

UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI
FAKULTETA ZA DRUŽBENE VEDE

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**Med radikalnimi obljubami in skromno realnostjo - kritična
refleksija teze o individualizaciji in transformaciji intimnosti v pozno
modernih družbah**

**Between radical promises and modest realities
A critical reflection on the theses about individualization
and transformation of intimacy in late modern societies**

Magistrsko delo

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The main discussion of the present MA thesis is centered on the concepts of individuality and intimacy as represented in the discourse of late modernity, especially in the works of the sociologists Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman. In the first part of the thesis the author introduces and outlines basic arguments considering the transformation of modernity, individuality and intimacy coming from these authors. The second part of the thesis is focused on arguments about the transformation of intimacy from two authors coming from sexuality studies: Ken Plummer and Jeffrey Weeks. By comparing the arguments of Plummer and Weeks with those of Giddens and Bauman the author tries to explicate important insights of late modern discourse and to show how other authors, working outside of the theoretical frames of late modernity, came to similar conclusions. In the third part, however, the author moves from an explication towards a critique of late modern discourse. To elaborate this critique, the author aligns with Bourdieu's and Marxist Feminist's class analysis. Using the markers of class and gender (and to a lesser degree of race and sexual orientation) the author dissects Giddens' and Bauman's arguments about individuality and intimacy, tries to point out their limits and their blindness towards various vectors of "power and difference" texturing late modernity. With this thesis the author hopes to point out the values and limits of late modern discourse, but even more to represent some refreshing insights into this theme, to open up new directions for understanding, examining and interpreting the place of individuality and intimacy in contemporary society.

Key words: late modernity, disembedding of social institutions, individuality and individualization processes, transformation of intimacy, class, gender

Med radikalnimi obljubami in skromno realnostjo - kritična refleksija teze o individualizaciji in transformaciji intimnosti v pozno modernih družbah

Osrednja razprava pričujoče magistrske naloge se vrti okoli konceptov individualnosti in intimnosti, kot sta uporabljena v diskurzu pozne modernosti, še posebej v delih sociologov Anthony Giddensa in Zygmunta Baumana. V prvem delu naloge predstavi in oriše temeljne teze o transformaciji modernosti, individualnosti in intimnosti, kot jih razumeta omenjena avtorja. V drugem delu naloge pa se osredotoča na teze o transformaciji intimnosti s strani dveh avtorjev, ki izhajata iz študij seksualnosti, Kena Plummerja in Jeffreya Weeks. S primerjavo tez Plummerja in Weeks na eni, ter Giddensa in Baumana na drugi strani, poskuša avtor razložiti pomembne vpogleds v diskurz pozne modernosti in prikazati, kako so avtorji, ki so delali izven teoretskih okvirjev pozne modernosti, prišli do podobnih zaključkov. V tretjem delu se avtor premakne od analize h kritiki diskurza pozne modernosti. Za utemeljitev te kritike uporabi razredno analizo Bourdieuja in marksističnega feminizma. Z uporabo označevalcev razreda in spola (v manjši meri pa tudi rase in seksualne usmerjenosti), analizira Giddensove in Baumanove teze o individualnosti in intimnosti ter poskuša izpostaviti njune omejitve in slepoto glede različnih vektorjev »moči in razlike«, ki označujejo pozno modernost. S to nalogo želi izpostaviti pomen in omejitve diskurza pozne modernosti, še posebej pa predstaviti nekaj svežih vpogledov v to tematiko z namenom odpiranja novih smeri razumevanja, preučevanja in interpretiranja mesta individualnosti ter intimnosti v sodobni družbi.

Ključne besede: pozna modernost, izkoreninjenje družbenih institucij, individualnost in individualizacijski procesi, transformacija intimnosti, razred, spol

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1 PREFACE

Writing is a complex process which involves many levels of engagement and it is like a path to which we never know the exact end. By walking in writing we also change the directions of our insights, arguments and conclusions. Similar, as we are going farer from our starting points, it often happens that paths begin to branch in multiple directions, paths often meeting at some crossroads and then diverging again, but nevertheless influencing each other's directions. What at beginning seemed as a simple walk may turn into a complex journey, with many possible directions and ends points. At least this was the feeling I had during my own writing and developing of arguments. In that sense my thesis represents just one of the possible paths one could take from reading the same texts I did.

In its form of disposition, as initial draft, the text was imagined to be a particular and 'pure' debate about sexuality and intimacy in contemporary world as seen primarily by Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, two sociologists and representatives of what I will call 'late modern authors'. They aren't of course the only authors writing under this frame, but they do represent two opposite positions inside the 'late modern' theoretical frame, at least it seemed so to me. I planned to focus only on their specific arguments about sexuality, to point on similarities and difference between them and to complement them with some arguments coming from other social scientists researching sexuality, intimacy and family forms. However, quite soon I realized that restricting myself only on the themes of sexuality and intimacy is impossible. For example, already arguments on this subjects coming from Giddens and Bauman are heavily based on their general arguments about nature of what they term either 'late/reflexive' or 'liquid' modernity, as well as with many other arguments about new disembedding processes of modernity and individualization as its main mechanisms. In their views, this processes combined unleashed sexual transformations, especially in the last part of the 20th century. In short, many concepts and arguments about changes in sexuality and intimacy were interlinked with all set of another concepts and arguments going beyond sexuality and intimacy.

This is of course not surprising because of one simple reason – sexuality and intimacy are existing within wider social contexts and are interlinked with many other social practices and social systems. These were, in that sense or another, also the messages of almost all authors represented in my text. Emphasis on these connections between sexuality and the wider social context and on sexuality as a social and historical practice is a characteristic for sociology (but it is surely not reduced to it) and in this sense this text can be also read as a sociological debate about sexuality and intimacy in contemporary society. However, what was initially planned to be a text on sexuality and

intimacy in late modern discourse soon began to spread on many wider themes and heading beyond the borders of its own subject. This will become obvious in the fact that the theme of individuality began to represent also a significant and big part of my thoughts, argumentation and finally my text. The theme of disembedding of social institutions also became more important during my writing process. But it is not only that. I widen my initial topic also by discussing sexuality and individuality in relation to capitalism and political economy, modernization and late modernity, patriarchy and gender categories, productive and unproductive work, class relation etc. However, sexuality and intimacy still remain central to my thesis or at least they remain the case study of discussing wider social processes of contemporary society. As result of all of this – and as the result of the complexity of the subject due to its strong connections with various other social practices – the text became much larger than firstly expected. Because of this I have decided to separate it in three general and wider parts.

Thus, in the first part which I named "Individuality and intimacy in late modernity" I am planning to open up the debate with introducing some arguments offered by Giddens and Bauman about nature of contemporary social formation, about its new mechanisms and character and about the role individuality and intimacy play in them. In that sense I am hoping that I will be able to point out similarities but also the significant differences existing between them. By pointing out on these differences I want to show various, in fact oppositional, ways how we can approach our subjects and construct various interpretations based on many points of agreements. I think that Giddens and Bauman are good example of this since they, basing their arguments on similar insights, come to quite opposite conclusions about late modernity, individuality and intimacy. I hope that such approach will make debate more interesting and late modern frame more complex and diversified.

In second part which I named "Remaking of sexual and intimate lives" I am going to continue the discussion about intimacy and sexuality in late modern discourse by complementing it with arguments coming from Ken Plummer and Jeffrey Weeks, both authors with sociological backgrounds and working inside the field of sexuality. I will try to show that these authors generally accept many of the arguments offered by late modern authors, especially those offered by Giddens, and use them in their own interpretations of changes in sexuality and intimacy which we are witnessing today. In many ways they came to similar conclusions as late modern authors by following different scientific and research paths and in this sense their arguments are even more interesting and have the possibility to strongly contribute to late modern discourse. Besides, both Plummer and Weeks deepened this debate about relation between late modernity and sexuality by

offering their own arguments about the transformation of sexuality and intimacy in recent decades. At the end of this part, I will also point on some differences existing between these scholars of sexuality on the one side and late modern authors on the other. I find these differences potentially significant and important for widening the debate in new directions and for asking a new set of questions.

These questions I will discuss in the third part. While in the first two parts I praised and valued Giddens' and Bauman's contributions to sexuality, in this part which I named "Not all that was solid has melted into the air", a title which I borrowed from Willi Atkinson, I'll begin to develop a critique of the late modern discourse by again introducing individuality as central to the discussion. Critiques of late modern discourse were expressed through numerous voices, although not so vocal and popular inside the academy. These critiques are mainly coming from authors who still retain questions of 'difference and power' central to their analysis of contemporary social formation, something what, they claim, Giddens and Bauman are seriously missing. In this part I will thus introduced the debate about class and gender offered by some (neo)bourdieusian scholars, Marxist-Feminists and some other authors who found late modern discourse non-satisfactory in its explanations of these questions. By introducing them I am hoping to point out on blind spots, limits and incorrectness of late modern discourse. For me these arguments have the potential to complicate the debate about sexuality, intimacy and individuality in contemporary society and to make late modern arguments less compelling as they may sound at first glance and how they sounded when firstly written down.

While the first two parts, at least in their themes, still represent the structure I've initially drafted, the third part is a definitely unpredicted outcome of my 'textual walking' and new questions and concerns which emerged during this walking. The invisibility of class and gender as still relevant categories of social analysis, as it is encountered in late modern discourse, is something what was my initial concern when deciding to write this theme. However, it was also the one hardest to develop and articulate and for a long time it was staying in the background of my thoughts. Luckily, during the process of writing, which was simultaneous with many social and class changes we are witnessing today, the articulation of my concerns began to develop. When I was able to articulate these questions of class and gender I also began to realize that these were not my concerns only, but they could be found among many scholars. The third part of this text is maybe my most original contribution to these debates.

The authors represented in this thesis, although working inside sociology, are coming from various tendencies inside it, both in a professional and scientific sense. It includes authors working

inside the frames of symbolic interactionism, social constructivism, Marxist theories, feminism, sociology of reflexivity and reflexive sociology. This approach maybe gives richness to the debate but it does also have its weak points. Sometimes in mixing many tendencies existing inside sociology we may get lost and also mix up the themes and subjects. I hope my text avoided this, at least I tried so. The text also tried to be intersectional by discussing individuality and sexuality in relation to class system, gender roles, and sexual normativity and, to a lesser extent, racial prejudices. In this sense it also carries risks. Sometimes in showing too much we may at the end show too little and be too much general. However, despite all this weak points I consider these perspectives to be powerful in explaining society, its structures, relations and practices. As I will try to show, these were also necessary perspectives for juxtaposing and combating many easy judgments and predictions which we can hear within late modern discourse. Thus, at the end and despite valuing and sharing many insights of late modern discourse, this text can be read as a critique of such discourse.

At the end, I would like that my text and its conclusions are primarily read with a polemical note. Subjects are complex and diverged and any easy judgments are hard to give. In that sense my conclusions are not final and absolute but rather a set of my own concerns when it comes to these subjects. I can only hope that it is also a valuable contribution in opening up some new perspectives, making new insights and asking new questions about the nature of individuality and sexuality in contemporary society, questions that will not remain blind to various inequalities and differences existing in contemporary social formation.

2 INDIVIDUALITY AND INTIMACY IN LATE MODERNITY

2.1 Introduction

Last decade of 20th century was marked by various profound changes occurring on many levels in society: breaking down of world blocs soon followed by globalization of Western-style capitalism on a world scale, emerging flexibilization and causalization of labor, disembedding of the social state, rising of new media and technologies with big influence on communication, ever more increasing lifestyles among youth, rising of divorces and serial monogamy etc. to name just few of these changes. Consequently, facing with this new changes and reconfigurations, many social scientists sought the way to grasp, understand and explain these changes. In sociology, I might argue, this was reflected through introduction of new themes into discussion and through new interpretations of the present, offering some new arguments about nature and mechanisms of contemporary society. In some cases authors begin to call for “rooted” redefinition of old concepts, begin to use almost completely new concepts (or reinterpret old ones in new way) and paradigms, making new (meta)theories in order to exchange old ones. In sociology this trend was obvious in the case of its two long running – that of modernity and individualization, discussed already by the 'classics' such as Durkheim, Marx and Weber. However, in new circumstances, many authors felt that old theories are not enough and indeed cannot grasp this new reality.

In sociology, these themes were the most reflected in discussion about 'late modernity'. This concept, as I will try to show, served both as mean for new authors for distancing themselves from other critiques of modernity (such as postmodernist critique), but also from classic explanations of it. In another words, the specific of authors writing under concept of 'late modernity' was their claim that new social configuration did not break with modernity's tendencies, but that in fact continued and radicalized them, consequently changing also its configuration (therefore the adjective 'late' appears).

In this section I will offer arguments of two authors writing under this term – Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman. The choice of two of them, among many others writing on similar subject, is not accidental. Namely, these two authors, although discussing similar themes and agreeing on many of its basic propositions, represent two opposite interpretations about nature and characteristics of late modernity. Therefore the aim of this section is to present their arguments about late modernity, keeping a special focus on the role of individualization and transformation of sexuality within this social formation.

2.2 Anthony Giddens: Self-reflexivity and disclosing intimacy

British sociologist Anthony Giddens represents a long present and influential author whose writings range across variety of topics, and who in recent decades engaged himself heavily in discussions about late modernity and changing character of intimacy and sexuality within this social formation. Thus, I must note, that my attempt here will not be to deal with Giddens theories in general. Rather I will focus on period of his writings between (roughly speaking) 1990-1995 in which he turns to the new themes and shifts away from his earlier interests and writings, beginning to use new concepts and paradigms which will somehow continue to characterize his writings until today.

This shift is most evident in his books *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990), *Modernity and Self-identity* (1991) and finally *The Transformation of Intimacy* (1992). In these books he begins to discuss themes of late modernity, individuality, self-identity as well as those of intimacy, sexuality and gender. In a lot of sense these books and themes discussed in them remain (inter)connected, thus for example in the *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990) Giddens for first time developed theory of late or reflexive modernity and elaborated many ideas which will re-occur and from where he will construct also his arguments in book on sexuality and intimacy. As I will try to show, Giddens in general tried to explore sexuality and intimacy via frames of his theory of modernity, where they somehow appeared as 'case studies' of general changes of life in late modernity. Thus, in following sections I will try to discuss many of these aspects and concepts and to show how they are connected with each other.

The best way to begin discussion seems to be with the term of 'late modernity'. Giddens adopted this term in order to both characterize new social formation but to also to distance himself from the postmodernist argumentations of somehow radical break between two modernities. In contrast to such theories, Giddens argues, contemporary social formation did not radically break with modernity (as in postmodern version) but it rather represents the continuance or even radicalization many modernity's aspects. To demonstrate this Giddens discusses themes of individualization, institutions, tradition and sexuality in order to show new environment of contemporary social formation, but also to demonstrate this effects as continuance of modernity's ideas and practices. Finally for him the best way to understand today's modernity is trough the concepts of institutional and individual reflexivity, from which I am planning to continue discussion and explain differences between two modernities.

2.2.1 Institutional and individual reflexivity

One of the main differences between (early) modernity and late modernity is their relationship towards tradition and it seems that this relationship is one of the corner stone for understanding undergoing changes (Giddens 1991, 1992, 1998; Heckert 2005). When it comes to tradition late modernity is, so to speak, a society of 'post-traditional order' both on the level of institutions and in relation to the person and the self. Before explaining what does this mean I will focus on how these post-traditional society emerged. According to Giddens late modernity emerges through three important 'dynamic mechanisms' characteristic for today: through separation of time and place, disembedding of social institutions and through institutional reflexivity itself (Giddens 1990, 1991).

In late modernity, Giddens continues, time and space are becoming separated and indefinite and social relations are tear out from local contexts. This means that in today's globalized world our experiences (on the level of identity or even 'reality') are not anymore tied to our locality and immediate interaction, but are connected with stories and experiences which are geographically distant from us, but still in touch with us via means of communications. As such they influence also our own lives. In this process time and place are becoming 'empty' and space is pulled away from place. In short, separation of time and place means that today our life, identity, as well as possibilities of their construction are influenced with dialectics between local and global, by locality and everyday interaction, but also by the 'experiences' and knowledges of global dimensions occurring outside of our local context. Important to say is that we cannot anymore prioritize which one of them (local or global) are more important since both are having high power in conditioning (or influencing) core elements of our life – both on the level of institutions and the self.

From this interconnection of local and global, of time and space, emerges also a process of 'disembedding of social institutions'. This is a process of “the lifting of social relationships from local context and their recombination across indefinite time/place distances” (Giddens 1991, 242). This however doesn't mean necessarily our geographic mobility but rather that “place becomes thoroughly penetrated by disembedding mechanisms, which recombine the local activities into time-place relations of ever-widening scope” where place becomes, so to speak, “phatasmagoric” (Giddens 1991, 146). This process of disembedding is characterized, Giddens continues, by the decline of the influence of tradition and authority of social institutions and consequently rising influence of 'abstract systems' as point of reference for the social and individual decisions and choices. This means that individuals in their everyday life do not necessary follow the traditional knowledges in shaping their lives and identity, but their lives and identity are now also, and more

and more, shaped by various 'expert' knowledges coming from many sources in society and places in the world. These abstract systems are consistent of 'symbolic tokens' ("media of exchange that have standard value and are thus interchangeable across and indefinite variety of contexts") and 'expert systems' ("system of expert knowledge, of any type, depending on rules transferable from individual to individual") which penetrate all aspects of our life (Giddens 1991, 242–244). In short, in late modernity instead of blindly following tradition we are now choosing between various sources of knowledge, from various sources of authority. Instead of tradition there is now multiplication of authorities coming from various social and geographical fields, from various sources of social knowledges. All this may be seen as by-product of disembedding of social institutions.

Under influences of mentioned dynamisms emerges also the Giddens's notion of institutional reflexivity of modernity. That modernity today is reflexive is yet one more distinctive characteristic between its present and past forms, and Giddens himself sometimes uses expression 'reflexive modernity/modernization' instead of late modernity, joining the voices with some other authors discussing contemporary social formation (Beck 1992; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994). Reflexive modernity for Giddens is a type of modernity which operates in "post-traditional order" as "social life away from pre-established percepts of practices" (Giddens 1991, 20). In modernity in which tradition loses its primacy, institutions are transformed and also more and more organized by the abstract systems. Because of these multiplication of authorities and knowledges this is as well modernity which operates and organizes itself not in great certainty and belief (in for example abstract systems), but actually in context of "methodological doubt" (Giddens 1991, 84). This modernity is reflexive because, both on level of institution and individuals, we are incorporating these new "knowledge and informations into environments of action that are thereby reconstituted and reorganized" (Giddens 1991, 84). In short, today we are faced with multiplicity of truth, options and choices available and this necessarily affects not just our knowledge but also our actions.

Modernity which operates in post-traditional area and through methodological doubt, where nothing is taken for granted, is indeed fragile modernity aware of all of the risks which modern life brings. But here Giddens notes that it is not risk itself what makes late modernity distinctive from all past social formations. What is distinctive is the fact that risk is calculated and incorporated in every action taken in late modern context. Risk is in a way a result of methodological doubt. Besides this, in this social formation the basics of trust have also changed. In the place of trust towards traditional systems, we are more and more witnessing building of the trust in abstract, and especially in expert, systems. However, the experts systems are characterized by polyphony of

voices and (expert) authorities where it is hard to imagine that any of them will become hegemonic and single voice. Other side of this phenomena is the fact that in such system the basis of trust itself is inherently fragile, permeated by 'methodological doubt' and this is why it is not easy to stick to the one and one only authority, but individuals themselves must choose among many expertises and often deal with their difference, even their contradictory claims and truths, as well as effects of their decisions and choosing.

Furthermore, as already indicated, the reflexivity of modernity is not only affecting institutions, but also individuals. The same mechanism of modernity “introduces an element of dynamism into human affairs, associated with changes in trust mechanisms and in risk environments” (Giddens 1991, 32). For example, today the very self is constructed in dynamism between the previously discussed local and global, meaning that individual experiences are influenced by distant realities. This change is at the same time as deep as it is fast, in the sense that mechanisms of late modernity extend in the core of the self in post-traditional order (Giddens 1991, 32) and 'force' individuals to become self-reflexive (Jamieson 2005, 37). Once freed from the constraints of tradition the self becomes a reflexive project (Giddens 1991, 32). As more as there is declining of tradition replaced with more growing dynamism of modernity, the more individual is faced with response to and creating of its own self: “What to do? How to act? Who to be? These are focal questions for everyone living in circumstances of late modernity - and ones which, on some level or another, all of us answer, either discursively or through day-to-day social behavior” (Giddens, 1991, 70). Furthermore, “how shall I live”, writes Giddens, “has to be answered in day-to-day decisions about how to behave, what to wear and what to eat – and many more things – as well as interpreted with temporal unfolding of self-identity (Giddens 1991, 14).

When tradition got weakened and where major fields of personal life are not anymore determined by old customs and habits, the individuals are forced to negotiate their own life-choices and decisions. In this sense – and this is according to Giddens crucial point – these choices aren't external or marginal aspects of individuals, but they begin to define what the individual 'is' (Giddens 1992, 75), they concern the very core of the self (Giddens 1991, 81). Identity therefore, as Giddens argues, more and more ceased to be a matter of 'social role' (prescribed by some 'externalities') and indeed became self-identity, the 'field' for active construction of each individual. To tell that identity is a reflexive project of the self means that “it is self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her and his biography” (Giddens 1991, 34). In late modern society individuals therefore do not act to fulfill a certain social role or their (traditionally) prescribed identity, but they act to build certain a narrative of their own self-identity, to build their own

biography by their own forces and resources. Therefore a “person's identity is not to be found in behavior, nor – important thought this is – in the reactions of others, but in capacity to keep a particular narrative going. The individual biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self” (Giddens 1991, 54)

However, as mentioned, this new reflexive self operates in a very uncertain environment which is filled with opportunities but also with high risks. This is because the notion of risk, as already mentioned, is a central aspect of human action in society which is taking the leave from the past, from the traditional way of doing things, and is opening itself up to a problematic and undefined future. Under such circumstances a thing such as insurance in economy, investments and so on – and, as I would claim, trust in personal relationships - are all part of what Giddens describes as an attempt of “colonizing of future” (Giddens 1991, 111) – the wish to make our future meaningful, at least a bit predictable and worth building and investing in it. Colonization of future, it seems, forces us to work towards it (an expected future) already in the present, in a reflexively presented manner.

However, here it is important to repeat that it is neither the high risk nor the self that are distinctive features of late modernity (Giddens 1991, 75). What is distinctive is that today thinking in notions of risk and risk assessments is more or less present in every action, both on individual and societal (structural) level (Giddens 1991, 123–124). What is furthermore distinctive is that this reflexivity and project of the self is a continuous process of constant making and remaking, it is therefore not a project to understand ourselves better but of building and rebuilding our sense of identity, of keeping certain self-narrative going and of trying to self-actualize ourselves (Giddens 1991, 75–79). Today, there is an ever-present awareness and certain skepticism (or at least spectra of fragility) towards lifelong projects. In simple words, individuals have to be ready to change their projects and identity if they are proven to be false or unsatisfactory and to start the new ones if necessary, trying to keep his or her narrative, no matter of changes, going and continuous. In late modernity the identity and self-narrative is more seen as ‘passages’, as a trajectory where after one loses one needs to overcome this loss in order to proceed with self-actualization.

2.2.2 Towards and through transformation of intimacy – dialectics between institutional and self-reflexivity

As already noted, the overall role of tradition in society represents one of the crucial points which Giddens uses to distinguish between late modernity and other social formations (such as, for example, *early* modernity or pre-modernity). As might be expected, the degree in which tradition has impact and influence on social institutions, everyday life and individuals (this means also personal identity, beliefs, habits etc.) tells us about the level in which a particular social formation is closer to the traditional or post-traditional order. In a post-traditional order, thus, tradition loses its strength and justification (legitimation) in determining the individuals and everyday life. Instead, the individuals have considerably more power to influence their own life course, where recipes of tradition are often marginal. But the other side of making tradition marginal in influencing life course is that one's life course itself becomes much more open and in fact left as the responsibility of the individual.

This opening of the life course, as something unique for the late modern reflexive self, as well reflects a wider process in late modernity - the democratization of everyday life. Here Giddens notes that modernity, in its wider sense, was always opposed to tradition but in many aspects of life – and particularly in everyday life – tradition nevertheless still persisted for long time (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 118). It is in fact only in the late modernity that the everyday life and life course becomes freed from restraints of tradition and that everyday life indeed becomes democratized, leaving more place for individual decisions and interventions. Thus, it is not opposition to tradition but detraditionalization and democratization of everyday life that is yet another specific characteristic of late modernity. From this point Giddens, as I will show, also begins to discuss transformation of sexuality and intimacy, as surely one of the effects of democratization of everyday life. Thus, reading what Giddens says about sexuality and intimacy may tell us also how he sees the mechanism of modernity, such as individualization or reflexivity for example.

These connections can be made from at least three angles: sexuality and intimacy are without doubt part of everyday life, they are connected with the tradition and institutions and they are as well connected with the question of the self and identity. Sexuality thus is something that is surely deeply social and therefore politically, socially and culturally regulated and structured. Yet, sexuality is, as noted, also a deeply personal matter and it is lived by concrete persons, not only structures. Giddens more specifically explains this through his thesis about 'the transformation of intimacy', which he sees as an effect of modernity's mechanisms – namely, detraditionalization of everyday life and individual and institutional reflexivity.

On the structural level one of the main reasons for the transformation of intimacy is the emergence of a so called 'plastic sexuality', a sexuality emerging on the ruins of traditional society. It is a sexuality which was shaped by many factors occurring in the last decades of the 20th century such as entering of women into paid (waged) labor force, demographic efforts to limit family size, the spread of contraception and reproductive technologies and the emergence of the nuclear family (Giddens 1992, 27; Tucker 1998, 204). Sexuality today became plastic in the sense that its (often unwanted) side effects came more under control of human actions, and today especially under more control of each individual. In that sense, maybe for the first time, sexuality itself became part of individual matters and interventions. Thus women and men today, for example, may have sex with a minimal risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and can choose when, and if, they want conception. These changes further had an impact on a more evident weakening of patriarchy and tradition. For Giddens there is no doubt that late modernity undermined many of the sources of male domination such as domination of men over the public sphere, the double standard and associated schism of women into pure (marriageable) and impure (unmarriageable), the understanding of sexual differences as given by God, biology or nature, the problematization of women as irrational in their actions and the sexual division of labor. (Giddens 1992, 11). All these sources have been undermined in contemporary modernity and thus are weakening patriarchy and male dominance, leaving the place for relationships which are more egalitarian and democratic.

Thus, one of the biggest novelties of contemporary 'plastic sexuality' is its power of "the socialization of natural world - the progressive replacement of structures and events that were external parameters of human activity by socially organized process" (Giddens 1992, 34). In simple words, one of the biggest achievements of 'plastic sexuality' is freeing itself from the strains of reproduction and putting sexuality under human (individual) control. In that sense, 'plastic sexuality' is, in short, a type of sexuality which comes after the "end of nature" and "end of tradition" (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 145). The term plastic, as Lynn Jamieson argues in her comment on Giddens, is shorthand term for today's heightened awareness of the plasticity of sexuality or the fact that there is no essential pre-given way of being sexual (Jamieson 2005, 38). The notion that there is no pre-given way of being sexual opens up a place for even more human intervention as a determinant factor in 'constructing of intimacy'. Sexuality in late modernity, thus, becomes an even more important part of the reflexive self and identity than it was in past.

But transformation of sexuality, as Giddens argues, is not only an effect of structural changes, but also of an active human engagement in processes characteristic of modernity. In his words: "In struggling with intimate problems, individuals help actively to reconstruct the universe

of social activity around them.” (Giddens 1991, 12). The main pioneers of these changes were the women, the women's movement and LGBT persons (Giddens 1992, 15; Giddens and Pierson 1998, 145-146). Often living as deviants from the established norms, left without 'prescribed' traditional recipes in precarious environments and wanting to create something new, these pioneers involved themselves in life experiments and therefore actively constructed their sexual and personal relationships. By the time they influenced debates around sexuality and intimacy and in last stance reshaped the terms in which we are thinking about them generally. In late modernity however the need of 'reflecting', 'remaking' and 'experimenting' with sexual and intimate became generalized both as an effect of individualized society and new emerging lifestyles. How Jeffrey Weeks expresses it, what was once part of marginal subcultures, willingly or not, became a cultural trope (Weeks 2007, 125). Today the question how to live our sexual and intimate relationships concern every individual, not just those on margins.

It seems that Giddens offers two concrete explanations for the role of the reflexive self in transformation of intimacy. On the one side he sees its traces in the discourse of romantic love. Flourishing through the 19th century and dispersing through the wider social field the discourse of romantic love begins to tell a story, to construct individuals whose (intimate) identities depend on narratives and on such specific narratives which are forward-looking. Thus, on the level of personal life, it corresponded with a characteristic orientation of modernity towards a colonization of the future (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 138). Furthermore, “romantic love essentially creates biography, not just for one person but for two. It is a moral and emotional complex which helps create couple” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 138). The emergence of the couple, in a sense, alters the erosion of more traditional forms of marriage. The discourse of obligations and marital and kinship relations was more and more replaced by the discourse of romantic love where the couple and emotions gained primacy over everything else in relationships (and even over their children). Besides, in the romantic discourse the personal and intimate connection began to be based on sexual and emotional communication rather than on the economic unit (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 138). Basis of marriage on an ideal romantic love helped to alter new relationships between men and women, or husbands and wives. Thus, writes Giddens, “husbands and wives increasingly became seen as collaborators in a joint emotional enterprise... The 'home' came into being as a distinct environment set off from work; and, at least in principle, became a place where individuals could expect emotional support, as contrasted with the instrumental character of the work setting (Giddens 1992, 26).

Contrary to classical feminist discourse, which sees notions of romantic love as a only snare for women, Giddens reminds us that ideals of romantic love was pioneered by women themselves rather than men and besides its many fallacies this discourse at least in principle was “part of drive to demand emotional communication and equality in relationships” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 139) as well as it set up the basis of intimate connection on another level. What is important for Giddens is that romantic love carried this promise even though it was “driven by the realities of its opposite, emotional inequality” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 140). In the discourse of romantic love, at least in principle, the self becomes reflexive and the role of human action more heightened, as well as orientated to the future – notions which are, as I already showed, tightly connected to the dynamism of modernity.

Other examples of the role of the reflexive self in the transformation of intimacy are the women's and gay and lesbian movements. Both movements deeply contested conventional notions about love, intimacy, family and they disclosed often hidden and ideologically justified inequalities between men and women and heterosexuals and homosexuals. Feminism for example, as well as the gay and lesbian movement, connected the personal and political in a new way (Tucker 1998, 208) and showed how apparently personal issues are in fact deeply political. They as well accelerated a rethinking of sexuality and intimacy and called for creation of new ways of emotional and sexual connecting. Notions such as active trust and communication, as well as anxieties and insecurities inherent for nontraditional relationships were first to be found among participants of these movements (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 145–146). The coming out of homosexuals, thus for example, is today “a very real process, with major consequences for sexual life in general” and through such self descriptions as “gay” or “political lesbian” it heightened the “reflexive process - whereby a social phenomena can be appropriated and transformed through collective engagement” (Giddens 1992, 14). In short, in Giddens' theory of the transformation of intimacy, it seems that women's and gay and lesbian movements converged with conditions of late modernity in the creation of reflexive self (Tucker 1998, 202), remaining its most advanced examples.

For the end of this section it is worth noting that even despite Giddens tries to offer a dialectical explanation of changes in intimacy and sexuality both from the perspective of structure and action, it sometimes still seems that in the last stance Giddens somehow prioritizes structural changes. Therefore he claims that the women's movement wouldn't have been possible without the changes in the nature of the labor force (entering of the women on labor market), the changes in family forms and so on. “The women's movement self-consciously build upon and contributed to, these [structural] trends” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 122). He has a similar claim for

homosexuality by suggesting that homosexuality “could only disappear as 'perversion' with the escape of sexuality from nature and the hold of tradition, including traditional forms of male sexuality” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 129).

2.2.3 Pure relationship and confluent love

In the new order of post-traditional society “both sexes have to deal with implications of this new phenomenon” where “personal life became an open project, creating new demands and anxieties” (Giddens 1992, 8). The search and construction of the self in late modern post-traditional societies “skirts any universal moral criteria” and more importantly it “includes reference to the other people only within the sphere of intimate relationship” exactly because these sphere “is accepted as highly important to the self” (Giddens 1991, 186). As the self becomes a reflexive project driven towards self-actualization it starts to be based on trust which builds upon opening up towards other individual(s) (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 118). Constructed trust with chosen others gives us the sense of an ontological security and is possibly fulfilling the 'ontological gap of sense' left after the decline of tradition. This basing of ontological security upon trust which we build with others also strongly reaffirms the intimate relationship as one of the (most) important sites of individual interaction and self-actualization, creating also opportunities for an individual to construct “shared histories” (Giddens 1991, 97). Furthermore, the sphere which we call personal relationships “offers opportunities for intimacy and self-expression lacking in many more traditional contexts” (Giddens 1991, 12). In fact, Giddens goes even further and claims that the “changes involved here signal not just the transformation of intimacy but in a way the creation of intimacy” (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 118). For Giddens this first of all means opportunities for ‘pure relationship’ and ‘confluent love’.

A pure relationship, according to Giddens, is a type of relationship that emerges in the context where the personal ties are more or less freely chosen (Giddens 1991, 89). 'Pure' has nothing to do with sexual purity (Giddens 1992, 58) but with the '*pureness*' of the relationship itself. It refers to the situation in which a social relationship is entered into for its own sake, from what can be gained from a sustained association with the other (Giddens 1992, 58) and it is exactly in this sense that the relationship is pure (Giddens 1991, 90). It is a kind of relationship that is continued only as long as it gives satisfaction for the parties involved (Giddens 1992, 58) and is intrinsically threaten if something goes wrong among the partners (Giddens 1991, 90). Therefore, the core principle of pure relationships is “the possibility of divorce and separation” (Giddens and Pierson

1998, 126).

The pure relationship, further, is not anchored in external conditions of economic life but is, as Giddens says, “free-floating” (Giddens 1991, 89). Therefore it is a relationship which requires an activity of the subjects involved and consequently - reflexivity. Activity and reflexivity becomes central in pure relationship. Furthermore, also commitment and communication are central to pure relationship (Giddens 1992, 194). Particularly commitment is what “replaces the external anchors that close personal connections used to have in pre-modern situations” and it is exactly because of this commitment why we should claim that this relationship is historically new (Giddens 1991, 92). The pure relationship is further based on intimacy or at least on the expectation of it. This seems to be especially true in a context where intimacy becomes an attempt to secure a meaningful life and environments which have not been incorporated in large systems (the systems where impersonal relationships prevail). Intimacy here “means the disclosure of emotions and action which individual is unlikely to hold up to a wider public gaze” (Giddens 1992, 138). The expectation of intimacy provides, according to Giddens, perhaps “the closest links between the reflexive project of the self and pure relationship”. Furthermore, Giddens claims that it is exactly intimacy and the quest for it that is central to modern forms of friendships and relationships in general (Giddens 1991, 94–95).

The pure relationship is also based on mutual trust between partners where trust achieved through such relationship is what gives a feeling of ontological security to the self. This trust is not anymore, as in the pre-modern order, based in tradition but on the intimacy or more accurate – communication (Giddens 1991, 97). In this relationship the self-identity and rules are constantly negotiated and reworked since relationship is lasting only until further notice. Therefore the pure relationship is a “key environment for building the reflexive project of the self, since it both allows and demands organized and continuous self-understanding” (Giddens 1991, 186).

