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Societies in Balance.
Re-thinking Matriarchy in modern Matriarchal Studies

Part I: Matriarchies – Society, Economy, Politics and Spirituality

Introduction

My first task is to explain what “matriarchal society” means: what kind of society is it? That means to explain how the people in such a society live, how they organize their social life, how they do their economics and politics, which are their values and world views. This cannot be found out in the past, because from ancient cultures only some remnants came down to us: ruins of houses and graves, artefacts like statues, images and pottery, and fragments of mythology which have been heavily veiled by patriarchal interpretations from the later millennia. Even if these remnants might be numerous, they cannot give us the full picture of what “matriarchal society” is. This is the reason why I dedicated my research during the last decade to still existing matriarchal societies. They are not far away from us, but still exist today in the continents of Asia, America and Africa. I could learn a lot from them, and they allowed me to develop the full picture of “matriarchal society” by my worldwide cross-cultural research. Here I would like to give you the result of these studies in short:

Matriarchies are not just a reversal of patriarchy, with women ruling over men – as the usual misinterpretation would have it. Matriarchies are mother-centered societies, with complementary equality between the genders and generations. They are based on *maternal values*: care-taking, nurturing, motherliness, peace-building, which holds for everybody: for mothers and those who are not mothers, for women and men alike. The matriarchal concept of “motherliness” is not the romantic image so often portrayed in patriarchy, a fiction that devalues maternal values and makes them appear merely sentimental. This reflects a systematic effort to obscure the fact that motherhood is the most important function in each society, because it insures its future.

Matriarchal societies are consciously built upon the maternal values and motherly work, and this is why they are much more realistic than patriarchies. They are, on principle, need-oriented. Their precepts aim to meet everyone's needs with the greatest benefit. Great care is taken to provide a balance between genders, among generations, and between humans and nature. So, in matriarchies, motherhood – which originates as a biological fact – is transformed into a *cultural model*. This model is much more appropriate to the human condition than the way patriarchies conceptualise motherhood and use it to make women, and especially mothers, into slaves.

This is the subject of Modern Matriarchal Studies, which investigates and presents matriarchal societies found all over the world. These investigations focus not only on the past, but also pay attention to societies with matriarchal patterns in Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific area. Contrary to common belief, none of these is a mere reversal of patriarchy. Rather, they are all gender-egalitarian societies, and many of them are fully egalitarian. This means they have no hierarchies, classes nor domination of one gender by the other.

With matriarchal cultures, equality means more than just a levelling of differences. Natural differences between the genders and the generations are respected and honoured, but they never serve to create hierarchies, as is common in patriarchy. The different genders and generations have their own dignity, and through complementary areas of activity, they function in concert one other. This can be observed on all levels of society: the social level, the economic level, the political level and the areas of their worldviews and faiths.

The Deep Structure of Matriarchal Society

How do they put this into practice? I would like to explain it here, in respect to the four societal levels just mentioned:

At the social level, matriarchal societies are based on the clan, and on the “symbolic order of the mother”. This also means maternal values as spiritual principles, one that humans take from nature. Mother Nature cares for all beings, however different they may be. The same applies to motherliness: a good mother cares for all her children, embracing their diversity.

This holds true for men as well. If a man in a matriarchal society desires to acquire status among his peers, or even become a representative of the clan to the outside world, then “He must be like a good mother” (as the matriarchal Minangkabau of Sumatra say).

But in matriarchies, you don't have to be a biological mother in order to be acknowledged as a woman, because matriarchies practice the common

motherhood of a group of sisters. Each individual sister does not necessarily have to have children, but together they are all “mothers” of any children that any of them have. This motherhood is founded on the freedom of women to decide on their own about whether or not to have biological children.

This is possible because matriarchal people live together in large kinship groups, formed according to the principle of *matrilineality*. The clan’s name, and all social status and political titles, are passed on through the mother’s line. Such a matri-clan consists of at least three generations of women, along with their brothers, nephews and maternal uncles. In classic cases, the matri-clan lives in one big clan-house. This is called *matrilocality*. Their spouses or lovers stay only over-night, in a pattern called “visiting-marriage”. These principles of matrilineality and matrilocality put mothers at the center; in this way women guide their clans without ruling.

