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Declaration on Behalf of an Archaeology of *Sexe*

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Abstract This article is an attempt to demonstrate the basic weakness of gender as a theoretical concept when studying prehistoric embodiment. 'Gender 'is theoretically linked to 'sex', known as the 'sex–gender system'. The study of past genders, in the sense of prehistoric normative roles and symbols, has decreased in interest among archaeologists, in favor of studying sex, *i.e.*, sexual practice and orientation. This switch to sex is part of archaeologists' endeavors to understand prehistoric bodily subjects. I will here recapitulate on the concept of gender and its serious limitations. I will furthermore try to shed light on how the turn to sex involves an encounter with almost exactly the same fallacies as did the focus on gender. As an alternative for the future, I suggest social identity and embodiment be studied under the theoretical label of 'sexe'.

Keywords Sex–gender system · Social identity · Body · Sexuality · *Sexe*

Introduction

Archaeologists dedicated to studies of the body have, in recent years, turned their interest to the study of sexuality. But how should we study sexuality? Where *is* sex, and where should it fruitfully be placed theoretically? What are the fallacies of studying sex? These questions are broad and difficult to approach. Our first reaction could be to employ a vulgar Freudian approach and claim that sexuality is the final truth about human existence. In fact, this seems to be the implicit notion concerning sexuality within the so-called archaeology of gender. Great artists, however, are sometimes capable of revealing truths about the human race that science, even the human sciences, struggles to express. So, let me start this article with brief examples from the art of film.

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Lately, I have enjoyed watching some classical movies by Federico Fellini and Ingmar Bergman, and occasionally I have asked myself why I found their films so immensely fascinating—until it struck me that these artists have managed to create a wide diversity of female characters that stand out as what could be described as *whole beings*. By 'whole beings', I refer to fictitious figures that we experience as true persons, in other words, bodily, sexual human beings who have desires and wills, as well as intellectual and moral capacities and the ability to conduct agency. In Bergman's *Smile of the Summer Night*, the successful actress Desirée Armfeldt comes to the little town where the story takes place. Here, she receives a nightly visit from her former lover, the middle-aged lawyer Fredrik Egerman, now married to the 20-year-old and still sexually innocent Anna. The night does not bring what Egerman had anticipated, as Desirée is expecting the brave duke Malcolm, who is her new lover. Egerman then returns to his residence, and his young wife, Anna, whose house is lived in by still other persons and passions. Among these is the lawyer's adult son, who is in love with the innocent Anna—and not to forget the clever maid of a similar age, Petra. Anna and Petra are in some ways each other's oppositions; the former, despite her 4-year marriage to the lawyer is still childish and inexperienced, while the other is independent and sexually experienced. Bergman still manages to make them both true sexual agents despite their marked difference as persons.

This ability of portraying female persons in such an authentic and straightforward way is also found in Fellini's *8½*. Here the main character, the film director Guido Anselmi, is experiencing a professional and personal crisis. This crisis is played out through the way it affects Guido's relationship with women, and not least through the women's relationship to him. Fellini uses a wide range of womanly figures, literally playing around his main character, and serving as veritable personifications of his crisis' complexes. For example, this is the case in the scene where Guido's wife Luisa is keeping her husband company in an outdoor restaurant. At this stage, a most destructive dialog is going on between the two, showing that Luisa, too, is on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Then suddenly, Carla—a real femme fatale—'sails' onto the scene, whence is Guido hardly able to conceal his total absorption in her. He is now becoming aware of his wife Luisa's reaction to this, and what happens next is that the reality of the scene seems to conflate with what seems to be Guido's dream life or imagination. Thus, the next scenes take a new twist; we see Luisa rising and running towards and greeting Carla, and then becoming intimately friendly with her. Further, the two women start dancing on the floor of the restaurant and behaving in a manner reminiscence of a classic heterosexual couple—of which Carla is the woman and Luisa the man. We may thus witness how Fellini displays different 'types' of women, as well as his playing with the fluidity of sexual identities. Simultaneously, he somehow manages to express that such a labeling of sexual persons into 'types' is an enterprise leading to very limiting categories of people. For this, performing of a heterosexual epitome does not transform the one woman—Luisa—into a man; the two of them are still women. What makes Luisa the less 'womanly' of the two, is nothing but very superfluous outer criteria, like her shorter haircut and her wearing of low-heeled shoes and a 'unisex'-styled blouse. This is in contrast to Carla's long hair, high heels and a dress showing the ultimate elegance of a female body. Interesting to observe is how the film lets the femme fatale Carla—just before entering the scene of the restaurant and not visible to its guests—rehearse a womanly gait! This is a

wonderful illustration of Fellini's implicit understanding of how gender is performed, and in this case literally trained. By doing this, he manages to expose the unexposed unnaturalness of a body style that commonly would be regarded as a sign of eternal womanhood and femininity.

The female characters of Smile of the Summer Night (1955) and 8½ (1963) do not at all live up to the common notions of womanhood of the time they were made. The films are totally bereft of stereotyped clichés about women or womanhood. Devotion to caring for children and husband and housekeeping is simply never an issue. There are no scenes with any settings even referring to or connoting such a domestic sphere. The women of the films, both the few mentioned here, as well as others, are not especially soft, weak or passive, except for some parodic characters occurring in 8½. Thus, I suggest the women in the two films could be described and experienced as sexual beings in a positive sense, in which 'sexual' is to be understood as consisting of, among other things, passions and driving forces for action. In other words, they epitomize clear profiles of agents, no matter how they prefer to perform their femininity, whatever this may involve.

Now, what do the persons of the films represent, other than real people? Another way of putting this is to say they are embodied persons. Embodiment has become the core term for archaeology's body project. Embodiment may be explained as 'living made concrete', 'incorporated personhood', 'a concrete living subject', 'concrete individual lives', or 'vivid persons of flesh'. Most commonly, however, it is referred to as *lived experience*. This concept has its origins in phenomenology; thus 'lived experience', 'phenomenology', and 'embodiment' form a chain of interrelated terms typifying this branch of archaeology. So, what is it that we archaeologists want when studying past embodiments? What is our quest? I would claim that it is to be challenged and surprised by the multitude of prehistoric embodiments. In this search, we want to get away from stereotypes of being, originating in our own reality. In short, we want to see the variation and possibilities in the human race. Inevitably, from what is said so far, it is vivid living persons of flesh and blood that we want. One of the aspects characterizing them as living is precisely their total lack of representing stereotypes. Here are no sexual clichés, and I would argue that being a stereotyped cliché is the antithesis of being an embodied person. However, we never witness these film characters in situations of sexual activity. Still, they are 'full' sexual beings and this is perhaps the momentum which makes them stand out as being exactly like living persons. These persons' sexuality is present, but simultaneously not present.

An archaeology of *Sexe*: A Preliminary Definition

When the concept of *gender* was introduced to archaeology (Conkey and Spector 1984), one of its core objectives was that this concept, *i.e.*, 'gender', would prevent us from approaching prehistoric persons through stereotypic and essentialist lenses. The sex–gender conceptual pair, or the theory of sex and gender, in short the 'gender concept' is well-established despite a generally acknowledged consensus of its limitations. Still 'gender', as used in archaeological jargon is uncontested as there seems to be an implicit understanding that the term 'gender' represents a kind of 'guarantee' against essentialist approaches to prehistoric personhood. As an

alternative to this archaeology of gender, I propose *an archaeology of sexe*. The nature of 'sexe' will be elucidated in this article; on a preliminary basis, I merely state that an archaeology of sexe involves the abandonment of the sex–gender terminology and what I regard to be an unfortunate theoretical trajectory accompanying its use. This trajectory is represented in a new kind of essentialism following on from what has come to be an implicit contention that there is a *necessary*—or, alternatively *always* relevant—link between sexual orientation and social identity. Even if today's archaeology of gender has a focus on performativity as being decisive for personhood, I argue that it operates from a point of gravity anchored in sex, in the sense of *sexuality*; in this way sexual orientation forms *the* essential source of social identity, or more precisely of 'gender types'. Sexual orientation may indeed be imbued in a social role; an archaeology of sexe, however, makes this link not a necessary one. An archaeology of sexe involves the abandonment of gender. From a pure terminological point of view, it is a going back to the exclusive use of 'sex'. Within archaeological discourse, however, the leaving behind of 'gender' and the conceptual pair of 'sex–gender'—would mostly be understood as an essentialist point of view. 'Sex', however, does not necessarily involve essentialist approaches. To avoid confusion with essentialist readings of 'sex', I propose to use the French term 'sexe'—as in Simone de Beauvoir's *Le Deuxième Sexe* (1949; cf. Moi 1999).

A central question arising from my line of reasoning will be: Why must 'non-normative' practices attributed to prehistoric women and men make us categorize these prehistoric persons as specific 'genders'? Why are they not simply women and men incorporating all types of knowledge and lived experience? I will explain how attributing them with the status of a 'gender' is a most limited way of approaching persons. The link to sexual orientation connected to this kind of reasoning is just as limiting as the stereotypes that gender archaeology initially was intended to hinder. The archaeology of gender currently addresses bodies and performativity. In so doing, concepts from the field of phenomenology are taken into use. However, traits of phenomenological theory are not instantly transferable to 'sex' and 'gender'. Thus, an archaeology of sexe also represents an attempt to seriously address the phenomenology of the body and sexuality and the concepts related to this tradition of thought.

