness and the positive effects through trial and error and counteraction of a growing awareness of the individual.

In these societies you can stick to your original role as brother or sister without becoming a mother or maternal uncle yourself.

In a clan you find three generations. The children can choose their family. They can take the initiative.

About initiation. A girl receives the name of her ancestor when she is 13 year old; and then only when they recognize the ancestor in her. From this age on they will do the work of adult men and women. They have responsibilities. There is no phase of teen-aging. In our society the teen-agers have no responsibility and are not seriously and actively involved in daily life and life in general. Matriarchal societies do not have problems with their youngsters; there are no youth-problems.

Participation in festivals gives a socialisation into the dynamics of the matriarchal societies. Through oral communication socialisation takes place. A huge problem arises when Mosuo-children had to go to Chinese schools or Hopi-children had to go to schools in the USA. Because of alienation children get problems. In patriarchal society children are drilled into hierarchy.

In Trobriander-society children have their own councils. Their vision is respected in the councils of the adults (men- and women-councils).

The Sami (who are divided over four countries: Russian Federation, Norway, Sweden and Finland) say: raise your nature in order to find your nature in cosmos.

Trobriander-children are not locked away from erotic and sexual festivals. They learn by initiation. Here the youth have their own respected places where they meet; the special love festivals.

Young girls do not get pregnant. They use natural conception. A Trobriander-girl needs besides of a man also a brother to get pregnant. Her lover only opens the door. They use imitation phalluses and dildo's. A child-soul comes not from a father but from the ocean. The brother goes to the ocean with a jar. The soul is swimming from the water into the jar. Afterwards the girls gets a dream about the coming soul and gets pregnant.

Pregnancy is a sacred affair. Christian missionaries preached sacrilegium when restricting the coming of the baby purely to the biological contact between man and woman. Sometimes they experience to get pregnant by eating something, a blue-berry; sometimes they sleep next to a megalithic stone, an ancestor-stone.

In the Hohe Meisner-area in Germany hides Frau Holle the souls in the lake; young girls come to swim in the lake and get pregnant. Sometimes they eat an apple.

To do research on sexuality in matriarchal societies is difficult ; western anthropologists have spoiled the contact. They only asked the Mosuo-people about free love in a one sided and prejudicial way. They think that free love is free sex. But that is not the case. When Heide came to the Mosuo, people warned her not to ask about free love as all the others before her did. They told her: 'do not ask this, because they will send angry dogs on you'.

So Heide when researching and interviewing did not ask about this hot item, which made them curious. So at the end of her visit they asked her: why don't you ask these things which all the others asked before you? Then Heide asked: 'Do you have love in your community'? They responded: 'we do not know what love is'.

Heide about the Mosuo: When she asked them about relationships (and not love), they had a very long discussion between themselves. After hours of deliberation and hesitating about the answer –it was obvious that they could not agree on one single answer and could not find consensus about the answer-; they told Heide: 'our relationship is as long as love lasts'. So some have long relations and others short. One woman had a lifelong relationship. Western view on relations is not understood. Free love is not free sex and love is holy.

Barbara Mann states that the Iroquois have sex in liberty; Bernadette Muthien states the same about the Khoisan in South-Africa. The same thing in Greenland where the basic social relation is not sexual. (Ola Ruhim). Sex in the western societies gets an attention which is out of proportion, which must be a compensation for many other losses.

Letecia: In the Philippines the love is not fixed upon partners, the love goes to the children.

Gudrun: Kunama-boys in Africa walk hand in hand in a very natural way. Relations are not shown in public. Relations between women are accepted as natural. There is a sister-brother-polarity and not the western wife-husband-polarity. The universe is experienced as maternal and female. The male is included in the polarity between the sister and the brother.

Polyandry in Tibet; Annine: do women in Tibet 'marry' the brothers from one family to protect land and capital and do they marry out of practical reasons? Heide states that this phenomenon is very badly described. The women have more helpers because their 'economy' is a mixture between agriculture on the scarce land and herding in winter- and summer-pastures. So men who herd the flogs are often absent for a very long time. That's why a woman needs more helpers around the house. Also women and men of one tribe do not want many children order to keep possessions together. But she is the one who decides who is her lover. **Romantic relations are separated from household-affairs.**

Heide: *polygamy* originates from communal marriage as an intermarriage between two clans. It is a healthy alliance. Sometimes there live different clans in one village, sometimes only one and then the intermarriage between two clans of different villages takes place. Also they know the walking marriage or visiting marriage. Western anthropologists were wrong in describing relationships in these societies as free love and full of orgies. It is a result of western male fantasy! Women feel

responsible for their community and separate romantic and erotic relations from living together in one house and 'marriage'.

Incest. Incest happens in situations of violence and domination. Incest does not exist in matriarchal societies and there exists no concept of incest. There is a kind of unwritten law, which in literature is wrongly called the incest-taboo. There is no sexual contact and relationship between brother and sister. Intermarriage between clans is stimulated. **Leticia:** love and intimacy are two different things. She, in Philippine tradition, loved her brother and while living in the USA they went everywhere together. This was not always understood in the proper sense. She states that the set of feelings for your brother or male relatives is different from the erotic. We in the west have forgotten what love really is. The main thing in traditional societies is how the clan survives. There is a huge respect for every generation, and each has its own functions. **The oldest generation is formed by the ancestors. Then comes the living generation of the grand- or clanmother and her clan: they take care of the ancestors and lead the clan. Next to that her children: the sisters and brothers whose main function is to protect the children. Then comes the generation of the children.** Sensuality and erotic's are natural things. Patriarchy tries to naturalize pathological things. Society is over sexualized; this is a compensation for a bad and unnatural lifestyle. Heide does not very often uses examples out of the animal world in order to explain human conditions. As an exception: when you put chimpanzees in a zoo and imprison them, they only eat and make love. The nuclear family is a miscarriage of patriarchy. Romantic love is idealised. It started when industrialisation took place. This took place in the phase of the extended patriarchy; it was not a nuclear patriarchy. The labour division between the free worker and the housewife destroyed clan life. The holy relation and soul-relation in matriarchal society is between brother and sister. The church based the concept of the Holy Family on the relation between mother, father and child. The concept of guilt and shame was brought into relationship. The nuclear family is a product of capitalism. When you separate the economic sector from sexuality, you get an egalitarian society. Claudia von Werlhof states: Women are the last colony of capitalism. Heide cites her and the famous book of Maria Mies. There is another important book called *Ancient Futures*.

Annine asks how to deal with a one day global tour on modern matriarchal societies which she gives in the Dutch academy PanSophia. Heide advises: do not do everything, use a few examples.

Social level and structure: Mosuo and Khasi

Economic level and structure: Juchitán (balance-etc.)

Political sector: Classical example of the Iroquois

Akan in North-West-Africa with their complex state-building.

Spiritual level: Hopi: worldview and festivals

July 20, Tuesday morning seminar: *the Gift Economy by Genevieve Vaughan (see 36 Steps Toward a Gift Economy)*

In the 1960's and 70's Gen was married to an Italian professor of philosophy who was strongly interested in the link between economy and language. After studying a lot, she did not agree with him that language was a kind of market, or had categories based on exchange... No, the market came after language-learning. She investigated the question: what is language and what is the economic connection with language.

The first goods and services are given by the mother to the child. Indigenous peoples did not have a market. They had gift economies based on the process of giving and receiving. Underlying human communication is the gift-economy and mothering. The gift-economy is a radical alternative to market-economy. Market-exchange creates a neuter non maternal area. In our society the child is dependent on one mother (not on a village). Boy children become anti-gift-giver because they have to construct a different gender identity from their mothers. Exchange stops the gift because it requires an equal return... It creates competition and individualisation. Gift-giving is hidden and discredited by the values of the market.

Gift-economy is easy in abundance. It is a nurturing-economy.

Aspects of the gift-economy:

1 Satisfying needs

2 Giving and receiving

3 Free distribution

4 Transitivity

5 Abundance

These things are part of the child's experience before she or he learns to exchange. When the child laughs the mother laughs; it is a musical interaction. The child vocalizes; it is a spontaneous responding and not manipulative. There is turn-taking in early childhood, not exchange. The Mother also receives gifts from the child: its laughs, smiles, urine and faeces but these are not exchanges.

Giving in order to get is ego-orientated. Academic studies, even those of *Piaget*, only study the child, they do not study the communication between the Mother and the child. Piaget only studied his own children as if the children came out of nothing. However, the mother is keeping the child alive but she is not included in the study. Patriarchal visions, even endorsed by female academics, leave out the mother and only see the child. But the mother is pro-active towards the needs of the child.

Perceptions are gifts from the environment. Ceremonies are creating a gift to mother earth. The intent is important. When native people are walking on the land, they are silent inside because they are receiving the gifts of the environment.

In our society as they grow up, children are shifted from the mothering gift economy into exchange; in patriarchy they learn that the gift-economy is inferior and the exchange-economy is superior.

There is a recent current of cognitive linguistics which sees language as metaphorical. There is a source area such as path to a goal, which comes from the child's embodied experience of moving

along a path. Linguistic expressions like love is a journey, or life is a journey come from these embodied patterns...

There are also patterns of experience coming from the market economy which map onto linguistic expressions. You have 'to pay' for something when you suffer or 'She stole my heart'.

There are basic patterns that come from giving and receiving which are also projected into language. A mother based epistemology can be derived from these patterns.

Markets make us value objects instead of relationships. We are malformed by exchange-thinking. Seeing objects in relationship is basic for humanity. The past gives to the future. There are different receivers and givers... Another person is more than a way to meet my own needs...

You have to 'read someone's mind' to find out the needs of the other. Psychologists have begun to study what people infer about what other people are thinking. [standing where she is, for example, can a person see the person behind her? If not, perhaps she needs me to tell her] The mother has to 'read the mind' of the child. Is she/her hungry? Is something hurting her/him?

In gift-economy other persons are valuable and important. In the exchange-economy I am important. They are two totally different economies. Exchange-economy creates conflicts in ourselves.

Women in patriarchy nourish and nurture their husband and sons even more than their daughters because they want them to succeed in the exchange-economy. We have to diminish the exchange-economy and to promote/elaborate the gift-economy. Language is the virtual gift-economy. In exchange-economy the top in the hierarchy gets more than the bottom because the gifts flow 'upwards' as profit...

We have to know what we need to do. We have to see ourselves as givers and receivers.

The subject is the giver; the verb is the gift; the object is the receiver. In patriarchy the receiver is seen as passive. Instead he/she has to use the gift which is given; it takes creativity; the word is a gift and the hearer uses it creatively. Gift giving needs abundance. Even when we live in scarcity we have an abundance of linguistic and perceptual gifts.

