

Contents

Introduction	<i>Maria Mies</i>	1
PART 1: WOMEN'S WORK AND CAPITALISM		11
1.	Women's Work: the Blind Spot in the Critique of Political Economy	
	<i>Claudia von Werlhof</i>	13
2.	Capitalist Development and Subsistence Production: Rural Women in India	
	<i>Maria Mies</i>	27
	Capitalist penetration in India and its impact on women	29
	Pauperization and marginalization: the case of tribal women in Andhra Pradesh	37
	Production for the world market: a house industry and marginalization	39
	Consequences for women	40
	Theoretical implications	43
	What can be done?	45
3.	'Investment in the Poor': An Analysis of World Bank Policy	
	<i>Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen</i>	51
	Surplus extraction from the poor or from wage workers only?	51
	Forms of subordination of work under capitalism	54
	IBRD is a capitalist bank: profits are secured	56
PART 2: COLONIZATION OF WOMEN AND NATURE		65
4.	Social Origins of the Sexual Divisions of Labour	
	<i>Maria Mies</i>	67
	The search for origins within a feminist perspective	67
	Problems of biased concepts	68
	Suggested approach	70
	Appropriation of nature by women and men	71
	Female productivity, the precondition of male productivity	78
	'Man-the-hunter' under feudalism and capitalism	86
5.	On the Concept of Nature and Society in Capitalism	
	<i>Claudia von Werlhof</i>	96
	'Nature' and 'Society'	96
	The concept of nature: people as 'nature'	97

The 'naturalness' of work	98
The limits of nature and the necessity of the monopoly over women and land	100
Monopoly as violence: the perpetuation of 'primitive accumulation'	101
Women as absolute nature and the violence of their domination	102
The artificial gender	104
Exploitation of 'nature' as the extraction of a rent from women and the colonies	105
The concept of society: things as 'society'	107
The 'humanity' of the machine	108
The double character of labour power as domesticated nature	110
'Liberation' from nature as the death of the capitalist mode of production	111
6. The Future of Women's Work and Violence Against Women	
<i>Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen</i>	113
The current situation: some general theses	113
Women's work in Western society: two contrasting approaches	114
'Women's labour capacity'	115
Women's labour as forced labour	119
Contemporary and crisis mechanisms of coercion	122
The future of women's work: summary	127
PART 3: POLITICS AGAINST WOMEN AND WOMEN'S STRUGGLES	131
7. Class Struggles and Women's Struggles in Rural India <i>Maria Mies</i>	133
Class struggle from above	133
Capitalist development and violence	137
Peasant women organize	139
Work organization and women's consciousness	140
Women's <i>sangams</i> : a formal organization of agricultural labourer women	141
Economic programmes	143
Methods of mobilization	145
Conclusions	155
8. Why do Housewives continue to be Created in the Third World too?	
<i>Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen</i>	159
Who or what is the housewife?	160
The definition of the housewife and the sexual division of labour	161
Domestic labour and women's paid employment in the Third World: examples	164
Why do housewives continue to be created in the Third World too?	166
9. The Proletarian is Dead: Long Live the Housewife!	
<i>Claudia von Werlhof</i>	168

If we have understood housework, then we have understood the economy	168
The connection between the world economic crisis and war danger: war economy	168
The 'pillar' of capitalist production, the proletariat, is disappearing	169
The 'vision of the future' is vanishing, this leads to general perplexity	170
The proletarian as minority phenomenon and the discovery of the 'informal sector'	171
What sort of a mode of production is capitalism? Conquest, 'the guilt question' and 'integration'	172
The Third World and the housewife as the 'pillar' of accumulation, the 'vision of the future'	173
The housewife as the opposite of the proletarian and the continuum between housework as the model of work	174
Sexual division, hierarchization and devaluation of labour: the model of the international division of labour	176
The 'Why' of the division: child-bearing capacity and female versus male capacity for work	177
Perspectives: 'femalization' of the proletarian and new forms of the socio-sexual division of labour	179
Index	182