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Journal of Gender and Power is aimed at providing an international forum for discussing various issues and processes of gender construction. It is a scholarly, interdisciplinary journal, which features articles in all fields of gender studies, drawing on various paradigms and approaches. We invite scholars to submit articles and reviews reporting on theoretical considerations and empirical research.

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Editor's Preface

In debates on the situation of contemporary women, the notion of emancipation seems to be a kind of picklock that opens all possible doors. It has been used in dozen, if not hundreds of ways. As a result, to a larger and larger degree, it starts sharing the destiny of other critical notions and categories. That is why nowadays it is so difficult to answer questions such as: "emancipation from what?", "emancipation for what?". It is even more so as in the 20th century women gained the same rights and opportunities as men. They obtain university degrees, they are doctors, attorneys and university professors. They are MPs and sometimes they hold highest possible offices: these of state presidents, prime ministers, Supreme Court judges. Contraceptives liberated them from unwanted pregnancies and, as a consequence, abandoning their carriers and devoting themselves to child rearing. From what should we thus emancipate already emancipated women?

There is also another problem: specific trends in the feminist movement prefer different interpretation and "content" of the notion of emancipation. At the same time, they perform a very typical procedure (in the case of ideological or political battle): they present their version as the only right one, final and unquestionable. They want their particular understanding of emancipation to gain universal status by aiming at marginalization of other modes of understanding of this very notion. This is a case of an attempt at creating Foucault's regime of truth and imposing knowledge on the meaning of contemporary women's emancipation as the only true one. From the post-structuralist perspective, this is nothing else than just an attempt at gaining power over meanings and identities. Emancipation always constitutes a social construct and is defined by specific socio-historical conditions that give political strength to selected postulates while forcing others into silence. In the past, in the first phases of existence of the feminist movement, relative agreement reigned as to the content of women's emancipation (which was connect-

ed with preference for obvious requests in equality of rights of women). In the last decades, the number of social constructs (and those aiming at getting meta-narrative status) rivalling in definition of women's emancipation and, even broader, in defining what does it mean to be a woman increased that much that probably only a "professional feminist" can get a full grasp of the issue (participants of never-ending polemics whose essence lies on accusing one another of "false feminism"). An average female sympathizer of feminist movement creates, at the level of her own common sense, her own interpretation of women's emancipation being an eclectic product of her own biography and feminist postulates she encountered. Sometime she also rejects all the proposals concerning emancipation, she escapes freedom for fear of responsibility for her own life and for fear of necessity of making never-ending choices. In a world dominated by ambiguity, indeterminacy and lack of clear success rules, apart from unquestionable limitation the rhythms of life of a prisoner or a slave has one significant advantage: it is established in an unambiguous manner which eliminates all the insecurity and shifts responsibility for one life to others.

What is my own opinion on emancipation of women? As a point of departure, I would like to note that each emancipation programme should refer to a specific historical "here and now", to concrete socio-cultural conditions and concrete female identity constructs. Creation of "universal" programmes in emancipation irrevocably leads to an attempt at making some particular experience, biographies, opinions and concepts universal while marginalizing others. Usually in such cases we are also dealing with essentialization of femininity i.e. exposing one or several features of femininity as immanent. In such a case, one version of feminism claims the right to speak for "all women" which leads to an attempt at appropriation of all the dissimilar voices and dissimilar experiences as well as to never-ending debates on what feminism is and what it is not combined with mutual accusations of "false identity" (and attempts and raising the true awareness). Therefore, it is necessary to agree on pluralisation of the feminist discourse even if it introduces theoretical chaos and political conflicts (within the movement). If biographies, experience, and aspirations to different groups of women vary, all programmes defined top-down also lead to imposing meaning and to an authoritative definition of reality.

Such an argumentation does not lead to accepting the thesis on the end of feminism, but rather to the idea of bottom-up feminisms with

particular groups of women defining themselves, what feminism means for them, and what kind of emancipation they want. Of course, such a standpoint leads to a series of complications out of which the most important one is connected with response to the following question: what if objectively (according to all possible criteria) the submissive woman is, as a result of very unambiguous socialization, happy in her submission and enters the roles set for her by the society with a liking and these confirm patriarchal and sexist relations between sexes?

Acceptance of each subjective biography and each subjective way of perceiving reality in an unavoidable way leads to abandoning any possibilities of fight for a change in the world as "what exists" gains the status of irrevocability.

Therefore, an attempt at external overview of the world in which a given woman lives as well as her "degree of awareness" is necessary. There is no alternative, even if this is bound to mean returning to certain elements of modernist ideas. This is, however, not equivalent to educators entering the role of omniscient meta-narrators who know best what it means to be a woman, and an emancipated woman in particular. Instead, they can be micro-narrators who always take biography of a concrete woman as a point of departure (in contrast to the idea of a universal woman) together with specific socio-cultural situation in which a given woman is placed. In such a situation, the so much typical for the past imposition of the Anglo-Saxon version of emancipation, together with Anglo-Saxon version of female identity, to women all over the world is abandoned. Already at the point of departure, emancipation becomes a conceptual notion, thus insecure and full of risk and understatements.

The search for authentic, natural or true identity has been given up. Since what does it mean to be authentic? Is it not equivalent to giving permission to yet another, socially imposed social construct? In contemporary culture, let me repeat once again, there are various versions of femininity that are all rational and authentic for groups accepting them even if in traditional perception they are manifested in grotesque and surprising manners e.g. in the form of an anorectic model with Barbie doll face or a monstrously muscular female bodybuilder. What other criteria for authenticity can be distinguished in an époque in which only mimesis exists?

In such a logic, attempts at changing identity are however not abandoned. Two stages can be distinguished here. The first one concerns

intellectual provocations leading to freeing oneself of the imposed version of reality and identity, providing space in which alternative systems of meanings could be discussed, and going beyond the dominant world interpretation and representation. In this context it is crucial not to answer the question "what should it be like?" but rather "what does it not have to be like?". What the gist is, thus, is breaking the weak-willed acceptance of the existing. Another stage, with reference to critical pedagogy, would include an attempt at empowerment of an individual so that she, aware of her situation and biography, could define her life situation and goals on her own and, if this is her will, she would make an effort to change her life. In such a way the woman gains control over definition of the boundaries of reality in which she is living. This is the idea of soft feminism that would never tell you what it should be like (or what you should be like) but rather asks you whether you want things to continue the way they are. The essence thus does not lie in providing ready-made empowerment and new life pills, but providing, sometimes contrasting, alternatives and knowledge on various worlds and various potential realities.

Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik
Editor-in-Chief



ARTICLES



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Modern Androgyny as the Basis for Corporal Republicanism: the Case of Marriage

ABSTRACT. Lewis Morgan and Bachofen outline an interpretation of sexuality as a central element in human sociability where sexuality is based on equality and takes into account subjects who are his or her own legislator regarding their bodies. Between this republicanism of bodies where no one is dominated by the other and Kant's idea of marriage, a long struggle was to take place first to define genders, assign roles and then make one subordinate to the other. Modernity itself adopts a new model of what it means to be human, taking on a kind of androgyny on which to base criteria for legitimacy and egalitarian normativity. Thus, the struggle for bodily domination has taken on the form of a conceptual struggle in order to define what it means to be "human". I will review the anthropology of androgyny as its necessary basis and subsequently analyze why it would no longer be justifiable to maintain this state-as-Moses and why it should be replaced by a republican moment whereby each citizen -defined in an androgynous way- would be taking back the *sui juris* category abducted by the Leviathan. I will analyze the case of same-sex marriage as a paradigmatic example of this.

KEYWORDS: androgynia, gender, same-sex marriage, state, body, republicanism

In their works, Lewis Morgan and Bachofen outline an interpretation of sexuality as a central element in human sociability. The 'primitive communism' they describe is viewed from the perspective of equal access to the other's genitality. To a certain degree, the prevailing laws in that type of community—where sexuality is based on equality—take into account subjects who are *sui juris* regarding their bodies: each individual is his or her own legislator. Between this republicanism of bodies where no one is dominated by the other and Kant's idea of marriage where this institution is made legitimate by one possessing the other's sex, a long struggle was to take place first to define genders, assign roles and then make one subordinate to the other. The institution of heterosexual marriage implies a political modeling of this process which places norms on bodies and roles. It also establishes a radical differentiation between heterosexual normativity and concealment as the denial of

homosexuality. The capacity to impose norms on biology and intimacy was initially a demonstration of divine sovereignty on Earth and then later became a show of sovereignty by the new mortal god: the state.

In both the state's secular capacity for sovereignty and its divine version, it is assumed that human nature has a functional structure. Following Prior¹, its function is inseparable from what it is. There is a continuum between the development of this essence and the execution of certain inherent functions.

In contrast, those who oppose any of these ways to legitimize bodily life do so by redefining human nature as an ongoing construction from the perspective of eventuality and whereby actions deontologize the subject. Thus, the struggle for bodily domination has taken on the form of a conceptual struggle² in order to define what it means to be "human".

For example, in the current debate about whether it is pertinent or not to allow same-sex marriage, there has not been enough attention paid to those very same anthropological grounds which are implicit in both positions. This is why—according to its advocates—the discussion has revolved around the relationship between its wide, public acceptance and the legal implications about a symbolic good which would arise from this acceptance. On the other hand, for those who oppose it, rejecting same-sex marriage simply means—in their opinion—necessarily defending a fundamental institution based on the natural order of things (marriage) which inherently implies heterosexuality.

Due to a flaw in this analysis, what has not been closely examined is the question of how far the state can justify its power to decide which forms of marriage are legitimate and which are not. I will argue that the institution of heterosexual marriage is necessarily grounded on an essentialist understanding of human nature which has persisted in the modern state but in a secular version. Part and parcel of this vision is the urge to assign a naturalized social role to the female gender and one as a maker of culture to the male gender. Furthermore, and paradoxically, modernity itself—where the state takes on the sovereignty of the gods in order to impose norms on morality and bodies—adopts a new model of

¹ In Prior's "functional contexts" —with certain cases—if a mere description of "X" is teleological, then indeed one can formulate an evaluation of it (see Prior, 2003).

