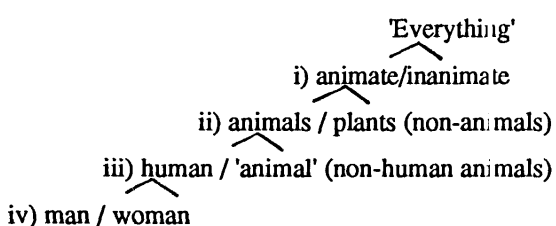# Chapter 3. Contextualising in Practical Reason

i) The Moral Hierarchy and the Right to Rule

The public knowledge system/s into which we are inducted from early childhood lay out simple frameworks for understanding reality: these seem to describe obvious 'natural' divisions and to be value-neutral. They do not seem to have any obvious political significance. For example, take the following simple descriptive taxonomy:

'Everything'

i) animate/inanimate

ii) animals / plants (non-animals)

iii) human / 'animal' (non-human animals)

iv) man / woman

This taxonomy seems innocent in the sense of being unmotivated or non-instrumental, 'natural' in the sense of reflecting the way things actually are, and to be value-free: no value claims are overtly made in it. All of these features arise from its apparently **descriptive** epistemological telos. However, there are a couple of features of it that should alert us to the fact that there is more to this taxonomy than initially meets the eye. First, divisions have been made recursively down through one side of the initial division and not the other: 'living', 'animal', and 'human' all contain subdivisions but 'non-living', 'non-animal', and 'non-human animal' do not. Secondly, there is an ambivalent presence at the bottom of the taxonomy (i.e., at a position v), below 'man'. That ambivalent presence is 'God', ambivalent because as you read down the hierarchy, 'God' appears to be the appropriate culmination of some kind of series, and yet, if this is a descriptive taxonomy, 'God', not being a type of 'man' does not belong there at all.

We can account for these features if we recognise that this descriptive taxonomy is in fact the descriptive content of an evaluative epistemic field: a hierarchical scalar field (see Part II, Chapter 2., Section ii) containing a recursive series of positive/negative[55] value contrasts, which can be translated as follows:

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[55]I am now using the value concepts generically, that is, they can represent any specific kind of value contrast and comparison. For example, the specific value ordering might be 'should exist'

(N> = *necessarily better than*, or orders a good/bad contrast):

> For spatiotemporal objects: (animate N> inanimate).
>
> For animate things: (animals N> non-animal living things)
>
> For animals: (human animals N> non-human animals)
>
> For human animals: (man N> woman)

Transitivity between the nested scales generates the following value ordering in descending order: man, woman, non-human animals, non-animal living things, inanimate things: this should be instantly recognisable as the **'order of nature'**, or the **'natural order'**. This ordering can be read from the original taxonomy by inverting it; this explains the ambivalent presence of 'God' on that taxonomy, which category is located, on the evaluative epistemic field (which could equally be called 'the Divine order' or something similar), higher in value than 'man' and all other categories on the scale. It also explains the assymetrical pattern of division. As I explained in Part II, Chapter 3, value distinctions within the 'good' subfield are much more salient than those within the 'bad' subfield because the 'bad' subfield comprises objects which should be 'culled' first. But what is the telos of this evaluative field, and, to more finely focus this question, what kind of criteria are being used to partition it? The answer to the first question can be found, again, in 'God''s ambivalent presence on the hierarchy.

Plumwood (1993, p 41) quotes Marilyn Frye as explaining that 'the structure' (of subordination) must seem **natural**[56], that is, a reflection of the way things are and not something invented by human beings. Frye attributes this to the requirement of power structures that they seem not to be open to change, but contemporary attitudes to nature do not see what is natural as unchangeable (rather, we seem to feel obliged to prove that we are able to interfere with it). The connexion with the preclusion of change is rather **evaluative**. The idea is that, in certain contexts, what is 'natural' **should not** be changed. Since, in other contexts, what is 'natural' is dangerous, chaotic, requiring control and rule, some underlying practical principle concerning permissions to intervene in nature is at work. That

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(for possible objects), or 'ought to be obeyed' (or a practical value contrast for principles) or 'ought to be chosen' (for options), or whatever. As we will see, in this value ordering, *better than* is expressed as 'ought to rule', a practical (moral) value relation, for categories of beings and objects, ordered by overridingness.

[56]The quote is from The Politics of Reality (1983), N.Y.: Crossing Press.

permission is witheld when 'naturalness' is invoked to prohibit interference or change. We can therefore discern two moral attitudes to 'nature'; the first attitude treats nature as properly subject to human interference and control, and the second treats nature as a domain prohibited to human intervention.

Plumwood[57] reports Rosemary Radford Ruether as arguing that 'nature' was not considered inferior or evil in the Old Testament, but was viewed as reflecting God's agency. Our 'alienation' from nature, in which it became viewed as a potential evil to be controlled, arose, according to Radford Ruether, with Classical philosophy. I would argue that this change involves the development, not of a change in attitude to 'nature' as such, but of the idea of a human domain of authority, which nevertheless is both subject to and must not usurp God's authority. We could describe that part of the 'natural' prohibited to human intervention as representing Divinity, and therefore as 'supernatural'. This demarcation of authority, then, is represented by the evaluative partitioning of 'nature' into 'nature' (negatively signed) and 'supernature' (positively signed). Since only Divine authority is thought to override the authority of human beings, the authority of the 'order of nature' described above, which governs human beings as well as lower categories, must be underpinned by the supernatural authority of Divinity.

As I argued in Part II, nested scales constitute the logical structure of overridingness. This will be seen to be consistent with the point of this particular scale. The above taxonomy in fact does not describe what is 'natural', but rather describes the **supernatural order**, that is, the hierarchical system, **ordered by overridingness,** of rights of intervention or interference between the objects and beings allocated to the different categories. God's moral authority (supreme right of intervention), overriding those of 'man' constitutes the prescriptive (moral) force of the 'natural order', and reveals the epistemic field constituted by this hierarchy to be moral in character.

This hierarchy is not plausibly reflective of any real supernatural order. It is extremely vulnerable to sceptical arguments, most obviously concerning the grounds and logical coherence of the racically heterogenous partition between 'natural' and 'supernatural'. It is, rather, the construction of human beings, deceptively presented: the category 'God' ambivalently present on the taxonomy is

[57]Critical Review, p 121. The Radford Ruther reference is New Woman New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation (1978), N.Y.: Seabury Press.

a secular 'God', invoked in the interest of secular power concerns. Plumwood says of 'dualisms' that they are 'an intense, established and developed cultural expression of ...a hierarchical relationship', intended to make 'equality and mutuality literally unthinkable' (p 475 [3]). The taxonomy described above also fits this description, and can in fact be seen as a nested system of dualisms or binarisms. It is neither value-free, nor uncontroversially 'natural', in the sense of passively reflecting important descriptive distinctions in nature. It is not clear that we would make the sharp demarcations between the categories of the descriptive taxonomy independently of the moral value hierarchy that the taxonomy underpins. Many authors have suggested that the sex difference, for example, is a continuum (e.g., Nancy Jay, 1981[59]). Describing parallels between the treatment of women and that of nature, Plumwood says (p 120[60]):

> Similarly in both cases there has been an attempt to impose a sharp separation on a natural continuum, in the one case between the characteristics of the sexes, and in the other case between the characteristics of humans and non-human animals, so that the distance between each side is maximised in a polarity.

Consistently with this hierarchy, and with the similarity that Plumwood identifies between conceptualisations of women and nature, Hegel draws parallels between the 'man'/'woman' and 'animals'/'plants' contrasts, according to Genevieve Lloyd (p 84[61]), who reports him as holding in the 'Philosophy of Right' that 'Women differ from men as 'plants differ from animals".

I argued earlier that the taxonomy above represents the 'supernatural order', underpinned by the overriding authority of God, which sets out intervention rights between categories of beings and objects. 'Intervention rights' are more simply understood as a moral **right to rule**. Plumwood, commenting again in 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature' upon Aristotle's arguments concerning slavery in *Politics*, says:

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[58]Op. Cit.

[59]Gender and Dichootomy, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1., Spring 81, pp 38-56. I think that we are probably pretty firmly 'wired' to pay attention to a female/male sex difference in certain contexts, but that its **relevance** is hugely exaggerated and 'globalised' for political purposes (see Chapter 2, Section i.

[60]1986. Ecofeminism: An overview and discussion of positions and argument, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplement to Vol. 64, June, pp 120-138.

[61]Op.cit. She cites the quotation to Hegel, (1821) *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1942, add. 107 para 166, pp 263-4.

