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In 1979, the historian Anne Firor Scott, who five years later was to become President of the Organization of American Historians, proclaimed: "Woman's place is in the history books."(1) Of course this was less a description of the actual situation than a challenge for the future; traditionally history has counted as something that men made, that men suffered, that men wrote. Male experience both in and of history was equated with "general history", with history "in general". This was summed up, for instance, in 1911 by Eduard Fueter in the very first chapter of his well-known and still indispensable Geschichte der neueren Historiographie. Here, he addressed the beginnings of modern historiography in the fourteenth century: Francesco Petrarca's Liber de viris illustribus and Giovanni Boccaccio's De claris mulieribus, a parallel collection of women's biographies. Fueter was moved to comment: "It was a strange idea to assume that Petrarca was only writing about men and to conclude from this that fairness or gallantry called for a female counterpart." According to Fueter, Petrarca had presented not men, but "generals and politicians" and thus "the military and political power of ancient Rome." Boccaccio, however, in writing about women, had "abandoned the field of history in general."(2)

Yet, the issue of the history of women had already been raised long before, and it had been written primarily by women. This fact constitutes a hitherto unknown chapter in women's history as well
as an aspect left out of the numerous works on the history of historiography. The history of female historians has been studied by Kathryn Kish Sklar in 1975 for the United States, by Natalie Z. Davis, the current president of the American Historical Association, in 1980 for France and England, by Bonnie G. Smith in 1984 for France, England and the U.S., and by Joan Thirsk in 1985 for England. Many women have written about the history of women, such as Christine de Pisan, a contemporary of Boccaccio, and their number has increased from the end of the eighteenth century on into the twentieth. On occasion they have described the significance of women in the past as "a power, a presence", as Anna Jameson did in her 1832 *Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical and Historical*. Up to now no equivalent study has been done for Germany, possibly an after-effect of the fact that it was precisely there that modern scientific historiography was established in the nineteenth century. In Germany, too, it was not unusual for women's historical dissertations at the turn of the century to deal with women's history. And the first Swedish female Ph.D., a historian, also wrote about women. The historical profession scarcely took notice of these studies, the questions they raised and the answers they found were not accepted, and between the 1930s and 1960s they were simply "forgotten". To a large extent women's place in historiography was now at the end of the preface: "But without Margaret X., who suffered in ways well known to scholars' wives, without her self-sacrifice, patience and ever-present sense of humour this book could not have been written."

Since the late 1960s, the issue of women's history has again been raised, mainly through the women's movement. It has been a long and laborious process to achieve recognition of the legitimacy and urgency of that issue, of the assumption that not only men, but also women have a history. In 1973-74 a course was
offered at one of the Parisian universities on the theme, "Les femmes ont-elles une histoire?" At the same time, the historian Carl N. Degler gave a lecture at Oxford University on the question, "Is there a history of women?" Fittingly, in the year when Oxford finally opened the gates of those colleges that had been reserved for men, also to women, Degler came to the conclusion that, yes, women do have a history. In 1983, a collection of essays entitled Frauen suchen ihre Geschichte appeared in West Germany, and in 1984 a collection entitled Une histoire des femmes est-elle possible? in France. In the meantime, this question has been answered, judging by the large and growing number of publications on this topic; not only do bibliographies of women's studies in general and women's history in particular now exist, but also bibliographies of such bibliographies. The trail that has been blazed in the space of a decade - and by no means only in the United States - is illustrated by two journals in which some of the aforementioned articles on female historians appeared. Kathryn Kish Sklar's piece appeared in 1975 in the newly-founded journal Feminist Studies; Bonnie G. Smith's article was published in the well established American Historical Review. This latter journal dedicated an entire issue to women's history, and its contributors belong to the new generation of female historians. Among non-feminist history journals in other countries, only Quaderni Storici in Italy and the Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte have risked this double step of dedicating issues to women's history (in 1980 and 1984, respectively), written by female historians.

This long road to women's history was marked, however, not just by a rise in the number of publications; above all, it also has an internal history which is far from concluded. This is the history of reflections on what women's history is or could be, what kind of implications it holds for the rest of historical
writing, and what its relationship to a truly general history should be, a history in which women and men equally have a place. Some of these ongoing reflections will be sketched out in the following sections. Needless to say, they bear traces of my own historical work.

II. History and Women's History

From the very beginning, the pursuit of women in history was not simply about filling gaps in research and inserting findings into the usual historiographical categories. Rather, it demanded a new vision of and on history. To cite a now famous formulation of a Renaissance historian, the late Joan Kelly, which appeared in the first volume of Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society over a decade ago: the problem was not just "to restore women to history", but above all, "to restore history to women". In other words, it was not just one of women in history, but rather one of the history of women, of the experiences of women both in and of history, of a history which, though not independent of men's history, is nonetheless a history of its own, of women as women. Women have remained invisible primarily because they, their experiences, activities and spaces have not appeared worthy of historical scrutiny. Thus, it was imperative that the new vision overturn the hierarchies existing between the historically important and unimportant. What women want to do, should do and have done is being scrutinized and re-evaluated. The contents of the numerous revealing and controversial studies on women's history cannot be reduced to a single common denominator. Nevertheless, they may be summarized in one respect, to which Maité Albistur has recently pointed: "La trame de l'histoire des femmes, on s'en doute, n'est pas moins serrée que celle des hommes. Mais il est désormais permis de se demander si le temps vécu par la part féminine de l'humanité s'écoule au même rythme
et aussi s'il est perçu de la même façon que chez les hommes". (12) Women in fact do have a history, and it is different from that of men. It deserves to be examined precisely because it is "different" — when measured against the history of men. But the fact that this history is "different" from men's, does not mean it is less important. Nor does it merely represent a "special case" or a "special problem" of history. This "special case" approach is still dominant and is apparent in the pervasive use of terms such as "frauenspezifisch", "'specifically' female", "la 'spécificité' féminine", "la 'specificità' femminile". Rather, the problem is one of recognising on the one hand that "general history" has up to now essentially been a "male-'specific'" one, and on the other hand, that women's history must count as just as general as men's history.

