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FEMINIST ANTHROPOLOGY: WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

Contemporary feminist anthropology developed out of the 'anthropology of women' of the 1970s. This modern feminist anthropology takes as its subject, not women, but gender relations. It does not purport to speak *for* women, although it certainly speaks extensively *about* women. It follows from this that feminist anthropology should not be confused with or taken to be coterminous with the study of Third World women. The idea that anthropology is concerned exclusively with studying the Third World is a common fallacy. Social anthropology certainly grew out of the geopolitics of colonial domination, and out of a Western fascination with non-Western cultures; a fascination which was, in many ways, born of a prior concern with 'self' rather than with the 'other'. Other cultures were, if you like, a way of understanding, commenting and reflecting on the peculiarity of Western culture. The question was not so much 'What are the other societies of the world like?' but rather 'Is everybody like us?' It is significant in this regard that the interpretation of 'other cultures' has often been likened in the anthropological literature to a process of translation (Crick, 1976). This is an analogy which rather aptly describes the process of rendering one culture in terms of another. Anthropology's internal response to this problem was to develop the concept of ethnocentrism – cultural bias – and to begin a process of radically interrogating the assumptions on which anthropological interpretations rest.

The 'anthropology of women' was part of this process of questioning theoretical categories, and of emphasizing the way in which theoretical suppositions underpin data collection, analysis and interpretation. The acknowledgement of 'male bias' in the discipline was a 'special' case of

the recognition of the ethnocentric assumptions underlying anthropological theory. This recognition was an important step because it ultimately brought into question many of the 'taken for granted' theoretical frameworks within the 'anthropology of women' itself, such as the domestic/public and nature/culture distinctions. The material presented in chapter 2 shows how feminist anthropology was able to make significant theoretical advances – for example, breaking down the assumed identity between 'woman' and 'mother', rethinking the distinction between the 'individual' and society, and challenging the Eurocentric concept of personhood or self frequently used in anthropological writing – once it was able to stand outside the theoretical parameters laid down by the domestic/public and nature/culture divisions. The rethinking of the concept of self is currently providing an impetus for the re-evaluation of theoretical frameworks in kinship and economic anthropology, as demonstrated in the discussion of marriage and property relations in chapter 3.

Critiques based on challenges to ethnocentrism have taken anthropology a very long way, and the most significant advances in this regard have undoubtedly been made in feminist anthropology and in symbolic anthropology. The interconnections between these two approaches are many and varied, and the debt they owe each other is amply demonstrated by the discussion in chapter 2. The history of the relationship between feminist anthropology and the discipline itself is rather like the history of the feminist movement in relation to left politics. The feminist movement shares many of the political aims of the left, but to a certain extent it grew out of a dissatisfaction with the insufficiencies of left politics regarding women. In the same way, feminist anthropology shares the majority of anthropology's aims, but it has also developed in response to many of the insufficiencies and absences in disciplinary theorizing and practice. We should not be surprised, therefore, to find that feminist anthropology both mirrors and parallels the theoretical and conceptual revisions which are occurring within the discipline as well as actually providing some new theoretical initiatives (Strathern, 1987a).

Understanding difference

Probably the most outstanding contribution feminist anthropology has made to the discipline has been the development of theories relating to gender identity and the cultural construction of gender, of what it is to be a 'woman' or a 'man'. This has come to be called the 'anthropology of gender', and it is a field of research which did not exist and could not have existed before the advent of a feminist anthropology. There are