...Aristotle...links together the dualism; arising from human domination of nature, male domination over females, the master's domination over the slave and reason's domination of the body and emotions, and gives his version of each hierarchy's place in a chain of hierarchies. (p 46, op. cit.)
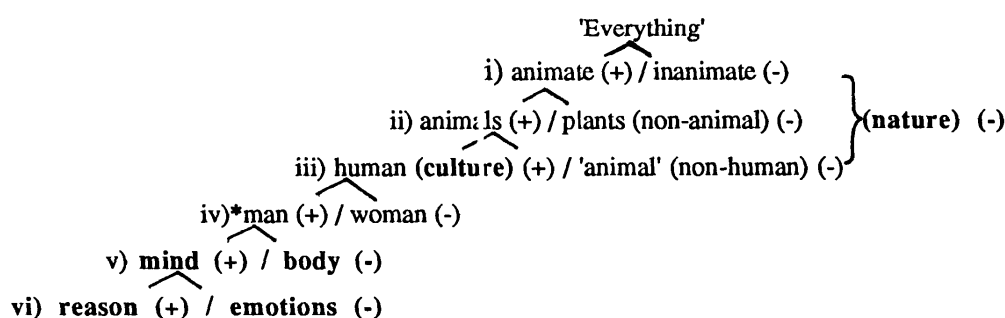
Many authors[62] have noted the associations between, for example, man, reason, technology or culture and mind (which all have positive value), and between woman, the emotions, nature and body (which by contrast have negative value[63]). Let us place this matched set of contrasting concepts on our evaluative taxonomy. 'Man' and 'woman' are already there. 'Technology' or 'culture' is supposed to pertain only to human beings, so should be located on the left hand, 'good' side at level iii), while 'nature' encompasses, by contrast with this, non-human animals and everything below them in value. Further, consistently with the pattern of recursive division of the 'good' side of a value scale, we could make a further division of 'men' into 'mind' and 'body', and then recursively divide 'mind' into 'reason' and 'the emotions'. In order to highlight the significant structural features of the hierarchy, I will mark the positive/negative contrasts with '+' and '-' respectively; it should be kept in mind that these contrasts are horizontally comparative between categories (expressing a *necessarily better than* relationship between those categories, as explained in Part II), and that lower levels of the hierarchy as set out here comprise a) finer descriptive partitions, and b) finer evaluative partitions on nested value fields. These can, however, be translated (as I demonstrated above) into a linear ordering using transitivity to unpack the nesting of the scale. Below, I will examine whether we can discover a global positive/negative contrast when this is done.

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[62]For example, see (in Bibliography for Part II) Helen Weinreich-Haste (1986); Carolyn Whitbeck (1986); Sherry B. Ortner (1986). I have reproduced Plumwood's list (from Feminism and the Mastery of Nature, p 43) of important western dualisms in Chapter 1, Section ii of this work.
[63]Of course contrasts with other concepts may result in different sign. For example 'nature' may be positive by contrast with 'artifice' or 'artificiality'. With this contrast, predictably enough, 'woman' has been associated with the 'artifice' s de and 'man' is more 'natural'. There is also the 'natural/unnatural' contrast which has always been used to legitimise attributions of deviance; this is connected with the moral authority of the 'natural order'. And there are usually genuinely competing value systems as well which may or may not be accommodated by the dominant ideology (e.g., the contemporary subversive elevation of 'nature' in rebellion against the excesses of science and technology has been accommodated by a 'natural technology/unnatural technology' contrast, most enthusiastically by the advertising industry).

In any case, our hierarchy now looks like this:

'Everything'

i) animate (+) / inanimate (-)

ii) animals (+) / plants (non-animal) (-)   }(nature) (-)

iii) human (culture) (+) / 'animal' (non-human) (-)

iv)*man (+) / woman (-)

v) mind (+) / body (-)

vi) reason (+) / emotions (-)

It is immediately apparent that classification by **value sign** accounts for the abovementioned associations between reason, mind, man and culture, and between emotions, body, woman and nature. This further accounts for several phenomena identified by commentators upon binaristic constructions, among them the puzzlingly ambivalent classification of women with non-human animals, with nature in general, and with inanimate matter. Classification by value sign is the simplest level of explanation of these phenomena, but as we will see, the taxonomy has more mischief to make than just this.

As I argued in the previous chapter, conflations between different levels of hierarchically arranged epistemic fields are readily made, especially in certain power contexts. This particular structure is, however, especially vulnerable to conflations between different orders or levels (of analysis), in part because of the taxonomy's misrepresentation as a descriptive arrangement, which is in fact an inverted moral hierarchy. Our unconscious recognition that it is will cause us to read it upside down without realising it, as well as to note that all categories on the left are of the same sign (positive) while all on the right are of the same sign (negative). This has the effect of telescoping or contracting the hierarchy in ways which account for several notorious phenomena connected with binarisms.

Because the left hand categories are consistent with each other, they will tend to 'float upward', becoming associated with those categories immediately above. This is in my view how a certain sort of paradigm develops. Man, for example, becomes the paradigmatic human, the human becomes the paradigmatic animal, the animal becomes the paradigmatic living thing. Context, plausibility, and structural cross-currents (e.g., the structural importance of the distinction between human and non-human animal) constrain these slippages, but the general rule is that the plus side of any contrast in the hierarchy will gain a generality connotation, will come to speak

for or stand for more general categories of which it is a type or an instance. This explains, among other things, the logical underpinnings of ambiguously sexed generics in which, e.g., 'man', nested within 'human', comes to represent 'human', and 'human' comes to be paradigmatically exemplified by 'man'.

The telescopic contraction of the right hand side takes a different form. Because these categories (down to level iv) are mutually exclusive, it manifests as a downward property slippage, and a tendency to specificity. While a woman can't be non-human, the category 'woman' acquires or attracts non-human attributes by contrast with the category 'man', such as, perhaps, a tendency to be driven by instinct and intuition rather than reason. Plumwood argues that 'emotionality, bodiliness, animality and particularity' are associated with women[64]. This results in part from downward property slippages from 'non-human animal' to 'woman', from 'woman' to 'body', and from 'body' to the 'emotions'. Further, there are structural cross-currents which make additional connexions between 'non-human animal', 'woman', 'body' and the 'emotions' in the opposite direction, which I will discuss presently. But also, for example, the category 'non-human animal' acquires 'plant'-like attributes by comparison with human animals. Examples of beliefs arising from this include the extraordinary idea that non-human animals don't suffer pain, and/or that they lack the ability to plan [65], or that they are constitionally unable to engage in strategies of communication that can be dignified by the term 'language'. While Plumwood in 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature' (p 5) attributes the '(stripping from) nature of the intentional and mindlike qualities which make an ethical response to it possible' to Cartesian thought, this is in fact an inevitable consequence of a 'supernatural order' long predating Descartes' philosophy.

The tendency to 'specificity' of the right-hand side categories is consistent with the work of some linguists who claim to identify a general/specific contrast between sexed terms, and the general association between positivity and generality and negativity and specificity also accords with some poststructuralist accounts of the 'hierarchical' nature of binary oppositions. My claim is that it is the structures of a concealed value-epistemic field that account for these phenomena; their peculiar

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[64]The Politics of Reason, 1993, op. cit., p 437.

[65]See, for example, Peter Harrison (1989), Theodicy and Animal Pain, Philosophy, Vol 64, No 247, pp 79-92.

characteristics are the traces in appare itly neutral systems of classification of suppressed hierarchical **evaluative** c rderings.

I mentioned earlier that structural cross-currents confirm reciprocal connexions between the 'emotions', 'body' and 'woman' (and extend to 'non-human animals' and 'nature' in general). The right hand side categories below level iv) do not exclude each other and can be attributes of at least 'woman', and, more controversially, 'non-human animal' on the hierarchy. The progressive focus on the good (left) side of the taxonomy has resulted in the omission of a legitimate mind/body distinction[66] under 'woman', and a potentially legitimate mind/body distinction under 'non-human animals' as well as the omission of a potentially legitimate reason/emotions distinction under 'body'. This is the reason why, under the structural pressure of this taxonomy, the category 'woman' fails to firmly retain its legitimate epistemic connexion with 'mind', and the category 'body' fails to acquire a potentially legitimate connexion with 'reason'. Because of this, the association by value sign between the right hand side categories trumps the suppressed, positively signed partners in these oppositions for women and non-human animals, who then become firmly associated with body rather than mind, and with the emotions, rather than reason.

Levels v) and vi) of the hierarchy reveal a deeper, more complex structure to the 'right to rule' hierarchy. The partitions concern significant 'rule or be ruled' contrasts in reference to the category they divide (we could say they that these pairs are correlative opposites, supervening on prescribed power relations between the divided categories). For example, if 'reason' rules 'emotions', then 'reason' rules 'man' (the category that 'reason' and 'emotions' divide), and if 'reason' does not rule 'emotions', then 'emotions' rule 'man'. We can infer from this that, according to the hierarchy, if 'man' rules 'woman', then 'man' rules 'animals' and every category below, that is, **nature.** If 'man' does not rule 'woman', then 'woman' rules 'man', and every category below. But if woman rules 'man', she does so on the side, so to speak, of 'nature'. This would be evident from the right-hand-side associations alone, but there are deeper structural connexions at work consolidating this inference. 'Woman', as Sherry Ortner argues[67], represents the transition zone between 'culture' and 'nature'. This transition zone is the transformation process of

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[66]That is, insofar as this is a legitimate distinction at all. It may well be legitimate in certain epistemic contexts, even if we might want to dispute, again, the exaggeration and globalisation of its relevance. The same observation can be made of the reason/emotions distinction.
[67]Op. Cit.