² Concepts enable the constitution of social systems and generate the necessary meaning which, in turn, enables these systems to operate. Thus, a central element in the political struggle is the position taken in order to determine conceptual and semantic construction (Koselleck, 1989; 2006).

what it means to be human, taking on a kind of androgyny on which to base criteria for legitimacy and egalitarian normativity.

It is precisely this new, modern, androgynous and egalitarian anthropology that was to be the main pillar first for women to regain rights over their own bodies and then for the rise of what Foucault called a gay culture. And, now, it is the main argument to support same-sex marriage.

My theory is that, with regard to the role of the state itself, the natural outcome of this new, normative egalitarianism would be the convenient privatization of marriage, in effect abolishing it as an institution regulated by the state. In this way, the struggle for domination over bodies would take on the form of a republican moment whereby each citizen—defined in an androgynous way—would be able to establish a space of non-domination over his or her own body.

In this essay, I will begin by presenting relevant aspects of the modern state as established by Hobbes and reconstrued by Foucault, featuring the new mortal god—as Hobbes would say—in the role of a secular Moses.

I will also review the anthropology of androgyny as its necessary basis and subsequently analyze why it would no longer be justifiable to maintain this state-as-Moses and why it should be replaced by a concept of non-state sovereignty that is an inseparable part of republican tradition and whereby individuals are their own legislators, thus taking back for themselves the *sui juris* category abducted by the Leviathan. I will analyze the case of same-sex marriage as a paradigmatic example of this³.

1. Historical-Conceptual Framework

The manner in which sexuality, gender, marriage and any other form of intimacy are structured carry a political, social and moral dimension

³ Regarding the relevance of gender issues for political theory, I have derived much insight by reading the works of Judith Butler; also Foucault's works vis-à-vis the relationship between the constitution of subjects and power. On the criticism aimed at the notion of 'modern sovereignty', the works of Giuseppe Duso, Carole Pateman and Butler herself have been of great help. With regard to Hobbes, I have turned not only to the widely recognized writings of Skinner and Malcolm but also Patricia Springborg. Similarly, in my mind, Duso and Palonen have clarified the relevance of conceptual history for political theory. In one way or another, many of the ideas contained in this essay derive from all these works.

which reflects the norms and rules laid down by social power. Neither a resurgence of Platonism nor the aspirations of analytical philosophy—i.e. that one can determine the proper use of political-social concepts or any form of scholastics, whether rational (Kant) or metaphysical (Aquinas)—would be able to explain the nature of the conceptual struggle that accompanies the normative orders imposed on corporality without first understanding the political-social aspects of this issue.

Therefore, in order to approach that political-social dimension, it would be more pertinent to analyze the linguistic turn, conceptual history and discourse⁴. Such an analysis begins with the *topoi*—which enables us to analyze the rise of a semantic horizon where agonistic positions can confront one another—as well as the emergence of different linguistic tools to be employed. For example, in the case of same-sex marriage, the political-conceptual dimension in this discussion has involved a defining or redefining of words such as ‘state’, ‘masculinity’, ‘femininity’ and ‘homosexuality’.⁵ Only upon examining these four concepts can we pinpoint exactly how marriage came to be defined. I would propose that the semantic struggle to define these four concepts merely reflects the disputes about what human nature is and, from there, the norms which accompany human intimacy.

If we must choose a starting point to analyze the conceptual genealogy driving this debate, there are good reasons to choose Hobbes. He is considered as one of the fathers of our modern understanding of society, politics and power. Furthermore—and what is vital to the discussion—this British writer is the father of the modern concept of liberty as non-interference (understood as bodily interference) and he is also the philosopher who rationally expressed the value of human life in absolute terms. To this we must add a more developed understanding of the state and its faculties as a ‘technology of power’ and manager of ‘rights’. It is these same characteristics which validate the state’s power, transforming civil society into *societas civilis sine imperio*.

The new Hobbesian social contract—legitimized by the new Leviathan—breaks away from classical tradition. Here, social individuals or different associations agree on an institutionality and sovereignty, as usual, will ultimately be in the hands of those who reached this agree-

⁴ For the connections between both theories (Koselleck, Skinner), see Palonen (2015).

⁵ In that sense, the Greeks and Romans did not interpret homosexuality as it is understood in contemporary times (see Foucault, 1984, p. 252).

ment. Domination (*Herrschaft*) will rest on the ultimate foundation of society: the citizens. The importance of this lies in how political power and its legitimacy are understood. For classical writers such as Althusius or protomodern ones like Machiavelli, what prevails is the idea that sovereignty is limited by the very same social reality that gave rise to it. That is, a person is eminently a citizen only insofar as he or she is a political subject who possesses that condition as reflected and wholly embodied in the power to remain a *sui juris* individual. This *sui juris* condition was an innate right. This is the reason why society was understood to be a *societas civilis cum imperio*. In contrast, the new Hobbesian science was based on an individual who did not aspire to hold any legislative capacity of any sort and instead delegated that role to the Leviathan's new *persona ficta*⁶ which indeed wielded absolute sovereignty. Modern, natural rights—which arise from Hobbes's ideas—may be interpreted as a guarantee to affirm sovereignty which now no longer rests in the hands of individuals but rather is handed over to a third party. It is this subject, the artificial person embodied in the state, who holds the only *sui juris* authority. Therefore, the modern rule of law is characterized not by active participation from the people; rather, it sees itself only as a formal and impartial way of safeguarding rights. As Sieyès put it, the very essence of representative democracy is a constituted power legitimated by the prior representation of a constituting power of an assembly.

No right can be guaranteed unless it is backed by a power that is hard to stand up against. This explains the nature of the *societas civilis sine imperio* where individuals lose the innate right to generate laws.

It is this characteristic that must be taken into account in order to fully understand the role of the state from a normative viewpoint. From its sphere, in an ongoing manner, it will increasingly demand that both men and women fulfill certain functions which are considered a natural ingredient within a social structure, one that must make liberty as non-interference compatible with normative orders. This interpretation is central to the institution which defines the union between man and woman: marriage. It is within that context where the state will come forth as the only entity called upon to regulate individuals and their relationships.

⁶ Hobbes's idea of the *persona ficta* exceeds the understanding which medieval legal tradition had of this notion (see Brito & Runciman, 2008).

Regarding that normativity, Hobbes emphasizes the unnaturalness of determining human life when it comes to aspects that regulate the sex life and intimacy of individuals (see Hobbes, 1999). According to the author of “Leviathan”, even issues such as incest, polygamy or monogamy, homosexuality and divorce are subject to the convenience of social life vis-à-vis the need to regulate these issues and the kind of regulation formulated. In other words, they are ultimately based on functional considerations. However, due to the effect they have, Hobbes believed they had to follow certain norms but, for him, a totally different issue altogether was the kind of regulation chosen.

This political dimension will determine the constitution of genders, the nature of homosexuality as being part of the normativity of morality or not and the general outlook on marriage as well as issues related to that institution. To put it another way, we can better understand the debate swirling around these issues if we take into account the self-appointed power of the state to regulate, and impose norms on, both the lives and bodies of individuals. To achieve this end, the state will rely on its monopoly over the use of force and its ability to promote certain lifestyles. Hobbes anticipated the analysis of what—in the development of modernity—was understood as the generation of policies to model the behavior of subjects. It is what Foucault would describe as the necessary conditions for self-government in order to maintain the social order in the face of increasingly more complex societies which make it impossible for the state to be the only safeguard of that order.

As part of the secularization process, the fledgling modern state took as its own the messianic language of Moses, St. Paul and Christ. As with the creation of any new God—a mortal god, as Hobbes would put it—the new being assumes qualities that are superior to those of the subjects it governs but all the while retaining a degree of anthropomorphism: it is presumed to have or carry out intentions, actions, desires, will, values and a teleological structure (a means to an end), presumably in order to promote peace and order as well as the well-being of the citizens that it supposedly treats like a father would his children.

This image of “the state” as embodying the idea of the common good and sustained progress crumbles in the face of totalitarian experiences (fascism, communism, Latin American dictatorships, etc.). From the criticism leveled by neo-Marxism (Althusser, for example) and post-structuralism to the varied movements within radical democracy, the end result was to question the legitimacy of the state in its desire to im-

pose norms on fundamental aspects of individuals' lives. This criticism against the state also reflected itself in the social movements of the 1960s: from the hippies and feminists to the environmentalists and pacifists, the common thread running through all these movements was to view the state as a fiction of the real Powers That Be who in effect ruled over society. The state was thus a mere mask to oppress the majority. A means of domination to benefit a hidden oligarchy.

These social movements were the concrete manifestation of a confrontation—initially conceptual and then later factual—aimed at stripping the state of its monopoly as a *sui juris* being. As with the struggle of the orders in Rome where the plebeians fought the patricians to acquire the status of being recognized as members of a people—or, as Foucault himself describes it, only through war was the third state able to become synonymous with “nation”—these citizen-led movements likewise sprang forth to express a new, egalitarian interpretation of society whereby what served to homogenize it, and thus hypostatize sovereignty, would now be used as grounds to demand and reclaim the innate right to self-determination.

2. Gender and its Deconstruction

2.1. Introduction

Analyzing political and social concepts as having both a general nature as well as more than one meaning is what enables Koselleck's conceptual history to become the semantics for historical times, thereby making it possible for us to pinpoint how the interpretation of certain concepts has changed and, with this, the way in which paradigms have also changed in social grammar (Richter, 1995; Palonen, 2003). While concepts may indeed refer to events and words, the concepts themselves provide the framework of meaning.

In this manner, every political-social identity always and simultaneously refers to its opposite. For example, neither the term “right” nor “left” would have any meaning unless it were juxtaposed against its opposite. Moreover, both terms have generated significant realities in the political-social arena and, at the same time, were born out of given historical circumstances; thus, their meanings carry a specific historical

weight.⁷ This determines how we understand concepts which are eminently agonal.

