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| Leviathan and Woman – Pateman | on Hobbes’s Standpoint*

Abstract

Carole Pateman is well known in several fields of research: the ideas of democracy, the problem of political obligation and criticism of liberalism. Her political theory also belongs to the feminist tradition. In this domain, Pateman posits a mutual dependence between patriarchy and social contract. To substantiate that hypothesis, she analyses and re-evaluates classical political thinking, including the ideas of Thomas Hobbes. The author of *Leviathan* holds an original standpoint on the question of women and cogently links their social role to the construction of the overall political system. In Pateman’s view, modern patriarchalism can be traced back to Hobbes’ thinking. This article presents an interpretation of how, and in particular Hobbes’s views on women and on how his political theory guarantees the validity and universality of patriarchal law.

Keywords: Pateman, Hobbes, patriarchy, woman in philosophy, feminism, social contract, liberalism.

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1. Introduction

Anyone familiar with the political theory of Carole Pateman knows how complex a task it is to present her views, since they engage in a multi-dimensional

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dialogue with various philosophical standpoints. Fixed points of reference in the articulation of Pateman's views are the political theories of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, John Stuart Mill and John Rawls. The aim of this article is to present one of the interpretations of a philosophical tradition of constitutive significance for Pateman's standpoint, namely, the theory of Thomas Hobbes.

This paper will not present the whole of Pateman's comprehensive interpretation of Hobbes's legacy. Rather, it will be confined to one of the most important and most interesting strands: the issue of women or (more broadly) womanhood. It gives a brief account of the peculiarity of Hobbes's standpoint compared to the views of Robert Filmer and of advocates of a social contract. It will explain how to understand a puzzling aspect of Hobbes's theory: how it undermines the legitimacy of the patriarchy whilst at the same time continuing to support it. It will also show how – thanks to a social contract – men guaranteed themselves the validity and universality of patriarchal law. Finally, I seek to determine the role played by Hobbes's standpoint in shaping the theory and practice of patriarchy.

When considering Pateman's reflection, it is worth remembering that she believes a modern form of patriarchy still determines the life of society today (Pateman 1988). Since that patriarchy is strictly linked to the social contract, hers is an unconventional reading, and consequently a re-evaluation, of the ideas of the social contract. Within the context of the marriage of patriarchalism and the social contract, Hobbes's views are particularly interesting, since they form the foundation of the modern model of male domination. Additionally, Hobbes wrote differently about women than other theorists of political thought. The uniqueness of his standpoint means that his remarks on the family and on children remain interesting and continue to compel thinkers today to reflect.

2. The Peculiarity of Hobbes's Standpoint

Hobbes's understanding of the family and women differs from that of other social contract theorists, like Locke and Rousseau¹, who, like most other theorists, assumed that family and marital law were of an apolitical character. That critical assumption led to the conclusion that the institution of marriage was natural. Hobbes opposed that conclusion, and also accepted "woman in the role of sover-

¹ Pateman is interested mainly in those philosophers who contributed the most to consolidating the discourse on the social contract: T. Hobbes, J. Locke, J. J. Rousseau, I. Kant and J. Rawls, and to a lesser extent H. Grotius, F. Suárez, ancient tradition and modern-day modifications of the contract tradition (D. Gauthier, J. M. Buchanan). For an introduction to and survey of standpoints in the area of contractualism, see (Porębski 1999).

eign” and that “the earliest power relationship would appear to be a mother’s power over her child” (Uliński 2001, p. 99). So Hobbes (supposedly) did not recognise the obvious subordination of women to men in the state of nature. His theory highlights the rights of the woman-mother and rejects the natural subordination of women to men resulting from the difference between the sexes. Women are free and hold a status equal to that of the opposite sex. As Hobbes sees it, this means above all that women – like men – are capable of defending themselves and conquering others. In the state of nature, a woman can be subordinate to someone, but just as well rule over someone. Other theorists of the social contract, meanwhile, assert that male domination is a natural fact of human existence. Hobbes is the only social contract theorist to assume that there is no natural domination of men over women in the state of nature.