The autonomous character of women's history, its "difference" from the history of men, has at times been understood to mean that women basically all had the same history. This hypothesis cannot be attributed to a feminist "short-circuit", a desire to ground women's solidarity in a common history, for it also crops up in works by non- or anti-feminist historians. Yet, historical studies of women have increasingly shown that the history of women is not identical for all women, that women do not all have the same history. Awareness of the "other"-ness, the "difference", the "inequality" between female and male history has been complemented by an awareness and historical study of the otherness, the differences and inequalities among women themselves. In this vein, the Italian journal for women's history, Memoria, devoted an issue to the theme "piccole e grandi diversità" in 1981. (13) In other words, the assumption that all women share the same perceptions, experiences or situation misrepresents historical reality. The history of women can only be grasped in the plural, not in the singular.
As research has intensified, some conceptions which initially provided a spur for historical women's studies have become problematic. These include, for instance, the idea that women have eternally been oppressed by men, the teleological assumptions that women's status has continually improved through the past or, conversely, that women have lost a distant paradise. The history of women resembles that of men insofar as it is just as rich and complicated, and that it is not linear, logical or coherent. The diversity of female experiences and situations which has been brought to light - not only in different cultures but also over time - has resulted among other things from the fact that historical women's studies have dealt with virtually all domains of history and society: with areas where only women are present (such as in women's organizations, women's culture, modern housework), those where women make up the majority (such as among witches and the objects of poor-relief), those where women existed in equal numbers to men (such as families, sexuality, classes, youth and old age, ethnic minorities), those domains where women made up a minority in relation to men (such as factory work, prostitution, historiography), and those where they were absent altogether (such as "universal" suffrage in the nineteenth century).

We may summarize that women have a history as women; it is not the same for all women, but its variety exists in the context of the complex history of the entire female sex. Let us look at an example which many historians have been researching for some time.

In the sixteenth century, new forms of poor-relief emerged in Italy. In traditional historiography the main aspect studied was that "able-bodied", "alien", and "professional" beggars were driven out of towns, a fact connected with changing attitudes towards poverty. Poverty no longer was viewed as an imitation of
Christ, but rather, as a sin. On closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent that while the "able-bodied", "alien", "professional" beggars were almost exclusively men, the majority among the objects of the new poor-relief system were women. And they were not driven away, but interned in newly-founded institutions, conservatori. The transformation of attitudes towards poverty here concerned something different from what applied to male beggars: female poverty was defined as a loss or a threatened loss of "female honour". This onore femminile was understood as sexual integrity and it was a social criterion that also applied to all other women. The female experience of poverty and poor-relief in the early modern period was therefore different from the male experience; it was an experience not of all women, but of a minority of them; yet, the experience of this female minority was connected to the social image and social reality of the female sex as a whole.

The emergence of the new historical study of women, its perspectives, its results, and its challenge to traditional views of the past is a chapter in the history of historiography which exhibits both old and new features. Among the old features is the enterprise of taking a novel look at the past, one derived from the situation and perceptions of the historian. As Johann Martin Chladenius wrote in the middle of the eighteenth century, at a time of much debate over the relativity of historical judgments: Results would be very different if an event, for example, a "rebellion" were seen through the eyes of a "loyal subject", a "rebek", a "foreigner", a "bourgeois" or a "peasant". For "that which occurs in the world is seen in different ways by different people", depending on "the state of their body, their soul and their whole Person." Accordingly, there are varying "view-points of the same thing", and "from this notion of view-points, it follows that persons who see a thing from different view-points
must also have different conceptions of the thing."(15) More than two hundred years later, after and in the midst of various crises in historical scholarship, the historian John G.A. Pocock took these reflections further. In his study on "The Origins of Study of the Past", he argued that "historiography is a form of thought occasioned by awareness of society's structures and processes" and that therefore, "any society may have as many pasts as it has elements of continuity, and that different individuals may be aware of different pasts, varying as they are associated with different activities, structures, or other elements of continuity". There are different "past-relationships", and "a society, then, may have as many pasts, and modes of dependence on those pasts, as it has past-relationships... Society's awareness of its past is plural, not singular". It is decisive for the rise of new forms of historiography that a problem has emerged or has been noticed which calls into question or even shatters the conventional relation between the present and past, and leads to questions such as, "how did the past become the present?" and "why should the present follow the past?"(16)

In this respect, the rise of the new women's history resembles other and older historiographical revolutions. Pocock shows how the two differ when he finally asserts that despite such historiographical relativity the nineteenth-century historicist revolution, with the emergence of scientific historical scholarship, created the possibility "to attempt the historical approach to every department of human life and to human experience as a whole." In established historical scholarship this attempt has, until recently, remained limited to half of human experience. Making good this promise is a task which has fallen upon women's history. This involves more than merely adding "man's better half" to existing scholarship; it means a more far-reaching possibility, to which Pocock has hinted: "There is no a priori reason why these
different awarenesses should grow together into a single awareness", for they sometimes "will differ so widely that their integration will be intellectually very difficult, even when it has become socially possible and desirable". The following section shows how - beyond the discovery of women's history and its difference from men's history - there have been attempts to relate women's and men's "different pasts" and "past-relationships" to one another (but also those of women to other women and of men to other men), and to conceive of the relationship of women's history and "general history".

