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**Gender, Work and Citizenship:
Between Social Realities and Utopian Visions**

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***Gender, Work and Citizenship:
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by Diemut Bubeck

In this paper, I (very) selectively present and discuss the results of a year of research, reflection and discussion on 'Gender and the Use of Time', a research project which involved about a hundred persons as researchers and conference speakers and took place in the framework of the European Forum at the European University Institute in Florence.¹ In

1 References to European Forum conference or seminar papers refer to the work produced by members of the Forum. For further information and requests of these papers contact Catherine Divry, European Forum, Villa Schifanoia, Via Boccaccio 121, 50133 Florence, Italy. Some of the contributions will be published in a volume edited by the Forum Directors, Olwen Hufton and Yota Kravaritou, to be published by Kluwer Law International, The Hague.

thinking about this collective research project, I shall do so with a political theorist's perspective and preoccupations—notably with normative questions of social justice—while nevertheless attempting to integrate work from the many academic disciplines on which discussions have been based. The presentation of this work, in the shape of a description of social reality in terms of two social and historical models, will allow me to highlight the features also relevant for considerations of social justice. The present situation, I argue, is best understood in the light of historical developments, and further clarified by looking at two models-cum-visions of a possible future. The models exemplify the advantages of a truly gendered perspective, and lead on to more practical conclusions with regard to social change. I end with some remarks on citizenship.

The current situation

It is probably a fair summary of a lot of the discussion of the Forum to say that it has mostly dealt with various aspects of the sexual division of labour, although we also addressed more generally the fact that women and men use their time quite differently. We discussed various historical aspects of gendered time use and its consequences as well as the social construction of such time use over the centuries, which created an awareness of the specific situation which European societies find themselves in the late twentieth century.² This specific situation is one of women having entered the formal wage labour market in increasing numbers after their relative withdrawal from it immediately after the second World War. Historically, what is remarkable about this situation is the following points. First, after women's legal and political emancipation in the late nineteenth

2 See the papers of the conference on 'The Historical Construction of Work Time, European Forum, 28/29 October 1994.

and early to mid-twentieth century, women's increasing paid activity levels³ raise the prospect of their *material* emancipation from men, or their potential economic independence from men—potential because most women in most of the European countries do not benefit fully from this potential because of the sexual division of labour. Secondly, this increasing potential has brought into relief the three main costs of such potential independence—women's comparatively bad material situation if they are thus independent due to their lower earning power and lower pensions entitlements, women's double burden of paid and unpaid work⁴, as well as women's increased material

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- 3 It is worth noting that women's economic activity levels have always been high (except for the most privileged women, obviously, who have always been in a position of making others do the work that other women have to do themselves in order to maintain themselves and their family or contribute to such maintenance). These activities were traditionally located in the agricultural sectors and in the trades (insofar as women were admitted) as well as in the households themselves. It is only in the 19th century that housewives started being classified officially as 'economically inactive', regardless of how much work they actually engaged in. The notion of the 'working mother' or 'working woman', which is unfortunately very often used in the literature, derives from exactly that concept of the housewife as economically inactive, that is, by implication, *not* working. Thus the 'working mother/woman' is so called, apparently, because there are mothers/women who are not working. The difference between the two, however, is that the former engage in paid work and the latter do not, whilst both will usually engage in unpaid work in their homes, comprising care and housework. Women's unpaid work at home is thus completely obscured by the expression 'working mother/woman', and the expression should, therefore, be avoided at all cost in order to avoid perpetuating, even if only implicitly, the myth that women who do not engage in paid work do not work at all.
- 4 Both types of costs become 'activated' in the case of the lone mother: the poverty rate of lone mothers is scandalously high (Aslaksen and Koren 1995, Bussemaker 1995, Simoni 1995; see also Hancock 1995), especially when there is no publicly provided childcare which would allow them to pursue paid work (which is the only way they can escape
(continues on next page)

vulnerability.⁵ Thirdly, women have increasingly used their political voice to ask for equality and justice and have entered the political institutions in at least some of the countries in unprecedented numbers. These facts have created a situation in which the question of justice poses itself in a new way, and is increasingly pushed by women themselves.

The gendered situation created by the combination of the sexual division of labour with paid work as the most prominent form of work and way of gaining one's living is, very roughly and in a caricature, the following: men have a high and relatively stable participation rate in the labour market with comparatively high incomes and a comparatively low and conditional participation rate in the unpaid work of the private sphere (childcare, care of other family members, and housework), whilst women, conversely, have a high and relatively stable participation rate in the unpaid work of the private sphere, and a corresponding comparatively low, unstable or interrupted and conditional participation rate in the labour market with comparatively low incomes. We might sum up the situation as follows: men's work and income patterns are determined by their status in the labour market, whilst women's work and income patterns are determined by their responsibilities in the private sphere. This situation has the following consequences. First, only men have a relatively stable work pattern, whilst women's work patterns (both paid and unpaid) are highly variable over their life cycle and are mostly determined by their taking responsibility for the unpaid work that has to be performed. Secondly, only men have a relatively stable and comparatively high income based on their paid work and later pensions, whilst women's income is highly

poverty, but which guarantees a double burden of both paid and unpaid work).

5 See below.

variable because conditioned by their 'prior responsibilities' and comparatively low where they do have their own income.⁶ As a result, women are still materially better off if they live with a man and thus pool income to benefit from men's higher incomes and pensions.⁷ Conversely, the case of the often materially deprived situation of lone mothers—women with high unpaid work responsibilities but without a man whose income they might share, nor often with the possibility of engaging in paid work because of these care responsibilities—illustrates the situation as it would be without the income of a man.⁸ The situation, in other words, is such that women *can*, of course, live without men, but that they are materially worse off in such a situation, certainly in terms of their income. The only group of women who has managed to escape this situation are highly educated women in professional, well-paid work who follow more or less male work patterns. The 'price' of this escape, however, is their being constrained in their ability to care for children or old-aged parents, or a very stressful life trying to combine a male paid work pattern with female unpaid work pattern, which, mostly, will also imply the paying for some care arrangements. There are also two further problems linked to this