In order to achieve social cohesion among the clans of a village or city, complex marriage conventions have been developed that link them in mutually beneficial ways. The intended effect is that all inhabitants of a village or city are related to each other by birth or by marriage. This shapes a society that sees itself as a big clan, where everybody is “mother” or “sister” or “brother” to everybody else. Thus matriarchies are *non-hierarchical, horizontal societies of matrilineal kinship*.

This social order based on motherhood includes far reaching consequences for the *economical level*:

Matriarchal economy is a subsistence economy, i.e. it is based on self-supporting gardening or agriculture. There is no such thing as private property, and there are no territorial claims. The people simply have usage rights on the soil they till, or the pastures their animals graze, for Mother Earth can not be owned or cut up in pieces. She gives the fruits of the fields and the young animals to all people. Parcels of land and a certain number of animals are given to each matri-clan, and are worked on communally.

Most importantly, women have the power of disposition over goods and clan houses, and especially over the sources of nourishment: fields, flocks and food. – This is the important distinction which makes a society a “matriarchal” one, and differentiate it from merely “matrilineal” ones. – All the goods are put in the hands of the clan mother, the matriarch, and she, mother of all the clan members, distributes them equally among her children and grand-children. She is responsible for the sustenance and protection of all clan members.

In a matriarchal community, the clans enjoy perfect mutuality: every relative advantage, or disadvantage, in terms of acquiring goods is mediated by social guidelines. For example, at the seasonal festivals of the agricultural year, clans that are comparatively better off will invite all the inhabitants to be their guests. The members of such a clan organize the banquet, the rituals, and the music and dances of one of the annual festivals – and then give away their goods as a gift to all their neighbours. By doing this, they gain nothing except honor. At the next

festival in the cycle, another lucky clan will step up, outdoing itself by inviting everybody in the village or neighbourhood, entertaining them all, and dispensing presents.

Since this is the general attitude, matriarchal economy can be called a “gift economy”. It is the economic manifestation of the principle of *motherliness*, which prevents development of an exploiting exchange economy and instead fully achieves a gift economy, as Genevieve Vaughan has formulated it.

Due to these features, matriarchies can be called *societies of economic reciprocity, based on the circulation of gifts*.

The patterns of *the political level* follow the principle of consensus, which means *unanimity* regarding each decision. To manifest a principle like this in practice, a society must be specifically organized to do so, and matrilinear kinship lines are, once again, the starting point.

The basis of each decision-making is the individual clan house. Matters that concern the clan house are decided upon by the women and men in a consensus process, of which the matriarch is the facilitator. Each person has only one vote – even the matriarch – and no member of the household is excluded.

The same applies to decisions concerning the whole village. The clan delegates meet together in the village council, but do not make decisions themselves; they simply communicate the decisions that have been made in their clan houses, and move back and forth, until a consensus decision is reached by the whole village. The same applies at the regional level. The delegates move between the local council and the regional council until consensus of all the villages is reached.

The origin of all politics is in the clan houses, where the people live, and in this way, a true “grass roots democracy” is put into practice. The result of these practices is that matriarchies are *egalitarian societies of consensus*. This clearly shows how maternal values also permeate political practice.

But such a societal system as matriarchy could not function as a whole without a deep, supporting and all-permeating spiritual attitude. *At the spiritual and cultural level*, matriarchal societies do not have hierarchic religions based on an omnipotent, but invisible male God. Dualistic worldview and morality are absent. In matriarchies, divinity is immanent, for the whole world is regarded as divine: as feminine divine. This is evident in the widely held concept of the universe as the Great Goddess who brought forth everything by birth, and of the earth as the Great Mother who created everything living. And everyone, and everything, is endowed with divinity by virtue of being a child of the Great Mother Nature.

In such a culture, everything in life is part of the spiritual symbolic system. In their festivals, which follow the cycle of the seasons and the cycle of life, everything is celebrated. There is no separation between sacred and secular, so the everyday tasks also have ritual significance. In this sense matriarchal societies are sacred ones.

So, we can see here that the entire societies are constructed in the image of the creative Mother Nature. “Mother Nature is our teacher”, as the Minangkabau of Sumatra say. This divine mother is reflected in every woman’s being, and in her abilities to create. Every social, economic and political action is informed by the principle of the world’s – and the universe’s – all-encompassing maternal attitude.

Therefore, on the spiritual level, matriarchies are *sacred societies and cultures of the Divine Feminine or Goddess*.