III. Women's History and Gender History

The observation that women are half of humankind and in some countries and times even more than half was the point of departure for many reflections on this issue. It is anything but banal and it is no coincidence that an important book on women's history, *The Majority Finds its Past* by Gerda Lerner, a former president of the American Historical Association, bore this reference.(17) Viewed methodologically, it implies the following principle: it is no less problematic to separate the history of women from history in general than to separate the history of men - and even more so, truly general history - from the history of women. This in turn means that women's history concerns not merely half of humanity, but all of it. The most important step in the efforts to link the history of one half to the other half, and both to history in general, was to conceptualize women as a social group, i.e., as a sex and that as a result, men also became visible as sexual beings. Since the mid-1970s, gender (Geschlecht, genre, genere, geslacht) has been introduced as a fundamental category of social, cultural and historical reality, perception and study. This implies that history in general must also be seen as the history of the sexes: as gender history. Gender, or the sexes, were until
recently not taken for granted as part of historiographic vocabulary. Thus, for instance, in the basic work *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, published since the 1970s, the entry "Geschlecht" does not appear alongside such other terms as "work", "race", or "revolution", nor does "woman", let alone "man". Despite thousands of years of philosophical speculation about the sexes, "Geschlecht" likewise fails to appear in the 1974 *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, and under the entry "sexuality" we find cell plasma, genes, and hormones. Women's and gender history, however, rejects both approaches: the omission of gender and its reduction to an object of apparently "natural" science.

The concepts, the underlying assumptions and the consequences of historical research in gender terms must be created, conceived and investigated anew. In the following, I will outline some aspects of the discussions around "gender": some of the motives which have led to the notion of gender as a social, cultural and historical category and the meaning of the term "category" in this context; secondly, gender as a social, cultural and historical reality which concerns historians, both female and male - and not only historians.

1. Gender as a Social, Cultural, Historical Category

In the past decades, the need to study gender has for many people become self-evident. To the same extent, however, gender or the sexes are no longer perceived as something self-evident: as an obvious matter, an *a priori* given, or a natural fact. We have learned to see that, on the one hand, all known societies have gender-determined spaces, behaviors, activities. Gender-based differentiation exists everywhere, but on the other hand, its concrete manifestations are not the same in all societies: they are not universal. The variations within the status of the female sex are just as manifold as those within the status of the male
sex. The meaning of being a woman or a man is highly variable over time and space, and this applies for not only the contents, but also for the boundaries between femaleness and maleness and for the rigidity of these boundaries. We have learned to separate the question of gender-based differentiation from the question of gender-based hierarchies, i.e. the power relations between men and women. The differentiation and the hierarchies are not always and not necessarily connected with one another or even identical. This means, for instance, that a sexual division of labour does not necessarily imply a sexual division of social rewards and of power, and that the hierarchies do not always have the same forms, contents and meanings. Furthermore, we have learned that the perception of male and female scholars, most of whom are West Europeans or North Americans, is often profoundly shaped by the gender relations of their own culture, by widespread ethno- or Eurocentrism, or by differing assumptions about the status and the emancipation of women. The current perceptions of the sexes and the terms used to describe them are to a large extent a product of the history of culture, science and of gender relations since the eighteenth century. (19) Therefore, the sexes and their relations are, and should be, perceived as social, political and cultural entities. They should not, and cannot be reduced to factors outside of history, and even less to a single and simple, uniform, primal or inherent cause or origin.

When we speak of gender as a "category" in this context, then this term refers to an intellectual and conceptual construct, a way of perceiving and studying people, an analytical tool that helps us to discover neglected areas of history. It is a conceptual form of social and cultural analysis. The category gender challenges what one may call the sex-blindness of traditional historiography. Natalie Z. Davis has formulated this challenge in the following terms: "It should become second nature
for the historian, whatever her or his specialty, to consider the consequences of gender as readily, say, as those of class."(20) It is important to underline, as was stressed, e.g. at a women's history conference in Italy in 1982, and in 1984 by Jane Flax, a Howard University philosopher, at the Berlin conference of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Nordamerikastudien: the category gender is, and must be conceived as, "context-specific and context-dependent". (21) This means that it is not a matter of postulating a universal principle such as practiced, for example, by Marxism insofar as it seeks to reduce all social phenomena to the relations between the means of production and the mode of production or between wage work and capital or between classes. While the category gender does offer fundamental possibilities for a more profound understanding of virtually all historical phenomena, it should not be used as a static or universal model, a myth of "origins" for explaining the panorama of historical events. Its power is not one of elimination - by reducing history to a model - but of illumination, i.e. as a means to explore historical variety and variability. Gender is a "category" not in the sense of a universal statement, but in accordance with the Greek origin of the word, in the sense of "public objection", public accusation, of debate, protest, process and trial. (22)

This "public objection" is directed above all at the category "biology", a static, reductionistic model, a major obstacle to understanding. In order to take gender as a socio-cultural category seriously, we must above all do away with the socio-cultural category "biology" and abandon the notions attached to it. In the first place, we must refuse to label sex or gender as "biological" and to perceive the female body, sexuality and the organs involved, or childbirth, childbirth and motherhood as "biology". (23) Mireille Laget's book Naissances is one example of how to treat a subject eminently bound up with the female body
without recurring to "biology".(24) If, however, one uses "biology" in this context, then it does not refer - as it suggests - to something non-social, pre-social, even less to an object of natural science. In fact, "biology" itself is a genuinely socio-cultural category with genuinely socio-cultural connotations which has marked the perception and relations of the sexes in the past few generations. The word "biology" came into circulation around 1900. Before that time there was no "biology". The words previously attached to the female sex ("God", "the eternal feminine", "nature" or "essence") belonged to a different historical constellation and are comparable to the modern gender-"biology" only in a very limited way, if at all.(25) Its socio-cultural character is visible in the fact that it carries a clear gender bias: it is regularly used in speaking about the female sex, but not about the male sex. Long before "biology" existed, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example, made a similar point, but in exclusively cultural terms: "Le male n'est male qu'en certains instants, la femelle est femelle toute sa vie." (He was cautious enough to add a small but revealing reservation: "... ou du moins toute sa jeunesse.")