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- 6 Income from both wages and pensions: see Aslaksen and Koren (1995) who discuss the Norwegian case which is comparatively favourable to women.
 - 7 Davies and Joshi 1995, McRae 1995.
 - 8 Calculations about women's material situation in couples are invariably based on the very problematic assumption of an equally shared income. Research on the distribution of material resources within couples and families is extremely difficult, but it is relatively unlikely that the actual division of resources is egalitarian, given the very different consumption patterns of women and men and the power imbalance created by the fact that it is men who usually dispose of the higher, or even only income available to the household (see Delphy & Leonard 1992). But even if men's incomes are not shared equally between men and their wives or partners, women will still be better off with access to *some* part of men's income than without access to any.

development. First, socially even less powerful groups—children and others dependent on care—will have to pay the price of women's approaching of men's working patterns, hence women's being less available for unpaid care than they used to be.⁹ Secondly, differences between women are exacerbated, or created in new forms, by this phenomenon of the professional high-income woman.¹⁰

Two models

How can we understand this situation in a wider context? Historically, what is happening is that European societies are moving from a relatively static *separate spheres model* (model 1, Appendix) to a much more flexible situation where the endpoint of that development is not clear yet and to some extent, of course, dependent on the limits imposed by existing power structures as well as the influence various social actors and interest groups bring to bear on this development. The separate spheres model locates men as breadwinners predominantly in the public sphere of paid work and women as 'homemakers' predominantly in the private sphere of the family. It implies, furthermore, relatively stable marriages, and the division of goods and paid and unpaid work between husband and wife. In this model, women do not have an income of their own, hence are economically dependent on men, and are protected from poverty through marriage:¹¹ whilst their husbands are alive they share in his income, upon his death they 'inherit' his pension rights in the form of a widow's pension.

9 See Waerness 1995, also various Forum Seminar discussions.

10 See my discussion below, also Laufer 1995.

11 See Daly 1995 on Germany as a case in point.

We are now at a transitional stage—represented by the *transitional model* (model 2, Appendix)—where there is movement in both directions: by women into the sphere of paid work and by men into the sphere of unpaid work. These movements have to be understood to be taking place in the different European countries to different degrees and in varying forms based on varying cultures and other differences, but it seems nevertheless right to say that the general development is roughly the same. There are two important points to bear in mind about this development. First, women's movement into the labour market has been stronger than men's movement into unpaid work. Secondly, these movements are *conditioned*, if not causally determined, by men's and women's previous exclusive locations, by the respective 'pre-existent' obligations corresponding to these locations, as well as by social roles and the stereotypes deriving from them. It is this causal link—which can also be understood as the long shadow of the separate spheres model—which makes intelligible the still comparatively low and very unstable pattern of women's labour market participation, and the even lower and more precarious pattern of men's participation in care and housework.¹² This transitional model means for women, on the one hand, the *increasing prospect of economic independence* from men (what I have called above 'material emancipation from men'), but on

12 The explanation of this pattern is, of course, more complex than I am able to represent here: there are other elements to such a structural explanation—economic developments, gender in its various aspects, the nature of care as opposed to production (see Bubeck 1995a), men's interest in maintaining their higher earning power—and also more 'micro' explanations such as the economic rationality of a division of labour in case of differential income (Gershuny 1995) and the reproduction of mothering (Chodorow 1978) which together make for a very complex picture. What is important to my argument here is the highlighting of certain broad lines which allow me to lead up to the crucial questions that, I think, the Forum has thrown up in its work.

together, also an *increasing material vulnerability*¹³ to low income if not poverty, since marriage does not guarantee a lifetime's share in a man's higher income anymore, and since women's incomes are still more precarious and considerably lower.

As far as caring responsibilities in this model are concerned, given women's stronger 'predetermination' to care,¹⁴ women's choices are quite dilemmatic. First, they can reduce their caring responsibilities to the extent that they are under their control, e.g. by having less or no children, thus maintaining their participation in the labour market.¹⁵¹⁶ Secondly, they can reduce their labour market participation in choosing some form or other of part-time work or even ceasing to engage in paid work altogether. Thirdly, they can try to 'offload' their caring responsibilities to some extent onto third parties: if they are lucky, the extended family is still relatively intact and can be relied upon¹⁷ or there is publicly provided care;¹⁸ if they are less lucky, they will have to pay for care themselves.¹⁹ Neither of the first two options are very desirable,

13 See Okin 1989 for a similar concept of women's vulnerability which she calls 'vulnerability by marriage'.

14 By 'predetermination' I mean a socially created one which I have elsewhere described as women's being caught or even trapped in the 'circle of care', which men, on the other hand, find hard to enter (Bubeck 1995a, ch. 4).

15 Del Re 1994, Norvez 1995, Malpas 1995. See also the concern over the very dramatic drop in the birthrate in Italy and other Southern European countries (Belloni 1995, Bimbi and Nava 1995, De Santis and Righi 1995).

16 Note, however, that other caring responsibilities are not necessarily under women's control (e.g. disabled children, elderly parents).

17 As e.g. in Italy, see Simoni 1995.

18 As in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and France, to name the best cases: see Mahon 1995, Vielle 1994, Simonen 1995, Bonke 1995.

19 As in the UK, Germany and the Mediterranean countries, see Bonke 1995.

however. The option of reducing caring responsibilities is not desirable in terms of women's (and men's) quality of life, nor for the society as a whole, assuming that any society would want at least to reproduce itself. The option of reducing labour market participation is not desirable because it renders women materially vulnerable, given that they have little or no income of their own and become thus dependent on a man's income with the risk of poverty because of the high divorce and separation rates. The third option of having third parties take on the care that has to be provided is only desirable if care is publicly provided and for all who need to have access to it. If, by contrast, care has to be paid or is provided through the extended family it exacerbates inequalities between those women who have access to it and those women who do not (either for lack of money or for lack of accessible family help). Thus professional women can increasingly 'have it all', i.e. children and full-time work, but in a context where care is not publicly provided only these women can afford this distribution of their work time and at the same time retain their privileged material security and welfare.²⁰

The role of the state

Legislation and social policy intervene into these models in ways that can influence them in various directions: they can support and thus contribute to reproduce old structures, they can be relatively neutral between them, or they can drive along the transformation of those structures. Thus welfare state regimes, for example, have been characterised in terms of whether and to what extent they are based on a 'breadwinner regime', which corresponds in my presentation to what I have called the separate spheres model. Yet more differentiatedly,