now quite a number of male anthropologists working in the 'anthropology of gender', and there is a growing interest in issues relating to masculine identity and the cultural construction of masculinity. Feminist anthropology is not, however, the same thing as the 'anthropology of gender', and this is a point which obviously requires further clarification, given my earlier argument that feminist anthropology should be defined as the study of gender relations, as opposed to the study of women. The problem is really one of terminology, because it is perfectly possible to make a clear distinction between the study of gender identity and its cultural construction (the anthropology of gender) and the study of gender as a principle of human social life (feminist anthropology). This distinction is important because, although feminist anthropology cannot be simply defined as women studying women, it is even more crucial when we come to define it as the 'study of gender' that this is not taken to mean that feminist anthropology is only concerned with the cultural construction of gender and gender identity. Feminist anthropology is much more than this, as I have tried to demonstrate in previous chapters. However, it is equally important to realize that the 'anthropology of gender' as a field of enquiry is not strictly speaking a sub-discipline or a sub-section of feminist anthropology, because, while it shares many of its concerns with feminist anthropology, there are those who study the 'anthropology of gender' from a non-feminist perspective.

This suggests that, while feminist anthropology cannot be defined as women studying women, there is some sense in which it can and must be distinguished from those frameworks of enquiry which study gender or women from a non-feminist point of view. The difficulty would seem to reside, in part, in deciding what constitutes a feminist point of view. One very common answer to this question is to say that feminism is all about the difference it makes to consider things from a woman's point of view; in other words, that feminism is all about the women's perspective. On the face of it, this response would seem rather tautologous, given that we have established that feminist anthropology cannot be defined by the gender of its practitioners and their subjects. Furthermore, it says nothing about whose point of view we are referring to; are we talking about the point of view of the person who studies or that of the person studied? Perhaps we are falling into the larger trap of assuming that their points of view are identical?

In order to resolve this dilemma it is necessary to return to some of the arguments concerning the relevance of the sociological category 'woman'. The major difficulty in equating feminism with the 'woman's point of view' is that this assumes that there is a unitary woman's perspective or point of view, which can be seen to be held by an identifiable sociological category 'woman'. However, feminist anthropology

strongly challenges this idea, as we have seen, because it demonstrates that there can be no universal or unitary sociological category 'woman', and therefore that there can be no analytical meaning in any universal conditions, attitudes or views ascribed to this 'woman' – for example, in the 'universal subordination of women' and the 'oppression of women'. The term 'patriarchy' is similarly deconstructed. This does not mean that women are not oppressed by patriarchal structures, but it does mean that the nature and consequences of those structures have to be specified in each instance, and not assumed.

A further problem, however, with the idea of the woman's point of view is that it presupposes some underlying 'sameness'. We have already seen that the notion of 'sameness' is brought into question by the deconstruction of the universal category 'woman', and by the empirical evidence which demonstrates that gender is everywhere experienced through the specific mediations of history, class, race, colonialism and neo-imperialism (see chapter 1). Feminist anthropology recognizes this, but at times it has often seemed as if the existence of a shared feminine identity, the commonality of gender, has somehow transcended the existence of other forms of difference. The 'anthropology of women' was excellent at considering difference based on gender: what difference did it make to be a woman, what difference did it make to see things from a woman's point of view, what difference did it make to be a woman anthropologist? The issue of gender difference was very sophisticatedly handled with regard to cultural difference. What difference did it make to be a woman in one culture as opposed to another? The concept of cultural difference has always played a key role in social anthropology because it is on the basis of such difference that anthropology has historically identified its subject: 'other cultures'.

The concept of cultural difference has been subjected to exhaustive analysis within the discipline, and it has been used to build a critique of 'culture-bound' ways of looking at the world. In other words, it has been the basis for the development of the critique of ethnocentrism. However, as I argued in chapter 1, the concept of ethnocentrism, while immensely valuable, leaves some very basic issues untouched. This is because it is formulated primarily in terms of how social anthropology can and should break out of its Western cultural assumptions, its Western way of seeing the world. The value of such a project is clear, but it none the less implies the existence of a unitary anthropological discourse which is based on Western culture. The critique of ethnocentrism is certainly designed to purify this discourse, to make it more critical and self-reflexive, but it is not necessarily intended to deconstruct it altogether. It is a remedial rather than a revolutionary programme, because, while anthropology may be rethinking its

theoretical assumptions, the authority of the anthropological discourse itself is never challenged. It is still the dominant Western discourse – albeit purified – which is going to define what is anthropology and what is not anthropology, what is ethnocentric and what is not. Other agendas, other anthropologies, are not going to be heard. They are not, of course, excluded specifically, and certainly not maliciously, but they can only ever be there as present absences while we still agree that there is a unitary anthropology, a single authoritative anthropological discourse, based on the distinction between 'Western culture' and 'other cultures'.