'nature' into 'culture', which is achieved by rule or control of 'nature'. Ortner is aware that the culture/nature contrast is empirically artificial. She says (p 65): '...one can find no boundary out in the actual world between the two states or realms of being'. In connecting the 'conceptual category' of 'culture' with the 'human ability to act upon and regulate, rather than passively move with and be moved by, the givens of natural existence' (p 65), Ortner recognises the influence of the high values of **active agency** and **control** in the contrast (something to which I will return). I would elaborate, however, that the 'transition zone' that 'woman' represents is epistemically **prescriptive**, not descriptive. What this means is that 'woman' represents not the actual rule over nature, but the need to do so, and she also represents the common ground between 'man' and 'nature' which makes this rule both possible and obligatory. It is not surprising then, that this hierarchy prescribes the following: that 'reason' must rule the 'emotions' in order to rule 'mind', and 'mind' must rule 'body' in order to rule 'man'; finally, 'man' must rule 'woman' in order to rule 'nature'.

'Woman', in her mediating position between 'reason' (which represents the overridingness of the supernatural) and 'nature' (the proper 'patient' of agency), embodies both. She embodies a toggle which is a 'wide Cut' in Ogden's sense, containing within it not indifference, but ambivalence: a contradiction which expresses and represents both the positive and negative areas of the scale. Unfortunately for 'woman', her positivity depends on obedience to 'man's' rule, since this is how she expresses her membership of the good side of the scale. (This kind of view is clearly evident in Rousseau's and Hegels' philosophies, which will be discussed in connexion with Lloyd's work on Reason in the next Section.) I have discussed this kind of toggle (an 'iconic dichotomiser') in Section i. of the previous chapter. It is 'iconic' in the sense that it is both a partition of a (prescriptive) epistemic field, and a category upon it; it is itself an instance of what it represents, comprising or containing within itself the power-inflected dichotomy that also characterises the entire field. The presence of an iconic dichotomiser in the 'order of nature' reveals it to be an instance of the most extreme form of binaristic construction.

We have now come a very long way from an apparently innocent, 'value-free', descriptive taxonomy. The taxonomy is in fact a moral hierarchy, ordered by overridingness of a purported right (and perhaps, depressingly, if the above arguments are correct, a purported obligation) to rule. The moral hierarchy is made

by making **moral** distinctions among categories of subjects, against the background of a morally insignificant material environment. As Plumwood explains[68], 'nature' is

> ...passive, ...non-agent and non-subject, ...the 'environment' or invisible background conditions against which the 'foreground' achievements of reason or culture ...take place ...a *terra nullius*, a resource empty of its own purposes or meanings (p 4).

Moral hierarchies in general, of which the above is an instance, are intended to legitimate a form of overridingness or trumping between the choices or interests of groups that mimics the logical overridingness of the moral in practical reasoning. Plumwood (1986[69]) says:

> And since what distinguishes the human ultimately is the possession of mental characteristics, then the higher or supreme value accorded these can be used to **justify** the inferior treatment of those not possessing them, possessing less of them, or identified with the contrasting sphere of the body and nature (p 135, my emphasis).

There are at least two elements that go into the persuasiveness of this legitimation strategy. The first element is the idea of epistemic privilege: those at the top levels of the hierarchy are supposed to **know** better than those below; hence it is rational (and morally obligatory) for lower orders to take direction from them. The second element is that of moral superiority. It is as if the morally better you are, the morally better your choices are, so that just as the morally better options should be chosen when an individual deliberates about an action, classes of morally better agents should have their way over classes of lesser agents when a society decides between groups of interested parties. The recognition of the moral nature of the hierarchy should alert us to look for toggles on the hierarchy that are thought to be of moral significance (i.e, that might be persuasively used to discriminate rights to rule). Further clues to the nature of the toggles can be found from the purpose of the hierarchy: to influence the choices of rational agents. It should be no surprise to discover that the taxonomy is consistent with the use of toggles closely connected with features of rational agency that are thought to have moral significance.

[68]1993. Feminism and the Mastery of Nature, (op. cit.).

[69]V. Plumwood, 1986 (op. cit.).

Plumwood argues that the mind/body contrast provides the underpinning general framework for political distinctions b tween both humans and nature, and male and female (p 134[70]). She goes on:

> The model of what it is to be human is basically masculine because the crucial human feature is identified as the possession (to at leas a greater degree than anything else) of mental characteristics of mind, of soul, spirit, consciousness, rationality or intelligence, and this is the sphere that has been generally identified also with masculinity (p 134).

I would argue, however, that a more general framework in which the mind/body distinction is itself situated can be discovered in the moral hierarchy we are analysing here. In the next section I w ll address in some detail the epistemological underpinnings of the patterns of conceptualisations of Reason and their relations with value hierarchies as described in 'The Man of Reason'. But preliminarily, there are features of the 'order of natur e' that can give us some idea of the features of **practical reasoning** that are ideolc gically employed to legitimate a hierarchical right to rule.

The moral hierarchy draws upon, mim cs and distorts legitimate structural features of practical and moral reasoning in orc er to be rationally persuasive. In the 'Critique of Pure Reason[71]', Transcendental Ar alytic, Bk II, 'Analytic of Principles', Kant explains the process of 'schematism' th at is required if we are to apply abstract, non-empirical organisational principles to empirical, spatiotemporal phenomena. This process can be roughly described as involving the syncretic combination of abstract organisational principles (a priori 'categories') with (spatial and temporal) organisations of experience (spatiotemporal 'categories'), creating what are supposed to be synthetic *a priori* (infor native and necessarily true) categories of rational or meaningful experience.

Now there is no reason to suppose that there could not be a power-inflected, distorted 'schema', one which, for example, highlights only one aspect of the *a priori* concept being schematised, at the expense of other aspects, so that it will not 'ring false', but will focus our perceptions narrowly on some features of experience

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[70] 1986 (op. cit.).

[71] *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (1986), Norman Kemp Smith (transl.), London: Macmillan.

at the expense of others. I would argue that agent causation has been distorted in this way.

The 'order of nature' contrasts a series of categories of thing constructed through what I would describe as a power-inflected 'schematism': the **active/passive** contrast which masquerades as a synthetic *a priori* practical schema. This 'schematism' involves the application of the *a priori* practical concept of a creative or generative cause (an agent) to spatiotemporal patterns of causal succession ('the succession of the manifold', p A144, B183), so that causality is represented as an 'active cause'/'passive effect' contrast of which spatiotemporal agency is an instance. This schematism results in 'good' agency being thought to always minimally involve being on the 'active' side of the contrast. This in my view is a political inflexion (through a debased interpretation of creativity and generation through focussing upon causal power alone) of a genuine schema for spatiotemporal agency[72]. If this is so, political inflexions of epistemic materials can occur at very deep levels of epistemic activity.

In the 'order of nature', the active/passive 'schema' provides the organising framework for a nested hierarchy of agency values. We see in the most basic distinction between animate and inanimate things, a contrast between **active** and **passive causal power**, the deepest and most general active/passive contrast, in which the inanimate represents perfect passivity or non-agency. **Action** and **reaction**, a more detailed form of the active/passive contrast, are represented in the distinction between animal and plant. **Rational** and **non-rational** are represented in the contrast of human with non-human animal; the active/passive distinction now involves a contrast between 'active' reflection and 'passive' instinctive responses. **Rational** and **irrational** are expressed in the male/female contrast; active/passive now makes a partition between reflection that governs non-rational forces and a reflection that is in the service of them. And finally, perfect activity (as absolute causal power) is represented at the top of the hierarchy in the form of the Divine, perfect, agent. The hierarchy therefore has perfect activity and perfect passivity as polar descriptive limits, and is divided into a good/bad moral contrast over the ambivalent (iconic dichotomising) category 'Woman', who expresses in her apparent combination of capacity and incapacity the moral dichotomy structuring the

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[72]I would argue that a genuine agency schema would articulate what is special about agency in the world not in terms of the power of causality, but in terms of the meaningfulness of the **connexion** between cause and effect in agent causation and in the rational apprehension of causality.

entire field. The coincidence of the 'reason/nature' contrast with the 'active/passive' contrast, also embodied in the category 'Woman', arises, I would argue, from the nature of the *a priori* agency concept infusing the 'active' side of the contrast. As Plumwood says in 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature' (op. cit., p 3):

> The concept of reason provides the unifying and defining contrast for the concept of nature, much as the concept of husband does for that of wife, as master for slave. Reason in the western tradition has been constructed a; the privileged domain of the master, who has conceived nature as a wife or subordinat other encompassing and representing the sphere of materiality, subsistence and the feminine which the master has split off and constructed as beneath him. The continual and cumulative overcoming of the domain of nature by reason engenders the western concept of progress and development.

The active/passive distinction can be usefully interpreted as a projection of agent causation through the lens of power, as can the more detailed moral hierarchy that is structured by it. This hierarchy is like a computer virus, a piece of apparently innocent taxonomic software meant for rational agents, which by concealing a programme of false values facilitates lying justifications, or false legitimations, directed at rational agents. **It succeeds by appropriating working categories and principles of practical reasoning, of which rational agents are presumably unconsciously aware and by which they are unconsciously guided, to a schematising process through which they can then give a false ring of truth to the resulting descriptive partitions.** These partitions can then be used as descriptive premisses in value and moral arguments, misleading the practical reasoning of rational agents.

ii) The Man of Practical Reason Agency as Control

In 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature'[73], Plumwood argues that a gendered reason/nature dualism connects and organises other dualisms, which are refinements or elaborations upon it (p 4). I have argued that this dualism is present as a global partition over the 'natural order' analysed in the previous section, an order which comprises several of the most notorious binaristic constructions. However, I think that a more detailed account of the contents of systems of

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[73]1993 (op. cit.)

binarisms, consistent with her explanation of their source in power relations, can be elicited from, again, the point of the epistemological practices in which they have a place, that is, the persuasion of rational agents.