20 See Mahon 1995 and my discussion below.

and maybe even more adequately, one can ask to what extent states consider women, in their policies, predominantly as wives, mothers or (paid) workers.²¹ It is a structure of benefits and policies based on women's status as *wives*, then, that obviously hails from the time of the separate spheres model and thus contributes to reproduce it.²² Whether policies based on women's social situation as *mothers*—such as maternity provisions, benefits for lone mothers and childcare—reinforce the separate spheres model or not seems to depend very much on the policy and the context of other policies around them: maternity leave, as opposed to parental leave, especially if unpaid, reinscribes women as mothers dependent on a breadwinner whilst reinforcing men's role as breadwinners;²³ benefits for lone mothers can be based on their situation as mothers or be geared towards encouraging them to participate in the labour market, in the latter case supporting a transitional model, in the former case reinforcing women's situation as mothers dependent on the state and/or on the contributions of the fathers of their children;²⁴ publicly provided childcare obviously encourages women's participation in the labour market, thus a strong transitional or even egalitarian model,²⁵ whilst a policy of non-provision or sketchy provision by states will tend to reinforce the dilemma for women to combine care responsibilities with paid work, thus forcing many to opt for staying at home or part time work and reinforcing women's

21 Lewis 1995.

22 For examples of such policies see Mahon's report of a paper on Greece (Mahon 1995), Daly 1995 and Vielle 1994 on Germany, Simoni 1995 on Italy; see also the discussion of policy in various European countries in Mahon 1995.

23 See Mahon 1995; also Tobler 1995, Vielle 1994 and Kilpatrick 1995.

24 Lewis 1995, Bussemaker 1995, Simoni 1995.

25 Kilpatrick 1995, Vielle 1994, Daune-Richard 1994; for the egalitarian model see below.

economic dependency on men (separate spheres or weak transitional model).

The analysis of how states influence social developments (and are in turn influenced by them) is obviously very complex. It seems clear, however, that the policies that have supported development towards and beyond the transitional model are policies that, directly or indirectly, are based on and encourage women's position as *paid workers*.²⁶ This is not only important for the direct reason that paid work generates income, but also because the social insurance system, through which the most important social benefits are channeled, is based on contributions from paid work. Social insurance usually generates much more generous benefits than social assistance, benefits, moreover, which are also a matter of rights.²⁷ Furthermore, most of these benefits are proportional so that less high wages or salaries and part-time work generate lesser benefits. Hence full contributions to social insurance, based on women's full participation in the labour market, are an important factor in women's material welfare and security independent of their relation to men, and as such typical of the transitional or even egalitarian model (see below). Lastly, a country's tax system also influences significantly the location of women in paid and unpaid work by favouring either dual earner or breadwinner-homemaker families.²⁸

26 See especially the 'Swedish model' (Mahon 1995, Vielle 1994, Daune-Richard 1994), also Daly (1995) on Britain and Daune-Richard (1994) on France, and Bonke 1995.

27 See Fraser 1989.

28 Bonke 1995.

Social justice

The gendered use of time poses itself as a potential problem with regard to social justice in two basic ways: first, in terms of unequal liberty, if it constrains one group more than another (i.e. if it distributes *actual*, rather than formally available, choices unequally between men and women); secondly, if such differential time use leads to differential access to material resources, hence material inequality. In this section, I shall focus on the second problem—which is also what I have led up to in my presentation of the models so far. Nevertheless, the first problem should not be completely left out, and I will return to the problem of unequal liberty when I discuss the different alternatives for the future in terms of how autonomous and free women and men are in making their choices.

The transitional model highlights three points which, in terms of material inequality and social justice, are problematic. The first point is the fact that the transitional model creates systematically different access to material resources between men and women through locating them differently in the spheres of paid and unpaid work, hence locating them differently with regard to their access to income from paid work. This differential access to resources contrasts with the fact that the work burdens of men and women are, on the whole, comparable: those of women in full-time paid work tend to be higher than those of men according to various time budget studies,²⁹ whilst those of full-time homemakers tend to be lower, and those of women in part-time work lie somewhere in between. Whilst labour burdens are not that different, then, between men and women, women are penalised in terms of

29 See Gershuny 1995.

their access to material resources for taking on the unpaid work that, in any society, needs to be done. As I have argued elsewhere, this work has to be understood as having a different 'logic'—that of care—and women continue to respond more readily to its demands than men.³⁰ A society, however, which penalises one group for taking on a type of work which, in any case, it would be much better if all the members of a society were engaging in is clearly unjust. The injustice here lies, essentially, in the differential distribution of income based, in its turn, on the differential distribution of paid and unpaid work.

The second problem with the transitional model is that it makes women materially vulnerable in a context where they cannot necessarily rely anymore—as in the separate spheres model—on sharing in a men's higher income. Several contributors to the Forum speak about women's hidden poverty, or 'inactive' poverty, which becomes obvious and 'activated' the moment a couple splits up.³¹ This poverty refers to income from wages as well as old age pensions, and is well illustrated by the high number of lone mothers who receive social assistance and that of elderly single women who are on minimum subsistence pensions. Hence whilst there is material inequality between men and women which, in itself, is unjust, there is also a less easily detectable inequality with regard to men's and women's differential vulnerability to poverty. What is detectable is the much higher number of women who end up poor—usually called the 'feminisation of poverty', but in fact not a new phenomenon at all³²—and from this, the greater material vulnerability of women has to be inferred. The incurrence of a much higher risk of ending up poor is by itself unjust, however, if

30 Bubeck 1994, 1995a; see also De Singly 1995.

31 Aslaksen and Koren 1995, p. 9.

32 See Lewis and Piachaud 1992.

that risk is socially created and differentially distributed between social groups.