The same sort of argument applies to the idea of 'sameness' which underlies the notion of the shared woman's perspective. Black feminists have long argued that the celebration of women *qua* women in feminist politics and academic writing, with its assumption that women have a necessary basis for unity and solidarity, privileges one particular discourse about women or 'womanhood' over others (Hooks, 1982; Davis, 1981; Carby, 1982; Hull et al., 1982; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 1981). Other views of 'womanhood', other ways of looking at the 'woman question', do not get heard. They are muted (see chapter 1). Much more important, however, is that gender as difference is privileged over all other forms of difference. Other forms of difference, such as race, may be acknowledged, but if they are they tend to be treated as additive, as variations on a basic theme. To be black and be a woman becomes to be a woman and be black. Black feminists make the point that the issue of race is not additive, that the experience of race transforms the experience of gender, and that it brings into question any feminist approach which suggests that women should be treated as women first, and only after that as women differentiated by race, culture, history, and so on (Amos and Parmar, 1984; Bhavnani and Coulson, 1986; Minh-ha, 1987). The issue of the primacy or dominance of gender difference is a contentious one, because gender as a social construct has a variable reference to biological difference, which racism as a social construct does not, and certainly other forms of difference – such as those constructed around histories, colonialism, class, etc. – do not. This sometimes permits a disguised appeal to biology of the kind that 'at bottom we are all women' or 'in the final analysis we are all women together'. However, given the predominantly experiential way in which individuals and groups come to know difference or differences in the world, and given that gendered individuals experience the social construction of gender rather than its biological determinants, I am not sure that the appeal to biology can be used to justify the primacy of gender difference. But, even if it could be so used, to make such an argument misses the point somewhat. This can be demonstrated by returning briefly to the critique of 'male bias' made by the 'anthropology of women' in the 1970s.

The 'anthropology of women' made much of the woman's perspective in large part as an antidote to the overwhelming problem of male bias in the discipline. In emphasizing the importance of the woman's perspective, the 'anthropology of women' sought to uncover the similarities, as well as the differences, in women's position worldwide. They looked, therefore, for universal explanations of women's subordination. This phase did not last long because the 'anthropology of women' developed a fundamental critique of its own position, and in the process self-consciously differentiated theoretical positions emerged. However, at one stage, the 'anthropology of women' did develop a discourse about women which had pretensions to universality. Precisely because it sought to be inclusive of women in other cultures, of the variety of women's experience, activities and conditions around the world, it actually practised a notable form of exclusion. Women who did not subscribe to this discourse on women, women who did not feel that the term 'woman' applied to them as expressed in the terms of this dominant discourse, were simply not heard; they were silent. One of the main concerns of the 'anthropology of women' was to deconstruct the categories of anthropological thought, to examine its ethnocentric assumptions. But the assumptions in question – for example, those about the nature of 'woman' and 'man', and about sexually differentiated spheres of activity – were Western assumptions, and the main subject of this questioning was actually Western culture as represented in the terms and categories of anthropological discourse. In other words, the revision which the 'anthropology of women' proposed was a revision internal to Western culture, and as such it was exclusionary.