Plumwood[74] argues that the dualism constructs reality not from a specifically 'male' point of view, but generally from the point of view of a 'master', whoever that master may turn out to be in any power system; it is 'the structure of a general way of thinking about the other which expresses the perspective of a dominator or master identity' (p 442). Again, in 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature', Plumwood describes 'reason' as a 'master' category against which 'nature' is 'a field of multiple exclusion and control' (my emphasis, p 4) , and describes the 'dynamic and logic of domination between self and other, reason and nature' (p 4). We can combine three important elements of her remarks here in order to more finely focus our understanding of the contents of the 'master' category, and of the patterns of inclusions and exclusions that it generates. The first is the motive of **control**. The second is the perspective, 'self', which should, given the practical context of the epistemological materials being constructed, be construed as the **agent** self. The third is the method of control, **reason**. These three combine in an ideal of **rational agency**, but rational agency given a particular cast or inflexion: the 'master' category comprises a valorisation of rational agency as **control**.

Genevieve Lloyd in her book 'The Man of Reason'[75] argues for the thesis that in the Western philosophical tradition, the way that Reason has been construed has been heavily influenced by a pattern of contrasts with the way nature and (the associated) feminine have been construed. In addition, the concept of the feminine has evolved by contrast with Reason. One result of this is that Reason as a standard is harder to attain for those who have or are required to have 'feminine' properties, hence the (male) 'genderization of the ideals' of Reason (p 37).

I have argued that binarisms and other ideological epistemological phenomena are meant to influence practical reasoners, so that some of their features will be explainable in terms of features of practical value and of practical reasoning. In this Chapter I will apply this view to an interpretation of Lloyd's book, arguing that the Reason which is the object of her analysis is better construed as **Practical** Reason. Recognising the political intent of the contrasts employed to construct reason, that

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[74]1993 (The Politics of Reason, op. cit.)
[75]Op. Cit.

is, the legitimation of a right to rule, enables us to explain the particular contrasts employed, and gives some insight into the historical chain of associations and contrasts that are the object of her analysis.

In the next section, I will be applying an axiological analysis to some important features of gender, including the 'value lockout' device (precluding women from attaining at once both the standards of Reason and of femininity) mentioned above. For the present I wish to give a politically situated account of patterns of evolution of important epistemological materials described by Lloyd in The Man of Reason. In her 'Preface to the Second Edition'[76], Lloyd says of her section on Descartes:

> In the lack of a clear grasp of the real nature of the book's concern with symbolic maleness and femaleness, I put more emphasis in this section than I now think appropriate on the interaction between philosophical content and its extraneous social context. I would now emphasize, rather, the interactions between philosophical content and the implict play of symbols, which links Descartes's texts with others in the philosophical tradition (p xiv).

These remarks should not be interpreted to mean that Lloyd's thesis is not politically situated. Lloyd offers an explicitly political or power-based account of the 'maleness' of Reason; she says (p 108):

> ...Philosophy has been deeply affected by, as well as deeply affecting, the social organization of sexual difference. The full dimensions of the maleness of Philosophy's past are only now becoming visible. Despite its aspirations to timeless truth, the History of Philosophy reflects the characteristic precoocupations and self-perceptions of the kinds of people who have at any time had access to the activity...they have been predominantly male...there has been no input of femaleness into the formation of ideals of Reason.

The notion of an 'implicit play of symbols' need not exclude the significance of 'extraneous' social context if we recognise that social context is not 'extraneous' to a public knowledge-system, but rather both constitutes its medium and determines its point. The 'play of symbols' is not a chaotic, unconnected series of changes, and the notion has no explanatory power unless there are some identifiable reasons for the patterns of evolution and interaction, between these symbols, that we detect. The model of explanation that I am using employs a combination of structural constants (basic epistemic strategies and tools) and a 'contextual' implied or posited

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[76]Op. Cit.

constant (power-groups' interest in epistemic materials) within a framework that recognises that the general point or telos of public epistemological practices is the guidance of the decisions of practical reasoners, in order to give an account of both the structure and content of the epistemic materials we are examining.

One of the most important structures governing the 'play of symbols' is **value sign**; one way of putting this claim is that identity of value sign is the most important predictor of the descriptive associations between categories, and that opposition of value sign is the most important predictor of descriptive polarisations between categories. This is what makes possible the structural account, employing value concepts, of Reason and its exclusions, that Lloyd is able to defend. She says (p 103): '...the male-female distinction itself has operated not as a straightforwardly descriptive principle of classification, but as an expression of values.' She goes on:

> Our ideas and ideals of maleness and femaleness have been formed within structures of
> dominance - of superiority and inferiority, 'norms' and 'difference', 'positive' and 'negative', the
> 'essential' and the 'complementary'. And he male-female distinction itself has operated not as a
> straightforwardly descriptive principle of classification, but as an expression of values.

In addition to exhibiting an explicit awareness of the role of positive/negative value contrasts in her account, I would argue that Lloyd also displays an implict awareness, which we all share (this latter accounting for the persuasiveness of her account) of value-epistemic structures guiding the relations between evaluatively-contrasted categories, and influencing their descriptive contents. In fact, Lloyd's account can be characterised as relying heavily on an implicit value epistemology. But we nevertheless have to explain why a particular descriptive content is attracted to, or was attracted to, a particular value sign, and that is where the male domination of the history of this particular public knowledge-system comes in to the explanation.

In this section, I wish to press Lloyd's account in order to provide a more detailed explanation of the contents of the epistemic materials that feature in it. I will defend the thesis that the Reason of the philosophers is Practical Reason, construed in a certain way, that is, valorising rational agency as **control**.

Rational agency has various aspects which can be valued in different ways, depending upon what you think is the most important or relevant thing about it. The

power of an agent to influence the way the world is constitutes the agent as a cause and is a defining feature of agency. A rational agent is, however, also definitively creative in its exercise of causality, and there are different ways in which this causal power can be exercised, depending upon the agency context, or the reasons for action. There are therefore different ways in which these causal powers can be construed, and these different ways can be differently valued. How the power of agency is construed evaluatively will depend on the agent's dominant reasons for acting.

Philo, for example, according to Genevieve Lloyd (p 24) valorises immortality and happiness with respect to mortality and suffering, while valorising 'active' with respect to 'passive'. This can provide some insight into the motive for valorising **control** over other aspects of the powers of agency. Agents who are vulnerable to suffering are going to be especially aware of, and concerned to enhance, their power to prevent their own suffering, to forestall badness. In suffering, the agent experiences him or herself **as an effect** in such a way that being an effect is a bad thing. In dangerous, unpredictable environments, agents are likely to notice and valorise that aspect of their causal presence in the world (their status as both a cause and an effect) in which they are in control of events; that is, in the contrast between cause and effect such agents will valorise being a cause by comparison with being an effect, and this will come to function as a standard and a model for what agency is and what should guide it, even though this form of an agent's powers is only valuable and salient in particular (i.e., dangerous) contexts. It should also be clear that this conceptualisation of an agent's causal powers is going to resist seeing those powers as themselves an effect; that is, the agent will seek to represent his or her causality as itself not caused or controlled.

It is interesting that the Argument From Evil against the existence of God constructs the Divine Being, the perfect agent, as being omnipotent, omniscient, and benevolent or perfectly good (perfection is extrapolated from three important elements of rational agency: efficacy, descriptive knowledge and a value position or engagement), but creativity is not mentioned, and does not sit easily within any of these perfections - rather, they all seem to be aspects of creativity although they do not add up to it. The Argument From Evil moves from the presence of badness in the world to the impossibility of a Divinity having these perfections, and is therefore 'negative' in its conceptualisation of creativity (as well as its demonstrative intent), relying on a view of agency in which its most important

feature is the power to prevent badness: 'control'. In the series of contrasts that Lloyd connects with the evolution of the Western ideal of Reason, which I will discuss in detail presently, it is striking that creativity is rarely mentioned in association with Reason, but the value of control is constantly reiterated in various different guises. It is as if this negative conceptualisation of the powers of agency has forced creativity out of the picture; however it reemerges as a kind of motive 'force', driving agency (but which must, nevertheless, be controlled) in connexion with the senses, passions, nature and women. This, presumably, is what underlies the notion of both women and Nature as 'Muse'; it is clearly evident, for example, in Rousseau's romantic conceptualisation of Nature as the inspiration for human development, as discussed by Lloyd, and is present both in Kant's construal of bodily passions and desires as providing the necessary materials for maxims of action, and in his otherwise puzzlingly 'passive' account of human relationships with the aesthetic, which focusses upon aesthetic responses to Nature, at the expense of human artistic creativity, in the Critique of Judgement (although, as I will later argue, there is much more to Kant on creativity than this). It is also present in Hume's construal of Reason as requiring the fuel and direction of the passions. Preliminarily to a detailed discussion of the pattern of contrasts identified by Lloyd in the construction of Reason, then, some sense can be made of how Reason has been construed by recognising how agency has been construed, that is, as primarily about control, rather than creativity.