The same thing happens in the case of how gender is defined. The first agonistic distinction is between heterosexuality and homosexuality. With the latter, the interpretation of “masculinity” reflected a core-value (Freedden, 1998) from which “femininity” was then defined. By the same token, homosexuality was defined by inversely negating those two components that make up the category of “heterosexuality”. Therefore, one could plausibly sustain that homosexuality in modern times is understood as being the lack or negation of “masculinity” and “femininity”. As a result of this, the normative understanding of homosexuality and its possibilities for social and legal recognition have been determined by the social roles assigned to those categories (masculinity and femininity), including the social usage given to both bodily forms. For example, a woman’s body is interpreted as a site which must be regulated by normative orders conditioned by the needs of the state and society (see Dover, 1989, p. 101). In this context, the *persona ficta* of the state retains the characteristics of all the patriarchal societies which preceded it. A woman is a space to be colonized by public policy on reproductive and labor rights. This occurs once the phenomenon of the “populace” emerges, necessarily accompanied by its regulations as a central aspect of modern political and state action. It is in this context that the female uterus becomes a space for action and a site for a power struggle. In contrast, the male body has been in a position to steer and maintain society, both on an economic and political level.⁸

While Hellenic-Roman paganism and Christianity lent ideological support to the different ways in which political intervention impacted biological life, it was not until the rise of a mercantile society with its own morals that this political need came to play a pivotal role in the state and its institutions. A similar phenomenon happened regarding the subjects being socially valued as citizens. Accepted sexual mores and the reproductive roles defined by society began to take on greater importance in an individual’s value as a citizen in comparison to other conditions such as prudent debt management or the requirements and skills for waging war. Throughout different periods in history, economic and

⁷ As Koselleck did, Luhmann defends the social relevance of meanings and the power of concepts to establish differences (see Luhmann, 2007).

⁸ Regarding effeminacy as the symptom of an underlying failure to live up to the central imperative of masculinity as control and domination, both of others and of oneself (see Williams, 1999, p. 127–129).

productive demands are the factors which have played a pivotal role in spurring changes regarding norms that have governed the human body and its functions.

The new iusnaturalist right and modern sovereignty adopted a tradition of intervention in biological life vis-à-vis human sexuality and took it to an unprecedented level and scale unseen in ancient times (see Foucault, 1984, p. 329). As Agamben himself reminded us, the idea of “governing a populace” is tantamount to secularizing the transfer of the Aristotelian notion of *oikonomia* to theology.⁹

2.2. The Naturalization of the Genders

As Luce Irigaray has pointed out, in patriarchal societies, women have been interpreted as “natural beings” and this notion has led to the belief that “motherhood” is an institution which is intrinsic in their nature (see Irigaray, 1985). In contrast, men have been viewed as social beings linked to a culture and who impregnate it with their fundamental characteristics.¹⁰ This is reflected throughout history in the value placed on female virginity, conditioned by beliefs held in phallogocentric societies. Defining what is “masculine” as a characteristic of a being who creates a culture in turn establishes as its opposite that which is feminine; therefore, with an *ergon* and *telos* destined to serve the other gender.

In effect, woman’s subordination to man and her condition as a “second-class individual” is perfectly exemplified by the masculine conception of how she should experience her sexuality. From the notion that the female gender is asexual—the negation of her pleasure—and her transformation into a sex object to promotional models and other ways to present the female as the extension of the products being advertised so as to drive consumer demand for these products: these are all expressions of how the male gender attempts to dominate his “opposite sex”.

This explains how the female identity has been determined by an essentialist vision in contrast to the sociocultural one that has historically

⁹ For Agamben, concepts such as “legislative and executive power”, legitimacy and legality appear first in theology and then are later transferred to the political-administrative realm. For this Italian writer, modernity’s governmental structure is tantamount to secularizing the idea of “Providence”.

¹⁰ In Greek culture—which informed Western thinking in a fundamental way—it was believed that only men could possess virtues. For further information, see the works from this collection: Balot & Ryan, 2012.

accompanied masculinity (see Williams, 1999, p. 151). The struggle for female equality necessarily involves fighting against this naturalist view in order to replace it with civil equality.¹¹

Civil equality is based on the idea that, while there are biological, physical and psychological differences between men and women, both realities are sociocultural artifacts in terms of their social appearance. This means that genitality is not what differentiates the “feminine” from the “masculine” but, rather, it is the social construct which we apply to identify each gender. If that is the case, then civil equality must necessarily dismiss genital aspects when taking into account both genders and instead focus on recognizing each one as arbitrary and cultural emergencies. This is why the idea of “gender equality” must eradicate any hint of naturalism when it comes to envisioning what is feminine and what is masculine.

These ideas will change as the conception of what a state, government and sovereignty mean also change. As noted by historians such as Bo Strath, socio-political criticism aimed at the state’s power will destroy the notion of “the state as a redeeming entity” and replace it with a new fiction: the market. The fall of the state as a redeeming entity and guarantor of an earthly Paradise was equaled by the fall of the almost religious ideology which accompanied it in the form of “modernism”. The illusion that one could believe in a kind of secular scatology where progress could be attained indefinitely.

In the following section, I shall outline the consequences foreseen in a strikingly premonitory way by two different figures but who both shared similar ideas about how the advent of the market and its sovereignty would impact human intimacy. Then I shall return to the issue of inverting equality as an alternative for a non-state, republican moment which would be reflected in the revaluation of genders and homosexuality and, through this, the revaluation of that institution which serves as the very basis for the modern state’s normative order: marriage.

3. Mercury and the Advent of *Homo Lucrui*

Wagner and Marx have more than just one point in common as they were both influenced by the philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach: they reject-

¹¹ On the idea of a “good woman” as not desiring or seeking sexual intercourse (see Dover, 1989, p. 101).

ed any transcendence that would negate the vital value of the present life; for them, religion was merely a human construct; and they scorned capitalist society, its culture and institutions.

Feuerbach's philosophy was not free from Marx's criticism; and, in Wagner's case, it is debatable whether Feuerbach's influence is replaced by his subsequent support of Schopenhauer's ideas.

In the rise of the new god, both thinkers felt that Life's most sublime gift was under threat, that new god being Money and Love the value under siege.

Wagner cried out that Mercury, god of merchants and trade, was the god of thieves and swindlers in ancient times. So how could he be raised up as a parameter for everything in the new world where science and technology were making breakthroughs?

According to Wagner, this is because culture now was subservient to these merchants and their money. In Roman mythology, "profit" was symbolized by the *dei lucrii* (see Borgeaud, 2005), minor deities in the service of Mercury, the god of trade himself. Their subsequent enthronement was embodied by a new kind of individual, the *homo lucrii*.

Influenced by Feuerbach and anarchist currents, Wagner sought explanations in capitalism and state bureaucracy which transformed man into a means instead of an end. For the author of "The Ring of the Nibelung", the modern state was nothing more than a system that shaped life and culture (a *Kulturstaat*), and considered citizens as usable goods. United with these same structures, the economy thus developed a life for mass production, not for love. In Wagner's view, the modern state was but an arm of capitalism and designed to create a new type of slavery: to be wholly in the service of mass production. The institutionalization of individuals' love lives reflected the way life in general was being subjected to the bureaucratization of mass production.

As if to anticipate the neo-Marxism of the sixties seen in authors such as Marcuse, Wagner talked of erotically charged love—even the transgressive and incestuous kind—as a source of liberation from these institutions.

Marxist criticism of the family as a structure designed for "entrepreneurship, work and economic production", and which was to be complemented by the development of hedonism through leisure (just think of how the concept of the "entrepreneurial family" has developed in modern times: it enjoys its access to goods by shopping and its leisure

in Caribbean resorts), dovetails with Wagner's viewpoint which brings together his institutional criticism of society and of the aesthetic values that permeate such societies. The opera centered on the catchy *allegro*—with easy lyrics and a crude plot—was disdained by the creator of the theater at Bayreuth for being nothing more and nothing less than the reflection of a society built on spectacle and consumption. This aesthetic led to the development of an opera increasingly addicted to “special effects” and shock value rather than one whose content sought transcendence. Meanwhile, for Marx and the Marxist movements that followed, love also possessed a subversive nature which would erupt in certain situations in order to break away from the institutions that imposed norms on it. If love was “an enterprise between equals in riches and social class”, then disruptive love—a man of high social standing who falls in love with his servant and lives in adultery with his lover—then this subversive individual is who truly shatters and overcomes the merely economic definition of human relationships. With the triumph of Mercury in civil society and masculine domination, women became consumer objects. The Danish film maker, Lars von Trier, captured on film the mythical force of Woman as an object of pleasure in the imagination of the *homo lucree*. A nymphomaniac, the concept of a woman “uninhibited and driven by an irresistible force in search of pleasure” and how that male “obsession” places her in the category of a natural, assigned object.

Upon reading the case of the famous diagnosis made with regard to Miss T.'s “illness”, one can draw several conclusions. She was a 29 year-old woman from Massachusetts. After a thorough gynecological exam (meticulously detailed in the doctor's report), it was determined that she clearly suffered from a disorder that could not be anything else but “nymphomania”, evidence of which was the direct, bold and lewd language used by the patient. Earlier, in 1775, a French “physician” called M. D. T. Bienville wrote a work entitled ‘Nymphomania, or a Dissertation Concerning the Furor Uterinus’. Here, he warned women of the dangers of eating chocolate and eating for pleasure in general, entertaining impure thoughts, reading novels or masturbating. According to him, these acts could have dire consequences in females such as unleashing nymphomania. The case list was extensive and the supposedly medical evidence pointed to a mental illness or a defect in “natural containment” which female genitalia was presumed to have. As Groneman has documented and Foucault himself argued, from ancient times down to the

18th century, women—in bodily terms—were basically considered inferior but not different to males. It was not until the 18th century that this idea of inferiority was coupled with the idea of females having a “nature” different from that of males. This concept also affected a woman’s ability to possess her own body and use it as she pleased.

The key was the rise of a new morality for women, derived from three currents: a new Christian Puritanism, “enlightened” concepts (defended even by revolutionaries) about women as being erotically dispassionate individuals and, finally, the requirements of an emerging society based on commerce that would necessarily have to submit women to certain types of work.

Sexist attitudes were clearly in place as lesbianism, prostitution and nymphomania were all viewed as illnesses and furthermore were thought to occur together. This very same mentality gave rise to the notion that women were susceptible to these kinds of “pathologies”. There was a distinct class-based prejudice in all this: women from the lower classes were presumed to be more “hot-blooded and promiscuous” and that, as society became more democratized, “such habits and decadence” could negatively influence “proper, young ladies”.