Part II: The Way into an egalitarian Society, or Implementation of Matriarchal Principles today

It started in 1986, when I founded the *International Academy HAGIA. Academy for Matriarchal Studies and Matriarchal Spirituality* in Germany. The Academy is dedicated to the exploration of matriarchal societies past and present and their worldwide existence. In that way, modern Matriarchal Studies developed as a new socio-cultural field of knowledge. Many women participated in the teachings, and the knowledge about matriarchal societies spread.

Later, two *World Congresses on Matriarchal Studies* followed which were guided by me, and here, the research on matriarchal societies was presented to a wider public by international scholars. In 2003, the first congress, titled *SOCIETIES IN BALANCE*, took place in Luxembourg/Europe, and the second one, titled *SOCIETIES OF PEACE*, was held 2005 in San Marcos/Texas. Both congresses, but especially the second one, brought together indigenous researchers, mostly women and some men, from many of the world’s still existing matriarchal societies.

In 2011, the third big conference followed in Switzerland, dedicated to *Matriarchal Politics* which meant the search for the implementation of matriarchal principles in modern times.

At the same time, these congresses made visible the *Matriarchy Movement*, for which – among others – I did pioneer work since three decades. It developed in Germany and Central Europe, and now is also initiated in the USA and other countries. So, it is becoming increasingly clear that this radically different cultural model will have great significance for our future as women and mothers.

Therefore, I would like to make suggestions for new mother-centered, egalitarian and peaceful societies to explain what new matriarchal

societies could look like. Of course, we cannot imitate traditional matriarchal societies, but we can gain much stimulation and insights from them, which – unlike abstract utopias – have been lived over millennia. For all, who are looking to implement new matriarchal patterns, these theoretical and systematic suggestions can be the starting point. It needs a *clear vision* which can give a clear guidance to make the subsequent practice lasting and powerful.

My suggestions refer to new matriarchal *microstructures*, to *macrostructures*, and to *global structures*.

Microstructures

At the **social level** this means escaping the increasing fragmentation of society – which drags human beings down into a state of separation and loneliness, and renders them sick and destructive. For that fragmentation is the breeding ground of increasing violence. Rather, it means developing structures that foster various types of *affinity or intentional communities*, such as communes, alliances of neighboring communities, and networks. Affinity communities, however, are not created from mere communities of interest – entities that rapidly come together and quickly fall apart. Rather, affinity communities arise from a spiritual-intellectual common ground, through which a symbolic clan develops, resulting in a group that is more deeply connected than a mere community of interest.

The matriarchal principle here is that such affinity groups are generally *initiated, supported and led by women*. The determining criteria are the needs of women and children, who are the future of each society, rather than the power-and-virility aspirations of men. In the new matri-clans women will fully integrate men, but according to a different value system, that is, one based on reciprocal care and love, rather than on power. In a community like this, men also live better than they do in patriarchy.

It would be a political goal to support the development of such communities in every way. Many of them are already existing, as the new *Communities Movement* can show us. Affinity communities of different kind are spreading in Europe and the USA and at other places. Unfortunately, they are usually not led by women, the result of which is that the traditional gender-roles are not reflected and overcome, i.e. men as the givers of ideas and founders are still at the center. To overcome traditional gender-roles, the diverse new *Feminist Movements and the Matriarchy Movement* are of utmost importance. They dismantle the deeply rooted patriarchal sexism and create models to bring it to an end everywhere in society. So, it is completely different if women give the ideas and create the communities, as can be seen by the examples of new women's villages in Congo and Colombia. The women's village of *Nashira* in Colombia is intentionally based on matriarchal ideas.

At the *economic level*, further increase in large-scale industry, in expanding military, and in so-called “standard of living” would not be possible, considering the danger of complete destruction of the biosphere, of the life on earth. Here the perspective of alternative, local and regional subsistence economy arises, for the subsistence perspective means economic independence of the people. Subsistence entities engage in self-sufficient and independent activities in which quality of life takes precedence over quantity. This does not only mean doing local gardening and agriculture, but also fostering regional communication, arts, trade, and technology. Even producing high technology is possible on the regional level, if the monopolizing by the transnational corporations will be finished. These corporations try to make the peoples of the world dependent not only on their technologies, but also on the very basis of life, which is water and seeds. This must definitely come to an end!