We can see, then, that the 'anthropology of women' was exclusionary in two ways. In the first place, it was actually concerned with revising Western cultural assumptions, and therefore assumed by default that all anthropologists were either Westerners or that they shared Western cultural assumptions. No consideration was given to the possibility that there might be anthropologists who had other ways of looking at the world. Secondly, it established a discourse about women which was exclusively constructed in dialogue with Western cultural assumptions. 'Other women' could not intervene in the debate except on the terms set out by those who were in charge of setting the agenda. The argument, then, is really about the political and theoretical complexities of trying to speak *about* women, while avoiding any tendency to speak *for* them. The 'anthropology of women' wanted to challenge men's right to speak for women, but in the process it found itself unintentionally speaking *for* other women. This is one reason why some critics have argued that anthropology is racist as opposed to merely ethnocentric. To acknowledge cultural bias is, of course, not the same thing as acknowledging that you may have been speaking about

other women in a way which prevents them from speaking about themselves. The argument that 'we are all women together' clearly doesn't address the issue of racism, because it merely subsumes the issue of race under an argument about the primacy of gender difference. However, feminist anthropology, unlike the 'anthropology of women', has made some progress in this area, because while it acknowledges that 'women are all women together' it also emphasizes that there are fundamental differences between women – whether based on class, race, culture or history – and that that difference is something which needs to be theorized.

Perspectives on gender, race and class: the problems of sameness and difference

Feminist anthropology does not, however, need to be told that women are different. It is the one social science discipline which is actually able to demonstrate from a strongly comparative perspective that what it is to be a woman is culturally and historically variable, and that gender itself is a social construction which always requires specification within any given context. The argument is not, therefore, about whether feminist anthropology acknowledges difference between women, but about what sort of difference it acknowledges. It is true that in the past feminist anthropology was concerned with registering only two forms of difference: gender difference and cultural difference. However, the material presented in chapters 3 and 4 shows that feminist anthropology has since developed sustained theoretical positions which specify the interconnections between gender difference, cultural difference, class difference and historical difference. This is most clearly demonstrated in the debates about the penetration of capitalism, the impact of colonial domination and the changing nature of the family. The comparative perspective of feminist anthropology on all these issues, and the way in which it has made gender relations central to any critical understanding of the nature of these processes, provides a challenge to many other areas of social science enquiry. The shift towards class and historical analysis which is evident in feminist anthropology is, of course, part of a wider shift within the discipline of social anthropology itself (see chapter 4), but the distinctive contribution of feminist anthropology is the way in which it demonstrates that gender relations are central to any sustained analysis of class and historical relations. It is also worth noting that the debate in feminist anthropology about the changing nature of the family challenges many of the arguments in contemporary sociology and in contem-

porary feminist debates concerning the relationship between family forms and capitalist relations of production. It also challenges the idea that the teleology of Western development provides a historical model which will be necessarily and beneficially followed elsewhere.

However, it is true that feminist anthropology has only recently turned its attention to studying difference based on race, and to trying to specify how gender, class and race differences intersect in specific historical contexts. This is largely because 'radical' tendencies in social anthropology have generally failed to incorporate arguments about race into their critical revisions of the discipline. For example, during the 1960s and 1970s, a number of anthropologists, both black and white, began to develop a critique of anthropology's colonial past, and suggested that the future of the discipline would have to be one based on a critical awareness of the specific relations of colonial domination, and on an equally critical understanding of the power relations inherent in the ethnographic encounter, that is in the relationship between the anthropologist and the people studied by the anthropologist. Many black anthropologists pointed out that colonial and post-colonial anthropology had been, and continued to be, racist (Lewis, 1973; Magubane, 1971; Owusu, 1979). They based their arguments on the fact that the discipline constructed other cultures as objects of study in such a way that the significant features of the 'other' resided in its relationship to Western culture, and not in terms of its own history and development. It was further argued that anthropology had made no attempt to come to terms with the politics of black-white relations under colonialism, and was continuing to make no attempt to come to terms with these politics in the post-colonial context. The discipline responded to these criticisms in a number of ways, but in the final analysis the blow was a glancing one because anthropology heard these criticisms primarily in terms of a discourse about ethnocentrism and not in terms of a discourse about racism.

