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BOOK REVIEWS

Editor's Preface:
Author, text, and reader in the *Journal of Gender and Power*

The *Journal of Gender and Power* is open to dialogue between various theoretical approaches to research and accepts authors' diverse value systems. For us, the reader is not only the addressee but—most importantly—is framed as the subject in relation to the content of each issue of the journal.

This way of conceptualizing the relationship between the text and the reader entails that the latter exerts some sort of power over the former. It does not, however, consist in singling out all mysteries residing in the text; in this approach, the text does not possess the "immanent truth" about itself. This power is somewhat modest, individual, not aspiring to a kind of enlightened universalism. It is a power of assembling—while reading—the text anew… The reader—let us repeat this again—re-writes the text and imbues it with their own meaning while perceiving it. The text is being multiplied with every reader. Thus we are unable to state "what the author's intention was", something that—from the postmodern perspective—is an attempt at imposing one's own subjective interpretation as the dominant one. Therefore, there is no "prototypical" or "original" text, but rather ways of reading the text preferred by a given reader that are inflected by their biography, experiences, social background or even mood. Every reading is inevitably a personal reading. There is, thus, no text in itself as there are only textual representations in the reader's mind or voice. And every representation is unavoidably local, contextual, deprived of "epistemological arrogance" which is characteristic of those who already "know everything".

And it is the antiessentialist category of representation that seems to be very helpful in trying to understand the controversy surrounding text interpretation. Representations are "«schemes of interpretation», as

widely available, experientially acquired frameworks for organizing an making sense of everyday life. The schemes (...) represent the social forms or structures of our lives (...) Mediate individual biography and interpersonal relations, reflecting and perpetuating culturally promoted understandings of everyday experience" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, p. 267) (given that every representation mirrors—in a peculiar way—cultural values and anxieties of a given era or society; Hall, 1997, pp. 13-74).

N. K. Denzin contends that "In the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself". Researcher "faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of what has been learned" (making sense of what has been learned *the art of interpretation*). At the same time everyone has their own interpretational script which leads to imposing a particular world order that is being researched; interpretation is not "mechanical" but "transformative" (in this context "crisis of interpretation" stems from the lack of universally accepted criteria of interpretation) (Denzin, 1994, pp. 500-502, 504). From this perspective we could follow A. Strauss and J. Corbin who claim that:

> All interpretations, whether or not they have the features or status of theory, are temporally limited—in a dual sense. First, they are always provisional, they are never established forever (...) Second, (...) Researchers and theorists are not gods, but men and women living in certain areas, immersed in certain societies, subject to current ideas and ideologies, and so forth (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 279).

Relatedly, T. A. Schwandt writes that "we are all constructivists we believe that the mind is active in the construction of knowledge (...)" (1994, p. 125). The current knowledge (specific to a given time and place) "consists of those constructions about which there is relative consensus", while "multiple «knowledges» can coexist when (...) interpreters disagree, and/or depending on social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors that differentiate the interpreters" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 113). It needs to be added that displaying the social side of the text does not entail denying the existence of the text. It is important to note, however, that the text is never accessible per se, but always exists in the form of socially constructed meanings (meanings ascribed to the text) (Gromkowska, 2002, pp. 15-16).

It is beyond doubt that we frame our interpretations of the text in a "given theory" which we deem to be the most adequate way of conceptualising the world. Doing so, we tend to frequently absolutize our theoretical assumptions not realising that they are imbued with various socially constructed assumptions or even subjective biases. After all, analyses of "the history of theory" (the histories of subsequently created interpretational schemes of reality) lead to the conclusion that all of them constitute nothing else but "products of specific social discourses" and an answer to the current dilemma (Kellner, 1995, p. 24). Text interpretation, from the perspective of Marxist theory will revolve around "class struggle", from the feminist perspective—around sexist gender stereotypes and female emancipation, from the perspective of critical theory—around domination and resistance. Thus, also in this context, analysis right at the very outset is a part of a social construction prone to a variety of (personal and ideological) "contaminations".

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Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik
Editor-in-Chief

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ARTICLES
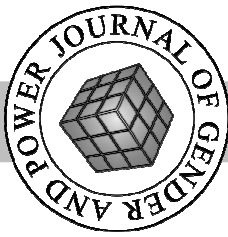
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The Birth as a Rite of Passage from Man to Father

ABSTRACT. The article shows that the birth of a child is not just a physical, but also a social and cultural event. It might be considered as a rite of passage that turns women into mothers and men into fathers, and both into parents. For men, the birth of a child is a significant change in life that is commonly taken for granted. As a result, life for most men changes fundamentally with the birth of a child. In addition, many fathers see the pregnancy, birth and the months thereafter as an extremely important time in their lives, during which they turn from a man into a father. Simultaneously, many of them embrace the fact of what an enrichment the children are for their own personal development. In these months the fathers are undergoing consequent transformation processes which demand certain efforts and are sometimes painful. In the process, they train new practices of fatherhood in the familiar living together.

KEYWORDS: rite of passage, fatherhood, birth of a child

For my father Johannes Wulf
and my son Alexander Johannes Wulf

For men the birth of a child represents a significant change in life that is commonly taken for granted. Owing to this important change in life, a man turns into a father (Wulf, 2008; Wulf et al., 2008). As a result, life for most men changes fundamentally with the birth of a child. Irrespective of how good or bad the relationship develops between the father and child throughout the course of life, it influences the quality of life for all participants in a long-lasting manner (Fthenakis, 1985; Gloger-Tippelt, 1988; Zaouche-Gaudron, 2001; Drinck, 2005).

The birth of a child is not just a physical, but also a social and cultural event. It might be considered a rite of passage that turns women into mothers and men into fathers, and both into parents. During pregnancy a change is happening from their previous individual and social situation to their role as future parents. Along with the birth itself, this transition is being processed (cf. Wulf, 2005; Wulf et al., 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010).

For a long time in the research on family and gender the father was "a forgotten part of parenthood" (Aigner 2001). Since the 1960s his absence has been claimed over and over again. The developmental deficits of children brought up by single mothers and the negative economic and social consequences of this situation have been discussed (Mitscherlich, 1963). Since the 1970s the father has been seen as an important interaction partner who, together with the mother, has had to provide the necessary care and nursing. In the 1980s and 1990s the non-reducible significance of the father for the cognitive, psychological and social development of children was emphasized. Today, the significance of the father is also seen in its gender-specific way of handling the children. From a psychoanalytic point of view, it is being highlighted how important it is for the child to build up a triadic relationship (see: Allert 1998; Metzger 2008). The historical and cultural character of fatherhood is being emphasized in the first place. Fatherhood is primarily being understood as an outcome of a social and individual construction process (Lupton/Barclay, 1997).

The contemporary image of the man and father, largely related to the child and family, has been built against a long history of the father, mother and family, whose traces can still be found in the collective and individual imaginary sense, the mentality of men and the practices of everyday life (Knibiehler, 1996; Lenzen, 1991; Bozet/Hanson, 1991). The new image of the father within family talks and arrangement must continuously be reinvented and secured in the everyday practices (Fthenakis, 1985, 1999; Erhard & Janig, 2003). The work on this father image begins during pregnancy and is continued after the birth of a child in the practice of care, nursing, upbringing and counselling (Berman, 1987; Marsiglio, 1995; LaRossa, 1997). This father image with regard to child, partner and family is not a sharp continuous leading picture. It therefore must be developed together by fathers, mothers and children through conversations and practices of everyday life.

This process is affected by historical father images of past generations, some traces of which can be evaluated positively and some negatively. The contemporary child and family-related father images emerge not without reference to the equivalent mother, children and family images (Lenzen 1991; Ecarius 2007; Fuhs 2007; Frieberthäuser/ Matzner/Rothmüller 2007). The process in which every family creates its obligatory family practices enfolds itself in the dynamic interactions in which not just one, but several normative orientations claim their

validity. Which of them is to be valid has to be developed by every participant in the creative shaping of the family imaginary world and the everyday family practices. This process of negotiation is strengthened during pregnancy; is consolidated in connection with the experience of birth and develops its full effectiveness under the family living conditions after the birth. This process is affected by the socio-economical conditions, cultural influences that are milieu-specific and the dynamics of the desire towards other members of the family. Hence this is a complex process, which is full of conflict; it often fails and leads, despite the mutual wishes and desires of all participants, to the destruction of many families and family-like living communities.[1]

Which images of the father, fatherly care and nursing practices emerge within the future families and *how* the representations of birth occurring during pregnancy, the radical experience of birth and new practices of fatherhood contribute to the constitution of family communities is to be examined. Secondly, it is important to show how the images of the conditions and obstacles of family life after the birth affect the emerging of the father image and contribute to the occurring of practices of fatherly care and nursing. The aim is to *examine the transformation process during which men become fathers.*[2]

Pregnancy

While the slow transition of a woman into a mother during pregnancy is clearly visible, the transition of men into fathers is much less noticeable. The meaningful changes take place in the imaginary world of the future father and in the numerous practices of living together. From the mental anticipation of the new situation as a father emerges a number of mental images, narratives, emotions and demands which were to a large extent alien to men before the pregnancy.

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[1] According to data provided by the Federal Bureau of Statistics (2004, p. 57) out of 6.9 million married couples with children under 18 in 2002 in Germany, 102,000 had a divorce which left 157,000 juvenile children, 86% of which lived with their mothers.

[2] Many of the following executions are based on the vast empirical material that had been raised in the framework of a project financed by the German Research Society. The interested reader is preordained on the executions that are the basis of the evaluation of the material (Wulf, Hänsch & Brumlik, 2008).

In many cases the news of a pregnancy releases ambiguous feelings, in which joy, fear, uncertainty and anxiety of taking over new responsibilities mix in an individual manner. If a man or a woman is surprised by the pregnancy they play it out with the help of their imagination whether they could and want to see themselves (again) as a mother or father. Often they discover that the timing of the pregnancy is not convenient, depending if one of them wanted to conclude his or hers studies, or if the couple already has a child or children and would prefer to wait before the arrival of a third child. Mothers and fathers constantly report that a surprise pregnancy interrupts their previous plans in life and forces them to redesign their visions of the future. Owing to the fact that with these changes comes a partial loss of control over their own life, fears and anxieties emerge which are emphasized by the fact that the future life is anticipated as unknown, unsafe and full of surprises. Many couples experience immense difficulty recognising *the uncertainty* a*nd the not knowing* as conditions of pregnancy and the birth and react towards it with fear and worry.

Many future parents worry about the health of the baby and the dangers that might occur during the birth. This is the reason why for many fathers and mothers the interaction with the midwifery and obstetrics units is very important. Often the representatives of the professional midwifery and obstetrics units point out the possible risks that might occur during pregnancy and the birth, and they also offer to help the future parents in order to protect them from possible dangers. Throughout the process an argumentation framework is created which has a great influence on the medical system during pregnancy and the birth.

The announcement of a pregnancy stirs up ambiguous feelings among many men. These feelings emerge from the anticipation of the birth and their imminent fatherhood. Along with the moderate joy there are articulated fears and worries in relation to the health of the unborn and the uncertainties connected with the birth. Many men see pregnancy and birth as a mutual task of the couple, whose consequences are anticipated for their own and their partner's life. There are apparently no significant differences within the father images between men and their spouses. The representations and images of fatherhood accepted during living together have to be developed by every couple in dealing with the family traditions, desired images and social realities. The future father is worried especially about the anticipated responsibility for the financial

situation of the family following the birth of the child. Some fear they could not live up to this challenge and this is why as a man and father they might fail at a central task.

During the pregnancy many future fathers are becoming familiar with the unborn in processes in which they mimetically relate to their expected child, they become "similar to each other" and confront them in an emotional and mental manner (Wulf, 2001, 2005, 2009). This happens with the help of *mental images* which the future father creates in relation to the expected child and the living conditions after its birth. In this process of confrontation with the unborn, past experiences with children, memories of one's own childhood, stories told by friends and relatives, television movies and photographs of the unborn start to form and mix with the imaginary representations and new representations related to their own life situation. With these mental images of the future life, interruptions to the contemporary life are being implemented. Not only fathers, but also mothers, sisters and brothers, grandparents, uncles and aunts and also friends, participate in this process. A collective imaginary space of representations emerges (Hüpplauf & Wulf, 2006), in which the child is born and a social place is assigned to it (Groppe, 2007).

In this process of becoming familiar with the future child and the creation of the imaginary family world, the ultrasound images play an important role for many future fathers who do not feel the unborn in their own body but see it and touch it from the outside. The ultrasound images visualise the unborn child hidden in the womb of the mother. Thanks to these ultrasound images, mothers, fathers and their siblings gain access to the life unfolding in their mother's body. Most fathers view this "access" to the mother's body as necessary for the protection of the new life. They see these video images as a fascinating possibility to gain access to information on their future child and a chance to make contact with it and develop a relationship which prepares them for their role as a father. Also the future siblings, grandparents and friends see the ultrasound images as recognition of the unborn and a chance for slow realisation. These pictures support the incorporation of the future child into the family and the socialization of the new life before it comes into the world.

In particular, the specialist diagnostics allow many fathers to gain intensive media access to their child. They see their child "live"; they see how it is moving, its particular body parts might be identified; the fa-

thers feel that the forms and colours moving in front of their eyes represent their child. When the future fathers are being shown the three dimensional ultrasound videos in 1:1 ratio, this equalization of the picture medium and the body of a child is fascinating. These videos are viewed by many fathers as a revelation of a mystery of life (cf. Tegethoff, 2010).

Birth

The birth is a physical and simultaneously social event, whose consequences are that the newborn enters the community of the family. While, according to today's standards, during conception, and eventually the birth itself, both man and women interact equally, it is the development of the unborn that is undeniably entangled with the body of the woman. This is why the birth of the baby represents an inseparable bond with the woman's body. From a physical perspective, pregnancy and birth are possible with a female body. For a long time these were to a large extent a woman's concern, who perceived it this way in a patriarchal society in order of men (Fuhs, 2007), who were in most cases not present at the birth (Labouvie, 2007). A fundamental change only took place here in recent decades. Today birth is considered a common issue between the man and the woman. Based on this fact future fathers participate jointly in the birth and support their wife's physical and mental state. The new fathers therefore make an effort to realise what is expected of them and seek their place at the event of the birth. This is why they often have a feeling of merely being *a witness of the event* and not an active participant.

Many future fathers are strongly involved in the choice of the clinic, eventually the designated birth place. Together with their wives, they inspect the selected birth clinics and decide jointly where the birth of their child will take place. Besides the place itself, the timing of the birth also plays a significant role, which, for example, is being set precisely in cases of a caesarean section. It is different during natural births where the timing is often unsure. In cases of expected natural births many men emphasize the importance of being close to their wives at the right moment in order to accompany them during the pains of the birth process. In some clinics the fathers are involved in the birth in the sense that they are given the option to cut the umbilical cord. Many fathers are not

aware, however, of the significant symbolic meaning of their actions. Cutting the umbilical cord separates the mother and child, it thus turns a dyad into a triad and is made for other social forms. Many women sense the presence of their husbands during the birth as a strong relief. Many men experience pregnancy and birth as events which "glue them and their wives together" and thus they form an important basis for the family community.

Life shortly after the birth

In the period shortly after the birth immense differences are revealed between fathers and mothers that already have one or more children and those who have their first child. Among men who are already fathers for a longer period of time a confidence is shown in relation to the efforts and obstacles of that time. These fathers know that the mutual life focuses on the newborn child and their daily routine will change again (cf. Baader 2008). Some fathers participate in men or father group sessions that help them to deal with the upcoming changes and interruptions. Although many fathers are well prepared emotionally, many changes and interruptions cannot be anticipated and might be experienced and overcome only in the new situation. Nevertheless, an exchange of experiences between men or fathers enables them to understand that the changes or interruptions due to the new situation are not just individual, but many problems are also structurally conditioned.

In the time shortly after the birth many fathers experience strong discomforts of living together with the newborn. At the centre of the multidimensional claims are professional and financial troubles, narrowed working possibilities, lack of sleep, intensive care and nursing demands of the newborn, jealousy of older children and the lack of time dedicated to them. In extreme circumstances, unforeseen situations bring special worries. These include moments when the baby or one of its siblings becomes sick. Then extra measures are required to keep the carefully balanced family order intact. Many fathers complain about a kind of "stress" they did not know existed until now and about the time and power deficits of parents in relation to each other. While the newborn or its siblings are mostly the centre of attention, it causes tensions and aggression between the parents.

With the demand for equal division of work between partners, the couples work out who does what task. The tasks are negotiated against the background of a few specific assignments of gender roles. In general, an equal participation of the father in childcare is accepted today among many couples. If this is not the case, the unequal task division is often explained with the pressure that lies upon men and demands to fulfil their work duties. In many cases the professional world introduces forms of traditional work division to the families. The father and mother can only resist this to a small extent in the sense that the fundamentally accepted equal participation of the father in childcare is often not realised. A lot of research shows that in the same amount of professional duties of parents there is still an unequal division of home duties and childcare in favour of men (Rosenkranz et al., 1998). Often working fathers feel that they are torn apart between their work that provides basic economic capital for the family and the care and nursing of their children.

Because of the fact that the birth of a child initiates a process of transformation of a man into a father and a woman into a mother, a readiness of the parents is required to embrace the vast array of changes. Each of them has to leave behind usual habits or at least put them aside for a long time. The dynamics of interaction within the couple change continuously. If, up to now, the relationship was defined by wishes, interests and behaviour patterns of the woman or the man, the child steps in as a new player who demands the attention and care from parents alike. This leads to a situation where virtually nothing that was of interest to the couple earlier finds the same interest at the moment. Instead of this the fatherly or motherly attention is being put towards the child. In this process differences and conflicts emerge between mothers and fathers. Even though equal attention shown by the partner towards the child is accepted by both parents, the father and the mother often understand different things under this term.

A special problem revealed in many cases as a consequence of pregnancy and birth is the erotic desire of the mother for some time is shifted from the husband to the child without a decrease in the husband's desire of the wife in the same manner. Through this a difference is raised between the man and woman which is felt by many men as hard to overcome. When a couple does not succeed to take control, the problems often escalate in this period, conflicts and interruptions emerge which in the course of time might lead to a split. Some couples

seem to be aware of this threat. To what extent they manage to tame them is an open question.[3]

In general a child is an outcome of a couple's relationship. Simultaneously it transforms this couple into a family community in which the movements of desire mix all over again in a new way. How this transformation takes place is defined differently in every family constellation. In a partner-like organisation of a family different emotional conditions are built up contrary to families with a more traditional division of work. The partner-like organised families find it very difficult to live the connection between being together and differentiation, which are necessary for their integrity. In the traditionally organised families there is a clear division of tasks and work between the man and the woman, within which the man is responsible for the material income of the family and its outside contacts, whereas the woman is responsible for the care and upbringing of the children. This division of work defines the relationship of being together and differentiation between the parents. In such a structured family, Freud saw a central duty of the father in the interruption of the family- favoured dyad between the woman and the child in order to create the possibilities of having a self-conscious life. This task of the father is just as important for the traditional families, it seems that the mother-child dyad in a partner-like organisation of contemporary families does not have the same significance as in the more traditional ones.

Because of the birth and breastfeeding there also exists today a dyadic relationship between the mother and the child. However, in partner-like organised families the father plays a role very early on as a relationship person for the children. In this family structure the relationship of the child towards the father, i.e. a person outside the mother-child dyad, gains significant importance. Our research (Wulf et al., 2008) and other studies point out that it is possible for the newborn from very early on to develop its independent relationship with its own father and other people (Lupton & Barclay, 1995; Zaouche-Goudron, 2001; Sellenet, 2005; Metzger, 2008). When small children are being nursed by mother and father in the same way it seems that they perceive them as some

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[3] According to the Federal Bureau for Statistic Research in 2006 among the population of 3.6 million people living in Berlin there were 35,500 families with children under the age of 18. This number included: traditional married couples, non-married couples and single parents. Depending on the district of the city around one third of the families are single parents.

sort of a "parent unit" which "slowly is being enriched through the two fundamental differentiation criteria of generation and gender order within which the child finds its first self-definitions" (Allert, 1998, p. 255).

Most couples today represent a visible awareness of the central significance of the father in the development of their children. This is why in the interview in our research the following aspects are presented (Wulf, 2008, p. 91f): (1) Fathers have to care about their children, to do something in their company, but cannot narrow their care to the mutual activities. (2) They might set the limits better for their children which are necessary for their development, without which their children might have great difficulties to fit in and build up orders and structures. (3) Fathers are necessary in the first place in conflicts with adolescent children. (4) They are necessary for the gender development of their children. (5) Fathers are important for the development of the ability of their children to face conflicts.

This assumption of the central significance of fathers for the upbringing is among many families connected to the notion that children have to learn to live with "the troubles of other family constellations" which are based to a large extent on the structure and the related duties of the family and less on the faults of particular people. When it is possible for the father or mother to tame these problems after the birth it seems to be a contribution to the long-lasting securing of family relations.

Outcome

Our research and the considerations resulting from it make it clear that many fathers see the pregnancy, birth and the months thereafter as an extremely important time in their lives, during which they turn from a man into a father. Simultaneously, many of them embrace the fact of what an enrichment the children are for their own personal development. In these months the fathers are undergoing consequent transformation processes which demand certain efforts and are sometimes painful. In the process, they train new practices of fatherhood in the living together. As long as men and women might be brought into the familiar community equally and the relationship between the genders is seen as partner-like, there are some good presumptions to develop new forms of

familiar community which allow fathers to have a greater participation in the everyday life of their families. Many troubles are based on the fact, however, that there are numerous experiences with these new situations of the familiar life, but these situations are not anchored in the emphasized life forms life models structurally. This leads to a situation where under the pressure of the professional duties many fathers and mothers cannot fulfil the wish to have more time to spend with their children. In this situation many contradictory wishes, desires and experiences clash which have to be confronted and balanced by fathers and mothers. Because of the fact that there are no more generally applicable living forms, every familiar community has to develop its own model of living together, which offers both parents the possibility to live through the similarities and differences existing between them. In the process, mothers and fathers also realise how important it is for the continued existence of the familiar community that they are able to maintain the mutual attractiveness as a man and a woman.

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Right to Freedom of Religion: A Gendered Difference[1]

ABSTRACT. This article critically analyses European jurisprudence to ascertain the extent to which the right to freedom of religion has been interpreted as a right of religion to internal autonomy. It asserts that women are being denied an effective right to freedom of religion insofar as they are unable to directly influence the content or structure of their religion. It argues that to fulfil women's equal right to freedom of religion, women's power and position within religion must be equivalent to men's. It therefore asserts that an intrinsic part of States' obligation to secure the right to freedom of religion is the facilitation of gender equality within religion. The article culminates by proposing proportionate and appropriate methods to facilitate gender equality within religion.

KEYWORDS: Gender Equality, Freedom, Religion

> Women, half the human race, have been invisible within churches and religions dominated by men. Women's modes of practice and organisation may be, as with other minorities, invisible and ignored (Boyle & Shenn, 1997, p. 1).

1. Introduction

Women are half of the human race and yet the issue of women's equality has yet to be definitively addressed in relation to their right to religion and belief. It is ironic that while human rights instruments proclaim that everyone is equal, the attainment of this fundamental truth is hampered by traditional, and often limited, interpretations of human rights. The limitations placed on the attainment of women's equality, by the current judicial and political understanding of the right to freedom of religion, is an apt example of this. It is recognised in international and

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[1] This is an updated version of the article published in the *Human Rights Law Review*: Stuart, 2010.

regional fora that 'women's rights are often curtailed or violated in the name of religion.'[2] States are continually reminded of their obligations to 'fully protect... women against all violations of their rights based on or attributed to religion.'[3] While it is true that 'religion is one of the chief perpetrators of women's subjugation, inequality, lower social status, lack of equal treatment and protection, and internalised notions of inferiority' (Rao, 1999, p. 118), it should not be forgotten that women also have a right to religion and belief. The right to freedom of religion and belief is invariably phrased as being in opposition to women's rights and equality; this is however an overly simplistic and counterproductive stance. Religious institutions play a vital role in the cultivation and realisation of all rights, not merely religious rights (see Witte & Vyver, 1996, p. xxxiv). Being male dominated, religious institutions generally limit women's role within a religion, both in their doctrine and ability to be office holders, *vis a vis* men. This inequality needs to be addressed within human rights law and domestic legal systems and politics .If one simply sees religion and women's rights as clashing and mutually exclusive, there is a danger that gender equality will not be fully realised and an important part of women's lives left unacknowledged, unprotected and unfulfilled.

Human rights research in the area of gender equality and religion has tended to concentrate on the treatment of women in religious States or under religious personal laws. Whilst this is of pivotal importance, the negative influence that gender discrimination within religion has on gender equality as a whole has not yet been accepted as a worldwide phenomenon, present in every country. A woman's equal right to her spiritual and religious beliefs, and her role within her religion, has yet to be addressed. Gender discrimination is prevalent in the vast majority of institutionalised religions, where it is left undisturbed or tackled by States regardless of their stated commitment to gender equality within their society and the world at large. It is important to reiterate the legal obligation under international and regional human rights law that every State has to facilitate gender equality within their jurisdiction, regardless of where this discrimination is occurring. To ensure that 'western'

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[2] Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1464, Women and Religion in Europe 4 October 2005 at para. 2.

[3] Ibid. at para. 7.1; see also Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 28 on Equality of rights between men and women (Article 3), 29 March 2000, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.10 at para. 5.

States recognise the necessity and the legal obligation incumbent on them to deal with such gender discrimination, this article concentrates on the legal gender equality obligations, created by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Convention), on Council of Europe member States. The same arguments could, however, be made in relation to all States with respect to their fundamental legal obligations to ensure gender equality, as outlined in the human rights Conventions they have ratified and international, regional and domestic jurisprudence.[4] Whereas the struggle for gender equality within religion may be harder to pursue in some States, the legal obligation to 'promote' such gender equality is still binding on each State, as demonstrated later in this article.

Women and men have an individual and equal right to freedom of religion. If this right is interpreted and commonly understood as the right to practise one's religion, within the context of a recognised religion, and women are excluded from influencing the content and being a part of the power structure within that religion then, in effect, not only is their fundamental right to equality being violated but also their right to religion. While women may have the right to join or leave a religion, if only men dictate the content of that religion, they are disenfranchised within the religion that gives meaning to their lives. Given the influence that religion has on the lives of not only believers but society as a whole, this disenfranchisement has serious repercussions for gender equality.

This article seeks to critically analyse the European Court of Human Rights' (European Court) and domestic jurisprudence to ascertain the extent to which the right to freedom of religion has been interpreted as a right of religious communities to internal autonomy, free from state regulation. It is asserted, within the body of this article, that to the extent that institutionalised religions are patriarchal, and women are unable to directly influence the content or structure of the religion they belong to, women have been effectively denied their right to freedom of religion. The article argues that women's power and position within religion should be equivalent to men's to ensure the equal operation of Article 9 of the Convention between the sexes, in conjunction with Article 14. It therefore states that an intrinsic part of a State's obligation to secure women's equal right to freedom of religion is the facilitation of gender equality within religion. The right to freedom of religion is not an abso-

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[4] For a full explanation of this point please see Stuart, 2008, p. 101.

lute right; it is subject to certain limitations in relation to public safety, order, health, morals or the fundamental rights of others (Article 9(2), Convention).[5] Whilst the European Court of Human Rights (European Court) has allowed churches to assert their own right to freedom of religion, as the body charged with ensuring the fulfilment of human rights without distinction, it is asserted that States have a fundamental duty to limit the institutional right to freedom of religion by reference to the equal right of women to thought, conscience and religion and gender equality. The difficulty inherent in this approach is recognised and the article culminates by suggesting proportionate and appropriate methods by which a State can facilitate gender equality within religion.

2. The Right to Freedom of Religion within the Council of Europe

Within Article 9 of the Convention the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is phrased as a right given to all human beings; everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This is the same in every other international instrument dealing with this right.[6] Looking, however, at European jurisprudence it appears that the individual right to freedom of religion has been interpreted and understood, in the main, as the right of a religious institution to exist and have internal autonomy. While it is accepted that there is an individual right to freedom of religion, the protection afforded to the individual right is limited and, almost entirely, dependant on the stance of the particular State involved. As can be seen by the European Court's judgment in *Sahin v. Turkey*,[7] the Court, under the principle of subsidiarity, allows a State to place restrictions as long as they do not 'entirely negate the freedom to manifest one's religion or belief.'[8] This 'laissez faire' stance has been further developed in a long line of 'veil' cases before the Court:

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[5] Article 9(2), Convention.

[6] For example, Article 18, Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 G.A. res. 217A (III), U.N. Doc A/810 (UDHR); Article 18, International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights 1966, 99 UNTS 171 (ICCPR); Article 1, UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief 1981, A/RES/36/55.

[7] *Sahin v. Turkey* 41 EHRR 8.

[8] Ibid. at para. 102.

the most notable one being *S.A.S v. France*, where the European Court appears to abdicate its supervisory responsibility to pay deference to the unsubstantiated view of the state.

> The main focus of the European Court's protection, under Article 9, appears to be the prevention of discrimination on the basis of religion and the protection of a religious community's right to autonomy in order to ensure societal peace, as opposed to actually ensuring an individual's right to freedom of religion. The encapsulation of the substantive, as opposed to non discrimination, element of right to freedom of religion as an institutional right might not appear problematic at first glance. To the extent that religions, and more particularly hierarchical and institutionalised religions, are patriarchal, however, women have been excluded from this sphere of influence and discriminated against. State policy of non interference in religious affairs, arising out of the judicial interpretation of Article 9 and the liberal notion of public/ private divide, has thereby effectively resulted in women being effectively denied equal enjoyment of their Article 9 right of religion.

Although the right to thought, conscience and religion is phrased as an individual human right, the European Court has held that a Church or ecclesiastical body may exercise the rights guaranteed by Article 9 of the Convention, on behalf of its adherents.[9] This allowance of a religion to be a holder of Article 9 rights is predicated on the assumption that an individual's religious life is dependent on the health of the religious community they belong to (Evans, 1997, p. 325). This view is demonstrated in the European Court's judgment in *Hasan and Chaush v. Bulgaria*,[10] where the Court stated:

> Where the organisation of the religious community is at issue, Article 9 of the Convention must be interpreted in light of Article 11, which safeguards associative life against unjustified State interference. Seen in this perspective, the believer's right to freedom of religion encompasses the expectation that the community will be allowed to function peacefully, free from arbitrary State intervention. Indeed, the autonomous existence of religious communities is indispensable for pluralism in a democratic society and is thus an issue at the very heart of the protection which Article 9 affords. It directly concerns not only the organisation of the community as such but also the effective enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion by all its active members. Were the organisational life of the community not protected by Article 9 of the Convention, all other aspects of the individual's freedom of religion would become vulnerable.[11]

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[9] *Cha'are Shalom Ve Tsedek v France*, (2000) 9 BHRC 27 at para 72.
[10] *Hasan & Chaush v. Bulgaria* 34 EHRR 55.
[11] Ibid. at para. 62.

In this judgment, and others, the European Court explicitly links pluralism, peace and public order within a State with the autonomous existence of religious communities. Accordingly, it delineates the limits of State interference with religion by reference to the goal of religious plurality or, in other words, non discrimination on the basis of religion. Taking plurality as its primary aim, the European Court has recognised, within article 9, that the right to religion includes the right to internal religious autonomy and the consequential non interference in religious affairs by States.

When deciding whether a State has violated an Article 9 right the European Court should subject the State's reasons and measures limiting the manifestation of religion or beliefs to the test set out within Article 9(2). Article 9(2) states that the 'freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.' In determining whether a limitation falls within the allowable exception the European Court decides within the 'necessary to' part of the equation, whether the State has a legitimate aim and if the means used to achieve that aim are proportionate. The depth of critical analysis the Court will exert on the State's stated legitimate aim(s) and proportionality of methods will depend on the extent of the margin of appreciation it feels should be given to States in relation to the competing interests at play.[12] The European Court feels that 'by reason of their direct and continuous contact with the vital forces of their countries, the national authorities are in principle better placed than an international court to evaluate local needs and conditions.'[13] In determining the proportionality of a State's measure, a certain degree of latitude is therefore given to the State's assessment and balancing of competing interests due to their inferred special knowledge of the domestic situation.

'The scope of the margin of appreciation will vary according to the circumstances, the subject matter and the background'[14] of the case. Where the issue at stake is a 'delicate' one, such as the protection of morals, and there is no common European consensus, the margin of ap-

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[12] The margin of appreciation is a device by which the Court allows a State a certain amount of leeway in their handling of human rights issues.

[13] *Frette v. France* 38 EHRR 21 at para. 41.

[14] Ibid. at para. 40.

preciation given by the European Court is wide. The margin is also wide where a 'state is required to strike a balance between competing private and public interests or Convention rights.'[15] The margin of appreciation can, however, be restricted when an important facet of a person's identity[16] or any feature that the Court sees as essential to the concept of a democratic society, is at stake. The court is not, however, consistent in its approach in these matters.[17]

As the European Court expressly stated in *Manoussakis and Others v. Greece*,[18] which concerned a limitation upon the holding of religious meetings by Jehovah's Witnesses, in 'delimiting the extent of the margin of appreciation [in this context, the Court had to] have regard to what [was] at stake, namely the need to secure true religious pluralism, an inherent feature of the notion of a democratic society.'[19] In this case the European Court elaborated that considerable weight must be attached to the need to secure religious pluralism when it comes to determining, pursuant to Article 9(2), whether the restriction was proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued. The Court concluded by stating that it would subject the justification of the State to a very strict scrutiny in relation to determining this point. It duly did so and held, in this case, that the means were disproportionate to the aim pursued.

This doctrine of strict scrutiny has, however, only been applied in relation to assuring plurality of religion; it has not been utilised in determining limitations on an individual's right to manifest their religious beliefs. This can be clearly seen in *S.A.S. v. France*. Although this case involved a plurality element, in that the full face ban prevents certain women from expressing their personality and beliefs, the European Court found that the principle of interaction, as defined by the French Parliament, was essential for pluralism and tolerance so denied plurality of dress. As the dissenting judgment infers the ban does not so much encourage plurality as eliminate a cause of tension by banning the full veil and hereby reduce plurality, which goes directly against the Court's own

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[15] *Evans v. UK* 46 EHRR 34 at para. 77.

[16] *Dudgeon v. UK* A. 45 (1981); 4 EHRR 149.

[17] Looking at *S.A.S. v. France* it can be seen that although the wearing of the veil was an important facet of these women's identity, the court did not narrow the margin of appreciation given to France on this basis.

[18] *Manoussakis and Others v. Greece* 1996-IV; 23 EHRR 387.

[19] Ibid. at para. 44.

jurisprudence[20] and their protection of plurality in relation to the institutional right to freedom of religion.