Past-present-future: time is a gift. All people want free gifts; we want to be nurtured by our mother. Stealing does not exist in matriarchy. Pass on the gift; let the gift circulate. Gen is deprogramming us. Pay it forward. Written language gift: speaker mind- reads the communicative needs of the audience. Writing has to be more complete and explicit than speech because the writer has to supply the context which the readers' needs might come from.

Exchange separates and isolates. We need to focus on relation. We need to come from isolation to relation. We have to look at the social needs in making small gifts. The big goal is social change. The cosmos gives infinitely. We reflect cosmos. Capitalist thinking exists more in the ego oriented sphere.

In gift-giving more positive relations are created. There is an interrelatedness of communication. Tacit knowledge, people know intuitive and non-verbal. In patriarchy people are economically exploited. People are fixed on their own needs.

Children could help us shift from *homo sapiens* to *homo donans*. And do not forget: a lot of gift-giving is still there. The problem lies in human relations. It is necessary to articulate the child raising in seeing each other's needs. Youngsters are mad; they are put in a dominant educational system.

We continuously create a competitive individualism, in the mean time we manipulate, get corrupt and ill; but we can make the shift to create gift-giving practices; this is not a self sacrifice. A gift can act on a thousand different levels. We need gift-guerilla-tactics. Spread the joyful message. Gift-giving creates abundance and exchange creates scarcity.

Some people give too much, they become martyrs and get burned out of giving. **Annine**: sometimes I say no to a Sophia-lecture because I need to look at my own needs. **Lydia**: Then it is a gift not to give and to say no. Like you say no to children to teach them their boundaries. Make a community of gift-givers. There are indigenous knowledge schools. Solidarity is important. Scarcity makes gift-giving difficult. Political change is necessary. **A community of gift-givers channels the divine**. The inner change will change the social and political structures. Exchange separates all levels: individual, inner, social and economic. We must go back to ourselves. Humanity is distorted. **Each time we change, community changes. People are not walking their talk. You must be the change in the society you want to change.** See www.gift-economy.com.

July 20, Tuesday afternoon, seminar on diverse matriarchal economic patterns lead by Heide Göttner-Abendroth.

keyword- matriarchal economics (modes of production and distribution): balanced economy with perfect mutuality, based on subsistence production (independent production) and on gift giving distribution; no private property, no territorial claims; only usage rights on the cultivated soil ; the basic goods and the distribution are in the hands of women (the matriarchs).

The economy is based on spiritual principles. Mother Nature is the basic economic principle. She is giving to all living beings (not only humans) and all are equally respected. There is gift-giving in abundance. Mother Nature is giving without asking anything back.

Clan economy: clan members work the land together; they guard the flocks; pastoral nomadic societies have this in common. Clan economy is communal. The goods are given into the hands of the matriarch; she manages the storage house and she distributes. For example, she distributes the milk of the herds of the Tuareg.

**The Tuareg are matriarchal and they are pastoral nomads*. The men give the result of the long distance trade to the women. Sisters and mothers: they are the future of the clan. All ancestors receive each day a small portion of food.

**Juchitan*: not only in villages but also in towns. The money is managed by the matriarch.

**Hopi*: the men do the agricultural work; they bring the fruits to the oldest woman.

Who is going to be the clan mother?

**Khasi and Minangkabau*: youngest daughter

**Mosuo*: choose the most loving daughter; they observe them from childhood on

About the term 'distribution of goods': it is a cold and abstract term. In the circle of gift giving, feelings are included. It is an emotional and a spiritual act. The abundance of Mother Earth is a sacred matter. The circle of gift-giving takes place on the level of the community.

During the year cycle and seasonal cycle there are many opportunities to distribute goods. When there is party all members of the clan or of the village are invited. When the crops are smaller the less prosperous will get a part. They share the meals with those who are better off. When there is a funeral things happen the same way. It is a spiritual principle to give what you do not need and therefore the goods keep circulating. There is mutual help and people do not give to get something back.

**People of Ladakh* share everything and when there is a funeral others come to help. Ladakh has many matriarchal elements.

**Juchitan: Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen* states that in this town nobody has to die from hunger; when she left the city, she herself also offered a festival. When trade goes well, the women wear many golden chains with coins. Everybody sees how the capital is growing. When she has many golden chains/necklaces she gives a party whereby her daughters divide candies among the crowds. When there is a festival the rich women share more than the poor women (*Societies of Peace* p. 70-75).

In the literature you do not read about gift-giving; they speak of exchange. This is misunderstood because patterns of giving are concerned (major doma).

**Barbara Mann* states that the Iroquois live in 5 to 6 nations (*Societies of Peace* p. 57-69). They cover 1/3 of the Northern-American territory; it is an intertribal or inter-connected or inter-national confederation. They do not know exchange but they know inter-tribunal gift-giving; they load their canoes with gifts; in this way they build peaceful ties with their neighbours. Do not mix these things: long distance gift-giving is not the same as long distance trade.

In Bronze-Age Crete they give gifts to the pharaoh; when they are conquered, they must pay tribute. Gift-giving creates bonds among mothers/children and individuals. Examples are King Salomon and the queen of Sheba; Jacob and Esau.

**Trobriand-peoples know the kula*. Over 200 sea miles they bring shelves and necklaces of white and blue shelves of one island to the other and further to the west of Papua-New Guinea. The women wear it proudly and receive it as a gift. It was interpreted as trade and as 'the first money'. But the purpose is to form bonds of friendship and peace. They are creating bonds over huge distances. In return of the white necklaces they get food and then they take green stones back home with them. These are kula of gift giving and do not belong to trade. In their language trading is another word. Kula is the highest value, trading is less valued. Among themselves they say: 'he is using the kula as trade' and criticise this. But male anthropologists have defined this as trade.

**Juchitan* is a subsistence culture. It is an independent agricultural city. The men work on the land around the city; the city cannot grow further than the available surrounding land needed to support the city and its inhabitants. In Juchitan trade is nothing more than a big household; there is only

trade for luxury goods; this is a marginal trade. Luxury-trade is a far distance trade. Example of supermarket Wal-Mart. This supermarket did not survive in Juchitan (see below).

Break.

Marija Gimbutas states that in Old Europe there were **cities** of 10.000 people; it was an agricultural clan city and homogenous. It has the structure of a big village. Festivals are in another neighbourhood. In this structure cities of millions of people cannot exist. A matriarchal city is something totally different than a modern city. When such a city is conquered, another dynamic develops.

**in Juchitan* the women trade with luxury goods but it is a subsistence economy. The Roman-catholic priests must be popular with the ladies.

A matriarchy has two characteristics: 1 it must be matrilineal 2 the economic goods must be managed by the women. If one woman in Juchitan has only sons, she adopts a daughter.

A subsistence economy is an independent self-sufficient economy (autarky).

They give luxury goods and things they need for ritual which have a spiritual basis as gifts. They are giving a gift to the gods. They transform the gift. First there is this gift-giving; trade might come later.

*Juchitan uses money. But this is a mean to bargaining trade without fixed money. (**Veronika B-T:** At the end of the day they give away the remaining flowers). Wal-Mart opened a big shop in Juchitan. Would it brake down the local subsistence economy? During the first weeks they bought the shop empty; but after a few weeks nobody bought there anymore. There was no place to communicate so Wal-Mart had to close.

Gold and silver have a spiritual meaning and are not the same as money. The king had a mask like the shining sun. But it did not belong to his personal possessions. Copper also.

There was no 'trade' before the conquering began.

** in Arab countries* they bargain to get to know each other; to build a relationship (**Mariam**).

The local subsistence system is that of organic independent farming.

A small city is good for the community; a big city has to do with power which is to be controlled. Big cities are the pathologic features of the megalomania of patriarchy. The Roman Empire is an example of new empire building and an example of limitless accumulation.

Patriarchy wants to get rid of small localities. The propaganda machine is overwhelming. Companies want to have big markets. They say: you cannot live without big units, but these units live on us. Market is another word for tributes. Transparency is important in politics.

In matriarchal villages and towns with a subsistence economy the biggest union is the region. It is contrary to centralisation and monopolisation. The goal is a flourishing region, a region which has an identity on a geographical, social and historical level. Bio-regional goals are not racist.

Money does not disturb a matriarchal society. It facilitates exchange. The basis is the subsistence economy; you can drop the money because the food is close by.

Regionalism creates transparency.

Matriarchal regionalism is different from patriarchal regionalism. It is open for foreigners and people honour hospitality. Patriarchal regionalism is closed, insular; you have provincialism and patriotism and long distance trade. Migration is a hot topic; anger rises because of migration; this causes fascism and privatization. People look for scapegoats. Not being hospitable is typical for western societies. In patriarchal societies women are excluded from economy; you find perverted matriarchal elements.

Matriarchal regionalism is inclusive; foreigners get gifts; they want to hear news from the outside. In matriarchal economic patterns the economy is partly in hands of the women.

Western society is a kind of super patriarchy. In the development of patriarchy this is a dangerous phase, since it takes over matriarchal patterns.

Let's give an example from mythology. Rhea of Crete uses a double flint axe made of rain magic with flints. She gives the present of rain. This is taken over by Zeus; he throws the lightning to his subjects. Patriarchy is living on a distorted matriarchy; the real patriarchy is an utopia. In patriarchy life is a commodity, genes are a commodity and the individual is a commodity.

An exchange region is more exclusive and separatist.

July 21, Wednesday morning, seminar on: *various traditional matriarchal political patterns; conflicts and conflict solving in matriarchal societies*

Be careful: there is a difference between traditional patriarchal societies and super patriarchy. Every patriarchal society takes over matriarchal patterns and distorts, splits and divides it into bad and good, dark and light, above and below. So you construct hierarchy. The bad ones are demonized. Super patriarchy annihilates women. The mother does not exist. The goal is to make the world uniform. Women must be deconstructed, made invisible because they can produce life. Patriarchal societies substitute nature, for example, they make artificial water and artificial fire. They annihilate the biosphere; this is an extreme form of exploitation. They feed themselves on matriarchy but on the other hand try to make the mothers' work invisible. Mothers feed their children and form the first community.

Recently in the USA (Hollywood) pregnant women became sex-symbols. There is a glamorisation of motherhood but on the other hand a denial of motherhood and pregnancy. Patriarchy becomes more dangerous when it uses technology; technology is a weapon. Remember the Greek myth: Zeus changes the gifts of Rhea into a weapon.

In classical patriarchy the female is demonized. In modern patriarchy the duality is disappearing into unisex. They don't accept two genders; they only accept male prototypes. In sex slavery women are objects. The object is annihilated. There are **100 million abortions** of girls in China and India. This is an example of physical annihilation.