From Gender to Sex in Archaeology

One might think that this paper is about sex. Yet if 'sex' is denoted as *the activity of sex*, this paper is not attributing it much value. Whole beings of the past, however, cannot be comprehended, imagined, or interpreted unless their sexuality is regarded as basic to their integrity and subjectivity as real persons. We know that the prehistoric past consisted of individuals who were true, whole, and sexual persons, as has just been tentatively illustrated by examples from great films. Bodies of all times are sexual bodies. The archaeological study of embodiment has, in recent years, been subject to a blast of interest. The study of these past bodies, and not least their sexuality—in the sense of *sexual practice and orientation*—have come to be the main gateway into these embodiments. In her article on past sexualities, Barbara Voss quotes a dig house graffiti from Çatalhöyük saying "gender is out—sex is in" (Voss 2000: 180). As Voss writes, it can hardly be known what the author of this sentence

really meant by this, but to us it may serve as an illustration of (gender) archaeology's increased interests in bodies and the sexual. In some respects, this runs parallel with a simultaneous decreased interest in gender—indeed, 'gender' refers to its original use by Gayle Rubin (1975), implying that the person's sex from the side of nature (boy or girl) is raised according to a specific gender ideology, and become normative men and women. There is thus a tendency towards archaeology becoming less concerned with the normative, and more interested in individual bodies and alien sexual practices.

Cheryl Claassen contends that "archaeology of gender is an archaeology of *sexuality*" (Claassen 1992: 4, italics in original). This is followed up by Voss who has demonstrated how archaeologists have, "over the last fifteen years, consistently considered sexuality to be an important aspect of gender-focused research" (2000: 186). This approach is further manifest in published volumes like *Archaeologies of Sexuality* (Schmidt and Voss 2000), and monographs in which sexuality is approached as interrelated in individual agents' lives (*e.g.*, Meskell 1999). Alison Rautman and Lauren Talalay (2000: 3) even use the word 'sexual/gender categories', a term only underlining the turn to an interest in sex as sexual orientation and practice. The present article is critical to the sex(uality) approach. I am not claiming that the studying of past sexualities is always irrelevant. My concern is rather to demonstrate that this approach—*by its close link to the sex–gender symbiosis*—runs the risk of just reproducing 'sexual types' of prehistoric persons. 'Sexual types' are essentially not different from the numerous 'gender categories'—other than only women and men—that scholars of gender archaeology are inclined to construct. Having in mind that the sexual approach undoubtedly is relevant in some contexts, I will explore its weaknesses and its fallacies. I will try to demonstrate how it is limited by its intimately entwined relationship with the *theoretical concept of gender*. Even if this is acknowledged by several others (see references above), none within our field of study have raised the question whether we really need sex or gender for the purposes of our study. And neither has any one doubted the viability of this approach when coupled with phenomenology. These are the issues raised here. I will try to illustrate how the sex–gender theory does not bring us closer to the whole and true persons of the past, *i.e.*, the prehistoric body, but only creates an obsession with sex, which again creates the stereotyping of sexualities and consequently a range of genders. Such gender categories, when constructed, do not necessarily represent an interesting persona in the social context we are studying, but potentially we only produce figures engaged in exotic sexual practices.

Deviant and alien sexualities surely existed in the past, whether this was tolerated by society or not, or was normal to 'them' but deviating from our reality. No matter how this complicated issue is dealt with, the theoretical course structured by the sex–gender system may only lead to pitfalls in our study of past embodiments. This may seem contrary to what I expressed in my introduction, in which I clearly state that sexuality is fundamental to, and a prerequisite of being a true person. As I hope will become clear—and due to my standpoint rooted in the phenomenology of the body—I firmly adhere to the basic fact that being a whole and true person is to be a sexual person. Claiming this, however, is not to say that the study of the activity of sex in itself—with a primary focus on prehistoric persons' orientation *as* sex partners—is always relevant.

Body archaeology recurrently claims to be related to phenomenology (*e.g.*, Hamilakis *et al.* 2002; Joyce 2005, with references). This is all good; however, phenomenology of body and sexual difference (cf. Heinämaa 2003; Kruks 1990) is not compatible with the sex/gender terminology, nor the theory attached to it. My concrete criticism of the gender concept will follow many of the same lines and be greatly inspired by Toril Moi's writings in *What is a Woman and other essays* (1999). The concept has also been debated within cultural anthropology (*e.g.*, Moore 1994: 36–42) and in archaeology. Some scholars have suggested the exclusion of 'gender' and focus on 'sex/sexuality' (Claassen 1992; Meskell 1999). This is based on a recognition of the sex/gender confusion, and of these two 'poles'[1] as ultimately representing the same thing. This identification comes primarily from the impact of Judith Butler (1993; 1999 [1990], see Perry and Joyce 2001) and her pointing out how sex collapses into gender and vice versa. Discussions in our field of study have led others to a renewed embracing of the gender concept (Dommasnes 1996; Sørensen 2000: 54–59). Yet, despite this challenge and critique of its use, or the recourse to sex and sexuality (*e.g.*, Alberti 2006; Conkey and Gero 1997; Joyce and Claassen 1997; Meskell 1996, 1998; Knapp and Meskell 1997; Strassburg 1996, 2000: 39–44), the sex/gender system has never been subjected to a true 'ripping apart', let alone abandonment.

Scholars of gender sometimes claim a discontinuity between sex and gender, *i.e.*, that gender does not necessarily follow from biological sex (*e.g.*, Kulick 1997; Schmidt and Voss 2000: 2). I would say that on the contrary, when 'discontinuities' of sex and gender are found, it is as much based on sexuality as before, but now in an inverted version, *i.e.*, in terms of deviant sexuality. Gender is superimposed onto sex. I here argue that no matter how one chooses to use the terms, or substitute one for the other, the gender mode of thinking is pervading most writings on prehistoric embodiment. In the present context of use, sex does not seem to get beyond a study of gender; by genders' link to sex, sex(uality) is what you get, no matter how this dualism is contrived. I believe sex and gender, in its current use, does not provide the relevant tools to approach past bodies. Still, gender rules the scene. In contrast to this, Moi (1999) presents a novel critique of the gender concept; her assessment of the sex–gender dichotomy is blunt and goes right to the core of the issue. In summary, her critique would be that the gender concept does not tell us anything more than the following fact: being born into a male or female body does not determine a specific behavior or sexuality. This statement is widely acknowledged, however, its consequences, as investigated and explored by Moi, are not. For as she claims, the conceptual pair of sex and gender—and I would add, even if gender is removed—do not help us understand anything more, *either of sexuality or of the body*. In other words "[t]he distinction between sex and gender is simply irrelevant to the task of producing a concrete and historical understanding of what it means to be a woman (or a man) in a given society." (Moi 1999: 4). In this paper, I briefly outline the history of the gender concept and consider this concept's use in archaeology. I will further forge a link back to sex and attempt to demonstrate how the 'sex pole' of the sex–gender conceptual pair only leads back to emphasise the weaknesses of gender. Lastly, I will

[1] I visualize 'pole' from high school physics, with magnetic poles opposing, but connected.

discuss alternative ways for a theoretical approach to the study of body and sexuality in prehistory.

'Sex–gender'–Origin, Essence and Consequence

The sex and gender conceptual pair was invented by the medical scientist Robert Stoller. He suggested this terminology in conference papers in the 1960s, and later his writings on this matter are synthesized in his book *Sex and Gender* (Stoller 1984). Stoller were treating persons who had been born with abnormal, or lacking sexual organs, but most importantly here, people who experienced themselves as belonging to the wrong sex. For instance, a man, could claim he was 'in fact' a woman, his body was just wrong. Stoller's solution to this was to give this experience ontological status; this implies that the psyche 'owns', or embeds a specific sex, which is as real and existent as the sex of the body. Based on the perceived miscorrelation between the sex of the body and the sex of the psyche, he found it useful to construct a distinction between sex as body, and sex as self-experience, where the former was called 'sex' and the latter 'gender'. Gender, in Stoller's work refers to gender *identity* and to gender *roles* (Stoller 1984: 9). Persons suffering from an experienced discrepancy between their sex and gender were treated by surgery and hormones so that the two 'parties' of their being were brought in accordance. So, with help of these analytical tools, transsexuals were diagnosed and their condition was explained. Their treatment was to change the sex (biological body), so it matched their gender (psyche, mind). But, as laconically noted by Moi (1999: 21), nobody questioned why "most doctors and transsexuals consider that the obvious way to achieve this is to change the body and not the mind".[2]

As we know, sex and gender was just to become another special case of the Cartesian dualism between (biological) body and mind. This has been pointed out on several occasions, also within archaeology (*e.g.*, Meskell 1998, 1999: 45, 56p; Meskell& Joyce, 2003: 67 pp; cf. Moi 1999: 80; Sørensen 2000: 44); at present this has become more of a truism among archaeologists interested in embodiment. The issue raised by Moi, could probably take us a little further in our reflections on this; why is the body 'the outlaw'—and the place of localization of the condition called transsexualism? Why must body and not mind be changed? Perhaps this is just a matter of logics following from the Cartesian split between subject(ive) and object (ive). Here, body belongs to the latter, to 'outer nature', or world *partes extra partes*. Perhaps after all, this outer world of which the body is a part is what counts as the most real. Being that this outer world was able to be changed by modern medicine, it perhaps makes sense that body and not mind was the 'party' to undergo treatment. The Cartesian thesis maintains that the true nature of the world can only be revealed by a pure thinking subject at distance from this same world. The status of the transsexual pre-surgery body as 'wrong' is paradoxically underlined by the subject mind. This demonstrates how the two 'parties'—subjec(ivity) and object(ivity)—are points on the same 'spectrum', as is gender and sex. But it also shows that the natural makeup of a body, *i.e.*, some given facts of nature, do matter.

[2] Moi does not discuss this issue further.