However, social anthropology took up the argument about the power relations inherent in the practice of anthropological fieldwork, as well as those concealed in the twin processes of anthropological interpretation and writing. An enormous body of literature exists on these issues, and this 'radical' strand of anthropology has continued into the present. There is currently a lively debate about the way in which anthropology provides written accounts of 'other cultures' and thus monopolizes interpretation and representation. In the process of translating the experience of another in terms of one's own experience, and then representing that experience through the structures of written language, the anthropologist effectively decides to speak *for* others. The current radicalism in anthropology experiments with forms of ethnographic writing in order to try to find some way of letting the

people who are being studied speak for themselves. The aim is to produce a 'new' ethnography which would be based on the multiple authorship of anthropological texts, and which would represent both the interlocutory process of fieldwork, and the collaboration between anthropologist and informant on which the practice of social anthropology depends (Marcus and Fischer, 1986; Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1983).

A serious critique has yet to be written of this new approach and of its consequences and potentialities for the discipline of social anthropology (but see Strathern, 1987a, 1987b). However, it is clear that it has strong continuities with the traditional anthropological approach to cultural difference. There has always been a very fruitful tension in the way in which social anthropology handles cultural difference. The tension arises because its maintenance is essential to anthropology's larger comparative project. Anthropology has always emphasized cultural difference, if not uniqueness. It has been pointed out by some critics that an emphasis on cultural difference can be used to stigmatize, 'pathologize' and 'exoticize' those who are different (see chapter 1). Anthropology has long been aware of this problem at least in one sense, and from the beginning of this century anthropologists have recognized the necessity of setting cultural difference against the wider background of social and human similarity. This is, of course, the purpose of anthropology's comparative project, and it underlies the humanitarian ethos on which the practice of social anthropology ultimately rests. The identifiable tension in anthropology's treatment of cultural difference is that an emphasis on difference is simultaneously an emphasis on similarity or sameness.

The ambiguity surrounding sameness and difference within the overall concept of cultural difference has allowed anthropology to use the idea of ethnocentrism – cultural bias – to sidestep any suggestion that other forms of difference might exist which cannot be subsumed under the heading of cultural difference, and/or that these differences might be irresolvable. The notion that it is possible for anthropologists and for anthropology itself to be ethnocentric is based on the idea that cultures have specific ways of looking at the world, and that they are different one from another. This difference is not, however, absolute, and anthropology acknowledges this by simultaneously emphasizing the similarities and differences between cultures. It is an apparent paradox of anthropological theorizing that the purpose in recognizing ethnocentrism is not to establish absolute cultural differences, but rather to break down the barriers to cultural understanding and to investigate the basis for cultural similarities. This means that, while the critique of ethnocentrism is, in part, about recognizing cultural difference, it is also about trying to overcome or minimize such

difference. The critique of ethnocentrism proceeds at a tangent to arguments about racism because the theory of ethnocentrism does not presume the differences it recognizes between cultures to be absolute. Individual anthropologists might argue that differences between cultures are radical, absolute and irreducible, but anthropology as a discourse concerned with interpreting 'other cultures' cannot afford to take such a position. Cultural differences have to be overcome, at least in part, if anthropology is to be successful in translating and interpreting the 'other culture'. The notion of rendering one culture in terms of another, which is at the heart of the anthropological endeavour, can only be achieved by negotiating the inherent tension between sameness and difference, and in so doing it does, of course, run the risk of collapsing differences which should not be collapsed.

The ethical, moral and political consequences of these kinds of arguments have been extensively discussed in anthropology. The important question here, however, is what difference does feminist anthropology make to all this, and/or what difference does all this make to feminist anthropology?