But further, imagine a rational agent in a power position, who seeks to maintain that power position - maintenance of control, continued dominance over others, is the most important service that such an agent's practical reason can perform for him or her. From such a position, the capacity for the agent to experience him or herself as an effect of causes outside of him or herself is the site of the danger to the agent of losing his or her power position and will be negatively valorised. What will be positively valorised in contrast with this is the agent's capacity to experience him or her self as a controlling, but uncontrolled cause. From this signed value contrast ('controlling cause/controlled effect'), various other value contrasts reflecting different possible circumstances of agency will follow, depending upon the context in which the contrasts are constructed.

We can see the influence of concepts from **practical reason**, rather than 'Reason' as such, in the contrasts identified by Lloyd as influencing the content of Reason, and which were, or came to be, inflected with male/female symbolic associations.

In what follows, I will examine Lloyd's analysis in some detail in order to demonstrate that more than a systematic contrast with what is perceived as 'female' or 'nature' is at work. My claims are entirely consistent with Lloyd's thesis and intended as an elaboration of it. What I am doing is positioning the patterns of contrast politically: in short, my claim is that the reason for the pattern of distancing from the feminine is the political imperative of legitimating the right to control women (and other groups, e.g., slaves), and that, consistently with this imperative, a model of rational agency which at the same time conceptualises and valorises the agent's causal powers as powers of control, and excludes women, other groups, and 'nature', is insistently evident in the evolution of the ideal of Reason.

Lloyd explains that for the Ancient Greeks, the contrasts employed to make a Reason/not-Reason distinction include 'clarity/darkness', 'order/disorder', 'determinacy/indeterminacy', 'activity/passivity', 'unchangeability/changeability', and 'purity/impurity' (see p 3 ff), the not-Reason sides of the contrasts all attributed to nature or matter. The relevance of the 'activity/passivity' contrast to the valorisation of the agent as controlling cause is obvious. But in addition, darkness, disorder, and indeterminacy will all impair control of a situation, causing confusion and mistakes. The valorisation of unchangeability and purity are also sourced in the valorisation of uncontrolled control; the unchangeable is also the unaffectable, further, changeability is a form of disorder, as is impurity.

According to Lloyd, there is a 'master/slave' contrast in Bacon's contrast of Reason with a female-inflected or negative Nature (p 12), which overtly expresses control as a high value sourced in a power context. Philo contrasts Reason and sense, with sense 'the source of the disorders of the soul' (p 22), so associated closely with chaos and disorder in an 'controlled order/uncontrolled chaos' contrast. But further, sense is here a 'source', that is, a cause, violating the guiding high value that the agent as cause should be him or herself uncontrolled. Again, the 'master/slave' contrast is evoked by Philo in a slave-uprising metaphor for the dangerous confusion caused to the mind by objects of sense perception (p 23).

In his illustrative interpretation of Genesis, according to Lloyd (pp 23-4), Philo employs the idea of woman's role as (inferior) aide to man in order to represent sense as an (inferior) aide to mind; here we see an 'end/means' contrast between Reason (as mind) and not-Reason (as sense perception), so that the instrumental value of sense-perception is based in the intrinsic value of the controlling mind that

it assists. The instrumentalism between the negative (extrinsic value) and positive (intrinsic value) categories of a binarism has been discussed by Plumwood[77], and is discussed in Chapter 2 of this work. It is important to note here that while extrinsic or instrumental value is transmitted to a cause from the intrinsic value of its effects; within the framework of agency this can be reversed: the value of an effect can lie in its value to, and hence in the value of, the agent as cause. Philo's model of sense-perception as extrinsically valuable with respect to the mind that it serves, then, illustrates that agency concepts are deeply implicated in the conceptual oppositions Lloyd identifies as structuring the concept of Reason.

Lloyd quotes Philo (in part) as saying that the female 'element' of the soul 'catch(es) blindly at what comes in its way[78] in a contrast with the male 'element' which is associated with a God who is Father, Maker, and Cause (p 25). Here is a clear contrast between the (female) agent as a reactive and hence caused or controlled cause, and the (male) agent as an uncontrolled cause, the one passive and the other active, the one vulnerable to the changeable and disorderly, an effect, not a cause, and the other ordered and immutable, an unchangeable and hence non-effected cause. The mention of male 'fortitude' by contrast with female weakness and vulnerability to passion (Lloyd, p 26) recalls the motive of avoiding suffering for constructing the value of agency as control of the bad. On p 27, Lloyd quotes Philo as saying 'The male is ...more dominant than the female, closer akin to causal activity'; he then goes on to connect subjection, passivity, irrationality and sense with the feminine. All of these contrasts are consistent with a concept of rational agency valorising control, motivated by the prevention of bad effects upon the agent.

Lloyd reports that Augustine explicitly valorises non-practical or theoretical Reason over practical reason, (valorising contemplation against the practical-temporal, for example, see p 30 of Lloyd). But I think a case can be made for holding his conceptualisation of the difference between theoretical and practical reason to be confused, because he also valorises the 'watch tower of counsel' (see quote from

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[77]See, e.g., Feminism and The Mastery of Nature (op. cit.), p 53.

[78]From a more extensive quotation in Lloyd, p 25, cited to Special Laws, III, sec XXXII, in Philo, trans. F.H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library, London, Heinemann, 1929, vol. VII, p 587.

Augustine, p 32 of Lloyd[79]). Counsel concerning action is advice or prescription, and is the product of practical, not just theoretical reasoning. The 'reason/reasonable appetite'[80] distinction is consistent with a (Kantian) distinction between pure and applied practical reason, or alternatively simply between thinking about what to do, and taking up a conclusion from that thinking in the will. In any case, Augustine clearly associates vulnerability to causation, 'the consequence of the will's loss of control' (Lloyd, p 31), with obedience, subjection, and corruption, and contrasts this with control, dominance and virtue as purity (see pp 32-3), 'purity', again, implying unaffectedness by events or causes from outside the agent.

Aquinas's construal of women as vacilating, easily led, chaotic and so on (p 36) all reprise the high value of control and are linked to the 'vital functioning'/'generation' contrast that Lloyd explains on p 35. This involves a contrast between the intrinsic value of man as a teleological ground of humanity, with the extrinsic value of woman as ensuring the perpetuation of that value. 'Generation', the way that Aquinas, following Aristotle, construed reproduction (with woman being the patient of a male reproductive agency, see p 36) constructs women as being, in reproduction, a cause (of reproduction) which is also merely an effect (of male insemination), in other words, a caused cause, and hence as devalorised on an agency model valorising uncaused causality.

In her reading of Descartes, Lloyd emphasises the novelty of his focus on method and his motive of finding certainty. The relevant contrasts employed to articulate a special high form of Reason include 'certainty/uncertainty', 'truth/falsity' (pp 41, 43), 'clear or distinct/clouded' (p 46), a l on my account connected with the desire not to lose control through error, and 'unmotivated/motivated', which draws on the notion of the agent as a cause uncontrolled by motive (p50). 'Structure/disorder' (p48), again, is based on the facilitation of control; a structured situation is far easier to manipulate than a disordered one. The 'inner/outer' ('soul/body') contrast (p 46) marks off that area of the agent which must evade external influence in order to achieve the status of freedom from effecthood. Lloyd says (p 47) 'Descartes's separation of mind and body yielded a vision of a unitary pure thought, ranging like

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[79]Cited by Lloyd to *The Trinity*, XII, ch. 8, pp 355, trans. S. McKenna, in The Fathers of the Church: a New Translation, vol. XLV, Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963.

[80]See quote from Augustine on p 30 of Lloyd Cited by her to ibid, ch 3, in McKenna, op. cit., p 345.

the common light of the sun over a variety of objects.' (p 47); here, she identifies the valorisation of an intellect which ranges freely because it is not directed by anything outside of itself (is not itself an effect).

As Lloyd points out, Hume constructed Reason as the tool of the passions, but it must be remembered that Hume did not identify agency with reason: he took our characters (our passions, values, sense experiences, etc.) to comprise the self or agent, and so is here also valorising the sovereignty of the agent, expressed through the passions which constitute it, with Reason this time, rather than sense, at its service. Agency is still here constructed as control, and both the 'calm passions' and social agreement are employed as controlling constructs to prevent a chaotic or counterproductive result.

Rousseau, according to Lloyd, employs not a simple binarism but a trinarism ordered from a negative nature (-), through a mediating Reason, to a positive Nature (+) (which I have argued is in fact 'supernature'). Negative nature must be modified; it is associated with wildness (uncontrollability) and disorder (pp 60, 63); on my account this is considered bad because it renders the agent vulnerable to loss of control and hence to suffering badness in its capacity to be effect. However, positive Nature is 'real' rather than 'artificial' (p 62), 'pure' rather than 'corrupt' (p 62), and involves the free expression of our feelings, rather than pointless convention (p 62). This recalls Hume's location of the self in the affective, which constitutes the character; here however it is pointless social convention which must be tamed, or overcome, in addition to wild (negative) nature, in order for the agent to achieve sovereignty and express control. Lloyd remarks that 'Rousseau sees (women) as a potential source of disorder, as needing to be tamed by Reason' (p63). Rousseau's Reasoning agent brings out the best in women (their 'Natural' virtue), as he brings out the best in Nature, by rule or control, just as the Humean agent brings out the best from his or her passions and desires with the controlling calm passions and the aid of social institutions.