The transcendence of the limiting faculties of subject and object—and the gap between them—is at the core of the phenomenological approach, as argued by Merleau-Ponty (1962). Here, he builds further on Husserl's theories, whose approach was to regard human existence as a state of simultaneousness of different regions of being. Living involves both terms *Körper* and *Leib* of Husserl (1960: 89–150); *simultaneously* (and with no division) the body is a human living body insofar as it is a materiality, Körper, pervaded by Leib. Leib includes faculties belonging to consciousness (mind, psyche, 'soul') and the human world in which knowledge, in the broad sense, is learned (intersubjectivity, life world, 'spirit'). This position of being part of, and *in between*, these regions of being *is* human existence—in Husserlian terms *Leib*—existence as a 'be-souled' materiality intertwined and intercrossing in a material field which is both given by nature and created by humanity. Thus, phenomenology represents a radical break with the Cartesian dualism. Rather, as Merleau-Ponty (1968: 130–162) claims, being human is a state in which the pure subject and the pure object has not yet dissolved. Thinking in terms of Leib and Körper is at the core of thinking of the body by phenomenology, but somehow the constructionist concept of gender has sneaked in. It is peculiar to note that 'gender' more or less implicitly is attributed to one of the most prominent representatives of phenomenological philosophy, that is, to Simone de Beauvoir and especially to her great work *The Second Sex*. Typically, her famous statement that one is not born a women, but rather becomes one (Beauvoir 1979 [1949]: 295) is mentioned in the same breath as gender, as an ingress to the explanation of the socially constructed aspects of being. The examples of this referential practice are numerous, and are prevalent in gender studies both inside and outside archaeology. However, this connection is a great distortion, which only serves to blur her philosophy:

> "…Beauvoir's idea of woman as a *becoming* is different from the idea of *gender* as a socio-cultural construct. Her well known thesis "One is not born woman: one becomes woman" is misrepresented when it is identified with the sex/gender distinction. *Le deuxième sexe* is not a thesis about women's socialization, but a phenomenological inquiry into the constitution of the meaning of sexual difference" (Heinämaa 2003: xiii).

As also discussed by Moi (1999), the poststructuralist interpretation of Beauvoir's second sex tends to be distorted; thus scholars like Moira Gatens (1991), Donna Haraway (1991: 131, 133), and not least Judith Butler (1999[1990]: 141) are all readers of constructionism into these famous words of Beauvoir, and they are, in turn, standard references for archaeologists of gender. Butler, for example, claims that "for Beauvoir gender is constructed". Thus Butler gives a strongly distorted image of Beauvoir when she claims that "[t]here is nothing in her [Beauvoir's] account that guarantees that the one who becomes a woman is necessarily female" (Butler 1999 [1990]: 12; see also Butler 1993, 4 and compare Moi 1999: 72). Rather, Beauvoir took a point of departure in biology as a given fact, and something which is constitutive of womanly existence. This given materiality from the side of nature is decisive for a woman's situation in the world. As I will get back to, the gender concept refers to something of a more ideological kind, and is potentially arbitrary, whereas Beauvoir deals with natural facts. Simultaneously, Beauvoir's position is as

antideterministic and anti-essentialist as possible. The bodily facts of a person thus make her specific *situation* in the world. In common with Merleau-Ponty, she regards this situation as decisive for personal *lived experience*. Butler, however, makes a false link between the gender concept and works by Beauvoir's phenomenology of sexual difference; but, in this theoretical setting the sex–gender theory did not even exist. Moreover, the lack of this conceptual pair did not prevent scholars from regarding the historicity of being woman and man. For example, from the field of cultural anthropology, Margaret Mead's study *Sex and Temperament in three Primitive Societies* (1935) is perhaps the most prominent example (see also Leacock 1978). Here, Mead demonstrated the historicity of sex in New Guinea. Among the *Arapesh*, both sexes were described as—by 'our' terms, which more precisely are those of western culture in the 1930s—as 'feminine' in the sense that both women and men cultivated a non-aggressive and child-rearing oriented temperament. This stands in contrast to the *Mundugumor*, where both sexes were aggressive in a way that our society would judge to be a typical masculine style of behavior. In the third group, the *Tchambuli*, a sexual distinction of behavior between the two sexes occurred; they were, however, turned upside down so that—by our standards—men stood out as feminine and women as masculine (Mead 1935, 279 pp). So, it was fully possible to study the potential variations of how to be a woman or a man, without any help from the gender concept; 'gender' would simply not have given any greater clarification of the potential historical contingency of womanly and manly lives in New Guinea.[3] Still, when 'gender' appeared for the first time within the human/social sciences, it was for precisely this reason: to emphasize the historicity of sex.

The first time it appears is in Gayle Rubin's essay on *The Traffic in Women* (Rubin 1975). As I understand her, the term 'traffic' refers to the social threads passing through a female body that is born into a traditional patriarchal society. One aspect of this traffic is the girl's role at the core of gift exchange between kin groups led by men. Bringing in Lévi-Strauss' theories of kinship and Freud on development of femininity and masculinity, she charts how patriarchal societies develop, as part of a greater economic system. Rubin's article is an attack on patriarchal societies, pointing out the necessity for these societies to maintain a heterosexual order, and a mystification of woman and man as almost belonging to different 'species'. And even if Freud and Lévi-Strauss' theories serve as explanatory devices for the development of such societal systems, they are also, quite reasonably, criticized for upholding notions of the "naturalness" of being a woman and man. Rubin's point is to criticize patriarchy and reveal the historical consistency of such a system. In so doing, she defines gender as *created* where "[k]inship is the culturalization of biological sexuality on the societal level" and "psychoanalysis describes the transformation of the biological sexuality of individuals as they are enculturated" (Rubin 1975: 97). Rubin uses the 'sex/gender system' to refer to the more specific gender systems characteristic of patriarchal societies. In this sense, the 'sex–gender system' is something which is subjected to critique—almost a bad word; at the same time, she calls attention to the arbitrariness of gender systems and the possibility for other quite different—and potentially liberated—sex–gender systems. Rubin applied Stoller's

[3] The same could be said about works by anthropologist Elanor Leacock (1978): on her very interesting work on sex roles and motherhood prior to the "invention" of the sex/gender system.

individualist and psychological approach to the social field; thus, gender had come to refer mostly to social sex as opposed to biological sex. Rubin explains the emergence of patriarchal sex/gender systems as linked to a differentiated socialization of girls and boys. This differentiation is rooted in symbolic meanings attributed to the different sets of genitalia. But this is as near as she comes to addressing the body, for even if she sees the symbols connected to sex organs as the point of departure for the trajectory socialization takes, sex/gender systems are potentially arbitrary. In other words, all potential genders can be inscribed on bodies. Rubin thus works in a theoretical universe which ultimately leads to an either/or: either the body is the basis for a strict trajectory leading to womanhood or manhood, or the body may potentially structure any meaning under the sun.

Gender in Archaeology: A Retrospective

In 1984, Margaret Conkey and Janet Spector published their groundbreaking article on the archaeology of gender. Here, the authors confront the implicit template that, until then, had dominated interpretations of women and men in prehistory. This template was nothing but the uncontested stereotypical images of women and men prevailing in the twentieth century western world. Thus, the typical representation of the lower Palaeolithic core family would be of a family father actively and aggressively experiencing the world on his hunting expedition, while the mother kept close to their dwelling place where she collected vegetable food supplies and cared for their children. Moreover, it was demonstrated how, as a result, material culture related to females was described in passive terms, and how the opposite was the case in interpretations of men. This male bias was predicated on sexism and in taking for granted that women and men are determined by biological givens, *i.e.*, to the notion that biology is necessarily destiny. As part of a move in a new direction, the gender concept was introduced to archaeology (Conkey and Spector 1998 [1984], compare Ortner and Whitehead 1981). Since then, *gender archaeology*[4] has gained status as a field worthy of our subject's enquiries.[5] Internationally, this paper must be regarded as opening the gate to this field of study and archaeologists were, for the first time, presented with the concept of gender. It is obvious from the above, that the heritage of both Stoller and Rubin is strong. Yet, what came to be the initial focus of interest in archaeology, were culturally defined gender norms as inscribed on biologically sexed bodies: that is gender as socially "prescribed and proscribed" (Conkey and Spector 1998 [1984]: 25). In other words, one followed Rubin's emphasis on gender as

[4] The indisputable relevance and importance of an archaeology of gender is not the issue here. Terms like 'gendered activities', 'gendered spaces', etc. all derive from gender archaeology. These categories have become part of an archaeological terminology referring to the issue in question. I will not, however, attack the use of these deeply embedded words. I admit that I am a user of this terminology myself, albeit somewhat reluctantly (cf. Goldhahn and Fuglestvedt 2012).

[5] Indeed enquires of women in prehistory had been addressed before. For instance, in 1976, the seminar entitled with the rhetoric question *Were they all men?* was held at the Museum of Archaeology in Stavanger, Norway (published by Bertelsen *et al.* 1987). In this volume, 'sex' is the term used to discuss the issue in question.

constructed and part of a wider '(sex–) gender system' involving the 'breeding' of specific womanly and manly genders and of people's reproduction.