The European Court has explicitly stated that Article 9 does not protect every act motivated by religion or belief.[21]

> In order to count as a "manifestation" within the meaning of Article 9, the act in question must be intimately linked to the religion or belief. An example would be an act of worship or devotion which forms part of the practice of a religion or belief in a generally recognised form. However, the manifestation of religion or belief is not limited to such acts; the existence of a sufficiently close and direct nexus between the act and the underlying belief must be determined on the facts of each case. In particular, there is no requirement on the applicant to establish that he or she acted in fulfilment of a duty mandated by the religion in question.[22]

The European Court's judgment in *Eweida*[23] appears to signal some movement away from merely protecting traditional and 'institution led' manifestations to also covering more personalised expressions of belief. As *S.A.S* and *Sahin* show though, there is a dearth of protection of such manifestations where the state itself is directly involved in the interference and the interference accords with the constitutional model governing relations between the State and religious denominations. The European Court expressly accords special importance to the role of the national decision-making body, where questions concerning the relationship between the State and religions are at stake, on which opinion in a democratic society may reasonably differ widely.[24] Thecourt, in this situation, gives considerable deference to the stated legitimate aims of the state and does not tend to robustly apply the proportionality test.

In *S.A.S*, the European Court allowed France a very wide margin of appreciation, in relation to its ban on the wearing of a full veil, due to its assessment that there was a lack of common consensus in Council of Europe states[25] and the fact the ban was the result of a democratic proc-

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[20] See the partly dissenting opinion of Judges Nussberger and Jaderblom in *S.A.S v. France* at para. 14.

[21] *Kosteski v. The Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia* 45 EHRR 31.

[22] *Eweida v. UK* (2013) 57 E.H.R.R. 8 at para. 82.

[23] Ibid.

[24] *Sindicatul Pastorul cel Bun v. Romania* [2014] I.R.L.R. 49 at para. 138.

[25] The dissenting judgment challenges this, in para. 19, as 45 states out of 47 have not legislated to prohibit full-face veil and there is wide soft law evidence opposing such bans.

ess. After the application of such a margin of appreciation, however, the court declined to then go on and properly apply the usual necessary and proportionate test; it simply gave lip service to it, leading to a lack of effective oversight. The European Court accepted that the impact of the ban on those that wear the Burka in France was and would be significant. In fact they specifically recognised that those who have chosen to wear the full veil due to their religious beliefs

> are thus confronted with a complex dilemma, and the ban may have the effect of isolating them and restricting their autonomy, as well as impairing the exercise of their freedom to manifest their beliefs and their right to respect for their private life. It is also understandable that the women concerned may perceive the ban as a threat to their identity.

The court also accepted that the number of women wearing the burka *vis a vis* the population as a whole was miniscule. It stated that it 'may thus seem excessive to respond to such a situation by imposing a blanket ban.' Even taking on board the fact that research showed that the ban had increased instances of Islamophobia, and the views of other human rights bodies opposing such a ban, the European Court of Human Rights still, however, declined to protect the women's article 8, 9 &14 rights. It did so not for any defined public safety reason or other strong competing human right but on behalf of the nebulous concept of 'the right of others to live in a space of socialisation which makes living together easier.' As the partly dissenting opinion of Judges Nussberger and Jaderblom identify, it is difficult to see how this concept fits within the stated exceptions falling within article 9(2) or 8 (2). France's argument should, therefore, have fallen at this hurdle, as having no legitimate aim. Even if it was accepted that the notion of "living together" was a legitimate aim, the court, itself, indicated that the concept was flexible and open to abuse. Having accepted that, the European Court did not go on to require evidence to support the fact that the banning the burka was actually necessary to have meaningful personal relations and assess its proportionality in a meaningful way. While the Court stated that it would 'engage in a careful examination of the necessity of the impugned limitation,' it did not fulfil this self-imposed duty.

The Court's judgment in *S.A.S.*, appears to cede an even wider margin of appreciation to the state and, arguably, breaches the boundaries set in *Sahin* by not only reducing visual plurality in French society, but by negating either the women affected's rights to a life outside the home or

their freedom of religion, depending on what each woman chooses to do. This is a highly worrying development, which demonstrates a lack of effective supervision by the court where an individual's, particularly a women's, right to religion is in the balance alongside an opposing state stance. This can be sharply contrasted with the European Court's stance in relation to the protection of a religious group's internal autonomy.

Although States currently have a limited right to interfere with the internal affairs of 'State' or established churches within their jurisdiction,[26] non-established religions are given the right to autonomy in their internal decision making and structure.[27]

This 'non-interference by a State in a religious community' stance taken by the European Court, and the former Commission, has had a huge impact on the individual's right to freedom of religion. It has, in effect, meant that when an individual becomes part of a religion they are deemed to voluntarily give up their personal right to freedom of conscience and belief.[28] In *X v. Denmark*,[29] the European Commission stated that a 'priest's' 'individual freedom of thought, conscience or religion is exercised at the moment they accept or refuse employment as clergymen, and their right to leave the church guarantees their freedom of religion in case they oppose its teachings.'[30] It followed this sentiment by stating that 'the church is not obliged to provide religious freedom to its servants and members.'[31] More recently the European Court has reiterated this sentiment in *Sindicatul Pastorul cel Bun v. Romania*.[32]

> Article 9 of the Convention does not guarantee any right to dissent within a religious body; in the event of a disagreement over matters of doctrine or organisation between a religious community and one of its members, the individual's freedom of religion is exercised through his freedom to leave the community.

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[26] *Knudson v. Norway* D.R. 42 (1985).

[27] *Hasan & Chaush v. Bulgaria,* ibid.

[28] *X v. Denmark* D.R. 5 (1976); *Karlsson v. Sweden* Application 12356/86, Decision of 8 September 1988; *Knudson v. Norway*. Interestingly enough the European Court's stance has in fact meant that the leadership of religious communities can ignore 'dissenters' within their religion thereby paving the way for 'unity' of beliefs within a religious community.

[29] *X v. Denmark,* ibid.

[30] Ibid. at 158.

[31] Ibid.

[32] [2014] I.R.L.R. 49, at 137.

Members of a religion therefore have no right to manifest their own individual religious views, different from those dictated by the leaders of the religion, within that religion. There is no right to freedom of conscience and belief, expression or equality within a religion. A religious community has the right to ignore the wishes and rights of their adherents without interference by the law. Effectively this means that once an individual is part of a certain religion, their only option is to accept the creed, rules and internal workings of that religion, or leave. This can be clearly seen in the cases of *Fernandez Martinez v. Spain*,[33] *Obst v. Germany*,[34] and *Schuth v. Germany*,[35] where ministers of religion were dismissed from their 'employment,' with Obst also being excommunicated, due to behaviour that 'dissented' from the official stance of the religion in question. As Sunder elucidates, this approach results in a legally authorised exile for those who openly disagree with the group's traditional or patriarchal views (Sunder, 2001, p. 542). The liberty versus equality paradigm has therefore paved the way for the rise of a new right to exclude an individual, not from an association's membership, but rather, from an association's meaning (Sunder, 2001, p. 542). The European Court not only permits this exclusion and suppression but actively protects the religious authorities' right to do so. This is aptly demonstrated within the case of *Sindicatul Pastorul cel Bun v. Romania*,[36] where the European Court reiterated the importance of a religious group's autonomy and demonstrated the primacy given to protecting this as opposed to an individual's right. The court stipulates that:

> Respect for the autonomy of religious communities recognised by the State implies, in particular, that the State should accept the right of such communities to react, in accordance with their own rules and interests, to any dissident movements emerging within them that might pose a threat to their cohesion, image or unity.[37]

In fact, the European Court sees the state as being 'neutral' when it allows those in power within a religion to supress any alternative

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[33] (2015) 60 E.H.R.R. 3.

[34] Application No. 42/03 (2010) found at http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx#{"dmdocnumber":["874337"],"itemid":["001-100463"]} [last accessed March 2015].

[35] (2011) 52 E.H.R.R. 32.

[36] [2014] I.R.L.R. 49.

[37] Ibid., at 165.

views.[38] It does not appear to appreciate that this is not neutrality *per se* but instead siding with the status quo and, indeed, can lead to suppression of human rights.

This suppression of dissent approach offering a choice of acceptance or removal is problematic. The allowance of this policy, by the European Court is rooted in the liberal concept that an autonomous individual makes choices on rational grounds; this is however only a concept and not one borne out in reality. The concept does not make allowance for the fact that individuals are members of various groups and rarely fully independent from their surroundings. It does not take account of the complex relationship between a believer and their religion. The question of choice is contextual. Many individuals are born into a religion and a religious community; membership therefore becomes part of those individuals identity before the concept of choice is introduced. Even where the choice of religion comes later it is difficult, if not nigh on impossible, for some individuals, particularly when their life revolves around a religious community or family, to 'cut' that religion out of their sense of identity and conception of life. To many members of a religion their religion is the foundation of their sense of self, the source of truth and salvation. Although they may disagree with certain tenets of their church, it is an important part of their identity. To leave, as a result of discriminatory/ patriarchal practices and structures, could seriously affect their spiritual wellbeing.[39] Leaving is also impractical where a person has little or no social, economic or personal independence from the religious group (Evans, 2001, p. 129; see also Coomaraswamy, 2002, p. 483). This is especially pertinent for women who, due to their status and position within society, are more likely to be dependent upon their family and religious community. In Europe, this is more likely to be an issue within minority religions or immigrant communities. Some religions use the threat of exclusion to prevent dissent and bring dissenters back in line. The purpose of the Jewish device of shunning or excommunication, for example, has been said to 'serve notice… that this conduct is unacceptable and also, secondarily, to encourage the violator to return to the community' (Broyde, 1996) and, presumably in this context, obey the discriminatory rules. In a closed and tightly knit community, exclu-

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[38] Ibid., n. 43 at 166.

[39] For an example of how religious women want to stay within a religion regardless of its discriminatory practises but wish that it would become more internally 'equal,' see Preston, 2003, p. 185.

sion from that community, due to a desire not to be bound by patriarchal rules, can be a severe penalty and one which many women do not wish to pay. The issue at the heart of this article is not that women wish, necessarily, to leave their religion but rather that they wish to be treated equally and have a say in the content and structure of that religion.

The European human rights system is not alone in its treatment of religious communities as autonomous entities. Human rights jurisprudence and international policy continues to define religion as a sovereign, extra legal, jurisdiction in which inequality is not only accepted but expected (Sunder, 2003, p. 1401). This may be due to the fact that religion and human rights could be seen to be competing ideologies. To the extent that religious precepts are seen as divine law, human rights and religion will clash. States that have a religious foundation, or religions themselves, are bound to argue that there is a natural law order that supersedes human rights and, in the event of a conflict, religion prevails (Coomaraswamy, 1999, p. 82). The fact, however, remains that states create the law that is abided by in their jurisdictions. The Council of Europe states, and indeed all states through membership of the UN, have chosen the human rights model and as such it is submitted that claims of religion are to be dealt with within this model and not as a competing ideology.

3. Status of Women within Religion

Religious institutions are, on the whole, male dominated patriarchal institutions that continue to perpetrate discrimination against women. Although women make up the majority of believers, they do not hold positions of real power within most major religions.[40] It is encouraging that many Christian religions are coming around to the idea of women as ministers of the faith. The Church of Scotland has ordained women as ministers since 1968, while the Church of England has ordained women as ministers since 1992. Since November 2014 it has also allowed women to become Bishops since November 2014, with the first female

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[40] In all the major religions, there are more women than men and more women in evangelical groups than mainstream religious groups, Boyle and Sheen, 1997. In fact studies consistently show that women, on a whole, are more religious than men, see for conclusions on the findings of the world value surveys, Stark, 2002, p. 495.

bishop ordained in January 2015.[41] While some religions are starting to show small signs of growth and acceptance of true gender equality, the pace of change is, however, slow. Even where religions have accepted that women may be ministers, gender discrimination and the side lining of women still occurs. Although the percentage of women incumbents within the Church of England has increased since 2002 by 41%, women still only make up a seventh of full time incumbent posts. Women, however, make up over half of those in part-time positions and those roles that do not receive a stipend.[42] It is notable that women are not generally selected to serve in large, growing or high profile churches and only 11% of the senior clergy are female (Voas, 2007, p. 4).

Only a few of the main religions accept that women can be official interpreters of their sacred texts and an official intermediary between God and the faithful. Up until very recently women were denied an education in the holy texts of Islam and Judaism and, in many States, still are. Where only men are the authorative interpreters of religious texts, women cannot contribute to any development of progressive, gender equal, interpretations. There has been no female Grand sheik of Al-Azhar,[43] no women mufti and no women ayatollah. Women therefore lack the institutional credentials and prestigious titles that can lend authority to men's pronouncements on behalf of Islam (Mayer, 1999, n. 4 at 184). This is the current position in the majority of religions. Most religions also claim that only men possess the ability necessary to communicate with and be God's representative on earth. A considerable number of Christian denominations do not allow women to be ministers of religion; Orthodox Judaism and most branches of Islam likewise prevent such roles for women. Even in religions where female priests are permitted, they only exist in small numbers and within certain denominations.[44]

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[41] Libby Lane was consecrated as a Bishop on 26th January 2015 information found at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-30974547 [last accessed March 2015].

[42] Statistics for Mission 2012: Minister, published 2013 by Archbishops' Council, Research and Statistics, Central Secretariat found at https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/facts-stats/research-statistics.aspx [last accessed April 2015]

[43] The Al-Azhar in Cairo is regarded as the pre-eminent centre of theological learning and, therefore, interpretation of the Sunni Muslim faith. The Grand Sheik is the leader of the Al-Azhar. He is perceived as the foremost religious legal expert in the Sunni sect. He advises States on religious matters and oversees an extensive network of educational institutes, worldwide.

[44] See the 'gender' section in the country reports within Boyle & Sheen, 1997.

Certain religions have even rescinded their former policy of allowing women ministers (Boyle & Sheen, 1997, p. 75).

Religions are not, generally, democratic organisations; as women are not in positions of power their voices and views go unheard. Women are therefore not able to influence the content of their religion or shape their role within it. Although many religions are increasingly paying lip service to the concept of gender equality, they do so within the limited concept of complementary roles for men and women and deny the applicability of substantive gender equality.[45] The older assertion of the natural inferiority of women has now been replaced by the anthropological model of mutual complementarity (Eyden, 2001). In this model men and women have separate normative roles, with human beings only finding perfection within this duality. However, while the roles are seen as mutually complementary, men and women are equal only in terms of dignity. In reality the specific characteristics attributed, and roles given to each gender, result in male dominance. The justifications for discrimination have changed but the end point of male superiority has not.

Male patriarchal attitudes are prevalent and protected within religion. This causes problems not only for those disenfranchised women within a religion but also for women's status and equality in society as a whole. The precepts and attitudes of religion pervade society. There is no wall separating the public and private life and thoughts of an individual. While many States might pride themselves on being secular or neutral as regards religion, the values of the dominant religions are part and parcel of and underpin the culture of a State. Religion and culture are intertwined. One influences the other. In a well-functioning society they walk hand in hand embodying the same values and 'good practices.' Advances or changes in values may initially begin in one but eventually become part of the other too. Discriminatory attitudes in one sphere therefore impact negatively in the other. The power of religion over the lives of women has had, and continues to have, a formative influence on their roles in group and collective identities, in family and the community (Sheen, 2004, p. 515). Women's lesser status in religion compounds their inferior status within society as a whole.

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45 See the Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris Dignitatem: On the Dignity and Vocation of Women* (1998), in relation to the Catholic Church's stance on this. See also Mayer, 1999, which gives examples of influential Muslim views on the 'natural' different roles of men and women; Fawzy, 2004, p. 24.

4. Struggle for Gender Equality within Religion

Women and men, both inside and outside religion, have struggled to put gender equality on the religious agenda. There has been a mixed reaction to their efforts, with the leadership of many religions proving resistant to change. Most strands of Islam are unwilling, as yet, to engage with the process of obtaining gender equality. Although Judaism is more receptive to the concept of gender equality, its more Orthodox strands are impervious to change in this area. One can take the Roman Catholic religion as an example of religion's reluctance to accept and implement gender equality.

Although in the 1970s there were signs that the Catholic Church might be close to accepting women as priests, this move towards gender equality was firmly quashed by the Vatican.[46] The movement for female ordination and dissent within the Church grew regardless. Pope John Paul II, in an attempt to quell this growing tide of support for female ordination, invoked the concept of divine androcentrism. He presented as a definite core doctrine of the Catholic Church the view that women cannot be ordained as priests.[47] When this failed to eradicate support for female ordination, the Vatican instituted a requirement that all priests and theologians must take an oath of loyalty obliging them to support certain definitive doctrinal pronouncements, one of which is the non ordination of women.[48] The priesthood and authoritive interpretators of God's will within the Catholic Church have been effectively silenced and gender equality prevented by the imposition of authority by the ruling elite. The current Pope, Pope Francis, has however indicated a softening in the Catholic Church's approach to gender equality. While reiterating that "the reservation of the priesthood to males, as a sign of Christ the

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[46] At the request of the bishop's synod in 1971, Pope Paul VI set up a special commission to study the function of women in society, although not to discuss women's ministers, and a biblical commission to look at the question from a scriptural angle. The final report was favourable to female ordination, with the majority finding that the Church could ordain women. In response the report was quashed and withheld from publication. Pope Paul VI in fact went against the main tenet of the report and sanctioned a doctrinal document against women's ordination: *Inter Insigniores*. This document did little to suppress the growing tide of opinion in favour of female ordination.

[47] The Pope John Paul II proclaimed this in his thesis *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis: On Reserving Priestly Ordinance to Men Alone* (1994).

[48] This can be found in the *Ad Tuendam Fidem* (1998).

spouse who gives himself in the Eucharist, is not a question open to discussion," he has indicated a widening of the role and position of women within the church and a movement away from power being concentrated purely in the priesthood.[49]

It could be debated whether, and the extent to which, religious women wish to be 'rescued' from misogynist attitudes within their religion. Certainly this question could be derived from cases such as *Sahin,* where the female believer, in question, wished to abide by a religious practice that the State and others have viewed as discriminatory. It could be argued that it is the individual believer's choice whether they abide by such discriminatory practices i.e. that equality means the ability to choose what you believe in and practise and, from an individual perspective, this surely must be correct. In fact the European Court expressly agrees with this standpoint within its judgment in *SAS.* This does, however, beg the question, what is 'free' choice. As stated by Preston, '(i)t is understandable and legitimate for a woman to want to fit in with other adherents of their faith. In addition a woman may value and respect the wishes of her parents, husband, children or others to conform to the cultural norms.' To what extent is a woman given a free choice in whether they abide by a discriminatory religious practice, where there is no alternative in how they demonstrate that they are a 'good' adherent of their faith?

Many could point to the rigorous defence of male only priests by a number of women, including, in the past, a UK prominent politician, Ann Widdecombe,[50] as indication that some religious women do not wish to have a secular version of gender equality thrust upon them. This is undoubtedly true. Equality, however, is not a merely secular concept but one at the heart of all religions. Ms Widdecombe, when leaving the Church of England over its ordination of women, accused the Church of 'promoting political correctness above the very clear teachings of Scripture' (BBC, 1992). To what extent however are the 'Scriptures clear' and equality merely 'political correctness'? The 'male' interpretation of the bible, and other sacred books, is the official interpretation and taught as such.

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[49] Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium, of the Holy Father Francis, (2013) para 113-114. Found at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhorta tions/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html [last accessed April 2015].

[50] Ann Widdecombe left the Church of England in 1992 due to its allowance of women to become clergy.

A process of socialisation takes place in every community where the members are taught and internalise a set of complex rules and religious 'understandings.' Institutionalised religions tend to promote unthinking obedience to the creed and rules they set. Where a person is taught that there is only one 'right' interpretation of the Scriptures, and only by accepting that can you be of that religion, to what extent is it really possible to question what is seen as unquestionable, i.e. the superiority of men in religion and God being made in man's image? (Shaheed, 2001). As McClain comments how voluntary is an acceptance of a religious 'norm' if the adherents have been socialised into accepting it and there is little practical alternative? (McClain, 2004, 1583). Surely it is only when there are competing legitimate religious interpretations that a real choice is possible? As the organisation Women Living Under Muslim Laws argues, it is only when women start assuming the right to define for themselves the parameters of their own identity and stop accepting unconditionally and without question what is presented as the 'correct' religion that they will be able to effectively challenge the corpus of laws and gender constructs thrust upon them. This does not mean that all women must feel the same way or hold the same views within a religion. It merely means that each man and woman should be able to choose what they believe in and not prevent others from exercising their equal religious rights, in relation to themselves. Not every religious woman will want to be a Minister of the faith, or influence the content of their religion, but every woman, like every man, should be given the choice to do so. It is this ability to choose free from barriers that is at the core of equality.

Religions are not a mass of people with one viewpoint or belief that their leaders espouse. They are a collection of different thoughts and beliefs, the holders of which all identify themselves as 'being of that religion.' What 'being of that religion' means however differs for each individual; human beliefs are individualised, as are human rights. Looking at religious beliefs in this context, the law's current approach to the right to freedom of religion is highly problematic.

5. Practical Effect of the Current Legal Approach to the Right to Freedom of Religion

The harsh choice of 'take it or leave it,' in relation to membership of religion, means in effect that women have to choose between their relig-

ion and community or equality. Individuals do not however merely have one badge of identity but many, each enriching that person's life. Women often do not wish to leave their religious community to gain equality; they wish to be recognised as fully functioning and equal members of their religious community. States have a responsibility to respect and ensure that women have this right. Religious women do not wish to damage their religious institution, in fact when it is criticised externally they will protect it. What they do desire is the opportunity to use, to the full extent, their capabilities to nurture and enrich their religion.[51] They cannot fully do this in their present disempowered state.

The judicial tendency, of not just the European Court but most domestic jurisdictions,[52] to carve the religious sphere out of the operation of judicial scrutiny is hindering the process of gender equality and is at the heart of why women do not currently have a right to freedom of religion. States and judicial authorities are implicitly allowing religions to continue to discriminate against women and deny their female believers an equal say in deciding the identity, content and structure of that religion. The liberal stance of neutrality and non interference towards religion is not neutral; it merely allows the power balance to remain heavily tilted towards male dominance within religion.

6. The 'Liberal' Stance of Legal Neutrality towards Religion

The catchword used to justify legal neutrality in relation to religion is plurality. A plurality of ideas is also seen by liberals as necessary for the actual evolution of society. Part of the premise behind religions being given internal autonomy is to ensure a plurality of ideas and therefore liberty within society. Academics such as Galston explicitly recommend pursuing a policy of maximum feasible accommodation in relation to religion. They expressly state that patriarchal gender relations should be allowed to persist to enable the maximisation of liberty (Galston, 1999, p. 875; Ahdar, 2001, p. 276). In some academic writings there is suggestion that human rights, particularly gender equality, might stifle liberty (Ahdar, 2001, p. 276). It is interesting however that, although

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[51] See Greenberg, 1999 in relation to this protective instinct.
[52] See Hill, 2001, at 409; Minnerath, 2004, n. 63 at 291 and Evans, 1997, Chapter 11 for details of domestic jurisprudence in this area.

liberty is presented as the favoured end point for society as a whole, liberty, in this context, is implicitly a purely male right. This viewpoint accepts that the views of women, half the human race, can be ignored and suppressed.

Much of what is behind this championing of 'liberty' against claims of gender equality is actually the defence of legally sanctioned male believer privilege. There is little realisation, within this reasoning, that non interference and maximum feasible accommodation can actually prevent the proliferation of ideas and the evolution of religion. In effect it gives exclusive rights to the leaders of religion to define the religions creed and views and silence or exclude those who disagree (Sunder, 2001, n. 49 at 515). By buying into the vision of 'an organised religious community based on identical or at least substantially similar views,'[53] States and judicial authorities cede the ultimate power to decide the creeds and internal workings of the religion to the leaders of a religion. They cede this power to religious leaders without any consideration of whether the religious authorities consult with or actually represent the views of their members. State power is used here in the service of religious leaders to impose patriarchal and hierarchical norms, for those leaders' benefit, at the expense of the basic right to equality of the community's female members (see Stopler, unpublished, quoted in McClain, 2004, n. 72 at 1591).

7. States' Legal Obligations in Relation to Gender Equality

The current legal approach to the right of religion effectively denies women an equal say in the composition and content of their religion. It is hereby asserted that such an approach violates the legal obligation States and the international community have to ensure gender equality and a woman's equal right to freedom of religion. States have a duty of due diligence to prevent, punish, investigate or redress the harm caused by gender inequality or any violation of a woman's human rights by the acts of private persons or entities.[54] The European Court has recognised

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[53] *X v. Denmark*, ibid.

[54] Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31 on The Nature of the General Legal Obligation on States Parties to the Covenant, 26 May 2004, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13 at para. 8 and *Velasquez-Rodriguez v. Honduras*, IACtHR Series C 4 (1988) at para. 172.

this duty within its own jurisprudence as can be clearly seen, in relation to gender equality, in *Opuz v. Turkey*.[55] In this case the European Court considered the obligation of States to 'take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women' as set out in Article 2(f) of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979 (CEDAW) in relation to the phenomenon of violence against women. It also referred to Article 2(e) of CEDAW, which explicitly places a duty on States to eliminate discrimination by any person, organisation or enterprise. A State's obligation to ensure that religious beliefs, customs and practices are modified to prevent discrimination has been reiterated within the CEDAW Committee and Human Rights Committee jurisprudence[56] and General Comments and in UN and the Council of Europe resolutions.[57]

Article 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that the contracting parties must secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in the Convention. Article 14 elucidates that these rights and freedoms must be enjoyed without discrimination on the basis of sex. This means that the right to freedom of religion and belief in Article 9 (1) of the Convention must be guaranteed and protected in law and in practice, for both men and women, on the same terms and without discrimination. It is therefore asserted that the present political and legal stance of neutrality and non interference in relation to religion has to change in light of this legal obligation. If religious

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[55] *Opuz v. Turkey* 50 EHRR 28.

[56] Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding Observations: Algeria, U.N. Doc. A/54/38 (1999) para. 70 & 71; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding Observations: India, U.N. Doc. A/55/38, (2000), para. 60; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding Observations: Bangladesh, U.N. Doc CEDAW/C/SR.654 at para. 62 (2005); Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Communication No. 12/2007, U.N. Doc. CEDAW/C/44/D/12/2007 (2007); Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee regarding Morocco, 1 November 1999, CCPR/C/79/Add.113 at para. 12; Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee regarding Kuwait, 27 July 2000, CCPR/CO/69/KWT. Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 28: Equality of rights between men and women (article 3)*, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.10 (2000), para. 21.

[57] Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2005/40, 19 April 2005, E/CN.4/RES/2005/40 and Council of Europe Resolution 1464, both attest that States should take all appropriate measures to counter intolerance and gender discrimination based on religion or belief.

institutions or beliefs are internally discriminating against or causing discrimination against women, then States are obliged to take action to prevent such discrimination. Although it is appreciated that the spiritual beliefs of another can be integral to their very person, claims of religion, which impact on the basic rights of others, must be subjected to critical analysis.

While it may be acceptable to argue over the precise content of a human right, it is clear that, regardless of the actual specifics, each human right must be ensured without distinction as to sex, or indeed any of the other 'protected grounds.'[58] This means that, in order to fulfil the non distinction condition, the content of the rights themselves must be non discriminatory. Following on from this reasoning, all human rights, including the right to freedom of religion, should be interpreted in light of the non distinction norm. The right to freedom of religion therefore must be looked at through the prism of gender equality (Stuart, 2008, p. 101). Women's right to religion is equal to that of men. Although states can and should allow religions internal autonomy, they still have a supervisory role to play in order to guarantee that gender equality is being ensured within religion and religious communities. This is not as fundamental a change as it may appear to be. Liberal theory, which underpins a state's neutral stance in the private sphere, already allows for the fulfilment of gender equality within religion. Rawls' 'principles of justice' guarantee the 'basic rights and liberties' of individuals within the 'social world' and thereby religion. In fact, Rawls actually states that 'because churches…are associations within the basic structure, they must adjust to the requirements that this structure imposes in order to establish background justice' (Rawls, 1996, p. 261). On this view, the autonomy of such associations is restricted by reference to 'basic equal liberties… and fair equality of opportunity' and the basic rights and liberties of an individual are guaranteed (Rawls, 1996, p. 261). Liberal theory therefore already embraces the idea that religious autonomy does not include the right to discriminate on the basis of sex.

Once it is accepted that religious autonomy does not include the right to discriminate on the basis of sex, the next question to be posed is

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[58] The author would like to iterate that although she is making an argument on the basis of gender equality, the premise that she is putting forward is applicable across the 'protected grounds' such as race, colour, sexual orientation, language etc. The content of all human rights must be interpreted in light of this entire duty re non discrimination.

how can gender equality be ensured within the right to freedom of religion and therefore within religions themselves? This is obviously a very difficult question, to be approached with sensitivity, but is not one that can simply be ignored.

8. Methods for Instituting Change within Religion

It is true that 'by its very nature, and in order to influence effectively the moral convictions and daily behaviour of those who subscribe to it, religious belief must be voluntarily adopted and maintained' (An-Na'im, 1996, n. 5 at 339). Change has to come from within for it to make a real difference, whether the change is being made by a person or an organisation. In order for women to be truly equal within a religion, those within that religion must therefore accept the concept of gender equality, with all of its resultant implications. Both An-Na'im (1991) and Coomaraswamy (2002, p. 483) are correct in insisting that change within a religion can only really occur through internal dialogue. At present however, although Council of Europe states have accepted that women and men are equal, those in positions of authority within some religions still appear unwilling to initiate a process of dialogue and change towards gender equality. Religious authorities tend to be a self-perpetuating male elite over which the religious community usually has little control. Like any in power, they resist reform ifs it is not in their interest. An upheaval of gender hierarchy would shake the core of not only religious doctrinal symbolism of androcentric gender models (Børresen, 2004, n. 63 at 552) but also the power relations they support. Seen in this light gender equality is a dangerous premise that would involve fundamental changes to the structure, composition and official views of most religions. This thereby threatens the position and power base of the current elite. It is therefore unsurprising that religions do not acknowledge the right of women to be a part of their religion on an equal basis to men; those in positions of power are reliant on the subordination of women to retain that power. Internal change is unlikely to occur in these circumstances without outside state pressure and 'interference' or huge ructions from within the religion. Where those in power within a religion are reluctant to initiate change, states must step forward and play their part in encouraging and supporting those religions in this

process of change towards gender equality.[59] Religious institutions and leaders need to be encouraged to embrace their golden rule of 'doing unto others as you would have done unto yourself'[60] and bringing into fruition the fundamental precept of equality that lies at the heart of each religion.[61] As stated by Stephen Barton

> In the sphere of gender relations… the great irony is that the Christian ideals of freedom reconciliation and equality are being discovered and practiced more outside the church than within it (Barton, 1989, at 403).

9. Instituting Change through Education

States can help facilitate religious change, thereby satisfying their international and regional legal obligation to 'ensure' non discrimination in the operation of human rights, in a number of different ways; one of which is through education. Religious education is key to equality within religion as it is key to equality within society as a whole. Notions of inferiority and inequality are taught. If, instead, one teaches gender equality the battle is almost won. Religious education takes place in families, schools, communities and within the 'church' itself. Although the State traditionally only has direct influence over education within schools, this is a good starting point.

At present there is considerable variety in the approaches taken by States to education in the field of religion and conviction (Plesner, 2004, n. 63 at 796). The UN Special Rapporteur's survey and report on reli-

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[59] It has been suggested that given the difficulties and slow pace of cultural change, gender equality can only really occur through a progressive realisation of rights. While the law states differently and women may wish that it were otherwise, this approach, in reality, is probably correct in relation to changes in both culture and religion. Coomaraswamy, 2002, n. 90 at 509.

[60] This 'Golden Rule' can be found in the Declaration Towards a Global Ethic, and the attached Principles of a Global Ethic, as signed in 1993, in the Second World Parliament of Religions, by the vast majority of religious representatives. A copy of the Declaration & Principles can be found by accessing http://www.religioustolerance.org/parliame.htm & http://www.religioustolerance.org/parl_rt1.htm.

For more information please see Tahzib, 1996, at 18.

[61] See Arat, 2000, at 69, in relation to the fact that equality lies at the heart of the Koran.

gious education[62] recommended that religious education should include education on a range of religions and be focused on the aims of tolerance, non discrimination and respect for human rights. This is not simply a recommendation; the duty of non discrimination in Article 14 of the Convention is equally applicable in relation to the right of education contained within Article 2 of Protocol 1 to the Convention. Council of Europe member states therefore have a legal duty to ensure that religious education teaching is in conformity with gender equality principles, as pointed out in the Council of Europe Resolution 1464.[63] This resolution elaborates on the content of this state duty by explicitly stating that states should fight against religiously motivated stereotypes of male and female roles from an early age, including within schools.[64] Article 10, CEDAW, specifically requires states to eliminate any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by, in particular, the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods. In order to promote religious tolerance and equality, in all its strands, religious education should be a part of mainstream education. Textbooks need to advocate a gender equal perspective and help to foster a person's critical evaluation skills. Teachers should also be properly trained to teach religious education in a tolerant and non discriminatory way taking human rights, and in particular gender equality, into account.

It is clear that the development of an individual's critical thinking is a key educational goal.[65] The development and application of critical thinking and evaluation within religious education is crucial for the attainment of gender equality and the strengthening of individual belief. It is only when women start assuming the right to define for themselves the parameters of their own identity and stop accepting unconditionally and without question what is presented to them as the 'right' role or religious interpretation that they can effectively challenge and change the beliefs and practices hemming them in (Shaheed, 1994). This is true also for men; gender equality is also their right. A shift in roles can only occur with support from both genders. It is by critically analysing religious

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[62] Mr. Abdelfattah Amor, Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance "*Racial Discrimination, Religious Intolerance and Education*", 3 May 2001, A/CONF.189/PC.2/22.

[63] Council of Europe Resolution 1464, ibid; Articles 5 and 10 CEDAW.

[64] Council of Europe Resolution 1464, ibid. at para. 6.

[65] For the position in Europe, please see Plesner, 2004.

gender stereotypes and interpretations of sacred texts that gender dis-crimination can be identified and rectified. Major religions have such a broad repository of positions and beliefs that they can legitimise any course of action. Islam has been said to be

> like any religion, a reservoir of values, symbols and ideas from which it is possi-ble to derive a contemporary politics and social code: the answer as to why this or that interpretation was put upon Islam resides therefore not in the religion and its texts itself, but in the contemporary needs of those articulating Islamic politics (Halliday, 2000).