"Biology" is moreover a social category with a specific content, since it is a concept which refers to human value. More specifically, it is a metaphor for the lack of it, for "inferiority", Minderwertigkeit. This is why it has been used for those areas and activities of women's lives which are assigned less value than male activities - such as child-bearing, child-raising and housework, which do not count as work, although Gebärarbeit was a common term in traditional German gynaecology and in English, French and Italian, giving birth is described as work (labour, travail, travaglio). This use of the term "biology" is based on the "general notion that differences among persons justify social inequality. Biological (usually meaning
intrinsically determined) differences are often regarded as more reasonable bases for unequal social rewards than are differences that result from variations in the environment, which are held to have more of a claim to compensatory special treatment. The female physical constitution is of course "unequal" or "different" when measured against the male. But why should women have to pay for this by being considered "inferior"? Obviously, it is not only "more basic", but also "more expensive" to deal with physical "other"-ness in a humane way, i.e. a way favorable to women. The "biological" problem proves to be one of economic, social and cultural relations between the sexes, for "the peculiar arrangement whereby many women receive economic reward for their social contribution (in child care, homemaking, and community work) only indirectly, via their husband's income, is neither morally nor practically required by the fact (if indeed it is a fact) that women are biologically better parents than men."(27) Beyond this, one can see that "biology" is above all a value judgment, for "biological" thinking did not initially only relate to women, but also to other social phenomena which came to be excluded from the "social": for instance, the social issue of the "insane" and the "feeble-minded", the ill, of life and death, of the body and of embodiment, of ethnic groups or races. The racist notion of "biology" tells us particularly much about its sexist version, for both developed simultaneously and overlapped.

It is self-evident that black people are not physically "equal" to whites in all respects, but are "different" in one respect. It is self-evident that women are physically not "equal" to men in all respects, but rather, "different" in four or five respects. But this partial and physical "difference" is neither the cause nor an explanation for the relation between whites and "alien" races or between one and the "other" sex: "Biology itself is mute".(28) Sexism and racism are not derived from physiological
differences. Rather, certain physiological differences are used to legitimate pre-existing social relations and, in particular, power relations. Their main significance is socio-cultural, and the "biology" of racial and sexual "differences" is itself a socio-cultural construct. The "differences" are metaphors for actual or alleged different lifestyles. Modern racism and modern sexism have a similar structure, symbolized in the social and cultural category "biology". Both consist in classifying the "alien" or the "other" group as "inferior" and to refuse it not only the right to be "equal", but also - and probably more important - the right to be "different" without being punished for it. In other words: to discriminate against those who actually or allegedly live, must live, want to live in a "different" way - regarding body, mind, emotions, i.e. culture - than that group which sets the cultural norms and values.(29)

One of the more recent attempts by historians and biologists to search and of course find "biology" in history emerged at the biennial conference of the Association of German Historians in 1984 in Berlin, which dealt with "anthropology". Put forward by men, it took place alongside with the first panel on women's history ("Women's Spaces") by female historians which of course had nothing to do with "biology". The male treatments of "biology" included: the historial perception of space and time, "negative reactions towards people of 'a different kind'", the "sexual dualism" of society, the women's peace movement around World War I, emotions and intellect, the subjective dimension of history, the history of everyday life, "body language", and finally, same-sex relationships between women - a subject which had not been admitted to the historical academy in other terms than such "biology", even though it represents a broad area of research in the framework of current women's history.(30)
In feminist women's studies also, the female body is often identified as "biology". This occurs, for instance, in the dichotomy - common especially in the United States since the mid-1970's, but nonetheless questionable - between "(biological) sex" and "(social) gender", or in the hypothesis of the "transformation of raw biological sex into gender". This tendency is also present in the vision of doing away with female "biology" through "bio"-technology - particularly in the form of test-tube babies - in order to achieve "equality" between the sexes.(31) A French historian has asserted that the main "obstacle" to women's liberation is in their "fatalités biologiques", on which male dominance supposedly is founded, and that women must "emancipate" themselves from their "biology".(32) However, such values and notions are problematic not only because female "biology" may in fact soon be dispensed with all too easily through modern technology - and one might recall Hannah Arendt's comment of 1972 to such "emancipation" or "equality": "The real question to ask is, what do we lose if we win?"(33) Even more important for historical thought, which seeks to understand the past, is the problem, that such notions and values, when projected into the past, are anachronistic and fail to do justice to women's actual experiences in and of history. For instance, the 200,000 women sterilized in National Socialist Germany by no means experienced this removal of their "fatalités biologiques" as a liberation. Their case, and the cases of many other victims of National Socialism, demonstrate a further feature of racist and sexist "biology": it refers not so much - as is often assumed - to an inherent, unchanging, ahistorical constant of cultural phenomena but rather to a perspective of social change through "biological" measures. Finally, the fact that some 5,000 women died as a result of compulsory sterilization (the operation is anatomically more invasive for women than for men) has again nothing to do with female "biology". Instead, it was the result of the power
relations between the predominantly male agents of Nazi racism and their victims, half of whom were women. It is precisely those historical studies, which sometimes are perceived as centering on women's "biology" (such as the history of mothers, child-bearing, midwives, wet-nurses, prostitutes) that have demonstrated that the female (as well as the male) body is shaped by culture and history.(34) It is a domain not of "biology", but of women's and gender history.