The originality of Hobbes’ views is distinguished not only in relation to the advocates of the contract, but also with regard to the standpoint of Robert Filmer. It is worth citing Filmer, perhaps the most trenchant and consistent exponent of patriarchal theory. His standpoint is based on a patriarchal vision of the world: the authority of the father and the subordination of women². The natural order of the family is reflected in the political domain, starting with an absolute monarchy³. At the core of Filmer’s theory is paternal power, understood as a superhuman causative power, whilst all inter-human relations are manifestations of that power/authority:

Paternal power is chronologically and conceptually prior to mankind and therefore to all human relations and all institutions of private and public life. Paternal power is governed by macroscopic laws which are *sui generis* and which state that the power is both temporally and spatially immanent (Rau 1995, p. 9).

This defender of absolute monarchy asserts that father and king share the same goals (Filmer 1991, p. 12). For just as Adam is subject to the Creator and children to their parents, so a people is answerable to its ruler. This means that power belongs to the king-father, and the populace is not sovereign⁴. In Filmer’s view, this vision is lent substance and verisimilitude by the Bible (Book of Genesis). At the same time, one is hard pressed to find confirmation of that view in Greek and Roman tradition.

² It goes without saying that patriarchy may be understood in various ways, depending on the historical period, the author and the context (Czarnacka 2014, pp. 369–371; Walby 1990).

³ Filmer is not a pioneer here. Gordon J. Schochet indicates that the connection between the power of a father and of a king derives from the thinking of many philosophers: Plato, Aristotle, Erasmus and Jean Bodin (Schochet 1975, pp. 267–268; 1988, pp. 18–19).

⁴ Filmer justifies absolute monarchy by invoking patriarchal theory and the English constitution (Szlachta 2016, pp. 186–187).

Hobbes also values monarchic absolutism, but differs from Filmer in his attitude to the idea of the contract: Filmer is a radical critic, whilst Hobbes affirms it. Hobbes, like Filmer, was convinced that the family and the state were closely linked; at the same time, however, he argued that neither the monarchy nor the family were natural institutions, but were wholly conventional (Pateman derives interesting conclusions from this). In the eyes of Filmer, such a view contradicts the natural order of reality.

3. A Woman's Power and Her Children

Pateman addresses an intriguing enigma that arises in Hobbes's standpoint: If Hobbes assumes that a man's power over a woman is not of a natural character, that marriage is a conventional institution and that the subjection of women does not occur in the state of nature, then why, within the family, does the woman appear in the role of a servant? In *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that a family consists:

Of a man and his children; or of a man and his servants; or of a man, and his children, and servants together: where in the Father or Master is the Sovereign (Hobbes 1909, p. 157).

So why does Hobbes, when speaking of the family, refer to a man and his servants, and not to men, wives, mothers, daughters and sisters? Why are women among the servants in the family? This is an interesting question, since in the pre-social state women were not degraded to that role – in the state of nature, a woman can dominate a man and become sovereign:

For as to the Generation, God hath ordained to man a helper; and there be alwayes two that are equally Parents: the Dominion therefore over the Child, should belong equally to both; and he be equally subject to both, which is impossible; for no man can obey two Masters. And whereas some have attributed the Dominion to the Man onely, as being of the more excellent Sex; they misreckon in it. For there is not alwayes that difference of strength, or prudence between the man and the woman, as that the right can be determined without War (Hobbes 1909, pp. 153–154).

In order to understand the situation of women in the state of nature, we should return to the original state, in which there are no political laws: neither matrimonial nor patriarchal. There is no law requiring or regulating, for example, the institution of marriage.

But the question lyeth now in the state of meer Nature; where there are supposed no lawes of Matrimony; no lawes for the Education of Children; but the Law of Nature, and the naturall inclination of the Sexes, one to another, and to their children (Hobbes 1909, p. 154).

In the pre-social state, marriage does not exist. It belongs to the enduring relations between the sexes, which are difficult to establish in the state of nature (or their occurrence is highly unlikely). Marriage arises along with the state. Additionally, in the state of nature, people usually break the conditions of the contract and refuse to meet their obligations; this occurs because people are solitary and unhappy, and life is of a “brutish” character⁵. The sole form of contract which individuals may safely conclude involves the contract and its fulfillment, occurring simultaneously. Such relationships include sexual liaisons, but not marriage. All lasting relations in the state of nature must first be constituted. This is done in two ways: people institute a mutual obligation either through a contract or by means of coercion.