The third problem is the increasing inequality between women that characterises the transitional model. Thus I have already referred to what we might call a new 'labour elite' amongst women, that is, those women with full-time, high-income career jobs who can approximate male work and income patterns and thus achieve a relatively high level of material welfare and security, especially compared to those women, often working class and/or from ethnic minorities, whose access to the labour market is less privileged and less stable, and whose access to material resources is still dependent on a male income or on meagre state benefits.³³ These women are also the ones who run the highest risk of poverty as single mothers or lone mothers after divorce. Especially where child care and other types of care are not publicly provided, then, it is only the privileged women who can afford to continue 'male' paid work patterns by 'buying themselves out', i.e. paying others for providing the care they would have had to provide otherwise. They may also increasingly pay others to provide the domestic work they have no time to engage in themselves. Such women thus form a new elite amongst women, increasing the difference between themselves and those whom they pay to replace them in their care and other domestic work responsibilities.³⁴ This kind of inequality may not seem very

33 See de Macedo 1994.

34 Two types of inequality arise between them. First, inequality of income due to the lesser pay that typical 'women's work' can command. Secondly, inequality of demands on one's time: professional women liberate themselves from the care and housework demands on their time by paying others to meet these demands who, in their turn, cannot afford to escape those demands themselves by paying yet others, hence incur a double burden of paid and unpaid care and housework.

different from the traditional one between middle and upper class women and their paid domestic helpers and other service providers, be it nannies, nurses or seamstresses. The difference, however, is that the privileged women in the transitional model are now able to secure their own income and material security through their own paid work (insofar as anybody can) whilst those in the separate spheres model were economically dependent. That this new kind of inequality arises amongst women in the transitional model is not surprising: the privileged women are able to resolve the incompatibility of the paid and unpaid work of the public and private spheres by 'buying themselves out' to adopt previously exclusively male paid work patterns and attaining the material benefits that come with these patterns, whilst the less privileged women are not able to do so and are thus in danger, once again, to become a cheap source of services. The incompatibility of the spheres remains, and a solution for all women can only be found either if the state provides access to care for all women or if the two spheres are changed such that they become more compatible.³⁵

In conclusion, there are three main points arising from considerations of justice that need to be addressed in considering desirable avenues for change: how can the material inequality between men and women be addressed, how can women's high material vulnerability be reduced and how can new inequality between women be avoided?

Men: where are they?

Before I continue the discussion of avenues for change and models-cum-visions for the future, I have to pause to take a closer look at men and their side of the models. Note that I

35 See discussion below.

have so far discussed public policy and issues of justice only with regard to women, but not with regard to men. This focus is still needed in a world which tends to overlook women, but it is equally crucial to look not just at women but at both sides, men and women, if we are to provide an adequate picture. A close look at the men's side of the transitional model in comparison to the women's, then, reveals that more movement has taken place on the women's side than on the men's side: while women have entered and are entering the labour market in ever increasing numbers, even if conditionally and often part time, men still perform a lot less care and housework than women.³⁶ Men, therefore, have been a lot less successful than women in realising their side of the transitional model.³⁷ Furthermore, states have been considerably more reluctant to allow for, let alone encourage or even force the movement of men into unpaid work: the sole existence of maternity rather than parental leave on the statute books of e.g. the UK,³⁸ and the very delayed introduction of parental leave in many of the European countries prove that states have not been very quick even in setting the conditions under which such change could come about;³⁹ but even where parental leave has been provided for by states such as the Scandinavian states, it has not been taken up by fathers.⁴⁰ Given this experience, Sweden and Norway are now pioneering a somewhat more forceful strategy

36 Gershuny 1995, Bonke 1995, Aslaksen and Koren 1995, Belloni 1995.

37 Bonke's assertion that 'whilst women have caused a revolution on the labour market, men have done so at home' (Bonke 1995, p. 13) seems not just overly optimistic, but unappreciative of the differential rates of change.

38 Which coexists with widely differing provisions by employers, see Kilpatrick 1995.

39 See e.g. the case of Germany in Tobler 1995.

40 Vielle 1995, Waerness 1995. The figures for men's take up of leave to look after sick children are slightly better—see Vielle 1995.

of providing for twelve months of parental leave, a month of which has to be taken by the father, that is, cannot be transferred to the mother.⁴¹ This strategy moves from an 'enabling' attitude—which, on the men's side, obviously does not seem to be sufficient to produce significant change—to a much more pro-active attitude with regard to changing men's participation in unpaid work. More generally, it can be predicted that significant change on the men's side cannot be expected to happen without relatively forceful and imaginative intervention by states.

It is also clear that the apparent symmetry of movement in the transitional model is misleading. This is further illustrated by Gershuny's synopsis of the trend in the performance of unpaid work in the household by full-time employed women and men over the last thirty years, which he, rather optimistically, calls 'gender convergence'.⁴² What is striking about these figures is the fact that it is women who have adjusted much more radically by reducing the time they spend on unpaid work (often by employing others to do so) and men who are increasing their participation ever so slightly (even if consistently) over time.⁴³ Time budget studies confirm more generally that there is a change in men's participation in unpaid work, but that it is a very slow change.⁴⁴ They also confirm, however, that women have readjusted the distribution of their performance of work in both spheres much more substantially than men, hence

41 Cf. also Tobler 1995b on 'Teilungsvorschriften' more generally.

42 Gershuny 1995, p. 5.

43 See also Bonke 1995 for Danish and Norwegian figures relating to all men and women, Bimbi 1995 on the Mediterranean countries, also De Singly 1995.

44 Time budget studies are on the one hand crucial instruments for assessing gendered social realities, but they also deliver quite crude and sometimes inappropriate reflections of women's and men's time use on the other hand: see De Singly 1995, Paolucci 1995a, Bimbi 1995.

that, in fact, in both spheres, women are pushing for change and men are dragging their feet.⁴⁵ The question for the reasons for this discrepancy imposes itself in this context, but I cannot even attempt to answer it, and I should also note that this is one of the questions that the Forum on the whole failed to ask itself, with the exception of De Singly and Jalmert who discuss ways in which fathers' involvement with their children is 'restrained' by differential time patterning⁴⁶ and psychological theorising focusing on the mother-child bond.⁴⁷

In conclusion, whilst much time has been spent to understand women's side of the transitional model—and the Forum has reproduced a more general pattern by doing so, too—we need to realise, and enquire further into, the social, economic and political reasons for men's much slower rate of change in order to understand the full picture.

A true gender perspective

Taking the conclusion of the last section further, what is needed is a true gender perspective in research and political discussion—one that looks equally at both *men's and women's side* of the sexual division of labour. Furthermore, this implies a perspective that embraces the *two spheres of work* in which this division of labour is played out—the public sphere of paid work,

45 Men and women are here referred to as a group, not as individuals: individual men may have changed their behaviour fairly radically, but as long as they are a minority among men, men in general will still be 'dragging their feet'.