Kant cannot, in the context of this discussion, be adequately represented with a few passing remarks. This is because Kant explicitly addressed the topic of rational agency, and the richness of his epistemology, which includes the epistemology of practical and specifically moral reasoning, demands a degree of attention to detail for which there is no space here. However, some important features of Kant's

work are consistent with my claim th it the Reason which is the subject of Lloyd's analysis has been constructed through a model of agency as control.

Taken as a whole, Kant's model of Reason as it pertains to agency is insistently creative; the emphasis on control in the sense of being uncaused, avoiding effecthood, is designed to honour our creativity rather than represent our causal powers negatively as primarily about the prevention of badness. The Categorical Imperatives[81], however, **are** 'negative' in this sense, in filtering out impermissible acts. Further, they have no application without a content, and their content comes from the impulses, desires, passions and other particularities of embodiment - here nature is a creative force guided and controlled by Reason. We could think of Kant as working with a 'high creativity/low creativity' contrast, in which 'high' creativity is an active creative force, and 'low' creativity is a passive, motive force, which must be controlled in order to avoid badness. The emphasis on our 'sponteneity', as on imagination[82], in his epistemolc gy represents our creativity as itself uncaused, sourced only in ourselves, and is for him part of the mystery of our noumenal ontology, as well as a source of our special status; elsewhere (e.g., the Critique of Judgement) crucial creative acts of the mind are connected with the aesthetic, and Nature's aesthetically inspirational powers are again sourced in the mysteries of a noumenal ontology. This 'high', positive Nature, recalls Rousseau's nature/Reason/Nature trinarism. Kant is clearly committed to the representation of the highest parts of an agent as uncaused, as evading effecthood, a value commitment which in part accounts for the relegation of crucial elements of his agency ontology to the noumenal realm where the cause/effect contrast has no purchase.

Lloyd's discussion of Kant is largely concerned to position Hegel's later development of the idea of inferior and superior modes or forms of consciousness, which, she argues, provides a framework within which women can be represented as possessed of the inferior sort (p70 f). It also draws attention (p 65) to Kant's use of the 'public/private' divide (later also taken up by Hegel in alignment with 'maleness/femaleness'), and to how this is conceptually linked to his universalising morality. However, as Lloyd points out, Kant's most insistently reiterated claim, in

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[81]See the 'Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals', in The Moral Law, translated and analysed by J.J. Paton, 1948, London: Hutchinson & Co.

[82]Evident in all three Critiques. For a discussion of 'imagination' in Kant's Critiques, see Gilles Deleuze, Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (transl.), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

his epistemological, moral and political writings, is upon the autonomy of the rational agent and the responsibilites that this invokes for him or her. This autonomy is a form of independence and self-governance, that is, of not being driven by the passions and sentiments that afflict embodied rational beings like ourselves, nor by slavish adoption of the ideas and practices of others (see Lloyd, pp 66-7). A self-rule which harmonises itself on moral grounds with the self-rule of other beings of similar status is a sophisticated generalisation of the idea of agency as control to the entire body of agents the accompanying notions of dignity and respect, while expressing Kant's great admiration for the moral capacity of human beings, also represent the agent who is helpless to effecthood, who is heteronomously caused, as a degraded and lesser being.

The political motive behind the representation of agency as control through a model of practical Reason is most overt in Rousseau and Hegel as represented by Lloyd. Women are explicitly recognised to be a threat, through their 'private' attachments and commitments (see p 77) to the uncontrolled controllers in the public domain. Lloyd explains that women's private duties are conceived as necessary by these authors, but dangerous, therefore requiring control; this recalls the forcing of our motive and creative powers outside of the agent into a necessary but external force which must be controlled. Hegel has the female universalising private attachments for a private, inferior morality (p 81), which must nevertheless be suppressed - 'this suppression, as well as making possible the very existence of the community, also constitutes womankind as what it is.' (p 82). The combination of necessity and danger is the most persuasive imperative to control: little wonder that women's consciousness and morality are represented as inferior, this representation functioning (in part) 'as a rationalization of women's exclusion from the political domain.' (p 84), that is, from the exercise of power.

In her discussion of Simone de Beauvoir, Lloyd is concerned to conclude a recurrent series of observations about the alienation of women from whatever it is that is being positively valorised: that even when they are included in the valorised category, they nevertheless still become associated with, slip into, the contrasting negative category. The conceptualisation of the good as involving transcendance of some category of badness insistently repeats the pattern of transcendance of whatever is associated with the feminine, Lloyd's central thesis. In de Beauvoir's case, Lloyd argues that this pattern is repeated; what is remarkable is that this has occurred within an explicitly feminist analysis. Lloyd attributes this to 'male'

inflexion of the concept of 'transcendance'; I will provide a different account of this phenomenon in the next section, based on the logic of value as it structures gender. What is interesting about Lloyd's analysis of Sartre and de Beauvoir's work for my purposes is that the relevant key notions used, by them, and evident in their Hegelian sources, are politically explicit in the sense of invoking power struggles between agents as fundamental agency contexts. Positioning Sartre and de Beauvoir, Lloyd explains that Hegel's valorisation of the 'self' with respect to the other, contextualised in 'the inherently conflict-ridden relations of mutual recognition between different consciousnesses' (p 87), and conceptualised and valorised in terms of the self's non-determination (p 88) and mastery over other selves (p 89 ff), provides the inspiration for the Sartrean valorisation of 'freedom'. Sartre's 'freedom' is therefore conceptualised as mastery or control over dangerous others (others seeking to master/control you) as well as 'determining' forces (p 93), forces that place the agent in the invidious and vulnerable position of effecthood. The Sartrean self cannot even be looked at; the despised objectified self (p 93) is 'fixed' (p 94), is in the wrong instrumental relationship ('for others', rather than 'for self', p 94), and so is an effect in an agency context, rather than an uncontrolled cause.

The depressing omission from Sartre's account of the possibility of the mutual respectful recognition of mutually valued subjects can only be explained by a presupposed model of human social relations in which a forced choice must be made between being in either a superior or inferior power position. For de Beauvoir, however, who takes the adoption of objecthood on the part of women to be a retreat from the responsibilities of freedom, the emphasis is not so much on a power struggle with others but with one's own fears, with determination, and especially with the (female) body, again, because it is not easy to control (p 99).

Finally, de Beauvoir (and Sartre both) associate freedom closely with creativity, an association which gives their philosophies much of their romantic appeal. Vulnerability to 'external' forces, in being considered inconsistent with creativity, however, again construes creativity as control, which is why the effecthood that compromises creativity for them is seen as 'subjection'. There is of course much more to creativity than control, and less; some forms of creativity are much more concerned with uncontrolled expression. It is also not clear why effecthood has to be so degrading to an agent, on any model of agency, unless that effecthood is placed in a power context where to be an effect is to be vulnerable to badness.

In conclusion, the chain of contrasts that Lloyd argues constitute the evolution of
the ideal of Reason express both the valorisation of agency as control and the power
imperative of legitimating that control for certain groups. These contrasts can be
conceptualised as dichotomised evaluative and prescriptive epistemic fields with
descriptive contents that can masquerade as 'innocent' descriptive fields, and which
covertly supervene upon existing power relations. Their patterns of evolution
(including association and distancing) can be explained by their epistemic structural
features (especially by value sign). Their particular contents trade for plausibility on
the unconscious recognition by practical reasoners of the *a priori* moral significance
of rational agency, and of the overridingness of the moral, and are seen to be
consistent both with the interests of those involved in their 'selection', and with the
power imperative of persuading practical reasoners participating in the public
knowledge-systems in which they have a place to accept and not resist their power
position.

iii) Power and Prescription:The Double Bind

I have argued, with Plumwood, that the core political role of binaristic construction
is its place in lying justifications or legitimations of (or, as she would put it, in the
'naturalising' of) control by some power group. A successful binarism contains
misinformation, which must perform three major functions, characterisable as
descriptive, evaluative and prescriptive. The descriptive function is the closing off
any movement across the descriptive boundaries of the groups. The evaluative
function is the inferiorization of the group/s which are to be dominated. The
prescriptive function is the provision of instructions for how the groups to be
dominated must behave (including the general instruction of obedience to the
dominant group). This latter relies upon the **practical evaluative** (action-guiding)
content of a dualism, that is, on misinformation relevant to practical and, especially,
moral, decision-making.

I have argued that practical (specifically moral) misinformation is involved in the
false legitimation of the power relation that the binarism serves. The group/s to be
dominated are represented as inferior (ultimately, or implicitly, **morally** inferior) to
the dominant group. As I argued in Section i of this Chapter, this strategy
legitimates control by mimicking the logical overridingness of genuinely moral

arguments and considerations. An example of negative moral attributions being used to legitimate control would be the use by white Australian power groups of morally derogatory attributions concerning Australian Aboriginies (such as that they are lazy, irresponsible, childlike, etc.) in order to ground the moral judgement that this group's members are bad parents, and thereby legitimate the removal of their children from their care.