They tried artificial wombs: it did not work. The argument was: women are cheaper. This is a double annihilation. In Latin America they use the birth by operation instead of the natural birth. Because birthing in ¾ of an hour is quicker and cheaper than the natural way, which may take hours. The natural way is seen as too expensive. Of course, there is opposition of mothers and women; but patriarchy is taking the energy of them, they are exploiting everything. They have this neurotic vision to distort what is natural and this neurosis started with Gilgamesh.

The question is how we get rid of it. **Heide**: I do not know. We know it probably together. All technology (of fertilization) is bad.

Genevieve: the temple in Nevada is situated near the nuclear site: it is changing the energy, against this they are not protected. They cannot understand our paradigm of alternative activism. We are going under the radar (and do not come into their sights). They do not take it serious. Alternative activism has another structure and it is decentralized. In Germany there is activism against the midwife, because midwifery is successful. It reaches the local communities. In Colombia congresswomen are fighting for midwifery. And that is dangerous to them: human bonds of understanding and empathy. Patriarchy has the technology; they can see what is successful and what grows. So they attack these signs and try to destroy it by measures, bureaucracy and imposing small and big rules.

The deep change in patriarchy comes from the margins and from the outsiders: the indigenous people and the women. Claudia von Werlhof was a good example of someone who came into their radar (and came into their sights). She became visible; she came in a position in which she could be observed. She was vulnerable and university and media started a witch-hunt. Also Barbara Mann is an example of a scholar whose competence was questioned. Fortunately, we have supported Claudia; in these cases it is necessary to form a network. We are trying to strategize how to handle patriarchy. Women solidarity can be very powerful. In patriarchy lots of things are done to destroy this. The rule is: 'divide et impera' or divide and rule. The men were afraid of the second wave of feminism.

Break

Heide is often accused of depicting matriarchy as paradise. The mother as prototype of paradise. In our society we are far away from the basic natural needs. Do not think that in matriarchy people are angels; they are not. They are just like us. But their conflicts are different and they solve their conflicts differently. The conflicts are different because the economic and social structures are different.

1 there are no problems with stealing of money; there is no market or market economy, they do not have white board criminality or mafia.

2 they have no problems with sexuality because therein they are much more open.

How do they deal with a serious conflict as murder or wanting to leave the clan or village? Generally, they solve their problems in the village, clan and tribe on a ritual level. In western society if there is a conflict between individuals, they are left alone and are isolated so the conflict can escalate. In matriarchal societies they are not alone. The generation of the elders is there to help the brothers and the sisters. Heide was present at a conflict in western China. Two men were fighting. The

brothers were on one side, the sisters on the other. They were screaming. Then the matriarch stepped in: at once, they became silent. They see a conflict as a good possibility to learn more; a new perspective to deal with. The clan is like a small world.

When there is a structural difference of idea of lifestyle between, for example, the members of a clan house and one daughter, she is encouraged to found another village and she receives a lot of help. **She is not excluded.** The daughter- and mother village have the matrilineal relationship. The daughter village establishes good relationships with the mother village as between mother and daughter. **This is the normal way of expanding.** The daughter village is producing another daughter village and so on. Lots of festivities take place between them. In that time virgin land was available. They are matriarchal because the mother village is considered the oldest one.

In Juchitan the women possess their own house but in the historical situation they live in clan houses.

The Minangkabau in Sumatra you can find the mother and daughter villages in two different regions. There is a central region and a surrounding region.

When in North Africa in the Kabyle region the village is getting too small, people found a new village and this village keeps the name of the mother village. This is an agricultural culture.

Also *the Hopi* have this agricultural setting and move on this way until today. These examples show that big units of cooperation do not only develop in situations of warfare and domination. It was the theory of male oriented anthropologist Levi-Strauss that hunters-gatherers knew boundaries and even conflicts; he even wrote that they exchanged women.

What about social patterns and intermarriages between villages? When in a village only one clan lives they start intermarriage bonds with another village. When in a village four clans live together they marry and then you have the so called cross-cousin marriage.

The Hopi once had a conflict between traditionalists and modernists. The modernists wanted to have electricity and the other were morbidly against this. So here the changes came from the outside world. Did they adapt to that or not? The Hopi could not resolve this problem. Patriarchy from the outside world causes the most serious problems. The Hopi solved this extremely difficult situation by means of a **ritual**. They had a **symbolic, sportive duel** without weapons, without shedding blood. The two men wrestled and when crossing the line, the representative of the modernists won. Next, the traditionalists left the city and founded a new one. Oraibi is the name of the old city, Hoteville the name of the new one. This is an example of how you can solve a conflict in a peaceful way.

This symbolic and sportive duel is a kind of ritual. A symbolic ritual is another form of communication. In patriarchy sport is not diminishing the aggression but on the contrary enhances it.

Mariam: The Arab states have a low criminal rate because the whole family is involved in the solving of conflicts, also in solving the conflicts of the neighbours. The conflicting people are not isolated.

Malika: verbal communication is direct; they say what they feel; this also prevents the emerge of aggression.

In matriarchal societies other persons decide. There are no courts and judges, lawyers etc. They solve it in the family.

With the Minangkabau the negotiations have a high communicative competence. The duty of peacemaking while negotiating is primarily the responsibility of the men. The women stay at home. The Iroquois call this man the peace chief. According to the Minangkabau he must be 'like a good

mother'. When the arch is stretched too tight, you need to defuse tension. In patriarchal societies the men are not peacemakers but war makers. In Kabyle society the women may not see blood.

When an individual wants to leave the clan, people let him go. Usually it is a man, who wants a career and earn money and is seduced by these prospects of patriarchal society. It must be stressing for them when a daughter leaves. But this happens very rarely. Women are better off in their traditional surroundings. People who want to leave can always come back.

Once a Hopi chief failed to negotiate peace. Electricity came in and the community had not agreed to it; he decided himself what he considered best for the community. He forgot to ask the consent of the village/clan. When he came back the village did not speak to him anymore. He broke the rule of the community and he was no longer considered a member of the community It is the consequence of his action; he broke the rule of consensus. It is their protection of the community.

When somebody is murdered, the family of the murdered clan member receives a lot of gifts. When a chief is not functioning well, the matriarch fires him. **Gudrun:** she gives an example of *the Kunama* in East-Africa. The spiritual man, called the Sananeda, invites the families of the victim and the murderer for a meeting. There is no revenge. The holy man refuses this. The clan of the aggressor gives lots of gifts to the family of the victim.

There are many ways to solve a problem or conflict:

1 blessing and curse of the matriarch. In Samoa only the matriarch has the power to curse. People are very afraid of her curse. Because this can separate them from their ancestors. She also has the power to give a blessing. She can stop aggression with her curse.

2 ritual. They ventilate their aggression and play it out into a ritual. There are healing rituals for the whole community. You simply cannot separate the spiritual world from the earthly world. Through the ritual aggression is healed in the spiritual world. If the anger is not gone completely, another ritual is performed to release the anger. They don't maintain an artificial peace. No such thing as: 'si vis pacem, para bellum' or 'if you want peace, prepare for war'. In the western system children who don't agree with their parents, want to change them because they want it their way.

In the west revenge is valued. The need for revenge is caused by exchange and market-economy. In matriarchal societies only in extreme circumstances, there is a need for revenge. Anger and actions which lead to murder are seen as real forces; shamans deal with these in a ritual by breaking symbolically the bones of the animals that are sacrificed.

What happens when feminist groups argue and fight? They are degenerating. You must maintain cohesion in the face of diversity and guard this diversity in a ritual. A difference is viewed at in a different way. It is not a conflict, not a reason to fight. A difference spoken out passionately is not an attack but a passion. When the passion stirs up you need compassion in the relationship.

In the west our definition of peace is too narrow. A conflict disturbs the balance in society; but that is not the only thing; also it disturbs the balance in cosmos. A ritual restores the balance in cosmos and society. In the west peace institutes study issues of war. **Patriarchal peace-study is war study.** Peace is defined in the perspective of war: narrow and negative. Peace is a balance between cosmos and

earth and community and individual. Peace in the inside is non verbal. When society is in balance, genders, generations and cosmos are in balance. **Heide** repeats she is translating the values of indigenous tribes into a language customary in western society. In their rituals *the Andina* deal with pain and suffering. **Gen**: balance comes out of a need which has to be fulfilled. The balance is a dynamic one; it is shifting constantly into yin/yang; it is not a need but the own attraction between the positive and the negative.

July 21, Wednesday afternoon seminar: *patterns of resistance of matriarchal societies against patriarchal aggressions*

The clan is the political unit. The matriarch cares for integrated opinions. She make sure everyone is heard. There is a creative consent.

A Family level.

Mosuo: they are always talking. They sit around their sacred hearth and discuss together the events of the day. The children participate in the discussion. When problems occur, it does not take too much time to inform everybody. **What helps is**: 1 they are relatives 2 they live in a homogenous society with the same economy. 3 problems are an exception because they communicate all the time around the sacred hearth, even the children learn this from early childhood on.

B Village level. There is a village council, in which the matriarch and her eldest brother participate. Sometimes only the men go. Women have their own council system and communicate through delegates. The speakers of their clan have a respected position. When all clan members agree, they submit the views to the village house. Often it is the brother of the matriarch. It becomes more complicated when city life starts.

C Regional level. The process starts in the clan house. They debate and the decision is submitted from village or city to regional council. When no consensus is reached, they go back to the village clan house. It goes back to and fro till the decision has been taken. The village delegate is chosen by consensus. They are no chiefs but speakers. Men are the representatives on the regional level. This has a practical reason: they travel through rough environment. Men deal with long distance communication. Women stay on the land and in the clan house. Women also travel to regional women councils. On the regional level, there are women and men councils. At the women's councils men are silently listening and vice versa. Strings and knots are information scripts. Western ethnologists wrote: the men were deliberating and the women were handcrafting. They did not realise that this was a kind of writing and that the men did also 'handcraft' in the women's council. Sometimes there are councils were 5 to 6 regions come together. This is an example of statesmanship.

The Akan in Ghana have a king as representative of the men and a queen mother on behalf of the women. The task and sphere of action of the Akan women is trading. With the Iroquois the women work the land and the men trade. **In Juchitan** the women also trade and the men fish and work the land.

Each clan member is involved in decision making. It is a grass root democracy and it is egalitarian. At first, decisions are taken separately in the women's and men's council and next the combined decision is taken.

The Minangkabau: when no decision can be made the matriarch has to tip the balance. This is accepted. It is not a top down decision.

It is very important to understand that they do not count votes, nor do they know majority and minority groups. That is why the word 'democracy' is not right. Counting is forbidden. Measuring makes the process static; they do not measure.

Kabyle: the clan mother listens, feels the needs and articulates the decision.

Matriarchal people think in quality; patriarchy thinks in quantity; they count votes.