It is possible, within each religion, to come up with interpretations that support equality and tolerance, as shown by the cross cutting accep-tance of the 'Golden Rule,' i.e. treat everyone as you yourself would wish to be treated, which has equality and tolerance at its very heart. Inter-pretations or misinterpretations, which appear to discriminate against women, provide a good pedagogic opportunity to challenge given no-tions, biases and stereotypes in religion. The use of comparative exam-ples enriches the interpretative exercise. It can be demonstrated by his-torical example that religious views and interpretations change with the times; religious views in relation to slavery and racial discrimination can be instructive case studies. Religious education must also ensure that women's perspectives are not lacking from religious viewpoints and that religious and cultural heritage is drawn from experiences and role-models of both women and men.[66] There is evidence of women being influential in the teaching and preaching of the early churches. These historical facts can prove to be an eye opener in relation to religion's current stance on women and their religious ability.[67]

What is taught as religious education is a very sensitive matter. Par-ents have a right to ensure teaching of their children is done 'in confor-

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[66] The role of religious education in the pursuit of tolerance and non-discrimination-study prepared under the guidance of Prof. Abdelfattah Amor, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of religious intoler-ance, International Consultative Conference on School Education in relation with Freedom of Religion and Belief, Tolerance and Non-discrimination (Madrid, 23–25 November 2001). UN: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

[67] Boyle & Sheen (1997), in relation to Japan, where it can be seen that although women actually started up various Shinto sects once these religions became institu-tionalised, women were pushed out of positions of authority. Also see Thurman, 1999, at 87 for the same reoccurrence in Buddhism.

mity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.'[68] The teaching of religion is also seen to fall within the right to freedom of religion and belief given to religions.[69] This means that although States are obliged to ensure that religion is taught in a gender equal fashion, they have to implement this obligation in a manner sensitive to the views of parents and religion. It has been shown that the best models of religious education are those that integrate consultation into the whole teaching process (Eidsvag & Sween, 2004). This is not to say that the States must bow to pressure from parents and religious leaders and allow gender discrimination to be taught under the pretext of religion, but that they must merely allow everyone to have their view listened and responded to. A full and constructive consultative process can help to illuminate a path through this potential minefield. It should be highlighted to parents and religions, when initiating such consultation, that the goal is to strengthen and develop a student's spirituality and to ensure the continued relevance and legitimacy of religion and belief in today's world.

10. Instituting Change through Support & Funding for Research & Surveys on Gender Equality within Religion

The states' goal must be to encourage internal change within religion towards gender equality in line with their legal obligations. As stated earlier, those in authority within religion can be reluctant to initiate this process. While the use of education is one way to create a movement and internal pressure for change, states can also facilitate this by providing the requisite space and support to alternative, gender equal, religious views, thereby allowing them to grow and influence the official stance of the various religions. Alongside this the state can initiate and fund research and surveys designed to highlight the desire for gender equality among church members and the dissatisfaction current discrimination causes. Such research and surveys should concentrate on the current

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[68] Article 2, First Protocol to the European Convention of Human Rights 1952 CETS 9; See also Article 5, Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, GA Res. 36/55, 25 November 1981.

[69] Article 6, Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Based on Belief, ibid.; Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 22 on the Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion (Article 18), 30 July 1993, U.N. Doc. HRI\GEN\1\ Rev.1 at para. 4.

religious and societal views of 'the faithful.' Recent surveys have demonstrated that there is a vast discrepancy between the views of Catholics on such 'societal' views as female ordination, divorce, abortion, contraception and the married status of priests and the official stance of the Catholic Church.[70] The majority of Catholics worldwide disagree with Catholic doctrine on these matters.[71] Such discrepancies are not limited to the Catholic Church; an increasing number of religious people feel that religion should not interfere in the personal choices an individual makes.[72] Even those who wish religious law to apply to their personal lives feel that such law should be gender equal.[73] Using the results of such research, states can draw to religious leaders' attention the growing disparity between their religion's official views and the views of its members in relation to gender equality.

In earlier times, there was consensus within religion that previous religious legal decisions should be kept under constant review to ensure they retained their relevancy and legitimacy (An-Na'im, 1996, n. 88 at 345). This early practice should be remembered and resurrected. When religion is out of step with societal values and is unwilling to start the process of change, or change is occurring at too slow a pace, it starts to lose its legitimacy. All the 'founders' of the main religions recognised this fact.[74] It is a misnomer that religion is static and unchanging 'religious

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[70] Global Study of Roman Catholics (Anon., 2014). This was a scientific poll, commissioned by the Vatican, of more than 12,000 Catholics in 12 countries representing Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America. Wijngaards, 2000.

[71] The majority of Catholics worldwide disagree with Catholic doctrine on divorce, abortion, and contraceptives. Additionally, the majority of Catholics in Europe, Latin America and the United States disagree with established doctrine on the marriage of priests as well as on women entering the priesthood as found in Global Study of Roman Catholics (Anon., 2014).

[72] Wijngaards, 2000, discusses the steady shift in European attitudes towards more personal autonomy and freedom seen within the Gallup research known as 'The European Values Systems' studies in 1981 and 1990 and also comparable studies in the USA and Australia, which show that the majority of believers now feel that the locus of religious authority lies within themselves.

[73] The results of the field study are particularly interesting as it shows that although Palestinians automatically want to be governed by Shari'a law they wish it to be gender neutral.

[74] Mohammed, Buddha and Christ all appear to have assimilated the 'good' local customs and practices into their religion and ensured their teachings gained legitimacy by only changing the local culture where it clashed with the basic precepts of their religion. Although it is asserted that they wished to alleviate the discrimination of women, they accepted that they were unable to make great advances in this area

traditions are in a constant state of change and adaption in response to their surrounding social conditions' (Berger, 2012, p. 28). If a religion loses its legitimacy, it loses its members and position of power within society. Where a religion feels that this is happening it is generally willing to change to 'capture' its market share of believers once more.

11. Encouragement for Religions to Enter into Internal Consultation

With firm evidence of a disparity between the views of those claiming to represent a religion and the members of that religion, the state would be in a good position to convince those leaders to enter into an internal consultation process with all their members. The state could also encourage the adoption of good practice across religions by organising, funding and publicising an inter-religious conference on gender equality. This would at the very least put the topic on the religious agenda and in the public eye. In order to mobilise the whole of society to campaign for gender equality within religion, the state could also initiate, fund and publish reports that study the impact that gender discrimination within religion has on women and society as a whole. This would help to open people's eyes to the negative consequences of religious discriminatory views and practices and create a climate more conducive to religious change. Religions are reactive; they react to social practices and new social realities. State and societal pressure can therefore prompt and facilitate a change in official religious views.

In order to underpin such a change in official religious views states should also proactively encourage religions to initiate, draft and publish independent feasibility studies in relation to gender equal interpretations of sacred texts etc to support true gender equality within religion and the acceptance of women's cultic ability. One of the main ways in which gender equality can be effectively realised within religion is by women being an integral part of the leadership structure and having the

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due to resistance to the idea of gender equality within the local cultures. It is somewhat ironic that while these great religious 'leaders' attempted to reduce discrimination against women, the religions that grew from them now use such 'emancipating' acts as justification to deny women equality (Thurman, 1999). For details about Buddha being unable to challenge the patriarchal attitudes of his time directly. In relation to the Prophet Mohammed, see Mayer, 1999.

authority to interpret, define and implement the religious creed. Law has a role to play in relation to this aspect of religious change and creating the requisite pressure to 'encourage' religious change.

12. Use of Equality Law as an Instrument for Change

At present many European States have legislation prohibiting sex discrimination within employment and the provision of services. All EU states must have such legislation.[75] This legislation, however, specifically allows for sex discrimination to occur in relation to the non-employment of women or provision of services to women within an organised religion, where this occurs in order to comply with the doctrines of that religion or avoid conflict with the strongly held convictions of a significant amount of the religion's followers.[76] There are also similar provisions in relation to sexual orientation.[77] There is no procedure within either the legislation itself, or legal jurisprudence, to determine whether such discrimination is 'justified' by reference to a religion's doctrine or member's views. The State simply takes the declarations of the religious leaders at face value. It is asserted that a more sophisticated mechanism for determining the doctrines of that religion or whether a conviction is strongly held by a significant amount of the religion's followers should be instituted, while this exemption is still in place. It is accepted that courts are very wary of becoming embroiled in religiously sensitive disputes and straying over the well recognised State/ church divide. This is evident in the English High Court's decision in *Wachmann*.[78] However, while UK courts are still reluctant to interfere within religiously sensitive disputes, this stance is gradually changing; UK courts are now willing to treat ministers of religion as employees of the Church and as coming within the ambit of Employment law, where the facts support such

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[75] Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment Directive 2006/54/EC.

[76] For example, see UK Equality Act 2010, Sch 9, para. 2 & 3, Sch3, s29.; Section 32 of the Australian Capital Territories Discrimination Act 1991; Article 28 of the New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993.

[77] See the UK Equality Act 2010, Sch 9, para. 2 & 3, Sch3, s29. The arguments outlined in this article could easily be used in relation to this protected category too.

[78] *R v. Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of Great Britain and the Commonwealth, ex parte Wachmann* [1993] 2 All ER 249.

a conclusion.[79] This however obviously only occurs where that religion accepts women, as ministers, in the first instance.

In *R (on the application of E) v Governing Body of JFS and the Admissions Appeal Panel of JFS and others*,[80] the UK Supreme Court was asked to adjudicate on whether the admissions policy of a Jewish religious school, using Matrilineal descent as the key criteria, was direct discrimination and thereby contravened Section 1 of the UK Race Relations Act 1976. In their handling of this legal issue, although the Supreme Court found that the admissions policy did directly discriminate, it paid extreme deference to the right of religions to determine their own membership and was almost apologetic in their judgment in being forced to stray into perceived 'religious territory.' It only found in such a way because it was argued on racial, as opposed to religious, grounds and therefore no religious exception could be utilised by the school. Regardless of how uncomfortable the courts are in straying into what they currently perceive as 'religious territory,' it should, though, be emphasised that the courts are an arm of the State and as such are legally obliged to do so under current State equality obligations.

However strong a government's desire to refrain from directly interfering in the management of religious affairs, circumstances can compel them to take a stand on matters of faith, ritual and doctrine.[81] The fact that the discrimination in relation to the non appointment of women within religious posts is mandated by the religious creed or beliefs does not detract from the State's duty to ensure gender equality and the equal right of women to freedom of religion. The right to freedom of conscience and belief has to be ensured equally to men and women; the right does not therefore cover gender discriminatory manifestations. In

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[79] The House of Lords decision in *Percy v. Church of Scotland Board of National Mission* [2005] UKHL 73, allowed the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to be applicable to ministers of religion; The UK Employment Appeals Tribunal decision in *New Testament Church of God v. Reverend S Stewart* [2007] IRLR 178, went further and specifically stated that ministers of religion could be employees of the church. There is no presumption against the contractual character of the service of ministers. The primary considerations are the manner in which a minister was engaged and the rules governing his or her service. If the manner could not fit within a contractual format they could not be an employee (Moore v President of the Methodist Conference [2013] UKSC 29).

[80] *R (on the application of E) v. Governing Body of JFS and the Admissions Appeal Panel of JFS and others* [2009] UKSC 15.

[81] Krishnaswami, *Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices*, 1960, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/200/Rev.1.

order for a manifestation of belief to be protected under the right to freedom of religion, it must pass the non distinction test. If a practice is gender discriminatory then it should not therefore fall within the protection of human rights law. Technically speaking States cannot therefore exempt religions from the exercise of equality laws.

Where there is reluctance on the part of religious leaders to move towards gender equality, which is evident at present, then the mere threat of removing these exemptions can prove to be an effective method of prompting internal change within religion. This can be seen by reference to the New Zealand 'Gay Clergy' debate. In New Zealand the tabling of the New Zealand Human Rights Act, and the prospect of expensive lawsuits from licensed homosexuals who wish to become pastors, prompted religious authorities to engage on a consultative process on the issue of gay ordination in order to decide the church's stance on this matter. In this case the mere prospect of 'State intrusion' into the employment relationships within the church had the positive effect of encouraging religions to embark on a consultative approach to update their self definition.[82] Interestingly, within the UK, there was talk of similar pressure being applied in relation to the established church, the Church of England. Mr Bradshaw, former UK Culture Secretary, raised the issue of amending the Church's legal exemption to the Equality Act 2010 to help pave the way for female bishops.[83] The Prime Minister was more circumspect stating that "although the time is right for women bishops ....we must respect individual institutions and how they work, while giving them a sharp prod."[84] Without doubt political pressure was however brought down on the Church of England to allow female bishops. This pressure was brought due, to a large extent, to the fact that the Church has seats in Parliament, is an establishment church, and the vast majority within its ranks supported the change. Such pressure has not been exerted on a non-establishment religion within the UK.

There is a lesson to be learned here: political pressure and proposed changes in the law can lead to a 'voluntary' change in religious rules and

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[82] See Ahdar, 2001, for more information and a different viewpoint on the matter.

[83] More details can be found at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9693229/David-Cameron-Church-needs-to-get-with-the-programme-after-rejecting-women-bishops.html [last accessed March 2015].

[84] In Hansard, column 579, 21st Nov 2012: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm121121/debtext/121121-0001.htm#12112171000010 [last accessed March 2015].

doctrine. Although the law can be used to facilitate changes in culture this must, however, be done sensitively and only to limited extent. Changes in law should reflect a burgeoning support for those changes in society. If the law imposes changes that garner insufficient support within society then civil disobedience, rebellion and a backlash against the imposed changes can ensue. Where change is unavoidable though, religious interpretations can be found to support that change.[85] Once the State has ascertained through consultation, surveys, and research that society, both religious and otherwise, is agreeable to gender equality within religions it can then move to abolish the current legislative gender equality exemptions for religion. By announcing their intention to amend gender equality legislation and remove the religious exemption, States can encourage religions to start an internal consultative process and re-think their official views on gender equality and female ordination. By insisting on equality within religious hiring procedures the State is not interfering with the internal workings of a religion, any more than it does in any other hiring situation. It is not telling a religion who to hire or dictating what the personal attributes or beliefs of their clergy should be, merely that each application for ordination/employment should be dealt with on an individual basis regardless of that individual's gender. This means that the 'post' should, like any other role, be given to the person best suited intellectually and spiritually for the post. The employment decision should be based on whether an individual possesses the necessary personal attributes, skills, and experience for the post, not predicated upon their gender.

12. Potential Legal Action by Religions under the Right to Freedom of Religion

It is idealistic to believe that all religions would simply accept this new stance of the State which would allow equality laws to operate within religion. Lobbying and social pressure would be applied upon the

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[85] This can be seen most commonly in relation to economic strictures but also in relation to racial equality. Where some religions and religious interpretations historically supported racial discrimination, the change in societal views and law prompted a change in religious creeds. It should however be noted that some religions, notably the Quakers, were the backbone in the prohibition of slavery movement and are active in combating discrimination and lobbying for fairer laws.

State, by organised religions, to reverse such a policy and religious leaders may take legal advice on whether legal action to prevent such revocation would have a chance of success. In any such legal action an applicant, under a right to religion claim, would have to prove that the State had violated their right to religion by revoking, or not providing, an exemption to gender equality legislation. The result of such legal action, if taken, is unclear. The jurisprudence of the European Court suggests that States would be given a wide margin of appreciation in relation to assessing their actions in dealing with a sensitive matter such as this, where there is no common consensus among Council of Europe States.[86] This stance has to, however, be balanced alongside the European Court's strict approach where a state is deemed to have interfered with the internal autonomy of a religion. The court's approach depends, to a large degree, on whether the court classifies the law as a neutral law or a targeted law.

The European Court, although it is beginning to consider indirect effects in relation to article 9 cases,[87] is still really only comfortable in extending the protection of Article 9 to those who have been directly affected by a state action i.e. the law or State action is aimed directly at the restriction of the manifestation etc. of that religion.[88] If the religious applicants could persuade the court that a revocation of their exemption was a targeted legal measure, as opposed to a neutral one, then the European Court would be likely to find that an interference with article 9 had occurred and the margin of appreciation given to the state in deciding whether or not this interference was objectively justified would be narrower. Where the legislation that is allegedly violating an individual's or institution's right to freedom of religion is generally applicable and 'neutral,'[89] the European Court has in the past denied that any interfer-

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[86] For examples of this see *Frette v. France*, Supra. n. 17 at para. 40; *Petrovic v. Austria*, 1998-II; 33 EHRR 14, *S.A.S v. France*, ibid.

[87] This can be seen in relation to an argument of indirect discrimination on the basis of art 9 in conjunction with art 14, ECHR for example see *The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints v. The United Kingdom* (2014) 59 E.H.R.R. 18, para. 31.

[88] See *Kokkinakis v. Greece*, A260-A (1993); 7 EHRR 397; *Dahlab v. Switzerland,* Application No. 42393/98 (2001), for examples of how the European Court deals with 'direct' discrimination against religion.

[89] The term 'neutral' in the way it is used here means that the law in question is not directed at one religious group and not, on the face of it, religiously discriminatory.

ence under Article 9 has arisen in relation to an individual's rights,[90] and while this stance has softened more recently,[91] it has yet to accept that such interference has occurred in relation to an institution's article 9 right.[92]

It is clear that gender equality employment legislation, directed at all employers within a State, is 'neutral.' Although the European Court has found a violation of Article 9 where States have interfered directly with the appointment of ministers of non-established churches,[93] in the present case the State would simply be acting to prevent gender discrimination being a factor in the hiring of an individual. It is not specifying or interfering in the employment process past the application of natural justice and equality rules. In this instance, the European Court would, in all probability, find that the State had not interfered with the applicant's right to freedom of religion. There is, however, a possibility, based on the conscientious objector strand of jurisprudence,[94] that the applicant would be successful in showing that their protected religious rights had been interfered with. While the court is, though, becoming more open to finding a breach of article 9 on the basis of a claim of 'indirect discrimination' where conscientious objection to military service and its related implications are involved,[95] it has not yet found a breach on this basis in regard to other religious manifestations. The court has only dealt with institutional claims of indirect discrimination in relation to the treatment of one religion *vis a vis* another religion, i.e. where an issue of the

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[90] *Valsamis v. Greece,* Application No. 21787/93 (1996); *Efstratiou v. Greece*, 1996-VI; 24 E.H.R.R 298.

[91] In *S.A.S.* the Court did find an article 9 interference even though the law was nominally a 'neutral' one in that it banned all full face covering in public.

[92] It has however accepted that such interference is possible within an article 14 & 9 case, *The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints v. The United Kingdom* (2014) 59 E.H.R.R. 18.

[93] See *Serif v. Greece* 31 EHRR 20; and *Hasan & Chaush v. Bulgaria,* ibid.

[94] *Thlimmenos v. Greece & Bayatyan v Armenia,* Ibid., Erçep v. Turkey (application no. 43965/04) ECHR 254 (2011).

[95] The right to indirect discrimination, namely when States without an objective and reasonable justification fail to treat differently persons whose situations are significantly different, was accepted by the European Court in *Thlimmenos v. Greece* (34369/97) (2001) 31 E.H.R.R. 15. In *Bayatyan v Armenia* (23459/03) (2012) 54 E.H.R.R. 15, the European Court first found an article 9 violation for the refusal of Armenia to introduce civilian service as an alternative to compulsory military service and the conviction and imprisonment of the applicant for refusing to do military service on the basis of his religious beliefs.

plurality of religion is affected, which in this situation, would not be applicable. It is, however, open to the applicant religion to argue for the application of the 'conscientious objector' test, with its stricter margin of appreciation, in relation to their institutional rights.[96]

In the event that the European Court did find that the State had interfered with the petitioner's right to freedom of religion, it is obvious that equality legislation would clear the 'prescribed by law' hurdle and pursues the legitimate aim of attaining gender equality. It is only in relation to the proportionality aspect of the current 'necessary in a democratic society' test that there may be some element of doubt. The outcome of the European Court's deliberations depends on the margin of appreciation it utilises: the wider the margin the more certain the state's success. If the applicant is arguing to retain an exemption already in the law, the burden on the state to justify the removal, due to an implicit protection of status quo, may be higher than otherwise as this appears to be a targeted action. In justifying the removal, it is thought, that the state would need to provide evidence that its people, and particularly those within that religion, were supportive of the gender equality laws being completely applicable within religion in its territory. The state, in doing so, could however fall into the trap of showing that they were interfering with that religion's autonomy by removing the exception, and social engineering change, and trigger the court's strict scrutiny. Conversely where a religion is arguing that an exemption to a neutral law should be made, the margin of appreciation the court would employ is normally be very wide. In considering the width of the margin of appreciation the court's stance would also be heavily dependent on the situation within the majority of Council of Europe states. Where there is no consensus among the Council of Europe states an individual state has more discretion in its actions; the more states have such exemptions the less discretion is given to the individual state to 'buck the trend.'

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[96] The issue at the heart of the conscientious objector cases appears to be that there were reasonable alternatives available to military service, which the state had not utilised but the majority of Council of Europe states had, and the system had failed to strike a fair balance between the interests of society as a whole and those of the conscientious objectors This development of article 9 jurisprudence is interesting and could prove beneficial to religious institutions arguing that they should have an exemption from a neutral equality law provision on the basis of the impact of the disputed law and taking account of the balancing required.

There are various factors that the European Court will take into account when considering whether an interference can be objectively justified. The main question is whether there are any lessor reasonable means of achieving the same aim and a consideration by the court of the impact of the measure has had on the applicant weighed up against the strength of the legitimate aim. The successful outcomes of the conscientious objector cases were predicated on the fact that there are suitable alternatives to accommodate the competing interests of the state and that the majority of states utilised such alternatives. In relation to the legitimate aim of ensuring gender equality within religion, it could be strongly refuted that there are any suitable alternatives, to ensure the same outcome, so this argument would be likely to fail. Given the weight of the opposing claim, i.e. gender equality, it would be surprising if the court did not allow the state discretion in how they balanced the 'opposing' rights unless some inequality in the state's treatment of various religions was also argued i.e. an article 14 & 9 argument. Judging from the past decisions in this area, whereas the European Court is reluctant to find a neutral law disproportionate and force a State to create exceptions to a general rule,[97] it finds it easier to hold that a targeted law is contrary to article 9. It really comes down to, at the end of the day, how the court characterises the applicable law and whether it accepts that such a law intrudes into the sphere of religious autonomy. If it finds that there is *prima facie* direct discrimination, which considerably intrudes into the sphere of religious autonomy, then the state may lose in the weighing up of the proportionality of the action, regardless of its legitimate aim of gender equality due to the primacy given to this autonomy. Otherwise, it is likely that the court give its usual deference to the state's view, in such matters, at the balancing stage. A state should therefore think carefully on how to institute any such legal changes, taking the European Court's judicial tendencies into account. The outcome is dependent on how the legal measure is drawn up and how the matter is presented and argued in court. Ultimately, it is asserted that the court would side with the state in this matter but this is not by any means certain.

On the other side of the equation, human rights law does however allow a State to create exceptions to the general rule where it feels that

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[97] For a case in point, see *ISKCON v Secretary of State for the Environment*, (1994) 18 EHRR CD 133.

such exceptions are necessary to ensure human rights or fulfil a societal need. Should a woman, who wishes to be a minister of religion, take an action against a State for allowing organised religion an exception to the general employment equality laws, it is highly unlikely she would win her case within any domestic, international or religion judicial arena. States are given a wide margin of appreciation where there is a lack of common State consensus. Although it is stated that there should be weighty reasons to justify interference with the right to gender equality[98], States have been allowed to limit the ambit of gender equality where there is an objective and reasonable justification for the limitation.[99] Looking at past case law, it is pretty clear that if the State framed their limitation of gender equality, in this context, in terms of needing to give due deference to a religion's right to freedom of religion and internal autonomy, the European Court, at least, would accept this as a valid justification and reject the women's claim.[100] The ball, as ever, lies in the State's court.

13. Conclusions

Article 9 of the Convention states that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief. At present, however, it is clear that women do not have an equal right to religion. 'To be able to search for an understanding of the ultimate meaning of life in one's own way is among the most important aspects of a life that is truly human' (Nussbaum, 2000, at 179). If we accept this as a truism, then it is of utmost importance that we work towards the attainment of this right for women. Although theoretically women have an equal right to religion, and make up the majority of believers, they have been effectively denied their equal right to religion through the operation of patriarchal reli-

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[98] *Petrovic v. Austria*, n. 125.

[99] *Case Relating to Certain Aspects of the Laws on the Use of Languages in Education in Belgium v. Belgium* A.6 (1968); 1 EHRR 252.

[100] The European Court, like every human rights judicial body, takes the concept of subsidiary very seriously. It feels that '[b]y reason of their direct and continuous contact with the vital forces of their countries, the national authorities are in principle better placed than an international court to evaluate local needs and conditions,' *Frette v. France,* n. 17. The Court's decisions, especially in relation to religion, usually rest on the premise of ensuring societal peace, as seen in *Otto Preminger v. Austria* A295-A (1994); 19 EHRR 34. Taking this into consideration it is likely that the European Court would accept the State's viewpoint and reject the gender equality claim.

gious creeds and power structures. While equality is one of the cornerstone beliefs of every religion, gender discrimination pervades religious structure, creed and practices. Due to a lack of authority and power within religion, women are powerless to effect change towards gender equality within their own religion. Currently State policies and laws are complicit in the discrimination of women by and within religion. The right to freedom of religion has been judicially interpreted in such a way as to give religious leaders the ability to silent internal dissent and insulate their 'religion' from change. By ceding the individual human right to freedom of conscience and belief to patriarchal religious institutions, pursuing a policy of non interference in relation to religion and accepting as inevitable and unchangeable the clash between women rights and religion, the world has effectively denied women the freedom of conscience and belief. This denial has had and continues to have a crucial impact on gender equality as a whole.

States have an international obligation to change discriminatory religious attitudes and allow women an equal right within religion. States are not powerless in relation to religion. Although change must come from within, the State can help to facilitate positive change in religion towards gender equality. Religious views are not static; they are reactive to social change. The State needs to create an environment conducive to religious change towards gender equality. It can do this by ripening views favourable to gender equality, both within and out with religion, through education and the raising of awareness by the publication of surveys and research. Once a critical mass of people within society and religion recognises the need for and supports gender equality within religion, the pressure on religion to engage upon an internal process of change, towards gender equality, can be increased by careful use of the law. The retraction of religious exemptions to gender equality laws could prove to be such a trigger point and one that is acceptable within the current international regional human rights systems. Religions can change in their views; they simply sometimes require a reason to change. It is incumbent on States to provide just such a reason.

Acknowledgment

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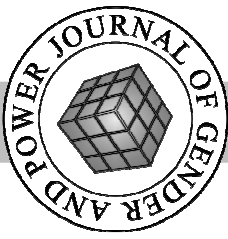
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Art in a World of Change:
A Vision for Global Aesthetics

ABSTRACT. This article focuses on art, the aesthetic, and the body as a medium for self and social change in developing some thoughts on this issue of globalization and dance. The article explores how art, and specifically dance, can be a vehicle for aesthetic activism that emphasizes the importance of social justice and compassionate community. Drawing on critical and feminist pedagogies the author links pedagogy and aesthetic activism to social integration and cohesion, a sense of belonging and interdependence, and a sense of shared consciousness. The choreographic process described centers on the body as a site for self and social awareness and a critical understanding of the context of women's lives. The aesthetic here is understood as that domain in which dominant meanings are disclosed and possibilities for social change can be imagined and realized. The author describes a community dance process in Cape Town South Africa in which notions of embodied knowledge and critical understanding come together to create a dance performance. This pedagogy suggests ways in which meaning and purpose within a changing global context can be grounded in an ethics of social justice, human rights and inclusive community.

KEYWORDS: global aesthetics, art, globalization, dance

Introduction

> The body knows and re-members even in the silences of our lives.
> In dance the familiar can become strange…
> more than movement it is the act of transformational possibility.

Globalization is not a new topic for discussion. Many of us have become aware of the changes in our societies and across the world that have come as direct or indirect responses to globalization. Current themes, whether concerning the economy, culture, transnational families or the environment have become part of our global discussions. We cannot ignore the effects of globalization and how it challenges our notion of stable identities, unchanging traditions, or the processes that ef-

fect these changes. Fluidity and flux have come to be significant meta-
phors for the way we define our cultures and our world.

The arts, dance in particular, is a product of culture. Even so, the as-
sumptions, especially in United States educational curriculum, that when
dance is shared in a classroom for a cross-cultural event we have created
some form *of positive partnership between differing peoples*.

This is a nice romantic idea and one that I myself have shared. As I
have had the opportunity to observe children from different countries
and cultures, of different socio-economic backgrounds, and of a different
race, or ethnicity, sex or physical ability sharing dance experiences, I too
can sometimes see a vision of *all* becoming equal as they transcend the
barriers of difference. In these kinds of cross-cultural experiences,
art/dance is understood as an avenue for providing a *common* language
as if this somehow transcends and obliterates all other differences. I do
not wish to posit that this isn't a significant and valuable experience for
children in and of itself but, rather, that we can ask more of the
arts/dance than this. What is encouraged here is to enter into an exami-
nation of what art/dance can offer a global society. Perhaps going be-
yond sharing our cultural diversities in a communal space, learning each
other's dances, or adding 'world' or African dance (as often done in the
United States as the answer to creating a different cultural experience)
to our curriculum we might, in addition, consider how art/dance is being
shaped through globalization. Even more importantly, how might we
shape the effects of globalization through artist avenues?

Art, it is well understood, offers a unique and powerful form of hu-
man expression. It has the capacity of speaking in a language that is vis-
ceral and far less mediated by our thoughts and abstract conceptualiza-
tions. It provides, at times, a raw embodied way of capturing human
experience. Dance, too, allows free reign to the sensual and the sen-
tient—things that elsewhere are often circumscribed by custom and
convention. It also manifests that form of playfulness that is so delight-
fully found in young children and then often erased from adult life.
Dance, like other forms of art, provides a space in which human beings
can touch the transcendent—experiencing new or alternative possibili-
ties that are outside of our 'taken for granted' life practices; it is a space
that encourages and nurtures the ability to imagine different ways of
feeling and being in the world. And, it is the human body that makes
dance concrete. To think of dance in a way that makes the global leap
without an appropriation of the other's experiences assuming a hierar-

chical stance of cultural superiority or arrogance, calls for a sense of *global aesthetics*. Here, the question of course must be asked 'what is a global aesthetics?'

I will draw upon my own considerable experience as an educator who has focused on art, the aesthetic, and the body as a medium for self and social change in developing some thoughts on this issue of globalization and dance. I also wish to draw upon the work of postmodern and feminists scholars who have written on the effects of globalization as a way to reconceptualize what it means for the arts to engage in human change in general, and, in particular, how the body, grounded in memory and experience, provides a potentially powerful resource for change. And, finally I will discuss how the co-existing forces of self and other constitute the universal relationship in which the body becomes the concrete place where questions of human compassion *and* human barbarism are simultaneously engendered.

Writing from the "global north"[1] and as a white female middle class dance educator from the United States, I cannot dismiss the context of my perspectives and my privileged position. Acknowledging this position with sensitivity leads me to recognize my own limitations and perspectives. I seek only to be part of the larger discussion recognizing my voice as important, but not the voice of Truth.

Dominating Aesthetics

A global view of aesthetics recognizes diversity and acknowledges that there are multiple meanings in regards to 'what is art/dance,' or 'what is good art/dance;' each responsive to the needs of different cultures in different social contexts, regions, societies and nations. It is important to recognize the ways in which we have acted that are exactly the opposite of what would be needed to create a sense of a global aesthetics. Though we have begun to acknowledge the rich presence of diversity, respect for a more multicultural approach to art/dance, and developed our sense of honoring the 'particular,' we must also examine the underlying assumptions and dispositions we continue to hold as part of our embodied ideology of the aesthetic. What I mean by this is the way

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[1] Term for the rich and developed countries, like Europe and the United States that mostly reside in the Northern Hemisphere.

in which we continue to see particular art/dance forms as superior while giving other forms of art less value. This is an important first step as we seek to seriously encounter the meaning of the arts within the context of a global society.

Here, I will continue to develop this argument through the field in which I work, dance, noting though that all arts many of the same premises that will be addressed in this article. Superior dance forms have typically been identified as western European and historically situated within a structure dominated by men or a masculine paradigm. Though this is a fairly simple reductionist view of a complicated system, what I want to problematize is the very way in which dance has capitalized on the power of the global north to devalue and subsume the global south.[2] While, to a certain extent, with our increased multicultural sensitivity we, in the global north, have given more "space, time and effort" in our classrooms and studios to the dances of the global south this effort has been overshadowed by the powerful ability of the global market to erase differences and impose a homogenous cultural space. While we are encouraging learning about 'other' culture's dance, food, dress or songs in our classroom, mass media such as music videos, MTV, movies are pumping out dance, dress and music '24/7' to places across the globe. Whether it is hip-hop, Starbucks, or MacDonald's fast food, the culture of the global north has become the desired forms of expression and pleasure.

In a parallel way western forms of dance are portrayed as the epitome of artistic expression. Recognizing this, I want to add my voice to the suspicion of any form of dance, such as ballet, that has universal pretensions or assumptions. There must be a balance between respecting cultural diversity without allowing claims for the privileged value of a particular culture or dance form, over another. This proves to be no simple task. Respecting diversity while children across the globe seek to imitate the fashion, music and dances of the west seems of little consequence. The global media has far more power and control of what children and young people are exposed to in terms of dance than the "official" dance world.

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[2] Term for countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Generally thought of as the group of impoverished countries that are mostly in the Southern Hemisphere. A preferred term for "Third World" or "developing" countries.

Recognizing the power of the global media and market, we must also recognize the struggle against globalization as a force that homogenizes culture, erases the particular, the local and the indigenous. It has only been in our recent history that we have begun to attempt to respect cultural diversity and sought to avoid ethnocentrism. Burns (2005, p. 8) talks about the need to both celebrate differences and emphasize our commonalities in reference to the cross-cultural study of women.

The goal of this sort of multiculturalism, or interculturalism, is in

> helping people to understand, accept, and value cultural differences between groups, with the ultimate goal of reaping the benefits of diversity (Ferdman, 1995). The goal is to both celebrate differences and emphasize the dimensions of commonality or inclusion that supersede these differences (Devine, 1995).

A multicultural approach goes against what some regard as our natural human tendencies to reject people and cultures that are different than our own. We like to believe 'our way of doing things' is the 'right' way. Our discomfort with 'those' who are different from 'us' provides a challenge to dance within the complexity of achieving diversity within unity. The task is in finding ways which both accept the particular while, at the same time, managing to transcend the differences. What isn't answered is why this is important to dance? What is the goal?

Erasure at a Price

Critics of globalization have given much attention to the erasure of local traditions under the impact of transnational capitalism. They have made us far more mindful of the terrible losses that the erasure of these local traditions represents. Local customs, dialects, religious practices, crafts, artistic expression, foods, and of course dance, represent the accumulation of human wisdom, ingenuity, and sensibility over the course of countless generations. Their mere existence enriches the cultural treasure of life on earth. They provide evidence of the almost infinite ways in which human beings have learned to adapt and negotiate their existence within their natural and social habitats. Their loss within one generation would be equivalent to the bonfires built by dictators to eradicate the books and texts that are the record of human intelligence and imagination. The homogenization of culture means the loss of the record of human struggle over natural adversity, exploitation and op-

pression. It, too, means the erasure of the magnificent record of accomplishments of human beings in all of their myriad forms and expressions. Sadly the demise of a local dialect, dance tradition or other social artifact, born within a local community, once gone can rarely be recreated. The loss is not just that of a specific community but also a depletion of the totality of the universal human culture.