Why feminist anthropology makes a difference

There are many ways in which feminist anthropology makes a difference, and many ways in which it draws our attention to the importance of understanding difference. However, there are two main questions we need to consider: what difference does feminist anthropology make to anthropology, and what difference does it make to feminism? These two sets of relationships have not been treated equally in this book perhaps, because, while feminist anthropology has spent an enormous amount of time considering its relationship to anthropology, it has spent relatively little time considering its relationship to feminism. There are practical and historical reasons for this, but perhaps the time has come to redress the balance a little.

Anthropology and feminist anthropology

The history of the relationship between feminist anthropology and mainstream anthropology has already been described in this chapter and in chapter 1. It is quite clear from the data presented in previous chapters that feminist anthropology has made its most distinctive contribution through demonstrating why an understanding of gender relations must remain central to the analysis of key questions in anthropology and in the social sciences as a whole. The comparative perspective feminist anthropology has brought to the analysis of the

cultural construction of gender, and to the debate on the sexual division of labour, including the problems raised by the development of capitalism, has enabled feminist anthropology significantly to advance the state of knowledge in these areas, both theoretically and empirically. Feminist anthropologists have only recently turned their attention to the analysis of the modern state, but it seems likely that in the next few years this area of enquiry will produce some of the most interesting and exciting work in anthropology. The centrality which anthropology gives to the study of kinship relations in the context of the modern state suggests that feminist anthropology has a distinctive contribution to make through a demonstration of the ways in which existing kinship systems structure state responses to 'family' and household forms. This very brief list is not intended to summarize the achievements of feminist anthropology, but it is intended to point to those areas where feminist anthropology has had, or will have, something useful to say. It should not be imagined that feminist anthropology is alone in saying these things, because the breaking down of discipline barriers, with the very notable move towards multidisciplinary scholarship, has been one of the most outstanding achievements of the feminist critique in the social sciences as a whole. Feminist scholarship has sought not only to radicalize individual disciplines, but also to establish new research procedures, new standards for research and new relationships between academic theory and practice.

However, as we have seen, feminist anthropology has the clear potential to speak to fundamental theoretical issues within the discipline of social anthropology. Its emphasis on difference, and on the relationship of gender difference to other forms of difference, provides an opportunity to question the primacy which social anthropology has always accorded to cultural difference. This is not to say that cultural difference should be ignored or even displaced; this would be foolish. But it is to suggest that forms of difference in human social life – gender, class, race, culture, history, etc. – are always experienced, constructed and mediated in interrelation with each other. If we establish the a priori dominance or significance of one particular form of difference in our theoretical frameworks, then we automatically run the risk of ignoring others.

I do not think that we can necessarily establish the primacy of one form of difference over others. This is because it is quite clear, if we take the example of gender, that logically there can be no way of experiencing gender difference in some moment prior to the experience of other forms of difference. To be a black woman means to be a woman and be black, but the experience of these forms of difference is simultaneous, and not sequential or consequential. What is more

important, perhaps, is that in human society these forms of difference are structurally simultaneous, in that their simultaneity does not depend on each individual's experience of them, because it is already sedimented in social institutions. It is, however, clear that in specific contexts some forms of difference may be more important than others. It follows from this that the interrelations between the various forms of difference will always require specification in given historical contexts. We cannot assume we know the significance of any particular set of intersections between class, race and gender prior to our analysis of these intersections. The task for feminist anthropologists, as for scholars in other disciplines, is to find ways of theorizing these highly variable intersections between the various forms of difference.

The consequences for social anthropology of accepting that cultural difference is only one form of difference among several is that it throws into question the primary organizing concept of social anthropology: the concept of culture. There is no generally accepted definition in social anthropology of what a culture is. In some cases a culture can be understood as referring to a society, but, in the modern world, situations where cultures and societies are isomorphic are increasingly rare. Anthropology recognizes this in so far as general definitions of 'culture' refer to systems of symbols and beliefs, the 'world-view' of a people, 'life ways', an 'ethos', and so on. The concept of culture in anthropology is in need of serious revision. However, in spite of the fluidity and uncertainty surrounding its definition, precisely because mainstream anthropology still sees the interpretation of 'other cultures' as one of its main tasks – if not *the* task – to call the primacy of cultural difference into account would certainly provoke a theoretical crisis. It remains to be seen whether feminist anthropology will do this or not.