Consensus does not mean everybody agrees, since not everybody thinks the same. Consensus means that the best thing for the community happens **and that you do not block this**. Members are socialized to feel the needs of the group. This interpretation of consensus is not understood in the west. Unanimous decisions are not possible. They have individual opinions but they feel and listen to the common interest. Common interest is explained. People understand that the individual idea is relative and not absolute. The process is more important than the result. Patriarchal consensus is unilateral.

Leticia in the Philippines: I am right and I know the best for the community. But... when the community does not agree then the conclusion must be that I do not see it well.

Benedette: Ubuntu in South Africa means that the individual interest is less important than the common interest.

If anyone stays passionately opposed, then you separate. In patriarchy the loudest voices are heard, In matriarchy also the soft voices are heard and do count. Patriarchal politics: war of everybody against everybody.

Consensus is derived from a Latin word 'consentire' which means to agree together. Consensus in matriarchy means: I accept the opinion of the group. External forces are the most dangerous and make the group vulnerable. They are not protected against this. Traditional patterns are focused on the internal organisation. But today they mostly have to cope with external factors that cause problems.

What happens in the council? It is necessary that both rational and spiritual view and cosmos and earth are in balance. Everybody is involved and diversity is not a problem. The process is interrupted by praying and singing and regulated by the talking sticks. They are really enjoying the council. People listen attentively and with love to the opinions of others. A special kind of mothering is at stake. People do not make parties of spilt because the children of one mother do not do this. We look too much with a rational mind.

Iroquois: they get their information through dreams and shaman's travels. Church ritual is about power, which makes it an empty ritual.

Break

How matriarchal societies resist patriarchy?

1 They go away.

Mosuo: they went away to live close to the Tibetan border in rough mountainous land. This is the most common way to escape.

Iroquois: they went away to the Mexican border. They left Mexico again for the area round the Mississippi, where they left a kind of hierarchal type of society. Afterwards they moved again to the north to the Great Lakes where they formed this 'League of Nations', this confederation of nations or tribes.

The Hopi came in from the south from Mexico; they left their clans every time when hierarchy creped in. The people who went away preserved their own tradition. The indigenous clans also had their patriarchal tendencies.

The Tuareg withdrew into the desert. *The Mosuo* into the mountains; *the Indians of Latin America* into the Amazon basin. Today, these people are murdered, genocide and local patriarchal habits came in. In isolated area's very old types of society could survive. *In lake Titicaca* people live on reed. Mosuo retired on an island in the Lugu lake. Sometimes the invaders came from the west (Tibet) and sometimes from the east (China).

Of course going away these days is much more difficult than before. Nowadays people are trying to adapt to foreign cultures, sometimes successful but usually not.

2 They adapt. They adopt formally what the enemies want them to do and to believe. For example, *the Minangkabau* were incorporated several times by the kings of Java. In each village they built a statue for the king, bowed to him and continued with their own tradition. They also did this in European times. Imitation and adaption are proofs of their own wisdom. The Minangkabau were infiltrated by Islam. This religion infiltrated the families more than the Javanese kings. They made a compromise: we accept Islam and, at the same time, we continue Adat. Then the houses of the men were transformed into mosques; now they have the men's councils in the mosques. Islam could not ground because land and houses were not in the hands of the men. The social forms were not changed; but the festivals, like those for baptism or marriage did change. First they go to the mosque and then they go home and have their matriarchal feast. This is happening because women have the economic power. Men translated Islamic wisdom into Adat wisdom. There is this compromise between Islam teachings and matriarchal Adat Wisdom. But under the official layer still exists the traditional layer which has hardly been influenced. This is also the case in Northern Africa with the *Kabyle*.

When the Dutch colonisation in present Indonesia and former Dutch Indies started, the Dutch wanted to have the land. But the people did not want to sell. The Dutch wanted to built a ring of plantations around the clan land. In consensus they took the decision that the women would plant gardens in the land surrounding the clan land. Now the Dutch could not buy the land because with these gardens it was women's land and it belonged to the women. The Dutch started to use weapons. But *the Minangkabau* did not want to give up their new gardens. The Dutch tried with the 'divide et impera' tactic. But the whole population backed the gardening. And so all the land stayed in their hand and the garden guerrilla was successful. Eventually, the Dutch went away and established plantations in the northern part of Sumatra.

How do these societies deal with modern times?

Mosuo: when the Chinese wanted to take control, they started to build streets. The Chinese patriarchal men were attracted by 'free love'. Money was earned and an airport was going to be built. In 1992, some of the women wanted to have hotels in their clan houses in order to earn a little money. They decided in consensus that the whole region should not have an airport. The Chinese stopped the plan to build the airport (also because they had difficulties in other places). The whole people revolted.

When they were facing urban development, *the Minangkabau* developed a very good instrument of resistance. They are the biggest matriarchal community of 6 million people. They live in two areas: the heartland or derek and the surrounding urban area which is called rantau. Some clans are emigrating half into urban life but also stay in the heartland in the centre. The clan sends a matriarchal woman into the rantau where she buys her own house. Then she sends back gifts in the form of money to the heartland. This is an example of infiltration of matriarchal patterns into city life. From the outside it looks as if the nuclear family is successful. They trade and gain a powerful position and they are very well educated. But in the background is the clan to support them and vice versa. The Mosuo have a different situation. They did not develop this backing up. The rantau is the extended land where they immigrate into. Since ancient times the Minangkabau always immigrated into new villages. You find the rantau in Sumatra, Indonesia and all over the world, even in New York!. These people are well informed and modern, because they get the information from the rantau.

Heide tells us how she managed to have rest and peace in a very conservative Bavarian countryside.

1 first people thought she was the leader of a sect. She was a witch or a feminist.

2 then she went to the mayor and asked to be left in peace.

3 then she started to give lectures about the Bavarian homeland; that was an ancient homeland. And from that time on no newspaper wrote negatively anymore about Heide.

Lydia Ruyle tells to the Jehova-people who very often came to her house in Colorado that she is a witch.

July 22, Thursday, all day: Excursion: *matriarchal elements in patriarchal cultures, especially in the Western ones* (example given: the Danube Valley)

(zie ook **met foto's** Nederlandse verslag 'studieweek modern matriarchaten juli 2010' op website www.academiepansofia.nl onder publicaties en verslagen)

After three full days of lectures by Dr. Heide Göttner-Abendroth we are going on an excursion to the Danube valley in two cars and a big bus. The Danube is 2845 km long and the longest river in Europe after the Volga. This impressive river flows through eight countries and has been a lifeline for the inhabitants of Europe since antiquity. From 9.00 till 18.30, on a very hot day, we drive around to visit various sacred places in the landscape.

First stop: church of Mary Magdalene. On the day of the feast day of St. Mary Magdalene on 22 July, our first stop gives us a view on a church dedicated to her. It is a round church built on a rise on top

of a stone circle. This Christian lady, spouse of the Jewish Jesus, has -apart of Mary- replaced the Neolithic lady. We commemorate her feast day.

Palaeolithic remains dating from 200.000 BC, and *Neolithic* settlements dating from 5000 BC, are found in the area of the Danube-valley. Through the Bronze Age, Celtic and Germanic times, the Roman Empire and the Christian Middle Ages we arrive at the present.

It is a remote area that was converted to Christianity rather late. When the Romans and later Christianity moved in, Bavaria was a Celtic-Germanic area, where the goddess still lived. She is called Lady Percht, the shining one, and she is internalized in the landscape. Most ancient settlements and sacred places are found on the low hills along the Danube, but all are either taken over or destroyed by Christianity.

It has been discovered through aviation archaeology that almost every hill has a sacred place. During the winter photos of the landscape are made, that make it possible to distinguish structures beneath the surface of the earth, like mounds consisting of stones. Now the goddess is clearly identifiable below the Christian surface layer and the Christian exterior. In Passau on the banks of the Danube an observatory larger than Stonehenge was photographed. Unfortunately, the excavators in Passau are not interested in Neolithic bones; they are mainly concerned with the Christian history.

Valley of the Danube: In this first stop Heide lets the group get off at an impossible place, a highway; but the view is splendid. Under our feet we see the Danube valley, an undulating landscape of low hills with higher mountains in the background on both banks of the river. Heide shows us a map of *Marija Gimbutas* indicating the area of the Lengyel culture. The remains of this culture can be found in Hungary and, more to the west, in this area, the valley of the Danube in Southern Germany.

The first farmers, originating from Anatolia, followed the Danube from the delta in the Black Sea to the upper reaches of the river in Germany. Every year, the Danube floods leaving behind a layer of rich silt. To avoid wet feet, the early matriarchal farming communities built their villages on the low hills along the river. So they kept their feet dry, their hearts warm and their heads cool.

We get our first lesson in sacred geography. Sometimes you see a low hill in a plain. If you find Christian shrines on these high grounds, you can be sure that they are built on sacred pre Christian remains, since a church is normally built in the centre of the village and there has to be a reason to build a church outside the village. Moreover, places of culture are always directly connected to straight roads leading to it. Also, pay attention to the names of places. A lot of pre-Christian names are demonized. When you come across names with 'pagan' or 'devil', do know that there is an ancient layer underneath the Christian one. Get used to observe the landscape first, view old maps, etc., next, research the etymology and history of the names, and only then, you can examine what has been written about it.

Passau. In the city of Passau three rivers come together, forming two sacred triangles. The large current cathedral, filled with big baroque sculptures, stands on one of the peninsula/triangles. On the other one a castle. The three rivers represent the triple goddess. We go to an old pilgrimage centre, called *Mariahilf*, built on the high bank just before the place where the white Inn confluences with the green Danube and the black Ilz. For the ancients this was a sacred place where the triple goddess

merges herself in *three colours: white, green (stands for red), and black*. Also in Innsbruck three rivers come together, venerated by the same Lengyel culture. They followed the river upstream to the source. But now something very special: in the Mariahilf church we find Maria in three colours. She is a white young girl on the panel in the side altar in the left aisle next to the central altar; she is the Madonna with child, dressed in a blood red robe, on the central altar, and, finally, she is the black older woman on the panel in the side altar in the right aisle.

The three rivers flowing together mirror the triple great mother, who is venerated here as Maria. Maria in Mariahilf helps with everything, with storms, diseases; she is small but effective.

You can see how Neolithic symbols survive in a Christian form to this day. In the side aisles you can find hundreds of votive or thanksgivings, like candles, wooden panels and paintings, to thank Maria for her help. A stone sculpture of Mother Anna with daughter Maria and grandson Jesus stands on the square next to the church. The mother as the centre of each matriarchal clan. Also in her you can see the triple goddess, the mother. In Germany the sculptures are called '*Anna selbtritt*'. There are many baroque sculptures. Sometimes, the mother has two little daughters in her arms, sometimes a daughter and a (grand)son.