The study of dance has in part included understanding that cultural traditions have been passed down through dance. We have learned to read dance as a text and come to value how this reading can provide insights into a specific, and often "Other" culture's values, attitudes and beliefs. Whether looking at issues of gender, patriarchy, sexual orientation, relationships, or other representations of human identity, dance has provided us with an important avenue for making sense of, and understanding, the global culture. Understanding the power of dance to document this kind of historical, geographic and specific information about culture must lead us to think carefully about the erasure, homogenization, or commodification of such forms of knowledge. Thinking about it in relationship to books might help to make this issue more clear. If we were to think of re-writing some of our most cherished texts there would be an outcry to save what has been written. Who would dare to re-write Walt Whitman, Gabriel Marquez, or Adam Mickiewicz or any of the many writers throughout our world who have been able to capture both the particular and the universal, the historical and the imagined, the poetic and prosaic renderings of our human tragedies, longings and transformations in their books? Why then would we ask less of dance?

Conflicting Identities

Yet, another threat to indigenous traditions exists. Not only must we concern ourselves with the migratory circuit of western influences of the global north into the global south, we also have what is termed "glocalizaton." Glocalization refers to a process where the local affects the global and the global or transnational influences the local. An example of this is *Riverdance* which was developed explicitly as a hybrid Irish national dance reflecting some of the Irish dance traditions but also reflecting some of the more global styles emphasizing sensual energy, pulsating rhythms and romanticized imagery. Riverdance was created to appeal to

an international audience so as to inject Ireland into the global scene. In the post-Riverdance era, Venable (2001) states there has been a global growth of Irish dance that continues to invent tradition. Indeed, she says (p. 286), "One of the most ironic aspects of Irish dance is the continual redefinition of the word 'traditional,' especially where movement is concerned…" Small, wee girls with their long curly wigs, tiaras, bejeweled costumes and laced shoes take their turn performing steps learned directly from the videos of Riverdance. They dance in the pubs for their family and friends imaging the dream of unsurpassed beauty and becoming the "chosen" partner of one like Michael Flatley.

What is the 'real' dance becomes a common question in dance practices that are 'borrowed,' 'infused,' or considered a 'hybrid' form of traditional dance. Though, of course, this phenomenon is not new in dance. Dance has always borrowed or taken from other cultures and expressive forms. What is different is the speed and ease of which the dance traditions are being influenced and changed, and often without acknowledgement or choice.

Not only do we question what is 'real' dance because of its steps or form, but in the global market we are now challenged to answer the question whether dance is authentic if it is taught "out of culture." African Dance provides us with an example of this situation. In a conversation with an African Dance teacher at the University of Cape Town I asked the question, "Is it still considered African Dance if it is taught by someone who is not African?" Of course, we must recognize first that there is no single African Dance, and that insinuated in my question was also the question 'what makes it African Dance?' His answer did not surprise me. He said, "African Dance is about a people's history, their stories, their life; one cannot simply take the steps and then be dancing African Dance." Though others may not agree with his definition, his point cannot be dismissed. African Dance, he argues, is a story of a people. It is not a series of steps to be learned as a dance style. Like other traditional dance forms there are specific movements or gestures that represents particular ideas, expressions or emotions, though it is not the dance vocabulary which is important. What is significant is the story of the people. Teaching African dance steps out of context is like taking the dictionary and learning some words, rather than reading a story. Teaching African Dance out of context as a mixture of steps or movements is more of a co-option of a tradition rather than a respect for diversity. Of course, this is only one way of thinking about African Dance. Others may argue

that as we engage in dancing the particular movements of a culture we also engage in a somatic understanding of that culture. What might be helpful here is to turn things on their end. Rather than moving from the global north to the south, we may ask instead 'what is it that South Africans learn about the United States as they learn hip-hop and gang culture?'

Looking in my own backyard of dance in the United States, we find that seeking "diversity within unity" has been not been easy, nor have we found simple solutions. A good example of this can be found in Carol Paris' article (2001, p. 235), *Defining the African American Presence in Postmodern Dance from the Judson Church Era to the 1980*. In this article Paris lays out the some of the difficult choices of African Americans choreographers during the early postmodern dance movement. With the aesthetic changes of the avant-garde artists where they "saw the body merely as the material for a movement for movement-sake approach; not the interpreter of emotions, linear narratives, musical melodies, or explosive rhythmic structures" a conflict was presented to Black choreographers. This change of aesthetics in dance in the United States happened at the same time as the civil rights movement, anti-war protest, and political assassinations. It was a historic time where some Black choreographers wanted to continue to use the body and dance as a way of examining the social political world, and not simply as an exploration of dance or the process of making dance itself. The 'black body,' during the 50's and 60's in the United States, could not be severed from its cultural identity nor did many of the African American choreographers of the time want to strip this representative 'black body' of its power to evoke the passionate narrative of oppression and desire for freedom. To give up this particular form of embodied expression also meant to silence a country's history, a people's story, and the chance to learn from our past.

Universalism as an Ideal

Yet, in the struggle against the erasure of differences or identities, and the fight against homogenization, I do not argue to rid ourselves of universality. Indeed, my argument is more nuanced in regard to universal claims. My assertion is that there is a universality that must be attended to along with the particular. The danger is in saying we are all the

same, and we are not; or in saying that one culture's forms and ideas are better than another. My argument here is that because dance and the body are one-in-the-same (dance does not exist without the body), dance has a unique possibility to advance what Burns (2005, p. 313) defines as "…*universalism—the idea that all humans share the same inalienable rights.*" To make such a giant leap from globalization to dance, the body and to a universal human ideal, creates a definite challenge to our cultural and ethical imaginations.

Taking care not to diminish the importance of difference (as there is much left to be done in the way of adequately recognizing and valuing all of our diverse experiences, cultures and traditions) I nonetheless want to draw attention to how we might understand human existence through our commonalities. Perhaps it is seeing the fear, suspicion and hate that is so rampant in the world today that makes me want to search for, and affirm, our *common* human attributes. It is, I believe, the commonalities of our bodies that offer ways of valuing those *shared* biological, emotional and expressive human characteristics necessary for a more humane world. To address the importance of a common humanity is to understand that the struggle for *human* rights and *human* liberation are indispensable in a globalized world. So many of the threats we face now are threats to human beings as a whole—dangers to our very existence as a species. Together we face the possible extinction of life on our planet because of global climate change; lethal epidemics spreading rapidly cross national boundaries posing terrible threats to all of us; nuclear proliferation brings with it the possibility of warfare that will make areas of our planet uninhabitable. There is a compelling need to see the commonalities of human life—the shared and universal quality of human life (indeed of *all* life)—as central to our quest for purpose and meaning. More than anything, I believe, the body, *our bodies*, is what grounds our commonalities. To address the importance of a common humanity grounded in universality is to understand that the struggle for human rights and human liberation is necessary even while recognizing the danger of the term *human* as a vehicle for imposing a particular concept of who we are. It is hard to see how one can make the case for greater freedom, for greater justice, for the end to violence, for greater human rights, without an appeal to the notion of a common humanity.

The universal is not some abstract idea or ideal rather it is to acknowledge someone as a subject granting them the same status as oneself, to recognize their sacred otherness. Ethical practices occur in spe-

cific situations. Practices in and of themselves may or may not be ethical, rather the 'rightness' of the action, as it affects the lives and experiences of those it is directed towards, determines ethical behavior. The 'rightness' of an action is not reducible to a response to the other. It includes responsiveness to their values, beliefs, and principles, aesthetic and religious sensibilities - the values and meanings of their worlds (Farley, 1985). This is what we might call compassion or the ability to 'suffer-with' others.

At the core of the universal claim is that of *corporeality*-the body. Here, it is not simply a physical body. Carved by the social order, designated as a representation of one's culture, the body has come to be understood as the aesthetic realm where meaning is made, life is experienced, and truth is understood as partial and relational. The body here is understood as the concrete material inscribed by cultural values, attitudes and beliefs, *and* the vehicle for transcending our limited social identities. The body serves as a conduit for the particular and the universal, the material and the transcendent. Accepting the body as the aesthetic realm, aesthetics necessarily becomes concerned with issues of power, justice, and the ethics of relationships. "The human drama," writes Morris Berman; "is first and foremost a somatic one" (1989, p. 108) or as Emily Martin (1989, p. 15) might suggest for understanding human history, one must dwell "at the level of the social whole, at the level of 'person,' and at the level of body."

Transcending Limitations and Boundaries

Today we live in a global society where cultural globalization, the transnational migration of people, information, and consumer culture, is prevalent. The creation of art/dance in this context is no longer limited by space or time. Our ability to experience a virtual world, even as we physically might stay in one place, has changed our sense of boundaries, our sense of location, even our sense of time. Coming to recognize the imaginary or constructed nature of our boundaries—the narratives of country, race or ethnicity—even gender, has spurred us to deconstruct what was referred to earlier as 'real' or 'traditional.' Within this context it is significant to understand that it is not dance that creates us, but we who create dance. Dance always mediates or expresses who we are and how we live within time and culture. In this sense dance is nothing more

than a text written by the body signifying how we experience and give meaning to our world. And it is here, through this text written by the human body, that we can begin to engage in the process of recognizing and transcending the limitations and boundaries that up to now have closed off new possibilities. We can discover new ways to live; expand our sense of being; and establish new relationships with those who share our world (Shapiro & Shapiro, 2002). The process calls us towards another kind of aesthetic or meaning-making process.

Meaning making as an aesthetic act looks toward the rational *and* the sensual, the mind and the body, the individual and the society, the particular and the shared. An aesthetics "born of the recognition that the world of perception and experience cannot simply be derived from abstract universal laws, but demands its own appropriate discourse and displays its own inner, if inferior, logic" (Eagleton, 1990, p. 16). Or put more succinctly by Eagleton; "The aesthetic, then, is simply the name given to that hybrid form of cognition which can clarify the raw stuff of perception and historical practice, disclosing the inner structure of the concrete" (p. 16). A global aesthetics then, moves beyond the individual or the self to connect to the other recognizing the concreteness of an ethical existence in a shared world.

A language that emerges from our bodily living speaks to a kind of rationality distinct from one that is only intellectually rooted. It speaks to the specificity of individual experiences, and testifies against any simple abstraction of any category or label. The social worlds in which we form our identity are visceral—they are in our bones and our musculature. Our views of ourselves, of others, our ethics, values, manners of being and relational understandings are instilled in our bodies—a place in which our thoughts and actions are instantiated. The 'body/subject' is the ultimate destination of cultural forming, both local and global. This point of cultural ingestion is where both projections and formations mingle in creating a double-edged process. The body of the postmodern subject as Terry Eagleton states, "is integral to its identity" (1996, p. 69). For modernity the body was where there is something to be done, a place for betterment; in postmodernity it becomes a place where something—gazing, imprinting, regulating—is done to you. And, for the global body imprinting by the concentrated power of the western media is intensified and a sense of a local self becomes less important. But what is special about the human body is just its capacity to transform itself in the process of transforming the material bodies around it.

What kind of world have we created? And, therefore what role does the body play? We need not look far. Hunger, homelessness, domestic violence, rape, loss of limbs from land mines and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), torture, all exemplify ways in which the human body is vulnerable; ways in which it can be systematically harmed, mutilated and destroyed. Human suffering extends *through and beyond* the boundaries of nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, and social class, sexual or religious preference—all the ways of marking ourselves off from others. *Here, in our shared physical suffering, in the commonality of the body, is a place of deeper and mutual understanding, and thus of transcendent possibility.*

The Suffering Body Questions the Integrity of Globalization

Media images transmitted globally, albeit used to support or deter particular political interests, have already proven their power of evoking an empathetic understanding and compassion for the other. Etched into our memories are images of Syrian children who are fleeing their homes; child soldiers forced into acts of brutality; groups of young girls kidnapped from their villages and forced into marriages to adult men; images of women trying to escape from possible rape or disfigurement; faces of those to be, or having just been executed; those subjected to the fear and shame of interrogation and torture; thousands of tent cities in Darfur and other regions where emaciated and starving refugees have been forced to flee acts of genocide; and the children of famine lying listlessly at their mother's breast where their life milk has dried up. *These global images are experienced not as abstractions but as the way we come face to face with our own humanity.* The suffering body transcends the particularity of human existence and becomes a potent means of generating a sense of shared humanity. Ana Maria Araujo Freire (1994) wrote passionately about the impact of the denial or prohibition on the body in her epilogue to Paulo Freire's book, *Pedagogy of Hope.*

> I am fed up with bans and prohibitions: bans on the body, which produce, generation after generation, not only Brazilian illiteracy (according to the thesis I maintain), but an *ideology* of ban on the body, which gives us our "street children," our misery and hunger, our unemployment and prostitution, and, under military dictatorship, the exile and death of countless Brazilians (Freire, 1994, p. 204).

To blind ourselves to what the body experiences, what it feels and what we might experience through our empathy toward shared pain is dangerous as it keeps us in the rational world where one can explain, without any necessary compassion or ethical sensibility, the problems of our world. But the body refuses to be understood as an abstract object, it is not other. It is real. It is the presence of all that we know, albeit housed in narratives of meaning.

To engage in *a global aesthetics with a universal ethics as its goal* would require from us a different kind of education. Pedagogically we begin with the body—the body understood as the concrete material inscribed by cultural values, local and global, and the vehicle for transcending our limited social identities. A pedagogy of the body may direct us towards the recognition of a universal humanity; the still radical idea that all humans share the same inalienable rights.

Pedagogic practices that draw upon the body, and aesthetic processes which provide ways of understanding the world and ourselves intellectually, sensually, mentally, and emotionally are all but non-existent in traditional educational texts, teacher education programs, classroom practices, or dance studios. This absence is troubling at a time when the body has become so central to theory and cultural practice; troubling because it is the body where the global influences of the west shape our images of physical beauty, success, and desire. Laurie McDade (1987) writes that knowing in the mind does not lie dormant, separate from the knowing of the heart and of the body.

> Everyday moments of teaching at school in communities, then, are personal, pedagogical, and political acts incorporating mind and bodies of subjects, as knowers and as learners. When we are at our best as teachers we are capable of speaking to each of these ways of knowing our students and ourselves. And we may override precedents in the educational project that value the knowing mind and deny the knowing of the heart and body. Students, the partners in this enterprise of knowing, are whole people with ideas, with emotions, and with sensations. If we, as teachers, are to arouse passions now and then (Greene, 1986, p. 441) the project must not be confined to a knowing only of the mind. It must also address and interrogate what we think we know of the heart and of the body (pp. 58-59).

Some of the reasons for the dismal construction of pedagogic practices that exclude embodied knowledge and aesthetic processes include the lack of prior educational experiences of teachers, the lack of understanding of how body knowledge can contribute to a broader social cri-

tique, the inability to turn it into an EOG (end of grade) test, or perhaps the need to be able to order and control knowledge which is defied by a curriculum in which students genuinely seek their own meaning.

In the following I want to share an example of how one might draw upon embodied knowledge and connect it to social and ethical critique. This act of educating for a kind of global aesthetics cuts across cultures and unites the arts/dance in the struggle for connection, healing (that is overcoming fragmentation and making whole), and compassion. Each of these speaks to the need for us to see ourselves, and experience ourselves, as part of a larger community in which the quality of our lives is inextricably connected to the well being of others. Though I will be describing a process I have created for dance, it is by no means only for dance, or only for the arts.

By the Virtue of Being Human

As Twyla Tharp said, "Modern Dance is more not less." I would add, "Teaching dance is more not less." Only those who haven't been teachers hold the old adage "those who can't dance teach." What we as educators come to know is that teaching demands us to know something about "what is" and "what is possible" of our students and of our discipline. Some important questions that confront us as dance educators are "What should we teach?" "How should we teach?" "Who should we teach?" "What is the role of the teacher?" and most importantly "For what are we teaching?"

Asking the question "what is" brings us to question dance. Is it a discipline? Is it an art form? Is it a way of learning about other disciplines? Is it something to learn in itself? Can it tell us something about our cultures and ourselves? Is it a way of knowing the world, or something to know? Can it tell us about the human condition? These are questions about visions that compel us to examine dance in the broader context of education. They ask of us to name what it is we care about, what concerns us, and further, what our vision for humanity is and how education gives shape to this articulated vision. I am reminded of the time I interviewed with one of the faculty from my doctoral program. He asked me; "What would your world be like if there was no such thing as dance?" His question brought me to seriously reflect upon the significance of dance in my life. Since that day I have found many answers to that ques-

tion, but it is the question that remains as part of my thinking about dance, and about dance education. James MacDonald asked two specific and related questions that I later encountered in my studies; "What does it mean to be human?" and "How shall we live together in the world?" These questions take us beyond dance recognizing the moral and political connections that accompany any act of education. It is an act of transcendence reminding us that education, any education, must engage the life-world of our students in all of their different narratives that are shaped by ethnicity, harnessed by social class and textured by culture. To know ourselves is to understand the way our thoughts, ideas, and desires are always bound up with the way of being that comes from the lives that emerge out of both our local situations and the matrix of global influences.

With all of this in mind I must say I have come to feel, like bell hooks, that any education worth its name must illicit the passion, the intellectual curiosity, the moral conviction and the spiritual sensitivity of students. Giroux and Simon (1988) summarize the concerns of education that is organized around this kind of education.

> This means that teaching and learning must be linked to the goals of educating students: to understand why things are the way they are and how they got to be that way; to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar; to take risks and struggle with ongoing relations of power from within a life-affirming moral culture; and to envisage a world which is "not yet" in order to enhance the conditions for improving the grounds upon which life is lived (p. 13).

Such a pedagogy engaged in ideological critique inevitably raises moral concerns. It exposes questions of social injustice, inequality, asymmetrical power, and the lack of human rights or dignity. This educational discourse is meant to provide a theory and a process for critiquing all that privileges some rather than all, separating us into categories of those who deserve to live well and those who do not. Critical inquiry here means to learn to question what we take for granted about whom we are, and how the world functions. Central to critical pedagogy is a kind of understanding where students come to "make sense" of their lives as they come to an awareness of the dialectical relationship between their subjectivity and the dominant values that shape their lives. These values may be ones fixed locally in early life, though now days they are more likely to be part the result of the influence of a global ideology. It is helping students to learn to examine, reflect, ask questions,

look for relationships, and to seek understanding of themselves and their world.

Over the past fifteen years I have worked in the field of dance education teaching at a small liberal arts college for women in the southern United States. In this position I have had the opportunity to evolve in my own thinking about dance education. From the most primitive ways of teaching of having students to reproduce the steps they have been given; progressing on to creative movement, where students learn to create from a movement vocabulary; and finally to a philosophy for education/arts/dance which has as it focus the development of a critical global aesthetic process which takes students through questions of identity and otherness, and towards compassionate and ethically responsible behavior. I will share one example of this in my choreographic work as an example of my pedagogic philosophy; it is this philosophy or vision through which all the courses I teach are filtered.

This particular choreographic example centers on the biblical story of the relationship between Hagar and Sarah. I selected this story as it lends itself to raising issues of power, jealousy, domination of the stranger, compassion, and the value of women in society (the value of women as determined by their ability to bear children). Teaching in a women's college in North Carolina (considered to be part of the 'bible belt' in the US) this narrative takes on special significance as Christianity has played an important role in the students' development as ethical human beings, and in providing meaning to their own lives. This story offered them a powerful and resonant narrative from which they could critically examine issues in their own lives. I read parts of the chapters in Genesis asking that they discuss their interpretations of this story. Specifically, I ask them to write a reflection about an experience they had, in their own lives, that made them feel as other. Each student wrote about ones they remembered. There was little hesitation in naming such experiences. I asked them to reflect upon their memories and to return to their felt experiences. They shared with each other times they had been shunned, unable to become part of groups they so desperately wanted to 'be in,' of times families separated, and of times they didn't possess the 'right' characteristics to be socially acceptable. From their embodied memories they created movements that expressed their life stories reflecting their pain, humiliation and sorrow.

Next, I asked them to reflect upon times they had made others to feel as the stranger. At first they said they didn't remember any times they had done this. Blocked by their inability to accept their own behavior,

which might have been experienced as hurtful or cruel by others, they were saved from, or avoided, a sense of responsibility. Also, at times, their level of understanding did not allow them to see the larger structures in which they participate in the everyday world, whether in their religious beliefs, choice of roommates, fear of Black men, and more significantly, ignorance of the larger social structures in which they are able to enter a place of privilege as white middle class women. Yet, they did remember. They had to acknowledge their own participation, whether through action or non-action; experiences in which they have ignored, distanced themselves from, and even allowed themselves to believe that the plight of the less fortunate is simply because they are either too lazy to do better or that they just don't care or fail to make the effort. As one student noted: "They (the poor) don't deserve what I have or they would have it" (Let me say that these women I work with would describe themselves as 'Christians'—concerned, caring, and compassionate—and see themselves as women who are generous—who have 'big hearts'). Again, after writing their own stories, sharing with others and discussing their experiences within the larger questions about who deserves to live well, they re-created their stories through movement.

I need to say here that in order to have the students enter into their feelings is to do more than talk about them. I use the modality of movement and the body as both the critical and creative tool to form the connections between what they know but have yet to name. *Talking is not enough to address peoples' feelings.* Here the arts can offer a powerful pedagogy. Too often the arts are thought about only in ways, which relate to performance, technical virtuosity, or as something beautiful in the traditional sense of the aesthetic. Using movement as a pedagogic method, as I do, allows students to focus on their bodies, not as objects to be trained, but rather as subjects of their world. They come to know their bodies as possible actors in history, as well as repositories of history. Indeed without this sense of agency there can be no talk of emancipation and possibility. Education, for the most part, continues to disavow the aesthetic process as something that can tell us the 'what is' of their lives and 'what might be.' At the least for aesthetic processes, the expectation is that students will gain skills in perceiving, interpreting, selecting, shaping, and synthesizing meaning so as to create coherence and clarity in how they see the world. They learn to attend to their existential projects, their feelings and their beliefs, thinking creatively and imaginatively. But most significantly, they learn how to name the world as they experience it. To move into a global aesthetics would mean to

transcend art itself and connect this meaning-making process to self and world. In transferring these aesthetic ways of knowing and directing them towards critical, ethical and embodied social analysis, students begin to engage in a radical pedagogy, and possibly a sense of universal connections and responsibilities. Engaged in such a pedagogy they come to understand the relational and therefore moral aspect of life. Or as Zygmunt Bauman suggests, they can reach a place where they may "grasp hold of the self and to awaken it as an active moral agent disposed to care for the other; a self that experiences a sense of obligation even before it grasps the Other's existence" (Smith, 1999, p. 181).

The final question I asked, in the process described here, referred the students back to a time in the story when Sarah hears God speaking to Abraham about her forthcoming pregnancy. I asked them to reflect upon a time that something happened to them, as it did to Sarah, where they were surprised by something that they thought could not happen. My expectation was that they would name joyous memories. Instead, each and every one told stories of pain and sorrow; a father's suicide, a mother's mental illness and family breakdown, a rape by a teacher, an affair that led to the end of a marriage and the beginning of another. They cried, they mourned, they told thing that shamed them. *They did what they are not allowed to do in schools.* They shared the things that make them most human, their erotic selves. *They integrated themselves into the world of feeling, and of common humanity, capturing the transformative possibility of education.* As mentioned earlier, what is of concern here is not so much the methodology but one of vision and philosophy. Guided by a purpose of education concerned with social justice and moral agency the methodology, I argue, must elicit possibilities for students to examine the social construction of their reality, reflect upon and experience themselves as rational and sensual beings, and be brought to question the significance and meaning of their own lives. I use a pedagogic form of movement, as well as reflective writing, discussion, poetry, reading, video viewing, eating together, performing together; all those ways of connecting the personal and the political, ourselves to one another, and each to a sense of responsible choices. It is to this place that any education concerned with an ethical humanity must be brought. This is not an approach that should be viewed as either affective *or* cognitive, *or* moral, but transcends those differences, remembering that, as Martin Heidegger argued, "Reason is the perception of what is, which always means also what can be and ought to be" (1968, p. 41). It is this understanding of reason that concerns itself with possibility grounded in

sensate-lived experience and made sense of through critical understanding and global ethical responsibility. Through this process of *sensual-reasoning* one can become actively engaged in re-fusing the mind and body, the particular and the universal, the self and the stranger (Shapiro, 1999).

The dance, which results from this process of reflection and connection, takes form imaging the joys and struggles of the dancers' lives. It speaks a language of common humanity to the audience as it represents memories of self and other. Through this critical/aesthetic process, they (the students) have named their own oppressions and ways in which they have oppressed others. They recognized that their bodies hold knowledge of their world, and they learned the meaning of their bodies as the materiality of existence. Coming to know themselves as body/subjects, they explored, examined and created connections between inner sensibilities (local) and outer context (global). The body memories that have been central to my pedagogy are, at least in part, records of the *felt world* of self and other in all of its sensuous and relational qualities. It is surely the latter that grounds the desire for a different kind of world—one of compassion, love and justice. Re-membering in this sense becomes the act of identifying the self in all of its creative, critical and ethical dimensions; it becomes the process of finding a home in this torn and afflicted world (Shapiro, 1999).

No longer can we suggest *that the ability to rationally apprehend a situation is enough*. Recognizing wrongs requires the recognition of the humanity of our victims. The over focus on the cognitive in education has left us with people who can build smart bombs, provides means of efficient interrogation, and supplied us with obedient soldiers. But let us not forget the moral challenge posed by the solitary individual when confronted by the stranger. What responsibility do I feel for the other? As Bauman argues this feeling, this moral urge, is inherent in the human context. It is rooted in the autonomy of the I and its need for relationship. Where moral rules have disintegrated with the postmodern, there remain only moral standards—standards that demand interpretation and choice. Our challenge as educators must be to transcend the traditional ways of educating the mind to envelop the wisdom of the body. It is in that wisdom where we find glimmers of compassionate connection, discernment of concrete existence, and the desire to live in a humane world.

Conclusion

Like nothing else in the education of our children, art offers ways to transcend a consciousness that fixes our world as if it is something that is unchangeable—to see the 'what is' of our world and to imagine 'what might be.' And, as it nurtures the imagination of children and attends to their perceptions it helps to develop them so that they are able to re-imagine and re-shape their world. Here is where art lays the groundwork for addressing the challenges of globalization. This includes challenging the limited capabilities and powers of our democratic and civic institutions towards new transnational reality. "The results—as Falk notes (2003, p. 188) notes—have not been pretty: frequent warfare, many incidents of ethnic cleansing and genocide, catastrophic risks of environmental collapse, massive poverty, a disregard for future generations." We can begin to understand the critical responsibility of art in a world where children are taught to accept and conform to 'what is' and not to question what they are taught or the nature of their own experience. Though art cannot, nor should it be, a direct mirror of life, it should tell us about life in ways that, as Maxine Greene (1988) says, makes the familiar strange and the strange familiar. In other words, it should help us to see what was obscured or hidden before, and help us to imagine that which was unimaginable. Arts education, then, becomes revolutionary as it shows us reality in ways that heighten our perceptions, and presents images to us of what might be possible or preferable.

As educators we can assist children in learning how to give voice to their life-stories through art. Not only is moving their own stories pedagogically valuable, as seen in the previous example, as a way to deepen our understanding of who we are but also moving them for others provides a place for students to share their stories. In voicing their stories a dialogue can begin. They, nor the teacher, need be dancers. It is a simple use of movement as a way of knowing and learning. In learning how to represent the world as they experience it students become better able to see themselves in others, and better able to develop that empathy for the life of another that a global aesthetics and universalism demands.

As I come to understand the power of education to be a transformative experience—one so badly needed to overcome the limitations of our differences and to recognize our commonalities—I become more convinced that educators have been given a unique gift. We have the opportunity to work with children and young people in ways that affirm their

identities, challenge their taken-for-granted assumptions, and impart a way of being in the world that is compassionate, critical, creative and bound up with a vision for a more just global community.

Such a community unlike our present fragmented and competitive world would be a place we can count on and are secure, where we understand each other, where we are never an outcast or a stranger, where we trust each other, and where we are safe and our well being assured. While such a community represents the kind of world that is not yet available to us it is, I believe, the loving and just world our children need and deserve. And it is one for which, we as educators, must struggle to make possible.

Acknowledgment

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Women "beyond control"?
—androcentric discourses in Victorian painting (towards reconstructing meanings)

ABSTRACT. From the perspective of feminist analysis, the painting is considered to be andro-centric. It is believed that artworks were created by men, for men and from their point of view. One can even say that, men spoker through the bodies and identities of heroine images in the painting. From this point of view, painting has been accused not only of the lack of women as authors of works of art, but also of the lack of representations of the female experience. Logi-cally, from this perspective, images of women on the canvas are often not simple reflection of reality, but they crystallize dreams, anxieties and feelings of their male artists. There is no doubt that theye are also imbued with ideologies concerning gender. Three images that will be examined in this paper were created in the Victorian era (the dates of their creation are: 1887, 1890, 1896). They all reflect anxieties about womanhood in the late nineteenth century, pri-marily manifested in the creation of a new image of a woman—the femme fatale. On the other hand the women as objects of the painting are treated as a sexual object for male creator and viewer. Every woman in the paintings could be described as "being out of control." There is a paradox here: the woman is simultanesly out of control and controlled by men. There is a worth to add that every painting has extremely sugestive impact on the viewer and amazing articstic value.

KEYWORDS: Victorian Painting, femininity, androcentrism, femme fatale, hysteria

The art of painting is considered androcentric in feminist analyses. It is thought that works of art were created by men, for men and from their perspective. It could be even claimed that men spoke through the female protagonists of the paintings, through the women visible in the paint-ings, their bodies (and identities). From this point of view, painting has been accused not only of the lack of female painters but also not depict-ing women in the paintings so that they reflect female experience. In this context, Charlotte Gilman Perkins, in her classic 1914 book entitled *Our Androcentric Culture or the Man Made World*, wrote:

But the main evils of a too masculine art lie in the emphasis laid on self-expression. The artist, passionately conscious of how he feels, strives to make

other people aware of these sensations. (…) If a man paints the sea, it is not to make you see and feel as a sight of that same ocean would, but to make you see and feel how he, personally, was affected by it; a matter surely of the narrowest importance. The ultra-masculine artist, extremely sensitive (…) uses the medium of art, which is unconscious, ingenuously (…) but as a form of expression of his personal sensations (Perkins Gilman, 1914, p. 85).

Logically, from this perspective, depictions of women on painters' canvases are not simple reflections of reality, but rather crystallise the anxiety and feelings of (male) painters. Without a shadow of doubt, they are also saturated with gender ideologies. An instance of extreme emotions, which can be triggered by art, is a 16th century painting by Diego Velazquez entitled "Rokeby Venus", which was chopped with a meat cleaver by a suffragist, Mary Richardson. It was intended to be (apart from a political manifesto, i.e. demand of freeing Emmeline Pankhurst) a symbol of resistance to the patriarchal norm of portraying attractive and sexual women's bodies (Nead, 1998, p. 72). Due to this, Mary Richardson—who is nicknamed "The butcher"—enters the historical annals as a manifestation of the not yet formed matter, a dreadful spectre of female sexuality which needs to be disciplined by men (Nead, 1998, p. 78) in opposition to the painted by the artist—calm and timelessly beautiful, though cut on the surface—naked Venus.

Velasquez's painting was created c. 1650 as an expression of the fascination with the beauty of the female body (the goddess of love, Venus, is depicted in the painting). In turn, the three paintings which will be subjected to analyses share the period when they originated—the Victorian era (dates of their execution are 1887, 1890, and 1896, respectively). All of them mirror the anxiety surrounding femininity at the close of the 19th century, which were displayed in the creation of a new image of the woman—femme fatale. The criteria for the selection of these works (apart from their immensely suggestive influence on the viewer and the artistic value) can be linked to a certain kind of frame: the woman as an object/subject of male executor and viewer inspection. In each painting, a woman is portrayed, one who can be seen as being "under the control" of a man—beyond control are her sexuality, emotionality, as well as her drives and instincts. This portrayal is a part of eternal beliefs about the polarised male and female anatomy. Here, the woman is the epitome of Nature—unpredictable and changeable; the man, in turn, is the symbol of Culture. And only culture can be tamed; however, the uncivilised, the female cannot be tamed completely (the

woman is identified with nature due to the peculiar physiology, her body is subject to a specific cycle of biological changes, strictly connected with nature "the menstrual cycle corresponds to the lunar cycle") (Moore, 1997, p. 60). The woman appears to be a threat to the man and to lead him astray.

At the same time, there seems to be a "perennial belief" that the woman is always "hiding something", that she "will never expose herself completely", and that she possesses an "unfathomable secret "(of her femininity), which cannot be "torn out" (this approach alludes to the trend of the quest for finding the "essence" of femininity). As stated by Tseëlon: "In mythological and theological representations the woman features as synonymous with artifice, inauthenticity, and duplicity. She appears as made up, claiming false identity (…)" (Tseëlon, 1995, p. 34).

It needs to be added, however, that the woman who is left beyond control, quivering with her instincts and drives is at the same time tamed by the male androcentric discourse of the male meaning-making, forced into the binary template of interpretation.

THREE PAINTINGS

1. The hysteric

The title of the first painting is "A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière."[1] A question that comes to one's mind is: is it really a mere neurology lecture given by professor Jean Martin Charcot in the Salpêtrière Clinic? A woman in the second phase of hysteria, who is in the centre of the painting, is assuming the characteristic arc-in-circle posture. The reason why she has not fallen on the floor is that the doctor is supporting her with his arms. The painting seems to be reviving in my imagination. I take the liberty to characterise the event, which is depicted on the painting on the basis of a note taken by P.R. Bourneville during Charcot's performance on 25th November 1877.[2] It is Tuesday, the day of famous

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[1] I analyse this painting, yet in a different context, in the book: *Kobieta epoki wiktoriańskiej. Tożsamość, ciało, medykalizacja* (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2013).

[2] A paraphrase of the description of the scene on the basis of Paul Regnard Bourneville's account, *Iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière* (p. 110), after: Foucault, 2000, p. 55.

lectures attended by the-then future big names in neurology Paul Richer, Pierre Marie, Gilbert Ballet, Maurice Debove, Józef Babiński. Charcot is showing his medium, a woman who does not control herself—she is in the state of hysteria. Her arms are bare, her neckline is low. Her dress brings about associations with cabaret singers, rather than a mental asylum patient. Her epileptic seizures make one think of sexual ecstasy; when Charcot lays his hands on her ovaries, the woman calms down for a moment. When Charcot places a walking stick on her womb, the woman falls silent. The hysteria attack wanders off just to come back the very moment the walking stick is removed. The woman demands the stick "in words devoid of any metaphor." The doctor alternately uses ether to calm down the hysteric, and nitrate to speed up the attack.

For twenty-eight men in black suits and white shirts, looking calmly with interest, it is a spectacle of medicine and femininity. They epitomise knowledge and truth about medicine as well as psychiatry. They epitomise the power of masculinity over the body and identity of women. Charcot is the master of the ceremony. This is an exemplification and confirmation of the androcentric world. Without a doubt, the woman constitutes the main focus of the work—she is the spectacle, yet a spectacle which can be likened to female celebrities of never-ending beauty contests.