For a successful pure relationship it is crucial to recognize the boundaries and autonomy of the other since otherwise the relationship may become addictive and codependent. The boundaries define the required autonomy of each self in the partnership. Therefore, opening out to the other (intrinsically for the pure relationship) paradoxically requires personal boundaries. It as well requires intimacy which does not seek to absorb the other but which recognizes its autonomy and specialty (Giddens 1992, 94–95). Boundaries and autonomy are important also because respecting them may “counteract the effects of projective identification” (Giddens 1992, 94).

Besides the criticism of projective identification typical for ideal of romantic love, Giddens however notes that such kind of love nevertheless opened up a possibility of relationships whose

continuation depends on intimacy. But this ideal of love which is based on disclosing intimacy – on opening oneself up to the other – gave way for the development of a new kind of love, opposed to the romantic ideal. Giddens names this new love 'confluent love' and defines it as love which develops as an ideal in society where almost everyone has the chance to become sexually accomplished (Giddens 1992, 63) and which presumes equality in emotional giving and taking. The more the partners are able to accomplish this kind of love the more their relationship is closer to the prototype of a pure relationship. It is a kind of love that presupposes intimacy, and develops only until intimacy itself is developed or in other words – to the “degree until each partner is prepared to reveal concerns and needs to the other and to be vulnerable to that other” (Giddens 1992, 62). Confluent love is, we might say, love of a disclosing intimacy. It “is active, contingent love, and therefore jars with the 'forever', 'one-and-only' qualities of romantic love complex. The 'separating and divorcing society' of today here appears as an effect of the emergence of confluent love, rather than its cause. The more confluent love becomes consolidated as a real possibility, the more the finding of a 'special person' recedes and the more it is the 'special relationship' that counts” (Giddens 1992, 61–62).

In confluent love, as we could see, the focus is more on equality, respect, knowing of the other (and his/her borders), disclosing and negotiations. It is a kind of love which focuses on immediate benefits which pure relationship can bring. It is in a way a 'secularized' love which puts activity, commitment and orientation on the relationship itself as a basis for reaching intimacy. What holds this kind of love and pure relationship is awareness of the truth 'until further notice' as a real condition of close relationships, and exactly this awareness increases the orientation on gains of sufficient benefits from the relationship to make its continuance worthwhile (Giddens 1992, 63). In this sense confluent love as well echoes the reflexivity of the self.

Another novelty of this kind of love is that it for the first time introduces *ars erotica* into the core of the conjugal relationship and makes the reciprocal sexual satisfaction a key element for sustaining or dissolving of the relationship (Giddens 1992, 62). In a certain sense, how Giddens claims contrary to conservative views, for the first time in history marriage and love become complementary – we enter into marriage because of love and specialty of that relationship only. External criteria play marginal role or not role at all. But confluent love, same as the pure relationship, is not exclusively a thing of the conjugal partners nor of the heterosexuals. It is a plastic love which spreads across formal and informal boundaries, across genders and sexual orientations. In fact, maybe confluent love was for a long time existing outside of marriage (and for sure was not a condition for it), maybe it was earlier practiced between pioneers of transformation

of intimacy, which were often and until recently excluded from conventional sexuality. In fact, as Giddens claims, maybe it was exactly the flourishing of confluent love that deconstructed and reshaped conventional sexuality.

Finally, Giddens also asserts some of the contradiction of this new intimate constellation. He claims that, same as many other aspects of late modernity, pure relationship is also inherently fragile and double-edged (Giddens 1991, 186). Their fragility may just be the effect of the non-existence of any external moral criteria which makes these relationships vulnerable to major life transitions (Giddens 1991, 187) or due to the “psychological traits of gender inequality” (Giddens 1992, 134) still visible even in a pure relationship. However, Giddens (1991, 1992) continues, there is also a structural contradiction centering upon commitment in the pure relationship. In order to generate commitment and develop a shared story the individual must “give off herself to the other” (Giddens 1992, 137) and they both must provide some kind of guarantee that the relationship will last indefinite and that ‘giving away’ is worthwhile. But, paradoxically, in late modern times such guarantee doesn’t exist and it is “a feature of the pure relationship that it can be terminated, more or less at will, by either partner at any particular point” (Giddens 1992, 137). Reflecting this contradiction Giddens concludes that “for a relationship to stand a chance of lasting, commitment is necessary; yet anyone who commits herself without reservations risks great hurt in future, should the relationship become resolved” (Giddens 1992, 137).

He also concludes that the “mobile nature of self-identity” - characteristic for late modernity - “does not necessarily fit easily with the demands of pure relationship” (Giddens 1992, 140).

2.2.4 Intimacy as a promise of democracy

Despite his awareness of the contradictions of pure relationship, and many still existing inequalities, Giddens is explicitly positive about ongoing changes. He generally believes that in a late modern context pure relationship is an ideal type of acting. He in fact puts a lot of faith in modern intimacy and sexuality also when it comes to their positive influence on wider social practices. As it could be already noticed, Giddens links changes in sexuality with changes in wider society, putting the two in a dialectical relationship. Therefore he claims that “democratization in public domain... supplies essential condition for the democratizing of personal relationships” (Giddens 1992, 196). But the reverse applies also: “sexual emancipation”, he thinks, “can be medium of wide ranging emotional reorganization of social life” (Giddens 1992, 182), or to put it in other words, “advancement in context of pure relationships is rich with implications for democratic

practice in the larger community” (Giddens 1992, 196). By changing our personal relationships in a more democratic way we are helping democracy from bottom up (Giddens and Pierson 1998, 182). In short, the possibility of intimacy means the promise of democracy (Giddens 1992, 94) and the structural source of this promise is the emergence of pure relationship not only on the level of intimacy but also in relationships between friends or parents and their children (Giddens 1992, 188). According to Giddens both on the level of intimacy and public domain the actors are lead by a similar “procedural way” (Giddens 1992, 182) – we respect each other’s autonomy and freedom (as well as boundaries), we are communicating democratically, we act on an implicit 'rolling contract' (Giddens 1992, 192) and we are working through a 'right-and-obligations' paradigm.

All of this changes are important and their importance doesn't lay so much in the subversiveness of the reflexive project of the self but in an “ethos of self-growth” which signals major social transformations in late modernity such as “burgeoning of institutional reflexivity, the disembedding of social relations by abstract systems and the consequent interpenetration of the local and global” (Giddens 1991, 209). These changes furthermore signal the emergence of a new type of politics which Giddens names 'life politics'. Life politics is a kind of politics that results from the centrality of the reflexive project of the self in late modernity (Giddens 1991, 231) and that sets itself as different to the (old style) 'emancipatory politics'. While emancipatory politics was concerned with emancipation and liberating individuals from the external (hierarchical and oppressive) constrains which were influencing life chances, in late modernity this is no longer the case. Once the tradition and many oppressive apparatuses lose their holds life politics emerges. While life politics is still concerned with a certain level of emancipation, it is now a politics of self-actualization in reflexively ordered environment that begin to predominate in political field and this politics sees power as generative, rather than hierarchical. It is in a way a kind of politics which follows from issues of self-actualization and transferring them into political agenda. In short, if emancipatory politics was politics of life chances, “life politics is politics of lifestyle” (Giddens 1991, 214).

Finally, I want to finish this chapter with a conclusion that Giddens takes contra Foucault when it comes to sexuality. He claims that “sexuality has the importance for us today that it does, not because of its significance for the control systems of modernity, but because it is a point of connection between two others processes: the sequestration of experience and the transformation of intimacy ” (Giddens 1992, 180).

2.3 Zygmunt Bauman: Sexuality and homo consumens

After the era in which sexual energy had to be sublimed in order to keep the car assembly line moving came an era when sexual energy needed to be beefed up, given freedom to select any channel of discharge at hand and encouraged to go rampant, so that cars leaving assembly line might be lusted after as sexual objects (Bauman 2003, 57)

2.3.1 General introduction

As we could see Giddens is overall positive about effects of individualization, emphasizing that (ideally, principally and as a tendency) it leads to reflexivity. It seems also that sexuality stopped to be object of regulatory social and institutional mechanism, what was so characteristic for its position in modernity when sexuality was sanctioned by the state, repressive forces, medical institutions etc. Both of this claims, if they would be prove valid, would indeed mean a great novelty of late modernity. However, there are also other voices inside this theoretical frame which are more critical and more skeptical about nature and characteristics of late modernity. The most critical among them is for sure the voice of Zygmunt Bauman.

This Polish-born sociologist with British address is also considered to be one of the most important theorists of 'late modernity', or how he names it – 'liquid modernity' (Bauman 2000, 2003). Thus, as expected, he has a lot in common with other authors discussing late modernity but he also differs from them and offers his own original and in-depth arguments. He similarly claims that liquid modernity consists of the process of individualization which is transforming identity from 'given into task'. Furthermore in agreement with Giddens, Bauman also claims that today's actors continuously renegotiate and reshape their identity, practices, relations and networks (Bauman 2000, 31) and that they are more and more becoming responsible for the effects of their actions. He also agrees that individualization is solely available strategy of acting in late modernity.

However, Bauman also makes clear that this predominance of individualization is not without its problems and contradictions. In another words, individualization establishes itself primarily as the autonomy of the individual *de jure* (proclaimed autonomy and freedom), “whether

or not the de facto autonomy has been established” (Bauman 2000, 31–32). In that sense autonomy de jure is 'destiny' and sometimes imposed on us as the only solution and not necessarily as a choice. In a nutshell - today everything is “down to individual” (Bauman 2000, 62) whether he/she likes it or – the individual needs to find out what is he/she capable of doing, it needs to search that capacity and to search the means and ends of how to best fulfill that capacity alone. For Bauman, this discrepancy between individualization *de facto* and *de jure* is one of the main contradictions of liquid modernity. By erosion of 'solid modernity' and its panoptical type¹ of regulation the individual is left with the novelty of constructing new communities and belongings which, by not having their base in solid bounding, are becoming more and more a matter of choice, changeable and negotiable but also less lasting and easier to abandon. In this sense, today all belongings and communities are “postulated; projects rather than realities, something that comes after, not before individual choice” (Bauman 2000,169). The similarity of these claims with that of Giddens is obvious.

Similar to Giddens, Bauman also claims that 'liquid modernity' is marked by the process of disembedding, but yet he continues that this process itself is not what is distinct for today's social formation. According to him already solid modernity was marked by a process of disembedding, but it did this only in order to again re-embed something new (Bauman 2000, 32), some new solid project and some new definite utopia. The disembedding of modernity was maybe most sharply pointed out by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* from where, it seems, Bauman got inspiration for using the adjective 'liquid' in order to best describe ongoing changes. Thus, in the section *Bourgeois and Proletarians* of this manifest Marx and Engels claimed that with the advance of capitalism and bourgeois society all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy gets profane and by this process man is compelled to face with sober senses his/her real condition of life and his relations with his kind (according to Bauman 2000, 4). But while these two authors were hoping that this process of disembedding will progress in re-embedding of a more just (ordered, planned and human-designed) system, Bauman has the privilege to speak after the fact or to speak from the distance of more than hundred years later. With the advance of capitalism and bourgeois society, he claims, many things changed and in many respect contrary to expectations of the two authors. In liquid modernity thus, we do not witness a process of new re-embedding since today

1 In Bauman own words the moving away from panoptical regulation (what I will discuss later in more details) means replacing of „heteronomic determination of social standing with compulsive and obligatory self-determination.” (Bauman 2000, 32).

what was once glued cannot be stick back together again (Bauman 2000, 22) and exactly this liquidity and fluidity – *the process of disembedding without re-embedding* – is the novel phase in the history of modernity (Bauman 2000, 2). In late modernity no 'beds', no anchorage, are meant or made for lasting. The 'beds' which are existing today are not furnished for re-embedding, such 'beds' prove to be fragile and often vanish before the work of re-embedding has been done (Bauman 2000, 34). What people then lost in contemporary social formation is an anchor (of tradition, community, neighborhoods, family or class), and they are simply left on their own (Bauman 2000, 28). The liquid modern individuals begin to live only in a self-confident present (Bauman 2000, 131–132) and change their aspirations from collective improvements into individual action and self-improvement (Bauman 2000, 29). As Bauman metaphorically expressed it, and what he sees as liquid modern specifics - progress has been individualized, deregulated and privatized (Bauman 2003, 29, 135), illnesses became privatized and so also their therapies, worries became privatized and so are the means of fighting them (Bauman 2000, 65). But quite contrary to Giddens and his thesis on reflexivity Bauman concludes that the process of 'melting the solids' “laid the field open to the invasion and domination of instrumental rationality or determining role of economy” (Bauman 2000, 4). This is also a domination of rationality that doesn't know its exact aims, a rationality that is perpetual – the present tense rationality. While rationality of solid modernity was preoccupied with reaching desirable aims without caring about the means, today the situation is reversed – we are preoccupied with the means, but we do not know what exactly our aims are (Bauman 2000, 59). It is then not surprising that Bauman as well agrees with his colleagues on the notion that many of modernity's institutions became, in Ulrich Beck's words, zombie institutions – at the same time dead and alive (Bauman 2000, 8) – and he also agrees that a new sociological approach needs to re-evaluate old knowledges and make new concepts in order to grasp these changes (Bauman 2000, 202–217).

However, one could also notice that Bauman, while standing in line with other theorists of late modernity, still sees these changes less positive and he is much more critical about them. This is probably because Bauman, in contrast to Giddens, is insisting on mentioned difference between individuality *de jure* and individuality *de facto*. While it seems that Giddens doesn't see this discrepancy as problematic and thinks that it will at some point become complementary, Bauman is less positive about that. For him on the contrary, there is a widening and growing gap between the conditions of individuality *de jure* and their chances to become actual individuality *de facto* – that is to gain control over their fate and make the choices that they truly desire (Bauman 2000, 39). Thus today, proclaimed freedom and disembeddedness - individuality *de jure* - is mixed blessing (Bauman 2000, 18) which opens up many possibilities, but also many limits. Same as this freedom,

so did the human relationships themselves became mixed blessings in late modernity (Bauman 2003, VIII). They are deeply felt and troublesome incarnations of ambivalence, embodying both elements of dream and nightmare (Bauman 2003, VIII).

Furthermore, in contrast to Giddens and Beck, Bauman did not use adjective 'reflexive' as the best way to characterize the new modernity. There is a specific reason why he chose not to do so. His own adjective 'liquid' doesn't assume reflexivity *per se*, or not even at all. In line with Cornelius Castoriadis, he claims that liquid modern society stopped to question itself and became a kind of society which no longer recognizes any alternative to itself (Bauman 2000, 22). Maybe this is why he in fact, in an interview with Milena Yakimova, strongly distanced himself from the adjective reflexive as an adequate term:

Reflexive? I smelled a rat here. I suspected that in coining this term we are projecting our own, the professional thinkers', cognitive uncertainty upon the social world at large, or reforge our (quite real) professional puzzlement into (imaginary) popular prudence - whereas that world out there is marked, on the contrary, by the fading and wilting of the art of reflection (ours is the culture of forgetting and short-termism - of the two arch-enemies of reflection)²

Therefore, Bauman also disagrees with Giddens in answering the question which type of individual/actor is the subjective motor of contemporary society? 'Which adjective to put after *homo* who lives in society today? And, how does this *homo* relate to the world and the others'? While for Giddens the answer seemed to be the reflexive self, for Bauman the main engine of liquid modernity is the *homo consumens*³.

2.3.2 *Homo consumens*

Homo consumens is a paradigmatic example of how an individual is living in today's society. It is the 'subject' of the consumer society, the main characteristic of liquid modernity. For Bauman, we are engaged in liquid modernity - which means that we are included or excluded from it - primarily as consumers (Bauman 2003, 74). Consumerism is the 'solely available strategy' of

2 See: Yakimova, M. (2002) *A postmodern grid of the world map? Interview with Zygmunt Bauman.* <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2002-11-08-bauman-en.html>

3 That the *homo consumens* is the main engine of liquid modernity equally stands also for sexuality: "... widely noted separation of sex from reproduction is power assisted. It is a joint product of the liquid modern life setting, and consumerism as the chosen and sole available strategy of 'seeking biographical solution to socially produced problems' (Beck)" (Bauman 2003, 44)

acting in liquid modernity, but it is at the same time also a 'choice' of acting for many (Bauman 2003, 44). For him, consumerism is also a way of managing and regulating society in liquid modernity. If production was the preoccupation of 'solid' modernity, consumerism is the ontology of its liquid social formation.

Bauman uses Foucault's notion of the panopticon as a paradigm of managing the society of producers, and compares it to his own notion of the 'synoptical society' which, in his view, better explains the regulation of a society of consumers (Bauman 1998, 2000). Liquid modernity needs neither mass industrial labor nor mass armies for its reproduction and doesn't need panoptical power as the main vehicle of social integration (Bauman 1998, 23). Saying this, liquid modern consumer society doesn't function through 'policing', supervision, force or through authority. On the contrary, liquid modern consumer society functions and integrates us "through seduction rather than policing, advertising rather than indoctrinating, need-creation rather than normative regulation" (Bauman 1998, 23).

Furthermore, consumerism often tries to assure consuming through playing, by affecting, and using our desires, fantasies and values. This is why Bauman claims that an integration of consumer society is happening through seduction, and not regulation, of desire: "The new consumerism is driven not by needs but by desire (...) Not founded upon regulation (stimulation) of desire, but upon the liberation of wishful fantasies" (Bauman, 2000, 74). In liquid modernity *homo consumens* thus doesn't "desire satisfaction, but desire desires desire" (Bauman 1998, 21). Acting in a consumerist way is "not about accumulation of goods, but about using them and disposing them after use to make room for other goods to come and use" (Bauman 2003, 49). The synoptical society can therefore not play on the solidity of norms, or a habits, since life organized around consumption "must do without norms" (Bauman 2000, 77), must in another words liberate everything in order to exploit (commodify) everything. In a synoptical society, Bauman (2000, 64) continues, there is a consequent multiplication of authorities and thus no Big Brother or Supreme Office.

The *homo consumens* is now free; freed from tradition, left on his own and faced with multiple consumer choices, like in a shopping centre! Therefore the life activity of *homo consumens* is that of shopping and shopping malls (Bauman 2003,12) and it becomes the *sine qua non* of all individual freedom and above all the freedom to be different, to have an 'identity' (Bauman 2000, 84–85). Shopping, in short, becomes the *modus operandi*:

If 'shopping' means scanning the assortment of possibilities, examining touch, feeling, handling the goods on display, comparing their costs with contents of the wallet or remaining credit

limit of credit cards, putting some of them in the trolley and others back on the shelf – then we shop outside shops as much as inside, we shop in the street and at home, at work and leisure, awake and in dreams. What ever we do and what ever name we attach to our activity is a kind of shopping, a activity shaped in the likeness of shopping (Bauman 2000, 73)

But living in such a context, of fluidity and fragility - of relationships, of choices and of social institutions - proves to be rather anxious. In times when we know that any social identity is not given, and where there is a spectre that every made choice may be wrong, not good enough and maybe delaying next opportunity, the *homo consumens* remains to stay an unfinished project (Bauman 2003, 49–56). The *homo consumens* is thus “fraught with anxiety”⁴ exactly because he/she knows that everything is marked by “alterability, transience, non-finality” and exactly because of this “there is always a fear that one is living a lie or a mistake”, that “vital obligation to authentic self is not met” (Bauman 2003, 55). Thus, he/she is a never-finished project. This underdefinition, incompleteness and non-finality are at the same time “poison and antidote” (Bauman, 2003, 56) of the *homo consumens*. This non-finality keeps the *homo consumens* constantly on the move, never satisfied.

2. 3.3 *The uneasy history of regulating sexuality*

In his text *On postmodern uses of sex* Bauman (1998) outlines his first arguments about changes in sexuality and especially in its regulation in contemporary society. Somehow already at beginning first differences with Giddens’s approach become obvious. While Giddens seems to see sex, eroticism and love as unproblematically united in the 'pure relationship' (Bernik 2011, 11), for Bauman it is exactly that “sex, eroticism and love are linked yet separated”. They “can hardly exist without each other, and yet their existence is spent in the ongoing war of independence” (Bauman 1998, 19). *Sex* for him is a natural and not a cultural product, something we share with non-human species (Bauman 1998, 19), it is the evolutionary solution to the issues of human durability of life forms (through reproduction) and it sets the mortality of every individual into the immortality of species. *Eroticism* on the other hand, is the culturalization of natural act of sex, something what fills “the sexual act with surplus value – over and above all its reproductive function” (Bauman 1998, 20). However, although culturalized, eroticism still remains close to nature, namely through risks connected to sexuality and sexual activity (e.g. conception). It is thus natural as it is also “the most obviously, unambiguously... social. It stretches towards another human being; it calls for the

4 Similar conclusions about anxiety of choice is offered also by Slovenian scholar Renata Selecl (2010).

presence of another human being and strives to reforge that presence into union, It yearns for togetherness...” (Bauman 2003, 38). Because of this for Bauman, “no union of bodies, however one might try, can escape social framing and cut out all connections with other facets of social existence” (Bauman 2003, 51).

Eroticism begins with reproduction but reproduction soon turns into constrain of eroticism. Yet, they always stay linked and that creates tension, “tension being as incurable as the link is unbreakable” (Bauman 1998, 20). How I noticed, what is characteristic for eroticism is the process of culturalization of sex. This for Bauman also means that with eroticism the 'history of sexuality' – history of cultural manipulation of natural sex - was also born (Bauman 1998, 19).

Finally, *love* is located on the other side of eroticism and it is “the emotional/intellectual superstructure which culture built upon the sexual difference and their sexual reunion”, and therefore “investing the sex with rich and infinitely expandable meaning which protects and reinforces its power to recast mortality into immortality” (Bauman 1998, 25)⁵.

The history of sexuality (which is that of eroticism) was for Bauman marked by two predominant strategies of regulation of sexuality and both of them were concerned and trying to link the sex, eroticism and love together. However their recipes were rather different and thus their history is marked by mutual conflicts of these two strategies over a domination of meanings about sexuality (Bauman, 1998, 20). It seems that both of the strategies were concerned with the question 'How to make a sense out of eroticism?', 'How to make sense out of sexual drive/desire that is no doubt natural but yet it is also “the most obviously, unambiguously...social” (Bauman 2003, 38)?', 'How to explain the fact that sexual act often yearns for togetherness and yet is in trouble relation to it?'.

On the one hand 'conservative' strategy (represented in the legislative powers of the state and ideological powers of the church and school) was consisting “of reinforcing the limits imposed by reproductive function of sex upon the freedom of erotic imagination” (Bauman 1998, 20). In contrast to this, 'radical' strategy of romanticism consisted of advocating a cut of the ties linking eroticism to sex (reproduction) and instead linking it with the aim and purpose of love. In short, the two strategies represented either 'eroticism equals sex' or 'eroticism equals love' choices. The problem with these strategies, Bauman continues, is that both of them searched justification for eroticism in something other than (or outside of) eroticism itself. “Both strategies were variants of the policy of alliance, and the potential allies were sought beyond borders of eroticism” (Bauman

⁵ Since Bauman wrote the whole book on love I will address this question in more detail later

1998, 21). For both of the strategies this surplus of sexual energy needed some sort of “a functional justification” and in both of the strategies eroticism couldn't be seen as something what stands alone for itself. Both strategies were afraid that “left to itself, human erotic inventiveness would easily run out of control” (Bauman 1998, 21).

2.3. 4 Postmodernization of sexuality and liberation of desire

However, in liquid modernity and with its process of postmodernization all this has changed. With postmodernization, characterized by processes of disembedding and cutting of the ties, “eroticism appears unprecedented – a genuine breakthrough and novelty. It enters alliance with neither sexual reproduction nor love, claiming independence from both neighbors and flatly refusing all responsibility for the impact it may make on their fate; it proudly and boldly proclaims itself to be its only, and sufficient, reason and purpose” (Bauman 1998, 21).

In fact this novelty has become so radical that today the freedom to seek sexual satisfaction for its own sake has risen to the level of a cultural norm, changing places with its critic from both strategies (Bauman 1998, 21). This is not surprising if we have in mind what Bauman said earlier about the existence of the *homo consumens* mainly as a sensation seeker. But still, in his view, this freedom is not totally unlimited since eroticism still operates in relation both with constraints imposed on it biologically (through possibilities of reproduction) and culturally (love's demands of loyalty and fidelity), both of them still trying to link eroticism to immortality, be it a physical or spiritual one (Bauman 1998, 26). It seems that today we do not anymore witness a sexuality in which desire seeks its prolongation or even satisfaction, but on the contrary, and like in the case of the *homo consumens*, we witness “desire [that] desires desire” (Bauman 1998, 21). Thus, in its postmodern form sexuality is narrowly focused on orgasmic effects where “postmodern sex” is all “about orgasm” (Bauman 1998, 24). It is not focused on immortality (biological or spiritual) but it is instead orientated on *Jetztzeit*, on the here and now, on establishing and negotiating its own roles as it goes by, when it is still in process. Important to note, however, is that according to Bauman this de-linking, 'standing on its own' and freedom of eroticism is not only its own choice, but it is also a “fate which eroticism can neither change nor ignore” (Bauman 1998, 26). Therefore this process of de-linking is not only positive but it is marked with various anxieties. No wonder that Bauman then is getting confused with the idea what relationships and love should represent today (Bauman 2003, XII). It seems that once freed from the constraints of tradition and economy they happen to get many meanings in liquid modern times. “[O]ne nights stands”, for example, are today

often “talked under the code name of 'making love'” (Bauman 2003, 5).

Further on in a synoptical society of liquid modernity sexuality is not anymore tied to family and kinship. This tie was characteristic for the sexuality of producers where sex was seen as a prolongation of kinship and where children were bridges between mortality and immortality (Bauman 2003, 41). The sexuality of producers was corresponding to the society of building 'lifelong projects', where sexual energy needed to be sublimed and regulated in order to keep the assembly line going. In liquid modernity, however, sexual energy needs to be given freedom and is even “encouraged to go rampant, so that [products] leaving assembly line might be lusted after as sexual objects” (Bauman 2003, 57). In other words, today's sexuality needs to be freed in order to correspond to the new societal reconfiguration of the society of consumers. While before its functionality was measured by productivity, today it is measured by consuming. This change occurred thanks to the “progressive deregulation of the subliming process, now diffuse and dispersed, perpetually changing direction and guided by the seduction by the objects of sexual desire in offer” (Bauman 2003, 57). In short, today what happened with sexuality is the same what happened with everything else in consumer society. We are engaged in society as consumers, and only as consumers we can participate in it. Bauman therefore concludes that today agonies of *homo consumens* are also agonies of the *homo sexualis* (Bauman 2003, 49). In the synoptical society of the *homo consumens* there are no strict regulations or dominance of one authority (church and school) over sexuality. In fact there is a multiplication of authorities and voices which shape sexuality.

One indicator of this multiplication is also for example the ‘counseling boom’ of advisers or counselors (Bauman 2000, 2003). Instead of leader(s), we now have a multitude of advisers/counsellors. And they fit, continues Bauman, much better to the liquid modern setting in which 'worries and illnesses' are being privatized and so are 'the means to fight them off' (Bauman 2000, 65). This counseling boom fits better to the context where life is lead as fitness, as episodic, as revocable and only 'until further notice' (Bauman 2003, 41).

The blooming of the counseling boom is also an effect of problematic relationships between the above mentioned units (sex, eroticism and love) of sexuality. In fact relationships today are a mixed blessing since they embody both elements of dreams and nightmares that simultaneously exist. But, for Bauman, counseling boom is also an effect of the fact that once freed from constrains, sexuality did not necessarily brought liberation, happiness and positive feelings, but also sorrows and negativity (Bauman 2003, 39). It is exactly because “sexual misery has refused to disappear” that we are not witnessing the rise of *ars erotica* (as Giddens claims) but the continuance

of *scientia sexualis*, now represented in post-fordist/post-assembly line counselors. Thus for Bauman the role of today's counsellors is not the same like the role of counsellors in the past. While the latter were promising to free us from constraints in order to liberate us from sexual misery, today's counsellors, while still promising the same, also need, maybe even to a greater extent, to deal with the effects of the postmodernization of sexuality. They thus also help us to deal with the all negative side of sexuality and unwanted consequences such as oppression, inequality, violence, abuse and deadly infections (Bauman 1998, 2003, 39). In short, they help us deal with the avatar of sexuality as both dream and nightmare.

Counselors today promise that they will “learn us art of loving” and offer us the secrets of “love experience” like any other offer of commodities in shops that allure and seduce us, promising “to take the waiting out of wanting, sweat out of effort and effort out of results” (Bauman 2003, 7). In addition, and in a paradoxical way, human attention tends to be focused on the satisfaction that we hope for relationships to bring, precisely because somehow we never find relationships truly and fully satisfactory (Bauman 2003, IX). Maybe this is so because the *modus operandi* of consumerism is not satisfaction and accumulation [and the question remains if human relationships may ever be truly satisfactory?] but it is “desire [that] desires desire” (Bauman 1998, 21), the one which is using and disposing the products (lovers) after using them (Bauman 2000, 2003, 49). It's not surprising then that Bauman is quite critical of counselors and advisers, defending in some sense Foucault's thesis that the process of confession, as a necessary part of counselors practices, remains a subtle form of regulation (especially if we bear in mind that counselors are new authorities in liquid modernity) and control. Bauman thus sees a dependence on counselors rather negatively (Jamieson 1999, 481). In this respect he radically differs from Giddens. On an evident level he is skeptical about much of the psychological literature that is used by Giddens as one of the primary sources for advocating reflexivity of the self in sexual and intimate matters and individuality. Further, it seems that they think on a similar thing when they are using the terms of 'expert systems' (Giddens) or counseling (Bauman) but see their rule in society rather opposite. While Giddens sees the evidence of reflexive change, Bauman seems much closer to see in it the evidence of new regulations of the consumer society and a reconfiguration of power relations.

2.3.5 *Homo sexualis*

Bauman suggests, as already outlined, that liquid modern society operates in a deregulated synoptical order, in a society 'without norms' and of a *de jure* freedom of the individual. It is a

society which doesn't integrate us through regulation and repression, but rather through seduction. In such a society, following the effects of a disembedding mechanism inherent to modernity, sexuality as known also becomes fragmented, unglued and separated, liberating the eroticism to its most extent, putting the imperative of satisfaction on the pedestal of cultural norm.

The claim that “new consumerism” is founded upon “the liberation of wishful fantasies” (Bauman 2000, 74) and that it operates through seduction rather than regulation brings us again close to sexuality (as a phenomena filled with fantasies, desires and seduction). It seems that of all three units of sexuality (sex, eroticism and love), eroticism is the most correlative with consumerism (and commodification)⁶. For Bauman thus, desire as such is “a wish to consume” (Bauman 2003, 9). He further suggests that in a liquid modern society it is maybe even too much to say 'desire' since desire in a consumer society is “like shopping and shoppers these days do not buy to satisfy desire, they buy on wish” (Bauman 2003, 11). Bauman bases these claims on the argument that even desire – in itself a wish to consume – needs time to germinate, grow and mellow, and that this is an amount of time that many shoppers of liquid modernity simply do not have. The desire of shopping malls is one of repeating, over and over again, the significant moment of 'letting oneself go', the desire which allows wishes to run without any particular scenario (Bauman 2003, 12).

Therefore, he continues, the “today agonies of homo sexualis are those of homo consumens” (Bauman 2003, 49). Freed from building tasks of re-embedding the new and resentful of building efforts, *homo consumens* may now deploy the sexual powers in novel and imaginative ways (Bauman 2003, 49), completely free of tasks, family, kinship and norms. As *homo consumens* so does *homo sexualis* “acts in consumerist way” and this means that eroticism is not about the accumulation of goods, but about using and disposing these goods after using them to make room for new ones to come (Bauman 2003, 49). Furthermore, with the postmodernization of sexuality, we are primarily sexual and sexually emancipated in a sense of “sensation seekers” (Bauman 1998, 32), as subjects of eroticism responsible neither to natural constrains, nor to the commitment of love (Bauman 1998, 26). In liquid modern society, and that is a society of 'alterability, transience and

6 Here it seems necessary to point out that Bauman is somehow inconsistent in using the terms. So for example, while in one text he is elaborating and discussing the relationship of sex, love and eroticism in postmodern culture (Bauman 1998), later - in *Liquid Love* – the notion of eroticism is disappearing from the discussion and it seems that it is replaced by the much more often used term 'desire' (Bauman 2003). Since he already in the first text is speaking about the liberation of eroticism and desire in postmodern culture, I think it is appropriate to accept that eroticism and desire are in some way used as synonyms. On this presupposition I am basing my further elaboration about the connection of desire (eroticism) and consumerism, about the connection between *homo sexualis* and *homo consumens*.

non-finality', the *homo sexualis* is thus fraught with anxiety. One is anxious exactly because of this non-finality since one can never know if he or she is living a mistaken and false or 'authentic' sexual life, and since he or she never knows if something important in ones (self) construction of sexual identity is overlooked. Because of this, and equally to the *homo consumens*, so the “*homo sexualis* is doomed to remain permanently incomplete” (Bauman 2003, 55) and this incompleteness is at the same time its “poison and antidote” (Bauman 2003, 55–56), its curse and cure. It is a strange freedom where *homo sexualis* knows that whatever he or she does, one can never be satisfied and one can never reach totality. At the same time, however, there is always a freedom to start newly, from the beginning with something new and it's never too late to do so. Exactly because of this “*homo sexualis* is not a state, let alone a permanent, immutable state, but a process, laden with trails and errors, hazardous voyages of discovery and occasional finds, interspersed with numerous slips, sorrows and missed chances and joys of looming relishes” (Bauman 2003, 56).

As the *homo consumens* so is the *homo sexualis* always on the move and never satisfied. Because of this non-finality and inauthenticity and faced with numerous choices on the markets (of many products, therefore also of sexual products and lifestyles) one is constantly scanning, in shopping manner (Bauman 2000, 73), the products and opportunities, the cost and gains. Whatever *homo sexualis* does, he or she always knows that there is something still left on the market and that the new things out there, maybe even better ones, will come and be placed on the shopping shelves. In short, exactly because of this fact, the *homo sexualis* is also perfectly appropriate for consuming, for being a subject of a consumer liquid modern society. In addition, this anxiety is also a side effect of fragmentation and separation of sexuality's units (sex, eroticism and desire) which, even though in many aspects deliberative, remain highly problematic and burdening (and always a spectre) for the *homo sexualis*. If we add to all this the fact that a return to the embedding mechanism of tradition, family and kinship is no more possible, then it is no wonder that Bauman sees today's *homo sexualis* as essentially 'orphaned an bereaved' (Bauman 2003, 38–57), 'left alone' to deal with whatever effect of this 'sexual liberation', alone and with his own skills.

2.3.6 *Liquid love*

Considering all of this one might ask in which way then the *homo sexualis* expresses love, especially considering it's de-linking from desire? What is the state of the love (and personal relationships) in liquid modernity? This is the central question which Bauman tries to address in his *Liquid love* in which „human relationships“ are the principal heroes (Bauman 2003, VIII) of that

book.