In Christian myths women are always subordinate servants. And again we meet the triple mother, the triple goddess, both inside the church in Maria as outside in Anna, but also in the valley with the three rivers. Heide assures us that, in Southern Germany, you can meet her on every street corner with a statue of the mother, but especially everywhere in the landscape.

In the woods of Bavaria you can find many sacred mountains; sometimes three together: a red, white and black one, like Rehel, Luse and Araba, respectively. In Anna you encounter the black earth and the dark mother. In the Danube valley both Palaeolithic and Neolithic finds have been discovered. The Schweigelberg is connected to the Frauenberg, close to our village, Frauendorf. Here are seven sources with seven bridges connected to the chapel of Maria, a centre of pilgrimage both in past and present. Often, you will find twin sites on both sides of the Danube.

The Lady or die Fraue or the Mother is also called Holle or Hulda or Percht, a Bavarian name. Holle is the great goddess of Central Europe. She is a triple goddess, because she makes the connection between the underworld, the earth and the heaven. Percht is derived from Perachta, which means the 'bright shining one'. The underworld aspect shines. All kind of folk customs and festivals are connected to Percht. Percht is white. Processions are held to honour the white Percht. The people know that the underworld will open and that the spirits of the ancestors will come to give little and sweet souls to the young women who want to get pregnant. They accompany Percht and dance around her. A lot of straw is used. Percht keeps the souls under her dress. There are both sweet and wild versions of folk customs. The young men tease the women and ask them: 'would you become my mother?' They don't understand anymore what they actually ask. Percht, sitting on a throne, is the centre of the dance. She wears many tiny coloured bells, this is her underworld aspect. However, in the folktale you read that she steals children, an example of demonization. In the past, she was the sweet old lady who protected the children. Men in another dance group wear belts with cowbells. This is a symbol of fertility. The clapper is a sexual symbol and can be compared with the phallus. The men clatter the bells and move the clapper back and forth as if it was their phallus. They start already in the winter. The great goddess has largely disappeared from Bavaria, but where she survived

people don't disgrace or ridicule her. They respect the traditional elements of their culture. There is the good Percht with the pretty face, as beautiful as sunrise, but when she turns around, you see the ugly face of the wrinkled old Percht. These are the two aspects of the same lady: the light and the dark side, two aspects of one cosmos. Maria is an adopted goddess. In all places where the great mother used to be present, she has been replaced by Maria. Frau Holle brought snow; nowadays one speaks of 'Maria of the snow'.

Also pay attention to the inflections of the names; 'Hilgart' is derived from 'heal' or 'healing', an aspect of the underworld of the goddess. Gart means 'garden' or 'Garten'.

Hilgartsberg. Everywhere you see a doubling. Opposite a Neolithic settlement with an earth wall with large stones one sees across the Danube a high mountain of black rock, which is unique in this area. Later a castle was built on this mountain, presently called the Hilgartsberg. Nowadays, the local guides call it a mountain ruin.

After our visit to the city of Passau, we visit the strengthened castle. Standing high on the mountain, we enjoy the great panoramic view on the Danube that winds like a snake around the rock. This is what the ancients observed. For them, the landscape was sacred; the rock was seen as the body of the (black) Lady, the river as the snake or dragon nestling at her feet and making her fertile. Also Mont St. Michèl in France was built on a rock.

This is the place to worship to goddess of the underworld; a place to heal yourself. At the Hilgartsberg stands a chapel of St. George, known as the dragon slayer. The dragon is an old goddess symbol. He kills the dragon, just like to old goddess was killed. The same happens at Mont St. Michiel in France. But Margaretha, representing the underworld, keeps the dragon on a rope, and the dragon lies at her feet. She caresses the dragon instead of killing him. In the name 'Olga' you find: 'Heel-Ga', again the combination of 'healing' and 'garten' or garden. This name also appears in Finland and there they drink milk with three different colours.

Mountains are often seen as the breasts of the goddess. Elements of the goddess can also be recognised in the naming of a place. If 'pagan' or 'devil' appears in a name, it is a demonization or reversal of that what was sacred and holy in the past. The mother has been denied and destroyed everywhere.

Bogenberg. The tour continues to Bogenberg, the oldest pilgrimage centre in Germany. Old pre-Christian customs lived on here in a Christian form. The Danube touches the foot of the mountain. Across the Danube is the great plain, that was often flooded by the river, making the land very fertile. Today, this plain is still considered as the granary of Bavaria. In the plain, in the city of Strauburg stands a statue of a Madonna of the Grain, a replacement of the old grain mother.

The hill is a cultic site for the whole region. The river makes a bend for the mountain, that's why the place is called Bogenberg. In the church on the top you find a pregnant Maria. She stands in a heart or vulva in a small, dark crypt high on the mountain. But how does she get pregnant? Every year, a group of young men from the village of Holzkirchen, 70 km away, go to her, carrying during many days a lying candle of 13 meters long. Is a Venus number meaning fertility and love or happiness. One of the men lifts up the candle and carries it into the church; like a phallus symbol. The love of the

young men makes her pregnant. Here you see the goddess of fertility and her heroes. This is the oldest pilgrimage site and here you see the 'hieros gamos' between the feminine and the masculine. It gives life to the land, because its birth is caused by the ancestors. It has to do with cosmic polarity, the connection in polarity.

The mountain of the red goddess with her heroes: you can see the Neolithic symbols. Actually, the birth of the child is a form of parthenogenetic reproduction; she is mother earth or Gaia. The green leaves on the candle symbolize the fertility of the red goddess. The same symbol can be seen in the dancing around the maypole in May, also meant to fertilize the land. The green top of the maypole symbolizes the male fertility. The same theme is reflected in the Venus mountain. The opera *Tannhäuser* by Richard Wagner is a Christianized version of an old folktale, in which the hero *Tannhäuser* is baptized by the pope. However, there is an older version by the minstrels. He is with Venus and he feels guilty and ashamed. He goes to the pope, who tells him that he committed a sin by making love to Venus. His land would dry out and he would not find a place anymore to rest under the heaven. *Tannhäuser* returns to Venus and then his land gets green leaves, thus restoring the balance in fertility. The pre-Christian version was very popular among minstrels in the Middle-Ages.

The triple Maria is also in this church: on the right Maria in white, in the middle the pregnant red Maria and on the left Maria in black as *Pieta* with the suffering Christ. This trinity can be found throughout Europe, the Mediterranean world and North-Africa. Other parts of the world have different symbols.

The long interesting day ends with a pleasant dinner at the banks of the Danube at the *Kohlbachmühle*. There is Bavarian music, and many Bavarians in traditional costume, people drink and laugh and are happy. On the Danube, large cruise ships are sailing along. It is getting dark but it is a long warm night, this feast day of Mary Magdalene, 22 July 2010.

July 23, Friday morning seminar: *diverse patterns of matriarchal spirituality; diversity of actual matriarchal societies*

keyword: matriarchal culture and worldview: no organized, hierarchical religion with power centres, instead tradition-based spirituality (comes from "spirits"); spirituality is performed by a great variety of ceremonies and rituals, which are not static, but dynamic; no transcendence beyond the world, the world (Earth and Universe) is regarded as divine, i.e. divinity is immanent; the result is: all is divine, all beings are equal, no hierarchy among all that exists; "diversity is wealth"; everything/everybody is interconnected with all what exists; cyclical concept of time and life; everlasting cycles of life and death and rebirth; sacred societies/cultures, or cultures of the "Divine Feminine".

In matriarchal societies the word religion is not used; they are concerned with a free flowing spiritual energy. Matriarchal spirituality is not about a transcendent being or a transcendent god. That is an example of patriarchal hierarchical thinking.

In matriarchal society life is everywhere. It is about fluidity and continuity. The term spirituality is used. For example, the Jesus movement is a spiritual movement. Religion (*religare*) tends to organisation and hierarchy, a fixed system. Spirituality is a free process, is concerned with the true

feelings of the people. Spirituality is a deeply personal relationship with the divine. Religion wants to organize this; it shows structured forms of hierarchy.

Spirituality has to do with personal guidance; it is an inner reality. There is a polarity between male and female. It is about a deeper knowledge and this knowledge gives direct access to personal religion.

In patriarchal religion you need priests who interpret the divine; it gives a lot of room for manipulation. In matriarchal spirituality is no transcendence; everything is divine and everything is embedded in divine cosmos. For example, when they venerate a stone, it is a symbol. When they venerate a star it is a symbol. **Barbara Mann** explained to **Heide**: we do not venerate the Spirits, because they are all equal. They would not use the word divine. In patriarchal systems only the word God is divine and the rest not. In matriarchal spirituality everything is worshipped, venerated in a ritual practice, in a ritual. Shamans are experts in rituals. The word 'goddess' is only used to counterpart the word God. The divine can be a spider, a woman or a Lady or Frau Holle. The word 'goddess' is missing in matriarchal language. They do not know the split between god and the world. They use the name Lady Venus. Behind the goddess is always Nature. Behind Rhea in Crete is Nature Crete. It is Frau Holle in German. Lady Venus is the power of Love in ourselves. In patriarchy the woman is the crown of creation. But in matriarchy a plant can be sister plant, or a bee sister bee. The unity between mother and child is coming from the umbilical chord; the chord is the link to the original unity. Worldview in union: cosmos gives birth to the earth; earth gives birth to all living beings. No one has to convert the other. The mountain can be a manifestation of the venerated Lady: then she is Lady Mountain. The lady is called the one with the 1000 faces. She manifests herself differently in each place because nature is different. In matriarchal religion the hero adopted several features from the goddess. The matriarchal holistic world recognizes that there is an invisible world which permeates into the visible world. Patriarchal religions are putting the invisible world into an hierarchy. There is confusion about the invisible world and the transcendental world. In the holistic matriarchal worldview a gradation of wisdom exists. We cannot see everything because we have a limited view; we have our physical limits. The invisible world is concrete and immanent. That invisible world is not beyond this physically observable world. The other world is always there.

'Transcendental' is patriarchal terminology. The basic of matriarchy is the umbilical cord; the mother has to cut it. You have to cut it, to die en to give life again. The umbilical cord is nurturing. And this nurturing is continued after the cutting. There are dimensions for which we do not have words, a language. Matriarchal people understand *dreams* as gifts of the spirit. This is the true meaning of the word spirituality. The spirits are immanent. In the old religion was duality and polarity. The goddess was Christianized into a patriarchal goddess. In the Middle Ages the clergy and the nobles developed the Christian religion; the ordinary people remained loyal to the old religion and put old symbols on Mary. They made Mary into a goddess. She is only the mother of Christ (= God). She is a co-option of the mother goddess. Many goddesses give virgin birth. Mary is the Mutter Göttin. But in Christianity she becomes the Mutter Gottes, she is human and his servant. This was decided at the council of Ephesus. Cécile: In catholic dogma is fear and guilt. In shamanic circles you learn to have a relation with the immanent world. We are not able to get a direct connection with a transcendent world. Transcendence creates a distance; there is a tendency to hierarchy and dependency. In matriarchal spirituality everything is immanent; there is a great respect for the invisible world. We cannot be

really free from this. If you recognize the immanent in the transcendent, then you integrate. Cécile: you cannot get the right connection when you don't feel the integrated immanent world.