46 De Singly 1995.

47 Jalmert 1995. See also Gershuny's modified rational choice explanation (Gershuny 1995) and a critique of this type of approach in Bubeck 1995a, ch. 4.

and the private sphere of unpaid work.⁴⁸ This four-fold representation, illustrated in the models I discuss, allows us to see the interaction between gender and work in the two spheres, and thus also to see issues and discussions in a new light. I shall illustrate this shift of perspective by looking at two issues, one more practical, the other more theoretical: the 'equal opportunities' problematic and the theoretical importance of time as a resource. First, with regard to the *equal opportunities discussion*, what has been focused on narrowly is one of the four categories, i.e. women's participation in the labour market, which, in turn, is seen as constrained by women's care obligations in the private sphere. This way of representing the issue then gives rise to the problem of 'reconciliation', which is often understood to be the question how women can be enabled to reconcile their care responsibilities with their paid work.⁴⁹ If we look at women and men in both spheres, however, the problem of women's constrained entry to the labour market (because of care responsibilities) may also be seen to be caused by men's failure to take responsibility for care and hence their absence from care work such that women have to pick up the pieces and do most of it, especially if there

48 By 'private', I obviously do not refer to the 'private' sector of industry which, in that distinction, counts as public. As Okin (1991) has pointed out, there are really two public-private distinctions: that between the state and civil society, where the state is public and the economy and other civil society institutions private, and that between the state and civil society on the one hand and the family on the other, where the former are public and the family is private. I should also add that there is some paid work in the 'private sphere' of the family, such as paid domestic and caring services, and some unpaid work in the public sphere or the community, such as charitable and political work (see Purdy 1995), which I disregard here.

49 See Junter-Loiseau and Tobler 1995 for a discussion of this way of conceiving the problem; see also Laufer 1995.

is a lot of it.⁵⁰ Of course, men's failure to take responsibility is at least partly determined by the gendered nature of paid work which hails from the time of the separate spheres model—but not entirely. If we look at the whole picture, then, what emerges as problematic is not only the constraints on women's paid work, but also men's relative absence from unpaid work and the male bias in the nature of paid work. Solutions, according to this larger picture, will have to tackle each of the four categories. In the European context, and more generally historically, the category that was focused on first was women's entry into the labour market and the abolition of various barriers to that entry. Some states have also tackled the causal determination of women's entry into paid work by providing public care as an alternative to women's private care. Sweden and Norway, as mentioned above, are so far alone in trying to address more actively men's participation in unpaid care. The regulation of paid working time, especially the setting of absolute upper limits and the reduction of the working day, would be an indirect measure to start changing men's predominant participation in the labour market and also the male biased nature of paid work which renders it incompatible with substantial amounts of unpaid work.⁵¹ The equal opportunities and reconciliation problematic, then, if seen in the context of both gender and the two spheres of work, turns from a specific problem of women into a general social problem: the sexual division of labour and the incompatibility of work in the two spheres is a problem deriving from social distributions and

50 As is the case with small children or other care-intensive dependencies such as disabled or frail and confused elderly family members.

51 See the papers from the European Forum Conference on 'The Regulation of Working Time in the European Union', 27-29 April 1995, Cross 1994 on the history of the 'short hours movements' and Purdy 1995 for an economist's critical evaluation of the possibility of such reduction strategies.

institutions which is played out on the backs of women. It thus appears to be a problem of women whilst it really is a general social problem.

Secondly, with regard to the *importance of time as a resource*, we enter the sphere of political philosophy. What the addition of the private sphere of unpaid work elucidates in relation to discussions of social justice is the mistaken assumption in these discussions that the private sphere is unconstrained, or if it is constrained, that the constraints are voluntarily chosen and obligations are voluntarily incurred: arguments in political philosophy about the inevitability of some inequality based on people's free choices about how much they are willing to work assume that there is nothing else that constrains these choices, hence that there is no time that is already taken up.⁵² However, as the separate spheres and the transitional models illustrate, there are exactly such constraints—in the form of major

52 See e.g. Kymlicka 1990, pp. 73ff., 181ff., 191-2. The argument can be reconstructed as follows. In thinking about a genuinely egalitarian society, we come up against the problem of differing preferences. People have different preferences about how much they are willing to exert themselves in order to have certain things (including opportunities), and it is not fair to prevent those who, say, have expensive tastes from working hard to be able to meet them. Their working hard, however, will imply that they will earn more than others, hence inequality. Hence, given that there are such different preferences which will generate inequality if acted upon, and that it is not fair to prevent people from doing so, we have to allow for people making different choices based on their preferences about how much work versus how much leisure they want, and this allowance will lead to a less than fully egalitarian society. The assumption implicit in this argument is that the only alternatives in the equation are work and leisure, and that leisure is genuinely free time which can then be spent however people want. (Similar assumptions are made in economics.) What is overlooked, however, is pre-existing obligations on our time which are not self-chosen, hence the fact that the category of 'leisure' harbours potential further, but unpaid work.

demands on their time—for women which come with the fact that they are women. A lot of care simply has to be provided, and women have no control over the fact that their elderly parents may need considerable amounts of care or that their child might be disabled or very ill. Nor do women always have a free choice whether to have children or not. But even if the choice of having children is a genuinely free choice, there is no genuine choice for women about whether or not they will be the ones to take on the bulk of the childcare and adjust their paid work accordingly. Hence women's time is, to some extent, still predetermined (as it was explicitly in the separate spheres model): it is not free. Nor is men's time, of course, since they are still constrained to follow male full or over-time work patterns. However, and this is the most significant point as far as discussions of social justice are concerned, men's constrained paid work is a source of material benefits and of social power, whilst women's constrained unpaid work makes them dependent on either men or the state and thus creates material vulnerability and inequality. Thus whilst the separate spheres model throws its long shadows—even at a time when the transitional model is socially realised—by constraining both men and women to the performance of certain types of work, it creates highly unequal material outcomes which are not based on free choices, and this fact should worry mainstream political theorists a lot more than it does. Only men, in other words, face the exclusive choice between more or less paid work on the one hand and leisure on the other that is taken to be a general and paradigmatic choice in political philosophy, whilst women face the problem of finding a bearable combination of preexisting unpaid and paid work. Men are in the relatively privileged position of choice of their paid work pattern—have all the time free to dispose of—however, precisely because the constraint of unpaid work has been unloaded onto women's shoulders. Time as a resource to dispose of, in other words, is not equally available to women. It is only by looking at women's and men's unpaid work patterns, however, that time can come to be seen

as an important resource which is unequally distributed to women and men.⁵³

A true gender perspective, then, typically puts the presentation and envisaged solutions to various problems in a different light: not only can supposedly women's problems be seen to be general social problems the solution of which women have been made responsible for (e.g. the problem of equal opportunities and reconciliation and the constraint of unpaid work), but also what are represented as general social conditions can be seen to be male-biased, that is, true only for men and, moreover, often made true for men at the expense of women (e.g. the supposedly free choice between paid work and leisure).