In a state of all-out war, a person must find allies in order to preserve his or her life. The emergence of a friendly group is unlikely in the state of nature, as keeping agreements is problematic. That is why a group of allies is constituted mainly through conquest, which is – in Hobbes’s paradigm – a form of contract⁶. Therefore, if a man or a woman succeeds in forcing another man or woman into submission, they possess a servant. Hobbes writes:

He that hath the Dominion over the Child, hath Dominion also over the Children of the Child; and over their Childrens Children. For he that hath Dominion over the person of a man, hath Dominion over all that is his; without which, Dominion were but a Title, without the effect. (...) And this Dominion is then acquired to the Victor, when the Vanquished, to avoyd the present stroke of death, covenanteth either in expresse words, or by other sufficient signes of the Will, that so long as his life, and the liberty of his body is allowed him, the Victor shall have the use thereof, at his pleasure. And after such Covenant made, the Vanquished is a SERVANT, and not before (Hobbes 1909, p. 155).

A master and his servant form a union of a defensive character with regard to other inhabitants of the state of nature. Crucially, this union corresponds to Hobbes’s definition of the family. Within this context, it is clear that the source of the family is entirely conventional. It stems not at all from procreation (as in Filmer), but from conquest.

⁵ The primal state is not an idyll. It is governed by “continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short” (Hobbes 1909, p. 97). Leo Strauss’s remarks on the existential condition of man in Hobbes’s approach seem crucial here, particularly within the context of the fear of death (Strauss 1952, p. 17).

⁶ The continuous need to dominate, to use force and violence, is understandable within the context of Hobbes’s vision of power and humanity. “Dominion is acquired two wayes; By Generation, and by Conquest” (Hobbes 1909, p. 153). People are greedy, with “a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death” (Hobbes 1909, p. 75). The state, meanwhile, is the power of “immortal god”: “Leviathan (...) that Mortall God, to which wee owe under the Immortall God, our peace and defence” (Hobbes 1909, p. 132).

Hobbes draws particular attention to the relationship between a woman and her children. In order to understand the problematic nature of that bond, one must remember the philosopher's assumption that a person cannot have two masters. Only one of the parents holds power over their children. Since paternity can never be established with the utmost certainty, in the state of nature a child belongs to its mother. Thus every mother possessing a child is at the same time mother and master:

If there be no Contract, the Dominion is in the Mother. For in the condition of meer Nature, where there are no Matrimoniall lawes, it cannot be known who is the Father, unlesse it be declared by the Mother: and therefore the right of Dominion over the Child dependeth on her will, and is consequently hers (Hobbes 1909, p. 154).

Although Hobbes's language may take one aback, one should add that for him the mother is a master who can do with the child whatever she wants⁷. Moreover, the infant, in turn, must "promise" the mother something; that means – *nota bene* – "signing a contract" promising obedience to the mother. In Hobbes's view – as a result of the contract – the mother thus has entitlement in relation to the child. That entitlement derives from the contract, which gives the mother absolute power over the child (although the father may also be this master). In Pateman's view, Hobbes's way of thinking brings home the radicalism of social contract theory, the premises of which concerns everyone – even infants.

It was not just Hobbes who drew radical conclusions from the social contract. Samuel von Pufendorf also observed the obligation an infant has to obey its parents (through a so-called "tacit contract").

If an infant could have reasoned and appreciated how well his parents would care for him, there is no doubt that he would have gladly consented to their authority (Pateman 1988, p. 83).

Filmer showed that treating a child as if it were capable of signing a contract is anthropological nonsense. However, in the light of Hobbes's writings, a child's "agreement" is obvious – a wholly understandable example of a contract. The "normality" of the contract with a child has its origins in the fact that, for Hobbes, the reasons and circumstances which determine the conclusion of a contract are meaningless and do not affect its validity. In other words, it matters not whether a contract is the result of due consideration, existential necessity or an act of violence⁸. Subordinating oneself to a ruler who provides protection in

⁷ M. N. Rothbard (1982, p. 197), a representative of the libertarian tradition, was of a similar opinion.

⁸ Writing about Hobbes's philosophy, Pateman has recourse to the term "sword", readily used by Hobbes. She writes, for example, about "Leviathan's sword", referring, among other things, to Hobbes's words "Covenants, without the Sword, are but Words" (Hobbes 1909, p. 128). Hobbes also

exchange for submission is always an adequate token of consent (Pateman 1989, p. 454). Subordination extracted through violence is simply a form of consent.