Feminism and feminist anthropology

The contribution of feminist anthropology to feminism is rather harder to work out than its contribution to mainstream anthropology. One obvious relationship is that many feminists have used anthropological data to deconstruct essentialist arguments about women in Western culture. Feminist anthropology has also made contributions to various mainstream feminist debates about the sexual division of labour and the form of the family under capitalism. However, the question still remains as to whether feminist anthropology is able to make a theoretical or political contribution to contemporary feminism. The most important issue in this context is probably feminist anthropology's radical questioning of the sociological category 'woman' (see above and chapter 1). If feminist politics depends upon the unity of

women as a 'sex-class', then what are the consequences for feminism of the work of feminist anthropologists? The answer is that an emphasis on the differences between women does not necessarily deconstruct the basis of feminist politics. Women do share similar difficulties and experiences worldwide; it is simply that these similarities must be demonstrated and specified in each case, and not assumed. The differences between women are important, and they need to be acknowledged because it cannot be part of a feminist politics for one group of women to speak for and on behalf of another. The important point is that, although women's experiences, circumstances and difficulties do overlap with those of other women, they are not isomorphic with them. In order to assert a solidarity based on commonalities between women, it is not necessary to assert that all women are, or have to be, the same.

In the final analysis, the contribution of feminist anthropology to contemporary feminism is simply to point to the value of comparison and to the importance of acknowledging difference. This may not be a very grand or a very profound contribution, but it may still be a worthwhile one. Feminist anthropology, because of the nature of the enquiry it is engaged in, has had to learn to celebrate the strength of difference. The deconstruction of the sociological category 'woman' and the dissolution of such concepts as the 'universal subordination of women' have not dissolved feminist anthropology. The justification for doing feminist anthropology has very little to do with the fact that 'women are women the world over', and everything to do with the fact that we need to be able to theorize gender relations in a way which ultimately makes a difference.

NOTES

Chapter 1 Feminism and Anthropology: The Story of a Relationship

- 1 I have elsewhere argued that women and men do not have separate models of the world. Women certainly have a different point of view or 'perspective' on the world, but this is the result not of a separate model but of their attempts to locate themselves within the dominant cultural model of the world, which they share with men (Moore, 1986).
- 2 Anthropology's pluralism is undoubtedly linked to its liberal intellectual origins. Marilyn Strathern discusses the relationship between feminism and anthropology in a recent article (Strathern, 1978a). I have developed my typology of the discipline from the one she provides in her article, but our views on the relationship of feminist anthropology to the discipline of anthropology as a whole are somewhat different.
- 3 This part of the argument developed out of my reading of an article by Kum-Kum Bhavnani and Margaret Coulson, where they discuss how the term 'ethnocentrism' can be used to sidestep the issue of racism. I am greatly indebted to them for this insight (Bhavnani and Coulson, 1986).
- 4 The effects of colonialism, the penetration of capitalist relations of production and the interventions of international development agencies on rural production system, on the sexual division of labour, and on regional politics have been extensively and very brilliantly analysed by historians of Africa and Latin America. See chapter 4 for further details.
- 5 Many of the criticisms of colonial anthropology have focused on how arguments about cultural uniqueness can be used to support racist and separatist ideologies and policies. In South Africa today, some Afrikaner anthropologists are still using very similar arguments to justify segregation under apartheid, just as they were in the past.
- 6 The argument in this section has benefited greatly from my reading of Rosalind Delmar's article 'What is feminism' (Delmar, 1986).