Banu: in India people talk about transcendental meditation. The process of patriarchalisation comes from Christianity into Islam even into Hinduism and Buddhism. The old religion is associated with 'fertility cults'.

Matriarchy is about non dualism; patriarchy about dualism; matriarchy is about anti domination and patriarchy about domination. They cannot be blended. They exclude each other.

In patriarchy is a stream which tries to go via transcendence into non dualism. Lots of people in patriarchal religions nourish themselves from non dualism and feed the patriarchal system. It is the same as with the exchange and gift economy. Patriarchal religion split of and they cannot be without it.

Malika: the mother cuts the umbilical cord but still mothers. Patriarchy tries to cut and separate the mother. The woman is the source, the spring, the basin. The man comes to the source, the clan. A polarity is not a duality. Polarities need each other. There is a tremendous love for mother Earth. Again **Heide** says that she tries to translate the matriarchal values into western language. You cannot buy a mother. You can buy a womb, but you cannot buy a mother.

Joan: I finally got the message and I am glad. You must have the whole picture of matriarchy and learn. I had the good teachers. The language gives another clue: we say: to bear children and in German gebären.

To use the word animism for this deeply felt spirituality is a defamation.

The sacred marriage is a cosmic symbolism and has nothing to do with fertilising the woman and the womb. We think in cause and effect that came along with the Indo-Europeans in the Mediterranean and in Europe.

Cosmos must be kept in balance by the idea of cosmic marriage. The cosmos must bind all the activities of the world. When the cosmic marriage does not take place the world falls apart. Children come from the ancestors and this has nothing to do with marriage. Cosmos loves the earth, otherwise we would fall apart. In a complex matriarchy the high priestess celebrates the sacred marriage with the king. She embodies nature; the sacred king embodies humanity. Sacred marriage is the love of the mother goddess (=nature) and humanity. The priestess and the king do not symbolize the female and male polarity. It is about the union of mother nature and humanity. The first marriage, or with a better word union, is a marriage of the powers of earth and sky. Sacred marriage has nothing to do with getting pregnant and childbirth. In Bogenberg, Mary is the mother who is giving birth to the child on a parthenogenetic way. The heros in Bogenberg has to work for her in order to become her heros.

It is about a sacred union and not about a sacred marriage; the word marriage is confusing. Union is the basic element in each matriarchal system. There also can be a union between two females. **Vicky Noble** wrote about the double goddess; **Gabriela Mesner** wrote about female pairs. In the double female you find the maternal level and the mother daughter genealogy.

In Bronze Age you find mother and son. But at first there was a parthenogenetic birth; production of the divine with the daughter of the earth. Artemis had nymphs who were also priestesses. They were reproducing the goddess and representing her. In an *Iroquois myth* the sky woman makes love with the wind in a lesbian relationship. The cosmos is female, is parthenogenetic. In fact, this word is both completely wrong and completely misunderstood. According to an *Australian myth* twin sisters gave birth to the universe. In *Pueblo cultures* there is a myth about two sisters. In *Hopi culture* they change into men. Do not bring modern ideas (eroticism and lesbianism or biology) into ancient symbolic and mythological themes. She is the androgynous female.

Animism: the soul of the goddess is in everything; she is in nature and she is everywhere. Venus is the power of love. The sky loves the earth; this power of love is in the tree, the stone, the ocean. People try to see the soul of natural things in a human soul. This is a personification. Life is a continuous love story. Lady Liberty is a personification of freedom in female form. It is manmade. Some trees can have a male soul or energy. The same you find in the landscape or in a stone, a mountain etc. A mountain can be male or female, pointed or round. There is this profound idea that everything has a soul. Always there is a profound reverence or respect. Sometimes there is a personification. May be it is better to use the word spirit instead of soul. Spirits sometimes make themselves visible in order to communicate.

It were the missionaries who talked about animism and polytheism.

Pre-Celtic mythology is matriarchal; Celtic mythology is patriarchal.

Malika's mother and sisters perceive little women; they are the spirits of unborn ancestors. Sometimes they don't come back because the other world is a paradise. There are 500 billion galaxies. One galaxy may have 200 billion stars. Sometimes ancestors are born into a flower or an animal. There is free choice and no hierarchy. There is no Hindu caste system. The bird is seen as an ancestor's soul.

Kaarina from Finland shows a Sami bear film.

The Sami are scattered over four countries. In the bear myth there are several layers:

1 the first layer is primal archaic. The woman makes love to the bear. The bear is her supernatural lover.

2 in the second layer: two brothers with the woman in the background.

3 the woman has transgressed life. Sometimes she puts her feet on the excrements of the bear.

4 She is getting punished for being with the bear.

The bear is female; arctai were bear priestesses; it has a link with ancestors. In Finnish and Swedish tradition the bear is nourished.

July 23, Friday afternoon seminar: *methodology of modern Matriarchal Studies*

Heide studied and taught methodology. Methodology gives you the tools; a clear methodology is very important. But for Heide it was not enough. In the first stage she was analyzing mythology and symbols. Each myth consists of several layers. Heide started with the archaeology of myth, but it only went back to the Bronze Age. It was not possible to reconstruct matriarchal society with myths. Heide searched for a framework, but her work was not finished at the time. When Marya Gimbutas brought in archaeology, Heide understood you need archaeology before myths. But still it was not possible to develop a global framework. She told us how lost she felt at that very moment. But then she started with anthropology, since you cannot learn from history how these societies function; too much is lost.

The existing modern matriarchal societies are a pillar in matriarchal studies. They do not exist anymore in Europe and Heide had to visit other continents. Her experience with the modern matriarchal societies enabled her to find the deep structures of the whole field and to formulate a complex definition as a base for a methodological framework. First, you develop the structure and then you bring in the internal things. This framework offers many advantages. First: It helps the indigenous people to better understand the values of their own culture. Secondly: the theorists better understand matriarchal patterns in history. Heide was allergic for any form of euro centrism. Work is always in progress. Each tool can be refined while the work is in progress. The general definition becomes richer and richer at the end of each chapter of books on matriarchy.

She found out that **Barbara Mann** uses the same levels in her description of *Iroquois women*: economic, political, social, religious. Heide did the theoretical work and translated the experience of the indigenous people from practical knowledge into theory. People accused her of classification and generalisation. But she only gave a theoretical tool. It was very difficult because we are all educated in a patriarchal pattern.

So the first pillar is the study in contemporary matriarchal societies. Then the second pillar is to study history. Heide wants to know how matriarchy developed in each continent and how patriarchy developed also differently in each continent. This opens a new perspective on indigenous peoples. Till now westerners did top-down research in these societies. But this new paradigm starts from the basis. This is also a new paradigm of historical development. It is a fiction that there is a unilateral development; this is a fiction of the human mind. Now we have to put the pieces together for a global history of mankind. **Rianne Eisler** speaks of a domination model and of a partnerships model; but according to Heide these terms are far too weak. You get a totally different society with completely different structures when society is developed and organized from the mother or the father.

The new paradigm has open spaces. It cannot be finished; it is only in the beginning. Opponents do not understand this and criticize it for this. But the new paradigm has a deep logic. Thomas Kuhn developed the structure for a scientific revolution. In general, he says that a new paradigm is stronger than an older one. The new one covers more fields while the older paradigm is explaining much less.

The paradigm of the gift economy fits together with matriarchal studies plus the subsistence economy plus the theory on the development of patriarchy. They are different links of one chain. You have to disregard the evolutionary theory of advancement in civilisation (and consciousness). The

indigenous peoples are not primitive. There is a global network of female scholars working with the new paradigm. Claudia von Werlhof is working on the history of patriarchy. Western patriarchy with its globalisation is in its last phase. 80 % of humanity is non western and non patriarchal. The western elitist mindset belongs to the older patriarchal paradigm. Many feminists attacked the patriarchal system. This new paradigm is a new tool.

In academic circles it is not done to speak of patriarchy and to name it. You are unscientific and you become isolated. But the integrated feminism deals with men and women in society. There are new values of freedom, solidarity and equality. Matriarchal studies provide a basis for several branches of feminism. These values are more nameable. They become more concrete and linked with a concrete and living society. It is necessary that women give their daughters a different education. It is urgent. Nothing is more practical than a good theory. Consciousness rising groups are needed. We have to live together in a new way, in a new community. The mother is the prototype of many new movements; maternal values and the gift economy can be leading themes for feminist and indigenous movements.

Annine: what is the **core definition of matriarchy** which is not too narrow but broad; is it necessary that all four levels - economic, social, cultural and spiritual - are covered? **Heide:** no, **two conditions are necessary:** 1 is the economy in the hands of the women? 2 is it a matrilineal society. These are sufficient conditions; other conditions are not necessary. Remember that matriarchies are in transition and develop.

Annine: **are all non-patriarchal societies matriarchal?** What about bilateral and partnerships societies? **Heide:** these are societies which have not fully developed into patriarchy. Bilateral societies are weak; economy is in the hands of the man. Society is not fully developed into a patriarchal society. Use the definition as a framework to describe the type but in reality there is some diversion. Bilateral or egalitarian societies are matriarchies in development; and they are not a separate group. They could become matriarchies which may be developing into patriarchal societies.

The Tuareg have an matriarchal society. They are matrilineal and have herds. A problem arose about the work of Prof. Dr. Hélène Claudot-Hawad (*Gesellschaft in Balance*, 108- 123 and *Societies of Peace*, 159- 172) because she thought egalitarian bilateral societies not to be matriarchal.

Malika: The men who are active in camel and goat herding, bring the product of economy to the women, to the matriarch, the mistress (or head) of the tent. So in this sense it is a matriarchal society.

The Akan are not fully egalitarian; within the genders there is equality; between the genders there is hierarchy. But beware about the meaning of the word hierarchy. This is not used in this society in the sense of domination, but in the sense of gradual distinction and gradation, an order which is based on sacred tradition. The royals of the Akan, the king and the queen mother keep all the clans together. They make distinctions in levels but this has nothing to do with a hierarchy of domination. The economy is of shared interest.

Linda: I am a little worried about the word 'economy'. The problems are not solved when you make the women head of the multinationals. **Heide:** do not use the patriarchal interpretation of the word

economy but use it in the sense of running a big household. The matriarchal economy is part of a holistic framing. You cannot separate the levels. The definition gives the minimum features.