As we know, the sex–gender theory was later debated within our field of study. The points of critique originate in contexts where archaeologists confront the body. These contexts of critique may be represented by (1) burial archaeology and/or explicit and more or less theoretical enquiries into the (2) archaeology of embodiment. Concerning (1) *burial archaeology*, the original expectation was that the analytical sex/gender distinction would serve as a powerful tool for confronting a diversity of relations and 'discontinuities' between sex and gender in any cultural context. As I will come back to, it was generally expected that this sex/gender approach would reveal a diversity of gender types in prehistoric contexts. Another, and more dominating voice in debates around burial archaeology is the disbelief that sex and gender really can get us any further. This critique is typical in a scenario in which a skeleton of a prehistoric burial is biologically classified as female, and the archaeologist, without any more data or consideration of other contextual features, defines this as having a feminine, womanly gender, even though it is obviously only its sex which has been determined. In other cases, the skeleton is missing, but the grave goods are preserved and bear features—*i.e.*, beads or weapons—reminiscent of our own feminine/masculine categories. In these cases, the graves tend to be classified as belonging to genders that are nothing but a reproduction of our traditionalist notions of women and men, and, in reality, of sex implicitly contrived in an essentialist way. Among many others, Jimmy Strassburg (1996, 2000) and Skogstrand (2006) has pointed out how gender becomes sex, and sex becomes gender, and how this "distinction in its common, normal form used in feminist works is not actually much of a distinction at the end of the day" (Strassburg 1996: 40). Here, Strassburg like several other archaeologists, is inspired by Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter* (1999[1990], 1993) and her establishing of how the sex and gender dichotomy, when set in operation, lose their demarcation, and conflate into the same thing. This collapse of sex into gender and vice versa is widely acknowledged. This brings us to the second context of critique which is (2) *the archaeology of embodiment*.[6] This field of enquiry is very much inspired by Butler's perhaps most powerful concept, *performativity*. Butler's probably most interesting observation is on how individuals produce their own gender by performing and imitating certain behaviors, which in turn are understood as natural in their origin. By performing our gender, we naturalize it, and notions like 'true woman' and 'real man' come about. To get a fuller understanding of what this implies, we can go back to Fellini's 8½ and consider how the femme fatale, actually practiced and repeated her movements one last time before entering the 'stage', *i.e.*, the outdoor restaurant. On stage, she convinced her public that all of her womanhood was naturally immanent. Gender as performativity has surely brought many fruitful concepts to archaeology, and has been successfully used to understand prehistoric contexts. Thus, her thesis that gender identity is something which is constructed by way of performance—in other words, sex, or gender as something we *do*—in turn gives a false impression of this identity as being 'natural', and this has had a great impact on archaeology. In this way, a more

[6] I do not see the two contexts of critique—burial archaeology and archaeology of embodiment as necessarily separate domains.

'concrete' approach to the body is attempted. This is embodiment and gender understood as something the person creates through repeated actions, as agents. One example from lithic archaeology are the studies of Marcia-Ann Dobres (1999) of stone tool manufacturing as a field in which gender is produced literally through production. Moreover, the interest in embodiment has highlighted the body's materiality and lived experience. This is where body archaeology forges the strongest link to phenomenology; but, this is also where embodiment studies build on incompatible theoretical grounds—*i.e.*, phenomenological accounts of the body combined with an uncontested bond to the sex–gender terminology. However, this terminology does not serve the aims of studying lived experience or the materiality of the body. Butler (1993: 1) endeavors to link "the materiality of the body to the performativity of gender", but in discussing this, the body's materiality is written off in terms of mere sex (*i.e.*, biology). As I will get back to, this is because her use of 'sex' only includes Husserl's *Körper*, but no *Leib*. Therefore intriguingly, Butler's quest for the materiality of the performing body slips away from us (Moi 1999: 49, and see Meskell 1999: 38). Gender does not automatically lead us to bodies and embodiment. This has turned the focus of archaeologists of embodiment over to sex. But this approach does not take us beyond the circle of sex and gender because this conceptual pair does not contain *Leib*, or if you like, the living real body.

Merleau-Ponty stated that humankind is not a biological species, but a historical idea. By this, he did not mean to say that biology does not exist, but rather that what we consider as belonging to the field of nature changes historically according to context. This may be seen as forming the background for cultural differences in the way biology is perceived as a basis for sexual categorizations. Butler takes this position as far as possible, to the point where she claims that "perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all" (Butler 1999: 10). This way, the entire materiality of the body becomes localized within the socially constructed field of gender. Simultaneously, this person's embodiment, *i.e.*, his/her knowledge in the broadest sense is, in fact, turned into an issue of sexual difference. A serious and relevant consideration of the world's natural givens is consequently not taken into consideration. The idea that gender involves embodiment, which is basically created through performativity, could be said to form the current consensus on sex and gender. From here on, I will call this the *gender performativity paradigm*.

A parallel, though not contradictory, voice in this discourse is the one which more explicitly refers to gender as culturally inscribed norms, where emphasis is placed on the socially constructed aspects (*e.g.*, Gilchrist 1999: 9 with references). In Marie Louise Stig Sørensen's textbook *Gender Archaeology*, sex in relation to gender is explained as something which "creates its structures or categories in accordance not with any specific biological realities but on the basis of a social conception of what these biologies are about and how they should be classified" (Sørensen 2000: 47).[7] Furthermore, Roberta Gilchrist in *Gender and Archaeology* defines gender in terms

[7] The aim of this article is to argue against even using the gender concept, or the account that Sørensen and other scholars advocate. The context of Sørensen's definition of sex in relation to gender is a critique of Nordbladh and Yates (1990, 220) on conception of sex. I fully share this critique (Sørensen 2000: 46p).

of "how biological and/or cognitive difference is interpreted culturally, how this varies between societies and how the mind and body may evolve in response to cultural definitions of gender" (Gilchrist 1999: 13). This current concept of gender is mostly about societal norms, ideology or super-individual ideals. These are the "prescriptions and proscriptions" (Conkey and Spector 1998[1984]: 25) in operation when "girling the girl and boying the boy" (Joyce 2000). It involves social patterns and not so much individual embodiment. While this gender concept allows for a possible continuity between sex and gender, the general consensus is that there is not necessarily any continuity. This account of gender is close to that of Rubin (1975). I call this the *gender constructionism paradigm*.

Both paradigms are, however, rooted in constructionism; the first one places the whole body—including its materiality—into the field of cultural construction by performativity (alternatively a total overlap between sex and gender), whereas the second is mostly concerned with normative patterns. Therefore, the two paradigms are not contradictory, and are also seen in combination.[8]

Stereotypic Humans and Fantastic Deviants

Both gender paradigms anticipate that we can find a series of genders.[9]In addition to normative woman and man within any given context, these would include persons who combine sexual characteristics. In general terms, such identities are called *third genders* (Hollimon 1997; 2000; Prine 2000; Saladin D'Anglure 1994). Principally, the gender theory, in its most optimistic version, expects to reveal contexts yielding a number of 'genders' (*e.g.*, Weglian 2001). For instance, four genders have been suggested for the Scandinavian Late Mesolithic (Schmidt 2004: 103), as well as up to seven genders among some of the historically known native groups in California (Hollimon 1997). An important point is made by Roberta Gilchrist who, in discussing the possibilities of finding female warriors in graves, criticizes the way archaeologists tend to interpret the burial of warrior equipment with female skeletons "as transvestite priests or cross-dressing warriors, *fantastic interpretations* that have been preferred over that of a woman wielding masculine symbols of power" (Gilchrist 1999: 70, emphasis mine). My aims in this paper are fully in harmony with the point made here. The inclination to arrive at such 'fantastic interpretations', originates in a way of thinking structured by a *gender mode of reasoning* embedded in the two paradigms defined above. Thus, an exotic 'gender type' is created, instead of simply a woman, probably taking part in war-like activities during her life. This woman buried with

[8] One example of this is social anthropologist of gender, Henrietta Moore's *A Passion for Difference* (1994). Here, the second paradigm is represented when gender identity is described as "guaranteed by a matrix of social relationships rather than by anything which might be deemed an essential attribute of the individual", and furthermore the first and second paradigm is combined in the following statement: "Recent ethnography has produced evidence of a large number of cases where it is the performance of particular kinds of activities or tasks which guarantees gender identity rather than simply the possession of the appropriate genitala" (Moore 1994:39).

[9] The phenomenon that some categories of people are combining characteristics of both sexes, and thus represented a 'third sex', was a widely known fact prior to the invention of the sex–gender system: both Beauvoir (Beauvoir 1979 [1949])as well as Mead (1935), to take only two examples, discuss this.

weapons is a woman who just diverges from our own stereotypes of womanhood. I believe this doing away with stereotypes of womanhood (and manhood for that matter) was the initial and real rationale behind an archaeology of gender, but this example demonstrates how an archaeology of gender gets trapped in its own concept.

Thomas Laqueur's famous book *Making Sex* (1990) is an appropriate medium for my further reflections. To recapitulate, he suggests two models for discourse on sexual difference. The *one-sex* model rests on the assumption that woman and man are mere variants of the same materiality. Difference is a question of scale and thus of an analogous, or continuous type. This way of thinking was replaced by a *two-sex* model, in which woman and man are seen as opposites, as two distinct *kinds*; almost as a 'digital' opposition. These are, according to Laqueur, the two typical ways of understanding sexual difference. The question is not whether one of these is 'correct'. I would, however, contend that their strength comes about only when used in combination. Now what happens if these two modes of thinking are compared to the concept of gender? Theoretically, the essence of 'gender' is that it is about societal norms. Norms, however, cannot be anything but ideals. I still contend that women and men exist as real facts and that there is, in most cases, a line of demarcation between them. For the sake of further arguments, we may see the one-sex model in isolation, and state that women and men are to be placed somewhere along the line between two extremes called man(ly) and woman(ly), respectively. However, no person is perfectly womanly or manly (or feminine or masculine); in other words, nobody can represent one of the extremes, because these extremes represent norms. Norms equal ideals, but no person can fully and perfectly incorporate norms. A person who really represents his or her society's norms would not be real, but would rather be like characters from fiction and fantasy, for example figures like *Snow White* on the female side, and perhaps *Rambo* on the masculine. These figures perfectly represent the norms at the extremes. They so fully represent the norms that they become unreal people. As extreme stereotypes we witness the convergence of gender ideology and stereotypic thinking. Perfectly gendered persons—unreal people thought to be encountered in real life—only stand out as quite comic figures. Here, norms and stereotypes almost become the same thing. The one-sex model suits Butler's theory, in that it serves as a model for thinking about how we all imitate, or perform, the norms more or less successfully, and how, to some, it seems to come more naturally than to others. But no matter how we define ourselves, or are defined by others, everybody embodies some or both of the two extremes. If we, for the sake of this thought experiment, stick to the one-sex model, we are all located somewhere on the line, and not at the 'gendered' extremes—and so do people who we categorize as third genders. From the perspective of the one-sex model, we are all queer, and ultimately only 'queer' people can be normal people.