2. Gender as Social, Cultural, Historic Realities

"Gender" or "the sexes" refers neither to an object, nor to various objects; rather, they refer to a complex set of relations and processes. "Thinking in relations" is needed in order to understand gender as an analytical category as well as a cultural reality, in the past as well as the present. Jane Flax, for example, has brilliantly elaborated on what this means on a philosophical and epistemological level.(35) In the following remarks, I will not deal with the philosophical dimension and instead focus on some aspects which show how this vision of gender can be useful and effective in writing history.

A. Gender as Relations, or: Gender History as Women's History.

Perceiving gender as a complex and sociocultural relation implies that the search for women in history is not simply a search for some object which has previously been neglected. Instead, it is a question of previously neglected relations between human beings and/or human groups. In the words of the late anthropologist Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, "Women must be understood... in terms of relationship - with other women and with men - (not) of difference and apartness."(35) Rosaldo points here to an important and often ignored dimension which goes beyond the now obvious insistence that women's history be integrated into general history.
through the study of relations between women and men. Not only must we study the relations between the sexes, but also the relations within the sexes. All sorts of relations among men have been the main focus of historical writing up to now - particularly those emerging in the political, military and economic realm - but also, for example, those between kin and friends. It is important to study not only the relations between women and men, but also those between women and women, e.g. between housewives and female servants, between mothers and daughters, between mothers and wet-nurses and midwives, between social workers and poor women, between female missionaries and the women of colonized peoples, among women in the professions and in politics, the forms and contents of women's thought, art, and culture, female friendship and love relationships.(36) Insisting on the importance of this issue has become all the more crucial, for in the 1980s the concept of "gender"/"Geschlecht" has virtually threatened to become high fashion. This fashion often seeks to soften the challenge of women's history surfacing in the new perspectives and conceptualizations, and gender history is being conceived of, by many and with visible relief, as a way to overcome women's history, resulting in a kind of gender-neutral discourse on gender. But if it were "forgotten" that the discovery of the social, cultural and historial relations between and within the sexes was the result of women studying women and men, we will fall short of our goal: not a gender-neutral but a gender-conscious approach to "general history". Women's history is gender history par excellence.

How little self-evident it is to see gender history - particularly in relation to women - as a history of relations within the sexes was shown in 1985 by the eminent British historian, Lawrence Stone. Expert on, among others, Family, Sex and Marriage, he has dealt with a field where gender relations are
of conspicuous importance and where women are half of the group to be examined.(37) In an article on "Only Women" in The New York Review of Books, he set himself up as historians' god and handed down "ten commandments" for the writing of women's history which — a surprise particularly in the case of a historian — were to apply "at any time and in any place". The first of them: "Thou shalt not write about women except in relation to men and children". While the author correctly recognized that the new approaches deal essentially with relations and their history, he failed to see that women are not conditioned solely by their relations to men, that the relations of women to other women are just as important as those of women to men, that children are not genderless beings, and that the history of men should also include their relations to women.

B. Gender History as Men's History. Examining men's relations to women means viewing what previously counted as an object of "history in general" in gender-conscious and thus "male-specific" terms: the history of men as men. Questions about gender have mainly focused on the female sex, on "the woman question". Men appear to exist beyond gender relations to the same degree that they dominate them. While the imperative that women's history always be related to men's has become commonplace, up to now the reverse has hardly been true. Military history and the history of warfare are a case in point. They have dealt exclusively with men — and for good reasons, since warfare in the Western world (at least within Europe) has been a form of direct confrontation between groups of men. Nonetheless, explicitly male-specific issues have hardly ever been raised in this field, such as its connection with the history of masculinity.(38) Furthermore, wars have had an enormous significance for women and for the relations between and within the sexes: we need only think of the very strongly gender-based and sexual war symbols and language present
in wars of liberation as well as in civil wars, in aggressive as well as in defensive wars; of the women's peace movement before, during and after the first world war or of the new forms of prostitution which appeared in the first and second world wars.(39)

In the past years, there has been a rise of "men's studies", mainly carried out by men. They deal with the relations between men and women, and among men. Some authors have examined the relation between war and the social construction of masculinity, and they have underlined that the latter should not be understood as a "biological" given. What women's studies have shown is now being confirmed by men's studies: gender norms and gender realities are not always identical and they are subject to historical change. According to a French historian, masculinity meant not only power but also grief and suffering for nineteenth-century men. Fatherhood has become a focus of interest for historians. Some of these studies - those being done by men - draw inspiration from a current call for male participation in female experiences and work ("Pregnant Fathers: How Fathers can Enjoy and Share the Experiences of Pregnancy and Childbirth") or for "men's rights", a tendency not merely corresponding to feminist demands for women's rights, but - as might be expected - sometimes also at odds with them.(40)

An issue which is still often considered as "women's history", the ways in which famous - that is, male - philosophers and other thinkers have thought about women, the sexes, sexuality and the family, must in fact be viewed as men's history.(41) It is men's, not women's history for a reason which has been discussed in various contexts, i.e. the fact that those writings present primarily men's views on women, that their image of the sexes is rarely descriptive, but normative, prescriptive and proscriptive,
and that the norms for women are usually not only different from the norms for men, but also from the realities of women's lives. The study of men's thinking on gender has come to be very diversified and it has brought to light many and unexpected complexities and contradictions, between different philosophers as well as within individual men's thought. Those studies have also promoted the awareness of a specifically historical problem of method which was recently pointed out by Arlette Farge: the problematic character of a historiography which limits itself to the presentation and repetition of the actually or really misogynous pronouncements which were said and written by men over the centuries; it often leads from outrage and denunciation to a kind of fascination and risks to become anachronistic to the same extent as it neglects to analyze such texts in view of their historical (social, political, cultural) context and significance, of their role within the complete works of an author and in view of how they were judged by their female contemporaries. When studies in intellectual history turn to the fewer or less well-known female philosophers or to the thought and judgments of other women — with regard to gender as well as to other relations — there sometimes appear to exist important differences compared to male thinking, such as in Hannah Arendt's basic concept of "natality" and her notion of human plurality which she saw symbolized in the plurality of the sexes, or in the case of Carol Gilligan's hypothesis of women's "different voice" in moral judgments. Thus, intellectual history also shows that the history of men as men becomes visible only when seen in relation to women's history and hence in a perspective of gender history.