Bauman starts the book with some more phenomenological claims about love saying that love seems to enjoy the same status as death since both are always born for the first time and come from nowhere. Same as death, so also love, no matter how many times it can appear in human life, doesn't have a history of its own (Bauman, 2003, 3). It is always a unique experience in which we can only become 'wise after the fact' (Bauman 2003, 3). So for Bauman, like we cannot learn to die, we also cannot learn to love (Bauman 2003, 3) and all of our knowledge and wisdom can come to our mind only on the day after love's arrival. Furthermore, if "desire wants to consume, love wants to possess" (Bauman 2003, 10) and so do both desire and love may appear as threats for its object. It seems that according to Bauman all love strives to foreclose, to fix and bury the resources of its precariousness and suspense, but – paradoxically – when it succeeds in that it quickly starts wilting and it fades (Bauman 2003, 8). Furthermore, maybe we can follow Bauman's thoughts and claim that in liquid modernity love, as always precarious and freed from constraints of tradition, in some sense comes to its natural condition - of its own fluidity and liquidity.

But saying this is not meaning, and Bauman for sure does not claim that, that with this coming to its natural state the anxiety and problems of love fade away. On the contrary, it seems that the opposite is the case. On the one side, as it was shown, with postmodernization of sexuality the ties between love and desire are broken, and yet they always stay connect. The paradox lies in the fact that sexual desire was always and it "remains the most obviously, unambiguously and, unassailably social", it always "stretches towards another human being" and "strives to reforge that presence into a union" (Bauman, 2003, 38). This is so because "no union of bodies, however hard one might try, can escape social framing and cut all connections with other facets of social existence" (Bauman, 2003, 51) and therefore "no episode [of erotic enjoyment without constraints] is a priori condemned to remain an episode forever" (Bauman, 2003, 52). The classical question of freedom and security therefore remains open. And not only this; it seems that in a liquid modern/consumer society this relationship becomes more problematic since "acting on wishes", as desire does, and "following desire seems to steer uneasily, awkwardly, uncomfortably to loving commitments side" (Bauman, 2003, 12).

Since Bauman thinks that desire stays uneasily with commitment, maybe here is the right place to write about his comments on Giddens' thesis of 'pure relationship' (of which commitment is the basis). Bauman accepts that pure relationships may be self-evident to many (Bauman 2003, 89) and the awareness that all relationships are today 'pure' may be a common place (Bauman 2003, 90), especially to young people. Still, he reads this in a quite different way than Giddens. He clearly

states that for him the 'pure relationships', 'plastic sex' and 'confluent love' are “aspects of commodification or commercialization of human partnership” (Bauman 2000, 89) and their emancipatory potential is for him debatable. To say 'pure relationship' is for Bauman an oxymoron (Bauman, 2003, 45) since the life itself is impure, and so are consequently the intimate relationships. For him the purity of relationship is thus not so much an effect of reflexive and emancipatory practices, but rather an extension of commodified logic and fragmentation by which once connected systems started to live their own life. Thus, 'purification of sex' actually allows sexual practice to adopt shopping/hiring patterns⁷ (Bauman 2003, 50), through which it promotes the 'no strings attached' sexual encounter as the archetype of 'purity' of sexual freedom. But, as it was already mentioned, this might only be an illusion since no union of bodies can escape social framing and completely cut itself from other facts of social existence (Bauman 2003, 51).

Besides this, it seems that Bauman is suspicious and critical of the possibilities of the two main basis on which Giddens's notion of pure relationships relies – trust and commitment. Considering trust he starts from the general notion that in liquid modernity, in a society of survival, “trust, compassion and mercy... are suicidal” (Bauman 2003, 88) and that the “world today seems to be conspiring against trust” (Bauman 2003, 91). Furthermore, to commit ourselves makes us in many ways dependent, and the problem with dependency is that it may not – and doesn't need – to be reciprocal. Therefore, one partner – or maybe even both, may bound himself, but the other – or only one – partner is always free to go and no bound or commitment can make us sure that the other partner will not go (Bauman, 2003, 90). The fact always remains that for breaking up the relationship only one partner is enough. Therefore for Bauman, the widespread notion that relationships are pure – that they last only 'until further notice' - “is hardly a soil in which trust may take root and blossom” (Bauman 2003, 90).

Considering commitment, and especially the one that is 'meaningless in long term', it seems like “*a two-edged sword*” (Bauman 2003, 15). Connected with trust, the awareness that the relationship may be broken brings uncertainty (Bauman 2003, 15) and it stays in contradiction with the desirable aim that the relationship is hoped to bring: that of reaching security in many aspects - “of the nearness of a helping hand when you need it most, of succor in grief, of company in loneliness, of bailing out in trouble, of consolation in defeat and applause in victory” (Bauman 2003, 13). Again, it seems like he is speaking about the contradiction between freedom and

7 Thus he claims that, in consumeristic logic, partners may leave you „as soon as they find that you, as the source of their enjoyment, have been emptied of your potential, holding little promise of new joys, or just because the grass appears greener on the other side of the fence” (Bauman 2003, 90)

security. For Bauman, in short, it is the very contingency and frailty of the contemporary relationship that is its essential problem, since 'we can always press delete' (Weeks, 2003, 138). Thus, in a more general sense, he concludes that on one side:

our contemporaries, despairing at being abandoned to their own wits and feeling easily disposable, yearning for the security of togetherness and for a helping hand to count on in moment of trouble, and so desperate to 'relate'; yet wary of the state of 'being related' and particularly of being related 'for good', not to mention forever – since they fear that such a state may bring burdens, cause strains they neither feel able nor are willing to bear, and so may severely limit freedom they need – yes, your guess is right - to relate... (Bauman 2003, VIII)

In liquid modernity it seems that there is another type of relationship that is archetypical – and that is a „top pocketed relationship“. It is called like this because it is “sweet and short-lived” and we may suppose that “its sweetness dwells precisely in that comforting awareness that you do not need to go out of your way or stretch yourself over backwards to keep its sweetness intact for a longer time; in fact you need not do anything at all to enjoy it“ (Bauman 2003, 21).

This is in a way the paradigm of the 'neoliberal', highly individualized relationship in which it is only the individual alone on who success relationship depends and it is only the individual who is in control, and who finally exists. The only condition and wise advice for the individual is that a top-pocket”relationship must be entered in full awareness and soberly” and the next condition is - “keep it this way” and do not let your head's supervision fade, do not allow the relationship to develop its own logic - “to fall out of your top pocket where it belongs” (Bauman 2003, 21) and where you are solely in control.

In general Bauman suggests that we should today rather speak about networks than about relationships, since networks stand for “matrix of simultaneously connecting and disconnecting” individuals and they are unimaginable without both activities being enabled. In a network “connecting and disconnecting are equally legitimate choices, enjoy the same status and carry the same importance” (Bauman 2003, XIII). They thus more accurately apply to the contemporary nature of insecurity, unfinality and non-predictability of human relationships in liquid modernity. The relationships that are marked by 'virtual proximity', which are easy to enter but also easy to cancel and harder to hold, which are oriented on *Jetztzeit* and define themselves in process, to here-and-now concerns.

At the end, when it comes to the 'promise of intimacy' for (public) democracy, Bauman again takes rather the opposite standpoint than Giddens. Much closer to Richard Sennett he is claiming that the advent of the ideology of intimacy is not a promise of democracy, but maybe it is

rather its decline, since this ideology transmits the political categories into psychological ones (Bauman 2003, 31), collective concerns into private matters and thus, as strongly indicated by Bauman, actually functions as one of the regulative mechanisms of liquid modern consumer society.

2.4 Conclusion

In the first part I tried to outline some of the basic arguments offered by Giddens and Bauman on the questions about characteristics of contemporary social formation and about 'How do we live today?' when it comes to personal and intimate issues. Common to the theories of late modernity is claim that under its mechanisms (over which they partly agree) we can witness disembedding of social institutions, erosion of tradition and old authorities and rise of individualization, all of which opened up a place for new processes in which the individual, compared to earlier periods, is put into a radically different position. Today, especially in comparison to periods before, individualization became the main institutional and individual mechanism of late modernity. In that sense many concerns of person and self - from what to work? What and who to be? Till which sexual and intimate life to have? – became individualized (both externally and internally), same as seeking solutions and resolving these concerns. Identity and life course became a task of individual.

However, it seems that these arguments are also the only common ground between them. Again, if we compare Bauman and Giddens, we can hardly see consensus on important questions about causes, the nature and characteristic of these changes. Thus, while for Giddens individualization seems to represent dynamism of institutional reflexivity, Bauman seems to see in it the prolongation of a commodity logic and consumerism. While for Giddens these processes are marked by democratic potential and promises Bauman sees in them the domination of instrumental rationality. With the erosion of tradition, Giddens argues, there is indeed a potential opening up for reflexive self and subject's intervention in 'keeping the particular narrative going' as long as he/she is satisfied with it. However, Bauman counter argues that it is hard to imagine reflexivity of late modern individual, since the *homo consumens* can never be satisfied, since it is a consumerist society and the process of shopping what keeps this subject alive and since there is a discrepancy existing between individuality *de jure* and *de facto*. Thus, in his view, the *homo consumens*, same as his narrative, is doomed to remain an unfinished project. While in Giddens' case the 'subject'

reflectively overlooks his options and rationally chooses, Bauman's 'subject' is doomed to irrationally consume.

As their views diverge on this issue they also have different understandings when it comes to the discussion on sexuality and intimacy. Again, while for Giddens the emergence of plastic sexuality represents the process of 'socialization of nature by subject' by which our intimacy becomes reflexive, Bauman speaks about the plasticity of sexuality in a sense of a commodity logic of choosing, using and disposing afterwards. His image of the *homo sexualis* as an unfinished *sensation seeker* falls hardly in Giddens' image of pure relationships. Thus again, while Giddens sees in new circumstances big potential of possibility for a unity of intimacy, eroticism and love in post-traditional society, for Bauman liquid modernity represents the end of this unity, where three mentioned components of sexuality became separate and begin to live on their own, often creating a tension between them.

However, no matter of difference between their claims, both Giddens and Buaman arguments implicate deep and radical, if not almost revolutionary, changes in individual, intimate and sexual relationships. If this would be proven to be true than this would be indeed a big novelty, especially if we have in mind that not even fifty years earlier, when it comes to this issues, the things were quite the opposite. Thus, further task of my thesis will be reflection on their arguments about sexuality and intimacy, but also about the role of individualization, in contemporary social formation of late modernity. In next session I will try to offer some further arguments about changing role of sexuality and intimacy today.

3 REMAKING OF SEXUAL AND INTIMATE LIVES: PROLIFERATION OF SEXUAL STORIES, INFORMALIZATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND NEW SEXUAL LANDSCAPES OF LATE MODERNITY

3.1 Introduction: Echoing of late modern arguments in sociological studies of sexuality

That there have been enormous changes occurring in sexuality and intimacy which are reshaping their landscape towards less traditional and more individual and democratic patterns and forms, and that some of them are (historically) new in many respects, is not a conclusion to which just theorists of late modernity came. Quite the opposite, as we will see, that is a point where many agree, no matter of their theoretical or paradigmatic differences and disagreements on the nature of the change. This will be occasionally discussed in my thesis. For now I can say that the arguments of late modern authors and especially those of Giddens echoed widely inside the studies of sexuality, family, personal relationships and sociology in general. Indeed, as Alenka Švab (2000, 205-227) noticed in her afterword to the Slovenian translation of Giddens's book on sexuality, the main value of his work on this subject, rather than echoing simple acceptance of his arguments, was provoking a fresh discussion which made many to again revisit the subject.

In this chapter I will focus on some of arguments of two authors, Ken Plummer and Jeffrey Weeks. They are both sociologists by profession, but such ones to which the subjects of sexuality and intimacy were one of their main professional and also personal concerns. Both of the authors extensively researched sexuality and intimacy, made their own original claims and conclusions and even developed whole concepts and frameworks for researching sexuality. They, at least it seems to me, also represent authors who in many ways independently and autonomously arrived to some similar conclusions as late modern authors when it comes to the nature of contemporary social formation, or late modernity. Through their researches and works they also made their own contributions to some arguments of late modern authors, especially to those, as mentioned, of reflexivity of late modernity and reflexivity of sexuality. The aim of this part is to discuss these contributions.

3.2 Ken Plummer: impacts of sexual storytelling on everyday life

Ken Plummer, recently after Giddens writings, released his book *Telling sexual stories:*

power, change and social worlds. This book, which drafting emerged at the end of the 1970-ies, represents in a way his reflection on the testimonials and stories from his own researches in sexual diversity which he conducted during the years of his career. It was such stories that interested him the most since in time of writing his book he had noticed that many of the stories of sexual diversity from his researches, compared to time when he begin to investigate them, have been heard, heard even many times and heard in many different ways. While in past being mainly confined to face-to-face talks and confessions, or to the professional stuff, sexual stories seemed to became today much more present, and in fact a mass phenomena. In that sense the “modern western world has become cluttered with sexual stories” and “Sex...has become the Big Story” (Plummer 1995, 4).

He noticed that sexual stories also, as an effect of being heard, helped to shift the terrain of discussing them, of constructing (imagined and real) communities and of changing not only the social acceptance of new stories of sexual diversity, but also of new sexual and intimate 'lifestyles'/forms. Thus, in his book he focused on discussing the influence of sexual stories on individuals, societies and change. A focus on this, at the time of writing, was also important because while “sexual stories are probably old as human time they seemed to have gained unusual power and prominence” on society only in late modernity (Plummer 1995, 6), how he also choose to call this social formation (Plummer 1995, 17, 132). It is also in late modernity that sexual stories seemed to developed most rapidly, proliferated and consolidated in society (Plummer 1995, 49, 59)

3.2.1 Stories as symbolic interactions

Sexual stories are for Plummer part of a wider story telling phenomena and in that sense his arguments in the book can be read as a part of a sociology of storytelling in general of which the focus on sexuality is merely one instance (Plummer 1995, 19). He begins from recognizing that stories of every type are always present in societies, circulating in forms of gossips or confessions told in face-to-face talks, or read in newspapers and magazines, but also in parliaments and courts, in forms of 'nation-building' stories or scientific and religious stories. We are always encountering them, participate in them and tell one on our own. Whatever social activity we are doing we are always making the stories:

We are constantly writing the story of the world around us: its periods and places, its purposes and programmes, its people and plots. We invent identities for ourselves and others and locate ourselves in these imagined maps. We create communities of concern and arenas of activity where we can make our religions, tend to our ‘families’, practise our politics, get on with our work. We experience our bodies and our feelings, as well as our behaviours and talk. And everywhere we go, we are charged with telling stories and making meaning—giving sense to ourselves and the world around us. And the meanings we invoke and the worlds we craft mesh and flow, but remain

emergent: never fixed, always indeterminate, ceaselessly contested. Change is ubiquitous: we are always becoming, never arriving; and the social order heaves as a vast negotiated web of dialogue and conversation (Plummer 1995, 20)

In that sense power of the stories is not penetrating only the common mind and ordinary everyday practices but also the sciences; in for example anthropology, psychology and history, but also in many other ones, stories and storytelling processes are more and more becoming central since they are seen as the pathways to understanding culture, or as base of identity, or as tropes for making the sense of the past, and even economics recognizes its 'storied character' (Plummer 1995, 18). Furthermore, stories and storytelling processes are for Plummer deeply social and must be understood beyond pure text and narratives. They must be understood beyond this because, as indicated in the quoted paragraph, we do not only listen and tell stories, but we are participating in them, believe in them and, although never completely, we try to act and live by them.

Stories thus, and that is central for Plummer, are and can be placed at heart of symbolic interaction (Plummer 1995, 20). "Stories can be told", he concludes, "when they can be heard" (Plummer 1995, 120). This means that we can see stories as joint actions, since people may be seen engaged in fitting together lines of activity around stories and therefore "they are engaged in story actions" (Plummer 1995, 20). This symbolic interaction typically involves relationship of interaction between producers/storytellers, coaxers/coachers and consumers/audiences of stories. For example storytellers (Plummer 1995, 21) are people who write autobiographies, books, letters, diaries, people who provide their histories/biographies for social researchers and are case studies of psychologists and clinicians. Coachers (Plummer 1995, 21) are individuals like Sigmund Freud or Oprah Winfrey, people who's line of activity is to 'seduce stories' and provoke them from people. They become listeners and probe, they interview and interrogate their subjects, and they send out questionnaires, letters and gather in groups to discuss their stories and findings. In Plummer's view they possess a certain power, and they did even more so in past. Finally, audiences (Plummer 1995, 21) mark all those whose line of activity is to consume, listen, interpret and make sense of all these stories circulating. It includes all those who watch documentaries on TV about these (sexual) stories, who are following talk shows, watching the movies with implicit individual story, or a student researching intimate stories and teenagers discussing the latest sex scandal. All of them may be seen as being part of symbolic interaction since they "are engaged in assembling life story actions around lives, events and happenings—although they cannot grasp the actual life" (Plummer 1995, 21). They are also symbolically interactive stories since the "meanings of these stories are never fixed but emerge out of a ceaselessly changing stream of interaction between producers and readers in shifting contexts" (Plummer 1995, 21–22). Although for Plummer meanings can get

habitualized, fixed and stable, they always shift in the contexts to which they are linked, showing that link between storytellers, coaches and audiences is never one sided and one dimensional.

Stories are also consumed in different social worlds and interpretive communities which can hear them in a certain way and hence no others and which may come to produce their own versions of the stories and to assemble around them. Further, these social worlds and communities are part of wider habitual networks of collective activity and because of this stories “do not float around abstractly” but are grounded in historical conditions and “structured through age, class, race, gender and sexual preference” (Plummer 1995, 22). In that sense “there is often an organized pattern behind many of the tales that are heard” (Plummer 1995, 22). For Plummer thus, social analysis of stories will concern themselves with questions about the social nature of stories, about social processes of producing and consuming stories, about the social role stories play and finally it will address how they influence change, history and culture (Plummer 1995, 24–25).

Plummer obviously applied this analysis of stories on a particular subject – on sexual stories – by which he tried to provide the example of stories as symbolical interactions and their role and influence in society. These are the stories which are obviously not just stories since they are personal narratives in which people recount some aspects of their most intimate life, often discovering burden and sufferings but also joys and desires, aspects of which often contain potentially discrediting, stigmatized and taking-time-to-accept informations about the producer. They are also obviously social realities since they are produced in contexts which are embodying concrete people experiencing their thoughts and feelings, and are stories which are played in everyday life (Plummer 1995, 16). Such stories of personal sexual experience narratives are a type of stories “that haunts us everywhere today in ways it did not in recent past” (Plummer 1995, 19).

3.2.2 Modernist stories of desire, danger and recovery

There is, however, also one particular type of sexual stories that gained influence, proliferated and affected wider communities in the recent past. These are for Plummer the sexual stories told by survivors of rape, women and man who came out as gays and lesbians and various other 'recoverers' from sexually and intimately related issues, such as those in case of abortion, incest, women who 'love too much', sexual and intimate co-dependents, sex and love addicts, and dysfunctional family, to name just few (Plummer 1995, 19, 50).

What is common to these personal sexual narratives is that they speak about 'suffering, surviving and surpassing'. They are personal experiences which speak of an initially deep pain, frustration and anguish sensed as being linked to sexual, but then they are also often personal experiences which speak about changing, moving away from that suffering and secrecy and are

often directed towards major change. They speak about being stigmatized but also about overcoming stigma, about feeling deep shame but also of overcoming it and even feeling pride about something what was once source of shame, as in case of homosexuality. Because of such pattern of narrating, sexual stories about 'suffering, surviving and surpassing' are, for Plummer, modernist stories and they contain generic elements of modernist storytelling (Plummer 1995, 54). Thus what is common to stories of rape survivors, coming out and 'recoverers' – and is common to modernist storytelling – is that there is always an element of suffering which gives the tension to the plot, suffering which leads towards the crisis or turning point where something has to be done and this ultimately leads to a transformation, surviving and maybe a surpassing (Plummer 1995, 54). These are stories which speak about “journey at work” (Plummer 1995, 56), a hard one, after which a new better phase can be achieved and a new home established.

As narratives they often served, no matter how diverse in their content, as stories to be identified with, learned and inspired from, and sometimes even followed, borrowed copied and lived-by (Plummer 1995 49). They were paradigm stories. Some of them spoke more about individual route emphasizing individual change, personal growth and self-actualization, while others were more political in their route seeking collective activity and bringing about social change in wider communities (Plummer 1995, 59). In that sense, it seems that sexual stories about 'suffering, surviving and surpassing' were made to be heard and had enormous potential to transform private pains into a social, political and therapeutic language (Plummer 1995, 50).

However, until recently they remained silent, limited and marginal despite their existence and despite the readiness from audiences to be heard. Today, in just a quarter of a century, they have been increasingly preset and there has been significant shift in storytelling “*from being insignificant to being widespread*” (Plummer 1995, 49), from being silent to being vocal and this is for Plummer, no doubt, a novelty in late modernity. It is a novelty in the sense that it introduces new tales into sexual stories, but also in the sense that this stories are being told in a new ways. The fastness by which sexual stories became widespread for sure evidenced that audiences were ready for stories to be told. However, besides that, there were other factors which backdropped the rise of sexual storytelling.

3.2.3 Modernization of sexual stories

For Plummer a couple of important changes that occurred during 20th century, and which are characteristic of modernity, backdropped this rise of sexual storytelling. They were: shifts in expanding of communications and growth of mass media, spread of consumerism, rise of new cultural intermediaries and the expansion of therapeutic culture (Plummer 1995, 125).

The expansion of communication and growth of mass media (Plummer 1995, 93) is a complex social process which includes shifts in access to print (emergence of easy and cheap publishing), rise of new media such as radio, film, and television, shifts in modes of travel and rise of touristic gaze and finally shifts and rise of media technologies such as telephones and we may add today mobile phones, smartphones, computers and tablets. With some of these media, due to their technological limitless and authority-controlled programs, the possibility to communicate such sexual stories as homosexuality and coming out for example was non-existent (Plummer 1995, 93). However, with the development of other media, especially new media technologies, possibilities of 'meeting', hearing, communicating or writing and publishing stories and finding audiences becomes enormous, not only for homosexuality but also all other sexual differences. Possibilities of reaching and interacting (influencing) with stories became today as well enormous. Simply, it seems that here Plummer gives to the communication and media the crucial role in "making the world a global village" (Plummer 1995, 93). What is crucial for Plummer is that "independently of what we communicate, we now communicate in ways that are fundamentally different from earlier centuries" (Plummer 1995, 93).

Another factor that for Plummer backdropped the culture of sexual storytelling is the rise of consumerism which increasingly marked post-WWII capitalism and which increasingly brought with itself markets, advertising, marketing, publishing, releasing, selling and even, as Bauman claimed, commodifying and seducing the desire in order to consume. Consumption and consumption objects, Plummer continues, also became the means of demarcating lifestyles and hierarchies among people. When it comes to sexual storytelling it must be noted that "the expansion of capitalism", for him, "brings with it [everywhere] the expansion of sex consumerism" (Plummer 1995, 124). Let's take for example, as Plummer (1995, 124) did, the youth subcultures or gay and lesbian 'scene'. Youth subcultures had their magazines, films, music spots and television programs and in them intimate and sexual lifestyles of 'celebrities', but also increasingly of themselves, became theme. Similar it was with gays and lesbians. The increasing of publishing markets, publishers, magazines, literature and other writings with such themes played a crucial part in the construction of gay and lesbian identity and community. The link between sex and consumerism gets even more obvious in many more cases, as for example in playing on desire and implicit sex in marketing and advertising for industries in general, but also in the existence of whole industries (pornography, tourism, sex travels, prostitution, 'pink' industry) based on sex. "Sex' in all its forms" – from playing a role in community building, to banal usage of sex and sexuality as commodity - "is manifestly part of this Big Sell", concludes Plummer (1995, 124).

Other factors which for him played a role in the rise of sexual stories were new cultural

intermediaries and the acceleration of individualistic therapeutical, self-help and expressive culture (Plummer 1995, 125). This culture has a long history, especially in the US, expressing itself in Freudian reception, therapies of the 1960-ies, counter-culture, New Ageism etc. All of them in that way or another deal with intimacy and sexuality and their presence today, their symbolical interaction and social worlds they affect, are significant. They are important part of the multiplication of authorities discussed by Giddens and Bauman. Finally, one really novel characteristic of today's world is the rise in cultural intermediaries, consisting of symbolic tokens of new technologies – from early word processors and videos until today's smartphones directly connected to the Internet. This symbolic tokens opened possibilities of making our own sexual stories and recording them, making them available to wide audience and even of selling out our sexual story (Plummer 1995, 125). With them the production of sexual stories became democratized and audiences enormous.

All these factors combined contributed to the spread of the storytelling, and with it sexual story telling. The emergence of new media – radio and television – in the first quarter of the century opened the possibilities to reach bigger audiences and to make many themes, previously held in books with limited audiences, available to them. The introduction of consumerist, advertising and marketing strategies accelerated the circulation of the stories playing on sexuality, as could be evidenced in examples of commercials with strong gender messages (housewife and earner) dominating at that time, or in the beginning of hosting and speaking about some intimate theme on first talk shows often in scandalous ways. However, new technologies also opened possibilities of cheaper publishing while, one might claim, the introduction of computer for example also individualized the process of editing sexual stories. With the introduction of newer technologies – cultural intermediaries – these possibilities became enormous, where processes of making and releasing stories are almost simultaneous, same as first reactions from audiences. It is in this context that stories of sexual 'suffering, surviving and surpassing' begin to gain their voice, to be heard, to be made by survivors themselves and told in new ways, and to change their status from being silent and insignificant (in the first quarters of 20th century) to being widespread. It is also in this context that these stories prefigured major social changes as a result of being heard and that they begin to be borrowed, copied, replayed and being remade over and over again (Plummer 1995, 49).

Thus, backdropped by these factors, told in new ways and reaching audiences, significant changes happened in sexual storytelling: *“In fits and starts with uneven development, a shift is identifiable. The private pains increasingly become public ones; the personal sufferings become collective participations; the pathological languages turn to political ones. Stories of private pathological pains have become stories of public, political participation (Plummer's emphasis)”*

(Plummer 1995, 110).

This transformation in sexual storytelling is significant and another novelty, especially when it comes to stories of 'suffering, surviving and surpassing'. But these sexual stories were not the only ones passing through transformation. Stories about women's sexuality, and sexuality in general, stories about family and new families, stories about sexualities of youth etc. are just a few of many stories that also represented some novelty in the last quarters of 20th century. For Plummer, significant shifts could be noticed and they were not lonesome. Thus, he claimed, if we are moving towards a new world order, as claimed by many, we should also expect a change in our sexual storytelling, both in what we say and how we say it (Plummer 1995, 17). It is with this question that Plummer will deal in his conclusions about sexuality in late modernity.

3.2.4 Sexual stories in late modernity

When beginning to discuss how late modernist stories look like and how we are telling them it needs to be noticed that Plummer is somehow much more cautious than late modern authors in predicting, judging and outlining the general tendencies of late modern sexuality. Thus, he claimed that he did "not want to create a sense of anything too sure, stable or solid" about nature of sexual and intimate transformations and that every of his new "trend detected here must be counterposed" (Plummer 1995, 133) since "they may not last, may not affect all, and indeed may be a passing in a few elite intellectual circles" (Plummer 1995, 134). But despite this there are signs of emergence of newer and diverse stories that avoid uniformity, reject naturalism, seek out immanences and ironies and discover complexities of sexuality and intimacy. The stories of rape survivors, gays and lesbians and recoverers are part of them. However, these new sexual stories do not replace modern ones, "but run alongside of them", providing a critical commentary and making difference (Plummer 1995, 133). It was by driving on these newer trends that begin to emerge that Plummer suggested three broad and overlapping shifts in late modern sexuality.

Firstly, the stories of authority begin to fracture in the face of participant stories (Plummer 1995, 133). If we look at the history of the sexual storytelling it is easy to notice that for long time sexuality "has been trapped in the gaze of science and religion" (Plummer 1995, 133) and major producers of sexual stories were church clergy, politicians, criminologists, state legislators and lawmakers or medical, psychiatrist and psychological doctors and members of staff. It is also easy to notice that when they were the only producers of sexual stories they possessed authority, power and control over defining the terms and conditions, as well as content, of sexual stories. This was again most visible in case of gays and lesbians and their position in the discourse of various religions or sciences. It could be claimed, that up until the 1970-ies, with rare exceptions,

homosexuality was basically treated as deviance, pathology and sin and a strong hierarchical relationship existed between object (homosexual) and subject (priest/scientist) of investigation, with the subject having complete definition over the meaning of homosexuality for the object. The main motivation was also to keep homosexuality away. Similarly, until the second part of 20th century rape cases remained unrecognized as occurring, of being a subject to legislative sanctions and survivors were often stigmatized and silenced. It could be claimed that when operating in modernity, when being produced mainly from the sources of social authorities, sexual stories were tending to be ignorant (if not that then often hostile) towards sexual stories of 'suffering, surviving and surpassing' of rape victims and gays and lesbians.

However, with proliferation of communication via mass media and new technologies this relationship began to change significantly. When these means got more democratized so the voices got more diverse and many newer stories start to be heard in their own terms and right (Plummer 1995, 134). This changed the terms of discussion significantly. When for example gay and lesbians became producers of their own stories their voices were much more affirmative of homosexuality and many begin to identify with it. Newer voices said in new terms also contributed to bigger acceptance of homosexuality. In some sense, today the whole process of storytelling may be in transition (Plummer 1995, 132) with boundaries between producers, coaches and audience blurring. However, besides the new storytellers, the old ones remained active and the future of storytelling for Plummer (1995, 134) "lies with an abundance and proliferation of contested and clashing participant stories".

Secondly, the sexual stories of the Essence, the Truth and the Foundation began to fracture into stories of difference, multiplicity and a plural universe (Plummer 1995, 134). Not even fifty years earlier the produced sexual stories were presupposing one universal sexuality (heterosexuality) lived in one universal way and for the whole life. The Kinsey scale of the sexual continuum was not accepted before the 1940-ies and widely not even later, but today we are almost 'naturally' presupposing this multiple continuum of hetero, homo and bi as 'natural' parts of the sexuality scale. This also counts for the realistic knowledge that people's sexual behavior often differs from public moral and that people do engage for example in sex before marriage, during marriage/relationships, that some live in marriages while being gay etc., the knowledges which were also not so 'naturally presupposed' before Kinsey's research in the 1940-ies. With more and more historical and anthropological knowledges about the multiple faces of sexuality through history and across cultures this notion of multiplicity becomes even stronger. Thus, for Plummer, in late modernity the sexual stories seeking essential unitary core of sexual life became increasingly shattered. In some ironical sense the hope for finding and establishing essential truth about our

sexuality “gives way to an awareness of difference everywhere” (Plummer 1995, 134) and leaves only fragments. In this multiplicity, stories also become divergent and diverse (Plummer 1995, 59). Today for example, the old gay and lesbian coming out stories are also in dispute and younger generations of gays and lesbians begin to tell their stories in a new – much less modernist – way. In that sense, Plummer concludes, we may be entering into a new historical period where modernist sexual stories are slowly losing their dominance (Plummer 1995, 134). In this context he rose up the question whether or not we are entering “the time of the post-gay and post-lesbian” (Plummer 1995, 142).

Finally, the third broad shift in late modernity is that sexual stories of categorically clear sexualities begin to fracture into stories of deconstruction (Plummer 1995, 134). This is most visible in the more problematic, ambivalent and ironic language we use to grasp reality. The old language of sexual storytelling is not seen as simply reflecting 'reality' and as non-problematical. In new contexts old language can be experienced as emptied of meanings, as clichéd and often resembled to tell old stories in an ironic way. And here for Plummer lies another coming change: while subjects from his researches, at the beginning of socially spread storytelling, were reading the sexual stories in order to find out truth about themselves, in future the subjects may be reading texts in ways that are more akin to endlessly playful and ironic interpretations and applications (Plummer 1995, 142). The stories become borrowings and are almost always reassembled in deconstructive ways. This can be seen as another evidence of breaking the link between producers, coaches and audiences in symbolic interaction of late modern storytelling.

Besides this broader shifts Plummer made some other conclusions about late modern sexuality, some of which with no doubt also reassemble late modern arguments, especially their reflexive variants. Thus, he noticed that stories are today full of indeterminacies and that they became a supermarket of possibilities that can start to pervade with endless choices potentially available and unavailable (Plummer 1995, 139). One of the effects of this is that in late modernity there are many decisions that can and indeed have to be made about life (Plummer 1995, 151) and individualization is for sure a noticeable process. As it was with individuality in late modernity, so did also the late modern sexual tales become more reflexive about storytelling processes (Plummer 1995, 173). One effect of this, concludes Plummer in agreement with late modern theorists, is that identities begin to blur and change and are no longer so fixed and stable (Plummer 1995, 139-140). They became task to be fulfilled and not life-long lasting. Plummer also positioned himself with Giddens in recognizing the importance of new life politics in late modernity, which he sees even more liberating than emancipatory ones. While still recognizing the importance of emancipatory politics (Plummer 1995, 147) he praises lifestyle politics and gives his own contribution to it by

discussing the ways how storytelling, as those of gays and lesbians and rape survivors, turned up into lifestyle politics related demands for new sexual citizenships (Plummer 1995, 144–166).

3.3 Jeffrey Weeks: Impacts of living sexual differences on everyday life

Recently in his book *The World We Have Won: The Remaking of Erotic and Intimate Life* Jeffrey Weeks (2007), another British sociologist writing extensively on sexuality, homosexuality and intimacy, engaged directly in debates discussed also in this thesis. His engagement is interesting because it represents a refreshment of these debates discussed here from a time distance which is longer than a decade. In those times – the 2000ies – many new issues and changes emerged around sexuality and intimacy. Across the Western countries same-sex partnerships began to be legally recognized and gay and lesbians began to exercise their martial rights. The issues of gay and lesbian parents, gay and lesbian parenthood and families soon followed and in some cases gays and lesbians also won family rights. Further, gays and lesbians were more and more visible in everyday life as neighbors, colleagues, doctors, salespersons etc. For Weeks these were just some signs of profound changes occurring and there was no doubt that the world is in the midst of an ongoing transition of sexuality and intimacy (Weeks 2007, 3).

These changes seemed profound since many could still remember the times, as Weeks himself, when homosexuality was closeted, censored and 'non-existent' in everyday life. But at the time when he was writing his book it seemed that homosexuality, among other forms of sexuality, was not anymore primarily reflected in the stories, to use Plummer's language, but more and more, and for a bigger number of people, also in the practices. One decade later for many people the stories became living practices. Thus, if in the middle of the 1990s Plummer was interested in analyzing on how sexual stories of coming out as an effect of their proliferation where causing acts of coming out among many gays and lesbians in everyday life, more than one decade later Weeks was interested in analyzing how outed gays and lesbians, by living as if sexual difference did not matter (Weeks 2007, 9), caused changes in everyday life, affected sexuality and wider society but also themselves. The effects of coming out of homosexuality on everyday life and society, as just one of many changes occurring today in sexuality, is something that will for Weeks be focus of analyzing sexuality and judging its character today.

3.3.1 Avoiding the traps in discussing sexuality: beyond 'pessimist' and 'optimist' versions of transformations

Making his contribution more than a decade after the first arguments about late modernity,

individuality and sexuality have been set up, Weeks had a good overview over new materials as well as he had a good overview over reception (confirmations or critiques) of late modern arguments inside sexuality studies. He also had a good overview over general discussions inside this studies. Thus, reflecting on all these discussions, Weeks noted that in his own contribution he wanted to avoid 'three main traps' (Weeks, 2007, 4–7) into which, according to him, many commentators on contemporary sexuality and intimacy fall, making the discussion harder and static.