Who is "Blanche" Marie Wittman, the main character in the painting[3]? A patient who trusted her doctor? An object subjected to exploration? A puppet in the hands of the master? An epitome of (male) sexual dreams watching her ecstasy? A hypnotist consciously hypnotising the excited male spectators who have their eyes fixed on her? The queen of hysterics? (is it—one might want to pose the question—her artistic nickname?) It is not meaningless that Charcot was famous for photographing his (female) patients, thus immortalising hysteria attacks on

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[3] It is paradoxical that the main character of the painting under analysis—Blanche Marie Wittman—who has become a symbol of uncontrolled female sexuality manifested through hysteria, is also a protagonist in P. O. Enquist's book entitled *Boken om Blanche och Marie* [The Book about Blanche and Marie]. The book was written on the basis of documents and sources (including Blanche's diaries) concerning Blanche and Marie Skłodowska-Curie's lives. They were friends, and Blanche assisted Marie in radium extraction. The novel reveals portrayals of two passionate women, ahead of their times, but also women riddled with disease (radioactive radium leads to disease and eventually death). These women are also unable to fit the female ideal. P.O. Enquist builds the narration around the insane love, which ends in tragedy—the love between Blanche and professor Charcot, and Marie and Paul Langevin.

a photographic plate, and also the public spectacles attended by hysterics. Together with his wife, they have presented these photographs during an art exhibition. Therefore, not accidentally, Georges Didi-Huberman uses the concept of Charcot's iconography or "living pathological museum" (Didi-Huberman, 2003, p. 239), while his (female) patients are nicknamed "artists of the interior and paradoxically returned (…) to the status of decorative objects" (Showalter, 1993, p. 310;) (it is worth mentioning that the main character of the painting was Charcot's lover of long standing).

In the case of the spectacle in the *Salpêtrière* hospital, we deal with a peculiar "theatralisation of hysteria." A. Corbain casts (female) hysterics' behaviour into two categories: exhibitionism and voyeurism. Here, the woman assumes the role of a simulator or an actress, while men tend to identify her behaviour with "orgasm delirium" or the provocative behaviour of street prostitutes (Corbin, 1999, p. 604, 607).

Driven by the traditional question: "what was the artist's attention?" by immortalising a spectacle of hysteria on a canvas, I now turn to the incredibly impressive two huge windows, through which sunlight is bursting into the room. This light appears to symbolically separate this scene from the darkness of the Victorian bedroom, a place where—as it was believed—female passion and excitation was out of the question, as every sensual and desiring woman was considered to be a pathological deviation from the norm. The Victorian darkness of the lecture hall was substituted with bright sunlight, while the main character of the scene is a (female) hysteric along with her spectacle of ecstasy.

Nevertheless, the painting is saturated with the classic gender binarism—the woman represents the nature, while the man epitomises the culture. It is a comeback of the Victorian gentleman who is a symbol of rationality, self-control, authority, and power. In this context, "Blanche" Marie Whitman constituted another confirmation of the legitimate idea of a woman devoid of rationality, who lost her control over the body and senses, who allowed herself to be deceived by her instincts, primordial drives and unsuppressed desire.

Disciplining female identity and body is clearly visible in the painting; it constitutes the essence of the Victorian construal of women, as does the unhindered medicalization of the female body through the power of micro practices of everyday life (these bring about Michel Foucault's narrations concerning the birth of the clinic in the second half of

the 19th century). And thus the gathered men are casting an analytical and disciplining look at the woman-hysteric, a look which includes the entire system of power/knowledge. The scene from the "A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière" epitomizes the synoptic gaze of the male eye, since only the man can describe what he sees. "(…)[L]ooking in order to know, to show in order to teach" is after all "a tacit form of violence, all the more abusive for its silence (…)" (Foucault, 2003, p. 84). The lunatic (body and verbal) language of Blanche Marie Whitmann becomes an example of a madman discourse, who—referring to Foucault—can be ascribed the ability to tell the untold truth, the ability to perceive, in one's naivety, what the wise cannot perceive (Foucault, 2002, p. 5). This character embodies the entire truth and anxiety surrounding femininity, the entire theory and practice of the socio-cultural repression of women. It is worth referring to historical descriptions of similar spectacles, which fascinated the Paris community of those days. Let us have a look at a piece of the memoirs *The Story of San Michele*:

> The huge amphitheatre was filled to the last place with a multi-coloured audience drawn from tout Paris, authors, journalists, leading actors and actresses, fashionable demimondaines […]. Some of them smelt with delight a bottle of ammonia when told it was rose water, others would eat a piece of charcoal when presented to them as chocolate. Another would crawl on all fours on the floor, barking furiously, when told she was a dog, flap her arms as if trying to fly when turned into a pigeon, lift her skirts with a shriek of terror when a glove was thrown at her feet with a suggestion of being a snake. Another would walk with a top hat in her arms rocking it to and fro and kissing it tenderly when she was told it was her baby (Munthe, 1929, pp. 302-303).

The author of these words—Axel Munthe—a Swedish practicing doctor in Paris, describes Charcot's lectures as an "absurd farce" having nothing to do with medicine, a game of lies and appearances. Munthe considers the phases of hypnosis conceptualised by Charcot, i.e. "lethargy", "catalepsy", and "somnambulism" as designed only by him and not utilised beyond the walls of the *Salpêtrière* clinic. A few decades later, Roger Bastide contends that the great Charcot's hysteria was more of a construct of doctors than patients. In his opinion, hysteria assumed forms of unconscious stimulation, whose symptoms were triggered by means of suggestion and subside by means of persuasion (Bastide, 1972, p. 364).

2. The prostitute

Another painting ¿Y tenía corazón? (Did she have a heart?) or ¡Y tenía corazón! (And she had a heart!) was painted by a 20th-century Spanish painter—Enrique Simonet y Lombardo in 1980.[4] It is also known under the following titles Anatomia del corazón (The anatomy of heart) or La autopsia del corazón (Autopsy of the heart). In the painting we can see a mortuary with a dead body of a woman. Next to the body, there is a man with the woman's heart in his hand. The décor is very austere—there are two simple tables, and a pair of knives and a bowl of water on one of them. Invariably dark walls are lit by modest light coming from a wall lamp. Sunlight is bursting into the room through the small unsophisticated window; its intensity contrasts with the darkness of the mortuary swathing the dead body. The contrast between the background and the foreground: the dark figure of the old man and the bright body of the deceased woman is the most striking oppositions in the painting. On the windowsill, a few bottles—with various liquids most probably used for preserving organs or disinfecting hands—have been placed. The lamp dispersing darkness, placed behind the man's back, is to symbolise the enlightening power of science. However, without a doubt, the low light is of outmost importance—as if the artist wanted to say that science is not able to address all questions, and in particular the one posed by the man performing post-mortem examination and—at the same time—the one expressed in the title of the painting. By juxtaposing the relationship between shadow and light, an inversion of the traditional way of thinking is presented: it is the shadow which seems to refer to science, while the light refers to phenomena eluding rational thinking.

The title of the painting is ambiguous *per se*; it can be both a question and an answer: "Did she have a heart?", "After all, she had a heart." In the work of Simonet, though most critics compare his work to other paintings from this period depicting death and autopsy, we do not find the expected props: skulls, medical books or anatomy atlases. Instead, we can see an old man representing the medical wisdom, who at the same time is deprived of the access to the truth. The title of the painting, although apparently including medical connotations, undoubtedly takes up issues of morality. The painter seems to be asking existential ques-

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[4] I analyse this painting, yet in a different context, in the book: *Kobieta epoki wiktoriańskiej. Tożsamość, ciało, medykalizacja* (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2013).

tions in this context. And so, who has the right to judge a woman's morality, a young prostitute who committed suicide by drowning herself?—it surely does not suffice to take out her heart in order to learn who she really was. Is it enough to be a medical authority to become an oracle in the domain of morality (del Pozo García, 2011, p. 23) (it needs to be reminded that back then medicine was intruding on the domains traditionally left to religion by determining norms and pathologies).

Why did the young Simonet choose a mortuary in order to pose a question about the human nature/the female nature/the nature of a prostitute, a question about the ambiguity of what is moral and what is devoid of morality; and finally in a brilliant flash of intuition, a question which seems to question the primacy of science and medicine? It is worth adding that the mortuary, in the second half of the 19th century, ceased to be a symbol of functional space, becoming the place of anonymous, unsystematised and alienated death, and at the same time, a place accessible for viewers. Mirel Ferre Alvarez calls the mortuary an echo of new mentality, which makes the intimate (death, paranoia, disease) the public. Here, the mortuary represents "the new scientific conception of death, a conception linked to the premises of positivism which saw in science a paradigm of social evolution" (Ferre Alvarez, 2009, pp. 164, 166) (undoubtedly, it is inscribed in the developing medicalization of social life).

And it is in this "positivism temple" (as Allan Mitchell calls it) designating the growing prestige of science (after: Ferre Alvarez, 2009, p. 173), that we see the body subjected to dissection. It is a body of a young, beautiful woman. Her luxuriant, glossy, wavy red hair falling towards the floor. Her skin is delicately cream-coloured, which does not make one think of a dead person. Noticeable is the lack of any bruises, traces of decay, the lack of subtlest allusion to the fact that she was recovered from a river. This is a beautiful, half-uncovered body caught in the anticipation of the lover. Without a doubt, it is a body full of eroticism, which has become "an integral part of the fascination with death" (Jordanova, 1989, pp. 174, 183). The naked drowned body, as depicted by Simonet, refers to the topos of the insane and obsessed with love Ophelia, but also to the representation of women as the untamed nature—sexuality which cannot be controlled and repressed. In the case of this painting we are not dealing with the perennial binarism present in the culture of the West. The naked body of the young woman is con-

trasted with the dressed body of the old man. One might even go on to claim that the female body is contrasted with the intellect of the man. The woman in an epitome of nature to which she has a greater affinity due to the female physiology and anatomy. The man constitutes a personification of culture and science. Looking at the painting, one could say that only the man can proceed to dissection—also the metaphorical one—of the woman. This painting, however, which is obvious for the viewer, does not relate to the realism of dissection. The simple activity of taking the heart out of the body—I will repeat once again—adds to the philosophical and moral symbolism of the work.

The anatomist, as suggested by L. Jordanova, who comments on Simonet's painting, assumes the attitude of the Shakespearean *Hamlet* (Jordanova, 1989, pp. 174, 183), and his question regarding the existence of the heart—although undoubtedly ironic and saturated with hesitation—becomes an unexpected enlightening of the mind by the heart; both the literal one (one in the hand) and the transcendental one (symbolising spirituality and the extrasensory cognition). The voluntary death, in the current of the river, appears to purify the prostitute, as the baptismal water frees from sins. And despite the fact that—as Neil Holmstrom claims—the death of the (female) character is a consequence of individual, moral degradation of the subject,"[5] it also constitutes salvation and redemption.

This painting can be, then, described in a typical—for this period—dialogue of discourses. One of them was connected with the "scientific conception of death, based on the premises of positivism," for which science becomes "a paradigm of social evolution" (Ferre Alvarez, 2009, p. 166). The second discourse was inscribed in the typical for this trend taste for mysticism and decadence as inherent in the reflection over the mystery for the body. Simonet's painting constitutes a representation of "the antinomy of a society in which life and death, perdition and redemption defined the contradictions of the positivist crisis" (Ferre Alvarez, 2009, p. 181). At the same time, it constitutes a symbolic representation of (the ambivalence of) the relationship between men and women in that era.

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[5] Neil Holstrom, Exquisite corpses: The Depreciation of Female Heatlh in Artistic Representation, p. 1, a talk delivered during Making Sense Of Dying and Death conference, session 5b: Philosophies of Death on the 11th November 2012, Salzburg, Austria, available at www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing the boundaries.

3. Pandora

Pandora is a painting by John William Waterhouse (1986). It is a „cultural text" in a direct way, where the categories of knowledge, cultural gender and power are leitmotivs running through the whole painting and determining its significance. Let us take a closer look at the painting.

Night. A black wood. A beautiful woman with a calm expression is kneeling at the foot of the stone plinth. A grand beautiful golden box is standing in front of her. The glow of the box is illuminating her face and the alabastrine skin of her naked arms. On the right there is a flowing stream, an often-encountered symbol of the evanescence of life. The woman is no one else but mythological Pandora. In subsequent interpretations and rewritings of the myth, the box given to her as a dowry would transform from a simple clay vessel into a box which is presented as a fine piece of craftsmanship by Waterhouse. This box looks nothing like the clay bottle described by Hesiod. Pandora is opening the box in the thick wood which appears to be dense with meanings. The wood is a symbol of concentrated and unforeseeable difficulties and it is a recurring topos in fairy tales. However, there is nothing disturbing about the wood in the painting. The stream flowing next to Pandora and blue lights coming from the distance are showing that the bright day is nearby and that regular life is going on. Pandora has not lost her way. Just a few steps away, the wood ends. She can be seen at the moment of opening the lid of the box. The time has stopped and nothing augurs the approaching misfortune. However, those who are familiar with the myth know that all the evils of the world are about to escape. Pandora, similarly to biblical Eve, symbolizes the betrayal of one's will and trespassing against the ban which results in the end of calm and happiness. Mythological Pandora is the first woman created by Zeus out of earth and fire. She was sent to the world full of harmony and homogeneity which was populated solely by men.

Nevertheless, the Pandora myth can be also interpreted in a different way, especially in the context of the painting by Waterhouse. His Pandora seems to be opening a box full of knowledge, prompted by curiosity. This knowledge is tantamount to different discourses which introduce anxiety and chaos into the one-sided and ordered world. The world based on simple and binary schemes. Even though this knowledge

brings anxiety and is frequently unwanted, it allows for showing diversity and complexity of reality while not necessary facilitating its understanding. Pandora's box symbolizes knowledge. It can be the knowledge about 'a woman,' but also about 'a man' which is not always uttered by a female voice in the discourse of femininity. Pandora is also a symbol of unconstrained woman's power. The beautiful Pandora is led by emotions—curiosity and desire—but at the same time she acts very logically: she makes a choice, opens the box which was given to her as a dowry. Is it possible to imagine someone who would not open it? This curiosity is dangerous but life-giving in nature—it gives rise to comprehension and transgression (what is more, if Pandora had not opened the box, then who would remember her a thousand years later?). The content of the box would always change according to the wishes of the authors of the myth's subsequent versions. However, anxieties and hope have always remained on the bottom of the box. The opening of the box is an act of losing control over what will happen, while the locked box used to give a feeling of stability and safety.

Several decades ago, American feminists started to claim that history had been written by men, about men and for men. As a result, they believed that the English word 'history' is nothing more but 'his story.' Thus, they put forward an idea of writing history by women, about women and for women—her-story. This might be the case with the myth about Pandora which so far could have been rewritten and reinterpreted by men. But how about reading it differently?

The opening of the box can symbolize new breakthroughs in science and social life, which initially might appear to be disastrous and appear to question the social order in a destructive way. However, such breakthroughs via numerous transgressions and (re)interpretations can give rise to different emancipating discourses of knowledge and power. Who knows, maybe after opening the box one of the thoughts born out of it led to the idea that even though femininity and masculinity are always inherently biological, they can give rise to a number of social constructs. Cultural gender, which is still considered by many as a plague and misfortune, for others opens the door to freedom, equal rights and empowerment. What seemed to be a disorder or even a misfortune from the perspective of old stereotypes is transforming into its opposite, namely, into the ability of defining a woman and a man and the ability of expressing the freedom to creating one's biography. Undoubtedly, this interpre-

tation of the Pandora myth is much closer to the intention of the authors. In the gender discourse we are often presented with the knowledge which is difficult, ambiguous and prone to multiple interpretations. This knowledge is inextricably connected with power, especially the power of understanding. Thus, the curiosity of researchers who frequently open the proverbial 'Pandora's box' leads to pluralism of discourses and to transgression. The knowledge offered in the myth about Pandora and Pandora herself are contradictory, ambiguous and incoherent. We need to bear in mind that Pandora literally means 'the all-gifted' or 'the all-giving'. She was endowed with beauty and sensuality by Venus, and with the gift of intelligence, eloquence and the power of seduction with words by Mercury.

Conclusions

Laura Mulvey introduced the idea of the "controlling male gaze," [6] which objectifies women depicted in art, to the conceptual apparatus of feminist critique. The woman as presented in art is a sexual object depicted by men and in adherence to male standards. Here, the active viewer—the man—is contrasted with the passive "object" subjected to inspection—the woman. This gaze is often associated with scopophilia understood as deriving pleasure, also the erotic one, from looking at naked female bodies presented in paintings (cf. Metz, 1982, p. 58). In the three analysed paintings, the gaze is of paramount importance: the curious look of Pandora, and the look of Charcot epitomising composure and authority, the look of the twenty men fixed on the patient writhing in hysterical convulsions or, finally, the penetrating look of the anatomist fixed on the heart taken out of the women's chest. (Blanche Marie, Pandora and the deceased prostitute remain passive objects of the gaze). There is also one more gaze, it is my gaze into the "women beyond control," one saturated with the knowledge about the era and the discourses of knowledge and power, one deprived of naivety of the random viewer; at the same time, however, fully aware of the fact that it is more ephemeral (momentarily solidified in this text) than the gaze of the artists, who immortalised the immensely suggestive and—to a great extent—

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[6] Laura Mulvey's essay is devoted to the cinema, however, I am convinced that her analyses are also applicable to painting. Mulvey, 1999.

timeless representations of femininity in their paintings. Sometimes looking at the old paintings, I have the feeling that their authors had a brilliant enlightenment of seeing through a mirror of time into the present day.

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Gender as a category entangled in the matrix of power and gender resistance potential

ABSTRACT. The subject of presented analysis is gender treated as a social category entangled in power relations. There are presented main social matrices of the gender-based power practices and it's institutional and extrainstitutional, structural and individual expressions and consequences. The attention is focused at the classical conceptions of power and the perspectives of using it's elements in the analysis of gender-based discipline practices in modern and postmodern society. There are also indicated—connected with queer culture—resistance strategies realized by using gender symbols and stereotypically perceived roles.

KEYWORDS: gender, power, discipline, resistance, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia

Gender is one of the main variables, which are taken into account in social research of various types. It is treated as an attribute on the basis of which individuals may gain access to resources, resulting in the diverse stratification location. However, at the same time it is not treated as an isolated variable, as numerous intersectional configurations of gender and race, ethnic identity, social stratification, or sexual preferences are analysed. Gender is viewed as the matrix, which is the foundation for defining roles attributed to individuals. Therefore it is an important variable through the prism of which the subject's identity is characterised. The analysis of gender includes such elements as identity, social roles, social relations, or sexual preference (Kerr & Multon, 2015, p. 183). Studies, which concentrate on gender treated as a variable codetermining individual's status, are usually focused on two issues. One of them is male and female access to various valuable social resources, which is the subject matter of feminist studies. The second issue is related to social status of non-heteronormative individuals i.e. gays, lesbians, transgender and transsexual individuals. This is the main area of interest of interdisciplinary LGBT studies and queer theory. The subject matter of the present analyses, which is merely an introduction to much wider issues, is a category of gender treated as a variable used in the

constructed matrices of power. At the same time, it is the matrix of undertaking resistance, thereby being a category of emancipation potential.

Power is a classic category within the discourse of social studies. The issues related to it constituted a subject of interest of both classics of various disciplines and representatives of critical deconstruction thought connected with postmodernism. In the context of the present analyses, references to Max Weber and Michel Foucault's trains of thought are particularly useful.

Power, in its general meaning accepted in social studies, determines the existence of asymmetrical relation. In the analyses of this subject, various elements defining the bases and consequences of domination and subordination are exposed. It may be viewed both as the cause and the consequence of asymmetrical distribution of capital, goods and resources (cf. Dick, 2008, p. 328). This view is based on Karl Marx's classic thought. It is also treated as a crucial assumption in modern interpretations of issues related to causes and manifestations of social exclusion. Subordination is a category corresponding to power. It defines a relatively low rank (compared with e.g. statutory position) in a given type of hierarchy, and is a consequence of domination (Athens, 2010, p. 340). At the level of discourse and social relations, subordination may be strengthened by discourses justifying it, which are of prejudice nature. Power is a social relation applied in various institutions. According to Max Weber's theoretical model, it may be based on three types of justification and it may have legal, traditional, or charismatic bases, accordingly (Weber, 2002, pp. 158-227). This category is defined by Weber as a chance "to realize their own will in communal action, even against the resistance of others". This classic of German sociology completes the interpretation of the notion of "power" by introducing two terms: *domination* and *discipline*. In the context of the present analyses, the way Weber understands the notion of discipline is particularly helpful. Discipline is treated as a chance of "immediate, automatic and schematic submission for order given by many other people, resulting from drilled attitude". This notion also relates to a "'drill' of uncritical and obedient submission" (Weber, 2002, pp. 40-41). According to Peter M. Blau, power is understood as all types of interactions between individuals or groups, in which one person or a group offers others awards, punishment or some services, which are unavailable (or hardly available) outside this relation, thereby forcing them to meet the expectations of the dominating subject. It is always an asymmetrical relation. Blau makes a distinc-

tion between coercive power and power based on gratification. The notion of power defines the ability of individuals or groups to impose their will on others, despite resistance undertaken by subordinate subjects. In this context, net value of power is analysed i.e. the ability to practise it regardless of restrictions imposed by subordinate subjects (Blau, 2009, pp. 119-121).

However, according to Michel Foucault, power practised in the context of modern and postmodern societies is of blurred and panoptic character, and it is based on the interpretation of *truth* as a social construct. Relations of power and submission are ever-present in social structures and interactions created within them, e.g. in communication as well as in institutional, economic, or intimate relations when at least one of the subjects of interaction tries to take control over another subject's actions (Foucault, 1994, pp. 285-293).

Oppressive power is a special type of power. It is a type of asymmetrical relation, which is accompanied, apart from normal manifestations of power, by social or political exclusion and depreciating the identity of the members of the subordinate group (cf. Prilleltensky, 2003, p. 195). Oppression, which may be analysed both as a process or a state of affairs, is a complex category and includes sociological, psychological variables and also possesses a political position. Its consequence may be both victimisation of the members of subordinate groups, or undertaking resistance strategies as indicated by many representatives of social studies (Prilleltensky, 2003, p. 195). Taking into consideration the abovementioned interpretations of the concept of power, it can be assumed that they can be used in the analyses of diverse meanings ascribed to roles related to gender and in the analyses of diverse access to socially established resources considering the gender variable.

 Applying power within particular institutions is realised by using diverse means. In the context of modern and postmodern systems, the discourse is one of the basic means. Michel Foucault indicates the importance of the discourses related to demography, biology, medicine (especially psychiatry), psychology, pedagogy, politics and morality (Foucault, 2010, p. 31). Scripts normalising discriminatory practices may be placed within the matrices of knowledge. These are the scripts based on the model of sexism. The concept of sexism may be referred to the specific type of attitudes and also to institutional structures. Within their scopes, the following are observed: practices related to discrimination of individuals or groups due to their gender, gender role or sexual preferences.

This concept can be used both in making the description of knowledge, beliefs, cognitive matrices of individuals (individual sexism) and relationships, interaction models occurring within institutions (institutional sexism). Individual sexism is expressed by the individual's conviction of the superiority of one of the genders (e.g. androcentrism), the gender role or sexual preferences (e.g. heterosexism) over the others. Undertaking actions that strengthen that implicated superiority is a consequence of such convictions. On the other hand, institutional sexism indicates various manifestations of individual sexism, expressed in the open or hidden form by the practices undertaken within the institution, including its structures, rules of operation and action or the practised policy (Szarzyńska & Toro, 2012, p. 35).

Individual sexism is a consequence of socialisation based on presenting the vision of gender reality as an explicitly binary. Its reality is based on precisely defined matrices of femininity/masculinity, treating as a norm identifying, practising of the explicitly defined identity based on these matrices, as well as attributes, preferences and a range of social roles related to identity (Ross, 1996, p. 16). Rob Moore takes into consideration diverse sources of matrices and discourses which create power relationships of sexist character indicating particular models of feminist theory focused on them. Distinguishing different types of feminism i.e. liberal, radical, Marxist, black or poststructural, Moore indicates the use of capitalist, patriarchal and racist ideology in strengthening power based on sexism (Moore, 2007, p. 22).

Heterosexism is one of the varieties of sexism. It may be placed both structurally (within the normative structure or the discourse structure) or it may adopt the internalised form. Heterosexism can be expressed in the form of homophobia. As a social fact, homophobia covers a set of negative attitudes and views towards homosexuality itself and towards individuals of non-heterosexual identity. On the other hand, internalised homophobia is a reaction to the conviction about social stigmatisation of non-heterosexual individuals (gays, lesbians, bisexuals) (Ross, 1996, p. 16). It is a consequence of the participation of the individual in the context of homophobic culture in which the following occur: devaluation or discrediting of the identity, desire, practices of non-heterosexual character (cf. Russel & Bohan, 2006, pp. 344-345). The discourses, which are based on homophobia, become part of the system of social control, basing on knowledge systems of stereotype character and marked by stereotypes (Madureira, 2007, p. 225). Internalised homophobia is

a consequence of socialisation in the specific social, cultural and political contexts which discredit individuals of LGBT identity (Russel & Bohan, 2006, p. 345). It is a type of attitude based on prejudice against individuals creating their own identity in a way which differs from heteronormative matrices (gays, lesbians, transgender individuals, bisexuals, transsexuals) (Madureira, 2007, p. 226).

Individuals who create their own identity against the socially normalised matrices are exposed to difficulties in the interaction structures and processes. According to the theory by Erving Goffman, interaction takes place in accordance with culturally defined models, describing attributes of their participants, their functioning within roles and behavioural models treated as a norm ascribed to individuals of the specific gender, at a specific age, fulfilling specific professional and social roles. Gender is an important attribute, which describes a course of typical interactions. Individuals of non-heteronormative identity are exposed to be labelled as deviants due to the discrepancy of social expectations concerning the identity of females and males with the real identity (cf. Goffman, 2005).

Atmosphere conducive to reflective self-identity management by agents of the society occurs in the context of the postmodern society. The individual gains access to matrices which allow for free moving between modernly established categories. These are open-access matrices included in pop-cultural texts broadcast by the media (cf. Melosik, 2013). Identity understood in such a way becomes the area of practising emancipation strategies of political significance. The development of subject's consciousness of occupying unfavourable and subordinated status due to the represented features which are within the category of independent variables (such as gender) can be the basis for resistant actions (Abowitz, 2000, p. 878). Considering various interpretative perspectives of the notion of resistance, a tentative definition may be accepted for the purposes of the present analyses, according to which it is an opposing action towards the subject, group or the ideas identified as related to oppressive dominance. It is practised in the situation of interference of diverse interests of particular social group representatives with simultaneous unequal possibilities to achieve them. Resistant actions are of reflective and intentional character with aspiration for the introduction of the change at their basis (Bielska, 2013, p. 67). Lauraine Leblanc assumes that the appearance of resistance is a consequence of several factors such as subjective consciousness of functioning in oppressive condi-

tions, motivation to oppose it and undertaking actions expressing the motivation (Leblanc, 2006, p. 18). Indicating forms which can be assumed by resistant consciousness, Chela Sandoval lists the following ones: equal rights form, revolutionary form, supremacist form, and separatist form. At the bases of the equal rights form lies the conviction that differences between representatives of the dominant group and the subordinate group are deliberately escalated in an unjustified manner when the representatives of both groups should have an equal access to various resources present in the public sphere. The revolutionary form is based on the conviction that assimilation of difference is not feasible within the present social order and that modification of social structure and social institutions is a condition for the introduction of the change. The supremacist form defines the conviction of representatives of the subordinate group according to which due to their own attributes (e.g. moral ones), they possess a better identity than representatives of the dominant group. The separatist form defines preference for preservation of the difference and its protection by means of separation from symbols, preferred values, and systems of evaluation accepted by the dominant group (after Spade, 2007, p. 240). Another exemplification of resistance strategies achieved by the usage of gender matrices is the construction of *queer* identity. Assuming resistance against the assimilation model, it takes into consideration the possibility of accepting automarginalisation strategies. It constitutes a specific resistance strategy against heterosexist order and characteristic gender hegemony, in the context of which an assumption is adopted that each individual is obliged to construct their own identity within the limits of binary matrices—scripts, defining male and female roles socially recognised to be proper. A similar identity model also expressing resistance against the above-mentioned binary is constructed within *Drag Queen*, *Drag King* culture. These are the strategies based on fun and performance in which conventions concerning exaggerated body construction and gender performance are neutralised, frequently corresponding to stereotype interpretations of femininity and masculinity. Referring to a theoretical model of performativeness indicated by Judith Butler, it can be assumed that *Drag Queen/Drag King* identity breaks the social model which defines femininity/masculinity. A performer of a Drag show (as the script itself) relies on a parodic exaggeration of socially accepted gender characteristics, sexual and gender norms and on deconstruction of social definitions of gender category. *Drag Queen/Drag King,* who is a performer of the biological gender role

opposite to their own, is given an insight into a social definition of masculinity/femininity. At the same time during the performance he/she questions the model (script) (in this case only apparently) arbitrarily authorised, acknowledged to be proper and natural. Thus the performer enters into a play with gender convention, the body becomes an area to redefine meanings, to perform identity experiments and it becomes the area of play (cf. Gąsior, 2008, p. 211). In reference to the analyses conducted by José Esteban Muñoz, it can be assumed that this is a trend based on disidentification strategy with a masculinised culture script interpreted as oppressive with the simultaneous implementation of the assumption of intersectionality of the experienced oppression (Muñoz, 1999, p. 22). The resistance expressed by the usage of gender matrices may adopt the nature of infra-political strategies. Infra-politics defines an area of a subtle hidden and secret political fight. However, it includes actions which form the basis for potential open actions, especially in the case of a significant power asymmetry between the dominant and the subordinate subjects (Scott, 1990, pp. 183-184). It constitutes an everyday expression of a resistance form, realised both individually and collectively. This is a strategy based on practising "hidden transcripts", as an alternative to "public transcript". The result of this is identity construction based on matrices alternative to socially recognised femininity and masculinity norms.

In conclusion, it may be assumed that gender is usually presented as an explicitly binary category in social discourses. The discourses assume that women and men demonstrate culturally defined for themselves identity models, heterosexual preferences and they function within specific, culturally defined roles. Gender identity is treated as a constant characteristic throughout one's life. Gender, acquiring a social meaning, is a category constituting the matrix of practices of social control and power. It is a category subjected to disciplinary practises such as naturalisation and normalisation. Individuals who construct their own identity by using the elements of matrices different from culturally defined hetero-normativeness constitute a social agent who is *unpredictable* and different from the accepted role definition. Consequently, they are at risk of receiving the label of deviants. At the same time, however, reflective management of variables characterising the gender may adopt the form of resistance actions. Within this type of strategies one includes constructing queer identity or exaggerated demonstration of sexual identity by representatives of the opposite gender as part of a drag queen/drag

king show deliberately based on stereotypes. Thus they become part of the resistance model of infra-politics character. In a cultural sphere, the context of late modernity creates chances for reflective construction of one's own identity by the subject, including creative management of elements related to gender identity. However, at the same time in the social sphere, it is possible to identify numerous areas of stigmatisation of people constructing their own identity in a way which is different from the assumptions of hetero-normativeness.

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Is gender neutrality
a post-human phenomenon?
The concept of 'gender neutral'
in Swedish education

ABSTRACT. Inspired by the feminist thoughts of Rosi Braidotti and Donna Haraway, the author of this article endeavours to depict the emerging concept of gender neutrality that has developed in Sweden in recent years. The author uses an interpretative paradigm with a variety of qualitative field research tools, to gain a deeper understanding of how gender neutrality works in practice at school and nursery level in Sweden. The study took place in Stockholm in September 2014 with the author living in situ. The case study involved the use of: field notes and observations, interviews with university scholars, heads of schools and nurseries and open-ended questionnaires with teachers, carers and students. The analysis of written resources included the school and nursery national curriculum, press discourse and scientific publications on the subject matter. The author of the article argues that gender neutrality may be perceived as a concept originating from post-humanism, therefore it should be examined within the post-human socio-pedagogical reflection and embedded in norm critical discourse.

KEYWORDS: post-humanism, gender neutral, equality, education, norm critical pedagogy, modernity

Introduction to a post-human conceptualization

With the extraordinary acceleration of technological advancement, globalisation and new, unprecedented social phenomenon, traditional humanism struggles to frame global reality. These factors evoke a new way of looking at humans, their fate and their social conditioning. With the deployment of a number of ideas with the prefix *post* (e.g. post-structuralism, postmodernism, post-realism, post-secularism) eventually the term 'post-human' was also constructed (e.g. Fukuyama, 2002). Post-humanism sought to de-centralise 'Man', who was for centuries at the heart of humanist thought, questioning traditional social norms and hierarchies, thus giving man a much more humble place amongst other

species. Human is no longer separate from other forms of life and certainly not dominant. Human and other life forms are interwoven due to evolution and the ongoing exchanges of material and immaterial data across different species, demonstrated by similarities in their genetic code, amalgamating ontologically different elements and categories into a dynamic hybrid (Jöns, 2006, p. 572). The humanistic idea of a 'Man' as a representation of the human kind, was an exclusionary category on many other levels. For instance it was a masculine normality that defined what is a 'mankind', not to mention the accompanying taxonomy of exclusionary model, where a human mould is white, heterosexual, able-bodied, healthy, young and also middle class. Even the semiotics of humanist thought suggest that the superiority of the male genome over other coexisting genders due to their patriarchal historicity. Post-humanism denotes the interdependence of the 'human' and other species and the increasing relationship with and dependence of humans on technology. Post-humanism rejects dualism of nature and culture, focusing on the autopoietic force of all living organisms (Braidotti, 2013, p. 3). It blurs the boundaries between categories; technology (e.g. artificial intelligence), the cosmos, inanimate objects and living organisms thus the categories overlap and interact. Some call it pan-humanity (Franklin et al., 2000, p. 26), thinking that these previously separate categories are interconnected only through a sense of vulnerability and fear and are kept in place by violence and threat of rejection. This is not how R. Braidotti (2013, p. 15) perceives post-human thought. In her view, it is more egalitarian than traditional humanism, and she accuses it of racism, sexism, classism and eurocentrism, that enables imperial thinkers to create categories of 'otherness' to discriminate against, what she calls: 'disposable bodies' who do not fit in with the ideals created by the humanist philosophers.