C. Gender History and Social History. If we perceive women's and gender history as a history of social relations, then we need to think about its relation to social history. Given that gender is a social category and that the sexes are social entities, all of
women's and gender history is in fact also social history. But this definition is starkly at odds with what has emerged since the 1960s as the "new social history". In Germany, the latter was still defined as the history of the "common man" as late as 1977. This view has clearly become outdated, evidence that account has been taken of the new approaches. Yet a perhaps more fundamental problem remains: the classic object of the new social history are the classes; accordingly, the "social" is essentially defined in terms of class structure, and history in general is defined as the history of society essentially determined by class structure. From the perspective of women, the traditional social history therefore operates with a too narrow understanding of the "social". The extremely frequent equation of the notion "social" with "class-based" or "class-specific" has led to the view that other social relations - for instance those between races and between the sexes - are something non-social, pre-social, or are even "biology".

During the last few years, historians have debated over the relation between class and gender. Frequently it was asserted that class was more "important" than gender: "Perhaps certain socially relevant commonalities do exist between women as women at certain times after all. However, more important for an understanding of self and practical living, for the experiences and interests of most women (despite their similar experiences of socialization and exclusion) were and are the concretely and highly variable manifestations which can be traced back to class. Didn't the young, educated aristocratic woman in the capital of the newly-founded Bismarckian Reich have much more in common with her brother of the same age group than with the old, widowed Polish woman seasonal worker - working during summer in Saxony - who lived in dire poverty and could neither read nor write?"
While this image certainly points to deep and real differences between women, it does so by using features which are in fact not class differences. The noble lady is young; the woman worker old; the lady educated, the worker can neither read nor write; the lady is unmarried, the worker widowed; the lady is German, the worker is Polish; the lady lives in a city, the worker in a rural area. But age, marital status, ethnic-national status, living in an urban or rural milieu are not criteria of class, nor can this be said to any great extent of literacy in the late nineteenth century. If the image intends to demonstrate that working-class women had a bad time of it compared to women of the aristocracy, one can also turn it around, comparing, e.g. a young, German, light-hearted urban housewife, happily married to a German worker, who is relatively securely covered by social insurance to a poor widow of the declining Polish rural aristocracy. If then the image says nothing about the relation between class and sex, it nonetheless reveals something different and important: the differences within a sex are just as large as those within a class. Neither class nor gender refer to homogeneous groups and even less to necessary bonds of solidarity.

Gender is one of the reasons for the nonhomogeneity of classes and class is one of the reasons for the nonhomogeneity of the sexes. Thus, women's history also deals with class, and we now have many studies focusing on women workers, workers' wives, middle-class and noble women. But two fundamental methodological problems have emerged directly out of such class-specific studies: on one hand, the problem of how historians measure class, and on the other hand, the experience of class which differs according to sex.

Looking at the first problem, class membership of men and of women is not measured with the same yardstick (e.g., income or
poverty, which would reveal stark discrepancies between women and men of all classes). For men, the class criterion is their relation to capital, production, the market, or employment. But for a woman, it is her relation to the men of her family, mainly husband and father (and only rarely her employment).(46) In other words, for women - in contrast to men - the class measure is derivative and actually related to family history. Given the methodological inadequacy of this "double standard", scholars have begun to measure women's status not according to "their" men, but according to their own lives. This means, for instance, that women's status is measured according to their work. However, work is not only organized (and paid) according to class, but also according to gender. Precisely in the period when "class" emerged as a social category, the nineteenth century, unpaid housework - the work of women for their husbands, children and other family members - emerged as a central feature in the lives of the vast majority of women of all classes. The numerous studies focusing on this subject show that housework, despite important class-based differences, cannot be reduced to class concepts, just as many other important gender issues.(47)

Taking up the second problem, it can be said that women experience their class differently from men. This becomes clear not only in the question of housework, but also, for instance, in the example of entrepreneurs' wives in England in the nineteenth century or in that of bourgeois women in France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Their experience of class was gender-based, just as that of the men of their class. The same is true for working class women in Imperial Germany: compared to the men of their class, they represented, e.g., a disproportionately large share of those on poor-relief, and the history of Bismarckian social insurance is very different for women and men.(48) For aristocratic women, Clarissa Graves-Perceval, descendant of one of
the oldest English noble families, may serve as an example. From the time of her marriage in 1845, her husband, the eminent bourgeois historian Leopold Ranke, acquired sole authority over her property of L 2,3000 (the approximate equivalent of today's L 125,000). Ranke has therefore gone down in history not only as one of the most important historians, but also as one of the richest.(49) Two decades after his marriage Ranke was also ennobled, and this class-specific process also had its gender-specific side. Had Leopold been a woman and Clarissa a man, then Leopold would have been less wealthy but would have already attained nobility upon marriage. While a man could confer his noble status on his bourgeois wife, the reverse did not hold true. Noble women were, so to speak, somewhat less noble than noblemen, as for example the aforementioned brother of the Berlin aristocratic woman.