Worldwide, the development of subsistence economy starts with strengthening and extending the structures of subsistence economy and gift economy that are still practiced, and in which women – who especially in the so-called Third World nurture their families – are usually the main stays. They give good examples how to develop similar structures everywhere. Regionalization of agriculture, trade, etc. for the benefit of *women and their families or clans* is a matriarchal principle, because they are the basis of human life on earth.

In modern context, the diverse *Ecological Movements* are on the way to this goal. They are many and they are everywhere. They include the *Movements of Urban Gardening and Transitions Towns*, which started in Europe, by which the citizens transformed public spaces like parks and parking grounds into gardens to grow food on their own. These movements are complemented by the *Movement for Gift Giving* with their many gift giving circles, and the *Movement for Regional Currency*, at which the people of a region use their own currency to get rid of the notion of capitalist money, i.e. the manipulations of the international capitalist bank businesses. This money is free from interest. It can only be used as “vouchers” to facilitate distant trade within a region that goes beyond the basic gift giving circles.

At the *level of political decision-making*, the matriarchal consensus principle is essential for a egalitarian communities and societies. It can be practiced here and now, immediately and everywhere. It is the inspiring stimulus for creating any matriarchal community, and its new, symbolic clans of all types constrain domination by individuals or groups. It establishes a balance between women and men, and also between generations, as the elderly as well as the youth are able to have their say. In addition, it is really the basis of democracy, as it manifests what formal democracies promise but fail to deliver.

According to this principle, the small units of the new matri-clans are the actual decision makers, but these policies can be implemented no farther than at the regional level. All the alternative movements mentioned above try to practice this principle more or less, and they have gained lots of experience in

this way. To implement the consensus principle in future means to develop a system of councils, smaller and broader, which are all interconnected to make decisions on the communal, local and regional levels. In this vision *flourishing, independent regions remain the political goal*, rather than ever-expanding larger entities like nations, unions of states, and super-powers, which bestow ever-greater powers on their rulers and destroy step by step the remaining democratic principles.

At the *spiritual-cultural level*, it is mandatory that all hierarchical, male-dominated religions with belief in transcendent divinities and claims of absolute truth – which have deeply debased the world, the earth, humanity, and especially women – must be rejected. Rather, we are looking at a new sacralization of the world, consonant with the matriarchal perspective that the entire world, with everything in it and on it, is divine. This leads to freely and creatively honoring and celebrating everything.

In this way, matriarchal spirituality can permeate everything and can become once again a normal part of everyday life. At the same time, this spirituality includes the *matriarchal principle of tolerance*, so that no one is forced to „believe“ something specific and no missionizing takes place. Matriarchal spirituality is neither a dogma nor a teaching of a powerful priestly caste, but the perpetual, multifaceted celebration of life and the visible world.

Diverse movements are already on this way: the international *Goddess Movement and Movement of Matriarchal Spirituality*, which developed within the Feminist Movements. Women celebrate the cycles of the earth and the cycles of life in many individual ways, and there exist no hierarchical order or spiritual head among them.

One of the most important movement is the *Movement of Indigenous Peoples*, by which diverse indigenous peoples on every continent, starting from their own spiritual traditions which are central to them, claim the rights on their own land, language, and culture. Most of them still preserved matriarchal patterns or, at least, many matriarchal elements.

Maternal values and matriarchal elements are also included, to some extent, in all of the mentioned alternative movements, and in many more which have not been mentioned here. But contrary to the Movement of Indigenous Peoples, they are not aware of it. Therefore, it is necessary to make it conscious to them and to bridge the differences between these movements so that *they would start to co-operate*. This co-operation is urgently needed, and the vision of a new matriarchal society, which includes them all, might create the bonds.

Macrostructures

Regionalism:

In a new matriarchal society, bigger is not necessarily better. The smaller units of society, responsible for engendering person-to-person and transparent politics, are given preference. They must not become so big that people cannot see through them, and cannot participate in their decisions, as is the case in so many of today's governments and super powers. But they must be big enough to safeguard their self-sufficiency and the diversity of their handiwork, technologies and arts. The ideal dimension is that of the *region*. The borders of a region are not random, like national borders are; rather they have developed out of the conditions of the landscape and out of cultural traditions. Regional borders are formed by the decisions of the people themselves who want to live together on the basis of *common cultural and spiritual traditions*; this avoids any war of culture or religion. Often the landscape corresponds to these cultural borders, because natural borders can be formed by mountain ranges, rivers, big lakes, or the sea which bound people into their regional places.