Another example of using words in patriarchal sense (apart of the word consensus which we already discussed) is the word '*distribution*'. You read in literature: 'the women are distributing'. But they are sharing and looking after everyone's specific needs. You must get the feeling behind the word. The spiritual level influences all the other levels. Common language is used, like the way of production or distribution, but in matriarchal context it is getting a totally different content.

Hopi: When the Hopi men harvest the products, they go into the hands of the women.

Kunama: the land belongs to the community. The herds belong to the mothers. The son has to ask the mother what to do with the land.

Annine: why do you find matriarchies only in agricultural surroundings? Once you explained to me that in these agricultural communities three generations could live together. But now we know that hunter-gatherers groups at the end of Palaeolithic times consisted of hundreds of people, for example in Göbekli Tepe and in the cave-region in Southern France and Spain. Also we know that the women gatherers provided ca 75% of the food. Also we know that mostly women were depicted. Why not take art history into the definition? *Heide*: the Palaeolithic is a long period and must be divided in at least three periods. The hunter-gatherers are to be found in the latest complex phase. This is work in progress. In Neolithic times people could form big clans. Matrilinearity is a way to form matriarchal clans. They live in long houses and have fully developed matriarchal structures. The definition is useful for traditional matriarchal societies and not for modern ones.

Angela D. about the *Nashira village in Columbia*: This is an independent new women community in Colombia; it is a community by choice. All are spiritual daughters in a symbolic sense. They are mothering and understanding each other.

Heide: in modern communities a young girl can choose a new spiritual mother and this can be another one than her biological mother: Ursa major and ursa minor. We must take ideas of traditional matriarchies and transform them into creative solutions for new communities.

Back to where we came from: methodology. There are basic methods:

1. The comparative method. Anthropologists and archaeologists always stick to one culture or society. They are specialists. The comparative method is the basic method for both matriarchal and patriarchal studies.

2 We work multi- or inter disciplinary. Anthropologists and archaeologists always stick to one discipline. But we use all relevant disciplines: anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, history of religion, psychology etc. We use it for our studies. We take back what they have stolen: we reclaim it. We focus on what is really proven.

3. Criticism of ideology. We have to deal with typical patriarchal prejudices. In the older literature it is very obvious. In the new literature it is hidden. Probably the following list can be helpful.

Most common prejudices to describe the male role in Europe, to describe the European role model. In books of the 18th and 19th century you find these role models everywhere.

1 Elitism based on western superiority feelings

2 Males are superior

3 Projecting western nobility on African cultures

4 The view that western cultures are civilized and non western cultures are non civilized.

5 Idolatry. Prejudices about animism and polytheism.

Indigenous peoples are described according to

1 Western European patterns and norms

2 Male gendered roles: the males are superior and the women do less important work

3 Intellectual inferiority of women to men

4 Western family patterns are projected on indigenous tribes. Take Malinowski when he described the Trobriand males. He concludes: men must be oppressed and depressed and have a depressed psyche.

5 common prejudice: male scholars are surprised in matriarchal societies. When they discovered that *the Khasi* in Northern-India venerated a goddess, they argued that it could not be a matriarchy. But when they discovered that men like to drink palm wine, they argued that these men must be suppressed and then their conclusion was: so it must be a matriarchy. All men who drink must be suppressed, the Finnish and the Russian. Catal Hüyük is an egalitarian society and it cannot be a matriarchy.

Carola Meier-Seethaler argued that a matriarchy cannot be egalitarian because the mother is the prototype. But to be in the centre has something to do with being respected and has nothing to do with power.

Malinowski never wrote about the matriarchy; he writes about the sexual life of 'primitive people' of *the Trobriand islands*.

The research is influenced by patriarchal logic. They are hunting their own invention. For instance, they say that women do not dominate and that's why matriarchy does not exist. In the older literature they wrote that matriarchy exists but has no structure and values.

Others put matriarchy far away in exotic regions. But the patriarchal society is everywhere. Matriarchal societies are made marginal and small. The Palaeolithic times are described as male centred and with patriarchal social structures. They did not put matriarchal societies in a historical line. They argue that matriarchy can only be found in horticulture. Engels said that the invention of the plough leading to a division of labour brought the change from matriarchy into patriarchy. But

this argument is not right. *The Minangkabau* have 6 million people and have a division of labour. So Engels' distinction is not correct.

They diminish matriarchy; there are only matriarchal elements, there is no structure of its own, this is the marginalisation. **Heide**: when women are alone they become matriarchal and when the men come back, they return to patriarchy. In science the very early use of plants and animals in the Neolithic by women are deliberately neglected. The observing of stars and the development of language, singing and poetry must be placed much earlier than the Neolithic.

Deconstruct Bachofen; he based ideas about matriarchies on mythology. That type of matriarchy is problematic and cut of feminist perception. He was the first who entered the field but he does not give a definition because he did not take the new field seriously. In methodological view our definition is framed on modern matriarchal studies. We don't need these traditional studies to go into the future. Without the study of modern matriarchal studies you cannot enter the future. If you neglect modern matriarchal studies the future will be patriarchal.

They made women centred cultures poor and simple, because these cultures never invented states. They project this patriarchal invention into the past. They offer only bronze age matriarchy and see no matriarchies before that time.

Another danger is to project romanticized ideas into matriarchies. This is based on wishful thinking. **The people are not better, but the structures in which they live are better.** Heide repeated this statement often.

Feminists are also opposing matriarchal studies. This is the Athena-feminism, which is equalitarian. They use the arguments that matriarchal studies are romantic and backward. They argue that the gift-economy system is based on exchange economy. There is a split in the feminist movement and in one branch you find hostility against the mother.

July 24, Saturday morning seminar: *relationship of Matriarchal Studies to Western theoretical concepts, like Marxism, Theory of Anarchy, Gender Studies, and others*

The group shares compliments about the wonderful booktitle: *Societies in peace. The way into an egalitarian society*. See www.gift@economy.

In the USA we find the Californian Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) and the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology.

Angela Miles states that there also is an integrated feminism.

July 24, Saturday afternoon seminar: *matriarchal studies and Marxism and gender studies*.

The matriarchal studies combine the research of the traditional and classical approach in matriarchal studies with integrated studies in modern matriarchies. The combination of traditional and modern produces a new shape and dimension. **But beware of the old classical studies on matriarchies because, as we have seen, they are full of prejudices.**

Of course, you can nominate the new field with several names. **Max Dashu** has proposed several and **Rianne Eisler** and many others also did. But in Luxemburg everybody agreed in calling the whole field 'matriarchal studies'. This term is in a political way very important.

The big advantage of the term is that people become furious and are at once interested. Matriarchal studies focus on egalitarian societies centred around the mother and on maternal values. When Heide gives a lecture she sometimes uses the term egalitarian societies, sometimes she uses matriarchal societies in balance. When she gives a talk for non academics and 'simple people' she talks about the homeland. She always has to explain that matriarchy is not a society where women abuse men. There is a social balance and an ecological sustainability. Patriarchy is domination of the father. The fathers claim that they are the beginning but they are not, because they don't give birth. Matriarchal studies is not about men and women, it is about basic different types of society. You have to separate how patriarchal men and women behave and how matriarchal men and women behave. You don't want to develop the patriarchal female in you. It is not about the animus and anima of Jung, nobody knows what it is. It is important that in Wikipedia a right definition is placed. In all the classical encyclopaedia and dictionaries wrong definitions of matriarchy are given.

Development in patriarchy:

1 early patriarchy is tribal

2 classical patriarchy has to do with huge imperia

3 colonial patriarchy

4 capitalistic patriarchy

Some researchers pretend that only tribal patriarchy exists and that patriarchy ended with the Enlightenment; that Enlightenment ended patriarchy.

In the eyes of the supporters of patriarchy the term 'patriarchy' is a uniform and static term. They don't see the progress in the stages of patriarchy. But patriarchy is sustained over many social forms. Capitalistic corporations and multinationals are symbolic fathers.

Linda: it is an infection into scholarship (sociology) not to recognize social forms; even sociologists don't recognize it anymore. **Heide:** you are talking about capitalist patriarchy.

Heide also criticizes the western concept of individualism. Postmodernism is a grand theory. There is a discussion between essentialists and reductionists. Individualism is promoted as a western achievement, a progress, but on the whole we are involved in mass-society in which we are a number. The theory seems very attractive but the reality is different. The system is pulling out each sense of freedom; there is alienation and destruction of each bonding. Every social and religious freedom is denied. Heide also criticizes Jung with his 'ideology' of the individuation process. It divides people. The assumption and underlying message is: if you have a relationship with another person you are not yourself. Thinking relationally is denying who we are. Bonding starts with the gift economy and separation starts with the exchange economy. That is why in the west we don't understand the real meaning of consensus. In the language of the mothers: I have to see you in order

to be me. **Bernedette:** you find the same value in the word *Ubuntu*. **Malika:** in *Berber language* we talk about 'we' and not 'I'. There is this wrong idea in patriarchy that in order to be ourselves you have to be separated. But it is different: It is not me but ours. We share.

Patriarchy offers two bad options about individualism: the first leads to isolation and alienation and the second to collectivism which puts people under pressure and leads to the opposite of freedom. Individuality in patriarchy leads to disasters. In matriarchy there is individualism which leads to individuation. Diversity in matriarchy is respected. They don't need individualism, they respect each other and each person has her/his own freedom. Women can opt for motherhood.

Patriarchal individualism is a disaster. Everything started with Gilgamesh. He individualizes himself when denying the mother goddess and nature. The ruler is the one; he forms the top of the hierarchy. In patriarchal society the individual thinks he/she is responsible. In matriarchal society the whole group is responsible. Patriarchy has developed rationality and individualism. The individual is the ruler, the pope, the capitalist companies. The question is how to deny patriarchy without resisting it. The individualism in patriarchy was for selected groups. Educational systems were for men, and women were excluded from the classroom. Corporations now have power over the individual. People film misuses and put it on You Tube. But this individualism has nothing to do with matriarchal individualism. The big question is why did it weaken and how. We have to conduct research on this big issue. Each continent covers a lot of causes and many reasons. They are different on each continent. If they ask when you lecture about this, you in your turn should ask them to be patient and to wait. This is not an ideological question; it is a big field, which still has to be researched.

We don't fight back to patriarchy; we just leave it. Many people do and this is why it is weakened. We develop other ways of living. We can create modern matri-clans. We share the ancient heritage and give it new forms.

Genevieve: we need to deconstruct it;

1. Dismantle it where we can. Theoretically and then in our mind.

2 We have to leave it practically.

Our background is formed by these maternal values. Women have the ability to be as good mothers in their communities. Or even sisters when they choose not to be a physical mother. Each sister can be a mother of her sister's children. But it is not about mothers but about maternal values which are embodied by women: peacemaking, balancing.