We can draw the following conclusion: the situation of all members of a sex is just as little identical as the situation of all members of a class. Nevertheless, gender just as class is an important "context-specific and context-dependent" category and reality of social relations between and within social groups.

At the level of methodology, women's and gender history go beyond "social" history. The former can utilize all the methods at the disposal of historical writing, including biography, cultural, economic, and political history, the history of everyday life, mentalities and ideas as well as those methods accorded a high position in social history, such as family history, mobility studies, historical demography, and oral history - provided that they be used not solely in a class perspective, but also in a gender perspective. In fact, the originality of women's and gender history lies not in its methods, but in the questions it asks and in its perspectives. Therefore new sources need to be discovered
and familiar ones need to be re-read, and we can perhaps concur with the Italian women historians who have said that there are more "hot" and more "cold" sources for such issues. As is true of all historiography, the crucial question is that of the critical evaluation of sources. But it is precisely at this point that women's history has thrown up new methodological problems, above all, the one "that what we know about the past experience of women has been transmitted mainly through the reflections of men... and has been shaped by a system of values defined by men." (50) Therefore, we need to take into account if our sources have been produced by men or by women, particularly when they deal with gender relations. One source from 1940, commenting on the period around 1933, can serve as an example: "One has to have seen the front benches at these mass gatherings. In every town they were always occupied by a particular type of aging woman and girl. One has to have looked down from the podium and seen the eyes of the female audience, shining in rapture, moist and hazy in order not to doubt the character of this enthusiasm", namely, "the rapturous devotion of the women to Hitler, raised to the level of pseudo-religious ecstasy". This passage has often been used as a source for describing women's mentality in that period. But actually it is rather a source for men's mentality, or more specifically, one man's, the author's, mentality. (51) In looking critically not only at history in general, but particularly at sources, women's and gender history would do well to follow a principle which used to be taught to German school children in Latin class: "Auf das Geschlecht hab ja recht acht, damit du keinen Fehler machst". ("Of gender always notice take, so that you don't make a mistake.")

D. Gender Relations and Other Socio-cultural Relations.
Looking at gender as a socio-cultural relation enables us to see the links between gender and countless other socio-cultural relations in a fresh light, such as - besides class - age,
sexuality, race, culture, language, freedom, religion, family, economy. Just as in the debate "class vs. gender", a kind of competition has been set up between gender and other dimensions, and it is not the interaction of different relations that is sought out, but rather, which dimension is "more basic", "more real", or "more important". For instance, in Stone's Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not exaggerate the importance in the past of gender over that of power, status, and wealth, even if all women experienced the same biological destiny". (52) However, the assertion that (apparently) gender-neutral factors carry more weight than gender-based ones ("biological" ones, according to Stone), disregards the fact that each such factor has historically meant something different for women than for men: in respect to individual women, to groups of women, or to women as a sex. This is obvious, for instance, in the case of "power" and of "wealth". In the case of "power" it is obvious perhaps not so much because men have usually had more power than women and power over women. It is probably more important that under the surface of formal cleavages of power between the sexes, women have also had their own forms of power, often of a more informal kind, power - or rather, as French historians say, "powers" - of various kinds, such as participation in men's power, power vis-à-vis other women, self-assertion as women. Studies in women's history have contributed to seeing the phenomenon of "power" as highly differentiated. (53) The gender-specific dimensions present in the case of "wealth" are strikingly clear. Women as a social group have had a smaller income than men and namely - at least in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries - in three respects: as houseworkers they have had no income, as lower- and middle-class wage-earners they have had a smaller income than the men of their class, and in higher income brackets they represent only a small proportion (for instance, making up four percent of history professors at West German universities today). More women than men
have traditionally belonged to the poor, and while poverty can be the result of class, it can also be based on gender or race. (53)

We must, however, go beyond the statement that each socio-cultural relation means something different for women and for men: each one of the only apparently gender-neutral relations between human beings is also conditioned by gender relations, and the latter are one constituent factor of the former. The history of religion, from the ancient Gods to those of the twentieth century, is in many respects inco comprehensible if treated as gender-neutral. The same is true for the question of ethnic minorities, whose women's and gender history forms a focus for a relatively broad branch of women's studies in the United States. Recently the history of Jewish and gypsy women as well as of other women who have suffered racist discrimination has been taken up in Germany. These women differ not only from those of the majority, but also from the men in their respective minority groups. (55) Racist language is obsessed with the sexes and sexuality, and contains a characteristic mixture of sexuality, blood and violence: contemporaries rightly diagnosed National Socialist anti-judaism as also being "sexual anti-semitism". Historians of European and particularly German racism - more specifically, men who belonged to its victims - have shown that in the racist world view, the "Aryan" or "Nordic" person was a "Westerner of the male sex". Racism also cannot be understood without understanding its gender dimension which is one of its constituent factors. (56) And if, conversely, the analysis of gender relations or sexism incorporates an analysis of race relations or racism, we may arrive at new and unexpected results. One of them is the insight that the specifically National Socialist policy towards women did not consist - as is usually assumed - in "pronatalism and a cult of motherhood", but in antinatalism, a cult of fatherhood and
virility and — as a constitutive element of the National Socialist "race struggle" — in mass extermination also of women.(57)

We may summarize: History is not only one of male, but also of female experience. It should not be studied only in male or apparently gender-neutral perspective, but also in female and gender perspective. In the words of the aforementioned eighteenth-century historian: according to "the state of their body, their soul, and their whole Person". I do not suggest to simply invert the postulate, described above, that other human relations are more important than gender relations, by setting up a counter-claim that gender is more important than everything else — even though this inversion first opened our senses to many historical discoveries. Instead, I would suggest that gender relations are equally important as all other human relations, that gender relations contribute to and operate on all other human relations, and, conversely, that all other human relations contribute to and operate on gender relations. The exclusion of gender relations from the "great issues" of history(58) is an obstacle to "great" insights. To insist on the hypothesis that other relations are "more important" than gender relations is ideological, historically unproductive and recalls the situation of Cassandra, the king's daughter, in Christa Wolf's narrative.(59) She dreamt to have to judge on the question if the moon or the sun "could shine brighter". A humble and wise woman taught her, that this was the misguided "attempt to find an answer to a completely absurd question". When Cassandra finally understood that she "had the right, perhaps even the duty, to reject it", this insight became a liberating step in her attempt to comprehend her history.