Gilchrist's critique, as quoted above, shows how the gender concept easily leads to interpretational trajectories of either/or. Either one is a normative woman or man, or—if sex and gender 'discontinuity' is found—fantastic interpretations—and *fantastic deviants*(!)—are near at hand. Gender produces *normative persons*, but not *normal*, real people. Sex–gender theory can only capture norms or anti-norms, 'normal' people and fantastic deviants. Thus, gender can never be anything but ideals operating on an extra-individual level. Gender norms do exist but are never fully embodied. In fact, bodily practices transcend the norms, otherwise, there would be no historical

change. So, gender tends to produce unreal, extremely stereotypic persons, or fantastic deviants.

One important ingredient of the 'normativity' and deviance created by the gender mode of thinking is sexual practice and orientation. Normativity, *i.e.*, persons interpreted as gendered women and men within any context are implicitly interpreted as conducting opposite sex relations, in other words a praxis close to our own notions of heteronormativity. Deviance is consequently associated with same sex relations or, in cases of fantastic interpretations, persons undertaking exotic sexual practices. Even if archaeology has acknowledged that premodern life does not regard sexual orientation as integral to a person's existence, but rather as practice, the gender mode of thinking actually makes sexuality the ultimate core of differentiation between social identities. Put differently, the demarcation of a prehistoric social identity is unthinkable without a core which is this person's normative or deviant sexuality. Thus, sexuality gets 'essentialized'. Therefore, the act of 'genderizing' is nothing but sexualizing. Bottom line is *that everything is about sex*(ual activity/orientation). Sexuality thus becomes our whole being. But, *is* sexuality our whole being?

Sexuality, Ambiguity, Transcendence…

Archaeologists' quest for prehistoric embodiment has shifted their focus to sexuality. I claim that this 'sexuality' is just a change in focus, from gender to sex(uality). Thus, one is still entrapped within the same theoretical circle, the one of subject and object, between which there is a yawning gap. The human condition does, however, represent an insoluble condition of being both subject and object, *at the same time*. Therefore, human life will always be one of ambiguity. Merleau-Ponty's theories on the body, in its sexual being, steers us to a view on sexuality which takes the best part from Freudian thinking, but with an existentialist twist. To Merleau-Ponty, the body is always expressive even within situations that we may regard as basically 'instinctive', that is in the playing out of sexual dramas. In his chapter on the body in its sexual being, he concludes:

> There is no explanation of sexuality which reduces it to anything other than itself, for it is already something other than itself, and indeed, if we like, our whole being. Sexuality, it is said, is dramatic *because* we commit our whole personal life to it. But just why do we do this? Why is our body, for us, the mirror of our being, unless because it is a *natural self*, a current of given existence, with the result that we never know whether the forces which bear us on are its or ours. There is no outstripping of sexuality any more than there is any sexuality enclosed within itself. (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 171, italics in original)

Here, the 'its or ours' points to the ambiguity inherent in a human being. In my understanding of Merleau-Ponty, it is precisely this ambiguity that makes it possible to claim that sexuality is all our being, but also, and one could say, simultaneously, nonpresent and mere 'background' of our being. This is somewhat different from the Freudian; here our sexuality is all our being and the essential thing on which

nonsexual actions become mere sublimations of sexual energy. For Merleau-Ponty, however, libido or Eros is a general force of life that is *indefinite*. This force is, so to speak 'taken up' by the person *in* situations—and transcending these same situations by actions. Thus, he sees this power, or motor, as being of a general character, upon which all agency takes place. It is indefinite, and could potentially be directed to any intentionality. Sexual situations belong to the spectrum of potential human situations. Being a person in a situation involves transcendence of the situation—you act upon the world, and respond to your co-subjects. Being a bodily subject involves being present in the situation; it is living the moment with the whole of one's expressive body, be they sexual situations or not. The essentializing feature that characterizes the gender mode of thinking is hence close to the Freudian—it makes sex our whole being. In contrast, Merleau-Ponty provides us with an apparatus that tells us that our sexuality is both our whole being and not at all our whole being *at the same time*. In the human race, sexuality is transcended, even on occasions that involve the activity of sex. This approach actually takes full account of sex without making it a limiting factor and it provides an opportunity to study sexuality for what it is, nothing less and nothing more. It opens up the study of sexuality—when relevant—without making this a deep essentializing feature of the person, at the core of her/his 'social identity'.

Indeed a functioning sexuality is basic for having what we regard as normal existential faculties.[10] One cannot be a person without it. Contrary to this, categories connected to sex and sexuality do not serve as fully relevant descriptions of the individual person; a living and vivid human being will always transcend his/her own identity, whether we talk about sexual, ethnic, professional, or other identities. The living body cannot really be what it is unless it is sexed, but simultaneously it cannot be fully described solely by using sexual categories. Limitations would be very quickly encountered. Thus, the vividly acting person is inscrutably intertwined with sex but at the same time, this incarnated subject—the living body—inscrutably transcends its sexual categories. The living body will, therefore, also transcend the standards and norms for how to behave correctly as a woman or a man. They will transcend the gender norms. This is exactly what the women in the great films did. They were certainly transcending what could be called the gender norms of their time, but they did this by way of standing out as living, embodied subjects. A person can of course imitate and 'represent' the gender norms of the time—as when the femme fatale in Fellini's movie rehearsed a womanly gait—but, to repeat my argument: a person cannot *be* a gender norm. Nonetheless, the women in these films were still full female persons, and in some ways their womanhood may be said to form a backdrop. This backdrop is basic, yet in certain situations our sex and sexuality 'breaks through' and becomes the prominent aspect of the situation. The phenomenological approach to sexuality makes it possible to regard sexuality as basic for normal personal capacities, but still not make sexuality our very being. But this is exactly what

[10] Merleau-Ponty's illustrates this in his example of a patient (Schneider) who, during the First World War, suffered severe injuries on his central nerve system. This patient was able to do things that he was used to doing before the accident. But he could never undertake "new" types of actions. He was totally deprived of a general capacity for transcendence. This loss was due to a chain of lost capacities, like sexuality and the ability to think metaphorically. He could not keep friendships and take up a political stance; in short, he had lost his own expressive body, and by this, himself as a person.

happens when genderizing people in the past. For this is merely to sexualize a person's entire register of activities. However, since personal embodied lives are, to a great extent, the transcendence of our sexuality, there must be several situations and contexts where the question of sexualities—or gender if you prefer—is not relevant. The introduction of the concept of gender led to the belief that prehistoric contexts could be approached and understood as populated with a wide range of (nonrepressive) genders, or gender types that served the function of freeing both 'them' and us, from 'narrow' western categories of women and men. These are all good points, and I do not want to attack these ideals per se. Yet, the concept of gender brings with it the danger that we sexualize situations where sex and gender serves as a limiting, distorting and even discriminating approach to the embodied person.

One may say that there are several types or styles of womanhood and manhood, and that these styles could be classified into gender categories. But everybody has their own style, and *if* these styles—which actually imply the transcending of sex—*become* our sex, the consequence of such 'gender typing' would be an infinite number of genders. There would be as many sexes as there are persons. In fact, this was tentatively suggested by the feminist writer Monique Wittig (1979: 119), a position strongly opposed by Judith Butler, who rightly states that "(i)f the number of sexes corresponds to the number of existing individuals, sex would no longer have any general application as a term" (Butler 1999 [1990]: 151). For my own part, I would add that claiming two main sexes in the human race, is not the same as saying that there cannot be differences in the categories of women. Contrary to the position of Wittig and other feminists, but similar to Moi (1999: 8), I cannot see that the category 'woman' necessarily must be imbued with political oppressive content. Wittig seems to see categories as always repressive and a hindrance for the full expression of an individual's personhood (see also Wittig 1992). Wittig somehow subtly seems to recognize human transcendence, but it seems to me, instead of acknowledging this fact she suggests that every person's own style be described in terms of something sexual. This, however, is nothing but to sexualize our whole being, instead of viewing sexuality as a basic background (and as such our whole being), and as a category which will always be transcended by living bodies and personal styles. This practice of 'sexualisation of everything' is precisely the danger involved in the gender concept and its inherent expectation of finding a number of gender categories in prehistoric contexts.

What would be the risks of going back to the pre sex–gender meaning of sex? In this sense, 'sex' does not dwell on a division of nature and society/culture, but may be used as an open term. Yet, in our context—so pervaded by the gender mode of thinking and writing—this will probably entail confusion. 'Sex' is mostly taken to refer to an essentialist perspective. As indicated earlier, I suggest the introduction of the French term *sexe*. The concept of 'sexe' involves a rejection of the constant quest for gender categories. 'Sexe' implies that we study women and men of the past, that is 'woman' and 'man' devoid of essentialism. These women and men should be studied from a perspective of lived experience, and will help us create women and men of a variety of embodiments—if you like social identities—bereft of the ultimately essentializing theoretical trajectories deriving from this focus on sexual orientation and practice.