Although post-humanism is present, at least on the declarative level amongst many feminist writers, Braidotti (2013, pp. 20-25) questions their measuring of what is classed as 'female' by the use of universal standards that are therefore tainted with Western culture and traditional humanism, with accentuated politics of whiteness. Post-humanism does not equate with the 'death of mankind' (early anti-humanism of 1970-ties; see: Schaeffer, 1970; Sartre, 1973; and Soper, 1992). Post-humanism relies on the deconstruction (see: Derrida, 2001) of normativity and politics of inclusion based on the rationalizing and normalising of diversity. There is however an undeniable heritage of

humanism that enabled the birth of post-humanism, visible in the cult of individuality, autonomy, personal freedom and responsibility (Todorov, 2002). These values inevitably promote secularism. Nevertheless they resonate in post-humanist thought, although they are not considered universally superior to other forms of togetherness and social coexistence. It is through emancipation and equality—enabled by humanism—that new ideas such as anti-subjectivity (introduced by Bruno Latour's anti-epistemology (1993) and affirmative stand of post-human condition (Braidotti, 2013) were able to emerge, so one may deduce that post-humanism is an advanced form of humanism. A good example of a post-human condition is the use of advanced technology by the music industry, to enable the creation of new music celebrities. A person with an average musical predisposition, average music hearing and average intonation, can sound immaculate and captivating due to extensive use of Auto-Tune, Pro Tools and other mixing and mastering software. Without the use of IT, this person would not be able to become a star, therefore binding the human and the technological into one within the final product of the post-human music industry. The same person's image, shape, skin condition, hair or even eye colour can be easily altered by the use of Photoshop and similar products. The difference between what we can hear and see and the original human specimen may be immense. Unlike in the humanist era, the 'star' can not be created without technological aids, exposing post-human dependency on advanced technology. Post-human does not eliminate the human element, it is neither anti-human nor inhumane, it simply widens the spectrum of interdependency between the technological innovations created by humans and the de-construction and re-creation of yet another human with the use of such technologies. This self-perpetuating mechanism of post-human creation spins at high velocity taking the human race into an exciting but uncertain new level of human-machine relationship. In the techno-deterministic view, 'project: human' is not yet final and complete. A more advanced human form is yet to be developed thanks to the enhancement of bodies and of human intelligence by the use of technology (Bostrom & Roache, 2007). Amongst many demarcation lines of traditional humanism, the human body possess a biological sex and a socially assigned gender. Machines however are free of such differences unless scientists creating them choose to assign gender to them (mainly in the linguistic sense—by giving them a gendered name). The development of

these thoughts led to some neo-feminist thinkers being drawn to the idea of a gender free society.

Perhaps it was Donna Haraway (1985, 1990), who first sought liberation from duality of body and gender in the creation of a post-gender cyborg. However such a creation relied fully on the technology which was unavoidably rooted in patriarchal historicity. In her pursuit of a cyborg utopism that liberates interactions from restrictions of gender, Haraway (1985, 1990, 1992, 2003, 2006) affirms new relationships between living organisms and technology, shadowing human ontology with a new post-human cyborg ontology. The connections between embodiment, technology and gender, were also present in works of Braidotti (2002, 1996), Springer (1994) and Balsamo (1988), representing a feminist angle when looking at power hierarchies that would still persist in the post-human cyborg utopia. This stands in opposition to Haraway's claims of discarded 'coherent and masterful subjectivity' of cyborgs, who represent a fusion of organic and non organic mater that paradoxically bring them closer to nature than a traditional self-centred human could ever become (Haraway, 1992, p. 87). The utopian idea of cyborgs that are meant to be in essence, improved 'humans' is an expression of trans-human trend within post-human thought. It relies hugely on science-fiction, futuristic visions of improved human qualities, elimination of genetic faults, self-regeneration and the extended power of human potential thanks to advanced, yet to be discovered technologies. In this stream of post-humanism, the use of technology is primarily subservient to human, to enable humans to remain a master species, to explore the full unrealised potential of human brains and advance human skills, powers, health and life-span. Some of it is already happening in the deepening analysis of human DNA, cell modification, organ transplants, artificial limbs, cosmetic surgery and the use of IT equipment that counters human error and monitors and corrects human behaviour (e.g. in aviation, military service or medicine).

Haraway (1990, p. 150) believes that 'the cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world'. At the same time she claims that we are already becoming cyborgs (eadem). What is puzzling for Haraway's readers is that in some places she acknowledges that even cyborg bodies (like human ones) are 'maps of power and identity' (Haraway, 1990, p. 180). Is it not a contradiction? Perhaps Haraway meant (similar to Balsamo, 1996) that cyborgs are a hope for escaping gender stereotypes. When Claudia Springer thought that the cyborg concept might have been yet another

expression of rebellion against what is inadequate or unjust in human life (1996), Braidotti (2002) thought that cyborgs would not dispose of 'otherness', whether it is based on sexuality or other qualities. Trans-humanism in contrary to mainstream post-humanism maintains the human/animal divide, making humanity separate and self-contained, reproducing exclusionary categories of classical humanist thought. Brai-dotti (2013, p. 97) argues in her later work that technological apparatus may be freed of sex and race, whilst its naturalisation will be an expression of hybridity and interconnectivity, which would lead to creation of a self-organising, transgender mechanism/organism. This organism would make transsexuality a desired norm in a post-human world, relocating the body of a human somewhere else. Would it create new forms of exclusion that it was meant to combat?

Nevertheless, one may choose to believe that Donna Haraway is one of the first futuristic feminist writers that materialised a post-gender world through the creation of cyborgs. The question emerges: Is gender neutral a post-gender idea that can be situated amongst post-human thought? Does gender neutrality remove sexual difference or is it an egalitarian utopia that attempts to introduce a certain 'gender blindness' in post-human relations? Further discussion will lead to finding the answers. The author will use examples of the Swedish take on gender neutrality, explored through an in-depth study into educational developments that have taken place in Sweden in the last few years.

A few words on norm critical pedagogy

With the pledge to frame 'gender neutrality' through the optics of post-humanism, comes an unavoidable turn towards norm critical pedagogy. Post-humanism in its essence questions what is known as a human norm and looks for multiple alternatives. Normative subjectivity, dividing different forms of life into: plants, animals, human, alien, cadaver, machine, comes under the scrutiny of post-humanist thinkers. Although R. Braidotti (2013, p. 49) claims to reject the individualism and relativism that shape vital characteristics of norm critical disposition in post-human subjectivity, her conceptualisation of multiple belongings and the nomadic nature of post-human subjects, fit within the politics of inclusion and interconnectivity, that are grounded in the norm critical framework. Both post-human and norm critical theories question the

nature and existence of social norms. They both tend to reveal and oppose the mechanisms of power distribution and exclusion in the making of norms and therefore create deep divisions under the premise of normativity. Both long to fight exclusion and injustice. Post-human philosophy goes beyond inter-human relations and cultural norms, towards closer and more intimate relations between human-bios (understood as active and creative life-forms), human-zoe (understood as a 'passive' biological embodiment of organic life) and human-advanced technology or even human-artificial intelligence. The boundaries created by human norms in the post-human realm cease to exist, crossing the lines between 'the organic and the inorganic, the born and the manufactured, flesh and metal, electronic circuits and organic nervous systems' (Braidotti, 2013, p. 89). What draws the norm critical towards post-human pedagogical reflection, is the desire to break the cycle of repetitive reproduction of familiar systems of thought and behaviour, actively reinventing subjectivity 'as a set of mutant values' (Braidotti, 2013, p. 93). In her earlier work, Braidotti (2006) talks about post-human politics that can be summed up as an affirmation of interdependence of the human species, the non-human others and the personal and a-personal life. Norms create order and the complete freedom from norms may lead to chaos. Nevertheless existing norms are inherently discriminatory towards these who do not fulfil normative criteria. This generates an underclass within human species of what Braidotti brutally labelled 'disposable bodies' who have limited access to protection, medication, vaccinations, refuge and so on (Braidotti, 2013 p. 117, 127). According to Braidotti (2013, p. 98), 'sexualised, racialized or even naturalized differences, ... have become unhinged and act as the forces leading to the elaboration of alternative modes of transversal subjectivity, which extend not only beyond gender and race, but also beyond the human.'

Norm critical pedagogy challenges the structures of 'otherness' and is far from being complete and definitive. It is, similarly to post-human pedagogy, a phenomenon that 'becomes'. It is performative in the process of making, which is active and therefore in constant movement, flexible, fuzzy and changeable. Although it has its roots in queer theory movements (Bromseth & Darj, 2010; Bromseth & Sörensdotter, 2014), due to the challenge of heteronorm, it goes far beyond queer or even gender theories. It becomes a holistic pedagogical approach to life, power structures and social world, with the focus on the norms that control the public and individual perception of what is classed as normal vs.

abnormal. Norm critical pedagogy combines emancipatory pedagogies and their critique of power with a new way of understanding post-human identity and gender, as a product of multiple oppressive social practices that create exclusionism such as sexism, racism, homophobia or classism. Norm critical pedagogy addresses these forms of power structure by unveiling and questioning norms that created them and continually legitimize them. Norm critical pedagogy hopes to create ways to escape 'branding', 'labelling' and assigning value based on one's gender and sexuality. Gilles Deleuze engaged with the idea of freeing 'human embodiment from its indexation on socialized productivity to become bodies without organs' (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 91-92). Is this what feminist and queer movements in Sweden seek to achieve through 'gender neutral' policy?

A 'gender neutral' human or a gender free attitude towards a 'gendered' human?

Scandinavia is well renowned internationally for gender equality. The Gender Gap Index brings Scandinavian countries to the top table (The global gender gap report 2014). When it comes to gender neutrality, some practices—e.g. the use of a gender neutral pronoun *hän*—existed in Finland for centuries, but its Swedish equivalent *hen* was introduced into Swedish language in 2011, on the wave of a more embracing view of sexuality and when the norm critical approach in Swedish pedagogy extended into political and social life. One may say that gender neutrality in education has recently become Sweden's number one export product (Nyström, 2010). Multiple Nordic countries are following the developments in Sweden, through official networks such as the Nordic Gender Institute and "Norden"—The Nordic Cooperation of Ministers for Gender Equality (Nyström, 2010) and Lithuania is one of the first countries that has decided to implement the Swedish gender neutrality model (Blomberg et al., 2014). It is important to explore the true meaning of gender neutrality, how is it understood and how it is put into practice in Sweden (Francis, 2010; Engdahl 2011; Aikman & Unterhalter 2007).

The following discussion on what gender neutrality is in practice for Swedish teachers and scholars is based on an in-depth study of the national school curriculum and a month long field research carried out in

Stockholm in the Autumn 2014. The research tools, captured in table 1, comprised primarily of semi-structured interviews with scholars from Stockholm University (SU) and heads of two schools and two nurseries based in Stockholm area, and short-term, non-participant observation in these four facilities.

Table 1.

Analysis of **official documents** e.g. Curriculum for the Preschool Lpfö 98 Revised 2010. Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the recreation centre 2011. Curriculum for the upper secondary school 2011.	**Interviews** with the SU scholars[1] involved in gender neutral discourse, research in that matter and preparation of students. (N 9)	**Questionnaires**—Swedish sample—school teachers and nursery teachers, already working in school/nursery environment, participating in post-diploma or specialization course at the SU (N21+N20)
	Interviews with heads of two small nurseries in Stockholm's middle class area: one private, one governmental + non-participant observations	
Analysis of existing scientific **literature**	**Interviews** with heads of two large (400 and a 1000 pupils), multiethnic public schools in Stockholm area + non-participant observations	**Questionnaires**—International sample—foreign students of final years of MA courses—part of ERASMUS exchange programmes at the SU (N18)

Source: AOC

The identities of some of the interviewees will be withheld to respect their wish to remain anonymous. Educational facilities will also not be named.[2] The interviews were enriched by analysis of fully anonymous, open-question survey carried out amongst students of Stockholm University on advanced teacher courses, who were already employed as

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[1] Unfortunately, author was unable to carry out an interview with Klara Dolk or Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, who are also key researchers in this field. See e.g.: Dolk, 2009; Lenz Taguchi, 2011.

[2] These can be obtained at author's discretion after prior authorisation by participants in question.

school and nursery professionals. A 'control group' of questionnaire respondents was formed from foreign ERASMUS exchange students of the final years of MA teacher courses. The interviews and questionnaires were completed in English, which was the common second language for both the researcher and the respondents. This might have had some minor effect on accuracy and the level of sophistication of the linguistics used. However, due to a significant numbers of participants, these issues should be considered marginal. There is also a significant number of research works in English language on the subject matter, that for practical reasons were given priority, however Swedish texts were not excluded.

The concept of gender neutrality has its root in post-constructivist feminism, in norm critical pedagogy and in the principle of equality for all. It can be considered a certain 'gender blindness' policy, that implies treating everyone the same despite their gender. Making neither preferences nor assumptions about gender roles or gender norms is the essence of this policy. Gender neutrality challenges the idea of two opposite species: men and women, separated by an invisible wall. Gender neutrality admits there are differences between men and women but these differences exist on a scale and not as two bipolar extremes. The implication is that despite differences, all genders should respect each other, cooperate, try to see things through the other person's perspective and not create artificial separate universes reserved for only one gender type. Gender neutrality challenges stereotyping of any kind, to open people's minds to a wide range of gender and personal predispositions that may not be coherent with traditional views of gender roles or gender features. It is focused on self-awareness and analyzing how gender may influence one's behaviour, relations and dynamics, in the classroom and in society as a whole. When this initial norm critical awareness is gained it becomes easier to realize when one acts differently towards people based on their gender.

The Swedish National Agency for Education, Skolverket,[3] is the central administrative authority for the public school system, including publicly organised pre-schooling, school-age childcare and the education of adults. It issues, amongst other guidelines, the national school curriculum, the pre-school curriculum and supporting materials for teachers. Skolverket shapes the operations of schools in Sweden and therefore it is vital to study its official documents in pursuance of gender neutrality

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[3] www.skolverket.se

taxonomy. It is not surprising that 'gender equality,' 'diversity,' 'gender' and 'equality' are used frequently in all of the documents. The term 'boys/girls' is used only once within the whole 200 page compulsory school curriculum. The word 'gender' was used on 20 pages, always in the context of equal treatment and anti-discrimination practices. For instance one may read that:

No one should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of *gender*,[4] ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, *transgender identity or its expression*, *sexual orientation*, age or functional impairment ... . Xenophobia and intolerance must be confronted with knowledge, open discussion and active measures (Curriculum for the compulsory school... 2011, p. 9).

The Preschool curriculum states:

...counteract traditional gender patterns and sex roles. Girls and boys shall have in the pre-school the same possibilities to test and develop capacities and interests *without limitation by stereotypical sex roles*... (Curriculum for the Preschool 2011, p. 5).

The school has a responsibility to *counteract traditional gender patterns*. It should thus provide scope for pupils to explore and develop their ability and their interests *independently of gender affiliation*... (Curriculum for the Preschool 2011, p. 10).

These documents and their contents on gender equality in many ways reflect the norm critical approach and the neutrality of attitude towards gender. They send a strong message to teachers and head teachers about the direction in which gender should be approached in teaching practice and this resonates strongly in the answers from the questionnaires and the interviews.

What is important to note, gender neutrality is not an attempt to remove gender from people. This, outside of a utopian cyborg, world would be impossible. According to the interviewees, (whose idea of neutrality turned out to be uniform) neutrality means equal treatment of people regardless of their gender. Neutrality also means realizing the differences and what implications they may have for the life opportunities of individuals and for any interaction between social actors. By realizing one's own limitations and one's own gender bias, one may be able to adjust towards a more egalitarian model of relations with others.

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[4] Some words are underlined to put emphasis (author), it is not underlined in the original document.

Gender neutrality is primarily about fairness and equality to all despite their background. It is a part of wider societal change that is meant to reveal the mechanisms of social injustice and to help with implementation of true equality in education and beyond. This can be achieved when all children are treated in the same manner, so they do not feel inferior, superior, less important or more important than others at any time. They should get the same attention and the same space and time in the classroom environment. Academics with teaching practice at schools and nurseries stated, that the teacher is not meant to create an artificial wonderland of an ideal world with no poverty, no addiction, no illness, no class division, no ethnicity or gender. The teacher is there to open children's minds to the world of diversity, to show how the existing hierarchies in society are created and maintained. At the same time the teacher has a mission to install respect and trust in all people regardless of their demographics and to show that we are all one race—a human race, regardless of our skin colour, our gender or our economic situation. Only in such reflexive environment can children achieve the true equality of opportunity. Gender neutrality allows people, despite their gender, to act more masculine or more feminine, depending on the context and the situation, so that they do not feel awkward taking on a more feminine or masculine task or role. Fear of negative judgment disappears creating an atmosphere that allows people to use their full potential and to accommodate how they want to act in different social settings, without feeling uncomfortable or at risk of ridicule. This should give children greater confidence in themselves and a healthy self-esteem, which may prevent multiple social and psychological traumas. Gender neutrality is therefore healthy for a well functioning, equal society and for people's mental health. According to both academics and the heads of educational facilities, this means that there is no embarrassment to face if a boy cries or if a girl has an angry outburst, because they are both human and experience a range of the same emotions. A father should not be viewed as less manly if he plays on the floor with his children in an affectionate and loving manner. A woman should not be viewed as more manly if she handles professional situations in a masculine way, which is deemed as cold and rational, giving her a 'hard as nails' reputation. We should all feel comfortable using a range of masculine and feminine tools, behaviours and emotions that are interchangeable depending on the setting and the circumstances. It is necessary for good functioning in society that people can switch between the roles and between gender specific

behaviours. We all can be more masculine or feminine despite our gender and our gender should not limit us in achieving our personal goals at home, at school and at work. Summing up, gender neutrality allows someone to be the person they feel most comfortable with and be happy and fulfilled, without being limited or frown upon. It allows people to be their actual selves, freeing them from what may be seen as an oppressive culture of gender stereotyping.

The relativism present in the gender neutrality discourse, leads school and nursery practitioners to pose self-challenging questions. How far do I, as a teacher, want to go with this idea? What do I want to achieve? Will it prepare a child for the reality of the outside world or will it create an artificial, experimental space within the educational environment? The best option is to widen children's perspective and make them aware of the gender implications in life and not falsify the gender picture, but to equip them with sensitivity to notice good and bad practice, to oppose discrimination and to always be as fair as possible in their own decisions and judgments.

Looking at the practicalities of how this neutrality may be achieved in the classroom, it is worth noting a new experimental technique, used in approximately 400 facilities across Sweden, of self-documentation by teachers and head teachers. They document by video, pictures and notes how they interact with children in an effort to distinguish their own bias. The process of documentation involves the children, who are encouraged to take photos and videos themselves. Both the professionals involved and the children analyse the materials collected, discussing how gender bias might have effected some of the behaviours seen in everyday life situations and to scrutinise the actions of education practitioners. This is both revealing and therapeutic. This provokes higher levels of reflexivity when interacting with children. According to Dr. Christian Eidevald,[5] who is involved in this project in nurseries, both head teachers and teachers are often shocked when viewing their 'in class' behaviour, when they suddenly see how their own behaviour differs depending on the gender of the pupils. Dr. Eidevald looks at pre-school from a structural feminism perspective. He analyses the dominant discourse through the lens of gender pedagogy. As a practitioner and a researcher he has a unique opportunity to engage with hundreds of pre-school

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[5] Dr Eidevald is a nursery teacher, a lecturer and a post-doctoral researcher of gender in education. Some of his works include: Eidevald, 2009a, 2009b, 2011a, 2011b, 2013; Eidevald & Lenz Taguchi, 2011.

teachers across Sweden. Whilst championing the programme, he also warns that limiting teachers and children by the norm of neutrality may also have some negative effects as it creates artificial boundaries and brings in new, quite narrow norms; the exact opposite of what is wanted. Practical examples of attempted neutrality quoted by Dr. Eidevald are: removing gender specific such as cars and dolls, not using gender stereotyping words like brave, tall, victorious and strong, trying to make the environment and games gender neutral. Toy animals that do not represent any particular sex are allowed as are building bricks. 'He' and 'she' are replaced by the third person neutral pronoun 'hen', games must be inclusive and compensatory pedagogy is used to encourage the use of gender specific words in reverse to the gender that they traditionally apply to i.e. 'you are so brave and strong Vanessa', 'you are so caring and forgiving Johannes'. Instead of saying 'what a pretty dress, you look beautiful' teachers should use neutral adjectives, like: 'oh I see you have a new dress, it looks very warm (or it looks very comfortable).' Another interviewee Elis Storesund (nursery teacher and lecturer at SU), runs special courses organised by municipal authorities, to enhance the self-reflexivity of teachers on how gender influences human interaction and to encourage positive change. She believes that there is no one single way to achieve greater neutrality in the classroom and that each teacher must create their own way of doing it. She also uses a documentation technique, similar to the one described above, to allow teachers to see if they display different expectations based on gender. It is interesting that she noticed that children can express resistance to compensatory pedagogy. They may not follow what the teacher wants them to do and she believes that they should be allowed to do that. Children need to know what the norms are and why they exist. They need to understand that the norms are relative and not only that they help you operate in social space, but also that they are a form of restriction. Children need to be aware of power relations and they themselves also use power by silent resistance, passive resistance, lack of cooperation, tears, screams and anger. Another SU post-doctoral researcher, Dr. Anna Palmer (2011) discussed how children often say and do things to please the teacher. Whilst it is clear that the children are attempting to fulfil the teacher's expectations of them, she was conscious that making children do or say something that they do not feel sure about would be a negative practice. She was the only interviewee that said that in her view one can never be gender neutral in their actions. However, this does not mean that there

is little to achieve in gaining greater gender equality. Dr. Palmer's work concentrates on breaking the limitations on how mathematics is taught in Swedish schools, which in her view leads to the restriction or self-restriction of pursuing maths related subjects by girls after secondary school. Dr. Palmer is trying to connect art, music, dance, body and more feminine subjects with maths to break the barriers of gender in this field. She also mentioned the pedagogical documentation as a form of scrutiny of teacher's gender bias.

Dr. Kajsa Ohlrlander and Dr. Janne Bromseth, from the Gender Studies Department of SU, pursued a norm critical pedagogy approach, where binaries of gender are undermined and all differences are placed on a scale, rather than as opposites. This creates a completely new approach to gender, different to the one of compensatory pedagogy, which tends to simply switch the traditional gender roles around. Achieving gender neutrality is much more complex. It is based on a judgement free approach, enabled by the relativism and flexibility of 'so-called norms.' The managers of nurseries who were interviewed, have been aware of Skolverket's requirements and declared great interest and enthusiasm for the idea of gender neutrality. They revealed some practices used in their facilities to initiate a process of change towards this ideal. Amongst the examples given were: selecting books that do not contain gender stereotypes, replacing male names with female names in traditional children's stories; using 'hen' for characters in stories so that children can imagine their gender as they wish; rather than using mum and dad on contact tags, 'parents' or the parents' names are used instead; using gender free dolls; using gender free animals; animating games where traditional relations are not used and having days where all children, despite their gender, dress as fire-fighters, flamenco dancers, nurses or football players etc. They use neutral, value free adjectives and don't use items that are coloured in a gender specific manner. Days are organised where parents come and talk about their professions and home relations, some being heterosexual, some single, some transgender or in a same-sex relationship. Country specific, culture festivals are held to celebrate diversity. They were very positive about experimental pre-schools such as EGALIA and felt that they set a positive model for other facilities. However, they were aware that the level of parental cooperation and support in pursuance of equality and gender neutrality might be different in other areas of the country or even Stockholm. They claim that the high levels of support they receive from parents is due to the

fact that the majority of children attending their facility represent European, middle class, affluent, highly reflexive and liberal parents.

This opinion resonated in the interviews with school head teachers who face the many challenges of multiculturalism when trying to adopt the curriculum guidance on gender equality. On one hand they feel they have to respect the wishes of children's families, but on the other they were supposed to encourage healthy self-esteem, ambition, feelings of achievement and equal opportunities. The head teachers declared a very positive attitude towards the idea of gender neutrality in the classroom and they were taking steps towards achieving it. One thought the policy is still at an early stage and that they expect more guideline literature for teachers on the matter. They also feel that teachers may not have enough time to implement it properly due to time restrictions and multiple tasks. One was seeking to employ a member of staff that would specialise only in helping other staff implement this policy more effectively. Meetings with staff to discuss ways of improving gender neutrality are regularly in place. Students choose representatives who sit in at these meetings and then work as information hubs for the exchange of information between students and staff. There is also an incident report form created for all instances of unequal treatment, intended to combat bullying, sexism and racism, should it occur. One felt that being a champion in this area is very important and that through the recent course for newly appointed head teachers run at SU, she was well prepared to implement gender neutral policy. Participation in a municipal group of head teachers confirms that other head teachers are also promoting gender neutrality in their facilities, fully embracing the concept and exchanging good practice on how to prepare and help teachers in the implementation of such practice.

Through the use of participant observations, the author noticed multiple practices of compensatory pedagogy, e.g. positive reinforcement of brave and active behaviour in girls and the rewarding of boys when they share or display affectionate behaviour. With the aim of combating stereotypes, a male teacher with a PhD in physics and applied mathematics ran a sewing class where boys (age 9-11) made pink bean-bag cats and girls made navy blue sailors hats. A great level of 'self censorship' of what teachers say and how they say it when interacting with children was also noted. Special laboratories for applied sciences are equipped with machinery and space to use 'touch and feel' methods of understanding in learning. One of the schools had a petting zoo with the

aim of encouraging care for 'dependents' and to provide a quiet place to reflect. Pupils with emotional trauma or 'bad' behaviour are sent to spend time with birds, snakes, fish and rodents, to clean their cages, feed them and pet them. It is interesting that most pupils sent there are boys, most volunteers are girls. Boys are encouraged to read more and girls are encouraged to talk more. Teachers are trying to give similar levels of attention to girls and boys, although boys sometimes gain more attention due to negative behaviour (mainly disturbing). One of the teachers said that for her it is very important to create cooperation between genders in the classroom and that she achieved it in sports, by having mixed teams, e.g. in basketball and football. Apparently, boys were very upset at first as they felt that girls hold them back in winning competitions against other schools, but girls wanted to be on the same team as boys and were determined to be, so the teacher decided to make a mixed team. With time they cooperate better and help each other more, they work as a real team also outside sport activities. It helped to make decisions about extra-curricular activities and trips more democratic where a consensus was reached much quicker than in the past. A common practice is for teachers to code the students name on tests and written assignments, so that they did not know whose test they are checking and grading. During *'Fritidshem'* (afternoon extracurricular, structured, leisure time activities during school hours), one of the visited schools had a lottery where children draw random partners for play activities and they also draw lots in regards to materials (e.g. fabric, paints, sequins, balloons) or toys that they will be given to play or work with. This allows them to 'choose' play partners that they may not normally choose and to play with toys or items they have never even thought of using. This sometimes helps them to make interesting discoveries, without being judged. This is one of the practical representations of how to implement gender neutrality in school practice.

Not everyone in Sweden understands or supports the idea of gender neutrality. Some parents are worried or even alarmed by the idea, that in their view, removes gender identity from a child. As one may note after reading the above paragraphs, this is not quite the idea behind the theoretical construct. However Swedish and international media heat up the discussions on the subject matter and confuse the public. Articles written in an alarming tone show the dangers neutrality poses as a societal threat that may be especially harmful to innocent children subjected to gender pedagogy (see e.g.: Prince Birkeland, 2012; Rothschild, 2012;

Soffel, 2011; The Week Staff, 2011). This is a reaction to challenging norms and questioning what is a norm, which reveals the power that existing norms hold. This is also a form of a 'backlash' described by Susan Faludi in the 1980's in relation to feminism. Nevertheless, a gradual change of gender attitudes has already started at a nursery level in Sweden. The change comes from the universities as they are the incubators of new pedagogical, norm critical thinking and from the government that for years regardless of coalition, has supported gender equality in Swedish education. There is also evidence that gender stereotyping and a gendered classroom environment has a an impact, and often a negative one, on children's opportunities and life choices (e.g. Favara, 2012; Holmlund & Sund, 2005).

All questionnaire respondents declared a positive attitude towards gender neutrality and viewed it as needed, desired, obvious, very good, positive, important or very important. The majority connected it with equality and focused mainly on the empowerment of girls and women's rights. According to some teachers that filled in the questionnaires, the Swedish word *jämställdhets*—equality, is used more often than: *könsneutralitet*—gender neutrality, when describing the same set of practices, which in their essence derived from the concept of gender neutrality and norm critical pedagogy. They feel that at an academic level and through reflexivity gained at universities, most graduates of humanist and social sciences naturally join the two into one. Equality = neutrality. Surprisingly these were also the feelings expressed by the ERASMUS respondents who represented multiple European and Far East countries. Was it simply an expression of what they have learnt through their stay with SU or of the political correctness it encourages? Examples given by respondents indicated otherwise, showing a deep understanding of the interconnectivity between equality and gender neutrality that was not only Sweden based, but referred to their own countries of origin and examples of gender neutral best practice in their home education systems.

Gendered or non-gendered post-human

In conclusion one may ask if this particular Swedish lead on equality, through innovative efforts in education, is an expression of post-human ideology. How can it even be analysed using a set of traditional, not to say 'old fashioned' norms and praxis, when it is clearly based on decon-

struction of traditional gender norms and on Haraway's notion of 'becoming' situated knowledge (1988)? In the authors view, gender neutrality truly is a reflexion of post-human pedagogical thought. Nevertheless, it serves as a much needed force in the quest for social justice that is carried on the wave of ongoing human advancement both in technology and in critical philosophy, that has turned social sciences towards post-human thought. New phenomena bring new issues, new solutions and new visions of societal order that consequently challenge and undermine existing norms and customs.

The Swedish norm critical way of pedagogical thinking about gender and of a neutral attitude towards one's gender, is so profoundly grounded in individuals at universities, that it runs at a subconscious level and forms a part of Bourdieuian *habitus* and *doxa* of graduates. They may not even realize how deeply embedded the concept of gender neutrality is in their perception of gender equality. This inculcated drive for equity cascades down into classrooms and into nurseries, inscribing the embodiment of gender neutrality in everyday practice of the new generations of Swedes, at work and in personal life. This gender neutrality without a doubt is an expression of a post-human thought, yet as was discussed, it does not extract or remove gender from humans. Instead, it pushes humans outside of their comfort 'zone' filled with the pre post-human gender norms, that legitimize unjust structures of exclusion. In the authors view, gender neutrality in Swedish education, although not yet fully implemented, is intended to alter the way we think and act when confronted with indicators of 'otherness', to create a less gendered and more equal society.

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A comparison of children's perspectives: Analyzing cultural and gender issues for preservice teachers around the world

ABSTRACT. For the past 7 years, preservice teachers in multiple countries around the world have been involved in an international internet project designed to increase their cultural competence, improve their language and technology skills, and enhance their collaboration skills for working with diverse populations. Preservice teachers' reflections are analyzed by gender, years of experience, and outcomes related to the project that will influence their experiences in the education field. Barriers to collaboration and solutions on how to overcome these barriers are presented in this article.

KEYWORDS: children, preservice teachers, gender

Introduction

The International Project (IPC) began in 2009 between pre-service elementary school teachers in three countries—the United States, Germany, and Bulgaria (Ausband & Schultheis, 2010; project website: http://www.internationalproject-ipc.com). During each subsequent year, Drs. Schultheis (Germany) and Ausband (USA) continued the research through collaborations with the original three countries and, due to their international contacts, were soon able to increase the number of countries involved. Currently, the project includes the United States, Germany, Bulgaria, Spain, Japan and Poland. Several collaborative trips

taken by pre-service teachers in the United States to Germany were possible due to these international collaborations and communication between the groups, although as the project has expanded, trips have become more difficult to coordinate. The basic idea of the International Project (IPC) is that pre-service teachers must demonstrate competency in social and cross-cultural skills which increases perspective building among students from different cultures. Cultural competency can be defined as "the ability to think, feel, and act in ways that acknowledge, respect, and build on ethnic, [socio] cultural, and linguistic diversity" (Lynch & Hanson, 2004, p. 43). Cultural competence reflects pre-service teachers' ability to assess their own culture and to value and respond to cultural differences in ways that recognize and celebrate others (Lindsey, Roberts & Campbelljones, 2005). Culture, as defined by Rueda and Stillman (2012) refers to the daily living patterns or practices that let people connect to their surrounding social and physical environment Thus, culture consists of the shared wisdom and problem solving activities essential to survive and prosper in a given environment. The aim for developing cultural competence in pre-service teachers is that *all* teachers learn how to "teach culturally" rather than teaching "about" culture (Rueda & Stillman, 2012).

In addition to developing cultural competence, scholars in education have advocated the importance of preparing teachers to foster global perspectives in order to help students develop an understanding of their interdependence among nations, develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions to understand complex global events (Merryfield, 1997). Merrifield defined global education (GE) as the study of human beliefs and values as related to global systems, and global issues and problems. GE cultivates the understanding of cross cultural understanding as well as promotes strategies for participation and involvement in a global society (Merryfield). Merryfield's (1997) extensive work with pre-service and in-service teachers, led to the creation of a framework for teacher education in global perspectives. The four major approaches include (1) conceptualization of global education, (2) global content including global history, systems, and issues and problems, (3) cross-cultural experiential learning, such as study tours overseas or student teaching abroad, and (4) pedagogy for global perspectives, including development of analytical, evaluative, and participatory skills.

Goals of the Project

The main goal of the IPC project was to prepare pre-service teachers of both genders to be competitive in a global environment with the advent of 21st Century Skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004). Within the framework for GE defined by Merryfield (1997), the IPC project endeavored to create an international online discussion and collaborative research projects using computer technology to develop pedagogy for global perspectives. Zong (2009) and Merryfield (2003) posit that online technologies are important tools for teacher educators who value cross-cultural experiences, skills, gender issues, and knowledge in local, national, and global contexts.

The structure of the IPC project centers on collaboration of pre-service teachers from around the world to cultivate pre-service teachers learning about different cultures and how to communicate with others of both genders who may have different perspectives about school and learning. 21st Century Skills include: learning and innovation skills (creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration) and information, media, and technology skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004). This innovative international project addresses all of these key skills and promotes a constructivist paradigm for learning. Both male and female students gain support with these skills from fellow students, their university instructor, their group instructor, and the support staff through the University of Ingolstadt-Eichstaett. Online technologies are important tools for teacher educators who value cross-cultural experiences, skills, and knowledge in local, national, and global contexts.

Research to Support Collaborative Internet Learning Projects

Telecollaboration is the use of online communication tools to connect students from different countries with varying first languages to develop collaborative projects through effective communication and intercultural exchange (O'Dowd, 2007). In universities throughout the United States, telecollaborative strategies are being used to successfully connect students from different countries so that they can begin to learn about different cultures and for the completion of joint projects. While telecollaboration does not take the place of study abroad programs, it

does enable students from varying cultures and of each gender the chance to work together when they otherwise might have been unable to travel due to financial constraints, family or work obligations, or other personal reasons. This technology allows students choices that they can never have in a face-to-face discussion of readings or resources (Merryfield, 2003). Online GE has been primarily studied in the area of preservice social studies education programs (Yoonjung & Minsik, 2012; Merryfield, 1997; Zong, 2009).

Tellecollaborative projects at the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany have been in use for over 20 years. Different groups of students studying intercultural communication, German, or English participate in these projects of telecollaborative exchanges. O'Dowd (2007) realized three important findings were related to these internet exchanges: (1) telecollaborative activities have the potential to impact a students' intercultural development more than traditional cultural materials would; (2) telecollaboration contributes best to a student's intercultural development when it contains dialogue between students about the explicit comparison between two cultures; (3) the development of intercultural awareness is best supported when a variety of online tools are used.