Pateman notes that the theory of an agreement in which an infant concludes a contract with its parents had to be rejected sooner or later. John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau agreed only that the natural duty of parents to ensure care and protection to their children entitled them to power over the children. However, in contrast to Filmer, they asserted that parents' power is limited in time, whilst the children themselves are not aware of the agreement.

4. Why Is the Wife a Servant and Not the Husband?

So how do these considerations relate to Hobbes's degradation of the woman in a marriage and in the family? In Pateman's opinion, in the state of nature, relations between the sexes may unfold in two different ways. Either the woman freely consents to sexual relations or she is somehow deceived or forced into sex and thereby yields to male domination. In the state of nature, women are capable of guaranteeing for themselves that sexual relations are the result of consensus. Yet the situation changes when the woman decides to become master; that is, when she intends to give birth and raise children. Then her situation becomes less advantageous, because she possesses a child to which she must also provide protection. We will recall that in the state of nature women-mothers are masters in relation to their children – and that very fact determines their downfall. A woman is incapable of protecting herself and her child unaided. So she “loses”; that is, she is forced to submit to a man⁹. That is why, in the state of nature, the patriarchal order develops: women become part of a family and become servants to men-masters. Thus women's subordination to men comes from the contract, which accords protection to women and children¹⁰. In the legal sense, a lasting expression of this subordination is the institution of marriage.

Hobbes's theory renders explicit what is implied by other theories of social contract. The primary contract is not only a contract that gives rise to civil and political law. A sexual agreement is also a contract, which establishes legislation and social structures in the form of patriarchal power¹¹. Men – understood as free

writes about man protecting himself “by his owne sword, which is a returne to Confusion, and to the condition of a War” (Hobbes 1909, p. 150).

⁹ One may also say that a man – not always, but as a rule – is physically stronger than a woman.

¹⁰ One may state just as well that women's subordination derives from men's violence towards women. Again, in Hobbes's philosophy, however, violence is a form of contract.

¹¹ The question of sex is rarely raised as a key issue. Emphasis tends to be placed on the “generality”: the idea of the social contract has become “a new principle of political life” (Wróbel & Szymański 2011, p. 11).

and equal people – conclude an agreement that establishes a political community. Marital law itself only comes into being as a result of an agreement. For Pateman, that law, at root, is neither natural nor neutral. It is male political law, which at its foundation imposes subordination upon women by men.

In the state of nature, women had the capacity to ensure protection for themselves and to be masters of their own fate, but under a state they were forced to forgo that right and subordinate themselves to men. In exchange, they received the protection of their husbands, but the price they paid for security was that they joined the servants. What else is a wife for? She is her husband's subject, fulfilling the role of a domestic and sexual servant. The social contract does away with the vision of women as free subjects and replaces it with wives, that is, slaves of a kind (Pateman 1988, p. 50). It is true that Hobbes distinguishes a servant from a slave (Hobbes 1909, p. 506); yet, as Pateman sees it, his definition of a servant blurs that distinction. Indeed, in chapter XX of *Leviathan*, Hobbes writes that a master has power over everything possessed by his servant (goods, children, etc.)¹². Pateman emphasises a wife did not, according to the law of the time, possess an autonomous legal personality, and the inferior status of women was taken for granted (see Laqueur 1990, Wiesner-Hanks 2019). It is worth adding that John Stuart Mill, among others, also indicated the servile situation of a wife:

(...) the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes – the legal subordination of one sex to the other – is wrong in itself (Mill 1869, p. 1)¹³.

Pateman goes so far as to assert that there is no reason women might agree to lasting submission to men and to becoming wives – that is, slaves (Pateman 1989, p. 457). If women could indeed participate in establishing a political community, they would not agree to the creation of a law that condemned them to constant subordination. So *Leviathan* would not have come into existence if women could have taken part in concluding the contract. Unity, which is a necessary condition for establishing a state, could not have existed if women had been permitted to conclude a social contract, since there is and can only be one representative of a group¹⁴. The sovereign is the representative of the unity, and it can only be a man.

¹² “The Master of the Servant, is Master also of all he hath” (Hobbes 1909, p. 156).