Lars von Trier’s acute observation enables him to pinpoint how many of these ghosts still haunt us today, even in the most advanced democracies.

In Wagnerian anarchism, there is a certain harking back to the primitive Communism described by Lewis Morgan and Bachofen, and where the individual who must replace money and merchandise must do so by substituting them for love and sensuality as the focal point of all social life. This same, unfettered love will enable the building of a now collective property, instead of a private and individualistic one. Marx sustained that only in a socialist society could individuals have the capacity to love one another solely for how their loved one was as a person. The idea of love as an end and its liberating force was a notion already seen in Feuerbach’s works.

How did this process affect the understanding of homosexuality? The answer is crucial as homosexuality basically acquired the connotation of being an incomplete gender. In other words, it became synonymous with not having become what one was meant to be from an essentialist standpoint: i.e. fulfilling a ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ function and purpose.

4. Equality as a Ubiquitous, Normative Value

As stated earlier, the institution of heterosexual marriage rests on an argument derived from a naturalist modeling of human sexuality. This vision owes itself to the essentialist structure of Greek thought which was subsequently adopted by different monotheistic traditions. It was assumed that ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ each possessed an essence whose ‘natural’ functions were expressed in social roles as well as in sexual orientation and practices.

To what can we attribute the change in understanding what it means to be ‘human’ which led to defying or questioning this tradition? The secularization of theological concepts and categories of canonical law did away with the old essentialism, leaving egalitarian rhetoric in its place. For example, in the contractualist tradition, Hobbes himself established general equality between all genders party to the social contract. This idea is paradoxical in nature: it presupposes a new model of what it means to be human which would take on the form of androgyny (see Foucault, 1984, p. 330–331) (gender does not assign roles or predetermined sexual behaviors, i.e. it annuls any differentiation). It also presupposes a new model that recognizes diversity whereby what was deemed marginalized, undesirable and reproachable could now come forth and become visible thanks to a new criterion of legitimacy and normativity.

This starting point involving ‘equal human beings’ gave modern rhetoric its egalitarian character. Furthermore, equality ultimately became the normative criterion by which these issues could be argued in public discourse. It was precisely the aspiration to achieve modern equality that determined the semantic evolution of both ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ as concepts and, finally, the concept of ‘homosexuality’.

This equality became a source of pressure brought to bear on the political system for it to eventually fulfill expectations about civil, economic and social rights (see Posner, 1992, p. 117). The latter type of rights were focused on recognizing differences and had to do with the problems associated with not recognizing individuals’ needs and, at the same time, not allowing them to choose other lifestyles. Equality implies that any form and vision of social semantics can have access to the social world. This generates a fragmentation of the notion of meaning, giving way to a cultural polycontextualism. This phenomenon explains why marginalized realities—such as that hidden by homosexual semantics—spring forth with such vehemence as they seek a new definition of their

content. And, from there, they demand legal recognition on equal grounds when it comes to legal and semantic goods.

The horizon of expectations sought by those who had been marginalized due to their sexual orientation demanded that its grammar be treated in a new, different way in order to reflect the principle of equality despite differences.

This would then generate access to a basic right such as recognizing the right to institutionalize their emotional relationships on equal grounds. The natural consequence of this new normative egalitarianism and of the criticism leveled at 'all things managed by the state' was expanding the debate to include the possible benefits of privatizing marriage, abolishing it as an institution regulated by the state. If 'marriage' is a category by which an additional, symbolic and normative value is assigned to a relationship between individuals, is it not then unreasonable to maintain it as a reality determined and sanctioned by the very same institution or system that should guarantee all lifestyles and not infringe the protection provided to third parties?

5. Final Observations: Marriage

Anthropology of the androgynous type—which is the basis for the modern notion about equality—will only come about once an institution that, as has been said from its very beginnings, sought to establish a normative principle which differentiated between other forms of human coexistence. This discrimination did not fade away altogether when it came to the issue of homosexuals; rather, it was only ameliorated. Likewise, civil society persists in approaching femininity from the viewpoint of an object and is thus a form of domination.

Societies which sustained the legitimacy of the state's power to regulate marriage basically rested on the need to assert themselves as the new reality vis-à-vis the powers which preceded them. If the state could decide on matters related to sexual behavior, human intimacy, reproduction and the constitution of a family, then it had even greater justification for making decisions about taxes and waging war as well as law and order in general. What could be more decisive than regulating a human being's most intimate, biological functions? There were also considerations about private property to take into account, which at one time included the "wife" aside from the protection of offspring.

If there were already enough mechanisms in place to safeguard and enforce the rights of offspring, women were no longer anyone's "chattel" and there was abundant legislation to protect private property, in order for the state to maintain its privileged power to regulate the intimate behavior of citizens, it had to co-opt the metaphor of "the Lord is my Shepherd" (see Foucault, 1979). The modern state thus took faith in the Eternal Life and transformed it into a promise of safe and prosperous life on earth but for which it appointed itself as overseer to control the moral life of individuals. The secularization of society meant the sacralization of the state.

With the advent of the modern state, another fiction was generated: the person. Beyond the norms imposed on him or her by the state, a person had rights and, in essence, was capable of deciding his or her own life. This was characterized by an absolute, androgynous neutrality with regard to gender. Maintaining the state's power over marriage threatens a person. It is a head-on collision between two artificial, social institutions. In a truly democratic society, any aspect of a citizen's private life depends on his or her own will and not on that of a third party who wields greater power.

The ongoing existence of marriage blessed by the secular, state "church" establishes symbolic value and draws a line distinguishing married couples from single people and married couples from couples who cohabit, thereby generating unjustifiable discrimination. Thus, while it persists as an institution, it should not deny anyone access to it. It is both reasonable and desirable that the state relinquish its archaic aspiration to acting as a new Moses (see Foucault, 1979, p. 226).

Societies need to have an idea of how to interpret what normality is. A focal point of how to determine what constitutes normality hinges on how liberty itself is understood: this acts as a formula by which different normative rules are generated. What we continue to observe is the extension of the idea that liberty constitutes a sphere where an individual's private life is protected by way of recognizing equal rights for all. Furthermore, this same idea calls for instances to be generated whereby a citizen's life will not depend on the power wielded by interest groups, persons or the state itself.

The legitimacy of regulating an individual's sex life and preferences became increasingly more questionable from the moment the secularized state became a neutral guarantor for the liberty of its citizens. This is why—more and more—the conceptual construct which sustained the

discrimination against sexual minorities has tended to crumble away. It is incompatible with the current interpretation of what normality is and with the notion of liberty which informs this interpretation. First, homosexuality was no longer considered a felony and illness. The arguments brought forth to sustain both prejudices became impossibly hard to defend. Today, they are viewed as simply ludicrous. This explains why it would be a logical step to move towards legally recognizing same-sex marriage.

Perhaps Hegel was mistaken and it is not the philosophy of Minerva's owl but rather the political corpus of the representative system: its legislation lags behind and is not in synch with the changes in values and semantics generated by societies as they progress. Both the marginalization of women and racism—among other forms of discrimination—first lost their capacity to sustain their arguments. Then, they lost social value even before legislation outlawed them and finally recognized the rights of those who had suffered discrimination.

More than a few were outraged by these social transformations. Some viewed equality between men and women as making females 'masculine', a threat against both femininity and a woman's role within the family. They fervently believed that a 'normal woman'—a notion created by societies grounded on male chauvinism—reflected the essence of what it truly meant to 'be a woman' and that these changes threatened her very nature. Today, one can reasonably argue that—in advanced democracies at least—it is impossible to sustain the idea of treating a 'woman as a child', that she is someone who must be cared for by men.

Normative rules are laid down according to the notion of a freedom that respects individual diversity and proprietorship over one's own body as well as individual will as a central element of a free person who is part of society. Tribal-like opposition is earmarked for extinction in history. This is a fact that the political body must not forget.

If we wish to maintain marriage as we have known it, then this necessarily involves accepting same-sex marriage (see Rydström, 2011, p. 39–40). The objections against it basically predate modern times and are deemed legitimate only insofar as they derive from religious beliefs. Any society that seeks to generate instances of liberty as non-domination is precisely the kind of society called to develop a legislative structure which enables different visions to coexist in harmony. As Sunstein has put forward, the abolition of marriage and instead privatizing it

is the best way to guarantee equal rights and dignity for two different groups: those who wish to uphold their own rules (as in a club) and rituals to celebrate the union of genders, making marriage an exclusively heterosexual affair, and those who seek the same kind of union but as homosexuals. In accordance with their own beliefs, individuals would then be able to make decisions about their private relationships in the same way as one would enter and leave a social club. Each club would have its own rules and, before joining that club, each individual would decide whether or not to be a member and abide by those rules. Those who wish to certify their relationship in the eyes of a given church, in any given ritual or simply via email, could do so as one would handle a private issue between two parties. For general, civil unions and as a merely formal procedure, the state should provide paperwork for individuals to fill out for specific purposes.

The notion that marriage is inherently heterosexual involves a two-fold domination: the naturalization of the female and moral-symbolic damage perpetrated against homosexuals. In contrast, abolishing this institution marks an event, a republican moment where the members of a people—without any distinction whatsoever—can give rise to a society from an *an-arché* starting point and based on one of the most fundamental aspects of sociability: sexuality and human intimacy.

The classic idea of the citizen-republican derives from a mythified state. This is why it will disappear once the myth dies and man as political animal will be replaced by man as consumer. The mall and window shopping will thus become the new public space. Both the market and its ideological justification on a global scale driven by the concept of globalization (where capitalism no longer depends on the nation-state and borders) will tend to become naturalized. Its mechanisms will be conceived almost as if they were laws of Nature.

This form of bodily republicanism—as reflected in the resistance manifested basically by social movements—is both an alternative to the citizen who is no longer subjected to the civil religion of the state as well as an alternative to the simple consumer who—as a free rider of liberty in political terms—gave up concern for this liberty and is now held hostage to the whims of the sovereign market. It is a republican form of networks which resists both powers and, using the human body as the grounds for a new normative order, seeks to recover for itself the innate right to become a *sui juris* subject once again.