Whither hence?

My exposition in rough strokes of the current division of work and material resources between men and women, as well as of the historical changes that have taken place so far and the social actors that have contributed to it or been responsible for it, has also allowed me to present, rather selectively, of course, some of the discussion that has taken place in the Forum. Further questions pose themselves on the basis of this exposition: in what direction will further development go, what kind of development would be desirable, and what attempts can or should be made to influence development in a desirable direction?

The model and vision representing the most ambitious, but certainly possible state of affairs is the *egalitarian model* (model

53 See Bubeck 1994.

3, Appendix).⁵⁴ In this model, the separation and radical division between men's and women's work which characterises the separate spheres model has been fully transcended in favour of an equal sharing by men and women of the work of both spheres, paid and unpaid. Also, since women have genuinely equal access to paid work, women will have equal incomes with men and thus their 'material emancipation' from men is completed: women will have moved from dependent, supposedly 'inactive' housewives⁵⁵ confined to the private sphere to full participants in the public sphere, whilst men will have taken on their full share in the care and other work of the private sphere. Women's equal participation in the sphere of paid work, combined with men's equal share in unpaid work, will also have abolished women's higher material vulnerability which was characteristic of the transitional model. In the light of the egalitarian model, the transitional model can be understood fairly literally as a model which captures the transition between the separate spheres model and the egalitarian model: women are in the process of entering the sphere of paid work, but have not entered it on the same terms as men yet and are constrained by their prior location in the sphere of unpaid work, whilst men are in the corresponding

54 Cf. Mahon's notion of the 'equality contract' (Mahon 1995). It has become quite fashionable to use the notion of a 'gender contract' to refer to various social arrangements between men and women. I think such terminology is as misleading as the social contract terminology was in the 17th and 18th century. As Rousseau pointed out in his critique of the idea of a social contract already: those who end up having the bad deal from such 'contracts' were never even asked, but the notion of the contract usually is taken to imply—and that, for Rousseau, is the dangerous pretense—that it is in everybody's interest and that all entered it willingly. It would be difficult to argue that a 'housewife contract' is in the interest of women, and certainly all feminists agree that it is not: why, then, do many of them use a notion which implies that it is?

55 See note 3 above.

reverse process of entering the sphere of unpaid work but constrained by their prior location in the sphere of paid work. A possible aim of the transition, then, is spelt out by the egalitarian model.⁵⁶ Is the egalitarian model a longterm aim, however? It represents no doubt a vision which informs a lot of feminist theory, implicitly or explicitly: it might be said to be one of the most important feminist utopias—if not the most important one—in much of the social policy discussion, but also more generally in social scientific research which deals with gender divisions, as well as political, social and legal theory. The notion of citizenship, especially if one gives a relatively broad interpretation of the reach of its egalitarian aspirations, can also be seen to imply such a vision.⁵⁷

There is a second model and vision which can be found in feminist theory, although maybe not as prominently, which I shall call the *free choice model* (model 4, Appendix). This model, by definition, maximises free choice. If the choices made by a collectivity of people are *genuinely free* choices, however, they can only result in random distributions: whilst distributive patterns are produced by distributive processes which are constrained, either internally through socialisation (and possibly our biological make-up?) or externally through legislation and policy (be it marriage bars, protective legislation or a 'breadwinner regime' in social policy), distributions based on free choice are *by definition* unconstrained, hence cannot produce distributive patterns other than random distributions. The value that underlies this model, then, is liberty and/or

56 Note that the model is neutral with regard to inequality between women (the third type of inequality I pointed out as problematic above): equal distribution between women and men can coexist with unequal as well as equal distribution within the two categories of women and men, hence with other forms of inequality not based on gender.

57 For more on citizenship see below.

autonomy, that is, the possibility of living one's life, and making decisions about one's life, without being constrained by social institutions and/or inner barriers. In the case of women, these constraints are the sexual division of labour (represented by the separate spheres model and still to some extent by the transitional model) and the many other constraints gender divisions, roles, norms and socialisation impose on their lives that they would like to escape. The absence of such constraints does not mean that some women or even many might continue some or even many of the formerly gendered practices—such as caring, adorning oneself or aiming to reconcile differences and maintain relationships, to name but three—but if they did so they would do so out of their own, free choice rather than because they were socialised to do so and/or otherwise constrained to do so.⁵⁸ If the free choice model were the aim of the transition from the separate spheres model, what would be important about the transitional model would be the enlargement of freedom that the 'opening up' of the hitherto 'forbidden' spheres to men and women represents, and the separate spheres model would have been wrong not so much because it produced material inequality, but because it restricted both women's and men's free choice.

The vision of the free choice model, in the extreme, is anarchist, and in a lesser extreme, libertarian or free market oriented, and it seems on the face of it rather unlikely that it might be reconciled with the egalitarian model. Thus note, first, that the way the distributions of paid and unpaid work come about in the two models is entirely different: that of the free choice model is unconstrained, whilst that of the egalitarian model may very well be considerably constrained. Secondly, it follows from the transitional model as it has been realised so far that further progress towards the egalitarian model, especially

58 Cf. Varikas 1995, Gianformaggio 1995.

on the men's side, might have to involve more than simply enablement or incentives: any significant amount of progress—as compared to the snail's pace that is observable at present—might have to involve 'rigging' men's choices considerably⁵⁹ in order to bring men to engage in more unpaid work and to draw even with women. Such 'rigging' amounts to a loss of free choice for men and will as such not only be a very difficult proposition to make politically, but will also be incompatible with the free choice model. It looks, then, as if feminist thinking about a desirable future is plagued with the same tension between freedom and equality that can also be found in the marxist tradition of thought. This is not surprising because both traditions—as, in fact, all other movements and theories of liberation from oppression—react against two basic forms of injustice created by oppressive systems: material and other forms of inequality, and the external and internal restriction of freedom of those who are oppressed. Utopian visions implicit or explicit in such movements and theories therefore locate themselves somewhere in the field of tension between the two poles of liberty and equality.⁶⁰ So which model should we aim for in the future?

