

to keep women out of non-traditional occupations and relationships. Arguments based on the "nature" of women have already been used far too long to exclude women from an active role in society and the church.

Having said all this, I must still profess admiration for this pioneering synthesis. The author's dispassionate exposure of the absurdities of wise men may be more effective in reaching women and men in need of consciousness-raising than the more emotionally satisfying fulminations of some feminist theologians. The language is clear and jargon-free, accessible to the general reader. The scholarship, with the exception of the few lapses I have mentioned, is thorough. The book could serve as a text for ideas on women and as an ancillary for the history of philosophy.

This reviewer looks forward to the projected second volume and would hope for a third volume dealing with the first and second waves of feminist philosophical thought. The present volume has indeed, as the author hoped, extended "philosophy into the philosophy of man and woman."

Linda Spear
Champlain Regional College

Women Entrepreneurs in India: A Socio-Economic Study of Delhi 1975-1985. Medha Dubhashi Vinze. *Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1987.*

Relatively few studies have been conducted on women entrepreneurs and fewer still on women entrepreneurs in India. However, at the end of the International Decade on Women, Medha Dubhashi Vinze addressed this important but neglected area. She conducted a survey of middle-class women in small-scale enterprises in the formal sector of Delhi. Her study was undertaken to ascertain, first, whether ten years of discussion on women had had any significant impact on their involvement in the economy and, second, whether the Decade had affected government policy and its implementation. The result of her research, published as *Women Entrepreneurs in India: A Socio-Economic Study of Delhi, 1975-1985*, both helps fill the gap in the literature on women in the economy and adds to our understanding of women in development.

The book, which has seven chapters, begins with a detailed description of industrial Delhi. This is followed by a discussion of the theory of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. This theory is based on male character-

istics which are alien to women entrepreneurs. Then come chapters on "Women and Socio-Economic Development," "Organizations in the Service of Women Entrepreneurs," "Problems of Women Entrepreneurs and Strategy Potential," "Perceptions of Sample Women Entrepreneurs," and "Conclusions."

The major contribution of the book is found in Chapter 6, "Problems of Women Entrepreneurs and Strategy Potential." This chapter delves into the psycho-social and fiscal components of the problems of self-employed Indian women. It shows that, for tradition-induced reasons, women do not readily apply for bank loans. In fact, they form only two percent of the total bank clientele. Then, because women do not borrow, they inevitably have no creditworthiness, and thus, would have difficulty getting loans if they ever decided to apply for them. Their lack of creditworthiness is also the result of their not having collateral, which in itself is a severe economic disability. These difficulties are compounded by women's limited access to appropriate technology and the economic infrastructure. Furthermore, their lack of training, their weak management skills and their low self-esteem feed into a vicious circle that keeps them from competing in the male-dominated entrepreneurial field (pp. 178-180).

Vinze's study shows that government policies which would assist small-scale enterprises have been introduced, but a majority of the women interviewed were unaware of them. Only ten percent of the women, including some who were highly educated, knew of the existence of government agencies that could help them. Further, this ten percent knew only the names of the agencies but not their objectives nor their activities (p. 192). None of the interviewees was aware of beneficiary organizations. (The reader cannot help but wonder how the vast majority of women must fare when such a small proportion of their educated sisters knows so little about government policies.)

The study also shows that despite government policies and agencies, traditional patriarchal attitudes continue to prevail. Male officers in government organizations deter women from using the available services. Vinze says:

At the Government level, the licensing authorities, labour officers and sales tax inspectors ask all sorts of humiliating questions like, how will you manage labourers? How will you manage both the house and business? Does your husband approve? etc. (p. 187).

The policies themselves seem to be commendable at the outset but the reader will find that, upon closer scrutiny, they do not really support women. The procedures for registration virtually preclude the participation of women entrepreneurs simply because the women do not fit the criteria specified in the regulations. Further, the impression is given that, by and large, government policies are aimed at the educated, established small-scale entrepreneurs in the formal sector who have a certain level of capital, while the vast majority of women who desperately need help are the illiterate, micro-entrepreneurs in the informal sector who have no capital nor the means to obtain it. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of the book is that Vinze also seems to overlook the masses of women in the informal sector.

Women Entrepreneurs in India makes a worthwhile contribution insofar as it addresses problems faced by Indian women in small-scale enterprises and identifies government policies, programmes, and agencies. It does not deal with the total picture of women entrepreneurs, *i.e.*, both in the formal and informal sector in India. It does, however, identify two major concerns: (1) lack of government outreach programmes for women in the economy; and (2) detrimental social attitudes. It is a welcome piece of work as it opens a vast area of research on how existing government services should be made available to women and how to find ways of overcoming dominant social attitudes.

Rashida Keshavjee
McGill University

Beyond the Public Domestic Dichotomy: Contemporary Perspectives on Women's Public Lives. Janet Sharistanian (ed.) *Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987, Pp. 197.*

The relationship between the "public" and the "private" sphere has been the subject of much theoretical debate and empirical investigation in feminist work over the past twenty years. In this context, links between feminists working in a diverse set of disciplines and researching a variety of empirical issues have been formed. One of the outcomes of this mode of interaction and exchange has been the recognition of the need for a forum in which such a dialogue can be made available to larger numbers of researchers who share common interests and concerns. The papers in *Beyond the Public Domestic Dichotomy* are the end products of a collectivity of feminist researchers who met at the University of Kansas Research Institute on Women's Public Lives, in the summer of 1980. It is a com-

panion volume to *Gender, Ideology and Action: Historical Perspectives on Women's Public Lives*, also edited by Sharistanian. While such an enterprise is laudable in its intent, in this particular instance the outcome is disappointing.

The context for the work is provided in the opening essay by Sharistanian. Herein she outlines the theoretical terrain which has provided the frame for contemporary debate on the "public and the private" and the relationships between the two. The concepts of "public" and "private," she argues, can be explicated by returning to the influential work of Rosaldo and Lamphere (1974), where Rosaldo forwarded her position that sexual asymmetry could be understood through an exploration of the tension and opposition between the world of men's (public) and the world of women's (private) activities. Bearing the dominant responsibility for child birth and child care the world over, Rosaldo argued that women were excluded in both formal and informal ways, from the sphere where influential decisions were made and carried out. As Sharistanian herself indicates, the "debunking" of this position has been formidable in recent years. Claims of essentialism, ahistorical analysis, biological reductionism, ethnocentricity and unwarranted assumption of homogeneity have come from a variety of feminist anthropologists, historians, economists and sociologists. Indeed Rosaldo herself has relatively recently tipped her hat to these critiques.¹ Supporting the more recent concerns and positions of socialist feminists, Rosaldo would content that a historical materialist method, sensitive to both material and ideological expressions of women's subordination, provide an important corrective to earlier work.

Given this important recognition, and given the promise of this collection's title—*Beyond the Public Domestic Dichotomy*—one would expect that the papers included would seriously grapple with the limitations and reformulations of a model which is premised upon the notion of "separate but interrelated" spheres. We are reminded of the "dual systems" approach which characterized earlier work on the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy.² Instead, the collection *begins* from the position that "the domestic/public paradigm continues to be of value when it is given precise definition and tested by a specific context."³ The largely uncritical acceptance of this approach short-circuits the possibility of theoretical debate and of reformulation. While this collection provides some interesting empirical observations and data, it is its lack of theoretical uniformity and innovation which limits its contemporary usefulness. This is especially the