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Conclusion

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The 'patriarchal moments' discussed in the present collection across genres and centuries broadly cover three different types of patriarchal power relationships: that between fathers/parents and their children, between men and women, and between individuals, families and governments.¹ All three are 'political' in the widest sense of the word, as power relations within the family and relationships between the sexes are governed by unwritten sociopolitical norms and conventions, whose transgression can nevertheless lead to conflict and debate. The last of the three patriarchal power relationships is contingent on the first two and builds these into a complex web, which is 'political' in the narrow institutional sense of the word, in which roles within the family are mirrored or replicated by those in the state, although it remains contested how far the parallels between familial and wider sociopolitical roles go at different points in time and where they might have their limits.

The first of these power relationships between fathers and their children is based on their biological link, with paternal responsibility and duty of care being met by the affection and reverence of their offspring. This biological relationship is best exemplified in the essays on Locke, Wollstonecraft, Sidney and Kafka, where it is not always entirely harmonious but fraught with assumed mutual obligations, the non-observance of which could easily turn into resentment and hatred. Locke's *Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) considers a dynamic relationship between parents and children that changes in character as the children develop into adults, and J.K. Numao focuses on the patriarchal moment in which a state of relative equality is achieved and parents and children can meet as genuine friends. However, this natural termination of the dependence of children on their parents implicitly only applied to male offspring before the modern period as the same progression to independence was not available to girls and young women. Significantly, therefore, Numao confines his discussion to the relationship between fathers and sons.

In the Western European legal tradition women remained the legal property of their fathers beyond adulthood, and if they married, they became legally

dependent on their husbands. Thus they never developed the same status of relative equality to their fathers, as is shown in the case of Wollstonecraft's Mary, whose main pursuit in life becomes the escape from the constraints imposed on her gender. While Faubert focuses on the issue of property-ownership that was denied to women in the patriarchal society of eighteenth-century England, legal and economic constraints could also have serious emotional and psychological consequences, as Wollstonecraft's protagonist is pressured into a loveless marriage for the sake of re-uniting two families divided over a property dispute and, because she remains bound by duty and guilt, she is unable to choose the lifestyle she desires.

Yet, men could also suffer from fraught relations with their fathers, as did Algernon Sidney, who as a younger son of an aristocrat was denied, on the grounds of primogeniture, the same status as his older brother and spent much of his adult life in pursuit of a meaningful social position and an estate he could call his own. Similarly, Franz Kafka struggled with feelings of inferiority, not through the vagaries of birth, but as a consequence of his physical and mental delicacy, which he juxtaposed in his *Letter to his Father* to the latter's intimidating masculinity and strength. The *Letter* reveals the full depth of psychological power a father could exercise over his son beyond adulthood, leaving his son not just full of fear but also with 'this feeling of being nothing' (Jahraus: 155). Throughout his life Kafka would feel like a failure unable to find solace either in his Jewish faith or in marriage – the only thing that would have made him his father's 'equal' (Jahraus: 161). Yet, parental influence over their offspring's person, property and marriage could also affect wider family and social relations.

Wollstonecraft's Mary shares the prospect of a loveless union with the bride of Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (1933), who is equally forced into marriage for the consolidation of family property, and both stage an elopement of sorts: Mary leaving for Portugal to escape life alongside her husband, while Lorca's bride is abducted by her lover on her wedding day, ending in the brutal revenge killing of both of them in defence of the jilted husband's honour. For, as Federico Bonaddio has shown, in a patriarchal society like that of early twentieth-century Andalusia, the reputation of men was dependent on the honour and submission of women, their 'sexual purity, modesty and restraint', which 'cannot be guaranteed' (166). Constrained less by economic necessity than by bourgeois social convention, meanwhile, Ibsen's Hedda Gabler chooses suicide as her way of rejecting patriarchal norms, while also freeing herself from 'marriage's biological trap' of motherhood (Weinstein: 152).