The Importance of the Globalization of Teacher Education

Teachers must be able to communicate and collaborate with a variety of people from around the world of different genders and cultures. Developing multiple perspectives, intercultural competence, and respect for human rights is a key definition of international education by Roberts (2007). According to Han, Thomas & West-Olatunji (2011), an educator develops the way to teach based on how he/she was previously taught and from personal beliefs, values and knowledgebase. Teachers are influenced by their beliefs and those will inadvertently affect their teaching practices (Lake, Lin & Rice, 2008). To truly develop these skills, pre-service teachers should be offered international opportunities through coursework, resources, and field experiences that will enhance their intercultural competence. Teacher education researchers have called for the internationalization of teacher education curriculum for the past several years (Gillom, 1993; Bartell, 2003; Arnove, 2001). Textbook companies have responded by adding cultural competence activi-

ties, new resource books, and materials on international teacher education.

Teachers in different countries can learn a significant amount from studying education in other cultures. The Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development publishes a report called the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) which compares 15 year-olds on subjects such as reading, math, and science. There are 34 member countries with over 30 additional countries/specific economies participating with 510,000 students every three years. By teachers in different countries having the opportunity to discuss a variety of aspects of educational topics, the PISA test results begin to clarify the different approaches to education. Pre-service teachers who have the opportunity to discuss the differences with other pre-service teachers around the world will have an advantage of understanding as to why certain countries exceed other countries when tested on specific subjects.

Specific Topics of the International Research in the International Project (IPC)

In the past two years students involved in the International Project (IPC) conducted research on a variety of different topics including the following: (1) How do students perceive their teachers? Is it different for males and females in each country? (2) How do children perceive the school environment, school architecture, school buildings, school year, and their classrooms? Is it different for males and females in each country? (3) How do children with special needs experience school? Is it different for males and females in each country? (4) How do students experience assessment and grades? Is it different for males and females in each country? (5) How do first grade students experience the transition from kindergarten to elementary school? Is it different for males and females in each country? (6) How do students experience certain subjects in elementary school? Is it different for males and females in each country? (7) How do homework expectations differ in each country? Is it different for males and females in each country? (8) What are students' perspectives on class rules? Is it different for males and females in each country? (9) What are students' perspectives of media, computer games, and technology? Is it different for males and females in each country? (10) What do students do in their free time and what are their hobbies?

Is it different for males and females in each country? (11) What are the students' perspectives of the involvement of parents related to school affairs? Is it different for males and females in each country? and (12) What are children's plans for the future including future career plans? Is it different for males and females in each country?

These topics are designed to cultivate cross-cultural competencies and global perspectives on teaching and learning for male and female children within each country. Within each year of the project, not all 12 topics are addressed as students self-select topic areas based on their interests.

Structure of the International Project (IPC)

Preservice teachers in different countries reviewed the possible research questions and chose a group based on their interest. The instructors of the project try to balance out each group so that students from each country were represented without a large group from one country working together. Thus, students who entered the online site late had to choose their second or third choice to research.

Once each group was established, pre-service teachers worked in the online platform called mixxt.com to introduce themselves to the other group members. Each group worked on a separate discussion forum and could upload files, create Wikis and use the chatroom. The students started with basic readings in their national languages and in English which had been uploaded by the instructors. The texts focused mainly on relevant qualitative research methods that can be applied to working with children. In their forums, they discussed and compared the results and collected main aspects in a group Wiki. Students then began creating their survey by contributing to a collective Wiki which would allow additions or deletions of possible research questions related to the topic. The students also did research on the internet and in the library to find relevant studies related to their topic. The instructors were assigned to specific groups and monitored group activity with a special focus on the development of the survey in the Wiki.

When the group members and instructor completed the research method and organized the design of the collection of data, the preservice teachers would then begin to interview and/or work with children from each country. Some interviewed individual children while

others worked with small groups of children on their survey questions. Each pre-service teacher interviewed at least five children of each gender. Some groups collaborated with school teachers and worked with school classes. The students chose different methods according to their topics. In the first step, many students decided to present stories to motivate the children to write texts or draw pictures.

When using the children's pictures, the second step of the data collection was a 10-15 minute interview with children which was recorded and transcribed. Therefore, the data was based on texts written by children or drawn pictures in combination with transcribed interviews. A few groups worked with surveys created on the Wikis which contained questions with rating scales or open questions. The students evaluated the data by finding categories on different abstraction levels or, depending on the kind of data they had collected, by statistical evaluation. The discussions and drafts were done in English. The non-native English speakers translated the stories, interview questions, and questionnaires into their language.

For the evaluation process, the students translated their results back into English to be able to discuss them in the international groups. In their groups the students compared the categories and results found in each participating country. They also compared their findings with the studies they found and read in the literature review on their topic. The next step was to prepare a common presentation in each group. Most groups agreed to create a PowerPoint of the research which led to each country having a section within the PowerPoint where the data was highlighted. Thus, comparisons between countries were easy to determine. Each group of pre-service teachers then met in their respective countries to present the data from each research question.

Evaluation of the International Project (IPC) 2014

The participating students were asked to complete an online survey during the last week of the project. The survey contained questions about personal data (gender, home country, mother tongue), international experience (travels, foreign language competence), internet experience and about the International Project (IPC): general experience, learning objectives, problems and recommendations.

A total of 49 students (10.2% male, 89.8% female) participated in the survey. 26.5% of the participating students were from Japan, 18.4% from Germany, 16.3% from Spain, 12.2% from the United States, 10.2% from Turkey, 8.2% from Poland, 4.1% from Bulgaria and 2% from Afghanistan (Poland and Bulgaria hosted students from the ERASMUS study program). 10.2% of the students had never travelled abroad; 42.9% spoke more than three or more languages, 20.4% spoke two languages and 12.2% spoke only their home language.

A total of 61.2% of the students said that they use social networks every day. Almost all of the students reported that they use the internet for researching information regularly while 20.4% stated that they read online newspapers daily, 36.7% several times a week, and 8.2% never read online newspapers. 57.1% of the IPC participants indicated they never play online games.

When evaluating the experience of working in a team, 67.4% of the students stated that their group was able to work autonomously. 83.7% were interested in their group topic and 59.1% had fun working on the project. 28.6% stated that the work was equally distributed in the group—a typical phenomenon in group work which should be taken care of in future projects. Only 32.7% of the students considered the time management in the group as appropriate and 53.1% reported that they had problems related to the communication in the group.

Regarding the coaching and support by the instructors, 63.3% of the students stated that they easily could contact the instructors and 61.2% were content with the intensity of the support. 53.1% considered it useful to have student tutors and evaluated the course instructions as sufficient. 55.1% evaluated the instructors' feedback as sufficient and helpful.

In regard of the learning objectives of the IPC project 69.4% of the participating students reported that they could improve their international experience. 67.3% reported that they learned how to organize an online collaboration. 61.7% increased their knowledge about the group topic and 61.3% learned about education and schools in other countries. Having gained benefit for the future work as a teacher was indicated by 59.2% of the students.

The majority of the students didn't report problems with teachers (67.3% no problems), with other group members (55.1% no) or the group topics (51% no). One of the main issues in the project seemed to be that students had not been sure about the work procedures due to

the constructivist and open learning setting. (63.3% partially, 12.2% a lot, 24.5% completely). Problems with the time schedule occured for 61.2% of the students partially, 14.3% a lot and 24.5% not at all. 57.1% reported they had some difficulties in finding literature and information about their group topic, 18.4% said they had major problems and 32.7% didn't have any problems with this.

The main issues reported by the students were related to the work in the group concerning the organization and distribution of the tasks which the students had to manage autonomously in their groups, the less detailed instructions due to a more open and informal learning and teaching concept and problems with the communication in the groups due to different obligations (not all students could gain credits for the course). There were no differences indicated by gender.

Conclusions

Benefits of the International Project (IPC) for Preservice Teachers. Preservice teachers learned better technology skills, increased communication in English for non-native English speakers and communication with people from different cultures and for each gender for all participants, improved research strategies, and a greater crosscultural awareness through the perspectives of children and their experiences with school. However, these benefits were sometimes clouded by some difficulties with the international collaborations. Instructors from each country worked with groups of students to support these barriers and helped increase awareness of the benefits of the project. In addition, the asynchronous communication that online course environments support is especially important for people whose first language is not English (Hanna, 2003).

Barriers to Effective Collaboration. Preservice teachers in all countries reported difficulties in several different areas throughout their months working on the project. These barriers will be explored below with a focus on solutions to prevent the same barriers from recurring or with an attempt to determine how to best minimize these issues in the future.

Communication. English was used as the language for the project which enabled students from outside of the United States to improve their English language writing skills. However, for students from certain

countries where English is used very little, students significantly struggled to communicate in a meaningful way with their peers. Developing a research project without language proficiency can make the collaborations extremely difficult.

The American students were encouraged to support their peers with proper English modeling and to be patient while the students from other countries improved their language skills. However the American students noticed they had to adapt their vocabulary and avoid to use "slang" expressions the non native English speakers are not familiar with. Students from Japan appeared to have the most difficulty. In future semesters, all students will be supported with additional English language resources highlighting the different research areas so that communicating about the topic will be easier with key phrases and ideas provided.

Incentives. Students from the United States were involved in the project as part of a course. Thus, they earned points toward their final grade in the class based on their participation in the project and the quality of their work. Students from different countries like Japan met throughout the time period of the project to discuss challenges and to seek support from the instructors. The incentive of receiving points and support may have assisted these countries with greater motivation to be involved.

If students did not have any motivation to participate, they were unlikely to stay involved in the project. Frustration was then felt by the students who were actively involved as they believed that they were completing the majority of the work required for the project. Females students expressed deeper levels of frustration than their male counterparts. It is recommended that any country that chooses to be involved in the future creates an incentive for student participation—points toward a grade, a monetary benefit, or support with the content toward another course or degree. Motivation to work with others from different countries and both genders has simply not proven to be motivating enough as students become too busy or focused on other projects within the term.

Timelines. Determining the appropriate time to begin and end the project is a significant barrier for the success of the IPC. Each country has a different timeline for each term, but the fall term seems to be the most aligned between the countries. Thus, the project has only been launched in the fall term. However, this can still be problematic as some countries complete their term after the December holidays while others

complete their term prior to the beginning of the holidays. One solution may be to begin the project the last week of September or first week of October and then complete the project by the second week of December.

Technology skills. New technology skills are introduced in the IPC project such as the creation of Wikis and the mixed platform for teaching and learning in general. Students had different levels of success depending on how well they interacted with the technology required for the project.

Difficult Collaborations. The IPC project encountered some difficulties in terms of student confusion around course expectations. First, some students were more active than other or perceived themselves as being more active than other students. This let to frustrations expressed by some of the students. This frustration may have been partly due to the need for more structured discussion forums and outlined weekly expectations. A second challenge in the collaboration process was the time and energy spent in monitoring the correspondence and guiding students' efforts. Some student participants indicated that more instructor guidance was needed. Some instructors were overwhelmed by having too many group responsibilities. Many of these issues could be resolved with more direct facilitation by IPC instructors. The third challenge was the response time. There were lapses of days between the time the students posted messages and the time they received responses from other countries. Participants noted in their reflections that this lapse of response time was frustrating because it hinders meaningful exchanges of ideas. These issues have been expressed by other online global learning projects (Zong, 2009).

Future Directions for Research on the Project. The authors are seeking additional opportunities to further strengthen the internationalization of teacher education on their campuses by expanding the project. Currently, the project is conducted each fall due to the different timelines of the university terms in each country. The authors are developing a similar shortened project to enable their students who enroll in summer session courses to participate. In addition, connections with professors from more countries are being explored so that new cultures can be introduced to the preservice teachers. Another goal is to increase the number of students from each country that is currently participating.

Conclusion. While there are many barriers to conducting an international project, the benefits exist that continue to reinforce the importance of involving students in crosscultural exchanges. Online technolo-

gies provide opportunities for teachers to experience a more global community than is possible face to face. Since many students are unable to afford international travel and due to the fact that students enrolled in education programs are typically not involved in study abroad programs. Offering international internet exchanges gives preservice teachers opportunities to experience different cultures and, thus, increase their awareness and understanding of different groups of people as well as increasing critical multicultural and global understanding among preservice teachers.

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Gender and power:
Women's leadership in the prevention
and management of conflicts in Africa

ABSTRACT. This paper describes the role and the place of the woman in African society, with particular focus on the issues of leadership, peace and security. Although women in Africa are more numerous than men, their position is not an enviable one. Thus this work will attempt to describe the causes which prevent the female kind from coming to the fore and being truly equal to men. In order to achieve that aim, one should consider the place of the woman, not only in the traditional society but also in what one sees as the contemporary realities of Africa. The author demonstrates that in most African countries, women had long been excluded from enjoying political rights, and that they have gained such entitlement only recently. Among the reasons which would account for this absence of women in the realm of leadership, one should draw attention to the patriarchal model of authority one acquires as a child and the burden of ancestral tradition which hinges upon the primacy of the male. There are also the additional burdens imposed over time by religions, which had always relegated the woman to the background. The woman has always been associated with the weaker sex, while being the one who gave life. The scope of this paper is limited to the presence of women in the public sphere, that is to say to their leadership in the affairs of peace and security, where women have or may have a certain influence. Certain difficulties encountered by African women with respect to leadership are also experienced by women in other parts of the world. With a few exceptions, all societies have been and continue to be governed by the same principles of exclusion. In Africa, just as everywhere else, there is no need for profound studies to conclude that feminist literature is not particularly abundant. This paper represents an exploration of a subject of no minor importance, namely the leadership of women in preventing and management of conflicts in Africa. Nevertheless, it is limited to a general view and does not analyse specific cases in each of the African countries.

KEYWORDS: leadership, gender, man, woman, power, peace, security, conflicts, Africa

1. Introduction: Women's leadership in the African context

The position of the African woman has been the object of numerous and long debates in our so-called modern society, and a notion which involves numerous prejudices. Prejudices which in fact are invalid due to the lack of knowledge of the African tradition and its values. Consequently, it is often though that the African woman represents no value

outside her household; hence she is not considered otherwise than a simple domestic. And yet the position of the woman within the traditional systems of Africa depends in general on the societies, regions, ethnic and religious customs, and on the individual traits of the women themselves. For this reason, they play such a considerable role that no man, regardless of his rank in the society, could deprive them of their rights. Therefore traditionally, in the domain of economy, they possessed more power than men, insofar as they had their own fields which permitted them to produce and amass: assets fell to them directly. They also exercised rational and operational control of everyday life as the head of the family entrusted them with the amount of grain which was supposed to serve as daily nourishment. In terms of structure, such an organisation was characteristic of the African tradition. Women could also own personal possessions which enabled them to enjoy a certain autonomy. In addition, they held magisterial powers and, within a society, controlled purely female organisations of professional and religious nature, in a more or less discreet fashion. Also, they were in charge of seeds and sowing, being traditionally considered a symbol of fecundity; by virtue of this there existed a permanence and continuity in the production, which necessarily resulted in a fruitful season. Thus contrary to the prejudices of which traditional African society was the object, it should be noted that African society represented a framework in which the woman played a very eminent role despite a status which presupposed her submissiveness, ready to respond to the demands of the family, which were her primary concern. Although considered as the one whose main function was to procreate, the African woman enjoyed a privileged position within the society and was perceived as a model. Also, history teaches us that with regard to politics "women played a great role, being the mother or wife to the king".[1] For this purpose "whole detachments of men were assigned to guard the queen-mother" which betokened the regard in which men held women. This is also why in certain African kingdoms "the queen-mother, the mainstay of tradition, had its royal court just as her son, with men as courtiers". This demonstrates the importance that the tradition afforded to women and shows clearly that men were also in the service of women.

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[1] Which confirms the adage saying that behind every great man (leader) there stands a woman. Although women are rarely in the foreground, they direct the piece, hidden behind the curtain.

Nonetheless, as in all social structures, flaws remain in evidence in many respects. They should be taken into account in order to shed light on what may have constituted an obstacle in the exercise of the functions of women in the traditional African society. At a certain point in history, women realised that the privileges that have been accorded to them by tradition were in fact just a minute portion of those they should have exercised. Consequently, with the rise of African states to independence, African women seek to make substantial gains on an individual basis, understanding that the privileges of traditions are actually veiled forms of alienation of their liberty, which will lead to the awakening of their awareness in all areas of socio-economical and cultural life (see Bourdieu, 1998)**.** They will realise that in fact they were not as advantaged as it seemed to them in the traditional organisation, in which, all things considered, they were still remarkably empowered. As a result, they have quickly come to see the phenomenon of forced marriage as a system in which they had no right to decide, as they were coerced to wed someone for whom love was never the ultimate sentiment (see Mianda, 1995). The conclusion was therefore clear: they were married without their consent, which enormously reduced their freedom of expression, the ideal form of which would have allowed them to give their assent, just as men did. The women thus saw what could have been their most fundamental right, to leave as if nothing happened. In these conditions, they demanded the freedom to choose their spouses in order to live in true and sincere love. Women thus relied on the universal principles of human rights so that may attain success in the struggle for their cause. As a by-product, female leadership will emerge in time. Still, when this leadership begins to become a reality in our societies, there is yet a long way to go before the woman will genuinely flourish.

2. The involvement of women
in the prevention and management of conflicts in Africa

If one sets out from the observation that women and children represent more than 75% of the total number of persons displaced following crises or violent conflicts on the African continent, it is also evident that African women have a particular role to play in the management of conflicts, especially with respect to issues addressed after conclusion of a conflict. It is necessary that they should be a part of the processes of

negotiating and reconstructing peace. A number of initiatives of African women shows that they constitute a positive force which is often ignored or neglected.[2] So a range of actions is still possible in which the potential of African women would be capable of playing a positive and a significant role in the consolidation of peace. Women, just as men, have a great interest in re-establishing peace in their communities. Unfortunately, in view of their economic and political marginalisation in the African society, women are rarely in the position to play the effective role they should play (see Bourdieu, 1998). It is therefore crucial to recall the position women occupied with respect to preventing conflicts or their peaceful resolution in traditional Africa, to show the difficult situation of women during conflicts, to study the role that African woman can play today in seeking a peaceful solution to the conflicts in progress across the African continent, so as to advance recommendations which would permit the African woman to make their contribution to the consolidation of peace and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Giesing, 2006). Although the traditional society had been organised and structured in a way that favoured cohesion and peaceful coexistence, it suffered from time to time from conflicts, just as every human society: conflicts between individuals, within one family, between different families or inhabitants of different territories. In order to address such situations, communities had a number of well-structured mechanisms at their disposal in which women generally played a major role. The system assigned the woman the role of a privy counsellors to her husband and an active role in the consolidation of solidarity and social harmony in general. Education in the spirit of traditional values was a priority, and children learned it from the members of their family. Through story-telling, proverbs and at various suitable occasions, they were taught the virtues of peaceful cohabitation (see Ekiyort, 2008). Notably, such virtues included temperance, solidarity, respect for the truth, the significance of work and effort, respect for the hierarchy, the meaning of honesty, decency and modesty, tolerance, the meaning of goodness and kindness,

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[2] "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda is now recognized internationally, but there are still challenges. To realize its transformative potential, it is time to move from commitments to accomplishments. Governments, the United Nations, civil society, the private sector, and other actors must implement commitments across all thematic areas. Ensuring a gender perspective and women's participation, protection, and rights is critical, including in prevention and disarmament, protection in displacement settings, peacekeeping, policy-making, and reconstruction."

love of one's neighbour, respect for life, etc. The education of children was a task reserved for the woman, therefore it was she who played a major role in the communication of those values to the new generations. Severe sanctions were inflicted on those whose ill conduct disturbed the peace and harmony of a community. Those sanctions may have ranged from payment of a fine to expulsion of the individual from the community or, in exceptional cases, to capital punishment. Men were those who chiefly took up arms and fought. And though women rarely were at the roots of armed conflict, many of those saw a substantial number of women take part in the combat. Certain women also played a highly negative role, participating directly in a conflict, or seeking to prove that they were equal to men. Women and girls often fell victim to sexual violence through rape and humiliation: they were forced into prostitution or had to carry unwanted children, not to mention infections with sexually transmitted diseases. The violence pursued them into the refugee camps as well, in which they were often made into sexual slaves of the militia or other armed factions. Unfortunately, in an increasing number of cases, even the peacekeeping forces happened to commit rapes or coerce women into prostitution.[3] On June 19th, 2008, the Security Council of the United Nations was compelled to adopt a new resolution which stipulates "immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians." In the case of war or violent conflict, unequal redistribution of resources, unlawful actions and disregard of international humanitarian rights lay a heavy burden on women. In addition, they are particularly affected in a number of war-ravaged African countries where human rights count for nothing. Gender violence is the order of the day, while any commitment to promoting economic and social welfare of disadvantaged groups is virtually absent. Violent conflicts, with the accompanying destabilisation, the displacement of populations and destruction of infrastructure exert an effect on the affected communities, which nevertheless varies

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[3] For example, United Nations peacekeeping missions face significant challenges, especially in view of increasing number of conflicts with the participation of non-state actors and complex mandates adopted by the Security Council. At present, peace operations are not only ensure the safety of civilians, but also monitor and enforce human rights. The situation becomes complicated when the peacekeepers and international civilian staff also happen to commit war crimes and acts of misconduct against the people they were mandated to protect. Those which are probably the most widely covered in the media are exploitation and sexual violence.

depending on the sex. Moreover, forced exile and the ensuing drain of people of skill and competence hamper social and economic development of the African continent. The exact scale and the nature of injustices and crimes against humanity, as well as the loss of human resources require to be precisely assessed and evaluated. There is no need to dwell upon the vulnerability of African women who are faced with armed conflicts. The crimes to which women are constantly subject are well known, even though they do not make the headlines (see Diallo, 1978). These hate crimes are a reflection of the negation of the woman as a political subject. War brutally reveals the aftermath of the tyranny and discrimination which women experience within their families and communities during the times of peace. Peace and development are inherently linked; there is no development without peace and no peace will prove durable if it is not supported by development (see Poulton & Youssouf, 1999). It is impossible to build lasting peace while forgetting about a major part of the population. If war is often the affair of men, peace is the domain of women. Perhaps this is not an automatic association, but the experience shows that discussion and mediation allow women belonging to rival groups to find a common ground of understanding. Thus they are a force for peace and reconciliation, and have to be more integrated in the peace process. Preventing armed conflict is the best parameter of peace and security in Africa. And building peace means preventing war. The women have a decisive role in promoting tolerance and non-violence, as they provide the first lessons in life. They are capable of manifesting their influence on their spouses by introducing integrity and respectability in their households. Women can also engage their brothers and sisters into the movement for peace by organising educational courses, seminars and awareness campaigns. In all African countries, women constitute a substantial majority, and in certain regions there are but women left after the wars. It would be perfectly natural to say that women give life and that they are best placed to appreciate its value and know how to preserve it better.

3. Female leadership in the governance of undertakings aimed at maintaining peace in Africa

Positive examples demonstrate that in general women take active part in movements for peace, both in domestic and foreign organisations

gathering women. African women enjoy moral authority in view of their role as mothers. In 2008, the violence which broke out during a political meeting in Conakry showed Guineans that peace is not something naturally granted but a value simultaneously political and cultural, which needs to be striven for and consolidated every day. From the first manifestations of violence, women became the principal target, although they were merely participants in a political action seeking peaceful solution to the socio-economical crisis in the country. Every time social harmony and human life was threatened, African women were the last line of defence against the deadly madness of men, being a living proof to the spontaneous hospitality and solidarity which went beyond any ethnic or even religious considerations (see Monod, 2012). Obviously, this does not eliminate hatreds which still persist, but those few positive actions showed that it is possible to live together and build a future. Everywhere in Africa, women have played a very active role during peace negotiations. On an international level, they launched the initiative "Partners in peace" to demand the implementation of the Lusaka Agreements and thus to create the opportunity of their incorporation in the peace process.[4] The Platform for Action of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), states as follows: "while entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex". In October 2000, Security Council of the United Nations adopted an innovative resolution (1325),[5] which recognized that maintaining and promoting peace and security necessarily requires the participation of women in decision-making, and called upon all actors to adopt a perspective which would take that element into account. Additionally, the resolution required from the UN that it raised the number of women

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[4] The Lusaka Agreement between the countries of Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Namibia, Uganda, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, seeks to bring an end to the hostilities within the territory of the DRC.

[5] Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security adopted by The Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on October 31st, 2000. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts.

among its special envoys around the world. The international community thus recognizes that it should increase the participation of women in settling conflicts and to take into account the male-female issue in all analyses, policies and programmes devised with a view to overcoming conflicts and establishing peace. However, at an individual level, various state entities do not always know how to translate that international consensus into specific measures. The nature and the causes of African political crises, the persistence of structures which sustain subordinated position of the African women as well as the failure of the world as an entirety to subscribe to actual equality between men and women have made it impossible to bring about a lasting peace. Among other things, African crises reflect the departure from the rural world once based on subsistence agriculture in favour of a concept of development geared towards commerce and services. It should never be forgotten that Africa is a profoundly rural continent. It is in this agricultural world, in which women have been doing almost all of the work, that one finds most of the victims of war. Preventing war means going back to rurally oriented policies by increasing the financing of agriculture, supporting women living in such areas and enhancing production capacity. Peace begins of its own, and in general one does not give more that one has, therefore if a woman does not have peace in her heart, there is no peace she could offer to others. Still, experience has shown that women find inner peace much faster than men, as research has clearly demonstrated that conflicts affect women and men differently. Women need to be helped to find that inner peace, because they are capable of giving it to others. In order to do that, one should more effectively include women in peace processes by advocating their participation in official peace negotiations, in view of the fact that women encounter much opposition when it comes to participation in such proceedings. Increasing female participation in conflict settlement and formulating decisions, in particular by granting them decision-making capacities with respect to peace negotiations and national reconciliation is a matter of utmost importance. Naturally, this entails better training of women in the techniques of negotiations, by means of a fairer and better education for girls. Hence strengthening the competences of girls through education is a necessity. One should introduce policies which would enable them to attend secondary education in greater numbers and pursue academic studies until completion. Furthermore, one should supplement it with programmes

which would give them the means and the confidence required to allow them to spread the culture of peace. Another aspect is endorsing development of social, political and cultural environments which support peace-oriented efforts of women, and ensure permanence of achievements in terms of the equality of sexes (see Dauphin & Senac, 2012). One should also strive to boost the economic power of women by expanding their access to funding and loans, as well as management of public affairs and information. On top of that, one should raise the awareness of female military personnel and the spouses of officers, by encouraging them to play an active role in preventing conflicts and put them in touch with specific initiatives undertaken with a view to building peace. Particular emphasis should be placed on disarmament and reduction of military spending by the governments, so that the financial resources thus released may be channelled to education in general and education in culture of peace in particular. All media should become fully involved in favour of development and promotion of women, encouraging artists and media professionals to make their contribution in advocating the culture of peace. Also, by implementing initiatives aimed at reinforcing the capacities and the power of the civil society, a situation needs to be created where women fully participate in its bodies, as enhancing such capacities, coupled with appropriate education and establishment of women's forums are essential if they are to partake in the reconstruction after a conflict (see Ekiyor, 2008). Civil society has therefore a superior role to play in building democracy and fostering respect for human rights. Albeit limited, women's organisations proved themselves to be privileged bodies, which offer the possibilities and opportunities to acquire and develop competences, knowledge and resources. These organisations mobilize themselves, taking action in conjunction with public authorities and running anti-violence campaigns, unjust or oppressive laws, poverty and domestic violence. Such activities contribute considerably to peace. Thanks to them, women firmly assert their readiness to take up the struggle against wars and violence of all kinds as well as come forward with solutions. Nowadays, the international community recognizes the tremendous contribution of women in peace-building processes, and one notices that the international community designs to include women, in systematic and significant fashion, in preventing and resolving conflicts, in post-conflict reconstruction efforts and consider them as fully-fledged partners in the formal and unofficial processes of

resolving conflicts and peace negotiations. Studies confirm the crucial and decisive role that African women have played and can play with respect to preventing and resolving conflicts as well as in promoting the culture of peace while relying on traditional methods. Sub-Saharan Africa is not only a geographical region that has been most severely affected by extreme poverty, it is also an area that greatly suffers from the ravages of war (see also Diallo, 1978). Feminisation of poverty and the violence following in the wake of armed conflicts should induce the international community as well as African countries to rethink peace and security from the feminine perspective. The parameters of peace should be redefined, in that they should be geared towards preventing rather than resolving conflicts, by demonstrating better international will and commitment, by enabling genuine partnership with the civil society, building durable peace in which justice is respected, by adopting an approach to peace and security which is based on female leadership. The latter should in itself be reconsidered by taking into account that women living in a rural environment constitute the largest part of the African population.

The position of women in Africa in all areas of life depends on the economic and social development of particular countries, as well as on beliefs and cultural traditions. The deterioration of social and economic welfare of women in Africa is also due to the countless political and armed conflicts. Yet another factor is the shortage of sufficient educational infrastructure, which in its turn leads to the situation where the priority in the matters of education is given exclusively to boys, who are called to play the most important roles in the African society. The Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of 1995 all contributed to the adoption of the Maputo Protocol.[6] The Maputo Protocol, which becomes the first official document devoted to women's right in international law of Africa underlines the important role of women in preserving African values. The document commits all African countries to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and harmful practices directed against

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[6] The protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples` Rights of Women in Africa, known as the Maputo Protocol was adopted by the African Union in Maputo, 2003. The instrument guarantees comprehensive rights to women, including the right to take part in the political life on a par with men, to be in charge of their reproductive health, and stipulates an end to female genital mutilation.

them[7]. According to the protocol, any action that has a negative impact on the fundamental rights and liberties of woman at any given level is deemed a harmful practice.

Conclusions

There are numerous definitions of leadership and each represents a viewpoint which is defended or prioritised by its adherents. The notion of leadership may be defined as having the ability of directing and permanently mobilising a group of individuals towards attainment of a specific goal. This paper is concerned with the analysis of female leadership in preventing and managing conflicts in Africa, a leadership which means the ability of women to influence effectively their social environment. This influence may originate in the official prerogative, if the executive function within an organisation is hierarchical in nature, but it may also be informal, if the essence of the influence is not associated with the formal structures of social organisation. Modern theories of distributed leadership see it as a collective phenomenon, seeing that it has ceased to be a quality of one single individual. In reality, leadership has never been an individual phenomenon, because even in the past the leader was always surrounded by counsellors, secret or official ones. Despite that evolution, African men find it extremely difficult to let themselves be influenced by the female charisma while African women themselves experience great difficulty in surrendering to the leadership of a woman. Still, the leadership that they do not exercise the public sphere is manifested elsewhere. Moreover, this is not leadership in the sense of a chain of command or coercive authority but rather a synergy of action expressed in the respect for human dignity and in being "female" Contrary to the usual misconception, female leadership is mobiliz-

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[7] In this case, The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and establishes an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. The Convention defines discrimination against women as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

ing its forces. There are no privileged categories involved; they are all categories of women who have to identify themselves with common issues which are often linked to discrimination and their marginalisation. From this standpoint, empowering women with autonomy would make them collectively efficacious and thus capable of taking charge with respect to their everyday initiatives relating to self-protection, pursuing their demands or pleading their causes. The dependence of women is a systemic problem. The dominance over women is something that takes place at the familial, local, national and international level at the same time. Once women have gained autonomy, they would find themselves in the position of force in all domains.

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Romani Women in the 21st Century and the Role of their Position for Children's Upbringing

ABSTRACT. This paper deals thematically with the emancipation of Romani women in the Slovak Republic, their position in the society, as well as delimitation of their social status and role. Emphasis is put on differences in culture, cultural patterns and behavioral models, differences in the upbringing of children and the position of the Romani woman in the Romani family, compared to the society's majority. Obstacles to the formation of an independent and emancipated Romani woman are described, for whom the concepts of emancipation and equality of rights are unknown and nearly inconceivable. Emancipation and equality of Romani women is particularly relevant in terms of opportunities for education, employment, position in the society and awareness of one's rights. The objective is to present educated, successful, independent, and equal Romani women, enlightenment amongst the Romani population, engagement of Romani women in public and social life, and support them through various projects, etc.

KEYWORDS: Emancipation of women, Education, Culture, Enlightenment, Romani communities, Majority society

Introduction

Although we live in the 21st century, there exist an obvious and incomparable difference between the majority society and the Romani community in Slovakia. This applies not merely to differences in culture (cultural patterns), the style and philosophy of life (values), etc., compared to the majority society, but above all to "differences in the upbringing of children (behavioral patterns and models, style of upbringing, etc.), in socializing (social learning), social status, the role and position of the Romani women in the family and society." As for Romani women, their status can be traced back to India, from where the Roma came to Europe. Contrary to Romani women, the women in the majority

society usually have a higher position in the society, higher level of education, better employment, and general level of emancipation. They are economically independent of men and do not lack legal consciousness, as they are aware of their rights and opportunities of asserting themselves. *Emancipation* of women means liberation, riddance of oppression, subordination, dependence, and their general equality (*Slovník.sk*, 2014). Until the 1900's, women were considered legally incompetent and dependent persons. They did not intervene in social or political life. They were denied the right to higher education or exercising a number of professions. They unequal, subordinate position to men was emphasized, as they were regarded as less important members of the society. As time went by, however, the women's movement continued to evolve and the emancipation of women began. The first sign of change was improved access of women to education. Prejudices against women's employment receded significantly only during World War I, where women proved their ability to work physically just like men. Yet, the Romani women's position in the society was different from that of non-Romani women. "Emancipation of women has not really reached the environment of Romani communities" (*Redakcia 1*, 2013)*.* "This is accountable primarily to the different, secluded Romani culture, family customs, traditions, and preconceived ideas about the position and role of the woman in the family, which are passed from generation to generation." The life of Romani women and their social position recalls the Middle Ages. Why is it so? There are multiple causes of this status quo. "Equality, mutual tolerance, respect, reverence, love, and understanding are unknown or taboo terms for most of us. The Romani woman is not an equal partner to the man on her side." The woman's verbal communication has little weight. "She may only assert her views in the company of other women." She may confide solely to her own husband who represents his family. These values are still valid even amongst the *integrated Roma.* In the patriarchal Romani family, the dominant position has the man. His woman is like a second-class citizen and has to obey her man under all circumstances. Her role is to bear and bring up children, and to take care of them and the household. In the traditional Romani family, the woman is the guarantor of the clan's survival. In order to achieve respect, she has to start a family as soon as possible, whereupon her value, social status, and her man's recognition are related directly to the number of her healthy (Poláková, 2002, pp. 32-63). While she is re-

quired to be absolutely faithful, fidelity is not expected of her man. Women have been considered as having a lesser cultural level than men and expected to stay mostly home. Man's role was mainly to provide for the family financially.