The first trap for him lays in the belief of 'progressivists' who see the transformation of sexuality and intimacy as an inevitable progress from the dark times to the light times, from sexual regress to sexual progress or from a state of non-freedom to a state of freedom. In this belief almost every new change is a positive step forward, always towards the better. The second trap is a mirror image of the first one. It is the belief of 'declinists' which is reflected in seeing everything as a decline from the state of grace, order and morality into the state of chaos and immorality. This view tends to see any transformations in sexuality as leading us from previous light and order times into the darkness of broken families, a violent youth, sexual promiscuity, incidence of homosexuality etc. This is a strong voice today and it tends to be conservative, basing itself on ideal imaginaries of the past which in many cases did not exist. There is, finally, the third trap of 'continuists' represented in the belief that despite all the 'huffing and puffing' in sexuality and intimacy nothing has really changed. This view points out on the 'recalcitrance of hidden structures' of for example patriarchy, capitalism and heteronormativity. The 'continuist' view includes a wide range of arguments extending from the claims that despite cosmetic changes nothing has really changed for women, that gay marriage can be seen as a continuance of heterosexual hegemony and they extend further all the way to the claims that the assimilation of gay marriage is compatible with contemporary configuration, or with neoliberal ideology and lifestyle. These arguments are mainly coming from the feminist, foucauldian and queer perspectives and for Weeks they provide strong arguments, some of which he personally absorbed into his own analysis. But the problem with them, he continues and joins arguments with Giddens (1992, 28–29), is that they often forget on the power of agency and on the power it has for the individual and everyday life (Weeks, 2007, 4–7).

For Weeks further, the main characteristic of the majority (although not all) of this claims, coming both from declinist and continuist perspectives, is that they are based on some problematic understandings of the nature of sexuality. Both of the views tend to see sexuality ideally, in normative ways, as something static and they tend to measure and judge the change according to that ideal and norm. Thus for example, conservative views about decline are heavily based on romanticized notions of a 'lost' society (family, personal relation, sexuality) which were even in the past barely representing reality. On the continuist pole the most present argument about sexuality,

and especially sexuality in the 'late modernity', is the one that sees sexuality, sexual freedom and the role of the individual in it basically as 'false' notions, especially in relation to capitalism. This argument, for Weeks, has a long history and it seems that it was predated by the argument about capitalism's distorting and damaging effect on human potential, where capitalism was often seen as manipulative towards the self. From Simmel, the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and civilization* till Bauman himself (Weeks, 2007, 127), the various versions of the above mentioned main argument are elaborated. As with Bauman, this argument is concerned with the commodification of sex and pleasure for profit making and thus manipulating the self giving it an illusion of freedom; freedom – as Bauman would put it – of consuming. In some views, such as those of Arlie Hochschild (2005) the process of commercializing penetrates all intimate life (according to Weeks 2007, 128). For Weeks again, these are powerful arguments but they also do tend to see sexuality as static and in some sense as essential. In this version the 'real' sexuality is seen as something existing outside of society and its influences and usually only gets corrupted by society and its processes, such as for example commodification. The 'pure' sexuality is opposed to false influences of capitalism and power. For Weeks, however, this perspective “is harking back” *not* so much the lost society but a society that never actually existed because “sexuality was never existing outside of shaping influences of culture, there has never been a pure undefiled eros uncorrupted by capitalism” (Weeks 2007, 128). There was “no beach beneath the paving stones” (Weeks 2007, 128) and thus sexuality was always shaped by society that orders it and invents and reinvents its meanings.

Sexuality is for Weeks always influenced by the social and therefore also by the capitalism, commercialization and commodification processes and it is part of consumerist culture. However, this does not mean that all influences of capitalism are instrumental towards sexuality and he stays rather critical towards such claims considering that they presume pure, uncorrupted and clean sexuality existing beyond devil influence of capitalism. There is no sexuality existing beyond these influences. In other words, it means to oppose the ideal to the real. This however doesn't “mitigate the cultural impact of such a critique” (Weeks 2007, 128) nor does it ignore the capitalist power relationships, its negative, banal and commodifying effects on sexuality (Weeks 2007, 13). However, the triumph of world capitalism, Weeks continues, does not mean that every act of love, intimacy or sex is inevitably tainted by it, but it does mean that its giant presence is providing threats and as well opportunities for sexual and intimate life. Weeks, following Bernstein and Schaffner (2005), suggested that rather than reducing sexuality and influence on it only to one source we should be aware that the regulation of sexuality “is always overdetermined: that is, it is shaped and reshaped by variety of forces rather than mono-casual” (Weeks 2007, 213).

Finally, when it comes to all these approaches and discussions around sexuality and intimacy what strikes Weeks the most is the fact that both of these positions (of declinist and continuists) are often represented as stark polarities, as either/or options, which rather divide and polarize debates and thus fail to grasp the “complexities and contradictions with which we all have to live” today (Weeks, 2007, 109) and which are central to contemporary late modern societies and to the issues of sexuality and intimacy. Thus Weeks in his book aimed to offer “a balance sheet” (Weeks 2007, X, 3) between optimistic and pessimistic perspectives using his sociological preoccupation and sense of history. He in short aimed to provide a 'realistic view' on these debates and to use historical observation. He thinks that only like this – “by having a handle on the links, the tendencies, the interconnections of past and present in our present history and our historic present” (Weeks 2007, 3) – can we 'realistically' measure the gains and losses of ongoing changes in sexuality and intimacy.

3.3.2 Importance of the grass-root impacts of being ordinary 'deviant'

To measure gains (and losses) of ongoing changes Weeks took into focus human agency (therefore the title “world we have one”) in a longer time period. In the introduction I already indicated that Weeks is interesting in aspects of (new) human agencies (such as coming out) on everyday life and sexuality. Commenting on the revolutionary moments of the 1960-ies and 1970-ies, which most dramatically accelerated the reshaping of sexuality, Weeks praises the role which women and gay and lesbian movements played in grass-root collective agencies and in reshaping of everyday life. For him, these movements, in many of their forms, also offer an example of the reflexivity of the self and exercising of pure relationships. However, it was still the impact of individual agency and of ordinary people on everyday life and sexuality that where most interesting to Weeks.

This is because for Weeks at the end, the real and radical achievements of the 'coming out' revolution from the 1970-ies were not primarily political and legislative but were in fact macroscopic and social, increasingly occurring and influencing everyday life during last decades. Influencing it in fact trough individual coming out acts of millions of gays and lesbians that followed after the emergence of new social sexual movements of the 1960ies and the 1970ies. Despite the fact that the dreams of these movements were not fulfilled and despite the fact that political and legislative changes followed only later during the 1990ies and 2000s, the effects of the messages of the 'coming out' revolution which this movements constructed had an immediate impact on everyday life. Despite their unfulfilled ideals for change the importance was that they were the change themselves by offering new discourses, prefigurative practices, creating new

politics, a new way of being here and now and experimenting with life forms and identities (Weeks 2007, 87). The main importance was the fact that gays and lesbians increasingly started to act as if they have been granted all the rights which they were denied in practice (Weeks 2007, 91) and as if difference between homosexuality and heterosexuality at the end didn't matter (Weeks 2007, 9). They began to form their own communities, partnerships, 'families of choices' (Weeks 2004, 2007), becoming parents and beginning to 'normalize' and 'routinize' their homosexuality (Seidman et al., 1999) in everyday life so that the double life of the closet is beginning to be a less defining aspect of their lives (Weeks 2007, 148). Thus, from today's perspective, Weeks suggests, it is not so much the movement and collective articulation of the coming out in the 1970-ies that were important, as it was important the sense of individual empowerment which they provided to the numerous homosexual individuals (Weeks 2007, 74) who begin to come out and live their lives openly.

The importance of this power of coming out in everyday life is for Weeks, and indeed it is, enormous. When men and women began to come out as homosexuals (and maybe as gay and lesbian parents) to their friends, families, colleagues and acquaintances, many other man and women begin to have homosexual as their friends, brothers, sisters, colleagues and acquaintances and thus, to use Plummer's words, to more intensively interact with homosexuality. Homosexuality in that process, with its images previously constructed through religious, medical and other expert books, is beginning to be subjectified and therefore less abstract. This made many of those who previously disapproved homosexuality and even advocated its sanctions to accept it and even become its supporters. Simply, one could claim that coming out of gay and lesbians in everyday life was one of the most revolutionary means in reshaping the attitudes towards homosexuals and homosexuality and bringing up social (if not yet political) change. Here we must remember that gays and lesbians are here just one example of how subtle changes in sexual attitudes, done by many in many ways, can influence everyday life. In that sense Weeks concludes - "never underestimate the importance of being ordinary" (Weeks 2007, 9) and different and changes it can bring.

For Weeks, the insistence on this grass-root level of analysis is important also because many important changes occurring today, especially those with emancipatory potential are effect of this grass-roots agency. Besides this and considering that we are in minds of transition and living through the changes, the future development of this changes will also depend on grass-root agency (Weeks 2007, X, 4, 165)

3.3.3 Great transition: 'unfinished sexual revolutions' of everyday life...

Considering the historical and time perspective, Weeks began his analysis with the year 1945 which he sees as significant in the history of the Western world. This year marked both end of one of the most totalitarian and bloody experiences in human history, but it was also the beginning of a new historical period filled with new expectations for a better life. It was also the period of reconstructing of European societies namely through the model of so the called “welfare state” in which the level of distribution of wealth was historically the highest and which ensured opportunities for the majority of the population in proportions that were not witnessed before. But this year marked also the beginning of what would be called the “baby boom” generation (Weeks 2007, X) across the West, a generation through whose life course we can maybe most dramatically witness the impacts of changes occurring in sexuality and intimacy. This generation could witness all of these changes, shifts and important, thought unfinished, revolutions (Weeks 2007, 7) occurring during their life course. In fact many of the baby-boomers were agents of these changes themselves – as young people rebelling the puritan sexual norms and gender conducts in the 1960-ies – as agents of the cultural revolution, or as ordinary people trying to develop new models of marriage or relationships later in their life, developing more egalitarian relationships and rising children in more democratic manners.

Weeks calls this period of transformations “great transition” because various changes in sexuality and intimacy, and on various levels, where not simultaneous but in fact “many of the changes had a long gestation and some were to take decades to reach fruition.” (Weeks 2007, 60). It could be claimed that the struggle of women for equality and changes in gender relations were preceding the struggle of gays and lesbians and were more rapid in their achievement, but they opened up a space for emergence of new, non-heterosexual relationships and their struggles (Weeks 2007, 74). For example, despite beginning their struggle already in the 1960-ies, when the women's movement was also at its highest point, the tendency to treat lesbians and gays as equal citizens and to give them more equal rights become significantly present only in the 2000-ies (Weeks 2007, XX). Thus, for Weeks these changes cannot be reduced on one source and time period, but the 1960-ies are indeed representing a crucial moment of unleashing ‘sexual revolutions’. Despite majority of demands for more emancipated sexuality released in that decade remained “unfulfilled hopes” still within “barely a generation, the old shadows has been dispersed and replaced by quite news shapes and configurations” (Weeks 2007, 59). Although not reaching the fulfillment of their utopian visions, they provided a new context and also marked the beginning of experiments with new forms of living, especially in the case of women and non-heterosexual people.

Concretely, during this period numerous 'grass-roots unfinished revolutions' occurred which activated shifts in everyday life and transformed it. They are unfinished revolutions because many

of their demands were not fulfilled, and because they, after the revolutionary wave providing collective moments of the movement, continued to happen on an individual level and in everyday life, somehow behind the scenes of public life. They are revolutions because, despite not changing everything and not provoking positive endorsement among many people, they are nevertheless profound since today there are hardly any households which are not touched, if not affected, by the transformations these revolutions provoked (Weeks 2007, 165).

Proliferation, diversification of sexual stories which Plummer discusses (Weeks 2007, 10, 113), as well as Giddens open relationship and disclosing intimacy (Weeks 2007 110, 122, 137–138) represent for Weeks examples of unfinished revolutions and they are part of great transition. However, among them, he lists some other unfinished revolutions (Weeks 2007, 7–12):

– *the 'gender revolution'*– fought for on many fronts and levels - of which main achievement is that inequality between man and women lost its justification and now gender inequality needs to be justified in the ways it never had before. What this revolution had changed is not so much reality of male power and end of patriarchy as it made profound shifts and changes in legitimization of that power (Weeks 2007, 143) which is losing its grounds under people's starting point of principally full human equality between man and women from which follows all the others forms of equality. As effect of gender revolution de-legitimization of male power is increasingly rising in everyday life.

– *the pluralization of families* which is characterized by the decline of traditional family and weakening of patriarchal authority over women and children, an process which is resulting in emergence of more complex and diverse culture of pluralization of households patterns and domestic compositions. This trends include rise of 'cohabitation' and decline of heterosexual marriage, rise of single parenthood, growth of people living on their own - approaching 40% in UK for example (Weeks 2007, 8), the emergence of serial monogamy as the dominant pattern of sexual partnering, the rise of non-heterosexual 'families of choice' and rise of 'friendship ethic'. Some authors, like Slovenian sociologist Alenka Švab (2010) suggested that instead of seeing these trends as effects of 'pure relationship' as Giddens sees them, we could in fact see 'pure relationship' as effect of the pluralization of the families.

– *the broadening of reproductive rights* is one of the key process in transformation of everyday life. By appearance of the Pill and various other methods of birth control women gained more autonomy and control of their bodies and this, to wider extend, provoked the separation of link between sexual activity, marriage, parenting and reproduction. For Weeks there can be no doubt in fact that reproductive rights and birth control were accepted with great enthusiasm from

women side and that from time of its introduction there is a constant increase in its usage, especially concerning the age, available knowledge and development (Weeks 2007, 68–70).

– *the coming out of homosexuality* is yet another profound unfinished revolution. From time when Plummer was writing, coming out stories of homosexuality, as he somehow predicted, diverged even more, same as the communities. There is evidence about more and more public acceptance of homosexuality, especially among young people, thus for example, Sunday Telegraph (1988) reported that among general population 60% of them disapproved gay lifestyle and yet it was also evidenced that 50% of people younger than 25 were accepting it and this generation represented the kids of baby boomers. They were also generation that was shaping attitudes during the 1990-ies (Weeks 2007, 103).

– *the emergence and recognition of sexual diversity* is yet another unfulfilled revolution. Again, this revolution could be connected to coming out of homosexuality. Despite the radical visions of radicals of the 1960-ies about 'post-sexual' society and 'end of homosexual' as identity, the historical and social analysis gives other picture. Thus, instead of the decline and the end of homosexual

we see the embedding of strong lesbian and gay identities, and in heir wake a proliferation of other sexualized identities, some acceptable, others soon to receive their own anathemas, based on gender (lesbian, gay male), sexual desire (sado-masochist, paedophile), ethnicity and race (black lesbian and gay identities, South Asian, Latino), faith (Gay Christians, Muslims, Jews), object choice (bisexual), the transcendence of biology (transgendered), and so on... (Weeks 2007, 83)

And this example is not only applying for homosexuality since heterosexuality is equally enough diverse among similar sexualized patterns. With emergence of World Wide Web this opportunity to meet sexual patterns and explore them (at least visually) become infinite and in many aspects the very category of 'perversion' is all but disappeared (Weeks 2007, 10). Contemporary world for Weeks, whether one likes it or not, is thus “haunted by the spectre of difference and diversity” (Weeks 2007, 122) and this spectre is expressed in difference between identities, tastes, family and partnership arrangements, sexual lifestyles, racial, religious and ethnic al differences in sexual behavior and in life courses – all aspects which inevitably intersect with each other (Weeks 2007, 109–124).

– *The recognition of sexual violence and abuse* and greater freedom to speak about something that was long covered as 'private issue' have led to wider recognition of the risks attached to sexuality and intimate life. This recognition ranges from problem of violent intimate relationships, queer bashing, sexual harassment, child abuse, sexual trafficking etc. Today this risk of violence

connected with sexuality is acknowledged and “remains wedded to the erotic like a dark shadow” (Weeks 2007, 11).

– *The expansion of sexual/intimate citizenship* is the last important change which became evident through 2000-ies by spreading of (couples, parenting and health) rights previously enjoyed exclusively by heterosexuals to the non-heterosexual persons, mainly through form of same-sex union or partnership. This is also something that Plummer has already discussed and wrote about as part of upcoming lifestyle politics. For gay and lesbians, sexual and intimate partnerships is about the recognition of them being excluded from rights and negated of citizenship and thus, consequently, about moves towards inclusion (Weeks 2007, 11). This process of expanding sexual/intimate rights is important because it redefines meanings and opens up the citizenships to various minorities which were previously excluded. Although still nowhere fulfilled in that form, it bears the potential of completely equalizing unions, parents and partnerships no matter of their sexual orientation.

By combining all 'unfinished' revolutions it becomes obvious that this period witnessed profound shifts in the social relations of sexuality and intimacy (Weeks 2007, 62). In this period we have witnessed a “shift of power between generations and between men and women”, so now the younger generations were evidenced to have genuinely new weight in culture, were more tolerant and open in sexual behavior and premarital sex become normal, while women gained more autonomy over their bodies (Weeks 2007, 62, 66–70). Similar to Giddens’s notion of plasticity of sexuality Weeks also confirms that in these years there was also a process of “separation of sex and reproduction”, followed by “separation of sex and marriage” and “separation of marriage and parenting” (Weeks 2007, 62). Effective female control of fertility broke the link between sexual activity and reproduction, thus making sex more risk-free and more source of pleasure. In long term it also delinked sexual activity from marriage, both through premarital sex and activity outside of marriage. As one effect of these changes, marriage increasingly for lot of people begin to represent rather a 'symbolic recognition of commitment' than key social institution that safeguarded society (Weeks 2007, 70–71). And finally, this time period produced a “shift in redefinition of the relationships between 'normality' and 'abnormality'” (Weeks 2007, 62) and “heterosexuality and homosexuality” (Weeks 2007, 74) since for example, the separation of sex, reproduction and marriage created new dimensions in which social and cultural emphasis on heterosexual reproduction becomes potentially irrelevant in judging the relationships or couplehood (Weeks 2007, 110).

3.3.4 ... and reactions on them

However, these emancipatory effects of unfinished revolutions on people's life are just one side of these shifts. This is because the shifts also brought with them various types of new challenges, uncertainties, fears, conservative 'contrarevolutions', and sexual wars and provoked social and political reactions as well as new types of regulations of sexuality and intimacy. Thus for Weeks, the direction these shifts took were not just one dimensional, progressive and, at the end, only emancipatory. Much more than other authors he seems to be aware of the ambiguity, transitory moment, phase and double sidedness of these shifts, what seem also to be the reason why he speaks about 'unfinished revolutions'. Thus, what is evident in this period of various shifts in sexuality and intimacy is also the following (Weeks 2007, 12–15):

– *The intransigence of gender differences remained characteristic of transformations.* Despite major shift in opportunities for women in education, employment, family, reproduction and sexual choice, the impact of changes has been uneven (Weeks 2007, 12). Women's obligation and role in caring and domestic responsibilities were resilient to change and women still continue to be central to care in all its forms (Weeks 2007, 78, 176), as well as they are also main holders of social (reproductive) capital. When it comes to parenting and step parenting, Weeks (2007, 178) continues, we still seem to be living in modernist times. It has been showed that men, despite acknowledging (primarily on ideal level) the gender equality and striking to reach involved fatherhood, were still often resistant to change, or were often failing to fulfill the ideal, which at the end lead to re-establishment of gender division of labor. Besides, it was evidenced that it is man, much more than women, who tend to pursue more individual routes in their lives (Weeks 2007, 173) what implicates that effects of individualization are in many respects still gendered. All in all when it comes to gender revolution Weeks concludes that “more than forty years later the majority of [women's] demands remain, despite genuine progress in many spheres, unfulfilled in their entirety. They were not so modest after all” (Weeks 2007, 78).

– *The continued institutionalization of heterosexuality* is also still evident today despite coming out of homosexuality and its challenging of hetero-homo binaries and despite potential of reproductive technologies to make reproduction irrelevant in judging the relationships. Weeks suggest that even in late modern societies we can witness that homosexuality is still subjected to minoritizing forces of institutional heterosexuality which excluded it in the first place. There is still no evidence of challenging heterosexual hegemony. Lesbianism, for example, still remains marginalized (Weeks 2007, 78). In this societies homosexuality still “remains the Other, even if Otherness now for many has a warm and friendly face” (Altman 2001, according to Weeks 2007,

12). Further, as we are moving geographically away from the West we can see that homosexuality still remains legally sanctioned, often with death and violence (Weeks 2007, 12, 200–201). Besides, more transgressive and diverse sexual lifestyles remain largely confined to more liberal metropolitan areas and cities while for many others lifestyles and identities still remain fates and not opportunities (Duncan and Smith 2006, according to Weeks 2007, 113). Thus for Weeks it is obvious that changes and gains are limited to a more privileged and wealthy parts of the globe. Beside this, although it could be claimed that radical sexual aspiration of the 1960-ies today became a general cultural trope, the new and more emancipatory forms of sexual and 'intimate being' remain fundamental and more practiced among those on margins 'of sexual and gender hierarchies' (Weeks 2007, 125). It is existence of these kind of contradictions and limits that are sufficient for Weeks "to temper any easy optimism generated by the world we have won" (Weeks 2007, 201).

– *The fear of difference, and the continued circulation of power around race, ethnicity, class and age.* Continuance of heterosexual hegemony and constrains, still powerful today, is not only constrain, but other constrains comes from other hierarchical patterns that intersects and shape sexual culture. Thus, sexual patterns are moduled by inequalities arising from race, ethnicity and class and sexuality and intimacy, in turn, are scarred by them. Researches still continue to show how sexuality is shaped by them (Weeks 2007, 13).

– *The commercialization of erotic.* As sexuality became one of the major focus of meaning and identity so it became even more entwined in hyper-commercialization of culture (Weeks 2007, 13) and in these practices sexuality, and especially that of women, is often trivialized (Weeks 2007, 78). Similar thing happened with gays and so called 'pink dollar'. What this shows is that erotic is inextricably entwined with market forces. However, as I pointed in Weeks critique of declinists and continuists, the triumph of global capitalism doesn't mean that every sex act is inevitably tainted by commercialization but it does mean that sexual and intimate are never free from threats, as well as opportunities, provided by its giant presence (Weeks 2007, 13).

– *The threat of sexual disease,* which become increasingly present after HIV/AIDS epidemics and especially after realizing that it's not limited only to one minority and sexual orientation. Further, HIV/AIDS is just one of many sexually transmitted diseases circulating today. The awareness of sexual diseases followed by awareness that 'everyone is at risk' when it comes to sexuality, involved many individuals in dealing with that issue and new reflexivity about health issues emerged, thus shifting the relationship between medicine and society. The health problems became individualized. This presence of disease finally forced, especially after HIV/AIDS crisis, the wealthy countries to start to deal with this issues and to find a way of controlling the spread of

epidemics, as well as of managing the progress of virus (Weeks 2007, 14, 101–102). However, when looked globally, the impacts of HIV/AIDS are still terrifying, thus by the end of 2005 there was over 40 million reported cases of infection, 25 million died, and there were reported cases of 14 000 new infections every day, followed with 8000 deaths (Weeks 2007, 212). Also, the spread and treatment of HIV/AIDS was not distributed equally on global level and is primarily controlled inside wealthy nations while in rise among poor ones, thus showing the intertwined of sexuality in nexus of poverty, fear and prejudices (Weeks 2007, 14). However, despite all this, HIV/AIDS crisis became recognized as global phenomena seeking the global answers and agenda (Weeks 2007, 221). It became indeed the cosmopolitan political issue.

– *the rise of fundamentalisms* (Weeks 2007, 14,97) and reality of culture wars, which may be seen as a responses to the 'revolutions', on emerging 'spectre of diversity' and uncertainty followed by dissolution of traditional authorities and traditional form of family. This opponents of 'revolutions' see in them deformation of late modern societies (Weeks 2007, 14) and interpret them as symbol of wider breakdown in social order (Weeks 2007, 93). Thus, to unprecedented degree the question how we live with existing diversity became a key issue about the ways how we live today and causes enormous tensions. Diversity can, and it does causes the problems, and it shows that recognizing the fact of diversity is not the same as valuing the diversity as good in itself, nor that emergent diversity translate straightforwardly into an easy optimism but more into 'ambivalences, tensions and contradictions' that are real and often passionately felt (Weeks 2007, 123). It is not then surprising that at the heart of these anxieties are sexuality, gender and the body (Weeks 2007, 14) and that opponents of 'sexual revolutions' put them today at the heart of their political discourses, strongly opposing homosexuality, abortion, same-sex partnerships, sexual education etc. In fact, many of the sexual issues which are becoming politicized today are so also due to the interventions of fundamentalists, which are considerably active in political arena and around issues of sexuality and intimacy. In these debates fundamentalists often share common assumption or the belief that there is a 'true' to sexuality, true which they have key to, key often representing the mostly traditional patterns. But in defending 'tradition' they do not simply repeating in, but also actively 're-inventing' it with new meanings. The images of past are often putted out of the context and often representing the more romanticized pictures, and descriptions, of the past intimate and sexual conducts. What is important to note here is that fundamentalisms are not just cultural throwbacks, but active and vocal shapers of public debates, often repeating old stories about sexuality.

3.3.5 Legacy of transition: informalization of social relationships, democratization of everyday life and new sexual individualism

As listed in the last two sections, we can see that the great transition was consisting of unfinished revolutions, reactions on them and of some new challenges occurring during it. Thus, the impacts of the great transition are not one-dimensional, simple or either good or bad, but they are more-dimensional, complex and contradictory. However, despite all this ambivalence surrounding them, these 'revolutions', combined with 'contra-reactions', did create new challenging contexts for sexuality and intimacy and provoked new ways of its regulation. What was somehow the characteristic of this new responses and new ways of regulation of sexuality was the fact that there was no positive endorsement of choice and changes, no positive embracing of pluralism nor full acceptance of sexual alternatives. Rather, at the same time when the new gains were given there was no surrender to libertarianism, but in fact each legislation maintained the element of control. What this shows is the fact that an effort was being made to balance between consent and control, between the private decisions and public regulation. Despite the fact of active conservative opponents trying to stop 'the spread of homosexuality' there was no attempt to make it illegal again, but more to limit and counteract its effects. Their campaigns were more aimed on moral revival, petitions and letter-writing than on the censorship of homosexuality. The impacts of these backlashes were generally limited, in many respects due to the fact that now, after unleashed revolutions and reactions, the context was dramatically changed and different (Weeks 2007, 89–94). From new realities arose new issues, namely those how to legally regulate emergent and evident sexual and intimate diversity, where to put the limit to that freedom, how to balance between 'conflicting values' of various groups concerned with sexuality and intimacy, and how to manage risk inherent to sexuality and intimacy in general. In each case, sexuality and intimacy, with all its complexities and contradictions, became central issue in late modern society. For Weeks there is no doubt that the aftermath of this transition is that today we live in a different world where attitudes have fundamentally changed (Weeks 2007, 3). For him, despite all 'unfinished revolutions', contradictions and inequalities still existing today, the great transition had brought profound changes - “in individual attitudes, in family life, in sexual behavior, in sexual identities, in moral values, in cultural norms and in social policy” (Weeks 2007, 105).

For Weeks, all these shifts have led to an effective demise of the traditional model of sexuality and intimacy (2007, 63). He wanted to connect these shifts to wider social processes which

happened in the same period and which, according to him, influenced these shifts. Thus, following Cas Wouters (1998, 2004), he claimed that gradually from the 1940ies and increasingly after the 1960ies people in the West were witnessing the process of an informalization of social relationships (Weeks 2007, 64–65) or of a 'controlled decontrolling of emotion management', in which social conduct becomes increasingly less authoritarian and more differentiated and varied for the majority of people, with increasing variety of behavioral and emotional patterns of behavior becoming socially acceptable (Weeks 2007, 65). As an effect of this “social relations generally are less hierarchical in the twenty-first century, and intimate relations in particular are less informal, more democratic” (Weeks 2007, 64). For many millions of people, despite inequalities, new spaces of possibility have emerged, followed by new aspirations and new forms of eroticism and intimacy. What is important here is to note that these new forms are not some utopian ideal but they have become (already) living realities (Weeks 2007, 64, 109).

Further, there is no doubt that “over a couple of generations, for good or ill, there has been an extraordinary democratization of everyday life” (Weeks 2007, 64) especially in regards to the shifts between generations and between genders. This was for Weeks a:

long-drawn-out process, involving many local battles as well as strategic shifts in the relationship between men and women, the heterosexual order and homosexuality, the state and individuals. At the heart of the process is the undermining of traditional sources of authority in order to achieve an ever growing sense of control over one’s own life, of self-determination. This in turn involves resolving the complex relationships between individual autonomy, agency and personal and collective identities (Weeks 2007, 72)

Following this, a new emphasis on the importance of individual autonomy in relation to all matters concerning intimacy and sexuality began to emerge in everyday life. What is here at stake is the importance of a 'new individualism' which emerged in the aftermath of a restless period of 'great transition' and structural reconfiguration of society towards 'institutionalized individualism'. Again, for Weeks, this is not individualism as an abstract process, or as a neoliberal ideology, but individualism “as a key force in individual lives, a social process that imposes its imperatives on individuals, but within which individuals can fashion their lives, can choose” (Weeks 2007, 126–127). This is a crucial achievement because, compared to earlier periods, individuals now have unprecedented freedom to choose their identities and lifestyles, and this for Weeks can only be seen as a positive move towards a more humane and tolerant culture (Weeks 2007, 127). This individualism, like the contemporary self, is shaped in a continuously sexualizing culture where erotic itself becomes the meaning for constructing the sense of the self and is in many ways responding to the question who we are. Further, as with the self, also the meanings of what

constitutes erotic and intimacy are in a constant flux. This fact is also expressed through metaphors often used when we write today about sexuality – of invention, construction, embodiment, narratives, script, performativity and so on (Weeks 2007, 124–126). Thus, for Weeks many of the new sexual lifestyles, and especially those of gays and lesbians, could be seen as an example of a 'reflexive project of the self' in which we all write and rewrite our narratives under freer, but complex, circumstances (Weeks 2007, 74–85). In late modernity sexual lifestyle choices became central to the individual's constitution of self-identity and daily activity, where individuals are forced to negotiate and choose their sexual lifestyles. In that sense we all have sexual lifestyles and it is important to think in term of sexualities rather than a single sexuality.

Today the world has lost its unifying myths, the grand story which linked gender, sexuality and family into a more or less coherent unity, sanctified by church, state and community values. In short, evoking both Bauman (2000, 2003) and Giddens (1991, 1992) the society has lost its unifying glue, and instead we live in a plural world, a world of irreducible diversity and multiple sources of authority (Weeks 2007, 109). Today the world is, how Weeks puts it, hunted by the spectre of difference and diversity (Weeks 2007, 122). Same as the world, so did sexuality and intimacy today become also diversified and multiple. This diversity manifests itself through three main dimensions – the diversity of sexual lifestyles, the diversity according to religion, race and ethnicity and the diversity of life course (Weeks 2007, 110–123). Thus, while for example older generations tends to see sexuality more 'functional', younger generations are having more pragmatical relation to it, seeking pleasure in it and having less expectations out of it. Finally, the great transition introduced diversity also into adulthood itself, leaving it open to separations and new beginnings, showing that even the older generations are not immune to the influences of these shifts of the 'great transition' of late modernity (Weeks 207, 110–123).

When it comes to making general conclusions about the gains and losses of the 'great transition' Weeks suggests that things are still not clear and that we are still living in a “world of transition, in the midst of a long, convoluted, messy, unfinished but profound revolution” (Weeks 2007, 3). Relying on Plummer (1995) Weeks observes this moment as messy and contradictory:

Widening disparities between rich and poor may be set against higher standards of living for most, if not all; social fragmentation may be read as a 'pluralization' of life chances; impersonality and loss of community may be set against a new sense of belonging in new sexual worlds; narcissism and selfishness must be measured against a proliferation of new individual freedoms; McDonaldization and standardization have to be seen against a proliferation of choices in the democracy of the marketplace; dumbing down is matched by a sophisticated self-awareness, an ironic reflexivity; moral decline may be countered by a definite moral effervescence and global citizenship; entrenched hierarchies of exclusion are met with the language of inclusion and belonging, and a deepening democratization of everyday life;

uncertainty and risk are set against the possibilities of a new global order and global human rights (Weeks 2007, 109)

For Weeks however, despite all of this messiness, contradictions and inequalities, compared to the silence about power relationships and oppressions around sexuality and intimacy half a century ago “today’s babel signals a vital, and necessary change” (Weeks 2007, 223). Further for him, when it comes to sexuality and intimacy the contemporary historic moment is positive, the changes until now where beneficial for a majority and at the end the world, in that respect, have changed to the better. Today it is increasingly possible to choose how we want to live, who we love and want to be with and how we want to live our intimacy and sexuality. What has also changed is the fact that the world we are making today is an inevitably profoundly diversified world, a world where people do not see everything in the same way, nor are they trying to live in the same way. It is also a world filled with risks and uncertainties, but it is not less value-laden. Maybe it is uncertainty itself that makes us to re-evaluate our lives, to find new resources and values, as well as moral communities through which we can build new ways of living (Weeks 2007, 108).

Despite old norms and values being reproduced, we can also witness the emergence of new norms which are reordering the meanings of commitments, of partners, significant others and dependants. We can witness the relations that are close to Giddens's concept of 'disclosing intimacy' or deploying commitments that are more negotiated, equal and committing themselves by different ways of reciprocity and care (Weeks 2007, 170–171). This is especially the case in non-heterosexual relationships (Weeks 2007, 176), or to say among gays and lesbians. Further, for Weeks, despite the fact that many hierarchical relations didn't disappear with late modernity and despite their persistence, the overall ethos of relationships are based on autonomy and choice unconstrained by external rules (Weeks et al. 2001, Weeks 2007, 187). In short, relationships are, as also late modern theorists concluded, the responsibilities and products of our own actions, and this all in all opens up numerous possibilities for more equal and democratic relationships.

This is why he, in a final stance, takes sides with Giddens and other reflexive late modern theorists and he does so for two particular and simple reasons – because we, on one side, became a more tolerant culture towards diversity and because we can, on the other side, witness to new quality of relationships, to the new forms of reciprocity and care that challenge the pessimists (Weeks 2007, 132).

3.4 Conclusion

As it becomes obvious from the last two chapters Plummer and Weeks share a lot of similarities with theorists of late modernity and they explicitly acknowledge and accept many of their arguments. Concretely, they seem to accept reflexive versions of late modernity, such as those expressed by Giddens, Beck and others. They agree that in late modernity tradition and traditional relationship are beginning to lose their power over the individual and that everyday life gets de-traditionalized. They also seem to accept that as an effect of this we are faced with individualization and diversification of life and its paths, as well with multiplication of authorities. For them also, many of these changes were reflected on sexuality. Thus, in agreement with Giddens' claims, both Plummer and Weeks seem to recognize and acknowledge individualization as one of the main characteristics of late modern sexuality. This reflexivity is also for them an effect of living in a context where we can choose among various possibilities how to live our sexual (and other) lifestyles. As it can be seen, also when it comes to sexuality, they praise Giddens' contribution more. In fact Weeks is at the end quite critical of Bauman and it seems that he sees Bauman's work as offering a pessimist variant ('losing of human bounds') of a 'declinist' version of sexuality (synoptical society which regulates through seduction of desire), which suffer from many problems.