However, apart from legitimating control, the binarism also contains prescriptive (mis)information, designed to give **instructions** to the dominated group/s. These prescriptions have **prescriptively coercive force** insofar as disobedience to them successfully legitimates, in the public knowledge-system, the punishment of offenders (this punishment can include anything from the loss of social acceptance to institutional discrimination to vulnerability to socially sanctioned violence). The prescriptive content of a binarism serves two roles: first, it coerces the serving of the day-to-day interests of the dominant group by the inferiorised group. An example would be the gender prescription to females thast they be nurturing and submissive, instructions that obviously serve the interests of those who would be nurtured, and of those who would prefer that that females submit to them. Secondly, it provides a prescriptive partition supervenient upon the descriptive partition that is designed to consolidate the prevention of movement across the partition of the binarism, and is therefore able, among other things, to preclude entry to privileged practices and social positions reserved for the dominant group but not acknowledged to be so. This creates a **double bind** for members of the inferiorised category.

Take the woman who is complimented upon having 'masculine' intellect, but who understands that the compliment is somehow an insult to her or to her sex, and take the man who is told he will make somebody 'a good wife',and who understands this to be an unambiguous put-down. The woman is experiencing a double bind, and the man is experiencing a double rebuke; how this works can be explained by the value logic structuring power-inflected prescription.

With the 'masculine intellect' attribution, the possession of the evaluatively distinguishing property (some kind of intellectual behaviour) implies maleness in a certain sense, rather than the reverse; this flexibility relieves the tension generated by a member of a negative category exhibiting a quality that has been positively valorised in virtue of being exclusively associated with the positive category. The

'male/female' value contrast, valorisir g maleness, metamorphoses (in partitioned contexts) into a 'masculine/feminine' value contrast, valorising 'masculinity'.

But a 'double bind' is achieved by pairing two prescriptive principles: 'Conformity to gender is right, and nonconformity to gender is wrong', with 'Masculinity is right, and femininity is wrong', or similar. To give an example of the way this may work, a woman may find herself denied promotion because she does not sufficiently exhibit the qualities required under the influence of the masculine/feminine good/bad contrast, ambition and aggressiveness. Yet she finds that if she becomes more overtly ambitious and aggressive, she is denied promotion because 'she has difficulty relating to others' or similar, which turns out to be hostility to her personality based on her failure to conform to gender.

These two principles are inconsistent from the 'female' point of view, and so must be hierarchically ordered by females, who will be forced into a choice between being wrong (more usually 'not good enough', e.g., for a promotion) on the grounds of failing to exhibit traits allocated to masculinity, or wrong on the grounds of failing to conform to gender. From a 'male' point of view, however, they are consistent, and therefore, when a male or group of males is in a position of power over a female, they have two rationally legitimate (and hence legitimating) options for ordering (by overridingness) the 'Conform to gender' prescription and the 'Masculinity is good' prescription, depending on which option the woman has chosen. Whatever the woman believes, no matter how much insight she has into the source of these principles, and however she may choose to order them pragmatically, she cannot escape the evaluatively negative epistemic field. These principles can therefore be flexibly applied according to the (controlling) task at hand; in other words, they can be employed together in a pincer movement as a double bind.

This is a 'value lockout' device: it is one factor in the maintenance of 'glass ceilings': traits which are deemed relevant to selection for privileged locations in a hierarchical system (e.g., aggressiveness, for such locations as management positions, parliamentary candidacy, etc) are just those which are prohibited for the group which is to be locked out (e.g., women). One such relevant trait is always obedience to the instructions for one's group. Members of this locked out group then cannot acquire these traits without disobeying the instructions for their group,

and if they do this, they will be able to be excluded anyway for this disobedience (for being, e.g., socially unattractive because 'unfeminine').

As Evelyn Fox Keller says[83]

> Women had observed that the division cf the world into two serves them poorly - it serves to exlude them from the domain of public life, of power, and of science. The claim that we are different **meant that we are less**... It is rather like the invertible figure ground diagrams - the ease and rapidity of the shift suggesting that universality and duality are, in some basic sense, two sides of the same coin. (pp 159-70, my emphasis).

They are two sides of the same power relation. J.K. Alberts (1992[84]) applies the notion of the double bind to the problem of dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. She reports Bateson's (19''2[85]) account of a logical double bind as containing three main elements, a 'primary negative injunction', a 'secondary injunction conflicting with the first', and a 'tertiary negative injunction prohibiting the victim from escaping the field' (pp 194-5). It should be clear that this account of the double bind is consistent with a prescriptive epistemological account, excepting that Bateson's appears to provide a rational solution: allow the 'primary' injunction to override the 'secondary' one. On the account given here, the double bind is seen to be more vicious, because from the point of view of the power-holders, the ordering of the injunctions (the principles) can be switched at will. This account also explains the **source** of the double bind in a **perspective** (i.e., in this example, the 'male' power perspective) from which it is both a consistent and useful pair of principles. However, the 'male' power perspective is not necessarily the perspective of individual men, who themselves are differentially subject to 'male' power relations (and to other intersecting power relations, e.g. race and class power relations). For men, failing to conform to gender and failing to be masculine combine to double wrongness: the paired principles of the double bind for women double the prescriptively coercive force of male gender for men; this explains the greater degree of disapproval evident in the 'good wife' attribution to a man.

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[83]Keller, Evelyn Fox. 'How Gender matters, or Why It's so Hard for Us to Count Past Two.' In Perspectives on Gender and Science, Jan Harding (ed.), London: The Falmer Press, 1986, pp 168-83.

[84]Alberts, J. K. 1992 *Teasing and Sexual Harassment: Double-Bind Communication in the Workplace*, in Constructing and Reconstructing Gender, L.A.M. Perry, L.H. Turner & H.M. Sterk (ed.s), State University of New York Press, Albany.

[85]Cited by Alberts to Bateson, G. (1972). Steps to an Ecology of Mind. San Francisco, CA: Chandler Publishing Co.

This analysis has implications for the polarisation of Feminism into sameness/difference essentialisms, which can be seen to be an inevitable consequence of the double bind.We could construe extreme 'sameness' feminisms as attempting to resolve the double bind by inverting the value contrast in the 'Conform to gender' principle so that non-conformity to gender for women is right, permitting them to pursue a valorised 'masculinity'. We could construe extreme 'difference' feminisms as attempting to resolve the double bind by inverting the value contrast in the 'Masculinity is right' principle so that the rightness of 'femininity' permits women to be also right in conforming to gender. But as Plumwood says:

> This dichotomy...of repudiating versus revaluing feminine identity, represents a false
> choice...critical reconstruction requires t le balancing of conflicting imperatives towards
> redefinition and revaluing (op. cit., p. 64).

The double bind, or 'value lockout device', however, also reveals prescriptive gender to be an important medium of the coercion of hierarchical power relations, directed at both females and males. Note that the paired principles of the double bind are both positive/negative value contrasts, and are therefore, as I argued in Part II, implicitly comparative. The male is doubly informed by these principles that in order to be a good human being, he has to be a good male, and in order to be a good male, he has to be better than females. This is a general pattern exibited by all power-inflected value contrasts: one achieves acceptability by being demonstrably better than some derogated group. The way that males are taught to prove their acceptability by proving superiority to females accounts for a good deal of the more destructive consequences for females of male gender, and, as I will argue in the following section, reveals gender to be the paradigmatic power-inflected binaristic construction.

Conclusion: Gender as Social DNA

I earlier argued (Chapter 3, Section ii.) that the valorisation of rational agency as control is likely to occur in dangerous environments, as well as arising from the point of view of maintaining dominance over others.

G.E.R. Lloyd, in his discussion of dichotomous classification systems from what he calls 'primitive' cultures (reviewed in Chapter 2, Section ii of Part II) mentions in a footnote[86] that the Zuni, who hold the 'left side' superior, are a 'peaceful agricultural people', and given that the right hand is the 'spear hand', and the left the 'shield hand', this may account for their valorisation of 'left'[87]. Valorisation of handedness may well turn out to be a significant indicator of the kinds of power behind the value system/s of a given culture, given that the right/left contrast in this context is, for human beings at least, connected with relative differences in physical strength of a kind that are highly likely to be salient and interesting to them. Cultures whose value systems have evolved in the context of power relations that have arisen from the use of force or violence will tend to valorise strength; for other cultures other associations for the left/right contrast may hold instead.

Examples of overt value contrasts, obviously linked to power relations, abound in these dichotomous taxonomies. Again, according to Lloyd, E.E. Evans-Prichard[88] describes the Nuer as having explicitly associated left, weakness, femininity and evil, and opposed to this, right, strength, masculinity and goodness (p40, op. cit.).The example of the Meru of Kenya [89] is even more obviously politically-sourced: there we see, on the positive side: day, first wife, senior, dominant age-division, man, superior, political power and white man, contrasted with, on the negative side, night, co-wife, junior, subordinate age-divsion, woman/child, inferior, religious authority, and black man.