Social Premises of Relations between Romani Men and Women

Due to their lower level of education, most Romani women are housewives (i.e., unemployed), hence dependent on their men and their competences. At present, men as providers tend to rely preferably on surviving without having to work, thanks to welfare benefits. As Poláková (Poláková et al., 2005, p. 240) points out, they become irresponsible, helpless, and unable to break the vicious circle of social exclusion and poverty. Women who are dependent on men lose the support they need, as their man is not capable of feeding his family, not only due to inadequate education and qualifications, lack of job opportunities, and last but not the least due to discrimination. The woman, from her point of view, perceives this as a hopeless situation with no perspective in sight. The outcome is that her world is based on constant insecurity. Quite often, it is the men themselves who discourage their wives from going to work, as they cannot stand the idea that their women would take on their role. They act that way out of jealousy, too, because they want to be able to keep an eye on their wives so that they would not be "exposed" to strangers' eyes. They cannot stand the idea that other men would regard their wives as sexual objects. Often they do not let their wives go outside, be nicely dressed, or talk to other men. It is taboo for women to show too much of their skin in this sociocultural environment (Hrušková, 2013).

Sexuality and Sexual Life in Romani Families

Generally, sexuality and sexual life are taboo for the Romani community. It would be shameless to talk about these things. Thus, it happens that that preparation for sexual life, marriage, and parenthood is completely omitted (Poláková et al., 2005, p. 204). The problem issues

for the contemporary young Romani female generation requiring solutions were: education, employment, and independence. Namely, the situation where young Romani girls do not even finish basic education and start a family, while still being children themselves, thus become fully dependent of their man/partner, due to behavioral customs and expectations. There is now the "opportunity to build Romani schools, in the vicinity of Romani communities," so that Romani women would have the "opportunity to gain qualifications, while taking care of their families," e.g., by attending various courses, training sessions, etc. This also applies to "integrated young Romani women who need support to be able to acquire a certain degree of education to be subsequently able to find a job." Even today, when a young girl graduates from a university, she still finds it difficult to find employment and become independent.

Finding Necessary Support
for the Emancipation of Romani Women

"An ever growing number of educated people from amongst the Roma leave the country to find a job abroad." Mere minimum of young Romani women complete basic education, enroll in a university, and successfully find a job and gain independence and equality vis-à-vis their partner. Such exemplary cases can be found mainly amongst women who live in a nuclear family, somewhat separately from the Romani community. Their success usually stems from their parents' decisions and support. Therefore, it is clear that Romani women's emancipation has to start with support of self-consciousness, education (motivation), job opportunities, independence, and through positive presentation and support of educated, successful, independent, and equal Romani women, as well as enlightenment and engagement of Romani women in public and social life, and improvement of their education and awareness of their rights.

Dealing with Abuse Syndrome of Romani Women

Another negative phenomenon is that Romani women are often abuse by their men, both physically and mentally. On the one hand, they

consider it an expression of his interest in them and a proof of his love; on the other, they fear his threats and himself. Quite often, the woman is isolated from friends and other people. "A woman restricted to taking care of the household and inhibited by her man's commands lacks adequate social interaction, support from social network, contact with the world of the majority, primarily because she lives in a secluded environment." It is impossible for her, for a number of reasons, to leave the man who abuses her. In their naivety, she hopes that her man's ways will change, because deep down he loves her and respects as his children's mother. Sometime, the reason is that she does not know where to seek help and find shelter for her children and herself, and where to get the money she would need. Her closest family would disapprove of her departure, because a woman is supposed to stay with her man under any and all circumstances and be faithful to him in good as well as bad times. Her fear of loneliness is only natural, as they would have to rely on herself without support from the closest family. Since they are exceptionally fixated on their husbands/partners and children, whom they do not want abandon (*Redakcia 1*, 2013). In this respect, it is necessary to ensure enlightenment and education of men, so that they would begin to view women in a different light. Romani women ought to be guided, so that they would not accept violent, humiliating, disrespectful, and constraining conduct of their men, and could stand up to against such conduct openly. They have to learn how to gain independence and demand due respect and consideration from their men as legally and socially equal human beings. It is important to make them fully aware of their rights and make them realize how their men misuse their position and power.

Aggressive behavior, physical and mental tyranny, restrictive orders, and browbeating that men practice against their women have a "negative impact mainly on the children in the family, who eventually adopt the behavioral models and patterns of their fathers. This leads to notorious preconceptions that men apply in their own families in the future." As Lukáč says (2013, pp. 105-109), children are usually left to their own resources to learn the ways of the world, experiment on their own, and *learn by watching* the everyday activities in their family. Their participation in the family's activities and their community's life is the primary source of their social education. They are guided to *independence.* They learn to participate in the economic activities in the family, which enables them to acquiring no-verbal communication patterns of adults.

Bringing up Children in a Romani Family

In social upbringing, upbringing is understood as "regulated, intentional, and purposeful introduction of a child into the lifelong process of socialization in a certain, concrete cultural and social system" (Kraus & Poláčková, 2001). Bringing up children in a Romani family is above all a domain of the mother and older siblings. Thus, socialization of a child takes place primarily within the family. Children's upbringing is however also influenced by a broader circle of relatives and the whole community as a network of emotional and psychological support (Smith, 1997, p. 243). Ondrejkovič says that the most common adjectives ethnocentric dimensions associated with the mode of upbringing in Romani families are: *inadequate, non-inspiring, restrictive,* etc. (Ondrejkovič, 2004). This is related to expected adjustment of the upbringing in the Romani family to the standards of the majority society. If we isolated the Romani community from the rest of the society, theoretically, the functions related to upbringing and socializing within the Romani family as a closed community would be adequate for the purposes of living. The family passes onto the child the Romani culture, its values, standards, behavioral patterns, which however clash with the cultural patterns of the majority. In the Romani family, the style of raising children is liberal and unrestricted. There are no restrictions, commands, or the like— unlike the style of upbringing in the majority society. "Children are brought up for life in the family and own community" (Lukáč, 2013, s. 107). The upbringing of girls and boys is characterized by ingrained stereotypes. Children learn mainly by imitating their parents and have very strong links to them. Very early in their life, they learn to take part in work around the house: the boy works with the father, the girl helps the mother with housework. The world of the child is not strictly separated from the world of adults. Romani children are intensively involved in the problems of adults. As Dubayová says in the text by M. Lukáč (2013, p. 108), the "typical phase of growing up is missing in the Romani child's upbringing." Archaic life cycles prevail, i.e., the time when the child slips from childhood into adulthood and has to deal with all the consequences of this transformation in terms of emotions, family relations, and professional orientation.

Enlightenment as a Means of Changing the Position of Romani Women

"Emancipation and equality of Romani women pertains mainly to issues concerning the level and options of education, employment, position in the society, and awareness of one's rights." Especially "intelligent, educated, and independent—emancipated Romani women (as well as men) have to engage in the effort to disseminate enlightenment and change of attitudes amongst Romani women, for whom they should be positive examples and much needed support on their road to independence." It is important to work intensively on changing the way of thinking of Romani women hailing from Romani settlements, as well as of Romani women who already are integrated in the society. Enlightenment and support of Romani women is achieved by promoting the "principles of Romani men and women's equality; support of equal rights and equal opportunities for Romani women, gender democracy," and help with forming the life and support of decent partnership of Romani men and women (Poláková et al., 2005). It is equally imperative constantly to "improve their awareness of their rights and upgrade their qualifications," e.g., by means of various courses, training, and scholarships that would open their access to the necessary education. This is a very challenging task that requires full engagement of "social workers, community workers, lawyers, consultants, psychologists, sociologists, officers at local administrations, etc." Significantly positive is also the influence of "Christian organizations and movements" that help the Roma attain meaningful social changes and change of attitudes. Individual institutions therefore ought to cooperate with them more. Support for Romani women may also have the form of creating and intensifying women's networks, as well as through various "promotional projects, activities of non-governmental organizations, associations, movements, confederations, etc. Independent and educated Romani women and" especially "Romani intelligentsia should develop initiatives to help disseminate enlightenment about all aspects of life amongst the Romani population."

Romani children often *lack adequate models*. The level of education of their parents is extremely low: up to 53.6% men and 64.3% women did not complete basic education (Ďuričeková, 2000). Teachers can play an important role as role models. Role models also are individuals from the environment where children spend their leisure.

The educational and socialization functions of the family in Romani families rest above all on the parents. As part of further development of social andragogics, it is important to exert efforts in research and conceptual endeavor by means of realizing family events with Romani parents as active carriers of the Romani culture, cultural patterns, and behavioral models. In the area of social work in the field focused on Romani women, it is essential to follow the principal aspects of the behavior and survival of women for the educational functionality of the family (e.g., mode of communication with children, verbal expressions, adherence to rules, etc.). The issue of primary importance is the behavioral example of the parents, which depends on their personal maturity. The educational level of parents as part of the cultural capital of the Romani family is not particularly crucial for their educational functionality. Romani parents are the target group in project focused on adult education, where it is important to devise and implement deliberate processes of personality formation (Lukáč, 2013, p. 108).

Conclusion

When defining the characteristics of upbringing and education in Romani families, it is necessary to acknowledge the great differentiation of the Romani communities. "The educational style, mode of communication, role distribution, and other 'contents' of family life vary in terms of time, geographical region, and degree of dependence on social and socioeconomic conditions of each family" (Lukáč, 2013, p. 106). As Poláková says (2002, p. 63), every Romani community is different and its specific characteristics and social environment. To be able to apply an adequate approach and achieve relevant results, one has to understand the given environment where the Roma live and be familiar with the conditions they grew up in, and respect the local culture, social structure, interhuman dimensions and cultural patterns.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *The Normal Chaos of Love*, Wrocław 2013: University of Lower Silesia Press, pp. 249

The belief that the privilege of freedom lies at the base of individualization prompted me to immerse in *The Normal Chaos of Love*—a title all the more interesting considering the fact that it deals with the subject of forming relationships based on love, which can be seen as form of subjugation. This subject has been examined in the following book written by Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. The first of the co-authors is a professor of sociology at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and the London School of Economics. He is the author of the term "risk society," as well as the 1986 book of the same title, which has been translated into Polish in 2002. Another book of his, which has been translated to Polish, is *Power in the Global Age: A New Global Political Economy*. Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim, on the other hand, a professor at Friedrich-Aleksander-Universität Erlangen-Nümberg, is a sociologist, philosopher and psychologist. Beck-Gernsheim's main research interests focus on the problems related to the family as a unit in modern times. Apart from the title discussed here, Beck-Gernsheim is also the author of other books concerning the subject of the family in the broad sense. The title reviewed here was published in German in year 1990. The Polish-language edition was translated by Tomasz Dominiak, and the foreword was written by Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz.

The Normal Chaos of Love consists of preface to the Polish edition, an introduction written by both authors, and six chapters, each of which has been written by one of the authors. Chapter 1, written by Beck, is titled "Love or Freedom: Living together, apart or at war;" Chapters 2, 3 and 4, written by Beck-Gernsheim, are titled respectively "From Love to Liaison: Changing relationships in an individualized society," "Free Fove, Free Divorce: The two sides of liberation" and "All for Love of a Child;" Chapters 5 and 6, written by Beck, are titled "Eve's Late Apple: Or the future of love" and "Love, our Secular Religion." The last pages contain the list of sources.

The main goal of the book is to persuade the reader to reflect upon the subject of forming a relationship between a woman and a man in times of "liquid modernity" (Bauman, 2000), and the chances of a relationship based on love entangled in the strive for freedom of both subjects who form the

relationship. The subject has been presented from two disparate perspectives—from the feminine perspective and the masculine perspective. The purpose of this strategy is the more thorough analysis of the matter discussed. The authors analyse the conflict of the possibility of fulfilling promises of freedom and independence with the conventional privacy and intimacy forms existent in the family. The family itself in its form typical for industrial society—the so called nuclear family—is the opposite of the concept of equality, depriving the individuals of equal opportunities for the development of the individual potential, especially female adults. Nowadays women are aware of their rights and, often-times under the pressure of their economic circumstances, do not accept this situation. Since 1960s, they, too, face the challenge that is the strive for individuality. A woman's financial independence allows her to make decisions about her life and at the same time relieves the man of the financial responsibility for the family. A plethora of men still believe that it is possible to reconcile the equal rights of women with the old-fashioned division of duties, and many of them are afraid that they might be displaced by women on the labour market. Such attitude results in a defensive stance whereby men put forward the laws of nature as an argument justifying the appropriateness of the traditional gender roles. On the other hand, the deeply rooted stereotypical commitment to providing for the family financially results in the man focusing on their work, and limits their capacity for development of emotional independence. This deficiency creates problems with the ability to recognize impending conflicts, helplessness, and lack of understanding, which results in the loneliness of an individual—loneliness not only of the man, but also of the woman, who, while economically active, still bears the burden of the traditional duties assigned to the role of the housewife. At the same time men, relieved of their duty of the supporters of the family, are neither willing to meet independent women half-way, nor can they accept the situation in which the woman makes her own decisions. This lack of understanding causes the bond between the spouses to weaken, and brings about the end of the relationship. The state policy does not facilitate reconciling individualistic aspirations of both partners either. According to Beck-Gernsheim, the aspects of life concerning work and workplace accommodate the man with a partner capable of continuous adaptation. This is especially visible in the case of high unemployment, which entitles the necessity of mobility. Such situation deprives one of the partners of opportunity, and this partner usually tends to be the woman. Consequently, various forms of support need to be introduced for emerging relationships alternative to the traditional family, such as the necessity of introducing system changes that would adjust, first and foremost, the labour market to the needs of dual-career relationships. However, no measures had been taken, and still one of the partners is

forced to conform and adjust their life to the career of the other. This continuous state of conforming, together with the realization of the necessity of procreation, places one of the partners in a position of dependence that often-times renders independent existence impossible. "Thinking a market economy through to the end, people would not have any family ties. (...) Correspondingly, this would be a society without any children unless they could grow up with mobile single fathers and/or mothers" (p. 45).

Paradoxically, individuality is a product of affluence, and as such its emergence depended on the situation on the labour market. However, this individuality is only apparent, since the labour market enforces its shape. Consequently, this seeming freedom of choice conceals, in fact, further subjugation. According to Beck, „the situations which arise are contradictory because double-faced: individual decisions are heavily dependent on outside influences. What looks like the outside world becomes the inside of an individual biography" (p. 51). Depending on the decisions of various institutions (including educational ones) specific generation preferences or discriminations emerge, which define life perspectives of the groups they concern. Institutional solutions to the problems resulting from those inequalities are still embedded in the traditional family model. As it is therefore evident, individuality does not go hand in hand with freedom—just as love is, according to Beck, more akin to subjugation rather than freedom, since love requires cooperation (p. 17), whereas freedom means "following the beat of one's own drum and falling out of step with the rest" (p. 17). This beat of one's own drum tends to be at odds with social expectations, which are still limited by gender stereotypes that prevent women from exercising their rights to being treated as equal to men. Therefore, "the prognosis is that we are in for a long and bitter battle; in the coming years there will be a war between men and women" (p. 19).

The almost obsessive search for ideal love leads to disappointments and compels the individual continuously to begin new relationships, which results in a emergence of a variety of new family forms: the negotiated family, the alternating family, the multiple family resulting from divorce and remarriage. Such relationships are characterized by temporariness, which entails the necessity of signing premarital contracts. As Beck aptly puts it, the marriage becomes "a tenancy for temporarily satisfying mutual needs" (p. 185). This sort of calculated entering a relationship does not serve love, destroys its individuality. The everyday struggle to reconcile the needs of two individualities forces the partners into continuous renegotiation of the conditions of the relationship. Unfortunately, Beck questions a relationship in which all everyday matters must be continuously negotiated, and believes that love has become wordy. Instead of loving each other, people only talk about it.

An additional problem stems from reconciling the marital and parental roles. The conflict between individualization and the sacrifices required by parenthood prompts the partners to reducing the „costs" of carrying out this developmental task. The need of procreation must be satisfied by just one child, so that child must be ideal. It becomes, therefore, necessary to make every effort to form a perfect child, a flawless product, so to say, going even as far as terminating foetuses whose examination results might so much as even hint at tiniest imperfections. The impermanence of relationships, as well as manipulating the process of programming the perfect child, including artificial insemination, result in the separation of biological, social and legal parenthood. The lack of stability in relationships and the disappointment at the child, who does not live up to the parent's expectations, leads to aggression of the parent towards the child as a failed product. This way not only love is included in the commercialization of the individual's life, but also parenthood. Together with a growing desire for a child, a sense of responsibility for that child, its development and future, is also greater. Such situation may sometimes cause the prospective parents feel unable to rise to the occasion and give up on the reproductive aspirations altogether.

The disappointment with the relationship based on the strive for ideal love, and therefore based on utopian, that is impossible to realize, ideas, sometimes leads to search for an emotional substitute in the form of love of a child, who is to fill the void of lacking a partner who would meet all those unattainable conditions. Single parenthood is, in case of a woman, a goal reasonably easy to attain, but also one that makes the man face a twofold loss, condemning him to a life of loneliness. The authors, assuming the position that love has become the foundation on which relationships are formed, conclude that it is not love but rather an obsessive need to escape loneliness. Beck-Gernsheim sums up this section by saying that love remains an utopia, referring to romantic love. The need, or rather the pressure for individualization, which leads to "living with an oversupply of options" (p. 63). is the common origin of both the increasing yearning for love and the constant lack of success in realizing it. The multitude of options leads to ill-considered choices and to discarding those choices if they fall short of expectations, and seeking out new alternatives.

The analysis of the subject is concluded by the general thoughts concerning the essence of love as an emotion connecting a man and a woman; following this, the authors state that obsessive pursuit of love is, among others, the result of leaving religious faith, which in turn prompts individuals intuitively to attempt to realize their need for transcendence through love. "[L]onging for a home and trust to counteract the doubts and anxieties modern life generates. If nothing seems certain or safe, if even breathing is risky in a polluted world, then people chase after the misleading dreams of

love until they suddenly turn into nightmares" (p. 205). Beck sums the above up by stating that love has started to function as a drug consumed without limitations, an addiction that must be fought. He predicts that love will become an emotion that will take the form of an epidemic that shall render the society unable to function.

The structure of the book is coherent and the content of the chapters conforms to the overall premise of the work. The chapters are logically consistent, and their volume is evenly balanced. A weak point of the title is the repetition of some of the same content in various chapters. Furthermore, the authors present this content in a contradictory manner. This may result from the premise of the analysis itself which concerns two separate perspectives—a feminine one and masculine one, i.e. the perspective of Beck and perspective of Beck-Gernsheim. It might have been beneficial to compare the subject matter of individual chapters, dismiss the repeated content, and aim at a more coherent presentation of the message. I believe that the presented thought would have been clearer in this way. The authors use understandable language, adequate for a text of academic purposes. However, one might have some reservation concerning the chapters written by Beck—the overuse of metaphors makes it difficult to understand some of the thoughts he tries to convey, and unnecessarily inflates the page count of the volume, not to mention the fact that it has a detrimental effect on its coherence.

The content itself raises no reservations. The authors worked towards a clearly set goal which was the exploration of the phenomenon of love in the context of striving for freedom and person's individualization. This goal has been accomplished. There are, however, some faults in the manner in which they arrive at their conclusion. The major objection would be the lack of conceptualization of the discussed problems. It would have proved helpful to define the phenomena that are the main subject of the analysis, namely love, freedom, individuality. Although Beck does engage in some speculations regarding the essence of love, those speculations are in fact the author's own thoughts which do not facilitate comprehension of the subject. Beck-Gernsheim does quote the definition of infatuation by Alberoni, who writes that "[b]eing in love is the search for one's own destiny... a search for one's own self, to the very bottom. This is achieved through the other person, in dialogue with her, in the encounter where each person seeks recognition in the other, in accepting, in understanding, in the confrontation and liberation of what was and of what is" (p. 61). This, however, is not a definition of love but the definition of the infatuation, and it represents an egoistic approach to this matter. Beck did attempt to define the relevant concepts, but only in the last chapter of the book. Following Beck's reasoning, one might have the impression that the author mistakes love for passion. It

might have been worth to mention that people in their pursuit of love tend to mistake it for one of its elements that is passion, while complete love includes also intimacy and commitment (Wojciszke, 2003, p. 8n.). Perhaps Beck did not take into account Sternberg's triangular theory of love, neither did he challenge the Giddens's notion of the pure relationship. This would explain the perception of love presented by Beck, according to which love is an escape from loneliness in the risk society. It can be concluded that the basis of forming relationships is an escape from loneliness. It is worth to contrast this notion with another, more mature, view on the bond on which relationships are based, proposed by Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska, who states that „fairness and awareness of it in relationships seem to set up a (new?) foundation of stability in the relationship, especially in a partnership" (Ostrouch-Kamińska, 2011, p. 338). Freedom based on moral values interiorised in childhood, on the other hand, need not be at odds with the development of the potential of a person's individuality (Nawroczyński, 1987). Since human beings are social animals, the development of their individuality can only take place in the context of relationships with other individuals. It is, therefore, absolute freedom and individuality, not love, that are a utopia. The main problem seems to be not so much the impossibility of satisfying the need for as much as the immaturity of the present-day individual regarding mature love. The authors do not address this problem. They do not recognize the potential of the human beings themselves, but instead point to the necessity of institutional changes that would support dual-career families.

It would have also been beneficial to juxtapose the discussed matter with family system theories which could facilitate the analysis of the transient nature of relationships. It is the partnership that should be regarded as a way to problem solving and the pursue of realizing ones own potential—as growth towards another human being. The development of characteristics necessary for life in a stable relationship of people pursuing careers can be considered as an element of the individual's development. "The tension which emerges out of the contact with people displaying disparate aptitude is the primary (key) factor of development" (Brzezińska, 2010, p. 237), and it is overcoming such crises that constitutes development. Freedom means opportunity for autonomous choices, including choices concerning the manner of realising developmental tasks related to early adulthood as well further stages of life. Such tasks include, among others, learning to live with a marriage partner, rearing children and managing a home (Brzezińska, 2010, p. 235). This problem is not addressed in the book—Beck leaves the reader with a horrifying vision of the future of the humanity as a society of single people, because, according to Beck, love is needed more that ever before and equally impossible (p. 4). Such punchline leaves the reader with

a sense of helplessness in regard to the discussed problem, and juxtaposed with the catastrophic vision of the future of the society obsessed with love which would, according to Beck, resemble an epidemic preventing that society from functioning (p. 233n), presented at the end, might evoke ejection and a sense inevitable failure. This gap could be filled by an additional chapter that would summarize the Polish-language edition, and analyse the prospects of being in a partnership as a means of avoiding the enponimise chaos of love. Therefore, I strongly recommend the prospective readers of *The Normal Chaos of Love* to supplement it with a title that complements the former in an ideal fashion, i.e. Ostrouch-Kamińska's *Rodzina partnerska jako relacja współzależnych podmiotów* (*Partnership in family as a relationship between co-dependent subjects*).

Despite the aforementioned shortcomings, I can beyond doubt recommend *The Normal Chaos of Love* not only to people who specialize in the subject which the book examines but also any and every reader who would be interested in this topic. The subject alone deserves attention. The strongest point of this title is the innovative perspective on the family, which is not a functionalist point of view but a perspective of a conflict between distinct human beings striving for individualization, which is embedded in the still stereotypical understanding of gender roles. The inclusion of the problem of double discrimination—of both the woman as well as the man fulfilling the role of a breadwinner—is also innovative. The authors' conclusions might encourage the readers to reflect upon their own life and, consequently, better to understand their own problems and better to deal with them. For the readers who are also scholars, on the other hand, they might be an inspiration for further study.

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Honorata Jakubowska, *Gra ciałem. Praktyki i dyskursy różnicowania płci w sporcie* [Body in the game. Gender differentiation in sports—practice and discussions], Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2014, pp. 580

Body in the game. Gender differentiation in sports—practice and discussions by Honorata Jakubowska offers a new approach to the perception of gender differences. The author explicitly emphasizes (in the *Introduction*) that her publication is firmly set in the field of gender studies and corporality, and sport serves merely as a means of displaying a varied approach to gender. This book is a continuation of the author's interests as evinced in her previous work *Socjologia ciała* [The sociology of body]. Presented analyses focus mainly on (gender) equality dilemmas and (gender) differences in sport.

Sport is a field where gender division is clearly visible. The segregation of sports disciplines based on sex (principle of dividing sports competition) is justified by differences in biology between the sexes. Joint competition of women and men (however not in all disciplines) would prejudice women's chances of victory. Further, the measurability of sport performance allows to accurately compare the results of men and women. Finally, sports analyses refer to the identification of gender what entails the dilemmas of gender questioning. Perceiving sports as the bastion of masculinity paves way to the violation of gender equality. The author suggests using a term "gender justice" instead of "gender equality" what would be reflected in equal access to sports on all education levels and in acknowledging the female dimension of sport.

The author's deliberations on justice are based on the concept of Nancy Fraser who sees any given phenomenon in three connected dimensions (cultural, economic and political). Indeed, the author provides all of these perspectives, at the same time pointing out social consequences of gender and corporality diversification.

The early cases of women's exclusion from sports in the 20th century were closely connected to a discourse stemming from the Victorian era when feminity was associated with the frailty myth. The other reason for preventing women from participation in sports was the conviction that their body was not suited for sports. The proponents of that stand claimed that sports activity may cause female body to lose its appeal, and most of all, impede a woman's fundamental duty—motherhood. Ms Jakubowska thoroughly presents the development of women's Olympic movement and the accessibility of Olympic disciplines for women, supporting her statements with many figures on the participation of men and women in Olympic competition.

Inarguably, it was difficult for women to enter the world of sport (at first they were not allowed to participate in competitions), sometimes even with certain political undertones behind their participation. To mark their presence in sport, women formed associations and set up organizations to highlight the issue of discrimination. Of particular importance is the emphasis on the situation of female athletes from Muslim states.

Having in mind the necessity of defining gender, imposed by the competition in given disciplines, the author analyses the definition of gender and the difficulties arising therefrom. These inquiries are complemented by the analysis of the cases of transsexual and hermaphrodite athletes.

Further in her book, the author investigates the larger context of women's absence from sports which may stem from social and political determinants. Ms Jakubowska touches upon the issues of sport socialization and various ways of encouraging children to participate in sport activities. The author also highlights the problem of doping both with the use of supplements and the so-called textile doping—smart performance-boosting sportswear backed by large clothing corporations. Finally, Ms Jakubowska comments on defining certain sports as female or male ones, and on the socio-linguistic dilemmas of maintaining the male perspective as the standard one and deprecating the female one.

The presented analyses clearly show that women's sports are less popular in the media. The author indicates that as much as 85% of sports broadcast refer to men's sports. A telling example may be the fact that in Poland a women's football game was first televised only in 2011 on TVP Sport. Ms Jakubowska presents quantitative analyses which clearly show that football is the most popular sport discipline and the media tend to focus on the men's sports. Television plays a significant role in promoting women's sports. Since women's sports receive less attention in the media, they are worse paid and, more than anything else, undervalued by the viewers. The author also highlights the idea of attracting the public, especially men, by modifying sportswear so that it accentuates the sex-appeal of female athletes. She also pays special attention to the financing of sports, leading to a conclusion that the richer the sport discipline, the more gender differences.

All the issues addressed by H. Jakubowska in her book are based on her own qualitative research. She has conducted forty-three interviews with female athletes and persons directly involved in sport: coaches, trainers, presidents of clubs and associations activists. She has also held three focused interviews with people interested in sport and 10 in-depth interviews with feminist activists. Such a diverse group of respondents brings diverse data what is a great value of this book. It allows to see all the discussed issues from various perspectives: woman's, man's, participant's or viewer's.

The presented surveys explicitly show that the existing differences in sports do not arise from gender but they are created by women themselves.

Reading Ms Jakubowska's book one notices how well acquainted with sport and sports disciplines the author is, although the reader may at times feel overwhelmed by all the information on the formal aspects of selected disciplines. On the other hand, lack of such information would leave certain gap for an amateur not familiar with the world of sport. The introduction of a reader into the world of sport is inarguably a great value of this publication (detailed history of sport development or the issue of the social definition of gender) and makes all the aspects presented further in the book complementary to each other.

The author quotes not only the reference books, but she also mentions press or television news. The press results emerged from the author's involvement into *The International Sports Press Survey 2011* co-ordinated by herself. This variety of sources is a strong point of the book and demonstrates how the awareness of the women's participation in sports is created and propagated on the social level.

Despite its academic style, what in itself is a merit, the book may be of interest also for athletes (including female athletes) and sport fans. *Body in the game…* is worth reading to see what usually remains unseen.

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Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska, *Młodzież akademicka a kariera zawodowa* [Academic Youth and a Professional Career], Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", 2013, pp. 405

Permanent and dynamic transformation of the globalized world carries along with it essential consequences for the social life and, as a result, for the man participating in it. Given the complexity and the multidimensional nature of the contemporary societies, an unambiguous description of the occurrences taking place in it is nearly impossible. All those changes don't seem to avoid affecting the labor market. Multicontextual transformation taking place in this dimension (flexible types of contracts, unemployment, permanent necessity of acquiring of higher skills, decentralization) has its influence on shaping a new career paradigm, in which the individual themselves is responsible for its course.

The matter under consideration remains not only in the field of interest of the political authorities, at both national and cross-border levels, but

also occupies an important place in the scientific discourse of many disciplines such as: Economics, Management, Sociology, Psychology, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Anthropology, Geography, or History. This narration becomes also a leitmotif in the work of Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska—the author of the book *Academic Youth and Professional Career*—who, in her publication, tries to explain concisely and exhaustively the phenomena related to the professional career of the subject, taking place in the contemporary labor market.

Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska is a full professor. She is the head of the Department of Educational Problems of Youth of the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. She also takes over as Deputy Dean of Scientific Planning and Reporting, Post-Diploma Programs, and Promotion. In the field of scientific research of the author remain socioeducational problems of youth, global reality, and the individual's professional career. All the areas mentioned above reflect in her academic activity as an investigator, as it is demonstrated by her numerous science articles, monographs, and the books created under her editorship.

Academic Youth and Professional Career can be successfully treated as a valuable source of information about the contemporary career paths and the market processes whish affect them. It is not only a result of a discerning theoretical analysis of the national and foreign scientific literature, but also of the empirical investigation of the author. Moreover, the book contains comprehensive descriptions of the theoretical orientation of the professional career. However, the most prominent perspective consists in the conclusion focusing on the career form the subject's point of view, in which they perceive themselves as a manager of their own development, making unassisted decisions concerning their professional future, planning its course and choosing methods of its realization. The publication under review is based on comprehensive collected studies on the complexity and the multidimensional nature of the career itself concerning many different problems in a valuable way. It has a logical and coherent structure grasping the issues mentioned above divided in two parts. The first part describes the theoretical analysis concerning the career, while the second introduces conclusions of the empirical investigation. Moreover, the discussed dissertation is divided in five chapters, each one of each introduces to the reader a different dimension of career.

Many cognitively interesting conclusions are presented in the exhaustive theoretical part in the field of concepts, definitions and theoretical assumptions concerning career. Consequently, according to the rule of the dissertation correctness, the first chapter contains investigation on definitions related to the concept of career. It describes not only the methods of its presentation, but also different suggestions on how to classify it. In the

second chapter the author analyzes the career from essential theoretical orientation perspectives such as functional-structural conception, symbolical interactionism, A. Giddens' structuration theory, or theories of historical interest such as description of characteristics and the factor or contemporary theories describing career as a development and autoconstruction dimension. The third chapter presents the individual dimension of career and conclusions concerning its meaning in each subject's biography. The chapter not only contains rich content and valuable collected data on the process of career planning and management, but also concerns sense ascribed to it subjectively by the individual. The last theoretical chapter oscillate around the youth issues and its transition from the education system to the labor market. It reflects also on the conditions of professional development of the young individuals and on the process of investment in career capital.

The second part, as a result of the empirical investigation on ideas and opinions of the undergraduates concerning the contemporary world—defined by the author as "Career without Limits", contains characteristics of autoidentification of the youth in the times of double transition from puberty to adulthood and from the educational field to the labor market. It shows how the dynamic transformation of the contemporary reality influences quality of the identity created by the subject and their belief of authorship reflected in the taken measures. Consequently, in that chapter the reader may find description of pro-development and proactive orientations adopted by the individual, which determine behavioral orientations in career. In accordance with the conclusions of the investigator recognizing those components permits to evaluate the individual's dimension of their influences on the world around them. It also turns out to be cognitively interesting to compare notions and interpretations concerning the career of the analyzed group of respondents. It gives the idea of their attitude towards their own professional future and of the opportunities which are present in the contemporary reality—important from the point of view of the creation of career.

In the investigation of Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska there are also threads which make possible recognition of the essential differences between women and men concerning their ideas of career and the phenomena related to it. The investigator not only points out diverse variables indicating different approach to the analyzed issues for each sex, but also does research on the reasons of its formation in cognitively interesting way. She notices divergence between their identity styles, adopted individualistic and collectivist approaches or life styles, adopted hierarchies of values and meanings ascribed to the cognitive curiosity. Furthermore, the author explains in a very rational manner how all of those factors affect the meanings ascribed to career by the respondents.

Women and man live in a heterogeneous, permanently changing world. The processes that take place on Earth influence how the concept of career is connoted and denoted and meanings that are ascribed to it. Reality is perceived in different ways by the representatives of both sexes. That situation is caused by socializing mechanisms and cultural experiences which affect the perception of the world. The book *Academic Youth and Professional Career* also concerns those types of factors and can be successfully recognized as a valuable source of information about the sex differences concerning the phenomenon of career, which, at the same time, encourages to think about the place of education in relation to culture as a space of its transmission and transformation (p. 373).

The axis of the investigator's narration is inscribed in the current discussion of the scientific field concerning career and the subject operating at the labor market. The content of the publication describes the situation of the individual participating in the space of the contemporary world—involved in many dependencies and on whom all the responsibility for the success is in the professional area. By dint of an interesting investigation performed by the author and different investigations led by other scientists (also those foreign—unknown to the Polish reader), quoted in the book, Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska makes possible for the reader to examine the reality in a relatively discerning manner, what shows a high cognitive value of the analyzed reading-matter and points out its comparative aspects.

The interdisciplinary character of the publication is an additional advantage of it. Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska often refers to the results of investigation in the fields of Pedagogy, Psychology and Sociology and, what is more, compares the data from those disciplines, which contain essential value from the point of view of her research. By dint of it, the reader is able to encounter a valuable text which forms source of the knowledge about career that has been aggregated until now and has been seen from the individual's point of view. Moreover, the narration led by the author may become a contribution to the discussion about the individual's consciousness concerning planning, monitoring and management of their career. Consequently, she points out that "the force of the influence on the current situation, or on the social environment, has its individualized character and depends on the individual's inclination to take active actions, which indirectly evokes those changes in the environment" (p. 378).

The multicontextual discourse led by Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska suits the publication to the needs of a broad spectrum of readers. It is a valuable reading matter for any practitioner who helps people looking for the proper career path, as well as for any theoretician who engages themselves in analyzing the career phenomenon. This book is, therefore, a valuable source of knowledge not only for the research environment,

which empirically and cognitively verifies the construct of career, but also for deeply reflective people who are interested in their own professional development. The work of Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska can be used successfully by the representatives of the social science and the humanities, including the undergraduates on the threshold of their transition from the education system to the labor market. The book under review will be surely a useful monograph for the people who plan to do research using a diagnostic survey, because the variety of methods used by the author and her ability to present and render data can be considered exemplary. That is the reason why it seems possible that this work will become an inspiration for creating other works of empirical character concerning issues of career.

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