Beauvoir's 'Lived Experience' in Contrastto Sex and Gender

As discussed in full by Moi (1999), I believe that taking more of the phenomenological way of thinking onboard will give us the relevant conceptual tools for studying embodiment. Indeed this continental/French tradition is already present in archaeology. Viewed from the perspective of Stone Age studies, this tradition has invoked a number of contributions with theoretical roots, not only in the phenomenology of the body, but also the sociological tradition from Marcel Mauss (and Émile Durkheim) and its prolongation in enquiries of body techniques (*e.g.*, Schlanger 1990; 2006) combined with a *chaîne opératoire* approach to lithic technology (*e.g.*, Apel and Knutsson 2006; Eriksen 2000; Dobres 1999, 2000; Edmonds 1990; Lemonnier 1990; Pelegrin 1990). This tradition, however, has much more to contribute. The thinking of Merleau-Ponty is often referred to in archaeological texts on the body in general, but very little of his view on the body in its sexual being. Within this theoretical landscape, there is even less use of the thinking of Simone de Beauvoir. In fact Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty, used in tandem, provide a complete phenomenology of the body, sex, and sexual difference. Central here, is Beauvoir's view on the (*sexed*) body *as situation* (*e.g.*, Beauvoir 1979: 445). As pointed out above, body as situation derives from Husserl's concept *Leib*, *i.e.*, the living, expressive body—body *cum* soul (*e.g.*, Heinämaa 2003: 26). Body as situation refers to one's specific body as an "instrument of our grasp upon the world" (Beauvoir, 1979: 66). This corresponds to Husserl's shift of focus from the Cartesian "I think, therefore I am" to "I can, therefore I am" (*e.g.*, Morris 2010). The bodily instrument grasps its situation according to the specific *life world* one is situated within. This is an approach of the *lived experience*, so much quoted by scholars engaged in archaeology's body project. As will be discussed soon, this approach is not immediately compatible with the use of terms like sex and gender. Archaeologies of sex, gender, and body, however, repeatedly claim a basis in phenomenological thinking. Thus, a central question is: if this archaeology of the body claims to be phenomenological, how do we believe we can achieve this, if sex and gender remains uncontested as relevant in the pursuit of prehistoric embodiment?

Let us take a closer look at this. Beauvoir took a firm stance against biologism, but still she regarded biology as a given fact. Contrary to what many poststructuralist supporters of the gender concept may think, this is fully possible. For, as expressed by Moi, "[t]o avoid biological determinism all we need to do is to deny that biological facts justify social values, and even the most recalcitrant realist can do that" (Moi 1999: 43). To Beauvoir biology exists. But, where do we localize the relationship between biology and the field of embodied lives? Where is Beauvoir's body in relation to sex and gender? As I have implied already, Beauvoir (as did Merleau-Ponty) builds on Husserl's *Körper* and *Leib*. Leib might be said to correspond to embodiment, whereas Körper is the prerequisite for being embodied. Körper is the biological body, the body as a natural given, and subject to the laws of nature. Körper, therefore, corresponds to 'sex' in the sense of strict biological materiality and to which set of genitalia you are born with. Leib corresponds to the lived and situated body. Yet, the lived experience of this body cannot be understood if we detach ourselves from regarding the materiality of this body, its outline and physicality, in other words, Körper. This detachment from Körper is exactly what Butler and other

theorists of gender have done. Leib at first sight seems to combine sex and gender, but this is not the case. As I demonstrated above, sex and gender only contain the biological body ('sex') and extra-individual—'outside-the-body'—norms of culture ('gender').[11]

Even if Beauvoir's phenomenology of womanhood is studied by way of lived experience, she also, in some ways, examined phenomena that could be said to correspond to sex and gender. As reviewed by Moi, the categories studied by Beauvoir were "body as object, body as situation, lived experience (subjectivity), myths of femininity (ideology; norms) and sex (the fact of being a man or a woman)" (Moi 1999: 80), and she continues:

> To Beauvoir, the category of the body perceived as an object is 'objectivist' and 'scientistic'. For this reason, this category resembles the 1960s understanding of sex. We have seen that Beauvoir rejects this category as a useless starting point for any attempt to understand what a woman is. To consider the body as situation, on the other hand, is to consider both the fact of having a specific kind of body and the meaning that concrete body has for the situated individual. *This is not the equivalent of either sex or gender*. The same is true for 'lived experience' which encompasses our experience of all kinds of situations (race, class, nationality, etc.), and is a far more wide-ranging concept than the highly psychologising concept of gender identity. Beauvoir's '*myths of femininity*' *closely resemble the concept of stereotypes or norms* (Moi 1999: 81, emphasis mine).

To me, the 'stereotypes or norms' pointed out here resemble the ideals that can only be incorporated by Snow White and Rambo. My understanding is that Beauvoir, or alternatively, any correct use of body concepts derived from phenomenology, would have defined 'gender' as belonging to an extremely normative, or rather stereotypic–ideological field of the life world. Following from my discussion on Laqueur's concepts, I would say that myths of femininity and masculinity resemble 'gender'. Beauvoir indeed regarded 'sex' as a biological category. 'Sex' in the meaning of Körper (corresponding to Stoller's 'sex') was *crucial* to her, but never as a category in isolation. From this, it appears that the theoretical 'continuum' from sex to gender in fact only contains two extremes that never really are united; the natural body at the one end, and the given context's myths/stereotypes about manhood/womanhood at the other. In current gender archaeology, the more concrete living body is approached through concepts like performativity and social identity. Embodiment and lived experience are also part of the prevailing jargon, derived from phenomenology. However, by its detachment from Körper, it is not studied in a true phenomenological way. It follows that the concrete body (again) disappears back into something strongly ideological which is the concept of 'gender'. Parallel to this, the quest for embodiment is pursued through the focus on sex(uality) that, in turn, creates a link to social identity. The bottom line will be that the archaeology of embodiment is back in an either/or situation; either bodies are approached from the point of sex (uality) or from gender, or both. The former is imbued with too much essentialism, the second with too much idealism. Thus, it seems that the 'continuum' from sex to gender lacks something 'in the middle'.

[11] In fact, this would correspond to Husserl's *spirit*—which may be explained as ideas that transcend history and individually lived lives.

How is this 'middle' to be defined? This middle corresponds to Leib. Yet, the lived experience of this body cannot be understood if we detach ourselves from regarding the materiality of this body, its outline and physicality, in other words the natural given of Körper. Stoller's 'sex' corresponds to Körper, but sex–gender theory lacks Leib. Leib can only be studied in close association with Körper, and this Körper–Leib connection is what the gender paradigms lack. Performativity in fact fits nicely into Leib. However, the way it has been employed so far, it is studied without taking into account its relationship to Körper. Again, the production of social roles through performativity ends up being studied, in reality, without the body. Thus, the very concreteness of embodiment and performativity becomes 'consumed' by gender, reducing the origin of personhood and embodiment to the social sphere. From the other end of the pole, it is attempted to approach the body through sexuality by implicitly constructing a necessary link between sexual orientation and social identity. In this way, personhood, or social identify, is consumed into an essentializing concept of sex. 'Gender' thus becomes defined by the person's activity and performativity simultaneously as virtually no regard is given to what situation in the world a given body is incorporated. Unintended, therefore, the way performativity is used to date, in lacking Körper, steers us back to the shortcomings of both sex and gender. In other words, within this gender paradigm one pursues Leib, but forgets Körper. But Leib cannot be studied bereft of Körper, they are simultaneous and correspond to Beauvoir's body as situation (Fig. 1).

The great difference between the concepts imbued in the gender paradigms as defined above—and lived experience—is simply that the former do not provide access to embodiment. However, as my argument goes, this pursuit of embodiment, instead of taking phenomenological concepts seriously, focus is steered towards, the sex(uality) pole of the sex–gender conceptual pair. This in fact, seems to be an attempt of 'doing Leib' while forgetting Körper. This same shift makes sex and sexuality the essence of a person and preserves sexuality as an undertheorized field of study. Performativity is truly a powerful concept, but

	NATURE	CULTURE		
Sex and gender by Stoller	sex		gender as personal identity	
Sex and gender by Rubin	sex		gender as socially learned	
Gender construction paradigm	sex		gender as social identity	
Gender performativity paradigm	socialidentity (sexuality)		social identity (performativity)	
Phenomenology by Beauvoir and others	Körper ⟺ Leib			myths and stereotypes

Fig. 1 A schematic way of illustrating the relation between the concepts discussed and an attempt to show what is lacking in the gap between sex and gender. This is, in the words of Moi (1999, 30), "a gap where the historical and socialized body should be."