In my opinion, Plummer and Weeks did not only confirm late modern arguments but they made their own contribution to them. Thus, Plummer's argument about sexual stories as symbolic interactions and the role of therapeutic/self-help literature in creating participative and new stories can go well with Giddens' usage of such literature as one of his primary resources in discussing the transformation of intimacy. Plummer, by discussing the influence of communication and media, consumerism etc. possibly offers an explanation how these stories developed, proliferated and influenced individuals and social worlds. For example, his claim how the development of media and cultural intermediaries caused proliferation of sexual stories in everyday life and blurring of boundaries between producers, coaches and audiences may go well with Giddens' arguments about globalizing and localizing tendencies of late modernity and about place and space becoming antonyms. It is not hard to imagine that today we are consuming and copying, symbolically interacting, with sexual stories that emerge all over world, that appear faraway from our community but are still influencing it.

When it comes to Weeks it seems to me that he also contributed to reflexive theories about the transformation of intimacy. By focusing on the impacts of human agency on everyday life on example of coming out of gays and lesbians, Weeks deepened the Giddens' arguments about how dealing with personal and intimate issues helped many individuals in reshaping their social environments. By widening the list of unfinished revolutions he helped to deepen the general argument about transformation of intimacy. Finally for Weeks one of the main effects of this great

sexual transition is exactly this democratization in everyday life and principal individualism when it comes to personal and private concerns. Also, Weeks deepened Giddens' arguments about women, gays and lesbians being predecessors and main practitioners of the reflexive project of the self and pure relationships.

However, such similarities can sometimes shadow some differences which exist between Plummer and Weeks and late modern authors. For example both Plummer and Weeks are more cautious of giving any easy judgment about the direction we are moving to when it comes to sexuality and intimacy. For sure they outline the positive development and praise positive historic moments, but they are not predicting a development of sexuality and intimacy in neither positive nor negative direction. Thus, they also do not outline and draw tendencies which are supposedly predominating today when we speak about sexuality. Much more than understanding sexuality in dominant tendencies (of reflexivity or consumerism) Plummer and Weeks speak about sexuality as multiplicity and diversity, as plurality, containing many diverse and contradictory tendencies and causing (regulating itself through) conflicts and tensions.

In that sense it seems to me that neither Plummer nor Weeks claim that individualization or pure relations are a main mechanism in sexuality and intimacy today. Indeed, Plummer expressed worries if more individual and new sexual stories are limited to intellectual elite. Weeks asked also if positive effects of great transition are geographically limited in urban places and the Western world. In fact, even when speaking about individualization in sexuality Weeks, following Ducana and Smith, claims that we are witnessing less patterns of individualization than patterns of detraditionalized inherited models of sexuality (Weeks 2007, 170). When praising pure relationships Weeks applies them exclusively to the women's movement and gays and lesbians and not to the population in general. Indeed the language of pure relationships becomes more silent when discussing changes in heterosexual relationships, which again confirms Weeks's claim that more emancipate sexual patterns remained primarily lived on margins of sexuality. For many people compassion remain much more important than building of trust in intimate relationships, and this relations themselves are often a mixture of pure and traditional elements in relationships (Weeks 2007, 139, 182). It seems thus that Weeks at the end recognizes Giddens' arguments in general more than his particular arguments about pure relationship and confluent love.

Finally, Plummer and Weeks focus much more on the questions of power, differences and inequalities in late modern sexuality. With this they reflected on the question which remain heavily non-existent in both Giddens' and Bauman's arguments. Thus for example one cannot hear a lot about gender, class and race in late modernity. This general non-existence of questions of power

and difference in the discourse of late modernity seems important to me, and it will be the theme of discussion in my next section.

4 'NOT ALL THAT WAS SOLID HAS MELTED INTO THE AIR': CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THESE ABOUT INDIVIDUALITY AND INTIMACY IN LATE MODERNITY

4.1 Introduction: spectres of late modernity

In his general evaluation of reflexive late modern theories Brian Heaphy (2007) pointed out on some of their values. He claims that the value of these theories, especially when compared with postmodernist interpretations, lays in the fact that they tried to reconstruct (modernist) sociology into a sociology of reflexivity and to offer new understandings of modernity as an advancing and continuous force. Thus, they refuted the arguments that modernity is an exhausted and finished project and that the social and the self are broken up, fragmented and bound to power-discourse. They refuted arguments that radical difference and power should be at the centre of analysis.

Instead, Heaphy continues, late modern authors focused on analyzing changes on an institutional level and their relationships to developments in personal life. They claimed that social relationships today cannot be grasped adequately by understanding them solely as effects of power, radical difference and reproduction of the system, but that they are also filled with possibilities, choices and places for intervention of human agency. This intervention of human agency in everyday life is a visible process and is also influencing structural changes, together with other dynamisms of late modernity. Finally, in Heaphy's opinion, by putting aside radical difference and power, sociology of reflexivity constructed a powerful narrative coherence which focused on a renewal of modernist tendencies and pointed out some new universalities and commonalities in human agency. Similar to postmodernist interpretations they noted that the dynamism of modernity brings about uncertainty and contingency into human affairs and that they are here to stay, but in contrast to them, late modern authors pointed out that uncertainty and contingency are making individuals more reflexive. In this sense they indeed offered a view that fits better with realities than postmodernist interpretations, says Heaphy.

However, praising the values of sociology of reflexivity did not go without serious criticisms from his side. In fact, for Heaphy, exactly to the extent to which these theories putted aside questions of difference and power in order to keep the narrative's coherence, they failed to be exactly that – reflexive. He expresses it like this:

While reconstructivist arguments about modernity talk about social and personal reflexivity, they are not reflexive in the sense of critical reflection on the dynamics of difference and power

involved in the production of the sociological narrative. They do not explicitly explore the limits of the analysis in terms of whose realities are represented or made invisible and what interests of power are promoted (explicitly and inadvertently). They do not promote reflexive sociology because they seek, above all, theoretical and narrative coherence. They achieve this by putting aside questions of difference and power. They put forward coherent narratives of reflexive modernity and social change, but not in a reflexive way (Heaphy 2007, 178)

Similar objections concerning the ignorance towards questions of power and difference, especially when it comes to Giddens, came from many other authors (Gimezez 1992; Jamieson 2005; Mulinari and Sandell 2009; Atkinson 2007a, 2010a, 2010b). This criticism is not surprising since one does not need to go all the way to postmodernist claims but it still can suggest that difference and power should be central to sociology and also to the sociology of self and identity. Various theoretical trends – as for example Bourdieusian analysis, feminist analysis and even to some sense Bauman himself – suggested this. For Heaphy this means exploring the limits of such narratives in terms of arguments about class, gender, sexuality, 'race', ethnicity etc. and their significance for the reproduction of inequalities (Heaphy 2007, 175). In that sense, even Plummer and Weeks pointed out on the importance of keeping power and difference in the focus when analyzing late modern sexualities. Thus, Weeks, pointed out on the difference of power as one of the troublesome diversities still existing today (Weeks 2007, 123) and influencing us differently. Recently, Plummer (2008) also noticed that despite all the talks about intersectionality in sexuality studies 'we really do not hear much about class these days' (according to McDermott 2011, 65).

This criticism seems to me serious and justifiable and it was also motivation for writing my own text. Thus, in my final part I will address some of these criticisms of late modern theories. I will try to show how, by keeping difference and power central to their concerns, these critiques offered alternative interpretations of contemporary social formation and provided a critique of some of the important arguments of late modern theorists. I will do this by focusing especially on class, gender and sexuality or on capitalism, patriarchy and heterosexism. Following Lynn Jamieson (2005) in her gender critique of late modernity, I also consider that discussions about these systems or mechanisms are crucial because, in many respect, they were one of the corner stones of (solid) modernity and thus it seems important to discuss their transformation, their role in late modernity and its processes and to, finally, explicitly explore the limits of late modern theories in the realm of these questions.

4.2 Class and gender in the discourse of late modernity

4.2. 1 Reflexive self versus class

Indeed there is an interesting invisibility existing in late modern discourse when it comes to vectors of powers such as class and gender. Let us take for example Giddens, as Willi Atkinson (2007a, 2010a, 2010b) did, who still remains rather ambivalent towards these issues. He principally did not dismiss class and he in fact claimed that capitalism still today “represents one of the prime driving forces behind modern institutions as whole” (Giddens 1991, 197). Indeed, commodification, capitalist production and distribution are core elements of late modernity (Giddens 1991, 5). He also warns that commodification, primarily through standardization, and other processes of capitalism may threaten the reflexive project of the self and the project itself can become heavily commodified. He goes even further and agrees with the claims that the poor may be completely excluded from the possibilities of making lifestyle choices and may not have easy access to the means of self-actualization necessary to the project of the self (Giddens 1991, 5–6). Capitalism and the market, Giddens does not forget, excludes many.

But then again, for Giddens, the market criteria – the main criteria of distribution in late modernity – also generates a variety of available choices in the distribution of goods and means necessary for self-actualization (Giddens 1991, 198–200). In another words, capitalism gives numerous possibilities for self-actualization and for living various lifestyles. Thus, it is not surprising that on other places and especially in his recent works about reflexive projects of the self Giddens adopts a language in which it often seems that class and gender in fact do not matter in individual life paths and that they are not decisive in individual decision making and acting. This is especially the case in some claims he makes about people's personal relationships as becoming 'pure', not regulated and affected by external criteria and as free floating. In fact in these moments class indeed becomes invisible. Thus, Atkinson (2007a) claimed that notions of reflexivity of the self, of a consciousness individual who reflects, monitors and rationally and free willingly chooses his/her actions and life paths may be seen as opposition and negation of class analysis. For Giddens at the end, and this is what makes it specific, it is the reflexivity of the self and individualization, and not class or tradition, that marks the *modus operandi* of late modernity. It is exactly because of this that Giddens praises lifestyles and life-politics and replaces with them old emancipatory politics which were more sustainable for group identities, but not for post-traditional society. In short, today the reflexive project of the self is more or less universal, cuts all layers of society and is characterized by a bigger control over the individual's life as well as by autonomy of action

(Giddens 1994, according to Atkinson 2007a, 542). In an analytical sense, of having it in the focus and measuring the limits of his analysis in relations to it, class remains absent from Giddens' new works. Therefore, it is not surprising that Atkinson notices that through his concept of the reflexive project of the self Giddens actually confirms himself as an adversary of class analysis (Atkinson 2007a).

4.2.2 *From workers to flawed consumers*

If I again introduce Bauman into this discussion it is obvious that he differs a lot in this respect from reflexive authors like Giddens. As mentioned, he explicitly criticizes reflexivity thesis and his approach definitely has power and difference in the focus, and as Atkinson (2008, 7) noted, issues of stratification, polarisation and inequality have always been central to his writings. This could be already seen through his dichotomy between individuality *de jure* and *de facto* texturing liquid modernity. On some places Bauman even notices that “class and gender hung heavily over the range of choices” (Bauman 2001, 145) and even praises their role in challenging the 'place in divine chain of beings'. However, I could argue, his analysis on the other side is not in an easy relationship with both class or gender analysis because it seems that Bauman on other places suggests that in liquid modernity individual is emancipated from constrains and consequently from class and gender categories (Bauman and Tester 2001; Bauman in Gane 2004, according to Atkinson 2008, 9). It seems like when people stop to identify with those categories they seem to, in Bauman's understanding, begin losing influence on people's life. However, this does not mean an end of exclusion, but we in fact witness to the new forms of stratification and constrains emerging in liquid modernity.

Bauman continues that in liquid modernity, in the society of consumers, importance of class has radically changed and became only 'secondary and inferior' (Bauman 2005, 31) to the consumer, as new marker of inclusion and exclusion into society. He bases his arguments on analyzing the development of work ethic and its regulatory role in society in Western societies. He noticed that in solid modernity, in the society of producers, the work ethic was a main regulator of inclusion and exclusion into society. Work was not only the source of living but also the source of life meaning, of respectability and even identity, carrying with itself, to express in Bourdieu's way, various amounts of symbolic capital and obligations to justify it. How Bauman often repeated in his work, the society of producers integrated its members primarily as producers and workers, regulating itself through this work ethic. In that sense work ethics and its integrative regulatory impacts reached well beyond factory lines. Solid modernity was also based on the principle of

reaching 'full employment' as one of its main tasks and here unemployment was identified as problem that needed to be combated in order to reach these prescribed tasks. Unemployed were seen as a 'reserve army of labor', unemployment itself as temporary condition, a phase, a state in-between permanent employment (Bauman 2005, 36). Being unemployed was not only an economic disadvantage but also a social stigma, the state which needed to be over passed.

In consumer society, in society which integrates us primarily as consumers, all that has changed. In consumer society capitalist tendency to “price labor out of work” (Bauman 2005, 54) – to devalue labor– seems to reach its highest point: “The present-day corporations do not need more workers to increase their profits, and if they *do* need more workers they can easily find them elsewhere and on better terms than those attainable locally, even if this leads to the further impoverishment of the local poor” (Bauman 2005, 64).

The capital for Bauman – due to the geographical replacement and technological advancement – does not need labor and therefore also not work ethics as its main regulator. Same as the workplaces so does work ethics also eroding in liquid modernity. While in liquid modernity workplace is still a source of living, it ceased to be a source of life meaning (Bauman 2005, 66) and work gradually moved away from its central position in individual motives, identity, or in social integration and systemic reproduction. As an effect work ethic also lost its regulatory principle (Bauman 2005, 37). Thus in such a society, 'where mass production does not require a mass labor' (Bauman 2005, 2), a new ethic needed to be found, and it was found in consumer markets, consumerism as a solely available strategy and finally in consumer aesthetics (Bauman 2005, 31). As argued earlier in the chapter about Bauman, there were numerous reasons why consumerism became a better regulatory mechanism than work ethic and panoptical society.

The workplaces left on the West, and the transformations they passed under the imperative of the concept of economic growth where marked by flexibilization of labor, rolling contracts, fix-term appointments, incidental hire of labor, downsizing, restructuring etc. (Bauman 2005, 41) which as a last stance weakened the labor position and accelerated new types of exclusions and social divisions. On some places (in Gane 2004, according to Atkinson 2008, 13) it seems that Bauman even argues that due to the intensified insecurity and flexibilization of labor all social classes are affected and even the privileged positions are not bound to last and are losing their ground under this process. On other places he also praises some aspects of individualization and, how he ironically says, 'humanized' new jobs for their capacity to bring satisfaction (Bauman 2005, 33).

However, for Bauman there is something more fundamental happening with 'pricing labor

out of work' and domination of consumerist aesthetics in liquid modernity. The earlier social divisions, of workers and capitalists especially, began to be recast into new divisions between real and flawed consumers. The point of inclusion or exclusion became whether we can consume or not and whether we have money to consume or not. Flawed consumers in this case are losers, seen as unuseful for consumption and therefore without social function (Bauman, 2005, 2), seen at the end as a problem which needs to be resolved. It seems that this exclusion through consumption is so fundamental that it even replaces the principle of capitalist reproduction (M-C-M') and accumulation of wealth to its process. Or how Bauman puts it:

Wealth and income do count, of course; without them, choice is limited or altogether denied. But the role of wealth and income as *capital* – that is, money which serves first and foremost to turn out more money – recedes to a second and inferior place if it does not disappear from view (and from the pool of motivations) altogether. The prime significance of wealth and income is in the stretching of the range of consumer choice... (Bauman 2005, 31)

In another words, to be rich today doesn't any more mean to accumulate wealth but to consume. The principle of money making more money through the process of production seems to be replaced with the principle of money being a means of consumption, and consumerism a new field of showing influence and wealth.

When the structural position of labor is weakened and it becomes secondary to the process of reproduction there are new social divisions, some of them not connected with labor, emerging. After naming good standing symbol manipulators and educated, as examples of some of new classes, Bauman pointed also on service and 'routine laborers' as new workers of contemporary casually and occasionally employed labor (employed for performing easy, routinised and easy replaceable tasks). These are types of workers which don't identify with their jobs and know that they are temporary so they keep it only as long as it brings what they want from it at this moment. However, one effect of this is also the structural weakness of such labor and the impotence for organization (Bauman 2005, 52, 64–65). There are finally those people who are 'underclass' and redundant. They are in fact new types of unemployed, such types of unemployed people to who the very same name became superfluous. This is because, in contrast to the modernist times of Welfare State and full employment, today there is no need for labor and therefore employment. In that sense present day redundant labor faces a new reality that it 'may never become a commodity again as due to absence of demand' (Bauman 2005, 52). In contrast to the panopticon society of producers, regulating itself through work ethics, redundant people do hold no promise on work and work ethics and all in all to have work becomes less of an option, if not impossible. What is even more indicative in liquid modernity is the fact that this permanent state of unemployment, this lack of

work as means of acquiring living, is ceasing to be defined as a political problem. On the contrary, in liquid modernity it seems that the redundant and unemployed are 'nobody's business', but are in fact personal problems, mistakes and worries. Therefore, in the seductive consumerist society the unemployed and redundant are simply superfluous, supernumerary, unneeded and cased to be a reserve army of labor (Bauman 2005, 66–67,69, 112). In that sense they are new. There is evidence that the production of redundancy and 'human waste', how Bauman also names it, is a tendency that will continue also in the future (Bauman 2005, 88) and turn out into a big population problem. This is a new superfluous class which does not know what to do with itself and lacks of any ideas about its future. However, old class concerns around labor – identity, meaning and identification – are not any more concerns of redundant *homo consumens*.

As it could be noticed Bauman's class analysis in a sense casts wage labor out of analysis, and indeed some of the questions – as moving of labor to geographically distant places, women and their role in general division of labor – remain rarely mentioned and generally non-thematized. Atkinson (2008, 10) also noticed that it is not exactly clear who constitutes the minority and who the majority in liquid modernity and he in fact notices that the polarization line varies differently across Bauman's writings. Finally he thinks that even Marx was not so simplistic, and was more faithful to the class complexities within his class analysis, in a way that Bauman is clearly not in his new divisions between consumers. This reductionism is also visible in reducing class on largely subjective processes of identification and construction of identity as if they are only, or the most important, measurements of whether or not someone is part of class (Atkinson 2008, 12).

4.2.3 Dislocation of gender

Further, when it comes to the analysis of gender and patriarchy Bauman and Giddens seem again to make them invisible and absent as markers and variables, although they are mentioned. Giddens, despite praising women and gay and lesbian movements and seeing them as the pioneers of the new relationships he is describing trough his books, has little to say about gender in general. While he on some places for example claims that patriarchy can still influence the pureness of relationships, he is generally arguing that individuality works against patriarchy and dramatically influences man and women. However, it may be noticed, we still hardly hear anything more concretely about how exactly late modernity influenced and undermined these relations, at least in the sense through which these questions have been understood inside more feminist analyses. This silence remains despite the fact that, as Jamieson (2005, 6) claimed, the Euro-North American societies where historically marked by a systemic dominance of men over women that rendered the

material reality through different access to property, income, wealth, education, business and pleasure and coincided in numerous stereotypes about men and women – such as those of men as independent and less emotional beings (Jamieson 2005, 6). Consequently this led also to different responsibilities in the division of labor.

Giddens and Bauman have hardly anything to say about how for example new sexual and intimate relationships influenced work in the reproductive sphere in general, and housework, child-rearing and care in particular – tasks which were usually, and in modernity for sure, gendered. Further it seems that partners, in their vision of intimate and personal relationships, only love each other and therefore we do not hear almost anything about children, cooking and cleaning, tidying up after other tasks, as Jamieson (1999) complained. In their theories it seems to me, it is presupposed that by women entering the labor market and by more people stopping to identify with traditional gender binaries patriarchy and gender division of labor began to crumble under the influence of individualization, democratization and negotiations. Almost by pure will and decision of two parties involved, patriarchy is gone. However, as I pointed, when it comes to gender somehow classical questions remain unanswered. In that sense it is not surprising that Mulinari and Sandell (2009) complain that theories of late modernity dislocate gender from their analysis, because they dislocate domestic labor, childcare, and reproductive work in general from their analysis.

However, this invisibility is maybe not so surprising and it has to do with what Heaphy was claiming, that in order to have a coherent narrative about new possibilities, choices and decisions these issues somehow had to be ignored. The marginalization of class and gender can also be evidenced in generalization and a universal language in which their claims about ‘how the individual is living and acting today’ are framed. Such universal language blurs the borders between social divisions, such gender and class. The general notion of ‘individual’ subsumes all these questions, life politics subsumes the (old and material) emancipatory concerns and also ignores them. Thus all in all, relationships between class (inequality), individualization and sexuality, which could possibly open up new questions and maybe even change the interpretation of the nature of late modernity, remain non-thematized.

4.3 Making the spectres into variables: re-articulating class and gender analysis

However, in difference to both approaches, there are also a number of theoretical tendencies that kept the question of power and difference in their focus, but also continued to ‘locate’ class and gender in their analysis of contemporary society. It seems to me that they kept them in focus because of two particular reasons. Epistemologically, as noted by Mulinari and Sandell (2009, 494),

although it is not hard to agree with the descriptive level of many arguments offered by late modern authors, it still can be argued that the formativity of the social, or the social in its formativity, is always marked by various (hierarchical) social divisions which position us in various locations that are beyond our control and are influencing our identities, opportunities, possibilities, capitals, life chances and lifestyles. It is also reasonable to presuppose that because of this we are also experiencing social reality in different ways. These divisions are always woven into social and they form it in many important aspects and therefore it is important to keep them in the centre of analysis. Otherwise, as Heaphy (2007, 175–176) argued, there is a risk of theorizing and exploring just some experiences and self identities while making the others invisible.

On the other side, while reading the works of Giddens and Bauman (and other late modern authors) one can also get the feeling that in interpreting these processes they somehow reduce the frames of class belonging and class analysis (Atkinson 2010a, 28–29) and scope of gender division of labor. Indeed, belonging to class often seemed reduced to images of the mass industrial phase of capitalism, to manual (male) workers or how Bauman put it – to the society of producers. By this definition, only employed mass industry workers are seen as a 'class in its real', while all others are seen as something else, often opposed to the first. In some cases class belonging is even reduced to identifying it with having a job, with work ethic and to traditional working class cultures and institutions (Atkinson 2008, 12). In that sense the employed worker and the unemployed women, the productive worker and the liquid modern worker, the wage laborer and the redundant and underclass, the intellectual worker and the construction worker, the worker and the peasant etc. are often posed one against each other and seen as different 'classes'.

However, there are other approaches which do not seem so reductive in their definition of class belonging and which managed to articulate and actualize class and gender analysis more in terms of social relations, social practices, social experiences or habitus rather than as an (only) statistical, static and economist category, or even simply as 'one of the identities'. Some of the approaches which are working inside of such frames, whose arguments I want to represent here, are (neo)bourdieusian reflexive sociology (Heaphy 2007; Atkinson 2010a; McDermott 2011) and Marxist-Feminist analysis (Hennessy 2000; Federici 2004, 2012; Weeks 2011) combined with some other feminist contributions (Jamieson 2005; Evans 2003 and Hochschild 2003, according to Heaphy 2007).

(Neo)bourdieusian analysis re-articulated class through centering on Bourdieu's concepts of social fields and habitus but also on the issues of resources to various capitals that circulate among these social fields and habituses (Heaphy 2007, 179). Marxist-Feminists re-articulated class analysis by introducing (gender) division of labor into focus and analysing how it is connected with the

capitalist mode of production. In doing so they spread both the definition of class belonging and of (necessary) work for reproduction of society and capitalist mode of production and showed how devaluated, low paid or unpaid work was historically mainly done by women. I choose these two approaches because they seem to adopt livelier class analysis, the division of labor (and capitals), and making it therefore more complex and inclusive. In a final stance re-articulated class and gender analysis seems to have a big potential to offer some alternative arguments to those of late modern authors.

4.3. 1 (Neo)bourdieusian re-articulation of class analysis

Many authors working under the influence of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and his reflexive sociology continue to emphasize the effects of power and difference, especially class, on the life in late modernity. In their arguments they oppose the concepts developed by late modern authors – especially to those of individuality and reflexivity – and praise the concepts of class, habitus, social fields, social place and capital(s). They find these Bourdieuan concepts useful because they consider that they can point on 'hidden structures' which influence our world views, understandings of the world and consequently our life-choices. In other words, how Heaphy (2007, 179) also expressed it, these concepts are not fully conscious, but they are in many respects un-reflexive and set a limit to the extent to which social action and interaction can be reflexively captured and managed. It is exactly this approach that differentiates reflexive sociology from sociology of reflexivity. Thus, authors working inside of Bourdieu's frame stayed sensitive to the ways how these structures work, which roles of the game they apply and how they are giving advantages to some groups but not to others (Heaphy 2007,179).

Habitus is for Bourdieu a set of durable dispositions and schemes of perceptions etched into individuals through their practical engagement in the world (Bourdieu, according to Atkinson 2010a, 37) in which various social fields and capitals exist and where they are not equally distributed. The power of habitus, as explained by Richard Jenkins (2006, 46) “derives from the thoughtlessness of habit and habituation rather than consciously learned rules and principles” and it is thus functioning beyond the level of consciousness and language (Bourdieu, according to Atkinson 2010, 37). Following this, our choices are almost always, although in variant degrees, influenced and intermediated by our habitus. Habitus, simply, ‘commands’ our options and choices. Thus, it could be claimed that individuals do make choices but they “do not choose principals of these choices” (Wacquant, 1989, according to Jenkins 2006, 47). This, however, doesn't mean that people reproduce habitus in a mechanistic way, but it does mean that habitus disposes actors to do

certain things and it provides a basis for the generation of practices (Jenkins 2006, 48). In that sense, how Atkinson suggests, choices and lifestyles are often (un-reflexively) habitual especially if we understand them as a set of routines, habits and orientations which provide the frame of choices, as suggested by Giddens himself in the discussion about lifestyles. From such understanding of habitus it is hard to imagine a reflexive self which operates autonomously and beyond limits of habitus (Atkinson 2007a, 542–543). Habitus would seem to limit and ordinate our choices both materially but also unconsciously, making us to do exactly certain choices and 'swim better' in certain lifestyles. In that sense our relationships, choices and lifestyles are never purely free-floating or an expression of our autonomous decision.

Furthermore, people are positioned within various social positions or fields which can be described as a network or a configuration of objectively defined positions that are themselves a “structure of the distribution of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as their objective relations to other positions” (Bourdieu in Wacquant 1989, according to Jenkins 2006, 53). As noted, within fields and habitus various capitals circulate, but they are not equally distributed within them, making some fields overloaded with capital, while others lacking it. Those capitals can be differentiated as economic, social, cultural and symbolic capitals. I will not explain them in detail here because they are not relevant for the main discussion. What is relevant here is Bourdieu's notion that possession of certain capitals may open up or limit our possibilities in life, and therefore also our possibilities for life-choices and lifestyles. This is because, as Heaphy (2007, 179) expressed it, the positions which people occupy in social fields, and the advantages and disadvantages of that fields, are dependent on their access to interrelated economic, social and cultural capital. Finally, the notion of social space may be understood as something where various fields and capitals meet and intersect, as well as they include habitus which is embodied in individuals. All these aspects help us to understand the notion of class – or categories of people who occupy positions within fields with the presumption that as more as these positions – and individuals within them – are closer, the more people share similar habitus (Jenkins 2006, 54). This again seems as a quite livelier and analytically more useful notion of class than those represented in statistical data or in the reduction of it to the 'industrial worker'.

Thus for scholars working inside of this frame individualization of lifestyle choices, even when appearing, will not be universal for all and actors will not act in a similar way. In that sense individualization will be differentiated and will – as a structural process – affect individuals differently. In commenting on Beck and his notion of the symbolical decline of class, Atkinson makes this point more clear and I believe it can be applied to a majority of late modern theorists. He

considers that while for Beck the 'democratization' of car ownership and vacations of workers in foreign countries, or the ability of workers to be more integrated into consumerist culture, may represent signals of a symbolical disappearance of class (and this is only so if presupposed that the working class is defined by the domestic holidays and ownership of cars), for Bourdieusian perspective however, the differences and relations *within* these 'democratized' practices would signify and represent the continued existence of symbolically differentiated classes (Atkinson 2010, 69, his emphasis). Simply, it seems to me, for a Bourdieusian perspective the question who consumes original products, usually produced in more individualized ways, and who consumes their cheaper equivalents, usually produced by supermarket concerns (and their trademarks such as Spar, Clever, Mercator or Konzum), will not only be an expression of reflexive choice of individuals but also of class differences. Of course, crossing between original and copy trademarks is possible, sometimes even trendy, but the fact remains that some choose certain products out of necessity, while other indeed can choose.

However, class is for Atkinson more than an expression of symbols. Thus, he also, similar to Marxist analysis, introduced an analytical split between objective-structural and subjective-symbolic moments of class (Atkinson 2010, 65–73). Through this he aimed to point out the difference between the appearance or absence of explicit discourse or symbols of class in constructing and articulating life choices and ways in which class – difference of habitus, social space and capitals – does still determinate these choices (Atkinson 2010). He concludes:

Far from spelling the end of class per se, from a Bourdieusian perspective these processes [of individualization] can be conceived as simply a decline of the symbolic construction of 'class' as a frame for articulating the differences of social space and mobilizing agents with the rise of individualist political visions of the social world, particularly in the 1980s, and the increased prominence of alternate constructions of difference such as ethnicity, nationality or 'social exclusion'... [But] this must be separated from the relational definition of class of the analyst, where theoretical classes exist so long as differences – relative distances and directions – in social and symbolic space persist and manifest themselves in the sense of difference, no matter what the actual symbols homologous with each sector of social space may be or how they are discursively articulated. This applies to politics too: it is not so much the precise content of political debate that matters – whether materialist or post-materialist, for instance – or how it is articulated, but the correspondence of stances on political issues with positions in social space (Atkinson 2010, 68-69)

In connection to this Atkinson (2008, 7, 12) also reflected on Bauman's often used dichotomy between individual (and freedom) *de jure* and *de facto*, between people casted as autonomous and responsible and their actual social position which is far from that. For Atkinson, this dichotomy can be reinterpreted in class terms and seen as a perfectly plausible description of

decline of old ways of cutting up the social space in perception and emergence of new ones with certain social changes and changes in possessors of symbolic power. Thus *de jure* freedom could be understood as the widespread construction of social place as in principle composed of autonomous, atomized and free individuals, while *de jure* freedom could refer to the real degree of opportunities and possibilities and of freedom granted by one's social position in social space. Simply, if we do not speak about class, and do not represent it any more symbolically, this still does not mean that it does not exist and influence our life chances, lifestyles etc.

4.3.2 *Moving from markets into workplaces*

There is no doubt that in their own analysis many Marxist-Feminists would agree on the importance of keeping these subjective and objective moments of class in focus as useful. However, I introduce them here because of other reasons. Marxist-Feminists seem to me important because they introduced into the debate an *intersectionalist* perspective of class and gender as (often) inseparable from each other. In their analysis, as Silvia Federici (2012, 97) noted, to be a woman signified both (culturally constructed) gender, but also a certain type of work and position in the division of labor. These words are invoking something at the same time personal and structural and something intermediated by various wider factors. Thus in their analysis, by introducing women as gender and specific worker, Marxist-Feminists also blurred distinctions between economy and culture, public and private, work and non-work, political and personal etc. and offered some new readings of class re-compositions. Following many other feminists (Heaphy 2007, 176), Marxist Feminists also recognized that significant changes in gender relations are occurring but they contested the notion that gender equality has been achieved or that is at all easily achievable as presupposed in late modern discourse. As Marxist-Feminists they claimed also that in order to reach more gender equality one has to question and change also the capital-labor relation, a notion which is opposite from many late modern arguments which implicate that gender equality can be reached inside of capitalism and its mode of production.

Thus, for Kathi Weeks (2011) one of Marx's greatest insights into social theory (and analysis of capitalist society) was to move the focus “from market based exchange to wage-based production” (Weeks 2011, 6), from (proclaimed) free individuals of market to the domain of secret and private place of production, or in short – to move the focus away from citizens and individuals to workers and capitalists, from 'economy' to political economy of capital-labor. It is exactly that point of not beginning with the market but with the dynamics of labor and capital that differentiated Marx from the majority of social scholars of his time and it differentiates him, it seems, also from

late modern authors.

By shifting the view from the market to the capital-labor relation Marx discovered the whole system of (capitalist) exploitation and commodity exchange⁸, where the possessive relation to capital of only a small portion of the population is contrasted by the majority's dispossession of capital, and therefore their expectable lack of various other capitals and power, as well as a lack of the means for self actualization and self-reproduction. Thus the majority, in order to gain some money, needs to sell their labor power, skills or knowledges to capital in order to gain a wage. However, despite this contradiction, this story was represented as the "story of two free, self-interested individuals, each an owner of property and both equal under the law, who enter into exchange of equivalents" (Weeks 2011, 5). Equalized as citizens and individuals they exchange between each other, one labor power or knowledge and other wage. However, by moving to the workplace – to the location where this special commodity would be consumed (Weeks 2011, 5) – Marx exposed that this relation between labor and capital, between workers and capitalists, is not a relationship of free and self-determined individuals, but it is a specific system of exploitation and chains around workers, a domination of living labor (work) by the dead labor (capital). While through wage labor the majority of those representing labor gain an equivalent of money not a lot higher than keeping the (material and maybe cultural) reproduction of working individual alive, the minority of individuals representing capital exit this relations with profits (surplus value) and accumulation of their capital. The majority was getting out of this process with subsistence necessary for living (wage), the minority with profits.

8 As it will be become obvious, both the Marxist Feminists' and my own approach rely on Marx's *labor theory of value* which became widely opposed and for many inadequate, also among some contemporary Marxists working under the name 'wertkritik' (Moishe Postone, Robert Kurz etc.) and basing their analysis on Marx's arguments about commodity fetishism and commodity logic and its overwhelm influence on society. I personally value that critique and think that it nicely re-articulates, in contemporary terms, that side of Marx's analysis of capitalism. However, following Harry Cleaver (2000), I think that to stay on that level of analysis means to stay only on the level of a point of view of the capital and its impersonal relationships and structure. However, it is not only that we are speaking about real living actors with real experiences of exploitation or power but it is also that in order to understand capitalism better we need to include also its social and political aspects into analysis. Further, as it will become obvious in what follows, I think that the actuality of the *labor theory of value* is not outdated. As I will argue, as a social and political relation capital still needs labor, although it found it on distant places of cheap labor and despite technological advancement reducing a certain amount of need for it, most dramatically on the West. However, capital relation is based on the principle of living labor turning dead labor into the play and making profits. Even in theory, at the end somebody needs to produce and operate computers, until now. Also, by keeping the labor perspective in centre, Marxist-Feminists discovered new types of socially necessary labor and specific ways how women are exploited in capitalism. Finally, I have to note, capital-labor relation is for me important as an 'abstract domination' regulating the general economical and social reproduction, as a social relation and social organizing principle. This seems to me more important than the fact of whether or not everybody of us are workers, or have a job, whether we are blue or white collar etc. These points will be explained in more details when I further encounter Marxist-Feminists' and Bauman's arguments.

This is a basic relationship of capitalism, the basic point of how we are included in production and working process – of how we are positioned in the capitalist mode of production. This of course is not the only relationship in capitalism, nor are the workers and capitalists the only classes, but the capital-labor relation is basic to capitalism, where two represent two extreme (and constitutive) poles and tensions of capitalist society, both in the past and the present. In that sense some, as Branko Horvat (1982)⁹ for example, pointed out that it is not always recommendable to see the middle or managerial class as an autonomous third class. Indeed, these social layers can hold a big amount of power and they in fact do. They can also have distinctive lifestyles and maybe can even gain some capital by themselves and move over into higher layers of society. But still, as he noted, their dependence, function and position is still primarily tied to the capital-labor relation; to make capital more fruitful and work more subsumed into the process of profit making. Thus, it is not surprising that in times when tensions between capital and labor worsen, there is also a decline in middle class layers of society. This of course doesn't mean to question the objective existence of the middle class, or to reduce it to either of the other two classes, but it does mean to claim that as a class, the middle class is neither a necessary nor a fundamental class of capitalist society, whilst the other two are.