These literary marriages take us to the second patriarchal power relationship between men and women established by the perceived order of creation, critically assessed in the essays on the Bible and Talmud by Sarra Lev and Deborah W. Rooke. Based on a biased authoritative reading of these key texts which positions woman as the inferior helper of man, marriage has been depicted as the natural union between men and women, so that those distancing themselves or withdrawing from it are in need of justification. Mary Astell thus warns her female readers not to enter into marriage lightly, while nevertheless advocating wifely submission to their husbands, albeit to maintain the due social order rather than in acknowledgement of any natural male superiority. Astell, it seems, would have been amenable to Rousseau's suggestion of limiting a husband's power by informal means such as the manipulation of 'his sexual needs' (Parageau: 111) rather than open rebellion, while Wollstonecraft's Mary refuses to play the game of the sexes by simply withdrawing from all marital duties. An alternative approach was proposed in Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata*, which resonates with Wollstonecraft's concept of "legal prostitution" (Faubert: 124) in considering marriage as 'a means of licensing the sexual exploitation of women by men' (Alston: 142). For Tolstoy and his Christian anarchism the only logical way out of this exploitative relationship is 'chastity' and the pursuit of 'selfless brotherhood and love' even though this might lead to the extinction of the human race (Alston: 142).

The third and most complex patriarchal power relationship addressed in this collection concerns individuals, families and governments. Its classical description can be found in Aristotle's *Politics*, which identifies two key partnerships, between 'men and women, indispensable for human reproduction' and between "natural ruler" and "naturally ruled" (i.e. masters and slaves), indispensable for human survival. These two partnerships then 'join to form a household' or family, which becomes one of the building blocks of the city-state (Hall: 37).

Following in the same tradition, the early seventeenth-century London clergyman William Gouge depicted the family as a microcosm of the state, in which children learn to be responsible members of civil society. In a similar way, the family in Rousseau's *Emile* becomes a training ground for the life of an active subject/citizen in the state (Parageau: 108). Yet, it might also be questioned whether or not there is a moment in the life of each individual in which the link between fathers and their children is either broken or fundamentally changes, so that these parallels no longer apply. Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha*, 'the ideological bedrock of patriarchalism', which was 'vehemently attacked at

the time of the Exclusion Crisis' (Cuttica: 66) for its rejection of a contractual relationship between rulers and ruled and a denial of parliamentary liberties, thus became a test case for patriarchal political thought. While the Kentish gentleman implied in the early seventeenth century that the ruler's fatherly domination over his subject-children endured into adulthood and thus kept his subjects in a state of permanent sociopolitical immaturity, his opponents in the later seventeenth century suggested (albeit using a caricature of Filmer for their own political purposes) that once adulthood had been reached the relationship between fathers and their offspring fundamentally changed. In response, Locke established in the first of his *Two Treatises of Government* that kings could not claim any authority over their subjects on the basis of a hereditary succession based on primogeniture because the line of succession was many times broken by the vagaries of biology as well as warfare and conquest.² His *Thoughts Concerning Education* also suggests that biological maturity and adulthood change the bond between fathers and sons/their children from one of responsibility and care to one of friendship in which adult offspring become the intellectual and civil equals of their fathers.

The relationship between fathers and sons as well as their sons' position in society at large might also be affected by order of birth as we have seen in the case of Sidney. A move away from a patriarchal political system ruled by primogeniture might therefore have been of particular benefit to younger sons who had most to gain from a political order based on personal merit and individual achievement rather than birth. It might therefore be unsurprising that early modern republicanism in particular has sometimes been associated with an uprising of younger sons against the rule of primogeniture in the family and in the state.³ Yet the association between family and state outlived the early modern period. As we have seen above, Kafka's struggle against his own father within the narrow confines of his family also stood for the wider struggle his generation of German expressionist writers fought against rigid paternalist and patriarchalist structures in society and the state before the First World War, embodied by the government of 'the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy, which had been ruled by the caricature of an old and seemingly benevolent father' (Jahraus: 156).