4 Cited in Smith, "Contribution" (n. 3 above), p. 716.

5 Personal communication from Ann-Sofie Ohlander (Uppsala). The first history Ph.D. dissertation by a woman in Germany was Anna Gebser, Die Bedeutung der Kaiserin Kunigunde für die Regierung Heinrichs II. (Berlin: 1897); cf. Johanna Heineken, Die Anfänge der sächsischen Frauenklöster, Ph.D. Diss., Göttingen, 1909. Up to now in Germany the absence rather than the presence of women in historical writing was noticed: Hans-Jürgen Puhle, "Warum gibt es so wenige Historikerinnen?", Geschichte und Gesellschaft 7/3-4 (1981), pp. 364-93.


12 Maité Albistur, Catalogue des archives Marie-Louise Bouglé à la Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, TS, p. 2; cf., e.g., Pénélope, Pour l'histoire des femmes 1 (1979 ff.); see also: 12 (1985): "Mémoires des femmes"; 13 (1985): "Vieillesse des femmes".


20 Davis, "Women's History" (n. 11 above), p. 90.


23 How little this is taken as a matter of course is shown, for instance, in public schools in the Federal Republic of Germany, where sex education is taught in the "biology" courses; another example is Ernst Rodenwaldt, "Untersuchungen über die Biologie des venezianischen Adels", Homo 8 (1957), pp. 1-26.


28 Rapp, "Anthropology" (n. 19 above), p. 503.

The contributions on women's history are printed in *Journal für Geschichte* 2 (1985) (on this, cf. n. 14 above and n. 55 below); the "biological" contributions in *Saeculum* 36/1 (1985). On the history of friendship and love relationships between women, see n. 36 below.


Yvonne Knibiehler, "Chronologie et histoire des femmes", in *Histoire des femmes* (n. 7 above), pp. 50-57, see p. 55.


Michelle Z. Rosaldo, "The Use and Abuse of Anthropology", *Signs* 5/3 (1980), pp. 389-417, here p. 409; similarly, e.g., Perrot,


38 Cf., e.g., Max Jähns, Handbuch einer Geschichte des Kriegswesens von der Urzeit bis zur Renaissance (Leipzig: 1880); Willibald Block, Die Condottieri: Studien über die sogenannten "unblutigen Schlachten" (Berlin: Ebering, 1913); Michael Howard, Der Krieg in der europäischen Geschichte. Vom Ritterheer zur Atomstreitmacht (München: Beck, 1981); in contrast, e.g., see Elshtain, Meditations (n. 26 above), Ch. 8 ("War and Political Discourse").

Wir sind Frauen wie andere auch (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1980), pp. 70-106.


42 Cf., e.g., Rousseau's philosophy of gender which was highly praised by some women, criticized by others (n. 26 above). Arlette Farge, "Pratique et effets de l'histoire des femmes", in Histoire des femmes (n. 7 above), pp. 17-35, here pp. 30f.


46 Therefore women are not a determining factor in class analyses; cf., e.g., Hans-Ulrich Wehler, ed., Klassen in der europäischen Sozialgeschichte (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

47 For an overview of the recent literature on the history of housework, see Bock, Scholars' Wives (n. 6 above).


51 Hermann Rauschnung, Gespräche mit Hitler (Zürich: Europa Verlag, 1940), pp. 240-42 (the fact that the ”talks” are largely invented does not reduce the value of this work as a source, i.e., about the author); for a critique, cf., Eva Sternheim-Peters, "Brunst, Ekstase, Orgasmus: Männerphantasien zum Thema 'Hitler und die Frauen'", Psychologie heute 8/7 (1981), pp. 36-41.


53 Michelle Perrot, "Les femmes, le pouvoir, l'histoire", in Histoire des femmes (n. 7 above), pp. 205-222; Dauphin et al., "Culture et pouvoir" (n. 11 above), pp. 282ff.; cf., e.g., Ruth Bordin, Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia: Temple U.P., 1981); Susan Carol


57 Cf. Bock, Zwangssterilisation (n. 29 above), pp. 17-18, 136, 299-300, 461-65; id., Die "Anderen" und die "Gleichen": Geschlechterbeziehungen im nationalsozialistischen Rassismus,
University Lecture at the Free University of Berlin, January 1987. Cf. also Eberhard Jäckel: "The National Socialist massacre of the Jews was of a unique kind, because never before there had been a State which decided and announced, with the authority of its responsible leader, to kill a specific human group including, without exception, even the elderly, the women and the children, and which put this decision into practice with all available means of State power" ("Die elende Praxis der Untersteller", Die Zeit, 12 September 1986).

58 Jürgen Kocka defined the "great issues" as "the formation of the States and the classes, religions and churches, industrialization and capitalism, nation and revolution, the fundamental causes and consequences of National Socialism, the German specificity in international comparison" ("Hitler sollte nicht durch Stalin und Pol Pot verdrängt werden", Frankfurter Rundschau, 23 September 1986).

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