A matriarchal society does not extend beyond its own region; it is a network of communities in villages and neighborhoods in towns. These are mutually independent village republics and town republics, and as such, the principle of consensus limits the size of towns and cities.

The same is true for the subsistence economy, it reflects the size of the region. It is based on intensive work and diligent, careful association with the earth; in addition it has been proven to be the most ecological and productive. Its dimensions are *human-sized*, rather than being mechanically super-sized. The result is a multiplicity of regional economies, varying according what is possible in the specific environment for the collective effort. Such local and economic diversity is a great advantage, because the diversity of lifestyles and cultures is based upon it.

These ideas are formulated in the modern *Movement for Regionalism*, which has been created out of the *Communities Movement* and is searching for political implementation.

The two faces of society:

Humanity is made up of two – the men and the women. All traditional matriarchal societies have taken this basic fact into account, in that they maintain a social order based on *complementary gender equality and perfect balance between the sexes*. A modern matriarchal society will also be set up this way.

This means that in every realm of society women and men are equally represented. In matriarchal politics it is always a woman and a man together, as the chosen speakers for the clan, who represent it in the outside world. That also true at the levels of village, town, and region: here too, the speaker for the village, town or the whole region is always a woman and a man. They act together, representing the double face of society.

This is true not only in politics, but for every aspect society: for economic functions just as for spiritual offices, as well as for special groups and guilds

such as handicraft workers, technicians, artists and scientists. Each post is simultaneously represented by a woman and a man, and so, doubly filled.

Culture and spirituality at the interregional level:

Regarding culture at the regional level, spirituality is the connecting power between all the aspects and functions in a traditional, as well as in a modern, matriarchal society. Matriarchal spirituality is not institutionalized and is thus free, but it is not arbitrary. It has a binding foundation: Mother Earth, which holds everything, and the flow of life, which permeates everything.

Although a matriarchal society, as a structure, cannot be constituted beyond the regional level, it can create friendly alliances with other regions. These *interregional associations* are of a purely spiritual sort, and expressed symbolically. This means that people of neighboring regions might visit each other, giving gifts of friendship and celebrating festivals together in order to learn from each other without any manipulation to convince the other from one's own way of life. This avoids cultural hegemonism and spiritual colonialism. In this way a free, horizontal network of *sister regions* can be created, completely distinct from today's centralist, hierarchal state structures.

In Europe exists a system of *sister towns*, at which town of the same size, but of different nations created a friendly relationship to each other. The citizens make trips to visit each other and to share specialties of food or of culture during common festivals. Of course, these are patriarchally governed towns of today, but their examples show how these "symbolic relationships" among regions can be practiced.

In the age of modern communications technologies, these cultural and spiritual alliances are not limited to neighboring regions, but can link to other countries and even other continents. In that way, a sister region in Europe can be associated with a sister region in South America or Africa or the Middle East, and they can share communication and cultural gifts via internet – a practice which is already worldwide performed by individuals and groups of individuals. In this way, *interregional associations among matriarchal communities, towns and regions will arise worldwide.*

Global structures

To solve global problems, these steps from below must nevertheless be supplemented with comprehensive structures. These are not „above,“ as there is no „above“ in this sense in matriarchal societies; they are simple more comprehensive.

National states no longer fit the bill: they are too big for humane, transparent political processes. At the same time, they are too small to solve global problems that the current patriarchy creates and leaves behind for posterity; this is especially true regarding problems related to advanced destruction of the biosphere on earth. It is no longer possible for national

governments, or even regional ones, to solve these problems. They affect all of humanity, so global strategies are needed to solve them.

No more national states:

Existing national governments must be dissolved in two directions: on one hand, in the direction of the autonomous regions, which are the basis for life; on the other hand, in the direction of a global structure with a purely executive status which has no state power. Such a structure could be a Global Council, which will be formed by the two halves of a *Women's Global Council and a Men's Global Council*. Today, the U.N. tries to form such a global council, but because of its patriarchal structure which excludes the issues of women, and the power plays of the super-powers on this level, fails to fulfill its ideals. In this form, such institutions are not much good when it comes to a radical change in the situation; rather, they just continue the patriarchal status quo.

Distribution of national wealth:

An initial and fundamental challenge is therefore to dissolve the financial wealth of the national state, first to the regions, and in the regions to the communities. Of course, it does not mean that the money goes to individuals or patriarchal institutions, rather it is only distributed for matriarchal subsistence communities. Exactly half of this wealth must go to women of the communities, and half must go to the men of the communities, so each gender can develop their respective area of the society and region. As there is already a double-occupancy of every agency in a new matriarchal society, this can be independently accomplished by each sex.