This relation of capital and labor thus is not a categorization and not even classification of people but it is more a metaphorical relationship, a basic principle of capitalist reproduction, which is nonetheless still real since it positions us into different groups in society and it influences our life chances and abilities. Marx called this capital-labor relation 'system of abstract domination'. He called it like this because it is a system in which, in contrast to previous modes of production, it is not force or threat of a force that set us to work, but it is rather a social system that ensures that working for capital is the only means for making our needs and wishes meet that set us to work (Kathi Weeks 2011, 7). Thus, considering the present – or we could say late modernity – Kathi Weeks (2011, 6) noted that waged work “remains today [also] the centre piece of late capitalist economic systems”. It remains also today the only means through which the majority acquires access to shelter, food and clothing, but it remains also the primary mechanism by which income is distributed, the basis by which status is allocated and by which most people gain access to healthcare and retirement (Weeks 2011, 6). These concerns will affect everybody – no matter if women or gays – who are dependent on wage labor as a means of survival.

9 At the moment I do not have this book with me and I'm writing according to my memory. Everyone who wants to check the details of his arguments should see: Horvat Branko (1982) *Political Economy of Socialism: Marxist Socialist Theory*, Martin Robertson & Co Ltd.

4.3.3 Moving from workplaces into households

However, Marxist-Feminists pointed out also on the limits of Marx's view of the exploitative nature of capitalism and developed the class analysis a step further (Weeks 2011, Federici 2004, 11-19; 2012, 91-111). They claimed that Marx's crucial mistake was to keep his focus only and primarily on productive wage labor in analyzing capitalist mode of production and capitalist exploitation. For Marxist-Feminists, while there is no doubt that productive labor is primal in capital-labor relation it is not the only labor done and necessary for reproduction of capitalist society. Thus, Marx overlooked that capitalist society is not only based on the productive labor of the worker but that important parts and necessities of capitalist society are also based on big amounts of hidden, unpaid and unproductive labor, often done exclusively by women. In short, Marxist Feminism spread the analysis of class by “following the worker not only from the market place into workplace, but also from the place of employment to the domestic space [and thus]... find evidence not only of class hierarchy, but of specifically gendered forms of exploitation and patterns of inequality” (Weeks 2011, 25).

They, simply, located gender in capitalism's (necessary) division of labor (Weeks 2011, 17). The concept of the division of labor is seen by Weeks (2011, 17) as useful since it can register (necessary) work by race, class and gender and it has power also to expose specific cleavages and contradictions within the class itself. Thus, while members of the same class, men and women in the capitalist mode of production do not necessary experience it in the same way. This also means that in the capitalist division of labor women performed special work and their labor value, in general, was valued differently. As Federici (2012, 97) noted, in that sense we can speak about women both as gender but also as a certain type of worker in capitalist society.

Thus, Marxist-Feminists claimed that one of the main gender divisions of labor in capitalist society is the one between the recognized waged and productive labor and the unrecognised domestic and affective labor, or reproductive work how they named it. By the emergence of the capitalist mode of production work previously often performed by women – work such as preparing food and cleaning the clothes, childrearing and caring for the young, the sick and elderly, domestic work, offering comfort and affection to relatives (Hennessy 2000, 64) – was privatized, devaluated and being labelled as non-productive (Federici 2004, 2012, Weeks 2011). In many cases it was not even seen as work but rather as part of women's nature justified by cultural binary oppositions existing between the genders. In this sense devaluated women work was a great advantage in general division of labor. Shortly, an important insight of Marxist Feminism was to expose that

“largely unwaged 'reproductive' work that made waged 'productive' work possible on a daily and generational basis was socially necessary labor, and that its relation where thus part and parcel of the capitalist mode of production. What has been coded as leisure was in fact work and those supposedly spontaneous expressions of women nature were indeed skilful practices” (Weeks 2011, 24).

By focusing on women both as a gender and a certain type of worker in the capitalist mode of production Marxist-Feminists had the possibility to analyze occurring changes in labor and gender regimes through some new questions. How do the new capitalist re-compositions coincide with and influence gender re-compositions? How and in which way were women introduced into labor market? How has this transfer of women into wage labor affected their unwaged labor at home, especially housework and care? And finally – did new capitalist re-compositions, and in which way, affect and destabilize the gender division of labor? These are just some of the many questions through which Marxist-Feminists would try to interpret late modernity.

4.3.4 Embodying the 'flawed consumer'

Here is maybe also a good place to return to Bauman and one obvious difference existing between his consumer analysis and Marxist Feminist class analysis which still insists on having the capital-labor relation in focus, dismissed by Bauman as belonging to the society of producers and as being secondary. Although Bauman, similar to Kathi Weeks, is recognizing that for many wage labor is still today the only means to gain money to participate in consumer society, he also generally concludes that in liquid modernity labor is cased away, because capital does not need it and because work ethic is losing its regulatory principle in consumer society. Consequently, the capital-labor scheme becomes outdated for analysis, or at least secondary. Instead, he suggested that we should analyze new types of exclusion and new classes – between flawed and ‘right’ consumer, human waste, underclass etc. Marxist Feminists generally and Weeks (2011) directly also orientated on work ethic and provided an elaborated critique of it. This is not surprising since work ethics of solid modernity also devaluated women work in general. However, although they could accept a majority of Bauman's analysis and descriptions of new types of exclusions and redundancy and even the thesis about the decline of available jobs, and see all these issues as relevant for researching, they may still argue that it is important to keep the capital-labor relation in perspective, that new types of exclusion are not completely autonomous from it and that in fact capital-labor relation still today remains a relevant concept for class analysis and a main principle of capitalist production, distribution and exclusion.

By keeping the capital-labor relation in focus many things could be still recognized and exposed many assumptions complicated and problematized. One could see that, what Bauman is also aware of, the difference between modernity and liquid modernity is maybe less epochal, temporal or a 'move forward in time' as it is geographical shift and a 'move forward in place'. It is in a sense less an effect of time advancement as it is of a new global division of labor accelerated at the same time as liquid modernity. Here it could be also noticed that disappearing of labor on the West was less an effect of technological development as it was effect of capital strategies to lower the costs of labor and find needed and cheaper labor elsewhere. Indeed, to paraphrase Federici (2012, 71), one of the main commodities which the Third World exports to the West is labor, in many of its senses: in the factories of global industrial (car, textile, IT, toy etc.) corporations, in the fields of waged peasant workers, or in the invisible labor of care (Federici 2012, 71; Hrženjak 2007) or other deficit and low paid labor obtained usually by immigrants inside the West, to mention just some of many examples. Here we can see that the need for labor is still there and that necessary labor for metropolitan and consumerist life in general, is done by workers elsewhere. Or to be more concrete, as Federici is (2012, 71), usually also “performed by women in Africa, Asia, Latin America or the former socialist countries...”.

It is this global division of labor that caused class re-compositions inside the Western countries creating indeed a situation, as Bauman explains it, of capital needing less and less workers and especially expensive Western workers in order to reproduce itself. Now the cheap work was available globally. Thus it seems that in many aspects the emergence of new excluded ones inside the West could be, and should be, also explained in relation to concepts of labor and capital and not in supposable opposition to it. How Bauman is putting it by himself, the excluded ones are those who are not needed for reproduction of capital, for making of profits. For me far from abandoning it, this actually actualizes the concept of labor and capital, especially in a society where inclusion into the world of consumption happens through (absent) wage labor. Similar as in the case of the earlier mentioned middle classes I think it is possible to be aware of the novelty of ‘redundants’ and human waste, it is possible to see them even as new classes excluded in a new way. However, there is no reason to believe that they are somehow autonomous from capital-labor relation, still the main principle of economic organization of society. In fact the more we analyze we can see how these new classes are expressions, dependent on and in many aspects influenced by this dynamic of capital and labor. I generally think that one can accept Bauman’s (cultural) critique and still keep the capital-labor relation not only as important but as also central and primal.

Finally, there could be an easy agreement between Bauman and Marxist-Feminists that inclusion to consumerist society is based on possessing money, and that there exists difference

between real and flawed consumers. They could also agree that today the political and economical system begins to be organized on that consumerist principle as a point of inclusion/exclusion. However, they may still continue to argue for importance of keeping capital and labor in focus¹⁰. This is because, despite the capital needing less labor on the West to reproduce itself, the main – systematic, legal, expected and ideological – basis for getting money for the majority still structurally remains wage labor. And maybe exactly this is one of the main contradictions existing between individuality *de facto* and *de jure*. Thus, if we ask for example the flawed consumer, coming even from redundant layers of society, why he/she doesn't consume in a proper way the probable answer will be 'Because I do not have the money'. But if we move further and ask our flawed consumer why he/she doesn't have the money to consume (and therefore metamorphose into the right consumer) the probable answer will be 'Because I do not have a job, do not earn anything and did not have rich parents'. This is maybe the meaning of Marx's words when he said that the capital-labor relation is a relation of abstract domination. This abstract domination could be nicely traced also through the above mentioned words of our imagined flawed consumer; that despite being redundant, and maybe not even hoping and wanting to have a job, this fellow knows that the 'natural way' to do this is through wage labor, no matter of the supply and demand for it on the markets and even if it is today an illusion to find it.

Simply, consumerist society needs to be produced itself also by various labor, often exploitative and invisible. This is still today the principle of organization, inclusion and exclusion, no matter how illusionary as a principle it may be. Before the conflict and contradictions in

10 Here is also the place to comment one more interesting thing. When putting capitalist relation and the role of accumulation of wealth on secondary place under emerging consumerist society and its aesthetics, Bauman (2005, 31) comments that the role of wealth and income in solid modernity was the accumulation of capital – money that makes more money. Today, however, consumption and not accumulation is the purpose; something like consumption and not accumulation of capital. While there is no doubt that consuming and consumerism is an obvious reality of today's social formation and that includes all social groups, I would still doubt that accumulation of wealth cased to be primarily. As we can see, and as himself Bauman often tells, 'the rich are getting richer' also today and there are obvious evidences that as closer as one comes to elite and capitalists there is, to use Bourdieusian language, a field where capital circulates and also accumulates. On the other side the fact that the majority does not accumulate wealth and income but instead on a daily basis consumes in supermarkets may be read in a rather different way than as a falling meaning of work ethic, of accumulation as an aim or as an expression of moving away from production to consumption. It may be an effect of their relation to capital. To paraphrase Cleaver (2000) again – to say that the aim of income is to get capital is an observation which generalizes capital's point of view, interest and reality. One needs to keep in mind that for a majority of the employed population in the capitalist mode of production the role of 'wealth' and income is not, nor it ever was, expressed in capital – money that makes more money, but in the wage as an equivalent for the subsistence of living. Simply, at the end of the working process, the workers did not get out with capital ready for investment and money making, but they got out with the wage which they needed to invest in order to meet their needs. Thus, simply consuming and not accumulating is maybe even not a choice for many, especially when having in mind all what Bauman writes about new types of exclusions.

consumption and consumerism, which Bauman describes, there is already a conflict of capital and labor underlying and texturing it in many important and crucial ways. On an economical and social level, in private and public sphere.

4.4 Locating class patterns in individualization processes

In the last chapter I outlined some of the ways in which we could re-articulate class analysis and begin to trace patterns of classed and gendered practices in late modernity. However, the critique of late modern theories was not only theoretical and conceptual, but many authors also conducted a more concrete, and empirical analyses. Using Bourdieu's perspective for example, Atkinson (2010a) conducted qualitative interviews mainly among white British citizens in order to directly examine whether today we are indeed witnessing reflexivity and whether class caused to influence people's lives. He focused his research on four main areas in order to examine this; on the education system, post-educational opportunities (employment), lifestyles and on class as a descriptive (symbolical) model. According to the reflexivity thesis education should give persons opportunities to increase reflexivity and to go beyond the limits of their habitus and class. This, combined with flexible working arrangements and an overall fluidity of jobs, should influence opportunities for upward mobility in the social hierarchy for those coming from lower positions. Considering the lifestyles in late modernity they should be 'reflexively chosen, fluid, eclectic and individuated as well as detached from class' (Atkinson 2010a, 158). Finally, according to the reflexivity thesis, class as a discourse should become meaningless in seeing one's own position and role in the world, which should be now more seen in the terms of reflexive self-perception (Atkinson 2010a, 185) and biographical narratives.

However, the overall findings in his research proved to be 'bad news for reflexivity theorists' (Atkinson 2010a, 132). Atkinson concludes this since in all four examined areas he didn't find any strong evidence for reflexivity and even less evidence for the declining meaning of class in people's life trajectories. When it comes to the education system there is indeed the fact that education, especially compared with the times fifty and more years ago, opened up possibilities of building up individual biographies and upward mobility for those who in previous generations (for example, pre-WWII context) wouldn't have that chance. Education during the welfare state model became more available to lower classes, and in this sense its individualizing influence was indeed wider than usual. However, this doesn't mean portrayed decline of class and its significance because at all stages, at all times, and through all this new practices of education class processes continued to

permeate the life course of individuals, from early childhood through their education and later in life. Thus, for those with bigger capital, for those who operate in an environment with a higher level of cultural (educational) capital from early ages, education is a natural thing and they tend to 'swim better' in the educational milieu. On the other side, for those with less cultural capital education is often experienced as alienating and unpractical as well as a (potentially) expensive waste of time. For many of them the educational system is seen as an institution of exclusion against which they developed oppositional attitudes. Thus, instead of gaining higher education many of the people with lower capital will prefer learning practical skills and masteries from which they can pursue (more) economical rewards. They tend to quit education at earlier stages and seek a job, seeing it as a more practical solution to their life worries and maybe also pushed, due to their positions, to do so. In that sense they may be today the first ones that will face the 'desert of jobs' and be at danger of becoming redundant, to use Bauman's words. What is important in this observation is that in all of these choices existed un-reflexive bounds of consciousness through whose lenses people read education, and these are pre-reflexively anticipated lengths (Atkinson 2010a, 105, 189).

Similarly, when it comes to the post-educational life (Atkinson 2010a, 132) – or employment – there is indeed a changing context of employment, evidenced primarily in less stable and flexible jobs, or with disappearing jobs. There are even some evidences for upward mobility in some cases. However, these tendencies do not mean that structural relations of class difference and distance are casing to play a less important role. On the contrary, these distances continue to differentiate (individual) employment histories. Those with ample capital, Atkinson continues, are again committed to more secure and stable, materially and symbolically rewarded careers. Due to their ample capital they have better access to resources, skills and habits, and can use the new context and opportunities of employment easier and with higher benefits for them. On the other side, social space and opportunities are not so spread for those with less capital and they can feel these changes in employment as in fact disadvantages, especially in a context where flexible employment means less opportunities for various social rights and where high unemployment is forcing many to even lower their expectations and sometimes accept conditions below their gained capital (for example a high educated person who is forced to work jobs normally prescribed for lower educated persons in their post-educational life due to a lack of employment in industries for which they gained education).

Atkinson, as mentioned, also examined one of the crucial ideas of late modern theorists – the one which claims that lifestyle choices are not any more influenced by class, and that they are free-willingly and autonomously chosen in the context of late modernity. Atkinson again did not find clear evidence for this in his research. He in fact discovered that from the privacy of the home to the

public sphere, from activities of work to leisure time, the class differences are still visible and active:

The aestheticization of household tasks versus the exercise of practical mastery in the domestic sphere, the abstract versus the concrete in reading, distinguished versus mass sport, taste for high culture and abstract forms of art versus lack of interest and a taste for realism, and the clear practical sense of and affective response to difference and distance and inferiority and superiority – all these are so many expressions of the fundamental division between a class habitus forged in milieus distant from the pressures of necessity versus one compelled to live life according to the logic of first-things-first (Atkinson 2010a, 158).

In summarizing these findings in his interviews, Atkinson concludes that many of the analysis about class difference addressed in Bourdieu's book "*Distinction*" are still valid. True, he continues, there have been some (in some sense significant) changes in concrete practices, goods and artists representing these tastes over time, as well as bigger complexities of lifestyle intersections and hybridization, but nothing of this did break with the fundamental vision of 'relational class structures' (Atkinson 2010:,158). In the sense of consuming, the difference between shopping in low-budget (and often low quality) or in more qualitative shopping places may also symbolically express these class differences.

Finally, Atkinson also didn't find evidence of class being discursively abandoned in people's talks nor that it lost the symbolical meaning in people's lives. Through his interviews, class continued to be an often deployed term in describing distances and positions, in seeing one's own place in the world *vis-a-vis* others and in describing similarities and differences between people. Because these claims are stated also in a context in which the individual occupies certain positions within objective structures, for Atkinson they do not only represent a reflexive self-perception, but are also expressed from the class point of view. From a (neo)bourdieusian perspective lifestyles, the way we choose them and we see other lifestyles, can still be seen as representing signs of membership of distinct social categories, and not only of individuality, neo-tribes or subcultures. However, what Atkinson did notice is the trend of a 'de-politicization of class' or the fact that class interests and organization around such positions are no longer alone at the heart of individuals concerns. Individuals often mentioned other types of exclusion – as gender, ethnicity and disability – as equally important to those of class (Atkinson 2010a, 185–186). In this sense we may speak about a certain symbolical declining of class.

For Atkinson, to conclude, this doesn't mean that everything stayed the same or that individualization is not an obvious and more salient process of the last few decades. Here again the main difference between him and the late modern theorists is in their interpretation of these

changes. Thus for example, the current 'de-politicization of class' may be read by Giddens and Bauman as a final decline of the class in life-trajectories of individuals, but from a (neo)bourdieusian perspective this process may be seen only as a decline of the symbolic construction of class which is in itself far from claiming the disappearance of class as such. Where late modern theorists see a new era in modernity where class stops to influence our life-trajectories, Atkinson sees only a 'changing context of class' (Atkinson 2010a, 132) and its manifestations of class differences and distances. Thus, using Goldthrope's (2002) arguments, Atkinson (2010, 33) suggested that processes of individualization and its influence on life-trajectories – which Giddens and the others posit as widespread – insofar as they are evidenced at all, turn out to be far less dramatic, far more limited and far more nationally variable than these authors would suppose.

4.5 Locating gender in late modernity

As Atkinson suggested the individualization process and reflexivity seems much less radical when juxtaposed to class differences texturing late modernity. Adding to this thesis, Marxist Feminist orientated on locating gender inequalities in late modernity. However, as noted, they tried to combine and intersect the two (class and gender) and therefore were able to provide unique analysis of late modernity and to question in which way new class re-compositions were gendered, in which way women were introduced into the market, how that influenced their labor at home and in which sense these changes, at the end, affected women as a gender.

4.5.1 Women, labor market and re-compositions of capitalism

When considering one of the main late modern presumptions about women entering the labor market as something in itself deeply radical for gender division of labor, one needs to stay cautious of such claims for a number of reasons. The overall cautiousness arises from the fact that entering of women into the labor market was not so one-directed and one-dimensional, but it had in fact multiple, ambivalent and even contradictory effects for women. Thus for example, Evans argues that the needs of capitalism have facilitated the employment of women as much as the commitments to sexual equality (according to Heaphy 2007, 140). How did capitalism, especially in its late modern re-configuration, facilitate these changes? One could answer – functionally for its own reproduction.

As many noted, one of the main characteristics of “new capitalism”, how Giddens calls it (or post-Fordism how Bauman names it) was its huge shift from the primary and secondary sectors towards services, selling, advertising and the third sector in general. This also accelerated a process of commodification of many tasks and skills deriving from reproductive labor in general. Thus, Marxist Feminists noted that under conditions of post-Fordism, practices once devaluated, deemed as unproductive and as non-work (and mainly done by women) began to be a source of capitalist valorization, of profit making and also of capitalist exploitation. As summarized by Weeks, this “merging of reproduction and production is visible in the ways that commodities continue to replace domestically produced goods and services and many forms of caring and household labor are transformed into feminized, racialized, and globalized forms of waged labor in the service sector” (Weeks 2010).

Furthermore, this reproductive, affective and care labor was maybe the primal labor force, skills and also the market where a majority of women find themselves integrated in post-Fordist economies, in addition to the already traditionally female-dominated public sector or for example earlier textile industries. Thus, if we look it as a tendency, women were not given 'just any jobs' (and let alone jobs which generate high priced capitals) but they were mainly integrated into specific industries of capitalist economy, industries which commodified work once deemed female and employed women workers as 'females'. Weeks was not the only one noticing this structural connectedness between new capitalist re-composition, commodification of 'feminine tasks' and inclusion of women into waged labor. In fact Evans also argues, using Lovell's arguments, that it is the characteristics identified with 'natural' femininity that made women ideal employees of the current form of service and consumer based industries (according to Heaphy 2007, 140). Further, some other feminists, as Adkins and Hochschild (according to Heaphy 2007, 141–143) for example, argued that not only that new capitalism employed women labor for 'feminine' tasks, but it also in many cases played an active role in demanding reproduction of 'femininity' in the working process. Thus for example Adkins exposed how women's conditions of employment inside the leisure industry demand from women that they engage in forms of gendered and even sexual servicing. Hochschild pointed out the increasing commercialization of human feeling inside airline companies and how the association of women with caring and nurturing practices became a requirement for employing and keeping a job. To this we could also add demanding from women to look attractive while selling or promoting various products, investigation in their intimate and reproductive plans while being interviewed for jobs etc., to mention just some of many examples. Thus Heaphy also suggested that in traditionally lower paid industries women continue to be employed as women and in many cases they are expected to even reflexively perform and work as certain kind of women (usually feminine and attractive). They must then also reflexively do their femininity and even self-

consciously perform as sexualized, emotional, caring and nurturing workers and this for Heaphy is not just some anomaly but it is in fact one of the central components of the globalizing economy which will still continue, it seems so, to be a trend also in the future (Heaphy 2007, 140).

Indeed if one also puts into focus the global division of labor it is easy to see how limited emancipatory effects of labor for women were, one needs to think only on the contemporary industrial East (the global industrial factory) and the role which cheap women labor plays in it, on workers' conditions and indeed classical industrial discipline by which they are set to work, as well as low incomes they receive as a substitute for living. Or we may think on invisible migration labor of many women (Hrženjak 2007) who are forced to abandon their families in poor countries in the East to go and illegally take care for people in rich countries, often for lower wages and without any conditions, risking charges in the case if they are caught. This is just in addition to many women suffering attacks of capital on their land and peasant communities forcing them to abandon their land and become vagabonds in the search for labor, an image sometimes invoking many descriptions about the primitive accumulation of capital described by Marx, but also by Federici (2004). While women in the West gained some modest rights and opportunities, which were also filtered among class lines, women globally did not and they still represent majority of marginalized, exploited, oppressed and attacked groups.

However, even if we limit ourselves only on the West the connection between capital re-composition and gender division of labor is still obvious. As claimed, women were integrated as a working force into capitalism mainly through now commodified 'reproductive work', historically seen as women's task and part of their nature. Something else was indicative for the integration of this labor into the market – that it was still devaluated, less paid and less protected as labor ensuring even less basis for attaining other social rights. In other words, women and women industries were maybe also laboratories for experiments, and indeed pioneers, of what will today become to be known as casualization and precarity of work and life. Still today women are on the forefront of groups which are affected by these changes, not affected in the sense of opportunities but actually limits. This remains true although precarity as such is becoming generalized on all population.

To expose this connection of capitalist re-composition with gender division of labor, to expose how capital both liberated and used women labor in specific ways does not mean to deny the importance of women entering into labor market and to downplay (even) limited rights and opportunities gained by this. In fact by becoming wage workers many women could at least partly attain some autonomy. However, above discussed ways of how capital also used and demanded gendered labor are important to mention, especially in today's context where capitalism is seen (or rather represented?) as all the way liberating, emancipatory and even revolutionary for patriarchy,

gender division of labor and women.

The history of capitalism, necessarily needing the exploitative division of labor, is rather more complex and ambivalent. Capitalism brought to women as both gender and as workers not only opportunities but also the feeling of exploitation, double burden and poverty, as well as various others less severe limits. Thus, while some women did indeed benefit from new opportunities of entering the labor market and were moving upwardly, the majority of them, as noted by Lindsey German (2013) did so as part of the working force, and in fact as a growing part of that force. Thus for her it seems then that in post-Fordist capitalism the majority of women, as noted by Bernner, found themselves worried not by hitting their head in a glass ceiling floor of upside employment mobility but instead with the danger of falling into the basement (Bernner, according to German, 2013). In short, opportunities promised by post-Fordist economy did not prove to be necessarily beneficial to the working class women, as well as they were not gender neutral.

4.5.2 Back to the households – what has changed?

However, let us go back to the household and see if women entering wage labor dramatically shook the gender division of labor in the private sphere. The simple answer would be no. Federici (2012, 100) noted that the rapid expansion of the service sector did neither eliminate home based, unpaid reproductive labor nor has it abolished the sexual division of labor in which it is embedded and which is still dividing the production and reproduction of capitalism (Federici 2012,100). Thus many women found themselves under a “double burden” of exploitation, working now for the capital and the men, both in the house and in the working place. Observing numerous researches done in some Western countries (US, Europe, Australia and New Zealand) Jamison (2005) came to similar conclusions. She noted that many researches reported that on the level of housework (domestic work) there is a shift, albeit modest, towards a redistribution of domestic work (Jamieson 2005, 138) and there is also an evident sense of the crisis and inevitability of change, but still, they also showed “a sense of containment and business as usual” (Jamieson 2005, 144). Researchers documented that the entering of women into the labor market did produce a most significant change in control of money and household income (Jamieson 2005, 140) giving more autonomy over the decisions how to use and spend the money to women. But still, they also showed that many women use smaller proportions of the common family income (especially depending on having children and in dual-work households) for themselves than men do (Pahl 1989, according to Jamieson 2005, 141).

Women in general still continued to do the majority of household work, while some

husbands began to engage themselves as well. However, in many cases this engagement was still seen more as a supplement and as secondary to what was naturally seen as women's jobs. Work of men in the household was simply seen as help, not so much as a work. Thus entering of women into the market had more dramatic effects on reduced hours that women spent for housework than on the increased hours their husbands spent for it (Jamieson 2005, 139). However, the proportion of men's engagement in the household was relatively insignificant to the extra work women added to their overall work time by entering paid employment. In this way many women, especially from the working class who could not afford some of the household services, felt the 'double burden' of the gender division of labor and the capitalist social relation. Jamieson suggested that if the women's entering in labor market is not followed by man's involvement in the household these inequalities can disturb the ease with which couples can sustain a sense of equality, symmetry and complementarity (Jamieson 2005, 32, 142). They can, in short, become the barrier for attaining of a disclosing intimacy. Further, somehow ironically and un-reflexively, for many women the main dissatisfaction with this inequality of labor was not with their partners but with themselves for not coping to be good worker, wife and mother (Jamieson 2005, 145).

Gender division of labor is even more evident when it comes to childrearing and childcare. Looking historically, the debates about parenting were exclusively focused on the role of the mothers and marginalization of the fathers (Jamieson 2005, 44). In that respect, as Jamieson argued, there are indeed significant changes happening which speak about involved fathers and their equal role in parenting. However, she also added, that these changes seem to appear mainly on the level of public stories and discourse than in reality. Stories speak much more confident about new fatherhood than literature that studies the division of labor in parenting. She notes that "from 1970s to 1990s, studies show that even when both mothers and fathers are engaged in full-time employment it is the mother who typically carries the major physical burden and the sense of responsibility of child care as 'her job'" (Jamieson 2005, 60).

For Jamieson as well, the reason for this is not solely laying between two individuals who co-exist as partners, but it is also structural gender inequalities which may work against involved fatherhood, such as different employment opportunities, bigger insecurity of employment, smaller salary etc. (Jamieson 2005, 56, 53).

This unequal share of childcare is maybe most obvious in cases of separation or divorce when children and childcare become a task of women much more often than of men. Besides, it was also reported that many fathers, despite some of them being involved with children, significantly reduced spending time with their children following divorce or separation. For Jamieson this fact "is more likely to reflect men's continued peripherality in relation to children" (Jamieson 2005,

171). While indeed some new types of fatherhoods emerged, for Jamieson all in all, “there was no clear evidence of gender convergence in [housework and childcare] but rather a rediscovery of patterns of gender difference” (Jamieson 1999, 483). Thus, reflecting on Giddens concept of disclosing intimacy Jamieson also suggested that having children can unbalance couples, but not primarily because children can distract them from their living of disclosing intimacy, but as a consequence of gender inequality becoming more extreme with the arrival of children (Jamieson 1999, 488). To repeat, Jeffrey Weeks also agreed that when it comes to parenting and step-parenting we still seem to be living in modernist times (Weeks 2007, 178). Jamieson herself chose the term ‘stalled revolution’ (2005, 31), coined by Hochschild, in order to describe this unfinished gender revolution.

4.5.3 Gender, unemployed and redundancy in neoliberal restructuring of capitalism

Further, I want to argue, that with the advancement of neoliberal ideology – which ironically both praised individualization and gender mainstreaming – there seems to be other attacks on women as a gender and labor force and other structural limits to women's emancipation. The neoliberal politics of reforms, and its contemporary manifestations in 'politics of cuts', significantly declined capitalist and state investment in reproduction of workforce and population in general. With this, the weight of the social reproduction falls down on the individual, often meaning on their 'families' or other 'private' units. But reading through glances of Marxist-Feminism this means also that the burden of social reproduction is falling down on the backs of women. As Hrženjak (2007) noticed, despite various predictions about the falling significance of reproductive work with the advancement of capitalism, the need for reproductive work did not at all disappear and in fact there is also today a growing demand for it, and it is still performed by women, often not even recognized as work or being underpaid and made invisible. In addition, with the neoliberal attack on the public sector of the welfare state, as well as with the attack on for example the textile industries in the West, the majority of negatively affected workforce were women, traditionally occupying these sectors.

If it is true that women, as Jeffrey Weeks suggested, still today remain the main carriers of social capital, then in the times when benefits are being cut, the responsibility for carrying of this capital is even higher, putting an even bigger burden on women. This burden of reproduction is also mainly on the backs of women among the unemployed, poor, underclass, redundant etc. It is easy to see and to presuppose that in such cases the burden on the women's back is even heavier. In fact, Evans (2003, 54) pointed out on one more structural connection between poorness and femininity.

She claimed that the demands on femininity and distinct forms of gender behaviour is especially high among socially and economically disadvantaged since, unlikely to be able to afford either higher education or child care, it is socially effective – in a patriarchal world – to maintain the feminine and femininity because it can potentially offer good support from males (Heaphy 2007, 140).

All of these mentioned reasons seem to be enough to doubt any easy judgment about the influence of capitalism and its recent re-composition on women's emancipation. In fact, and contrary to late modern authors, we could claim that capitalism did not only open up opportunities for women, but it did also again recompose itself in a patriarchal and gendered way, reproduced them as 'females' and limited their options. Capitalism used binary division of genders, gendered division of labor, devaluted female work in complex ways to make the reproduction of capitalism and profit making alive in its late modern phase. This shows that despite that we often may be able to theoretically (and ideally) separate gender from class, or patriarchy from capitalism, and claim that capitalism doesn't need gender in order to reproduce itself, historically and materially reflecting this notions don't hold. Viewed through a historical perspective, all re-compositions of capital and labor until now – the introduction of women into labor market, globalization of capital and labor flows, global division of labor and more recently flexibilization of work and precarization of life conditions – are not only classed but are also gendered. Echoing Hennessy (2000, 99) we might say that until now capitalism was proven to be also the barrier to the full fulfillment of gender, racial as well as sexual freedoms, either by directly using their difference in its regulation or limiting their access and possibilities for self-actualization due their positions in social relationships. Similarly, Ana Vilenica recently noted that the “partial transformation of modern-traditional family (mother+father+children), rising number of single parents, of conjoined families and nonheterosexual families and communities did not brought substantial changes in their social position” (Vilenica 2013, 11).

We could claim that at least until today, women's emancipation is not only limited by patriarchy but also by capitalism. This notion also argues against a naïve view of a (simply) progressive role of capitalism in women's emancipation, presented in both Marx's writings (Federici 2004, 13, 2012, 102) and arguments of late modern authors. Thus, the liberatory aspects of capitalism and individualization will often stay in opposition to their position as women both in the family (or domestic sphere) and the labor market. In a last stance the liberatory aspects of capitalism will go against her position as a wage worker, unemployed or redundant. Although many gender patriarchal roles were eroded by the new landscape of capitalism and modernity, gender division of labor, and other differences, did not disappear, often expressing themselves in new

forms with similar characteristics. Thus Donna Haraway commented how today – in late modernity – we are witnessing a “paradoxical intensification and erosion of gender itself” (Haraway 1991). It seems that while patriarchal and gendered practices are changing on one level, they reimpose themselves on another level. But at the end, capitalism, classed society and gender division of labor still stick together also today, and support each other.

4.5.4 Class among gays and lesbians

Many authors (Hennessy 2000; Reynolds 2003; McDermot 2011) have pointed out that when it comes to sexuality, homosexuality and class relations one usually encounters a 'desert of material' existing. This is maybe why Plummer, as mentioned at beginning of this part, complained that one today hears a little about class in sexuality studies. There is limited research encounters and theoretical development of relation between them, they are still undeveloped, often marginally discussed or accepted (only) principally rather than (also) analytically. Thus McDermott (2011, 65) claimed that researches in sexuality and intimacy have generally tended to neglect the implications of class on them. Commenting further McDermott argued, similarly to Heaphy (2007), that exclusion of social class from researches of sexuality raises up epistemological questions about whose experiences are being used to generalize understandings about sexuality and intimacy. She concluded, obviously with Weeks on her mind, that in order to understand the nature of the 'world we have won' and measure its gains and losses we “must focus on social class as a major axis of power which positions [people] unequally and unjustly” (McDermott 2011, 64) and influences many aspects of our life of which sexuality and intimacy are one part of.

McDermott (2011) did a more explicit research on the relationship between class and sexuality. Using also the Bourdieusian framework of 'social class as a social practice' (McDermott 2011, 67–68) she researched the influences of the class on post-compulsory schooling choices of young LGBT people. She conducted semi-structured interviews with women who were self-identifying as butch, dyke, lesbian or gay. She noticed that while at some point of their lives queer persons from all classes faced negotiating and managing their sexual and gender identities to others, class did still play a role in influencing their choices and potentially opportunities. Similarly to Atkinson she discovered that LGBT persons coming from working class background were again more likely to see a continuing education as 'making no sense', being more attracted to the 'practical sense' of paid work in comparison to the continuing education (McDermott 2011, 72) and to see wage labor as a sign of independence and self-esteem (McDermott 2011, 71). The decision to enter the labor market was often pressured by their social position and limited resources of their families.

This means that often the choice whether or not to continue education was 'the choice of necessity', how Bourdieu describes it (McDermott 2011, 71), and not only an autonomous and reflexive choice. For LGBT persons from middle-class background the decision whether or not to continue education was not under question and was somehow 'natural'. Thus, one might say that despite their same sexual and gender identity, when it comes to these issues LGBT persons tend to act as members of their class, in a classed lifestyle. The decision whether or not to enter higher education may be seen as very important when we discuss sexual identity. Universities in general, McDermott argues, offer a 'more liberal' atmosphere and ensure bigger and more neutral access to informations and knowledge about sexuality and intimacy, or for that matter gender and race as well. In that sense they tend to be more welcoming and tolerant towards 'sexual minorities'. This context of the university can, thus, play an important and empowering part in negotiating sexual identity with oneself and the social environment, among its already mentioned importance in gaining various capitals (McDermott 2011, 73, 76). However, as expected, when having in mind that education is influenced by the class relationship of capitalism, educational benefices are not neutral or available for many, and thus also to many LGBT people. Many of them in that respect, due to their habitus and class, may remain excluded from this benefices and thus lacking more beneficial knowledges and environments. McDermott's analysis seems to reconfirm the Bourdieusian thesis that education choices are classed and that class remains relevant also among LGBT people.