the gender performativity paradigm steers our approach more towards a prehistory consisting of exotically costumed people of a twenty-first century gay parade. Performativity has played a role in creating interesting prehistories. The concept, however, also obscures the fact that most people of the world, throughout history, are women and men. Claiming this is not to negate that there are persons who identify themselves, or are identified by others, as something else—*i.e.*, the third variety, combining the womanly with the manly, whatever this is. In some of these cases, though, such 'combinations' would just equal a real person; a woman or man doing something untraditional—without abandoning his/her life as some kind of man or woman. But the employment of approaches connected to 'sexe' would not be focused on the construction of a number of sexe categories that would just resemble the 'gender categories'. Sexe as I see it, for the most part includes the two sexes, but what a man or a woman is—or may be or become—is, as we know, historical. The situation of being a woman may in some contexts provide great freedom and possibilities; in other words, freedom to live out a range of ways of womanly being, whereas other contexts provide a repressed situation for a person born as woman. Sex and gender—if one prefers to hold onto this terminology—is indeed historically mutable. Robert Schmidt (2004) makes a good case for this in his study of South Scandinavian Late Mesolithic graves. A society's specific sex–gender *intensity*—*i.e.*, degree of rigidity is decisive for the situation of being a woman or being a man in this society. It contributes to making the situation of being born as one specific sex in that society. With low intensity, being born as a woman will provide freedom in the choice of knowledge and social role. In this excellent study, Schmidt demonstrates the existence of such low-gender intensity in Late Mesolithic Scandinavia, in fact a society not markedly focused on demarcation of the sexes. Interestingly, this result matches experiences from the study of hunters' rock art in Scandinavia (Goldhahn and Fuglestvedt 2012). But, again, sex–gender terminology is not a prerequisite for acknowledging what Schmidt defines as gender mutability and high or low gender intensity. The historicity of sex was recognized before the introduction of the sex–gender system, as is shown by references made to Leacock and Mead, and not least to Beauvoir. The low gender intensity in Late Mesolithic Scandinavian societies describes a situation where being born into the body of a woman or man is more open. As such, it stands in sharp contrast to what would have been the case for Viking Age men or women, where restrictions as how to be (real) women and men were strong (Schmidt's high gender intensity). In the Viking context, deviance from 'correct' norms of how to be a woman and man, created deviance from an 'emic' point of view (*e.g.*, Bandlien 2005; Hedeager 2011; Price 2012; Solli 2002). This is a case in which deviance indeed seems to have a relevant link to sexuality. *The sex–gender mode of thinking, however, insists that it is always so*. The presence or absence—or different degrees of rigidity in how to live a life as a woman or a man, in any context, may very well be said to contribute to the making of 'body as situation' in any historical context.

There are reasons for stating that Beauvoir was all too pessimistic on behalf of prehistoric women, and tended to see women as a repressed category ever since the Stone Age (de Beauvoir 1979 [1949]: 93–128). On this point, she is, in part, simply wrong in her account of woman throughout history. Fascinatingly, this does not make

her theory of the origins of patriarchy less interesting.[12] As we know, the Stone Age, even before the advent of agriculture, contained a wide variety of types of hunters and gatherers. This includes the most egalitarian to the more kin/lineage-based societies characterized by informal or formal chieftains as leaders. Beauvoir had considerable knowledge of the anthropology available at the time she was writing *the Second Sex*. This knowledge was, however, partly dominated by the Durkheim/Mauss tradition—leading on to the anthropology of Lévi-Strauss—who based their theories very much on lineage-based systems characterized by gift exchange of women between men. Even though she also had knowledge of results from American anthropology, we should not forget that this was very male biased. Her ambivalence towards motherhood probably originated from this perspective on history, but not least the setting of her own life, which was France during the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed, while she describes the joys of motherhood, her text is tuned in a negative and ambivalent way. There is, however, little archaeological and anthropological evidence to consider women's relation to motherhood as being, necessarily mostly negative, and the natural origin of repression (cf. Leacock 1978). As also recognized by Beauvoir, it is the social conditions that decide whether motherhood binds the woman and denies her a life of freedom. For instance, an Eskimo woman, despite being a mother, is still able to go on hunting trips and use weapons. The study of grave material among Eskimos by Barbara Crass (2001) is but one example of this. Combined with ethnohistorical data, her evidence shows how men and women have carried out the same activities. The only clear line of demarcation is female and male dress. Thus, Eskimo women had much the same opportunities as Eskimo men. As noted by Crass, there are few gender specific nouns in the Eskimo language, and: "This lack of fixed gender differentiation is not only found in language… but also in activity patterns" (Crass 2001: 109). Anthropological and archaeological evidence reveal a wide variety of activities—or 'identities'[13]—associated with buried women—hunters, shamans, warriors, etc. (*e.g.*, Brumbach and Jarvenpa 1997; Engelstad 2001; Estioko-Griffin and Griffin 1981; Claassen 1997; Hollimon 1997, 2001; Koehler 1997; Sassaman 1992). I believe these results would have pleased

[12] Beauvoir provides a theory of the origin of subjugation that takes its point of departure in men's and women's different roles in reproduction (de Beauvoir 1979[1949]:94p). Again, this is done in an anti-essentialist fashion. However, male dominance is on a worldwide basis, and the reasons for this cannot be due to fully contingent factors. The fact that women and men have different roles in reproduction, may structure a life where it seems "natural" that the woman is bound to childcare and participates less in communal life, a situation which in turn gives her the role as dominated. But this structure of domination is not at all a necessity. According to Beauvoir, it was only a necessity at the "pre-human" stage in our evolution. After the transition to modern humans, the practice continued, and it survived because it had become ideology. How then can a previous necessity be turned into ideology? Here, Beauvoir becomes a theorist of practice. The reasoning is simply that the way your life is ordered and the way you live it also forms your thinking. In this way, how your life actually is, becomes your ideology of how life "should be". Male dominance is not something given. It cannot be explained in terms of biological factors, but indeed the facticity of the male and female bodies almost "invites" human societies into some typical forms of practice, which again structures an ideology justified by the "order of nature". This way, Beauvoir elegantly explains why male dominance may be likely to develop, totally free of essentialist accounts (compare Moi 1994).

[13] The reason why I set the term identities in quotation marks is because, like 'gender', I see 'identity' as somewhat static and bereft of transcendence. This is a discussion on its own. Here, I am only content with stating that a true phenomenological approach would be to approach embodiment less in terms of identity and more in terms of the dynamics of *becoming*. This approach would also match archaeologists' interest in agency.

Beauvoir. They would have underlined and emphasized one of her main points, namely that what a woman is, or what her situation may be, has the potential to be open. Indeed, life worlds providing this opportunity existed in the past.

Womanhood is historical, but this variability does not stop these people from being women, whether we use the example from great films, or the examples of Late Mesolithic Scandinavia and of the Eskimo. However, how the life of a woman unfolds through its situation(s) is not random. Therefore, *Körper matters*, as Körper is decisive for Leib. Whether you are born as a woman or a man is decisive for your specific situation in world; in other words, it calls for questions of the following type: What is involved in the situation of being born in this kind of body within this kind of context? Other parameters aside, what are the possibilities and restrictions for persons born into bodies of a woman, and how are these possibilities in relation to the situation of being a man? This is different from constructing a gender typology for people who are born as women, or likewise, for people born as men. The gender concept does not bring us closer to the phenomenon of being a person. Rather, by its obsession with sexuality, it leads us in quite the opposite direction, which is straight to the two extremes of either 'normativity' or deviance. Even when the variability of, for instance, female lives is revealed in the archaeological record, the sex/gender discourse leads to descriptions of these women that are imbued with exactly the same clichés that feminist archaeology intends to counter. Thus, gender descriptions closely resemble stereotypes of women and men, *or its inversion* which is deviance. In other words, they are just the same as Beauvoir's *myths* about femininity/masculinity. In contrast, accounts of lived experience, when used in all its fullness, do not.

Woman the Warrior

The existence of she warriors (*e.g.*, Davis-Kimball 1997; Hollimon 1997, 2001) in prehistory is known through historical cases like *Jeanne d'Arc* and *Running Eagle*. They also appear in myths about the amazons and in emerging archaeological evidence. This archaeological evidence has not been interpreted as clear and unambiguous evidence for the existence of female armies or women warriors as a very frequent occurring phenomenon in prehistory, but is taken more as an indication of the existence of female warriors as real facts of prehistory, even if the extent of its rarity, or its frequency, is unknown. The source critical aspects of this (*e.g.*, Joyce 2008: 73–75) are interesting and relevant, but my discussion here does not concern itself with this. It is more concerned with our ideas and associations when regarding woman the warrior as a phenomenon. Our encounter with female skeletons equipped with the tools of combat not only evokes the formerly discussed fantastic interpretations, but also a vocabulary which does not echo anything other than stereotypic notions of women and men. She-warriors have been described as 'manly-hearted'. Indeed, this is not necessarily a bad thing, being that this is the description used by ethnographic informants. But when such labels are intertwined with the formulations in the archaeological texts, these women are described in active terms like 'expansive' and 'innovative'—in other words classic stereotypic ways of describing masculinity. Moreover, the coupling of the gender paradigms with the phenomena of possible female combatants, more than any other incidence, misleadingly appears to

call for the construction of third and fourth womanly genders. But why do we need 'genders' to explain variability in female lives? Why must the she-warrior be described in terms of a gender type, instead of simply a woman trained in the use of techniques of combat?

When considering the she-warrior, it is of course an interesting part of the fact, that it is a woman. On the other hand, her knowledge of how to ride, how to use her weapons and to fight, should be understood as a capacity she has been able to gain, due to her belonging to the human race. The knowledge which enables her conduct is not due to hormones, genitals, or physiognomy. It has necessarily nothing to do with her 'type' of womanhood in terms of being 'less' womanly. To use Beauvoir's terminology, her *lived experience* as being a woman and a warrior, should be a very interesting part of her *situation*. But *if we make her represent a gender*, her activity *as such* becomes part of her sexuality. And if we sexualize it, it would surely become some variant or other of a deviating sexuality. Again, gender can only create normative people and deviants. Gender does not create much room for the warrior woman. If every woman choosing non-normative or untraditionalist activities (whatever they are) is sexualized and typed as a deviant (read: naturally less 'womanly' than other women), we are back within an essentialist tradition where choosing a 'manly' activity would bring into question whether you were a 'real woman' or not. In other words, the gender concept clears the ground for a new type of sexism, which is, in fact, founded in another type of essentialism. I believe this was not the intention when introducing it to archaeology. It is surely at odds with feminist thinking. Gender—originally introduced to archaeology to prevent our own time's cliché-laden notions of natural womanhood—are projected onto the past, which ironically, ultimately undermines its purpose. Gender creates a morass of shifting contradictions on womanhood and manhood. This morass escalates when gender gets conflated with social identity, a combination not always relevant, as in the case of the she-warrior. The she-warrior is a social identity with no necessary or relevant link to sexuality. The occasional conflation of gender and social identity seriously obscures the prehistoric individual as someone who transcends their sex, and thus becomes a person.