¹³ “In Mill’s opinion, the fate of a woman in a patriarchal family is worse than the fate of a slave, with which she displays numerous analogies” (Uliński 2001, p. 176). Still in the mid-nineteenth century, “property was disposed of by the husband, representing the whole family in external relations” (Uliński 2001, p. 176).

¹⁴ It is worth adding that “sovereign power must be absolute power; otherwise, the sovereign is unable to fulfil its tasks. One of the consequences of the fact that the sovereign is the representative of his subjects, and they are his principals, is that none of the subjects has the right to aspire to deprive the sovereign of his power” (Porębski 1999, p. 51).

In the social contract, there is no figure representing both sexes. Any attempt by the master at representing or replicating both sexes would lead to a violation of the unity, which in effect would lead to the questioning of the constituted political order. The conclusion? Woman can be seen as the source of the disintegration of the life of society¹⁵.

Let us ask once again: why in Hobbes do marriage and the family have a patriarchal structure (Pateman 1989, p. 447)? A hypothetical history of women in the state of nature explains how patriarchal marital law is established. As we know, the source of the family is not procreation, but annexation based on force. This is a crucial assertion: the institution of marriage and the creation of a family derive from conquest, which for Hobbes is a form of contract (Pateman 1989, p. 457). Thus a man's power over a woman does not result – as in Filmer – from the fact of paternity, but from the man's physical dominance over the woman. Masters of families rule on the strength of a contract, or more precisely on the strength of conquest, which is a form of contract.

So the situation is this: women/wives are protected by men, whilst men/husbands (instituting the state) are protected by the might of Leviathan (Pateman 1989, p. 460)¹⁶. Yet the social contract itself realises solely the male point of view, and the needs of women are consigned to the margins. In concluding a social contract, men ensure themselves the protection of their liberties (their freedom assigned by nature) and secure the continuous possibility of realising their sexual needs. They establish a political mechanism (the power of the state) which guarantees them continuous access to women's bodies and their subordination. The institution of marriage is nothing other than a safeguard of the lasting dominion of men over women. The subordination of women is preserved by the institution of the state and by law of a universal character. Suggestive within this context are Hobbes's famous words in which one may discern the realisation of an absolute (immutable) social order, which likewise encompasses sexual roles. The philosopher asserts that the state is "An Artificiall Man" (masculinity), which is to serve the protection and care of natural man (femininity) (Hobbes 1909, p. 149)¹⁷.

¹⁵ This idea was perhaps best formulated by G. W. F. Hegel. The feminine element is the "eternal irony of the community" (Hegel 1977, p. 288). Why is woman politically dangerous according to Hegel? Why does she oppose the state and the law of reason? A complex answer to these questions is given by K. Guetzlowski (2002).

¹⁶ Hobbes writes that only the state creates laws, since people are subjects of the state alone (Hobbes 1909, pp. 234–235).

¹⁷ The word "serve" is rather misleading here; in practice, it denotes the possession of absolute power.

5. The Significance of Pateman's Interpretation

The question seems trivial, but it is worth asking. Why has analysis of Hobbes's philosophy appeared in the reflection of Pateman? Is it because Hobbes's views obviously belong to the canon of philosophical-political thought (a fact that needs no justification)? Is it because of certain interesting pro-feminist details? Those motives are important, of course, but the main reason she refers to Hobbes lies elsewhere. Hobbes's theory is key to understanding what the patriarchy once was and what it has proved to be today. Hobbes imparted a specific form to his views on the power of men over women and invested them with elements familiar from tradition. At the same time, however, he "invoked" the future; in other words, his reflection became the matrix for the modern-day form of patriarchy.

The new model of patriarchy is not a carbon copy of Hobbes's philosophy, but a modified version of it. This modification may be described in negative terms, pointing to the rejection of two of Hobbes's assumptions. First, for Hobbes, every kind of political power is of an absolute character, since he blurred the distinction between conquest and contract. Hobbes's successors, meanwhile, clearly distinguished between consent (free will) and coercion. Unlike Hobbes, they also stated that political power was limited by the conditions of the original contract, although they upheld the view that the state wielded the power of life and death over its citizens. Second, Hobbes regarded all contract-based relations as political, including marital and sexual relations. Modern political thinking, however, maintains that sexual relations are of an apolitical character¹⁸. It is on these pillars that representatives of the liberal doctrine have built their own patriarchal construction¹⁹.