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Achebe's Receding Male Chauvinism: A Study of *Anthills of the Savannah*

ABSTRACT. Achebe's works such as *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* spew much male chauvinism which leaves the female characters of the novels in a state of serfdom and the male characters as overlords over the women. How could *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe's late novel, help to change this perception and moderate the author's tough stance on women? Could the socio-cultural position of women in this novel change with a quantum leap to enhance their image? This article will chronicle Achebe's strives to articulate this new vision that impacts on the image of women characters in the novel. First, it discusses the effects of male chauvinism in the author's early novels and turns to the work under analysis to illustrate the attributes of characters like Beatrice, Comfort, Elewa etc. which place them on high social pedestal; they are the symbol of hope and progress and lead the way to social emancipation only to laugh at men to scorn. Again, the work takes a critical look at the story which the author uses to symbolize womanhood. The woman is a story teller with eternal qualities because she survives the wars that take the lives of men who are not discretionary to live to tell the story. This exaltation of women could be that of the prose genre where story telling is an issue; and through the art of storytelling, prose is raised to preeminence. Has Achebe, the story teller taken the identity of a woman? Has Achebe achieved gender balance by "deconstructing" male chauvinism in a world that is so intensely searching for gender equality? The paper will construct serious logics to answer these questions.

KEYWORDS: male chauvinism, female chauvinism, Achebe, women, the story, *Anthills...*

Introduction: Male Chauvinism in Achebe and the African Novel

The African tradition dominated by the patriarchal system has set before the modern woman a daunting task of fighting her cause. Such a traditional norm as the subsuming of a woman under the tight control of the man obstructs social evolution in Africa. Stuart Mill recounts that this uncanny ordeal remains "the chief hindrance to human improvement throughout the ages" (Nwodo, 2007, p. 14). In *God's Big Toe*, the reader is exposed especially to Igbo and African cosmology and its world view on male chauvinism. He goes through the experience of powerful

current of pseudo-hallucinatory love for the boy child at commensurate disregard for the girl child and women in general. Azu Anuka is the agent and the culprit. Azu Anuka, because of this paranoid feeling of the preeminence of Onwubiko, his only son in the family, maltreats his wife and daughters and maintains that Onwubiko's value could not be equated to all of them put together. With slight irritation, he becomes so ireful and sternly rebukes his wife in one of the occasions he has to vent his emotions over this particular boy his *chi* (God) has given him after the births of many girls:

Why do you always touch my sore spot? Have I not warned you about this boy? You want to kill him so that nobody'll succeed me when I'm no more. Foolish woman! Ingrate! I must marry another wife. From now onwards, you'll see what happens to you (Arungwa, 2008, p. 75).

However, one lethal instrument ever deployed to the service of society in the subjugation of women generally is the marriage institution. In the light of this, marriage makes a woman to be subjected to a man in a couple relationship and sets in most cases two or more women under the roof of a single man in a polygamous arrangement, leading to rivalry and mutual destruction among the women folk (*The Victims*, by Isidore Okpewho). In a dire case, such a union is arranged and forced on the woman. Juliette in *Trois Prétentends...un Mari* is a good example. Her grandfather, Abessolo mocks her assertive voice in the choice of her suitor, in which she wants a different man from the one chosen for her by her family. Abessolo's admonition of Juliette's father here is a warning to those who seem to have forgotten the tradition and try to run roughshod over it.

Si je n'avais été là, l'autre jour, tu aurais refusé de prendre les cent mille francs que nous avait versé Ndi, le jeune homme qui veut épouser ma petite fille Juliette. D'après toi, il fallait attendre pour consulter Juliette elle-même avant d'accepter la dot. (Scandalisé, au public:) Consulter une femme à propos de son mariage! (Oyônô-Mbia, 1964, p. 22)

If I was not there the other day, you would have rejected the hundred thousand francs which Ndi, the young man who wants to marry Juliette my little daughter gave us. In your own opinion, it was necessary to consult Juliette before receiving the bride price. (Ridiculed, openly:) Seek a woman's opinion in her marriage! (my translation)

Literary works like Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen*, Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*, Mariama Bâ's *So Long A Letter* among others expose the harrowing plight of women in African tradition. However, Achebe's celebration of male chauvinism in *Things Fall Apart*, where the position of a woman is in the house, is simply the reducing of the role of a woman to that of a housekeeper set against all kinds of odd and domestic chores, child-bearing and maternity care. Gatse in Henri Lopés's *Sans Tam-Tam* complains bitterly about this nonsense: "Mère était toujours enceinte, partageant sa vie à s'occuper du dernier Nourrisson, à recommencer chaque jour la cuisine et à cultiver le manioc dans les champs voisins" (Ohaegbu, 2000, p. 172)—"Mum was always pregnant, her life divided between taking care of the last baby, cooking every day and planting cassava in the near-by farms" (MT). The Igbo cultural practices in which *Things Fall Apart* is set lay too much emphasis on the male child and the respect for the phallus is vulgarized. Conversely, the taunting of the girl child as well as women comes in full spate; effeminacy is derided, dreaded and eliminated and that is why Okonkwo has a hand in the death of Ikemefuna—he does not want to be counted among cowards who fear the sight of blood. Effeminacy is hunted beyond the woman's sphere of existence and determinedly traced to any man who exhibits a modicum of tender emotion. A man who has soft heart is a hidden and ugly enemy. It is quite expedient, as a result, to tear the mask off the face of this anti-hero because his manhood is flawed. Unfortunately, it is Nwoye in *Things Fall Apart* whom this ill-fate befalls and so he is out of his father's favour for his feminine gestures. Okonkwo is rankled any day by this. Nnolim (1999, p. 19) comments:

The folk story of the quarrel between Earth and Sky comes up in *Things Fall Apart* to draw attention to the 'effeminate' nature of Nwoye which worries his father, Okonkwo. Achebe tries to point out that Nwoye prefers the 'effeminate' story of his mother about the vulture who was sent to soften the heart of Sky with a song about the plight of men to whom Sky has denied rain to the story of blood and war told by his father.

These contraventions as acts of humiliation against women in *Things Fall Apart* particularly assume multifarious dimensions and their handling demands commensurate tack from no other artist than the phenomenal Chinua Achebe. The paraphernalia of fear, lambent affection, remorse and sentimentality are neatly woven into the reflexes of the feminine or at times it is associated with laziness and failure. On the

other hand, masculinity comprises odious hatred for, terrible fear and brutal rejection of all the above feminine traits besides strong penchant for bravery leading to rabidity, pugnacity, bellicosity, belligerence, intransigence, foolhardiness, masochism, sadism, love of risk and danger—all which are rallied in one man, one character, Okonkwo, an embodiment of bustling manhood. Nevertheless, these habits constitute his Achilles' heel and / or hubris and lead him, a luminous star and epic hero, to shameful extinction in the novel in the form of suicide. Once again Nnolim (1999, p. 191) speaks about this:

To succeed or not to succeed; that was the question confronting every Igbo man. For Okonkwo as for many an Igbo man, the fear of failure is a hauntingly tangible thing. Achebe as the omniscient voice has, in many scattered comments laid the background against which Okonkwo struggled—the Igbo values which acted as a touchstone against which success or failure of Igbo manhood was measured.

Discrimination against sex in Achebe's novels especially in *Things Fall Apart* has different tenors altogether. One of them is the silence of women in matters that affect them and their communities in which they are not even allowed to air their views as it is in the case of Juliette. They are denied one thing, the voice and are only given ear to hear and mind to understand and imbibe whatever men decide even over their own fate. This is the only right they know the tradition of the land reserves for them. Hajdukowski-Ahmed (1987, p. 54–55) argues that women have been stripped of language by punitive primitive patriarchal institutions or, to say the least, women's language has been deflowered, doctored and reduced to sorry dictates of the overbearing phallus that wants them to speak what it wants and how it wants it. The consequences now are that women speak two levels of language:

Dans les sociétés dites primitives, les femmes pratiquent le bilinguisme à différents degrés: elles parlent «femmes» entre elles et «homme» avec les hommes; la communication avec l'extérieur passe donc par le code dominant, celui de l'homme. In the said primitive societies, women practice bilingualism at different degrees: they speak "women" among themselves and "man" with men; their communication outside themselves pass through the dominant code, the man's (MT).

Okpara et al (2015, p. 256) buttress this fact when they write that "In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo beats his wives at the slightest provocation,

while in *Arrow of God*, Akuebue's customary response when asked about his family is, they are quiet. This signifies that women are supposed to be seen not heard". Achebe's women have no say either at home or in public. They have lost their voice, unless they are invited to come and bear testimony in the midst of men in any matter of public interest. Otherwise, it is men who have the right and freedom to talk. Referring to the events in *Things Fall Apart*, Nkoro and Chukwu (2015, p. 23) inform that:

The normal course of action as the novel depicts shows that in Igbo traditional society, the people uphold dialogue, that is, face to face discussion of a problem as a primary means of dispute settlement. Cases involving other clans are first deliberated at the meeting of *umunna*. Being a patriarchal society, *umunna* refers to every male child of the clan.

Umunna by implication becomes the clan's parliamentary chamber where women record zero percentage representation and this chamber which is the highest decision making and regulatory body in Igbo tradition binds men together in fraternal love and in a sort of social responsibility. Zavalloni (1987, p. 23), who argues that the domination of men over women is foretold by men's ascription of their various causes to a common identity, for instance, the infant Jesus became God and Buddha's divinity is ascribed to masculinity, describes this as 'l'émotion identitielle qui fonde la solidarité des frères, ce que l'on appelle «*the male bond*».' i.e. the identical emotion which creates the solidarity of brotherhood known as the male bond (MT). For Zavalloni, it implies that the consequences of these primordial examples of Jesus and Buddha and perhaps other prophets are phobia of a dimension tending toward idiosyncratic dementia, set up in the human society of time immemorial with the tendency of men laying claim on divine status which in turn inspires all kinds of paranoid phallocentrism (Zavalloni, 1987, p. 23).