An Archaeology of *Sexe*: A Conclusion

'Sex', prior to the introduction of the sex–gender system, normally tends to be taken to represent essentialist thinking, even if this is not the case, *as for instance in The Second Sex*. The proposal to use the French 'sexe'—and thus 'an archaeology of sexe' is an attempt to avoid confusion with the essentialist connotations the term 'sex' tends to create.

There is nothing wrong with studying sexuality when this is relevant; what is argued is rather that the sex/gender paradigm *insists* on the enduring and absolute relevance of sexuality. This is a new essentializing sex concept. This is a great fallacy, and throughout this article I have tried to demonstrate the pitfalls of such an approach. This is the consequence of the gender concept, which is a theory that never escapes the blunt finality ascribed to sex. It insists on sex being the essence and the deeply rooted core of the person and it does not allow any possibility for transcendence. Consequently, it is not compatible with Leib, or lived experience. Indeed, being a

person is being a sexual person, and sexuality is a prerequisite for being vivid and real. Yet, being a person is *simultaneously* the transcendence of sexuality. Therefore, as derived from Merleau-Ponty's thinking, I state that sex is both the whole of our being, but still nothing of us, at the same time. Only in this way, can sexuality be studied—for what it is, when made relevant.

As a consequence of my criticisms against this conceptual pair, I suggest that sex–gender be replaced by the term *sexe*, along with a *phenomenological body* concept as the basis for an understanding of sexual difference (cf. Heinämaa 2003; Moi 1999). The original use of the concept of sex, like in the English translation of Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* does not split up (biological) body and psyche, body and the social norms; the term is actually flexible in that it makes it possible to talk about the sexed person without neglecting their transcendence. But, as noted by Conkey and Gero "French archaeologists appear perplexed by what they consider to be a historically and culturally specific Anglo-American concern with gender, a term that, they claim, has no translation to French" (Conkey and Gero 1997: 414).The French unease with gender could be regarded as part of this tradition of thought on the body; to reiterate, even if 'gender' directly and indirectly is ascribed to Beauvoir, a splitting of the sexed person into sex and gender is as far from Beauvoir's thinking as possible. More generally, sexe equals the 'pre-sex-and-gender-meaning' of sex in English—and 'kjønn' in Norwegian, 'kön'[14] in Swedish and 'køn' in Danish (cf. Moi 1999: 31). Sexe unites the embodied person, it sees Körper and Leib as simultaneous momentums. Thus, employing sexe does not lead down irresolvable theoretical paths and to confusion when studying sexuality, lived experience and embodiment. Sexe is compatible with approaches to the phenomenal body. On this basis, I propose the serious introduction of a phenomenological body concept. 'Sex' prior to the introduction of the sex–gender system is today mostly associated with essentialism, even if this is not necessarily the case. My suggestion that 'sexe' should be used for 'sex' is to signify an anti-essentialist and phenomenological meaning, and to avoid confusion with the essentialist connotations associated with this term.

Beauvoir's philosophy provides us with an intriguing theory of the origin of patriarchy not based on essentialism. The emergence of female subjugation is understood in relation to the different materiality of female and male bodies and their roles in reproduction. The historical trajectory leading to patriarchy is in some way at random, but still contingent. Thus, biology becomes destiny in certain historical contexts. The facticity of a female body destines specific ways of reproduction by society. In our western tradition, woman became the second sex and biology a specific kind of destiny. This is to see the historical context as constitutive, and consequently, the *body as situation*. This involves recognizing the materiality of the female body. By adhering to gender theory as criticized here, one cultivates the idea that being a social person is essentially about sex and sexual orientation; alternatively, or simultaneously it stresses performativity, while losing sight of the body's materiality. Womanly sexe in Beauvoir's terms is an open category. In general and in 'a society in which the equality of the sexes would be concretely realized', a woman will conduct her transcendence "with the same freedom as her brothers" (Beauvoir 1979:

[14] Swedish theorists of gender have tentatively introduced the Swedish term 'genus'. Thus, 'kön' now refers to 'sex', while 'genus' to 'gender'.

735). The consequence of this is that whatever a woman chooses to do should be regarded 'womanly'.[15] This view is far more relevant than setting out to (re)construct genders in prehistory. From this, embodied persons may emerge as sexed persons and persons of situation and lived experience. Thus, in her feminism, she envisaged a society in which the category woman is potentially understood as wide a category as there are persons with female bodies. This does not equal the ultimate claim of Wittig (1979) that there are as many sexes as there are persons. It is rather to include persons within a category of women. This category is real, even if constructed (cf. Hacking 1999). Beauvoir envisions a society bereft of any clichés bound to a person's sexe or sexuality, simultaneously as all women are included in this category of the human race. Even if various cultures operate with more than two sexes, the universality of the existence of two main categories—based on visual and material differences at birth—cannot be denied. These two main sexes—woman and man—are universal, even if their specific contents in every context are historical. Even if a two-sex, or a one-sex model is applied—whatever the fluidity between them are, or whether the two are strictly oppositional categories—they still exist as two main prototypes, and a base for wider symbolic categorizations. Sexe, in Beauvoir's *feminism* is both a fixed and an open category. One cannot escape the materiality of the body. However, in Beauvoir's feminism, this materiality should not, beyond the mere reproductive possibilities and confinements, prescribe anything at all in terms of how one should live. Man and woman are open *and* universal categories through time and space. Sexe implies freedom because it liberates us from making 'fantastic interpretations' and of approaching social identity freed from this fixation on sex and obsession with 'deviant'—whatever this may be—sexualities. With this approach, real and embodied persons—whole and true—may emerge. These are persons of situation and lived experience. As persons, they are pervaded with sexuality—as the constitutive backdrop for being a person. But being a person is simultaneously the transcendence of our sexual essence. Only this may make real and vivid persons. These are the persons of the great films described in the beginning of this article. These were women of many kinds. Archaeology should be able to see women of all kinds in prehistory as well. And by this, I really mean women, all women. Bergman's and Fellini's characters Carla, Luisa, Desiree, Anna, and Petra—as any prehistoric mother, female warrior, hunter, or weaver—are persons of lived experience, each in their own way.

It is rather fascinating to witness how archaeology—in a time when it has, more than ever, focused on materiality in general, and the materiality of the body in particular—largely seems to overlook the most striking difference of materiality in the human race, namely those of the genitalia we are born with. The gender performativity paradigm, as defined above, has indeed brought a powerful aspect to our field of study. But the strong emphasis on performativity has *almost* served to obscure the fact that most representatives of the human race are born with a specific materiality, *i.e.*, specific genitalia that in most cultures immediately put them into one of two main categories. This recognition can well be combined with the performativity approach,

[15] I here use 'womanly' for feminine, to avoid specific associations, even if 'feminine' with an extended meaning could have been used. To paraphrase Moi, "'[f]eminine' and 'masculine' are excellent terms of critique, but I would hesitate to use them positively, to take them as guidelines for my own work. So, far at least, it looks like even the most unsexist search for 'femininity' in literature, film or other cultural phenomena ends up producing fairly predictable clichés" (Moi 1999: 106).

in fact it is very similar to Merleau-Ponty's thesis that women and men—partly by mimicry of others—make up two context-specific main styles of being (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 65 and see Heinämaa 2003: 68). This does not exclude the possibility of third or fourth ways of being, neither theoretically nor concretely. But we do not need 'gender categories' to handle this. As archaeologists, we should not undermine the power physical difference has on cultural categorization. This materiality is structuring the way the subject experiences her/himself, and how one is met by one's milieu. These two main forms of materiality (of Körper), on the side of nature, are induced in a universe of symbolic classifications and oppositions. This main divide is universal, even if its contents are not. To claim the existence of a biological difference on nature's side is not to take an essentialist point of view. Rather, it brings with it a focus on the symbolic value of the genitalia one is born with. Women and men exist in all cultures. This statement holds true whether thinking is dominated by a one-sex or two-sex model. It does not imply that 'woman' and 'man' represent the same values as in our western context, and neither does it imply a form of essentialism on the part of prehistoric societies, as is sometimes tentatively claimed (Meskell 1998: 142; Voss and Schmidt 2000: 3).

To conclude, sex and gender is by nature very similar and not just an 'opposition'; as stated in my discussion on subject and object, they are in fact part and parcel of the same ontology, and, therefore, also 'continuous' concepts, belonging to the very same arch. This being the case, the study of *sex* cannot produce any results in the study of embodiment which are anything other than a mirror of the thinking structured by the study of *gender*. Thus, the gender theory—even when turned to the opposite 'pole' by its emphasis on sex—is only capable of producing results that do not bring us closer to the whole and true persons of the past. Sex can only mirror the fallacies of gender, but in an inverted version. 'Gender' should be abandoned as a useful concept and terminological category.

Throughout this paper, I have tried to show how this concept paves the way for a new sexism. Thus, a feminist archaeology should not only *engender*, but simultaneously make efforts to *de*-gender the past. To accomplish this, I suggest employment of an archaeology of sexe.

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