Marguerite: my students are transgendered. They do not get the essential thing what a woman really is. 'My vulva is not performance'. What a woman is, is so different in many cultures and in the complexity of the historical situation. Women need to unite across class and race. The gender-discourse is a typical western patriarchal issue. **Angela D.:** 95% of the murderers all over the world are men. **Heide:** in feminism the gender-discussion was an obstacle to progress.

Gen: maternal values do recognize needs. The problem is the lack of maternal values.

Heide: you must go into this discussion from the basis of social structures and give an explanation on the development of patriarchy and clarify that 'gender' is misused in patriarchy.

Gender, race, class are terms which are used to split and divide and at the end to suppress the people: it is a tactics of patriarchy. Race is a mechanistic definition of patriarchy. Our criticism on patriarchy is also a critique on colonialism and racism. Categorization of class and race are invented to dominate it and it creates wounds. It must be healed.

In matriarchy they do a ritual and after the ritual the discussion goes on but now on another level. They are ritualising the way of making decisions.

So first you give the intellectual explanation and then you do a healing ritual. Matriarchy is a Meta level. It is not about motherhood but about maternal values; about caring and sharing and peacemaking. It is not about matriarchy here and patriarchy there; matriarchy is a broader perspective in which people ritualise the conflict. Matriarchy is transcending feminism. We are connected on both a spiritual conscious and a subconscious level. Matriarchs find each other. We did find each other. Left-wing feminists accuse Heide of being an utopian who is making an old myth new.

Coffee break followed by a lecture on Marxism.

Marx was an eye opener to Heide Göttner-Abenroth. But he completely neglected women. Engels knew the work of Bachofen and Morgan. He developed the theory about the division of labour. He thought: the first community is a communist community. Sees an unilateral historic development. Sees the beginning as primitive. The higher the division of labour, the more patriarchy comes in. Here you see the prejudice that all matriarchal societies are primitive. This has a lot of negative impact on *the Mosuo*. Their Chinese chaperons find them stupid. They represent capitalistic global Chinese communism. They suggested that when the plough with the oxen came, it was invented by males, because they are supposed to be stronger and more intelligent so they can invent new technology. However, the plough and other new technology were invented *by women*. See the example of Demeter and her small hero Triptolomos to whom she hands over the secrets of agriculture.

The whole clan was involved in inventing new technology. In communist ideology each individual will be relieved from labour. Women are marginalized because it were the means of production who were the motor of evolution. August Bebel states that the destruction of society came in by violence; there were many fights between women and men groups. But privileges were grasped by a special group of men who started to govern. Patriarchy came in by violence. Marx was a privileged white man. Internet gave more power to a smaller group who got more control over the masses. It is the Marxist view that when capitalism comes in patriarchy is over. This is not true: they define patriarchy too narrow. Bachofen -although he did not use the term matriarchy- described it too narrow. In the debate that arose from his work, the term patriarchy was introduced.

World religions do not see themselves as forms of patriarchy; they exhibit diverse manifestations of patriarchal thinking. In Buddhism wisdom is female and compassion is male. When you are born as a man, this means positive karma; when as a woman negative. Nirvana is a place where nothing is; it is hostile to nature and all living.

In Marx' system economy forms the understructure and religion the superstructure. In idealistic philosophy it is the other way around. In matriarchal studies the levels are not hierarchal; they are interconnected. To follow spiritual principles is denounced as 'primitive'. The means of production created a surplus which was not divided equally. The surplus leads to classes, this is a motor which leads to classes. In Marx' view the ideal society had abundance and no pressure of work. So no alienation. In matriarchal society surplus leads to festivals and gift-giving. On the basis of gift giving are spiritual values and giving and communication. There is no division of the spiritual from the material. The basis is nature and the mother. This is the integrated material/spiritual level. The first thing that happens when a child is born, is that it is nurtured; after wards the culture comes in.

About anarchy

essentials: no state, no rule, no domination. They criticise Marxism; some anarchists criticise patriarchy. They promote small communities, have a vision on alternative societies but this is not really developed. How do they envisage daily life? They want a peaceful society but how? It is a movement dominated by males; women play a marginal role. They build theories. They don't have a concrete utopia. The biggest experiment was in 1936 in the Civil War in Spain in Guernica but it was not realized. ***Erella:*** young anarchists are a potential ally. But matriarchy is much more than anarchy. We don't know what they can realize in practice.

The Zapatista in Mexico have an indigenous background but are also dominated by men. There are admirers of free love which means promiscuity. Some want to bomb for peace! Remember: women are always in avant-garde movements but they are not in the centre.

Patriarchy constructs fixed roles for males and females. All women are patriarchalized and socialized in patriarchy. Androcentrism in patriarchy is to put the male in the centre and the female in the margin. Women in submission and men in dominance. Women in academics do research in androcentric topics. The first condition is that as a woman you behave yourself as being a man. Second condition, even if you notice this, you don't succeed. You have to accept the patriarchal norms; you have to accept this patriarchalisation. They are very critical to academic feminists. We all have to adapt to patriarchal standards in order to survive.

Closing ritual as described on top

Sunday 25 July Sunday, all day: Round table meeting

1 what do we take home to our communities?

Homo donans revolution of butterfly revolution. How can we inspire women to a new non-patriarchal way of activism? (when there is a disaster the military comes in; military and economic values are dominating even in an emergency aid). Flee markets; intercultural gardening; Bumper stickers values against market.

2 network and publishing. Intense discussion on this theme. ***Gen*** wants to help the non-English speaking authors by founding a fund to help with translation-costs.

3 *how to bring matriarchal studies into a bigger group of non-academics.* It is bigger than the goddess studies. The relationship between feminism and indigenous cultures is very important. You have to present matriarchal studies on an economic, social and spiritual level. For example, you can play 'how to form a matri clan': children choose 2 or 3 mothers; mothers choose brothers; mothers and brothers choose grandmothers. Ask for their feelings. Some are getting totally unexpected mother or grandmother. Inclusive feeling; nobody is excluded. Make a ritual: stand in a circle, shake hand and sing a song. Or you can play a gift-giving play. You can play the process of consent-finding or a conflict solving play, e.g. between a mother-daughter village. Exchange with flowers. Ask a practical question: do we need to go on excursion by car or by bike. At the end the group will be more related. Make a ritual.

Women are so creative you only have to touch their source of creativity.

The medium film is very important. Make a list of available films. There is a film of Katherine Frye about the Minangkabau. National Film Board NFB in Canada. Their films are on the web and they are sold very cheap.

There is a difference between long-term activism and short term.

4 *list of international conferences.*

On Sunday night, the last evening of the week of seminars, we go out for dinner and celebrate my birthday. Next to a lot of cordiality, Gen offers me the dinner and as desert I get a piece of cake with a candle. Heide gives me a compliment, although I am a newcomer, I am fully included in this international group that meets already for many years. The group is part of a matriarchate study group of 200 members, who live around the world and form a digitally connected network. We say goodbye and we will meet again at the international congress in Sankt Gallen in May 2011. See the information below.

We are greatly indebted to the people who organized this week: Akademie Hagia with Heide Göttner-Abenroth and Cécile Keller and Genevieve Vaughan of the Gift Economy, who donated us the stay at the hotel. This enabled us to give a more generous gift to the Akademie for the unique teachings we received.

After the conference: a list of keywords sent by email:

Heide: *Another point was that you wanted me to send you a list of key words on matriarchy. As I do not know which key words you will need I just start with some of them:*

- *matriarchal economics* (modes of production and distribution): balanced economy with perfect mutuality, based on subsistence production (independent production) and on gift giving distribution;
no private property, no territorial claims; only usage rights on the soil which is worked;
the basic goods and the distribution are in the hands of women (i. e. the matriarchs).
- *matriarchal social order*: based on the clans; non-hierarchical, horizontal order of matrilineal kinship (matrilinearity);
residence very often in a big clan-house, house of the mother (matrilocality);
common motherhood of sisters; the result is that every woman is a "mother";
the brothers are the supporters of women, not the lovers or husbands;

brothers are regarded as the closest relatives to the sisters' children ("social fathers");
lovers and spouses either as guests over night ("walking/visiting marriage") or during a short period, their home is their mother's houses;
each generation has its own "honour/dignity" i.e. its own powers and tasks;
children are regarded as reborn female and male ancestors.

- *matriarchal politics*: decision-making by a complex system of councils (organized along the matrilineal kinship lines): clan councils, village councils, regional councils and, in some cases, inter-regional councils;
all decisions are clan-based and are made by consensus throughout the system of councils;
the result: egalitarian societies of consensus.
- *matriarchal culture and worldview*: no organized, hierarchical religion with power centres, instead tradition-based spirituality (comes from "spirits");
spirituality is performed by a great variety of ceremonies and rituals, these are not static, but dynamic;
no transcendence beyond the world, the world (Earth and Universe) is regarded as divine, i.e. divinity is immanent;
the result is: all is divine, all beings are equal, no hierarchy among all that exists; "diversity is wealth";
everything/everybody is interconnected with all that exists;
cyclical concept of time and life; ever-lasting cycles of life and death and rebirth;
sacred societies/cultures, or cultures of the "Divine Feminine".

Marguerite Rigoglioso sent her syllabus she uses in fall 2010 in the Dominican University in California with following definition:

A "matriarchy" is not a social structure in which women benefit at the expense of men. Rather, matriarchal cultures are characterized by shared leadership between men and women that results in political harmony, social balance, and emotional well-being. In matriarchal societies, the mother is the central figure, nurturing is a primary value, and the earth is seen as sacred. What can we learn from matriarchies that might help us create a more peaceful and environmentally friendly world? This course will explore the fascinating ins and outs of contemporary matriarchies such as the Mosuo of China, the Minangkabau of Sumatra, the Tuareg and Berber of North Africa; the Akan of Ghana, the Juchitán of Mexico, and others. Drawing on the instructor's own research in North Africa, we will also examine historical accounts and legends regarding rebellious African and Asian Amazons — women-ruled warrior tribes — and we will consider to what extent such stories have any basis in fact. We will look at evidence of matriarchy as humanity's oldest social structure, as well.

This colloquium involves an interdisciplinary approach (social and cultural studies, religion, and history) to the study of historical and contemporary women's political and spiritual leadership. We will explore how women have negotiated and maintained power in patriarchal society, and we will examine women's participation in matriarchal society. The goal is to for students to understand how they may apply lessons learned about women-centered leadership to their own lives and careers, and how they may apply a revitalized feminist consciousness to help solve the world's problems and challenges.

Dr Annine van der Meer (President Academy PanSophia, Holland) Reporter.

The Academy PanSophia is a knowledge centre for matriarchy and oneness consciousness whose focus includes the rediscovery of the female side of God, female values and the contribution of women in ancient and contemporary cultures.
www.academiepansofia.nl and www.anninevandermeer.nl (English flag).