However, one other important aspect of chauvinism in the novels in analysis is the symbolic designation of farm crops to sexes to reflect superiority and inferiority. In this scenario yam becomes a crop exclusively cultivated by men whereas cocoyam belongs to women. And what is more worrisome is that the distinction in its nature and entirety is oppressive and marginalizing and becomes an ideological propaganda, a serious gender politicking. Udumukwu (2007, p. 66) buttresses this point with arguments as flexible as these:

In other words, yam functions as a sign of transforming an axiological entity, which accounts for its significance in the social system of a culture. Thus, yam is used in the novel as a trope for personal power and strength. As such, we are told that the strength of man's hand is measured by the size of his barn and yam is described as "the king of the crops", and a man's crop".

A further stroke from Chukwuma (2007, p. 137) sheds more light on this symbolism of yam.

The seed yam is the subliminal essence of worship that binds the people to their god as so centrally expressed by Chinua Achebe in his novel *Arrow of God*. Hence yam is the symbolism of life, of wealth and of religious kinship. And yam is male.

Okpara (2015, p. 256) et al have reason therefore to assert that "Feminists argue that in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, wealth, power and ownership of land are male attributes while women are depicted as passive". Blessing Diala-Ogamba (2007, p. 155) adds her voice, a little away from the yam crop, thus: "In *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, women are relegated to the background. They are barely mentioned as strong characters except for Chielo, the priestess of Agbala in *Things Fall Apart* when she performs her duties as a priestess. The same trend is also seen in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* and *Idu*; even though the women here are shown to work hard in their trades, the patriarchal society they operate in dictates the tune". This paper will look at how Achebe surrenders his much touted male chauvinism to make a twist in favour of women, an entirely new vision in his conception of gender equation in African literature.

Female Chauvinism in *Anthills of the Savannah*

In sum, the exclusion of women from seemingly courageous, but obviously irrational acts of foolhardiness in *Things Fall Apart*, for instance, which suffices the masculine preponderance and phallogocentric dominance are the hallmarks of male chauvinism. The question so crucial to ask is this: is Achebe clinically renouncing his avowed and proverbial male chauvinism in preference to female chauvinism in *Anthills of the Savannah*? However, the question, as important as it appears, hinges on the fact that Achebe's elevation of sadomasochistic ideals before the advent of *Anthills of the Savannah* gets to the brinks of racism against

women and gives feminist writers and critics an axe to grind. Succinctly put, Achebe in *Anthills of the Savannah* races downhill from the peak of male chauvinism, an erstwhile ideology he espouses early in his career with all his creative talents. Nevertheless, he has lately and ironically too begun to climb a new hill of chauvinism. If the cases in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* specifically are simply the reflection of society as the hallmark of literature, and if Achebe connotatively satirizes the Igbo culture for promoting gender imbalance by presenting the image of society in literature exactly as the object in real life, he, Achebe fails Pierre Macherey's test as Egleton (1976, p. 51) puts it:

If the image corresponds wholly to the reality (as in a mirror), it becomes identical to it and ceases to be an image at all. The baroque style of art, which assumes that the more one distances oneself from the object the more one truly imitates it, is for Macherey a model of all artistic activity. Literature then, one might say, does not stand in some reflective, symmetrical, one-to-one relation with its object. The object is deformed, refracted, dissolved—reproduced less in the sense that a mirror reproduces its object than, perhaps, in the way that a dramatic performance reproduces the dramatic text...

Achebe takes the tortuous route of 'deconstructing' male chauvinism in *Anthills of the Savannah* with a string of metaphors. John Searle (Abuh 2005, p. 10) clarifies the concept of metaphor thus:

Roughly speaking, theories of metaphor from Aristotle to the present can be divided into types. Comparison theories assert that metaphorical utterances involve a comparison or similarity between two or more objects...and semantic interaction theories claim that metaphor involves a verbal opposition between two semantic contents, that of the expression used metaphorically, and that of the surrounding literal context.

The first level of metaphor exploited by Chinua Achebe *Anthills of the Savannah* in the course of breaching male chauvinism is the fire in the savannah grassland. The savannah fire is wont to leave in its trail anthills as the only surviving things since clay is not any kind of fuel and so not inflammable. Their presence in the ravaged savannah remains symbolic, ample evidence of history and memory when the flora and fauna have all gone. Chris, the fugitive is on his flight to Abazon with Emmanuel when suddenly the stupendous site of the anthills invoked in Ikem's poem entitled: "Pillar of Fire: A hymn to the Sun" catches his strayed gaze.

They laughed and fell into silence as if on some signal. They had each independently come to the same conclusion that though everything had gone reasonably well so far they must not push their luck by talking and laughing too much. It was in the ensuing reverie that Chris, gazing into the empty landscape, had become aware of the anthills (Achebe, 1988, p. 211).

In essence, the anthills metaphorically stands for women whose mental elasticity and resilience in times of war and violence that gulp men help to remain behind as survivors and tale bearers. The situation is synonymous with the women in the novel (Beatrice, Elewa & Adanma), who must live to tell the sad story of Ikem Osodi, Chris Oriko, His Excellency, Major Samsonite and Colonel Ossai, who in turn are the victims of the war in the novel, the consequences of dictatorship. The woman's story expectedly is an emotional one as exemplified in this reference to the death of Ikem.

"In our traditional society," resumed Beatrice, "the father named the child. But the man who should have done it today is absent...stop that sniffing, Elewa! The man is not here although I know he is floating around us now, watching with that small boy smile of his I am used to teasing him and I will tease him now (Achebe, 1988, p. 222).

Achebe's arguments in the novel are that the survivors by accident or design are great manipulators of stringent circumstances and deserve their place in honour and history. He reveals the weaknesses of men in the novel such as Ikem and Chris, who respectively pursue revolution and the quest for justice and sanity in society recklessly and quixotically. Such approach rips open their vulnerability before their assailants. This is quite antithetical to the subtle, discreet and sagacious attitude and spirit with which Beatrice has treated her invitation by Sam to the Presidential Retreat at *Abichi* Lake. She is able to manoeuvre herself out of harm's way that is the ruse of Sam. Today she is like the proverbial brave soldier who lives to tell the story of the war rather than die at the battle front.

The Story as Metaphor of Women and Preeminence

Achebe to this end elevates the story to a higher pedestal as a sign of preeminence and in accordance with the semantic metaphor the author has laid in the plot. This corresponds to the exaltation of the virtues of

the women folk in the novel. By and large, the story is greater than the wars and the warriors themselves because of the ability of its echo to reverberate years after the exploits. Achebe (1988, p. 124) explains:

So why do I say that the story is chief among his fellows? The same reason, I think that our people sometimes will give the name Nkolika to their daughter--Recalling-Is-Greatest. Why? Because it is only the story can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is only the story that outlives the sound of war drums and the exploits of brave fighters. It is the story, not the others, that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The story is our escort; without it we are blind. Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story; rather it is the story that owns us and directs us. It is the king that makes us different from cattle; it is the mark on the face that sets one people apart from their neighbours.

For the fact that it is women that answer the name Nkolika and tell the story of wars naturally, Achebe ascribes the eternal qualities of the story to them. After all, even Abubakar Imam Kagara (Dathorne, 1940, p. 10) reminds us that *Magana Jari Ce (Ability to Tell Stories is an Excellent Possession)*. This underscores the crucial roles of the story and women themselves in the descent of customs and mores for social evolution through oral tradition. "So the arrogant fool who sits astride the story as though it were a bowl of foo-foo set before him by his wife understands little about the world". (Achebe, 1988, p. 124) This illustration is metaphoric and an indictment of a person who leaps into danger and cooks himself there to make a story and a teller out of it. The fate of such a fool, Achebe (1988, p. 124) maintains, is pathetic:

The story will roll him into a ball, dips him in the soup and swallows him first. I tell you he is like a puppy who swings himself around and farts into a blazing fire with the aim to put it out. Can he? No, the story is everlasting... Like fire, when it is not blazing it is smouldering under its own ashes or sleeping and resting inside its flint-house.

By implication, Achebe employs this anecdote or metaphor to explain how difficult it is for anyone to overshadow or destroy womanhood through disparagement. Rather it could amount to self-destruction. Consequently, he deflates the 'arrogant fool', the man, 'who sits astride the story', the woman (I brave to say in intercourse) thinking that he is superior and the master.

Achebe as a Woman and a Story Teller

Again, it is not every diviner or seer who can tell the story; it is only he who is chosen by “*Agwu*, the brother to madness” (Achebe, 1988, p. 125) to tell the story of the land. Achebe, the Eagle on the Iroko, who sees it all, has been endowed with greater potentials by *Agwu* (the Muse) to tell the story of the land from a more accurate perspective. Whom the cap fits let him wear it. So he, Achebe wears the garb of womanhood in that singular quality of storytelling which is the greatest honour to him and indeed to the women folk!

Female Characters in *Anthills of the Savannah*

Of course, Achebe unveils his new vision of womanhood by creating female characters endowed with talents which those of *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, in the strict sense of it, lack: formal education. Beatrice stands tall in that category with all her scintillating academic records which Sam speaks of in glowing terms.

Lou, this is one of the most brilliant daughters of this country, Beatrice Okoh. She is a Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Finance—the only person in the service, male or female, with a first class honours in English. And not from a local University but from Queen Mary College, University of London. Our Beatrice beat the English to their game. We’re very proud of her (Achebe, 1988, p. 75).

Beatrice believes in the power of education to change society and the individual. It brings about independence and self-confidence and alters primordial views; by so doing, it engenders self-pride that makes a woman to stay in her own house with much dignity and respect in order that a man comes looking for her. These are the values she has cultivated for herself. Ruminating on these thoughts, she rests assured that she has comported herself virtuously well in her relationship with men, especially Chris. She breaks the silence:

Being a girl of maybe somewhat above average looks, a good education, a good job you learn quickly enough that you can’t open up to every tongue that comes singing at your doorstep. Nothing very original really. Every girl knows that from her mother’s breast although some choose to be dazzled into forgetfulness for one reason or another. Or else they panic and get

stampeded by the thought that time is passing them by. That's when you hear all kinds of nonsense talk from girls: Better to marry a rascal than grow a moustache in your father's compound; better an unhappy marriage than an unhappy spinster hood; better marry Mr Wrong in this world than wait for Mr Right in heaven; all marriage is how-for-do; all men are the same; and a whole baggage of other foolishnesses like that (Achebe, 1988, p. 87-88).