Riane Eisler, in 'The Chalice and the Blade'[90] argues that cultures evolve according to either a 'dominator' model (which she associates with male dominance, and in particular with the use of tools to coerce the acquisition of wealth from others) or the 'partnership' model (which she associates with egalitarian sexual power

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[86]No 2 on p 39, op. cit.
[87]This material is cited to Hertz, op. cit.
[88]Nuer Religion, Oxford, 1956.
[89]Cited to R. Needham, 'The Left Hand of the Mugwe', *Africa*, xxx (1960), 20-33.
[90]1990, London: Pandora Riane Eisler, 'The Chalice and the Blade'..

distribution, and in particular with the use of tools to **create** wealth from resources). Marilyn French, in 'Beyond Power - On Women, Men and Morals'[91] argues that a dominating pattern of power relations tends to spread because in order to resist a person or group intent on domination, one must take on the strategies of the aggressor.

Feminists are frequently accused of portraying males as violent and dominating, and as therefore to blame for the world's ills such as war and the degradation of the environment, and in fact both of these authors seek to make a connexion between 'maleness' or 'masculinity' in some sense and with domination, oppression and violence. Both authors explicitly mourn the theorised loss of female power as having provided a necessary counterweight to these kinds of tendencies in societies. It is easy to see why such insights are often misconstrued and misrepresented by antifeminist commentators as positing an inherent badness (with respect to femaleness) in maleness. However, neither of these authors are saying that males are 'naturally' or necessarily dominating and violent. The problem is that their theses are difficult to express without an explicit language and epistemology of values, something so far denied us by the persistence of the intellectual apartheid of reason and values. I would translate their claims as being far more general in character than a specifically 'male' theory of dominating patterns of power, and certainly not as sociobiological. Both of these authors are talking about the evolution of certain value hierarchies that develop in symbiosis with certain kinds of power relations; if French is correct, there is a (presumably reversible) tendency for 'selection' of the kinds of power relations that rely on coercion and violence. We need not label males as the source of these values in any biological, 'natural' or fixed sense at all (as French points out, for example, one can distinguish matriarchal from matricentric cultures; the former exhibits dominance by females). Rather, we might interpret French as arguing that masculinity **construed as a value system** prescribed and enforced for males has served as a kind of social DNA, ensuring the intergenerational transmission of hierarchical power relations supported by physical violence. This 'evaluative' DNA is packed into male gender, specifically, in the male's instructions for how to be a good male, remembering that this is how one gets to be a good human being according to the matched principles of the double bind. Plumwood says (p 51, op. cit.):

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[91] 1985, London: Cardinal Marilyn French, 'Beyond Power - On Women, Men and Morals'.

For the master, formation of identity' (against the other) 'leads to a need to maintain hierarchies to define identity. There must always be a class below, whose inferiorisation confers selfhood. The more doubtful or insecure the establisment of such an identity is, the more strongly and vociferously the other's inferiority must be stressed. Such an identity requires constant reassurance of superiority and hence constant reassertion of hierarchy. This is a major factor in establishing certain types of masculinity.

Recalling how the paired prescriptions of the double bind work for men, male gender can provide a powerful ideological mechanism for the reproduction of hierarchical power relations encoded in gender[92]. In fact, once we understand both male and female gender as an **agenda** of values and practices set for the sexes, we can recognise its role as a differentiated pair of packages of values that passes on both specific sexual power relations, and a model for all forms of hierarchical power relations, from one generation to the next. If this is true, male **gender** is a major culprit in dominating and exploitative power practices, and since conformity to gender is coerced by a society (many of the coercive strategies being packed into the gender package itself), we have no grounds for the blaming of individual males or for the construction of them as inherently and unchangeably destructively dominating or violent. Further, we need not become fixated on the male/female divide in our attempts to understand power and the destructive forms that patterns of power can take. If the dominator values can be abstracted from the groups chosen to pass them on, then they can be seen to be able to benefit any group at the expense of any other; we have an explanatory mechanism capable of revealing how values support oppressive power relations **in general**. Further, this diagnosis advertises a cure: if certain values and the passing on of them through, among other vehicles, gender, are symbiotically supportive of destructive patterns of power, then we know where to direct our efforts for change, because these both are open to rational assessment and attack, and are disseminated in obvious, subvertible ways. As Evelyn Fox Keller says (op. cit., p 172):

> Feminist theory has brought home to us that gender is neither simply the manifestation of sex, nor simply an easily dispensible artefact of culture. It is, instead, what a culture makes of sex - it is the cultural transformation of male and female infants into adult men and women. All cultures do this, but they all do it somewhat differently. Invariably, how they do it - how they organize the spectrum of human attributes around sex - has a significant impact on their

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[92]For an account of the cultural coercion of male gender see Rosalind Miles (1991), The Rites of Man: Love, Sex and Death in the Making of the Male, London: Paladin.

structuring of the world beyond sex as well - indeed, it permeates all aspects of their existence.

General Conclusion

John Ferguson says (p 10[93]) '...the habit of antithetical thinking was deeply imbued in the Greek mind, and we may suspect that its prominence was somehow connected with the practice of debate in the assembly and law-courts.' This is an important observation. The Ancient Greek culture combined a system of clearly demarcated power relations (between master and slave, male and female, Greek and barbarian) with newly emergent, adversarial **public justification** practices. It is not surprising that it is here that we see the beginnings (as documented by Genevieve Lloyd and others) of the use of the oppositionally constructed and value-contrasted power-inflected epistemic materials that have been the topic of Part III of this work.

The combination of power imbalances and a public knowledge-system utilising public justification practices created a power imperative that these imbalances and their attendant values and practices be legitimated by rational persuasion. The public justification practices of that system constrained these materials to **conform** to legitimate epistemic constructions; they persuaded by drawing upon the unconscious descriptive, evaluative and practical epistemic defaults of the users of the public knowledge-system. But since the descriptive, evaluative and prescriptive claims that would support the power relations that had to be defended could not answer to the perspectives of all participants in the system (including those affected by it, and those who would reject these claims on behalf of others), these materials had to **deviate** in deceptive ways from legitimate epistemic constructions. Power-inflected epistemic materials were the result.

Epistemic materials are human artifacts, as are the strategies and tools by which they are formed. They are properly the products of cooperative human creative activity, and are themselves intrinsically cooperative objects, as are the public knowledge-systems in which they have a place. Cooperation presupposes structure, as I argued in the introductions to the three major parts of this work, and structure we in fact find; not rules and laws with validity beyond our uses for them, outside of ourselves, dominating us, but expressing and accommodating our shared, contextualised, purposes and our special capacities and skills as human beings.

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[93]John Ferguson (1969), The Opposites, *Apeiron*, Vol 3, Jan, pp 1-12.

But in recognising the validity of epis emic structure, and the cooperative nature of the human practices in which it arises we must recognise also that features of human social life will infuse the struc ures and the way that they are used.

Part III of this work had two reciproc;il aims; first, to demonstrate the integrity, by exhibiting the explanatory power, of t ie epistemological models defended in Parts I and II, and secondly, to provide subst intiating evidence for, as well as detailed elaborations of, some important accounts of power-inflected epistemic materials. I have been able to support these accounts through a model of legitimate epistemic strategies and tools and the epistemic materials that they structure, against which suspect epistemic materials can be compared and shown to be distorted, and against which the particular patterns of distort on thereby discovered can be revealed to be consistent with power influences upon public knowledge-systems.

There are two reciprocal points to be rade here about the poststructuralist and analytic philosophical paradigms. The poststructuralist paradigm has long recognised the power inflexion of wh it is known in that paradigm as a 'discourse' something roughly analagous to what I have called a public knowledge-system. However, this paradigm does not expl citly acknowledge the legitimacy of structure; structure is discourse-relative and emergent, and so cannot be used as a standard against which any given elerr ent can be identified as requiring rejection or modification. This I would characteris as a reduction of structure to its medium, with an attendant loss of evaluative scope (analagous to a 'naturalist' error).

The analytic paradigm, on the other hand, explicitly recognises (and demands) structural interpretations of phenomena, but in inappropriately abstracting that structure from its human social contex , is resistant to the idea of the political inflexion of knowledge-systems. This disconnexion of structure from its medium again precludes evaluation of the struc ures we discover, in this case because it is thought 'supernatural', in the sense of being beyond the domain, or the proper domain, of human interference (a 'supernaturalist' error).

The 'epistemological turn' in Feminist philosophical analysis, as exemplified by the work of Genevieve Lloyd and Val Plumwood, constitutes an important stage in overcoming both paradigmatic limitations. The emergence of a research paradigm involving the systematic identification of power-inflexions of the epistemological domain is a major breakthrough, not only for Feminist research, but for analytic

philosophical research in general. As we have seen, the epistemic materials of philosophical research are as vulnerable to political inflexion as those of any other form of cooperative enquiry if the discipline is not able to survey the political terrain within its own borders. But acceptance of the legitimacy of power-based critiques of philosophy within the analytic paradigm may in addition help restore to the discipline the ethos of social service that can be glimpsed in its revered Greek origins, an ethos in which 'pure' research has its place in a professional environment which recognises the value of philosophy as care, as an act of service to the societies which sustain it. It is not at all surprising that it is Feminist philosophers who are pioneering this value shift.

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