This foundation, in which women get 50% of the national wealth, and 50% is left for the men, is quite moderate in light of the fact that women in most cases are the primary carers of children and the elderly; through this work alone they would have earned a larger share of the national financial wealth. However, this money is not a paying for motherhood and women's work, but a small reward for all what women had done for free through long periods of time. This equitable division of wealth would enable women to stop begging for state aid – which for them is notoriously scanty anyway.

The constant social and economic crisis-mode in which all of today's national states find themselves would come to an end. The current horrendous flow of money into male projects like the military, multinational corporations, monumental ego-architecture, and sports stadiums costing hundreds of millions of dollars means that there is nothing left but pitifully small amounts for social services, as women are expected to provide these for free – the usual situation of exploiting women. With the division of financial national wealth, women would probably establish infrastructures to fulfil social needs, with the likely result that culture and education would flourish. And women would establish their own universities, because their knowledge is never respected in patriarchal societies. But even men are not free to do what they want with their share of money, for

the projects of women and men in the communities and regions would be agreed upon by the local and regional consensus councils, according to maternal values.

Global structures for global problems:

The other direction in which the public wealth of national states should be dissolved would be the structures of the Women's Global Council and the Men's Global Council. An agreed-upon percentage of women's and men's wealth from all the regions would go to these two halves of the Global Council, conducted by delegates of both sexes, whose responsibility would be to direct and oversee these two halves. The Global Council's assets would be used exclusively to solve the global problems of the polluted air and water and soil and the damaged life on earth, that means, to clean up the technology-caused legacy of pollution by military and industrial corporations.

Through the two-gender Global Council, the different perspectives of both sexes can be preserved. In this way, the "double face of society" is visible to the broadest institutions. Members of the Women's Global Council and the Men's Global Council are always elected delegates from each region, and are responsible to their region; they have no power to make decisions independently of their region's determinations. They moderate and coordinate the decisions of all regions of the world in precisely the same sense that a regional or local council coordinates the decisions of the matri-clans.

With these structures, what we call a "state" dissolves, regardless of whether it is a monarchy, an empire or a national state. The concept and image of the hierarchical "state," no matter how constituted, have become redundant. Patriarchal history of domination begins with the formation of "states" every time. With the development of new forms of matriarchal societies, which are free of domination, a new, humane cultural history could begin. –

See for the *International Academy HAGIA for Modern Matriarchal Studies:*

www.hagia.de

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Books:

Heide Goettner-Abendroth:

Matriarchal Societies. Studies on Indigenous Cultures across the Globe
New York 2012, Peter Lang.

Heide Goettner-Abendroth (ed.):

Societies of Peace. Matriarchies Past, Present and Future

Selected papers of the two World Congresses on Matriarchal Studies,
Toronto 2009, Inanna Press, York University.

Heide Goettner-Abendroth:

The Goddess and her Heros. Studies on Matriarchal Mythology
Stow, Massachusetts 1995, Anthony Publishing Co.

Biographical note:

Heide Goettner-Abendroth was born in Thuringia, Germany, in 1941, she is a mother and a grandmother. She earned her Ph.D. in philosophy of science at the University of Munich where she taught philosophy for ten years (1973-1983).

She has published on philosophy of science and extensively on matriarchal society and culture, and through her lifelong research on matriarchal societies has become a founder of Modern Matriarchal Studies.

She lectured in Europe and abroad, and her main work “Matriarchal Societies” has been published in German, English and Italian.

In 1986, she founded the “International ACADEMY HAGIA for Matriarchal Studies and Matriarchal Spirituality” in Germany, and since then has been its director. She has also been visiting professor at the University of Montreal in Canada, and the University of Innsbruck in Austria.

In 2003, she organized and guided the “1st World Congress on Matriarchal Studies” in Luxembourg; in 2005, the “2nd World Congress on Matriarchal Studies” in San Marcos, Texas; and in 2011, a major conference on Matriarchal Studies and Politics in Switzerland.

In 2005, she was elected by the international initiative “1000 Peace Women Across the Globe” as a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize. In 2012, she received an award for her scholarship from “The Association for the Study of Women & Mythology” in San Francisco.