The subject of feminist readings of social contract theory – including Hobbes's standpoint – exceeds the scope of this article. Nevertheless, a few interesting facts, crucial within the context of our considerations, are worth noting. Feminist analyses have certainly referred less to the thinking of Hobbes and more to

¹⁸ Pateman offers a critique of this view, which was grounded in the liberal tradition (visible in Hobbes, but more so in Locke). At the origins of the liberal tradition, the body politic splits into two domains: the public and the private. Familial relations (intimate, based on feelings), as an expression of the natural subordination of women to men, are defined as apolitical. In that way, the original political law – male marital law – is artfully concealed within the tradition of the social contract. Pateman tries to expose that mystification (the concealment of male domination). She points out that in the rhetorical and declarative sense, contract theorists include women in the social contract and the body politic (Locke declares that he is speaking on behalf of all mankind). In her opinion, the sole purpose of this inclusiveness is to mask men's privileged position in society. The aim of Pateman's positive project, meanwhile, is to arrive at an expanded formula of citizenship in which the value of womanhood and of universal egalitarianism are both honoured and reinforced (Guczalska 2019).

¹⁹ A full and exhaustive analysis of the modern form of patriarchy is presented in a book devoted to Pateman's ideas. See (Guczalska 2019).

such social contract theorists as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke. That is because those philosophers wrote at much greater length on women. In addition, Hobbes's anthropology seemed rather uninspiring in a feminist context, since he placed the emphasis on a person characterised by individualism, egoism and isolation from social ties (Elshtain 1993, p. 109). Yet there were reactions to Hobbes's theory. His reflections inspired Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673) and were studied by Mary Astell (1666–1731) and the historian Catharine Macaulay (1731–1791). In 1967, Gordon Schochet published his ground-breaking *Thomas Hobbes on the Family and the State of Nature* (Schochet 1967), which preceded analysis of Hobbes's standpoint linked to strictly feminist political thinking (Okin 1979, 1982, *The Sexism of...* 1979, Eisenstein 1981, Elshtain 1993, Hirschmann & Wright 2012).

Richard Tuck states that Hobbes is the philosopher most undertreated by historians of political thought among the great thinkers of the West (Tuck 2002). Yet that view does not apply to Pateman's writings, in which Hobbes is a central figure. For Pateman, the liberal doctrine – which she treats to a comprehensive critique – replicates problems and aporias already present in Hobbes's stance. Although Hobbes does not appear in Pateman's first influential work on participatory democracy (Pateman 1970), in her subsequent books (Pateman 1985, 1988), his views are constitutive of her diagnoses concerning liberalism and the contemporary world. Hobbes's standpoint is noted in many of her publications²⁰, and her commentaries issued down the years represent multi-stranded insights into Hobbes's theory, not contradicting one another, but systematising and enhancing our knowledge of the link between liberalism and the patriarchy. Pateman is a coherent, consistent scholar who advances well-considered arguments. Her interpretation of Hobbes's views has been acknowledged and even distinguished (Hirschmann & Wright 2012)²¹.

The interpretation of classic political theory should be approached with a view to better understanding, and to formulating a response to modern-day challenges. Pateman's reflection does both, constituting a valuable contribution to the study of Hobbes's standpoint, liberal theory, democracy and feminism. Pateman expanded the field of research on women in the domain of political theory. Her interpretation of not only Hobbes's theory, but also that of Locke, Rousseau, Kant and Rawls, has opened up new perspectives for feminism and even – more broadly – political theory. She links conclusions derived from classic political theory to contemporary factors. In particular, she points to the connection between philosophical findings

²⁰ Note (Brennan & Pateman 1979, Pateman 1980, 2002, Pateman & Mills 2007, *Hobbes...* 2012).

²¹ In this publication, Pateman, in conversation with Quentin Skinner, summarises her reflections on Hobbes's standpoint. The interpretations of Pateman, Skinner, Cavendish and Schochet are the subject of commentaries from authors published in this volume.

of a general nature and the functioning of public institutions, the labour market and even sexual behaviours (prostitution, rape) (Guczalska 2019). Pateman is one of those thinkers paving the way to a comprehensive and original approach to canonic themes which are reinterpreted from the perspective of subjects important for women. That approach continues today. Debate on Hobbes's theory is linked to such themes as fertility and abortion (Boucher 2012), breast implants (Wright 2012) and the theory of sexuality (Sreedhar 2012).