In order to answer this question, it is worth realising that, unlike the egalitarian vision or model, the free choice model is easily counterproductive if implemented in a society which is still determined by the oppressive institutions and structures of the past—as the societies represented by the transitional model are: see my reference to the 'long shadow of the separate spheres model' earlier on. Change towards genuine free choice presupposes not only the fall of formal barriers, but also the genuine availability of new options to those who were formerly

59 —as well as a lot of political imagination to do so successfully—, see Bubeck 1995b.

60 See also Laufer 1995.

excluded from them, and this, by contrast, takes much longer to achieve and much more extensive changes: compare the abolition of the marriage bar to the achievement of an equal likelihood of women's careers in formerly male professions, or the institution of parental leave to the achievement of an equal likelihood of men and women taking it up. Only if such equal likelihoods are realised, however, is it really safe to give men and women a free choice—that is, is it safe to do so without risking to reproduce the old gendered patterns! Liberal policies, in other words, as many critics have pointed out, are not sufficient to produce real equal choice. It seems then, paradoxically, that one has to restrict choice—that is, attempt to push in the direction of the egalitarian model—before one can leave a free choice to men and women—that is, realise the free choice model—because only the egalitarian model is likely to create a situation of *genuine* free choice.⁶¹ Equal freedom, that is, genuinely free choices, for both men and women, in other words, can only be brought about through the achievement of much more egalitarian distributions not only of work and income, but also of interests and preferences. It remains a problem that their realisation may require the restriction and 'rigging' of certain choices, but the liberal alternative is only working to a limited extent, very slowly and by creating new problems, as is illustrated by the transitional model.

In conclusion, the following distinction has to be drawn. If understood as *strategic models* aimed at generating political

61 The danger in the strategy of restricting choice before one can safely re-open it lies in the fact that it may become a continuously self-justifying way of life where the vision of freedom has been lost: see the disastrous experiment of 'really existing socialism'; see also Ursula LeGuin's *The Dispossessed* which highlights a similar problem for a fictional anarchist society (in which, among other hierarchies of political and social power, gender is supposedly abolished, too).

strategies, the free choice and egalitarian models are at least in tension if not incompatible with each other. If understood as *utopian visions* for a future, however, they are not necessarily incompatible, since we can imagine a state of affairs where relatively egalitarian distributions between men and women and between the spheres of paid and unpaid work are achieved on the basis of men's and women's free choices. Thus note the paradox mentioned above that genuinely free choice can only be achieved in a thoroughly egalitarian society. Note furthermore that the random distribution of activities in each of the four categories of the models is an egalitarian distribution, although it does not imply that each man and each woman spends equal time in both types of work. If we distinguish the question of strategy from the question of final aim, then, we can conclude that we can aim for both liberty and equality in the long term, but that political strategy and short- and medium-term policy will have to be defined between the Scylla of continuing inequality and injustice and the Charybdis of coercion. What seems fairly clear, also, however, is that a pure liberal strategy of removing barriers and expanding (formally available) choices is not going to get us very far very quickly on the long road to a so far seemingly utopian society in which liberty and equality may have been reconciled.

Conclusions

How is the rather abstract train of thought of the last section related to the more concrete level of social realities and policies, and what does all this have to do with citizenship?

The link between the analytical level of models and the normative considerations of social justice on the one hand, and the more concrete level of questions about how to proceed within and beyond the transitional model may be best formulated in the shape of several points of conclusion.

1) Inaction or non-action will either preserve the status quo by not removing barriers for change, or, in the best case, only allow for a very slow pace of change. Policies and legal structures which are left over from the time of the separate spheres model and hence are based on and reinforce the deeply gendered structures according to that model will prevent any further progressive developments within the transitional model. The absolutely first priority, therefore, must be to abolish such 'bulwarks of the old structures'. Such abolition will only increase formal freedom, however, but nevertheless set the conditions for further change towards genuine equality and choice. In many European countries, a lot of change still has to happen at this very basic level: the very need for the category of a 'breadwinner welfare state regime' in the social policy literature perfectly illustrates this need.

2) With regard to policies enabling change towards gender equality more positively, especially new policies which replace old policies based on the separate spheres model, careful consideration needs to be given to new vulnerabilities that might be created: the old system, corresponding to the separate spheres model, afforded material protection to women as wives, at the price of their economic dependency. In the transitional model, as pointed out above, women become materially vulnerable because of their inability to rely on life-long material protection from men,⁶² whilst still having spent too much time in unpaid work to have been able to generate sufficient material resources by themselves.⁶³ Any policy changes should take into account and attempt to alleviate this vulnerability, thus correcting the injustice of

62 E.g. in the case of divorce, see Hancock 1995.

63 Income from paid work and pensions, cf. Aslaksen and Koren 1995.

unequal material vulnerability as well as the gendered nature of policies.⁶⁴

3) Both the analytical, normative and the social level also point into the same direction for further and more substantial change, that is, the need to strengthen and push further men's participation in unpaid care and housework—given the slow pace of change on the men's side as compared to the women's side of the transitional model—whilst continuing to support women's full entry in the labour market. It looks as if to date there is not enough political imagination nor much political will to do so except, maybe, in the Scandinavian countries. There are some suggestions from Forum participants at this level, however.⁶⁵

4) Both levels furthermore require a true gender perspective on the basis of which the concentration on 'women's problems' with entry into the labour market and the attempt to solve 'women's problems' without looking at the corresponding role of men with regard to these 'problems' can be understood as a simplifying misrepresentation of a much broader social problem, i.e. that of gender division and inequality, which create specific 'problems' for women (as well as men) and specific advantages (mostly for men—but also some for women). The point, then, is not so much that there are women who have problems, e.g. with 'reconciling' paid and unpaid work, but the fact that gendered societies solve their contradictions—in this case the incompatibility between the

64 Much of the discussion on the individualisation of benefits, it seems to me, revolves around this problem of women's material vulnerability and the problem of how to alleviate it without, however, reinforcing separate spheres model assumptions such as women's economic dependency on men (see Aslaksen and Koren 1995, Lewis 1995, Bussemaker 1995).