Beatrice possesses all the earmarks of a modern woman scared by marriage, pursuing an idealist philosophy. In her every woman realizes her worth and ambition and sees a prospect ahead without thinking that gender is a hindrance. This hindrance is there in Achebe's early works where women kowtow or kneel down to receive a cup of palm wine from men, but it has been eliminated by both the author and his female characters. Daduot (2010, p. 4) strongly supports this view and therefore writes:

Dans son premier roman: *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe par exemple, y évoque l'image de la femme surmise et passive. Mais dans son *Girls at War*, le personnage féminin change de statut. Pour prouver leur atouts socio-politiques, nous voyons Augusta qui s'engage au commerce pour s'approprier le pouvoir politique. Plus tard et après plus de trente ans, Chinua Achebe dans *Anthills of the Savannah*, suggère que la femme n'est plus derrière l'homme.

In his maiden novel: *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe, for example, evokes the subdued and passive woman. But in his *Girls at War*, the female character changes its status. To prove their social-cultural awareness we notice Augusta, who gets involved in some trade in order to have economic power and Gladys, who challenges the powers that be. Later and after more than thirty years, Chinua Achebe in *Anthills of the Savannah* suggests that the woman is no more behind the man.

Henri Lopes's Wali in *La Nouvelle Romance* abandons her marriage with Bienvenu midstride in protest against the stifling intents behind such union, which is in bad odour with her noble aspirations. She shrugs it off and travels to Paris for further studies. A little longer she becomes militant in the struggle for women's liberation. In this quote she specifies her objectives very clearly:

Je rentrerai un jour. Non pour démontrer que nous sommes aussi 'intelligent' que les hommes, que nous sommes capables d'avoir autant de

diplômes (ce serait prendre le problème par le mauvais but) mais pour engager la lutte, dussé-je être jetée en prison ou en mourir. Ce sera long, mais l'issue en est assuré (Iloh, 2010, p. 6).

I will return one day not to show that we are as 'intelligent' as men, that we are capable of obtaining as many diplomas as they do (that will be taking on the problem from the wrong angle) but facing the battle, should I be thrown into prison or die there. That will be longer, but the fact of it is certain.

Achebe's women have the attributes of men and assume roles assigned to men by culture and society. The author moreover inculcates this sense of responsibility, high cognitive function and discretionary abilities in them, which are apparently lacking in their male counterparts in the novel; a swap of duty of a sort. Beatrice exhibits powerful insights for which Chris addresses her as a priestess or prophetess. She is in that mood when she reveals to Chris the impending danger dangling like the sword of Damocles around the necks of their clique members, namely: Beatrice herself, Chris and Ikem. And this observation proves flawless in the end.

And I see trouble building up for us. It will get to Ikem first. No joking, Chris. He will be the precursor to make straight the way. But after him it will be you.

We are all in it, Ikem, you, me and even Him. The thing is no longer a joke. As my father used to say, it is no longer a dance you can dance carrying your snuff in one cupped hand. You and Ikem must quickly patch up this ridiculous thing between you that nobody has ever been able to explain to me (Achebe, 1988, p. 114–115).

Actually, the Kangan 'troika' of Sam, Ikem and Chris (Achebe, 1988, p. 202), who illuminate not this depth of percipience rather appear as a foolish triumvirate looking for trouble in an already volatile and crisis-ridden state forgetting that "This world belongs to the people of the world not to any little caucus, no matter how talented... And particularly absurd when it is not even talented" (Achebe, 1988, p. 232). Comfort and Beatrice's bosom friend demonstrates this same perspicacity in dealing with her fiancé. According to Beatrice she (Comfort) is "a more sensible and attractive person you never saw" (Achebe, 1988, p. 88). She discovers that the man she wishes to marry is unimaginative and does not understand a proverb used by his aunt to disparage them while on a visit to his village. Her love for him vanishes on their return to town and she pushes him out of her flat. Instead of a man to sack a woman he

considers no longer good for him, it is now the other way round, a reversal of roles in *Anthills of the Savannah*. We see the women in the novel hire and live in their own flats and accommodate their lovers. Beatrice as one has all the accessories which include a good job in the Ministry to set life in motion, a paid House Help (Agatha) and a private car to tidy it up. It is noted that "Achebe's re-visioning especially in the positive image conferred on women marks a willingness to espouse a change." (Udumukwu, 2007, p. 311). Chimamanda Adichie in *Half of a Yellow Sun* expounds a powerful version of feminism that is similar to that in *Anthills of the Savannah*. Nnolim (2009, p. 52) recounts that:

Adichie began this novel by leaving behind us the preoccupation of African women writers in the twentieth century: feminism. The women she creates are no longer there to carry foo-foo and soup to men discussing "important matters". They have been empowered by education so that at Odenigbo's parties, they hold their own among world-class intellectuals, like Odenigbo, Dr Patel, Professor Ezeketa, Professor Lehman. The two central female characters, Olanna and Kainene have been educated abroad and Lara Adebayo is no pushover. The women we encounter share complete equality with their male counterparts.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the gender of Elewa's child is a testimony that Achebe has made up his mind to be on the side of change by abandoning male chauvinism for female chauvinism. In the past, he would prefer a male to emphasize its centrality in the continuity of procreation potentials of an average Igbo and African man beyond his present life. The naming of the child conducted outside folk tradition by Beatrice and other women would constitute a taboo in normal circumstances; here it is seen as normal. Moreover, that the baby girl, with an opening as it is said in traditional setting, is called a sensitive male name, "Amaechina: May-the-Path-never-Close" (Achebe, 1988, p. 222) could be interpreted as worse abomination. The fact of this matter is plain in the shock expressed by Elewa's uncle and mother:

This baby has already received its name. She is called Amaechina.
The old people were visibly stunned. The man recovered first and asked:
who gave her the name?
All of us here, said Beatrice
All of you here, repeated the old man.
All of you are her father?
Yes, and mother.

You young people, said the old man.

What you will bring this world to is pregnant and nursing a baby at the same time... (Achebe, 1988, p. 225–226)

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Achebe's aim is to reconstruct the Igbo world view by suggesting we should turn to matriarchy as a viable alternative. Though strange, it sounds possible in *Anthills of the Savannah*. The proposition is epitomized in Beatrice's native name: Nwanyibuife (A woman is somebody). Certainly, it is an axiom merely looking at the virtues of Beatrice. Her comportment especially the ability to manage crises that ensued after the death of Ikem and Chris speaks volume. Her ability to pull Agatha back into the fold after the latter's misbehaviour over the feeding of Elewa's daughter is astonishing because of the reason that informs the action. The time is not auspicious for women to quarrel among themselves rather it is the time of unity of purpose for them to forge a united front in the face of tragedies. This especially calls for forgiveness. This is her magic. Even Elewa has a place in this quantum leap despite her low estate and poor educational background. That she is able to endear herself to a highly placed man like Ikem is an indication that there is something desirable in her person. Beatrice observes that and remarks:

A half-literate sales-girl in a shop owned by an Indian; living in one room with a petty-trader mother deep in the slums of Bassa. Why had she not got sour? Why did she radiate this warmth and attraction and self-respect and confidence? Why did it seem so natural to install her in the spare bedroom and not like Agatha, in the servant quarters? She was Ikem's girl, true. But was that all? And how come Ikem singled her out in the first place to be his girl from the millions just as unlucky as herself? There was something in her that even her luckless draw could not remove (Achebe, 1988, p. 184).

Like mercury in U-tube capillaries one would say, Achebe has caused female chauvinism to rise at one end while male chauvinism drops so low at the other. Hence, "it is now up to you women to tell us what has to be done" (Achebe, 1988, p. 184). No doubt, the romantic universe of the novel suffers imbalance and tilts toward women and the diffused phallus surrenders. Men now taunt themselves before women do them. At the instance of Beatrice's question, they own up easily:

...what does a man know about a child anyway that he should presume to give it a name...?

Nothing except that his wife told him he is the father, said Abdul, causing much laughter.

Na true my brother, said Braimoh.

Na women de come tell man say na him born the child. Then the man begin make *inyanga* and begin answer father. Na *yéyé* father we be (Achebe, 1988, p. 222–223).

Achebe deliberately expresses this caricature in pidgin English to symbolize the base status of manhood in the novel and perhaps in the referent world.

Conclusion

Anthills of the Savannah in the denunciation of male chauvinism is a grand narrative which forces men to confess their oppression of women and so it dispels the cloud of the age-old oppressive and suffocating denigration of the female gender. It is a new vista in the reconfiguration of the social gender sets in favour of women. This is aimed at inspiring women in Africa to rise to the challenge of national emancipation. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the author, Chinua Achebe assigns a new role to women as compensation for their losses in the lopsided dizzying height of chauvinism that plays out in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. The new responsibility is not that of the last resort as it used to be, a spare tyre on a rescue mission. It is that of a major player in the herculean task of social transformation and preservation of humanity. In line with this, Achebe (1988, p. 98) outlines the ancient roles that do not matter in the current dispensation:

Nneka, they said. Mother is supreme. Let us keep her in reserve until the ultimate crisis arrives and the waist is broken and hung over the fire and the palm bears its fruit at the tail of its leave. Then, as the world crashes around man's ears, woman in her supremacy will descend and sweep the shards together.