Pateman's standpoint has also been and remains the subject of criticism²². Her conclusions regarding women within the context of the social contract appear debatable, since her assertions are supposedly not backed by source texts²³. Interestingly, Pateman's own words lends credence to that accusation: She has noted that she reconstructs gaps in the argumentation of classical thinkers and seeks out contradictions and aporias – including in Hobbes (Pateman & Mills 2007, pp. 219–220). It is worth pointing out, however, that such criticism focuses solely on one aspect of her interpretation. That dimension is impossible to avoid, since it is her original and singular achievement. All the more reason, however, to stress that Pateman's texts abound in quotations and are based just as much on what the philosophers actually say. It is not true, therefore, that Pateman concentrates too much or even solely on content that is concealed, not explicitly expressed or leading to an aporia²⁴.

On the contrary, it seems that her precise reading of a particular work leads her to conclude that the analysed semantic structures contain some gap in the argumentation or are lacking in logic. For example, in social contract theory, it is declared that all people are free and equal – yet wives are subordinate to their husbands. My argumentation heads in the opposite direction. I maintain that Pateman has interpreted philosophers and political theorists too literally and without the requisite distance. She considers a given argument in an extremely serious and principled way, while failing to register that certain views are ahead of their time whilst others are proverbial relics of the past. In that sense, one may accuse Pateman not so much of “departing from” the letter of the text as rather displaying a naivety in her approach to classic treatises of political theory, which in many places speak anachronously about women (Guczalska 2019)²⁵.

²² A survey of selected commentaries by Susan Moller Okin, Nancy Fraser, Robyn Marasco, Chantal Mouffe, Jane Mansbridge, Alan Ryan and Charles W. Mills is presented in (Guczalska 2019).

²³ I refer to this accusation because it is strictly linked to interpretation of Hobbes's writings. In Pateman's view, the sexual contract is not clearly explicated in theorists' texts.

²⁴ Philosopher's have written clearly and indisputably of women's inferiority to men.

²⁵ This issue becomes more complex in relation to contemporary philosophers who also assume a patriarchy, one good example being Rawls.

Shortcomings in Pateman's contextual and historical approach have also been identified by J. H. Wright (2004). That argument could be maintained, although in this instance – as with the accusation of an overly free interpretation of canonic texts – the considerable volume of historical and legal Pateman cites is overlooked. On the other hand, it is the logic of Hobbes's exposition, and not its rooting in history, that is crucial to the interpretation of his writings. In that sense, Pateman herself stresses the difference between her approach and the analyses of Quentin Skinner (Pateman & Skinner 2012, p. 33). In reading Pateman's works, we soon realise that they confront the past in order to understand the present. She does not write history books. In her studies, history (including the history of political thought) is treated instrumentally and does not constitute a value in itself. Without the perspective of the modern world, old words, thoughts, narratives and facts would not really be of any particular interest. Pateman attaches singular weight to the meaning and cohesion of words that are spoken and written; she is aware that even erroneous and illogical theories give rise to social facts: "Telling stories of all kinds is the major way that human beings have endeavoured to make sense of themselves and their social world" (Pateman 1988, p. 1).

The focal point of Pateman's considerations is modern social contract theory. The significance of her output becomes manifest in the context of the revision of that idea (Guczalska 2019). Hobbes holds a special place in this respect, as he must be evoked in order to fully understand the "logic of the contract" (Pateman & Mills 2007, p. 35). The revision leads to the conclusion that the main social institutions are not constituted by truly free and egalitarian relations. The underlying notions of political theory – freedom, citizenship, marriage, work, liberal democracy – are constructs which assume that matters of a patriarchal nature have been settled beforehand. One example of this is the assumption that a man is a free citizen acting in the public space and governing in the state – and, as head of the family, in the home. Such assumptions stem from the sexual contract (known as the "social contract"), which implies a hierarchical social order implemented on the basis of a marital contract, labour contract or contract for sexual services. It is worth adding that the now canonic notion of the "sexual contract" has gone beyond the strictly feminist context and inspired the revelation of an aspect of the social contract which Charles W. Mills terms the "racial contract" (Mills 1997). Mills also states that the most interesting proposition of contemporary feminist thought is content which synthesises the standpoints of Susan Moller Okin, Jean Hampton and Carole Pateman (Mills 2008).