65 See Tobler 1995b on 'Teilungsvorschriften', Bubeck 1995b on a 'caring service' and Gunning 1995a on the reduction of the (paid) working day; also McLennan 1995.

nature of paid work and the demands of unpaid work—by making those who are less powerful responsible for struggling to solve them. The incompatibility of paid and unpaid work, in other words, is not a women's problem but a structural problem in our societies which needs to be discussed as a general social problem, and solutions to which need to be conceived at this general level—taking into account the situation of both men and women—instead of specifically as solutions 'for women'.

5) As the example of the last point of conclusion illustrates, the analysis of the spheres of both paid and unpaid work shows up a general incompatibility between the two spheres. This incompatibility was not a problem in the separate spheres model because men and women had exclusive responsibilities in the two spheres. It does become a problem, however, in the transitional model, as both men and women start combining work in both spheres, although it becomes more of a problem for women, given their strong 'pre-determination' to take on the unpaid work combined with men's reluctance to take on substantial amounts of it, as well as women's strong entry into the labour market. So far, the major adjustment to the problem of the incompatibility has been to transform the unpaid work of the private sphere into paid work, through state or market provision, thus freeing women from their unpaid work obligations. What should be considered, however, is whether further development in this direction—which we might also see as an imperialism of clock time over caring time⁶⁶—is desirable. If it is not, we have to think seriously about ways in which the sphere of paid work can be prevented from taking over our lives, and from imposing a kind of value monism which makes it difficult for the sphere of unpaid work, notably care, to claim its

66 Cf. Gunning 1995a, Paolucci 1995a, 1995b.

equal if not importance in human terms to society and for such unpaid work to be recognised and valued.⁶⁷

6) The new and increasing form of inequality between women which arises with the transitional model should be borne in mind and kept at bay in the discussion and implementation of new policies and legislation. The price of progress for some women should not have to be paid by yet more unfortunate and disadvantaged women. In general, the explicitly egalitarian policies of the Swedish model have been more successful than other policies in improving the material equality of women through a strong policy of incorporating them into the labour market. However, even that model produces a small group of materially very vulnerable women, viz. women who have not been able to participate in the labour market.⁶⁸ At a time when full employment cannot be guaranteed, even this relatively successful strategy cannot be relied on entirely, and alternative strategies may have to be discussed.⁶⁹

None of these conclusions are very conclusive. But as a political theorist I can only attempt to clarify the choices and point out and elucidate the underlying principles and values. It is up to the politicians and policy specialists to propose solutions that fit the bill—hopefully in the light of the considerations

67 Cf. Kravaritou 1995b. Unfortunately, the sphere of paid work will remain a sphere which has to occupy feminists because of women's unequal location within it and because of the material income and power derived from it.

68 See Vielle 1994.

69 Cf. e.g. that of a citizen's income (Purdy 1995). Whilst it is doubtful that a citizen's income will do anything much to improve the material situation of women in particular, it is usually endorsed as the only possible response to the phenomenon of persistent unemployment which hits women as much as men. It is also not very clear what effects such a policy would have on the sexual division of labour. However, feminist versions of a citizen's income might be invented.

discussed in this paper or similar ones discussed by others endorsing a gender perspective.

Citizenship

Do these points have anything to do with citizenship? The answer is: it really depends on one's definition of citizenship. In social scientific and political circles (but excluding a good number of political theorists), T.H. Marshall's conception of citizenship has been very prominent.⁷⁰ According to Marshall, citizenship—which can be defined as the meaning of membership in a particular community—has three aspects: civil, political and social, comprising both entitlements and obligations, with the stress, however, lying on entitlements or rights. Accordingly, full membership in a community does not only entail equal civil and political rights for all citizens, but also social rights for those disadvantaged groups among them which would otherwise not be capable of full participation in the community. Social rights, in other words, are meant to counterbalance social inequality and assert the equal status and dignity of all as members of a community. If we take this conception of citizenship, most of my discussion has been about how to understand women's unequal and less than full citizenship in the past (as dependent, private wives) and present (as constrained participants in the public sphere) and the prospects for truly equal citizenship in the future. As a political theorist, however, I am not entirely happy about the exclusive focus on citizenship at this level. Whilst I have argued myself that feminist notions of citizenship invariably have to integrate the social—the gendered structures of society—into their discussion and to analyse their effect on the sphere of politics,⁷¹

70 Marshall 1963.

71 Bubeck 1995b.

I think it is also important to stress that citizenship is first and foremost a *political* concept. Accordingly, citizens are members of a politically constituted community, that is, a community that, in the best of cases, governs itself as democratically as possible. Citizenship as a political concept then refers to the nature of citizens' activities, rights and obligations in the sphere of politics, widely understood, as much as to those in other spheres of social life including that of the family.⁷² Citizenship in this political sense has been comparatively little discussed in the Forum.⁷³ However, the political sphere is not separate from the social, and if, according to McLennan, '(t)he archetypal political problem facing women is how to change the lives of men',⁷⁴ then the Forum's discussion over this last year has not only contributed to an illumination of the current gendered reality, of various possible changes, and of the need for change, but also to a new perspective on women's and men's citizenship in our European societies.

72 Cf. Lister (1995), who, herself social policy specialist, attempts to combine the Marshallian approach typically used in sociology and social policy analysis with a more political approach.

73 Kravaritou 1995a, Bubeck 1995b, Varikas 1995, Gunning 1995b, Purdy 1995 and Gianformaggio 1995 address it in some ways. It may also be worth noting that the title of the Forum 'Gender and the Use of Time' seems to suggest the location of the problematic under consideration mostly in the sphere of the social.

74 MacLennan 1994, p. 11.

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Appendix

1) The separate spheres model

	men	women
labour market, income	exclusive location: breadwinner	
unpaid work		exclusive location: homemaker

2) The transitional model

	men	women
labour market, income	high, stable: core work-force	low, conditional: peripheral work-force
unpaid work	low, conditional: not so new men	high, stable: primary carers

3) The egalitarian model

	men	women
labour market, income	equal to women	equal to men
unpaid work	equal to women	equal to men

4) The free choice model

	men	women
labour market, income	random variation	random variation
unpaid work	random variation	random variation



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