When it comes to post-educational life and 'partnership making' of many LGBT people it seems that they continue to face the hardships and disadvantages of a class based system. Thus for example the 'first analysis of poor and low income gay and bisexual people', conducted by economist scholars (Albelda et al. 2009) in the US in 2009, reported on a big presence of LGBT people among low-income and poor strata of population. The study was focused on analysing living and working conditions of gay male, lesbian and heterosexual couples or married partners. In contrast to the often heard prejudices about LGBT couples living a more privileged, leisured and easier life than the rest of the couples and families – a prejudice often based on the symbolical image of all LGBT people as being somehow deviancy of bourgeois class or as simply being white and middle class – this research reported that LGBT people are as likely to be poor as heterosexual couples. In fact, they claimed that more than a decade of researches (Badgett 2001; Badgett et al. 2007, according to Albelda et al. 2009, 1) continue to show “that LGBT people actually have lower incomes than comparable heterosexual individuals and households” (Albelda et al. 2009, 1) and that in some cases LGBT couples, families and households are even more likely to be poor than for example heterosexual married couples. This is especially true when observing lesbian couples and families since they are more likely to be poor than both heterosexual and gay male couples. Among

lesbians, the poverty rate was higher in all researched areas: partnerships, family, children etc. They were missing both material and economical means, were excluded and denied recognition in many areas of social rights, had less possibility for rising up their children etc. Gay couples on the other side, while having a lower poverty rate line of all three compared groups, were interestingly enough falling towards it if one of the partners was 'coloured' (Afro-American for example), even more if both where, or if one of the partners did not have a job (Albelda et al. 2009).

However, all of this is not so surprising since class relations always reproduce themselves through social divisions and identities. A lesbian couple may experience hardships both due to its class, gender or sexual orientation and usually with all of this combined. Similar hardship may be experienced by a black male gay couple, not to mention black lesbians. This all shows that among LGBT people also class differences and social divisions are 'alive practices' since some groups are more likely to be poor and occupy lower positions on labor market, owning less capital(s) and operating in more precarious and adverse habitus. Thus, they may experience even their sexuality differently.

4.6 Some spectres of sexuality and intimacy in late modernity

Plummer (1995) and Weeks (2007) outlined some of the important ways in which changes occurring in sexuality and intimacy are connected with general processes in late modernity. Indeed, sexuality is maybe the field where we can see most dramatic changes occurring compared to only fifty years ago, and some attitudes – especially the social acceptance of homosexuality – really changed a lot. Plummer and Weeks also offered a qualitative argumentation on how participative sexual stories and disclosing of homosexuality to the others in everyday life influenced these changes. However neither of them explicitly was defending Giddens' thesis about disclosing intimacy, and when they did – as Weeks did – they connected it mainly with gays and lesbians. They seem to praise more general outlines of tendencies in late modernity, than a particular description of sexuality offered by late modern authors. It seems to me that there is a reason for this, and that they are not the only ones cautious and suspicious to make such conclusions.

Namely, arguments about transformation of sexuality and intimacy offered by late modern authors received also a lot of critical attentions among social researchers on gender and sexuality (Worth et al. 2002; Jamieson 2005; Mulinari and Sandell 2009; Bernik 2010). Thus for example

Worth et al. (2002) conducted qualitative interviews among gays in order to test Giddens' thesis about them as pioneers of plastic sexuality through exercising of episodic sex, open relationships etc. However, in their interviews they found that gay partners were rather anxious about episodic sexuality and that conversations about non-monogamous practices were a very sensitive area in relationships, and a source of insecurities, conflicts and instabilities in gay relationships. As being hard issues, it lead also many of the partners to rather hide their episodic encounters outside of relationship, than to disclose them to the partner in a reflexively and negotiated environment (Worth et al. 2002, 247). Also, many of the gays principally accepted such open rules more due to their 'presupposed' dominance in gay sexual culture, more as an integrative and socializing aspect, than due to a purely individual and conscious decision to open up their particular relationship. However, all in all when it comes to personal and intimate relationships gays and lesbians, many authors agree, tend to principally adopt more democratic and innovative practices. But even that cannot represent a majority of their relationships, since they also often adopt rather conventional views on sexuality, intimacy and partnerships. This is again, as noted by Jamieson (1999), not surprising since they are also raised in a heteronormative society and are adopting many of its patterns and conventions.

When it comes to sexuality among heterosexual couples the changes are even more modest and far less radical than what is prepossessed by Giddens. Looking through numerous researches, Jamieson (2005), following Lillian Rubin (1990), claimed that researchers are evidencing changes but they were ambivalent and contradictory. These changes were expressed in individual's conflicts and contradictions when it comes to modern sexuality and which we can witness around us (Jamieson 2005, 130). However, all in all she concluded, that when it comes to disclosing intimacy, as it is presupposed by Giddens, “neither public stories nor what is known about everyday practices indicate a clear trend in sexual relationship towards equality, disclosing intimacy, and mutually negotiated do-as-we-enjoy sex” (Jamieson 2005, 133). Despite the fact that there was a modest evidence of departures from conventional sexuality “there was no clear evidence of gender convergence in sexual behaviour but rather a rediscovery of patters of gender difference” (Jamieson 1999, 483). Researchers did show some changes in assessing claims such as the notion of equality between man and women, as well as the blossoming of personalized and varied repertoires of sexual behaviour and closer fusion of sex and intimacy which are maybe implicated by plastic sexuality (Jamieson 1999, 483). But for Jamieson however, available evidences hardly show sexual revolution and majority's (determinant) moving towards plastic sexuality, except they are perhaps showing diversification of repertoires (Jamieson 2005, 118–119). For her thus it seemed that disclosing intimacy remains “a radical political desire and conservative nightmare rather than an

established trend” (Jamieson 2005, 134). Jamieson believes that radical change implicated by disclosing intimacy is possible and is actually happening, but only for a minority, while the “overall picture is one of persistent inequalities” (Jamieson 2005:138). Finally she notes that “perhaps the main reason for doubting disclosing intimacy is relatively modest change in gender inequalities” (Jamieson, 2005, 166). With this she maybe summarized the voices of many authors I represented here.

Some other authors working in the field of family studies (Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards 2011) joined Jamieson in rising a doubt about the individualization and disclosing intimacy as a main feature of how people today live their (family, intimate and sexual) life, as well as in the claim that individual gains are basic concerns of individual actors. Some evidences in fact show that people still remain considerably adherent to the values of putting the family and children first as well as looking for security, unity and not being lead only by self-interest and individuality (Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards 2011, 122). In short, many people today still seek to purchase and reach intimacy in other ways than solely individual and disclosing patterns. Finally, as Jamieson (2005) banally put it, for some people to reach intimacy, especially a disclosing one, is also not at the centre of the meaning of their personal life.

Recently, Slovenian sociologist Ivan Bernik (2010) in commenting on Bauman's and Giddens' views on sexuality and late modernity also repeated that various researches in the field of sexuality and intimacy rather negate than confirm radical and 'revolutionary' changes in sexuality and intimacy, as sometimes represented by Giddens and Bauman. Researchers still continue to confirm that the sexual conduct of people is generally changing rather gradually (Bernik 2010, 8–10, 14) and more modest than what is presupposed by the picture of *homo consumens* or pure relationship. Thus Bernik (2010, 13) concluded that their views rather invoke stereotypical images of sexuality as represented in (spectacular) mainstream media than actual findings on the ground, in people's personal sexual and intimate lives.

In this Bernik echoes also the critiques of many others (Jamieson 2005; Mulinari and Sandell 2009) that Giddens (and we could add Bauman here as well) typically does not base his arguments on existing empirical researches done in the field of sexuality and intimacy. In that sense, empirical material conducted by sociologists and other scholars remained significantly ignored, despite the fact that at least from the 1980s on the body of knowledge, literature and conducted researches in this field was permanently rising. In this sense Bernik rightly noted that neither in Giddens' nor in Bauman's bibliography there are references on empirical researches in this field (Bernik 2010 13, fusnote 3). Thus Bernik was compelled to conclude that their works on

sexuality are demonstrative examples of 'postmodern sociology', how he ironically adopted Bauman's concept. Significant for this sociology, he continues, is that it aims to reach wide influence but as a scientific work it remains remembered, as Bauman quoted Steiner, by their fast effects and fast out datedness (Bernik 2010, 22).

4.7 Concluding this section

In this section I tried to re-articulate class and gender analysis and some sexual discrepancies which seem to me still relevant for analyzing late modernity. Marxist inspired scholars pointed on class as a material barrier for reaching a better and more reflexive standard of living and lifestyles, emphasizing capitalist and gendered limitations to such an emancipatory project. In that sense they also pointed out how individualization and post-traditional society are marked by both class and gender differences which are not just some identitarian abstractions but real material barriers. Bourdieu inspired scholars focused more on un-reflexive aspects of class and habitus and ways in which various lifestyles may express class locations. Similar to Marxist inspired scholars they also claimed that individualization is far less radical and class much less disembedded than what is presupposed in the late modern discourse. They also applied this on sexuality and gender, as I have shown. Marxists in short emphasized class as exploitative, while (neo)bourdieusians focused on its 'suggestive' moments. But they both emphasize its continued existence and limitations for the reflexive project of the self, reflexive acting and intimacy in late modernity.

A simple important message of these analyses would be, to paraphrase bell hooks (2000), that 'class and gender does matter' and that they influence our choices. As social relations they remains an important barrier for equalizing and complementing freedom *de jure* with freedom *de facto*. The important message remains that individualization, limitations and opportunities of late modernity are still today filtered through class and social divisions which are decisively influencing our participation in them. Another important message is that classes are real whether or not their members (self) identify with it. Important to say is that the individualization effects of late modernity do not go easily with persistent class and gender inequality. True, the landscape has changed significantly, but collective practices and experiences of exploitation, difference and limitations remained.

Finally, having all these critiques in mind, it is not surprising that the thesis about disclosing intimacy received rather critical voices among Marxist-Feminists and feminists in general. Already in her review of Giddens' book on the transformation of intimacy, Matha Gimezes (1992) concludes that the book although interesting, ends up as a celebration of the alternative lifestyles of the few, and often affluent, and ignores the extent to which sexuality, lifestyles, pure relationships and confluent love can only flourish among those for whom the 'traditional family' has ceased to be a source, not only of identification, but more importantly of economic and emotional survival and a stable unit for social reproduction in general. Thus theoretically, such relationship may flourish only in a context where basic life needs and necessities are easily provided. Jamieson thus summarises that the "thesis that couples are increasingly centred on disclosing intimacy suggests that it is theoretically possible for a couple to bracket off the material, economic and social aspects of their relationship; whether that is theoretically possible or not, there is no clear evidence that it is happening in practice" (Jamieson 2005,164).

For her, the thesis about disclosing intimacy "presumes a world in which the necessities of life are easily taken care of". But this "unfortunately" is "not a world that many people live in". In fact, "the empirical evidence suggests that in many Euro-North American societies social divisions becoming more, not less, extreme" (Jamieson 2005, 174). Their words, read in today's context of social and economic crisis where the social function of state is being privatized and thrown back on the 'back of the family' and thus mainly on women, seem very compelling and true. This fact is today much more obvious than it was maybe in the last two decades when many theories about 'new relationships' were beginning to be constructed.

5 GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have tried to outline some of the basic arguments about significant changes occurring today on a social, individual and institutional level. I tried to offer some of the basic characteristics and dimensions of these changes as argued by scholars writing about late modernity and some other scholars working inside the field of sexuality studies. These authors provided sophisticated and complex arguments about these changes and applied them on many spheres of people's life. Thus, I have to make this explicit, in my thesis I neither dealt with all arguments and concepts about late modernity nor did I elaborate a definite number of themes emerging inside of this frame. Instead, I focused on three themes which seemed important and central to me in my own discussions: disembedding of social institutions, individualization processes of late modernity and transformation of sexuality (intimacy). I tried to cover these three central themes from various perspectives, including both their appreciation and critique, asserting both their strong arguments and weak points.

However, it has to be noted, that in that sense I still have the feeling that my thesis, even when it comes to these specific themes, is still not definite and comprehensive. Thus for example, Bauman until today developed his arguments about liquid modernity on themes of time, fear and culture in general, and for sure many other authors working inside of this frame gave their original contributions as well, putting the focus on different themes. When it comes to sexuality and intimacy – as a central theme underlying all others in my thesis – the situation is similar. The influence of the Internet on sexualities on a global level, cybersex, net-pornography, pink dollar and commercialization of gay subculture, or of sexual citizenship, love affairs, possessiveness and jealousy in contemporary relationships etc. are just some of the themes that are absent in this thesis and would be important to elaborate.

Absent is also one more obvious and important theme – the rising number of single persons and single households in contemporary societies. This theme is heavily absent from the debates about the transformation of intimacy in general and is shortly mentioned only by Jamieson and Weeks. For me, however, this seems like a theme that has the potential to deconstruct and open up new questions about many issues I have discussed here. For example, this trend is also new and arising, and in its form it is somehow radical since today it is maybe the first time in history that so many persons are 'living alone' meaning beyond often deeply socialized patterns and concepts of

forming some kind of intimate union, some kind of marriage, of forming a family and finding someone to share a life path with. In that sense many questions can arise about single persons and meanings of intimate relationships (thus also pure ones), sexuality and intimacy in their lives. We could also raise many questions about the causes of these trends – are they effects of higher reflexivity or huge disappointments in the meanings of love and partnerships? Are they a combination of the two or of something third? The single households remain also challenging for many aspects of the gender theory: how do we discuss gender patterns in single households? How do we discuss gender division of labor, its relation to capital, relation between productive/public and private/reproductive work in single households? How do they reproduce and care for themselves? Which effects this has for gender theory in general? These are just some questions on which I do not have answers, but which seem like important fields for further investigation.

Like always with theoretical discussions many questions remain open and unanswered and the interpretation at the end incomplete. There are always many directions to take and many more things to investigate. However, what I am sure of at the end of my thesis is that in order to answer these numerous questions we need to keep an intersectional perspective in our minds. I think these questions should be read intersectionally. I am thinking here on intersectionality in a wider sense: as a perspective which takes into account both structural elements and human factors and complex and dialectical relationships between them; a perspective which takes into account various disciplines which deal with the themes we are up to investigate; a perspective which takes into account the cultural, social, economic dimensions and their inter-determinations; a perspective which takes care on novelties and novel ways of existing but which also takes care on old and power based systems of dominations; finally I am thinking on a perspective which keeps the question of power and difference central and reads changes through vectors of class, gender, race, disability etc. with a reflective sense for their historical and social dimensions conditionality. The minimal justification for this perspective is the fact that all these systems of domination remain active and relevant for the construction and reproduction of contemporary societies and often work together and intersect.

An intersectional approach also seems to be able to accept many of the new and refreshing insights of some late modern arguments but at the same time to remain critical towards them and to point out their limits. One can accept the notion about non-traditional and more individualistic relationships, about everyday life etc. and still claim that they are occurring in midst of class, gender and racial inequalities that are important to keep in focus. Thus, by introducing the vectors of political economy, class and gender into the debate, one is able to, little by little, deconstruct tempting, generalized and universal arguments about the late modern individual and his destiny in contemporary society. One is able to see that almost all mentioned and potentially good processes

of late modernity are still classed and gendered, like it is also with the material foundation and division of labor of this contemporary social formation. Further, one was able to see that the opportunities and benefits are textured in a similar manner. Thus, it is still important to have them in mind and to keep them central since they are not only descriptions but real lives, and they are not just social relations but relations of domination and exploitation. At the end they are deeply political questions.

Finally, when encountering the numerous questions which emerge when we are up to analyze contemporary transformations it seems to me that old sociological concepts and concerns are still not exhausted. Indeed, maybe it is in fact this unwillingness to deal with these old concepts, the silence surrounding them and turning them invisible during analysis that makes late modern arguments non-attractive. This is so because the attempt to point out on novelties was paid by the price of making questions of power invisible. But this can end up as only a partial view of reality. Instead we need a more complex and sophisticated theory, working with both new and old concepts, looking on both possibilities and limits. Only such a theory has the potential to explain rather than simply describe these changes.

While reading the material and during writing this thesis I began to gradually move from observing abstract hypotheses and statistical information towards observing more concrete examples and images emerging in my everyday life. I began to think about persons and couples surrounding me – taking examples from my primal relationships and university, working and cultural, but also street, contexts. These are examples which embody stories of my friends, colleagues but also of many of mine acquaintances which I met through my life path. In this sense I am maybe lucky because, due to my university path, I had opportunity to meet, get closer and discuss some personal and intimate issues with people from at last three different states, language groups and cultures, with various sexual orientations and gender expressions. Many of them also opened about their 'stories of suffer' but also of joys. With all of them on my mind the question opens – what all of these examples tell me about individuality and intimacy today? How can I connect them with all these theoretical frameworks I have discussed here?

On primal level they tell me that the world, in comparison to older generations of our parents and grandparents, has changed significantly. Today indeed we see and experience ourselves in more individual terms than our parents and especially grandparents. Reasons for this are

numerous and reflect many processes occurring in society, from post-war class settlement, rise of consumerism, media and communications, the new social movements to various other and numerous factors. But important to note here is that individualization is not the only characteristic that differentiates us from the generation of our parents and grandparents and in fact many other, widespread but not so positive, processes can be counter-posed to it. For example commodity fetishism, more alienated and reified relationships in general or precarity and insecurity are also characteristics texturing our generation. Maybe the individualization is raising among the newer generations but so do for example also depression and anxiety, being equally spread as individualization. Thus, like many argued, while many things have changed significantly they still did not change radically or revolutionary but rather gradually. Changes also did not take one direction and had different characteristics with multiple, contradictory and ambivalent effects. They were, to use a bit older language, effects of both the processes of liberation and emancipation and domination and inequality, effects of grass-roots movements but also state and capitalist strategies, of human and structural agency.

However, in my view, the really significant changes, especially in comparison to the generation of our grandparents, indeed occurred in intimate and sexual lives of people, at least in the West. The rise of individual self-determination when it comes to sexuality – who to love and how to live sexual diversity – is indeed significant and new. Again, the most dramatic expression of this are maybe gays and lesbians who today can be encountered in everyday life as friends, colleagues and neighbours – an expression of sexual individuality which even generation of our parents hardly had. But this is just in addition to the rising of serial monogamy between all sexual orientations and the falling significance of marriage and long-life monogamy; or the rising number of single households for whom it is not clear if this also means absence of 'love making' but there is enough reason to doubt. Maybe indeed, how Giddens put it, one of the main gains which we have today is the principle that relationships are lasting as long as one of the parties involved wants it and that we always have this possibility of escape and of cancelling these relationships. All in all, how Weeks pointed out, our generation's attitude towards sex is less moral, more practical and more desire-oriented which, however, is not meaning that it is less ethical, more perverse or promiscuous. How evidences showed people still do try to link love, sex and partnership together, they do follow many traditional patterns although in more individualized ways and their sexual behaviour did not change so radically as often presupposed by media or the New Right movement. However, being single will not stop people from not having sexual experiences also in the period when they are 'free', or even if they chose to be permanently 'free'. All this are just some of the changes occurring in sexuality today and one effect of them is for sure the rise in awareness of the 'fragility of human

bounds' in general and the insecurity of their lasting. All in all I could also agree that when it comes to the sexuality and persons' positions in everyday life relationships are in general more democratic and individualized. But to claim this neither means that they are actually democratic or individualized.

That being said I also have to note that looking again around myself, many personal relationships which I encounter are simply not individualized and more democratic and are even less pure. Many of them remain traditional, especially when it comes to childcare, care in general and housework. I have witnessed many couples who were developing towards 'pure relationships'... until the children came. Indeed the response of many of them was to return to traditional ways of doing things and justifying them. I was also witnessing attempts of many parents influenced by new knowledges about pedagogy, ranging from scientific to new-age advices, to apply them in their own childrearing. Ironically however, many of these discourses reproduced and justified the higher responsibility of women in childrearing and their general duty for reproductive work. This shows that just because something is new does not mean that it is emancipatory. In short, many of the relationships remained impure as Giddens himself also admitted. In this sense it is also interesting to note that in late modern theories there is not a single word about one of today's most present impure spectre of contemporary sexuality – affairs, cheating, double relationships etc., Finally there are people, many of them trying to construct reflexive, egalitarian and democratic personal relationships and experimenting with new types of relationships, but they are, as Jamieson noticed, a minority.

However, I want to finish this work with them. I am imagining a young university-educated couple which met at university, is in a relationship for some years already, finished university and want to continue with their life. They are maybe part of a generation which benefited from their parent's investment to the best extent (studying hard and on time) and which really obtained knowledge to the point of reflexivity. They were ready to become a new class of which their parents have dreamt of. However, while imagining this, words of Croatian philosopher Milan Kangrga, a person otherwise not interested into any of these themes, comes into my mind. Writing about the economic situation in his own country – which is today much worse than in the times when he wrote this – he used an image of a freshly married young couple. This young couple, we may paraphrase Kangrga, may be reflexive in the sense how Giddens sees it. The will, and the knowledge, even a reflexive scheme, may be on their side.

Nevertheless it is hard to imagine that in their love and reflexivity they will not face the reality and issues of class society and wage labor as frames and ways of acquiring material

substitutes for their living as a couple and as a means for the participation in consumerism as the solely available strategy in late modernity. They will be compromised by reality and the available capitals for fulfilling it, as well as by contemporary market labor demands in their locality. If the situation is really going towards the direction that Bauman describes, which I think it does, than our couple may also face the danger to become reflexive 'human waste', not needed for capital valorization. Many trends show this; all across the Western world young couple may face hardship of attaining jobs, let alone safe and permanent ones, in order to make wage and a possible basis for the life-project. Due to the lack of this means they may also lack other means necessary for the fulfilment of a more individual and personal relationship. The lack of available living place and the trend of children abandoning their parent's home later in life can for example illustrate this. In some cases the reflexive couple may not only miss a job and money, but as well a place where to obtain their personal relationships in real intimacy.

It is hard to imagine that their choices, also intimate and individual ones, will stay separated from these material questions and that they will be an effect solely (or primarily) of reflexive insights and wishes of the parties involved. Indeed, for Kangrga, there is Marx lying under the bed of this (late modern) couple, creating persistent and present uncomfortability and uneasiness to this couple, especially to many couples from the lower strata. Thus for many of them when they lay in the bed at the end of day, their minds may be preoccupied more with the question whether this bed will stay stable in the future or will it be dis-embedded, but not due to their individual choices and not by the processes under their control. These concerns seems to be not due to reflexivity and (self) expectations, or phenomenology for that matter (as Bauman seems to see them) but due to the class relations of capitalism. Due to the mode of production of both modernities.

The most important message of my thesis remains that individualization and democratization, obviously visible processes, are still today filtered through social division generally, and class and gender especially. Still today, in late modernity, the answer on who is the loser and who is the winner will entail classed and gendered stories – if we are ready to listen them. If we look globally, they will also entail racial dimensions. Thus still today and despite I'm also arguing that faces, forms and compositions of capital and patriarchy have changed, capital in general and late modernity in particular were and are reproducing itself through class and social divisions. They are not just influencing our identities but also posing limitations of entrance and thus participation, opportunities and possibilities for reaching a more emancipatory and reflexive life in late modernity.

Finally, on a completely personal level I want to argue something which I did not encounter at other authors and which seems to me as a simple fact of life when it comes to personal relationships and intimacy. It seems to me that reflexive late modern theories fail in one important aspect in their understanding of personal relationships – they try to rationalize them and make them in principle governable by rationality. However, I personally have big doubts about this because, judging by myself and people around me, I can in fact see personal and intimate relationships as being in their most constitutive parts irrational and constantly containing irrational aspects in themselves. These aspects are important parts of such relationships and in some contexts maybe more important than rationality. It seems that personal relationships are always developed through complex, often opposite, dialectics of rational and irrational. Despite this, one cannot hear a lot about jealousy, envy, control and about what is called 'power games' in relationships in the arguments of reflexive modern authors. Also, one often cannot reflexively explain why we find some person particularly attractive while others not, how we develop sympathy and why we are rarely cold headed and rational in such situations. We often find ourselves loving a person which we rationally maybe would not like... and maybe this is what gives them the whole charm at the end.

POVZETEK

Med radikalnimi obljubami in skromno realnostjo

- kritična refleksija teze o individualizaciji in transformaciji intimnosti v pozno modernih družbah

Ko poslušamo o življenju starejših, o tretji generaciji, ko listamo njihove družinske albume in opazujemo njihove navade, lahko opazimo mnoge pomembne razlike med njihovim življenjem in življenjem, denimo, njihovih otrok ali celo otrok njihovih otrok, torej naše generacije. Od družbenega okolja, družbenih/socialnih prostorov, prek načina preživljanja prostega časa, tipa zaposlitve, etike, prepričanj in vrednot ali recimo osebnega, intimnega in ljubezenskega življenja – ni dvoma, da obstajajo pomembne razlike, kakor je izpostavil Jeffrey Weeks (2007), med načinom življenja teh generacij. Te razlike pa niso – in zdi se, da to trdijo vsi avtorji, omenjeni v tem magistrskem delu – posledica nekakšnega 'večnega' spora in nerazumevanja med 'mladostjo in starostjo', temveč so prej posledica mnogih družbenih sprememb, ki so se odvile na mnogih nivojih družbenega življenja, še posebej v zadnjih par desetletjih ter med temi generacijami.

INDIVIDUALNOST IN INTIMNOST V POZNI MODERNOSTI

Iz tega uvida v realnost sprememb, ki so se zgodile na ravni družbenega in osebnega življenja, izhajata Anthony Giddens in Zygmunt Bauman, sociologa iz Velike Britanije, ki sta zelo vplivna v debatah o naravi in značaju sodobne družbe, njenih institucij, načinu življenja ljudi in o tendencah, h katerim se ta družba giblje. Oba avtorja delujeta v do določene mere podobnih teoretskih okvirjih, ki sem jih poimenoval 'teorije pozne modernosti'. Trdita, da se je danajšnja družba poslovila od tega, kar so imenovali 'družba modernosti' in od številnih njenih sidrišč – od etike, načina življenja, življenjske poti, a tudi od institucij, ki so jo označevale. Pod dinamizmom te iste modernosti, pod radikalizacijo njenih procesov, se posamezniki danes nahajajo v družbi 'pozne modernosti', kakor jo imenuje Giddens oziroma 'tekoče moderne', kakor jo naziva Bauman. Čeprav avtorja navajata nekatere podobne procese kot značilne za današnjo družbo, predvsem procese razstavljanja (ločevanja) družbenih institucij ali individualizacije, razlikovanje v poimenovanju sodobne družbene formacije ni naključno.

Za Giddensa (1990, 1991, 1992) se tako pozna modernost pojavlja kot posledica njenih dinamizmov; 'ločitve časa in prostora' (kjer posamezniki v današnji družbi, zahvaljujoč dostopnim sredstvom komunikacije, konstruirajo svoje izkušnje v interakciji z globalnimi dogodki, zato lokacija začenja izgubljati svojo pomembno vlogo v procesu te konstrukcije) in 'razstavljanja družbenih institucij' (danes zaradi možnosti konstrukcije identitet v neskončnih dimenzijah časa in prostora, tradicija, njeni običaji, družina in različne druge avtoritete začenjajo izgubljati veljavo pri definiranju in izboru osebnih življenj posameznikov, zato se ta življenja definirajo in gradijo v interakciji z multiplimi avtoritetami, ki izhajajo iz različnih virov v družbi). Na kratko, Giddens trdi, da zaradi vpliva teh dinamizmov pozno modernost lahko označimo kot 'post-tradicionalno' družbo, kjer se življenjske poti gradijo, kakor je temu sledeč Giddensa navedel tudi Weeks, v kontekstu večje avtonomije in individualnega izbora posameznika, v katerem ravno on začenja prevzemati glavno besedo.

Iz tega procesa razstavljanja družbenih institucij, v katerem smo se prenehali posvetovati s tradicijo glede osebnih vprašanj, izhaja še tretji dinamizem modernosti – 'institucionalna reflektivnost'. Institucionalna reflektivnost se kaže v dejstvu metodološkega dvoma, ki prežema delovanje posameznika v pozni modernosti. Posamezniki danes živijo življenje okraj že pripravljenih receptov delovanja, v kontekstu, v katerem se zavedajo, da nič ni 'od Boga dano' in da se vse, še posebej pa življenjska pot in identiteta, mora zgraditi. To vnaša dinamizem v človeško delovanje, dinamizem, ki je ozko povezan z izgubo zaupanja v že vzpostavljene recepte tradicije. Ko tradicija preneha določati posameznikovo življenje, to postane njegova odgovornost in usoda. V kontekstu pozne modernosti, v post-tradicionalni družbi, se posameznik srečuje z množico izbir kako zgraditi osebno življenje. Zdi se, da po Giddensu iz samega tega dejstva izhaja tudi reflektivnost v posameznikovem življenju. Ta se na osebni ravni kaže na ravni sebstva in intimnosti, njuna aktualnost v posameznikovem življenju pa postaja vse pomembnejša, kakor tradicija vse bolj izgublja smisel za posameznika. Na ravni sebstva posameznik ve, da je danes 'prepuščen' sam sebi in da je njegova življenjska biografija – to, kdor on je – njegova lastna naloga in odgovornost. Zdi se, da postane v pozni modernosti, kakor bi lahko rekli, 'vsak svoje sreče kovač'. Giddens navaja, da to za posameznika ni vedno lahka naloga, a da ima posameznik na sploh na voljo množico izbir, najprej po zaslugi svetovnega trga, ki številnim neenakostim navkljub ponuja številne možnosti za vse, predvsem za imetje 'življenjskega stila', ki postane osrednji v tej reflektivni konstrukciji sebstva.

Kakor smo že navedli, drugo osrednje mesto v posameznikovem življenju začneta igrati intimnost in seksualnost, ki postaneta pomemben del osebne biografije ter reflektivne konstrukcije sebstva. V zadnjih nekaj desetletjih, tako Giddens, smo (lahko) pričali pojavu 'plastične seksualnosti'

oziroma seksualnosti, pri kateri je posameznik socializiral naravni svet na način, da je zvedel seksualnost pod svoj nadzor pri vprašanih njenih nezaželenih posledic (denimo nezaželene nosečnosti in spolno prenosljivih boleznih). Plastična seksualnost pa se ravno tako osvobaja zakona kot lokacije njenega prakticiranja in tako posamezniki začno vstopati v seksualne odnose prej in ne glede na zakonski status, pred sklenitvijo zakonske zveze in v njej. S tem se mesto užitka in iskanja zadovoljitve v seksualnosti in intimnem življenju posameznika vse bolj povečuje, tradicionalnim dolžnostim in navadam navkljub. Pod vplivom navedenega, kakor tudi pod vplivom reflektivnosti modernosti, se odpirajo nove, po Giddensovem mnenju pozitivne, možnosti za seksualnost in intimnost. Pojavljajo se možnosti za razcvet 'čistih odnosov' v osebni življenju in med partnerjema. Čisti odnosi se pojavljajo v kontekstu, v katerem so intimni odnosi bolj ali manj svobodno izbrani in v katere vstopamo zaradi njih samih, hkrati pa pri njihovi izbiri in za njihovo delovanje eksterne stvari in strukture izgubljajo veljavo. Na mesto slednjih v čistem odnosu posamezniki razkrivajo svoja čustva in delovanje, ki ga drugače ne kažejo v javnosti, v katerem iščejo seksualno in erotično izpolnitev, odnos, ki nudi zadovoljstvo obem vključenim stranem. Dalje, čisti odnos traja zgolj toliko časa, kolikor to želita vključeni strani, temelji pa predvsem na zaupanju in dogovoru. V čistem odnosu se spreminja tudi sam odnos ljubezni, ki postaja konfluentna. To je ljubezen, utemeljena na emocionalnem jemanju in dajanju, ljubezen, fokusirana na enakost, spoštovanje, spoznavanje drugega, pogajanja in dogovore. Ta ljubezen ne črpa iz posebne osebe in njene erotizacije, temveč črpa iz posebnosti samega intimnega odnosa med partnerjema. Za zaključek in v potrditev svojih drugih tez o pozitivnih vplivih individualnosti, Giddens poda mnenje, da ne glede na neenakosti po spolu, ki jih lahko zaznamo v čistih odnosih, ti vseeno emancipatorni in nastopajo proti patriarhatu. Hkrati pa trdi, kar je enako zanimivo, da pomenijo tendenco, kako bodo odnosi izgledali v pozni modernosti in katerih čistoča se bo širila ne zgolj na intimnost, temveč tudi na odnos med prijatelji, sorodniki ter na samo politično polje.

Čeprav tudi Bauman (1998, 2000, 2004, 2005) prepoznava nekatere podobne procese kot indikativne za to, kar imenuje 'tekoča moderna', med njim in Giddensom vseeno obstajajo pomembne razlike. Tako se denimo za Baumana proces razstavljanja družbenih institucij danes kaže skozi nezmožnost njihovega ponovnega sestavljanja in zdi se, da v tem smislu tudi uporablja termin tekoče moderne; takšne modernosti, v kateri družbene oblike nimajo več svoje stalne in toge oblike, temveč se nenehno spreminjajo, pogosto še preden jih uspemo smiselno pregledati. Poleg tega se zdi, da Bauman drugače razume tudi same mehanizme modernosti, kakor tudi naravo njenih sodobnih formacij. Zanj je tako proces raztakanja 'toge' modernosti odprl prostor ne za več reflektivnosti, kakor trdi Giddens, ampak za 'invazijo in dominacijo instrumentalne racionalnosti' in 'determinirajoče vloge ekonomije' v družbi, torej za širjenje komodifikacijske logike na vse pore družbe. Ravno zato Bauman poimenuje tekočo moderno 'potrošniška družba'.

Če se vrnem na poslušanje zgodb in listanje družinskih albumov, s katerimi smo začeli ta tekst, zlahka opazimo, da so naši predniki živeli v tem, kar Bauman imenuje 'družba proizvajalcev' oziroma 'toga' modernost. Člani te družbe so bili vanjo integrirani prek dela in delovne etike, kjer delo ni bilo samo izvor dohodka, temveč tudi izvor življenjskega smisla in pomena, ugleda in identitete. V tekoči moderni pa, trdi Bauman, začnemo spremljati tendenco, pri kateri kapital ne potrebuje več množične družbe proizvodnje (vsaj ne na zahodu) in pri kateri se pojavlja splošna tendenca iztiskanja meznega dela iz procesa kapitalistične reprodukcije. V taki družbi pomen dela v življenju ljudi in delovne etike pri regulaciji družbe posledično začne vse bolj izginjati, zato družba tekoče moderne potrebuje nov način za svojo regulacijo in reprodukcijo. Tako se v pozni modernosti, trdi Bauman, premikamo od regulacijskega principa delovne etike k regulacijskemu principu 'potrošniške estetike'. V tekoči modernosti so tako posamezniki vključeni v družbo primarno kot potrošniki in potrošništvo postaja 'edina dostopna strategija' delovanja za posameznike. Vendar pa za razliko od delovne etike te moderne, konzumerska estetika ni utemeljena na disciplini ali represiji, temveč, povsem nasprotno, na osvoboditvi posameznika od vseh tradicionalnih okov (dela, zakona, družine), osvobajanju in zapeljevanju želje in ponujanju množstva potrošniških izbir. Če je bila tako po Baumanu družba te moderne utemeljena na Foucaultovem principu panoptika, je družba tekoče moderne utemeljena na principu sinoptika.