6. Summary and Conclusions

Pateman's standpoint is important in relation to the revision of classic political theory and standard readings of *Leviathan*. The feminist context reveals that Hobbes's philosophy is of a paradoxical character, containing as it does strands both reinforcing patriarchalism and emancipating women. Advocates of a social contract have usually assumed that the power of men over women is natural and necessary (Locke, Rousseau). Hobbes does not advocate that kind of subordination. A woman is by nature inferior but can make a man her servant (dominate him). Ultimately, however, women in Hobbes remain the permanent servants of men. Women's servility towards men is based on two premises (Pateman 1988, p. 48). First, men are masters in society, because they have concluded a contract thanks to which political power of a patriarchal character has obtained universal validity. Second, one condition of the contract's conclusion was the exclusion of women from political life. This measure proved necessary because free women, endowed with reason and equal to men, would not have signed a contract that condemns them to permanent subjection. The subordination of women assumed the form of binding political law, expressed in marriage. Legally ratified marriage became the guarantee of the enduring subordination of women to men.

Despite the pro-feminist qualities of Hobbes's standpoint, the absolutist vision of *Leviathan* cannot be positively evaluated. Like Strauss, Arendt and Habermas, Pateman sees in Hobbes's political project the origin of liberalism – a doctrine that she sharply criticises²⁶. Pateman's interpretation offers no praise for Hobbes's standpoint, and its value lies elsewhere. It represents a crucial contribution to the study of Hobbes and enriches the feminist tradition with profound analysis in the domain of the history of political thought, which supports the thesis of the uninterrupted perdurance of – the changing forms of – the patriarchy²⁷. So what is the most interesting conclusion arising from Pateman's analysis? Well, it is a rather surprising conclusion. The case of Hobbes (a protoplast of liberalism) clearly shows that a departure from the past of the patriarchy, with the figure of a dominant father to the fore (Filmer's theory), does not lead to the abolition of women's

²⁶ Liberalism is *de facto* “two competing traditions of liberal thinking” – one derives from Hobbes, the other from Locke (Krawczyk 2011, p. 11). In this approach, Pateman criticises both traditions. Carl Schmitt identifies Hobbes mainly as an advocate of individualism (Schmitt 2008, p. 71). Pateman's positive project, meanwhile, is close to the idea of community as understood by Rousseau (Pateman 1970).

²⁷ Key authors of works from the area of Hobbes studies include G. S. Kavka (1986), D. Gauthier (1969) and J. Hampton (1986). It is worth adding that Pateman's standpoint converges on many points with the thinking of C. B. Macpherson. This question is discussed by D. Held (2006) and M. Turowski (2014). On how the standpoints of Pateman and Macpherson regarding Hobbes are correlated, see (Macpherson 1962) and (Guczalska 2019).

subordination to men. Therefore, it becomes essential to understand the new form of male domination, necessitating a new way of interpreting and evaluating the social contract and the liberal tradition.

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Lewiatan i kobieta. Carole Pateman o stanowisku Thomasa Hobbesa

(Streszczenie)

Carole Pateman jest znana na wielu polach badawczych: idei demokracji, problemu zobowiązania politycznego czy krytyki liberalizmu. Jej teoria polityczna przynależy również do tradycji feministycznej. W tym obszarze C. Pateman stawia tezę o występowaniu współzależności pomiędzy patriachatem a umową społeczną. W celu uzasadnienia tej hipotezy badaczka poddaje analizie i przewartościowaniu klasyczną myśl polityczną. Jedną z teorii, którą na nowo interpretuje, jest filozofia Thomasa Hobbesa. Autor *Lewiatana* zajmuje oryginalne stanowisko w kwestii kobiet, a ich rolę społeczną łączy spójnie z konstrukcją całego systemu politycznego. Zdaniem C. Pateman myśl Hobbesa stanowi punkt wyjścia do kształtowania się nowoczesnej formy patriachalizmu. Artykuł przedstawia tę interpretację, a w szczególności poglądy T. Hobbesa na temat kobiet oraz tego, w jaki sposób jego teoria polityczna gwarantuje obowiązywanie i uniwersalizm prawa patriachalnego.

Słowa kluczowe: Pateman, Hobbes, patriachalność, kobieta w filozofii, feminizm, umowa społeczna, liberalizm.