Another problem for a political system based on patriarchal power and family relationships, meanwhile, is the rule of women as discussed by authors as different as John Knox and Angela Carter, or the political space to be inhabited by women within a patriarchal system, an issue addressed by Aristotle as well as Kant. While Knox objects to the monstrosity of female rule as subversive of

the natural sociopolitical order, Carter embraces female rule as a satire on the 'phallogocentricity' of the modern world (Charnock: 172). Arguably, Carter's dystopian matriarchy in *The Passion of New Eve* is the only successful female government presented here, but it is based on the subjection and consequent emasculation of men. While women in Aristotle's *Politics* are citizens of an inferior kind 'incapable of most public activities' (Hall: 36), the women in Kant's political system are depicted as inferior and intellectually immature, yet it is never entirely clear to what extent their 'intellectual immaturity' (Pascoe: 116) is either natural or conventional. Hence both McLaren and Pascoe try to grapple with the issue to what extent their authors should be considered either 'sexist' (Pascoe: 120) or 'misogynist' (McLaren: 50), or just the unreconstructed products of their time. A similar ambiguity can be found in Prosper Enfantin's address to the family of Saint-Simonians of 1831, which supposedly calls for the liberation of women. Yet, Enfantin's idea of liberation does not involve women's equality within the Saint-Simonian family but their (temporary) exclusion from it lest they 'enter into the state of *confused equality*'. The only place open to them remained that of the female leader, a 'maternal figure' (Laqua: 132), alongside Father Enfantin himself. Thus, as Daniel Laqua's essay shows, Saint-Simonism was at the same time 'both patriarchal and anti-patriarchal' (132), conservative and progressive. A similar ambiguity runs through all the essays in the present collection as a latent theme that is there right from the start.

As we have seen in the essays in the present collection, patriarchal power relationships in the western tradition are based on the three great monotheistic world religions as well as ancient political philosophy, in which the origins of mankind and society are discussed and a seemingly 'natural' order is established in the process of creation or the formation of the first human societies. Reverence for creation and the social order emerges from works as disparate as Augustine's *City of God* and Pope's *Essay on Man*, while the contestation of these foundational texts and their wider contexts shows that the perceived 'natural' order of creation might be built on very shaky foundations indeed.

The prime example for this are the different versions of the creation story as outlined both in the Talmud (Lev) and the Bible (Rooke), suggesting that it depends entirely on our preference and translation whether or not we find proof for a hierarchy of the sexes. One-sided interpretations and selective quotations from the Qur'an out of context have also skewed the picture. As Asma Barlas points out, 'it is not just questionable textual practices, but also the failure to contextualize its teachings, that ties the Qur'an in perpetuity to a long defunct patriarchy' (Barlas: 33). The same issue is also addressed in Conybeare's chapter,

which questions the extent to which 'Augustine's vision of humans in the world, and of their political organization, is ... hierarchical', before concluding that it is 'far more dynamic and egalitarian, through its recognition of others in their common humanity, than would be suggested by a patriarchalist reading' (48).

The image that emerges from the essays at hand therefore is one of a contested patriarchy, characterized by tensions between a normative framework and actual sociopolitical practice. While normative authority is exercised or imposed, this same authority is also constantly undermined as the patriarchal power brokers struggle to rise up to their task. The remaining question meanwhile is how this normative authority is created, or why a patriarchal norm is upheld even though all concerned are aware of its fictionality. A normative framework shapes wider power relations and serves the maintenance of hierarchies and the *status quo*, and it is always in the interest of certain individuals and groups to maintain them (cf Baines: 100). Those who shape the interpretation of a text can thus shape ideology, while ideology can also shape the interpretation of a text. The reading and re-reading of texts is therefore a dynamic process that can lead to different results in different contexts and circumstances. The 'patriarchal moments' captured in this collection are records of these processes of definition and contestation.