Na podlagi tovrstnih predpostavk Bauman oblikuje tudi zaključke o naravi individualizacije (in individualnosti) ter intimnosti v tekoči modernosti. Zanj se tako 'principialen posameznik' sodobnosti (generalizirani 'posameznik') ne kaže v reflektivnem sebstvu, kakor trdi Giddens, temveč v *homo consumensu*. *Homo consumens* je posameznik, vključen v potrošniško družbo tekoče moderne, on je subjekt delovanja v potrošništvu kot edini dostopni strategiji delovanja. On je takšen subjekt, ki nenehno konsumira v množici izbire (proizvodov, zaposlitev, prijateljev, partnerjev, prepričanj, resnic, načinov življenja itn.). Aktivnost *homo consumensa* je enaka *shopingu*, v katerem ta nenehno skenira možnosti, tehta med njimi, izbira in se zaveda, da se bodo nove možnosti ponovno pojavile na potrošniškem obzorju. Cilj *homo consumensa* ni akumulacija dobrin, izgradnja nekakšne progresivne biografije (kakor namiguje Giddens), temveč potrošnja možnosti in priložnosti, ki jih nato odvrže, da bi naredil prostor za nove dobrine, ki nenehno prihajajo. A takšno stanje *homo consumensa* ni brez lastnih težav. Pravzaprav ima ta potrošniška nedorečenost in nestalnost (netrajnost) – ta tekočnost vsega – za posledico to, da je *homo consumens* nenehno ujet v anksioznost, saj ve, da je vse, kar počne, nestalno, da ni niti avtentično in niti edina možna verzija trenutnega življenjskega stila ali identitete, temveč le ena izmed variacij na temo.

Iz značaja *homo consumensa* Bauman vleče zaključke tudi o značaju intimnosti v tekoči

moderni. Tako trdi, da se s spremembami v modernosti spreminja tudi intimnost sama. V družbi proizvajalcev je bila seksualnost disciplinirana, regulirana z državnimi sankcijami, zakonom, kodirana s poroko, intimni odnosi pa so se gradili z eno ali eventuelno dvema osebama, grajeni so bili s ciljem dolgoročnosti in so sledili logiki toge modernosti 'eno življenje, ena zaposlitev in ena zakonska zveza'. Takšna oblika seksualnosti je ustrezala obliki toge modernosti, v kateri je bila seksualnost, kakor pravi Bauman, sublimirana in regulirana z namenom, da zaganja (tekoči) tovarniški trak družbe proizvajalcev. V protrošniški družbi, tisti, ki se je poslovila od dela in delovne etike, pa se mora seksualnost osvoboditi in pravzaprav 'razbesneti', da bi se hrepenelo za proizvodi, ki zapuščajo (tekoče) tovarniške trakove (ki se zdaj nahajajo na krajih, oddaljenih od potrošniške družbe) in da bi se jih konsumiralo. Očitno je, da Bauman na tem mestu govori o komodifikacijski logiki, ki prežema seksualnost potrošniške družbe in njeni instrumentalizaciji za potrebe te družbe. Enako kot individualnost, tudi intimnost danes živimo skozi potrošništvo kot edino dostopno strategijo. Bauman pravi, da v takšni družbi prihaja do 'postmodernizacije seksualnosti', v kateri se razstavlja vezi med seksom, strastjo/eroticizmom in ljubeznijo. Strast se tako v tekoči moderni ne nahaja več pod imperativom reprodukcije (v primeru seksualnega odnosa), niti pod imperativom ljubezni, ki po Baumanovem razumevanju še vedno teži k (po)vezovanju, dolgoročnosti, a tudi k posesivnosti, zahtevanju in zapiranju. V vsakem primeru pa je v tekoči moderni strast osvobojena odgovornosti do ljubezni in romantičnih zahtev oziroma do kakršnih koli drugih zahtev, ki so jih od nje terjali konservativci ali romantiki. Strast je v potrošniški družbi osvobojena in pravzaprav pozvana, da se potopi vanjo, da se uporablja v marketinških oglasih in da se prikazuje v marketinških manirah.

Zato je za Baumana *homo seksualis* ekvivalent *homo consumensu*. To je seksualni subjekt potrošniške družbe, v kateri je seksualnost regulirana s pomočjo sinoptične sedukcije, ki še posebej, kakor smo navedli, igra na strast ali erotiko. To je subjekt, ki ga v seksualnem smislu vodi 'želja, ki si želi želje' (hrepenenje, ki hrepeni po hrepenenju), zato nikoli ni miren in na miru, temveč nenehno konsumira in skenira nove, boljše ali bolj izzivalne, priložnosti v supermarketu možnosti. A ta svoboda je kljub vsemu istočasno tako 'strup kot antibiotik' za *homo seksualisa*, saj četudi strast teži k svobodi, hkrati vedno ostaja globoko povezana z zahtevami ljubezni, saj, kakor trdi Bauman, nobenemu seksualnemu in strastnemu aktu ni usojeno, da za vedno ostane zgolj akt, med drugim tudi zato, ker seksualna povezanost teles v sebi vedno vsebuje tudi možnost trajnejšega povezovanja. V tem smislu so seks, strast in ljubezen 'povezani, a spet ločeni' oziroma v neprestanem medsebojnem konfliktu. Zaradi tega, kakor tudi zaradi supermarketa možnosti v tekoči moderni, je *homo seksualis*, enako kot *homo consumens*, v svojem bistvu anksiozen in vedno ostaja nedokončan projekt.

Bauman ostaja kritičen do Giddensovega koncepta čistega odnosa in to zaradi več razlogov. Prvič, za Baumana je, kakor tudi sam eksplicitno navaja, 'čistoča' čistega odnosa predvsem odraz potrošniške logike in sprejemanja *shopping* manir in navad v partnerskih odnosih. Naprej, kakor je bilo že omenjeno, medtem ko Giddens dojema seks, strast in ljubezen kot elementarno povezane v čistem odnosu, so za Baumana ti v neprestani vojni in konfliktu ter povzročajo težave in spore med partnerjema. Tretjič, zaupanje, sočutje in usmiljenje, ki so za Giddensa pomembne značilnosti čistega odnosa, so v tekoči moderni suicidalne, saj se po Baumanu družba obrača proti zaupanju in sta zvestoba ter zaupanje v čistem odnosu zaradi zavedanja, da sam odnos 'traja dokler traja' oziroma dokler se ena stran ne odloči drugače, na spolzkem terenu in nestabilna podlaga za gradnjo intimnega odnosa. Očitno je, da Bauman ostaja kritičen do mnogih Giddensovih predpostavk o čistem odnosu.

Bauman pa je kritičen tudi glede možnosti emancipatornih posledic individualizacije. Na tem mestu za razliko od Giddensa ostaja skeptičen. Poudarja, da je individualizacija danes tako usoda kot prekletstvo za posameznika, zato ker obstaja temeljno protislovje med individualizacijo *de jure* in individualizacijo *de facto*. Med individualizacijo kot ideologijo in kot dejanske življenjske možnosti. Za razliko od Giddensa, Bauman tudi veliko več pozornosti posveti negativnim posledicam kapitalistične družbe ter trga kot ključnega gibalnega ekonomije (in politike) ter navaja nove neenakosti, ki se pojavljajo. Trdi, da se v potrošniški družbi pojavlja nova neenakost in sicer med 'lažnimi' in 'pravimi' potrošniki. Lažni potrošniki v glavnem sestavljajo novi razred, ki se oblikuje v tekoči modernosti in ki ga Bauman imenuje podrazred oziroma 'človeški višek (izvržek)'.

Ta razred se je pojavil v družbi, ki se je poslovila od dela in v kateri delovna etika ni več potrebna za regulacijo. Zato današnji brezposleni, za razliko od generacije svojih staršev in njihovih staršev, ne sestavljajo več niti 'rezervne armade dela', saj enostavno niso potrebni za reprodukcijo kapitala. Današnji brezposleni tako ne upajo na zaposlitev, še posebej ne na stalno zaposlitev. Kadar pa delajo, ne doživljajo te zaposlitve kot stalne, se ne identificirajo z njo in jo izbirajo glede na želje in možnosti danega trenutka. Dela, ki jih opravljajo, ko so zaposleni, so večinoma rutinska, lahko obvladljiva, hitro zamenljiva itn. Za razliko od Giddensa, Bauman ostaja pesimističen in predvideva, da se bo problem človeškega viška povečeval. Zato tudi vztraja pri svoji delitvi med individualizacijo in večjo avtonomijo posameznika, ki je razglašena *de jure* in njenega dejanskega obstoja in realizacije *de facto*. Lahko si je namreč zamisliti, da človeški višek nima nujnih materialnih sredstev za življenje reflesivnega sebstva oziroma za konsumiranje na sploh, saj glede na pomanjkanje denarja, ki je ključ za participacijo v potrošniški družbi, človeškemu višku manjka ravno ta ključ.

PREDELAVA SEKSUALNIH IN INTIMNIH ŽIVLJENJ: RAZCVET SEKSUALNIH ZGODB, INFORMALIZACIJA DRUŽBENIH ODNOSOV IN NOVE SEKSUALNE KRAJINE V POZNI MODERNOSTI

Kakor smo se trudili nakazati v prvem delu magistrske naloge, obstajajo mnoge pomembne podobnosti in razlike v Giddensovih in Baumanovih argumentih, ko govorita o razstavljanju družbenih institucij, individualizaciji in intimnosti. V drugih dveh delih magistrske naloge sem želel razpravljati o odmevih 'teorij pozne modernosti' v družbenih znanostih, med njunimi kolegi. Tako v drugem delu naloge razpravljam o pozitivnih odmevih in vzajemnem dopolnjevanju med Giddensovo sociologijo refleksivnosti in nekaterimi vplivnimi raziskovalci, sociologi, na področju seksualnosti, intimnih odnosov in družinskih oblik.

Tako je denimo Ken Plummer (1995) z nekoliko tezami prispeval h Giddensovim argumentom o refleksivnosti in intimnosti. Te je razvil s pomočjo raziskovanja 'seksualnih zgodb' kot simbolnih interakcij oziroma z analizo zgodb, ki jih ne smemo jemati zgolj 'kot tekst', ker ob tem misli na zgodbe, ki oblikujejo slike o svetu (saj je naša potopljenost v svet vedno posredovana prek zgodb) in vključujejo v sebe kompleksni odnos med proizvajalci, raziskovalci in publiko, ki jih posluša. Vsi so vključeni v oblikovanje zgodb in ravno v tem smislu so zgodbe interaktivne ter imajo moč vplivanja na vsakdanje življenje, posameznike, institucije itn. Ravno zato za Plummerja niso le tekst, ampak prej živi okvirji delovanja. Kot Giddens tudi on trdi, da je seksualnost danes postala eno od osrednjih mest v posameznikovem življenju in zdi se, da v družbi nasploh. Plummer pa za to nudi svojo lastno pojasnitev. Zanj tako ni naključje, da so ravno posamezne zgodbe proliferirale in si pridobile vpliv pod vplivi mehanizmov 'pozne modernosti', kakor tudi on imenuje sodobno družbeno formacijo. Z drugimi besedami, ni naključje, da so ravno seksualne zgodbe postale bolj vplivne in pridobile na pomenu v vsakdanjem življenju.

Te zgodbe za Plummerja predstavljajo na eni strani primer za modernizacijo (širjenje) seksualnih zgodb, a tudi 'žanrski' prototip modernistične zgodbe. Tako opaža, da so različni družbeni dejavniki, značilni za modernost, prispevali k širjenju seksualnih zgodb in jih omogočili. Kot najpomembnejše Plummer navaja premike v širjenju komunikacije in rast množičnih medijev, širjenje potrošniške kulture, rast kulturnih (inter)medijev in širjenje terapevtske kulture. Na eni strani je širjenje komunikacije vplivalo tudi na razrast vse večjega števila drugačnih glasov v zvezi z intimnostjo in seksualnostjo. Potrošništvo je, kljub vsem svojim negativnim posledicam, prispevalo k temu, da je (tekstovna, digitalna, multimedijaska) vsebina o seksualnosti in širjenju seksualnih zgodb postala množično dostopna širokim družbenim slojem. Po Plummerjevem razumevanju, prek razrasta kulturnih (inter)medijev, posamezniki vse bolj dobivajo možnost vpliva na samo vsebino seksualnih zgodb. Danes so možnosti dokumentiranja in objavljanja lastnih

seksualnih zgodb zelo velike in tako se rušijo meje med proizvajalci seksualnih zgodb in publiko in hkrati se spreminja tudi njihov značaj. Eden izmed primerov tovrstnega širjenja in razrasta posameznih seksualnih zgodb na krilih zgoraj omenjenih sprememb, je vsekakor terapevtska kultura (samo)pomoči. Tu Plummer enako kot Giddens izpostavlja pomembnost te kulture pri približevanju vprašanju seksualnosti in intimnosti vprašanjem sebstva in identitete. Za razliko od Baumana, ki v terapijski kulturi vidi odraz kontinuirane rasti instrumentalne *scientie sexualis*, multiplikacije avtoritet in potrošniške logike, Plummer (kakor tudi Giddens) vidi njihov vpliv mnogo bolj pozitivno. Medtem ko Bauman trdi, da terapijska kultura danes poleg nasvetov o intimnih uspehih in seksualni svobodi svetuje tudi o neuspehih in seksualnem siromaštvu mnogih zaradi neizpoljenih obljub seksualne revolucije, se Plummer osredinja na pozitivne spremembe. Tovrsten Plummerov argument, posebno ta o modernizaciji seksualnih zgodb s pomočjo sredstev komunikacije, je podoben Giddensovem argumentu o mehanizmih modernosti prek katerih se naša identiteta začne konstruirati v interakciji lokalnega in globalnega.

Po Plummerju so zgodbe, ki so se najbolj razširile z modernizacijo, ravno tiste, ki so tudi same, zaradi svoje vsebine, modernistične. Na področju seksualnih zgodb to vsekakor drži za zgodbe, ki so govorile o 'strasti, nevarnosti in okrevanju'. To so za Plummerja zgodbe, ki so imele svojo vsebino utemeljeno na zgodbah o trpljenju, preživljanju in preseganju in postavljanju sebe v novo situacijo, s srečnejšim dogajanjem. Tu ima v mislih predvsem primere zgodb o 'coming out-u' moških in žensk kot gejev in lezbijk, žrtvah seksualnega nasilja in posilstva ali o mnogih drugih drugih posameznikih, ki so preživeli neko trpljenje v svoji seksualnosti in ki so to trpljenje prebrodili. To so po svoji vsebini modernistične zgodbe, saj nudijo konkretno progresiven scenarij za preseganje trpljenja in tudi narejene so z namenom služiti kot zgodbe-primeri (simbolična interakcija) za inspiracijo, motivacijo, preslikavanje in prilagajanje mnogim drugim v podobni situaciji. Ravno zato, ker je obstajala publika, ki jih je čakala, so se lahko tako hitro razširile. Hkrati pa je k temu prispevala, če ponovim, tudi modernizacija sredstev za širjenje seksualnih zgodb in to v zelo pomembnem aspektu. Če naredimo primerjavo z zgodnejšimi obdobji, pred pozno modernostjo, zgodbe o 'strasti, nevarnosti in okrevanju' niso bile prisotne v družbi – pravzaprav so bile tabu, skrite v zasebnosti in pogosto obvite s tančico molka. Te zgodbe so bile tudi prežete z odnosi moči, kot lahko vidimo na primeru homoseksualnosti, kjer je izključno moč definiranja in regulacije imela v mnogo slučajih kvazi medicinska, psihiatrijska ali psihološka znanost. A ta odnos se pod vplivom mehanizmov modernosti spreminja in 'deviantni glasovi' postajajo vse bolj prisotni, oblikujoč svojo bralsko publiko, ki se je, kakor v primeru homoseksualnosti, prenesla tudi v konkretne živče skupnosti.

Vendar pa se danes, če zaključim, spreminja tudi sam značaj modernističnih zgodb oziroma

nove zgodbe so drugačne in reflektirajo seskualno življenje v pozni modernosti. Nove zgodbe so predvsem, kakor je bilo že omenjeno, participativne zgodbe z mnogimi akterji in ne govorijo o seksualnosti kot 'od Boga dani' kategoriji, zato za razliko od preteklih zgod spekter 'hetero-homo-bi' dojemajo kot naraven, enako kot prakticiranje intimnosti zunaj zakonske zveze. V tem smislu Plummer komentira, kako se je modernistično pehanje za razkrivanjem resnice o seksualnosti ironično zaključilo s povečano zavestjo o seksualni razliki povsod okoli nas. Pozno modernistične zgodbe govorijo tudi o dekonstrukciji modernističnih zgodb. Pripovedujejo, a tudi imitirajo modernistične zgodbe na ironičen način, z izraženo zavestjo, da niso edine pristone ali celo 'od Boga dane' in da so še manj stabilne in toge. Na ta način Plummer na koncu sprejme Giddensov argument o reflektivnosti pozno modernističnih zgodb ter o supermarketu možnosti, ki ga te zgodbe nudijo.

Plummer se je, kakor smo videli, osredotočil na pojasnjevanje, na kakšen način so se seksualne zgodbe razširile po vsakdanjem življenju in ustvarile svoje družbene in politične svete, na koncu pa povzročile tudi družbene spremembe. PISOČ VEČ KOT DESETLETJE KASNEJE, SE JE NEK DRUG SOCIOLOG seksualnosti, Jeffrey Weeks (2007), ukvarjal s podobnimi vprašanji, a z drugačno analizo. Bolj ga bodo zanimale spremembe, ki so je zgodile po tem, ko so seksualne zgodbe, skupaj z drugimi dejavniki, vplivale na posameznike in jih spodbudile, da izvedejo svoj *coming out*. Bolj kot glasovi deviantov ga bo v seksualnih zgodbah zanimalo, kako je življenje te deviantnosti – kakor da ta nič ne pomeni – v vsakdanjem življenju spodbudilo različne spremembe na ravni seksualnosti in intimnosti ter posledično spremenilo seksualno krajino. Z drugimi besedami, Weeks analizira ravno to, o čemer govori tudi Giddens, torej način, na katerega so posamezniki, medtem ko so se ukvarjali s svojimi intimnimi vprašanji, intenzivirani s pozno modernostjo, rekonstruirali intimno krajino. Podobno Plummerju in Giddensu za primer jemlje žensko ter gejevsko in lezbično gibanje, ki so bili, navkljub dejstvu, da se večina njihovih zahtev ni izpolnila, sami sprememba in so zagotovili emancipatorni diskurz za milijone posameznikov, ki so množično začeli živeti svojo homoseksualnost, kakor da stigma sploh ni pomembna in kakor da so že dosegli enakost med heteroseksualnostjo in homoseksualnostjo, čeprav njihova politična in legalna izenačitev ni v popolnosti zaključena niti sedaj.

Po Weeksu so tovrstna dejanja pomembno spremenila tako okvire diskusije o seksualnosti, kakor tudi njeno vsebino. Na eni strani je vse večje število gejev in lezbijk kot konkretnih oseb v vsakdanjem življenju (otrok, bratov, sorodnikov, sosedov, sodelavcev) pomembno prispevalo k rušenju predsodkov o njih ter k vse večjem sprejemanju. Hkrati so ti začeli graditi svoje osebne odnose, mreže in skupnosti ter postali prepoznani kot del vsakdanjega življenja. To dejstvo je, če ga gledamo v luči mnogih drugih sprememb glede seksualnosti (ki jih bolj podrobno obravnavam v

tekstu) v zadnjih desetletjih 20. stoletja, prispevalo k vse večjemu zavedanju o 'prikazni razlike', ki lebdi nad seksualnostjo. Weeks tako meni, da lahko danes govorimo le o seksualnostih.

Zdi se tudi, da Weeks še posebej sprejema tezo o pomembnosti individualizacijskih procesov v sodobnih vprašanjih intimnosti in seksualnosti ter na ta način podpira Giddensove argumente. Weeks govori predvsem o individualizmu kot ključni sili v posameznikovem življenju, a tudi kot o družbenem procesu, ki se posamezniku vsiljuje, vendar pa naj bi znotraj tega ta vseeno lahko izbiral in na ta način prispeval k svoji dobrobiti. Intimna in seksualna vprašanja so za Weeksa danes ravno tako osebna ter pod nadzorom in skrbjo posameznika, kar odpira številne priložnosti. Zanj je bistveno, da so danes družbeni odnosi na sploh manj hierarhični, intimni odnosi pa manj formalni, bolj svobodni in demokratični ter da je vsakdanje življenje demokratizirano. Princip avtonomije in svobode v seksualnih in osebnih vprašanjih je postal tudi kulturna norma. Zato Weeks na koncu eksplicitno pozicionira svoje argumente ob Giddensove in svojo intervencijo vidi kot nadaljnjo elaboracijo njegovih argumentov.

Iz navedenega naj razberemo, da Plummerja in Weeksa lahko uvrstimo na stran sociologije refleksivnosti in teorij pozne modernosti, h katerim tudi oba pomembno prispevata. Vseeno pa se zdi, da obstajajo tudi neke, za to magistrsko delo ključne razlike med njimi. Tako denimo niti Plummer niti Weeks ne trdita, do so refleksivnost in čisti odnosi glavne tendence sodobnih intimnih odnosov in hkrati tudi ne predvidevata, da bo temu tako. Oba danšnjo situacijo na polju intimnih vprašanj dejansko vidita kot zelo kompleksno, ki pa se vsekakor nahaja nekje med svobodo in restrikcijo, z raznolikimi, pogosto kontradiktornimi načini življenja, ki obstajajo eni zraven drugih. Oba trdita, da smo pravzaprav v središču 'konflikta' ali celo 'vojne' glede pomena intimnosti in seksualnosti ter da je seksualnost danes v središču političnih intervencij. Situacije je še vedno tekoča in nepojasnjena, čeprav je denimo v očeh Weeksa trenutek teh transformacij pozitiven. Če nadaljujemo z Weeksom, zdi se, da on, za razliko od Giddensa, vidi pluralizacijo družinskih oblik, ki smo ji danes priča, ne kot posledico čistega odnosa temveč čist odnos kot posledico te pluralizacije. Podobno navaja, da danes ne spremljamo toliko popolnoma individualiziranega in inovativnega seksualnega obnašanja posameznika, temveč smo priča individualiziranim tradicionalnim oblikam seksualnega obnašanja. Za konec pa velja omeniti še, da Weeks tezo o čistih odnosih in refleksivnem sebstvu uporablja izključno na primeru gejevskega in lezbičnega ter do določene mere ženskega gibanja. Zato, četudi sprejmemo, da ti zares prakticirajo čiste odnose, to še vedno ni dovolj za trditev o čistih odnosih kot generalni tendenci med seksualnim obnašanjem in intimnih odnosih/seksualnega obnašanja in intimnih odnosov v splošni populaciji.

"NI SE VSE, KAR JE BILO STANOVSKO IN STALNO IZPUHTELO V ZRAK": KRITIČNA REFLEKSIJA O TEZI O INDIVIDUALNOSTI IN INTIMNOSTI V POZNI MODERNOSTI

Plummer in Weeks opozarjata še na nekaj bistvenih preprek za uresničitev reflektivnega projekta sebstva na področju intimnosti ali življenja na sploh, ki jih teorije pozne modernosti zavračajo, ignorirajo ali enostavno spregledajo. Ravno ta tišina, ki preveva mnoge teme pozne modernosti, bo predmet številnih kritik, tako znotraj sociologije na splošno kot tudi znotraj njenih poddisciplin, ki so osredinjene na seksualnost in intimnost. Tretji del magistrske naloge zato odpiram za pripombe, ki jih je glede sociologije reflektivnosti izrekel Brian Heaphy (2007). Ta pri teorijah pozne modernosti prepozna njihov poskus, da ponudijo alternativo postmodernističnim pojasnitvam sprememb, ki se dogajajo v zadnjih par desetletjih. Za razliko od njih in Baumana, sociologija reflektivnosti trdi, da sodobni družbeni položaj posameznika v družbi in individualnosti v njegovem življenju ni zgolj izraz struktur moči in instrumentalizacije individualnosti. Vloga posameznika je mnogo bolj ključna v vseh teh procesih. Da bi to dokazala, se sociologija reflektivnosti osredotoča na singularnosti in skupne značilnosti posameznih izkušenj, iz katerih izpelje svoje argumente o reflektivnosti kot glavni tendenci. S tem teorije pozne modernosti izrekajo nasprotne argumente postmodernističnim, ki govorijo o fragmentaciji identitet in nudijo alternativne rešitve, ki ne pomenijo tako radikalne prekinitve s tendencami modernosti. A Heaphy oblikuje tudi kritiko sociologije reflektivnosti. Namreč, ker so se teorije pozne modernosti osredotočile na singularnosti in privzele univerzalen jezik o tem, kako danes posamezniki živijo, so zanemarile vprašanja razlike in moči in tako sociologija reflektivnosti ni ravno to – reflektivna.

Sledeč kritiko, da so teorije pozne modernosti zanemarile vprašanja razlike in moči, se v tem delu magistrske naloge posebej osredinjam na dve tovrstni vprašanji – na razredno in spolno analizo. Da bi izpeljal to kritiko diskurza pozne modernosti, reartikuliral razredno in spolno analizo ter da bi izpeljal kritiko same pozne modernosti iz teh pozicij, se naslanjam na marksistično (oziroma marksistično feministični) in Bourdiejev teoretski okvir, hkrati pa uporabljam dodatne avtorje, ki jih ne umeščamo striktno v nobenega od navedenih teoretskih okvirov. Tako najprej poudarim dejstvo, da sociologija reflektivnosti, kakor tudi sam Bauman kot njen kritik, sicer deklarativno ostaja ambivalentna glede vprašanj razredne in spolne neenakosti, a jih na koncu vseeno zavrne kot relevantne koncepte za analizo sodobnih družbenih odnosov. Tako denimo Giddens razredu zoperstavi svoj koncept reflektivnega sebstva, ki sam po sebi implicira neomejenost z razrednimi strukturami pri izbiranju svoje življenjske poti. Enake implikacije reflektivnega sebstva so očitne tudi za spolno neenakost in Giddens sam eksplicitno navaja, da reflektivno sebstvo deluje proti takšni neenakosti. Na drugi strani pa Bauman, čeprav razvija svoj model neenakosti, jasno zoperstavlja koncept 'slabega' in 'dobrega' potrošnika razredni analizi in

trdi, da v novih neenakosti razred izgublja svoj pomen in pada na sekundarno mesto pri analizi teh neenakosti. V nadaljevanju svoje magistrske naloge preizprašujem in kritiziram navedene trditve.

'Eliminiranje' razreda kot relevantne kategorije v diskurzu pozne modernosti po mojem mnenju izhaja iz nekaj tez; iz trditve, da je pod vplivom t.i. države blaginje, ki je velikemu deležu prebivalstva omogočila izobrazbo in boljše delovne pogoje, posameznikom omogočeno, da 'prestopijo' svoje razredno poreklo; iz trditve, da izginjanje t.i. 'industrijskega delavca' in njegovih mnogoterih kulturnih oblik na zahodu, pravzaprav zaznamuje tudi izginjanje delavskega razreda; in iz trditve, da je v pozni modernosti pod vplivom individualizacije in avtonomije ter zaradi zmanjševanja posameznikove identifikacije z razredom (nasproti denimo identifikacije z nekim življenjskim stilom), razred začne izgubljati tudi svojo simbolno relevantnost. S tem se pripadnost razredu reducira bodisi na subjektivno identificiranje bodisi na spremembe v rekonpoziciji kapitalizma.

Zato prek uporabe Marxove razredne analize poskušam vpeljati v diskusijo njegove koncepte o odnosu kapitala in meznega dela kot osnovnega ekonomskega (in družbenega) odnosa kapitalizma. Kakor navaja Kathi Weeks (2011) ima odnos kapital – mezdno delo še naprej osrednje mesto v pozno modernističnih družbah, mezdno delo pa ostaja glavni (in strukturni) izvor denarja za večino pripadnikov poznomodernističnih družb, medtem ko si dobičke (viške vrednosti) prilasti manjšina. V tem smislu se zdi – reflektirajoč Bauman -, da je odnos kapital – mezdno delo še vedno aktualen za analiziranje potrošniške družbe, saj pogojuje neenakost med potrošniki. Enostavno, kakor pravi tudi Bauman sam, če je denar ključ za vstop v potrošniško družbo ter za delovanje v njej, potem mezdno delo ostaja glavno sredstvo za pridobitev denarja. To ostaja relevantno navkljub dejstvu, da so številni posamezniki danes izključeni iz sveta meznega dela in postajajo človeški višek. Menim pa, da se to dogaja ravno zaradi logike kapitalizma ter odnosa kapitala in meznega dela. Z drugimi besedami, izključevanje se odvija že na ravni načina produkcije kapitalizma in ne zgolj na ravni potrošnje. Prek uporabe Marxove razredne analize tudi preizprašujem tezo o vse manjši potrebi kapitala po delu in trdim, da je to stališče preuranjeno, saj je padec povpraševanja po delu na Zahodu prej učinek geografske premestitve dela na Vzhod, kakor pa neke bistvene in radikalne spremembe v kapitalističnem načinu produkcije. Nenazadnje je najpomembnejše sporočilo Marxove razredne analize to, da možnosti naše participacije v kapitalistični družbi (in njeni regulaciji seksualnosti, intimnosti in individualnosti) ostajajo strukturno omejene ravno s to družbo in izkoriščanjem, hierarhijami ter oblagovljenjem, ki so zanjo značilni.

Razredna analiza, ki jo navdihuje Bourdieujevo delo, širi analizo z zgolj ekonomskega na socialni, kulturni in simbolni kapital. Z uporabo konceptov habitusa in družbeno polje ta reflektivna sociologija kaže na 'ne-refleksivne' strani naših življenjskih izbir, torej na sugestivnost habitusa in

polja, ki v veliki meri upravljata z našimi izbirami in s tem meče senco dvoma na tezo sociologije reflektivnosti o naših izbirah kot posledicah naših lastnih, individualnih odločitev. Rečeno drugače, avtorji, ki se naslanjajo na Bourdieuja dalje zastopajo relevantnost razredne analize in trdijo, kot denimo Willi Atkinson (2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c), da izginjanje simbolnega pomena razreda ni isto kot izginjanje pomena razreda na sploh. Rezmišljujoč o teorijah pozne modernosti avtor trdi še, da dokler za njih razlike v življenjskih stilih morda lahko pomenijo posamezne izbire, za Atkinsona te pomenijo razredne razlike oziroma razlike v posedovanju različnih vrst kapitala. Atkinson pravi, da je tako tudi danes moč opaziti takšne razlike v pozni modernosti. Zato preizprašuje mnoge teze teoretikov pozne modernosti in razkriva, kako so razredne razlike danes opazne tako na ravni izobrazbe in zaposlitve, kakor na nivoju življenjskih stilov in celo simbolike oziroma jezika ter da oblikujejo izbire in diskurze na teh poljih.

Marksistično feministična analiza, ki je utemeljena na Marxu in povezuje vprašanje ženskega položaja v družbi z kapitalističnim načinom produkcije, vpelje v debato še eno zapostavljeno sfero teorij pozne modernosti – vprašanje reproduktivnega dela. V svojih argumentih o intimnosti in seksualnosti ter v svojih radikalnih tezah o njihovih transformacijah tako Giddens kot Bauman popolnoma zanemarita to vprašanje. V nobenem trenutku ne reflektirata spolne delitve v tej sferi, torej dela pri vzdrževanju gospodinjstva, vzgoji in skrbi za družinske člane. Kakor ironično poudari Lynn Jamieson (1999), pri njujinih pogledih na intimnost se zdi, da se partnerja le ljubita in razkrivata eden drugemu, medtem ko vprašanja skupnega življenja in njegove reprodukcije popolnoma umanjajo. Ravno navedeno je predmet številnih kritik ter razlog, zakaj mnogi, posebno avtorji, ki imajo feministično pozicijo, niso mogli sprejeti argumentov teoretikov pozne modernosti. Namreč, kakor v primeru individualizacije v razmerju do razreda, raziskave še naprej kažejo, da navkljub vsem spremembam patriarhata, ki smo jim priča, vprašanje reproduktivnega dela ostaja večinoma v domeni žensk in da v teh poljih spremembe niso niti približno tako korenite, kakor to implicirata Giddens in Bauman. Marksistične feministke pa ne ostanejo le na kritiki reproduktivnega dela, ampak so svojo kritiko razširile in povezale s kritiko kapitalizma kot takšnega. V zvezi s tem kritizirajo tudi tezo, da je vstop žensk na trg dela za njih izključno emancipatorno dejanje, kakor zagovarjajo tudi teoretiki pozne modernosti. Trdijo, da je ta proces ambivalenten in kontradiktoren ter izpostavijo, da je bilo vključevanje žensk na trg dela kodirano s potrebami kapitalizma v isti meri kot s potrebami žensk, kar konkretno pomeni, da so ženske v glavnem integrirane v prekarne, nizko vrednotene in slabo plačane industrije. In še, ker vključevanje žensk na trg dela ni spremljalo vključevanje moških v reproduktivno delo, so se mnoge znašle v dvojnem jarmu – kapitala in patriarhata. Marksistične feministke tudi poudarjajo, kako trenutna družbena in ekonomska kriza, v kateri se socialne funkcije države na novo privatizirajo, najbolj prizadeva ženske, kar preprečuje njihovo nadaljno emancipacijo. V svojih

splošnih sporočilih razkrivajo ozko povezavo med kapitalističnim izkoriščanjem in patriarhalnim zatiranjem in zato tudi dvomijo v možnost emancipacije žensk znotraj okvira kapitalistične družbe, kakor zagovarjata Giddens in Bauman.

Ta del magistrske naloge končam s kritikami, ki so jih teorije pozne modernosti doživele na področju študij družine, intimnosti in seksualnosti. Čeprav so mnoge spremembe na tem področju očitno, v veliki meri ostajajo polovične in kontradiktorne. Tako tudi denimo Jeffrey Weeks navaja številne med temi kontradikcijami, kakor je vztrajajoča hegemonija heteroseksualnosti, strah pred razliko v seksualnosti, polovična ženska emancipacije itn. Drugi avtorji pravijo, da čisti odnosi niso pomembno prisotni v partnerstvih, niti v homoseksualnih, ki jih Giddens navaja kot primer, ali pa trdijo, da individualizacija in postavljanje svojega sebstva v središče odločitev ni edini način, na katerega ljudje danes gradijo svoje intimne odnose. Mnogi namreč še naprej podpirajo tradicionalne oblike intimnih odnosov in mnogim intimni odnosi niso, za razliko od tega, kar trdi Giddens, v središču njihovega življenja ter konstrukcije sebstva.

Magistrsko delo zaključim s splošno evalvacijo tem, ki jih obravnavam v nalogi. Poskušam upoštevati nekatere sugestivne argumente teoretikov pozne modernosti, a hkrati pozivam na drugačno branje teh interpretacij. Na branje, ki bo zmožno vključiti njihove sugestivne argumente, vendar ne bo zapadlo v generaliziranje in univerzalen jezik, ki zapostavlja vprašanje razlike in moči ter označevalcev razreda in spola.

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