However, Achebe's gender philosophy is lacking at any time in equilibrium given the fact that he roves from one extreme of chauvinism to the other while the modern world searches for gender equality. He caps it with the brazen deflation of phallogocentric motivations manhood enjoys in his other novels apart from *Anthills of the Savannah*. Therefore a location of his gender ideology within a continuum would give him

a better focus and a well deserved and permanent liberation from the schizoid paranoia of chauvinistic partisanship. In spite of all these, Achebe is but set to make a statement and only those who are following closely his career history and aspirations could fathom it. Like a rat nibbles at cheese, he romances a particular reward in this epic novel. The author seeks redefinition of the genres with a view to creating a new hierarchy that perhaps never existed before. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the story telling art which is essentially prose is given a pride of place. Achebe demonstrates his apology for prose genre by drawing attention to the failure of drama and poetry in the novel. After all, dictatorship, which is the other side of *Anthills of the Savannah*, is both dramatic and poetic given its associated tension, suspense and sensationalism that are melodramatic apart from its seeming incomprehensibility that is quasi-poetic. In this bargain, Chris Oriko's escape is woven around a dramatic sketch and this is proven when the author, Achebe (1988, p. 188) admits that "...for even in his harried run Chris had still left himself scope for heightening the drama of the chase." To this end, it has its dramatic paraphernalia intact as Chris is billed to act as a poor man which he is naturally not (imitation); his costumes are Braimoh's threadbare clothes and cap; a couple of stain patches to bring blemish to his highbrow personality, robust flesh and ruddy cheeks. His companion in the journey, Emmanuel Obete puts on a *soutane*. Braimoh in addition gives Chris two kola nuts to munch and he is meant to speak pidgin English and all these constitute the stage management and props and whatever he needs to continue to act and disguise in the course of the journey to Abazon. Suddenly, a stroke of fate comes against these sketches of imaginary theatre and it ends in a fiasco to justify what Braimoh has said in that earlier dialogue between him and Chris.

Me Commissioner? Not at all. Na small small motor parts na him I de sell. Original and Taiwan.

Ehe! Talkam like that. No shaky-shaky mouth again. But oga you see now, to be big man no hard but to be poor man no be small thing. Na proper wahala.

No be so?

Na so I see-o. I know no before today say to pass for small man you need to go special college (Achebe, 1988, p. 194).

Chinua Achebe cites Ikem's poem, already discussed, in which the April Sun is portrayed as a "Pillar of Fire" and symbol of oppression.

Before long, it is worthy to note that there is a common notion that Achebe raises his language to a poetic level in *Anthills of the Savannah*. This fiery language corresponds to the fiery nature of poetry. This fire, poetry razes down the savannah and is therefore conceived as evil. The fire and the poetry are metaphors of men and male chauvinism and violent revolution which they stand for. In line with this, this poetry of revolution leads to the path of death and the poet, the man is the victim; and Achebe's stance is that violent revolutions make a new set of skulking and lurking oppressors to emerge, so there is no true freedom in them:

The sweeping, majestic visions of people rising victorious like a tidal wave against their oppressors and transforming their world with theories and slogans into a new heaven and a new earth of brotherhood, justice and freedom are at best grand illusions. The rising, conquering tide, yes; but the millennium after-wards, no! New oppressors will have been readying themselves secretly in the undertow long before the tidal wave got really going (Achebe, 1988, p. 99).

Achebe, for this reason, advises that slow and steady reforms nurtured by patience bear lasting fruit of freedom and they are the sign of discretion and subtlety. These are salient and sublime qualities which the female characters in the novel, who tell the story of the tragedies, radiate. All in all, Achebe's intents in *Anthills of the Savannah* might not be construed as contempt for other literary genres, but one thing is certain—the prose genre is supreme in his account and raised to an Olympian height.

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Women, the Informal Economy and the State in Lesotho

ABSTRACT. Poor women in Lesotho endure a triple jeopardy of exploitation by patriarchy, capitalism and the state. To escape from this jeopardy increasing numbers of poor women are entering the informal economy, which is increasingly becoming the major dynamic and expanding sector of the economy. Becoming informal entrepreneurs has not only financially empowered women, but has also subverted traditional patriarchal gender power relations. This paper, based on a critical field survey, considers the experience of women in the informal sector, changes in gender and class relations and the contribution of the informal economy to national development. The paper shows that the informal economy is a contested terrain in which kinship values of the economy of affection coexist in dynamic tension with those of primitive capitalism, and that the patriarchal and weak state is the major obstacle to poor women's emancipation. It concludes that, since the informal economy is the only vehicle for poor women's empowerment, policy must optimize the benefits of the informal sector while limiting its excesses.

KEYWORDS: development, emancipation, empowerment, enterprising, formal sector, gender inequality, informal economy, patriarchy, policy, women, state, traders

Introduction

Lesotho, an enclave economy completely surrounded by South Africa (SA), is grappling with an economic crisis of considerable proportions. The crisis is characterized by rising unemployment, poverty, crime, disease, violence and political instability. Since 1987 nearly 60 per cent of the population has lived below the national poverty datum line, and "there has been a persistent fall in household income as indicated by GNP per capita" (Mapetla & Petlane, 2007, p. 73). The 1980–90s International Monetary Fund (IMF) economic reforms, the retrenchments, the privatization programme, the streamlining of bureaucracy divestiture (Makoa, 1996) and drought and floods have compounded the situation. The country's heavy dependency on SA and foreign aid has limited its capacity and policy options for addressing the mounting crisis. In response to the continuing crisis, increasing numbers of poor women are taking the initiative to solve

their economic problems by engaging in informal entrepreneurship. Today, and as in most developing countries, women constitute a majority in the informal sector and the majority of economically active women are in this sector (Women in the Informal Economy Global Organization, WIEGO, 2003). Located within the dynamic interaction of global economic processes and local development politics, the informal sector is a hybrid arrangement which is numerically dominated by women, and in which trade rather than production is the main economic activity.

The resurgence of a women majority informal economy raises fundamental questions: Which of the many feminist and development theories best capture the essence of the processes unfolding in Lesotho's 'feminine' informal sector? Does the informal sector contribute to national growth and development, and if yes to what extent? What is the relationship of the formal sector to the formal economy and the state? Finally, what kind of policies will best promote women's emancipation as well as give a positive form to the informal sector? These are difficult questions, and only tentative answers are attempted here, if only to invite further debate.

Qualitative in orientation, it is based on a critical field survey and secondary literature, which reveal subtle connections and processes that point to a restructuring of the politics of gender and development and the emergence of new gender and class relations. Specifically, the paper argues that, because of its easy entry requirements, the informal economy is the only route by which poor women can escape from patriarchal control and poverty. In addition to improving the human security of women informal traders and their families, the informal sector has also given women an economic base for supporting their struggle for gender equality and political visibility. Translated into political power, women's financial independence has led to a fundamental reconfiguration of gender power relations. Yet, the informal economy has also reproduced some of the worst excesses of capitalism and patriarchy. The paper concludes that, women informal traders are important agents of change and development, and therefore public policy should be re-oriented to assist them and give a positive form to their efforts.

Background and Context

Notwithstanding official policy pronouncements to promote gender equality, women continue to endure gender inequality and discrimination in Lesotho. Mapetla and Petlane (2007, p. 30-31) observe, 'unequal

gender relations' remain "a common feature of Lesotho society, in both the private and public spheres". Women remain a subordinate 'second sex', conspicuous by their absence in positions of power and influence. The predominantly male ruling elite have used state power largely to protect its narrow political and economic interest. To fight against this political and economic marginalisation women have turned to the informal economy. But, because "Lesotho does not have an informal sector policy despite rapid growth of the sector in the past two decades" Mapetla & Petlane (2007, p. 78) the full potential of women informal entrepreneurs remains unrealized. As in much of Africa, the state in Lesotho is unable to adequately advance the human security and welfare of its citizens and to provide them with adequate employment, education and health. With only water as the 'most significant natural resource', which is exported to SA, the Basotho state is a weak state with limited resources and options.

The State in Lesotho

The state in Lesotho is not only fragile, but is also at the centre of the crisis of underdevelopment, poverty and political instability. Since independence in 1966 there has been a vicious Machiavellian struggle among the elite to capture, control and consolidate state power and use it to subdue opponents. Mapetla and Petlane (2007, p. 13) aptly put it:

This dynamic has included three coups d'état (in 1970, 1986 & 1984) and twenty three years of undemocratic government, including seven years of military rule. The last ten years of democratic restoration (1993–2003) have seen the establishment of a virtual one-party state.

The most recent coup attempt was in 2014, and it was the intervention of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) that averted the deterioration of politics into violence.

With political 'instability, controversy and conflict' becoming the main defining features of Lesotho's post-independence political landscape (Mapetla & Petlane, 2007) issues of gender equality and the informal economy are prioritized in policy formulation. Although weak in relation to other states and some international actors, the Basotho state is relatively powerful in relation to the weaker 'second sex' and the weaker 'second economy', and has indeed, through policy omissions

and/commissions, influenced their fate. For such a weak and unstable state prioritizing gender equality and the informal sector may seem a luxury but, as argued herein, gender equality and informal enterprising bolsters state security.

Women in the Literature

De Beauvoir (1964), the mother of modern feminism, made important distinctions between sex and gender, conceptualized women as ‘the other, second sex’, declared that one is not born, but rather becomes a woman, and that biology is not destiny. Her followers have splintered into different ideological schools, with conservative, liberal, Marxist/socialist, radical, environmental (ecofeminism)post-colonial, post-modern and cultural feminism vying for influence (Oyewumi, 2015; Butler, 2006; Ford, 2002 & Sow, 1997). None of these contending perspectives is entirely correct or wrong. Instead, they each give a partial picture of the far more complex reality of feminism and gender politics. The reality is, feminism has become a kaleidoscope of “many-faceted responses of a multitude of women wrestling with the question of self-determination, seeking social changes that will give them greater justice, power and dignity” (Keen, 1996, p. 195). Class, race, religion, ethnicity all combine in defining the forms which women’s struggle for gender equality take. Such complex and multi-layered struggles by women for emancipation are not amenable to mono-casual analysis. Accordingly, this paper is based on a critical synthesis of different and contending feminist perspectives.

Gender Relations in Lesotho

During the pre-colonial era, patriarchal traditions, idioms and ideologies restricted women’s participation in the public sphere, and instead forced them to remain invisible ‘workhorses’ of the household (Gill, 1997; Mueller & Martha, 1977). Leadership and entrepreneurship were qualities associated with masculinity, and only male children were nurtured to acquire and develop them, for they were expected to be household heads and breadwinners (Machobane, 1996 & Murray, 1997).

Rooted in political economy, the subjection of women was buttressed by patriarchal and religious ideologies and traditional institutions which define and / or limit the rights, options and possibilities available to women. The traditional unequal power relationship between the sexes was redefined, with ambiguous implications, during colonialism.

On the one hand British colonial rule, by guaranteeing the protection for the Paramount Chief, left gendered Basotho customs and institutions relatively intact, and today some ancient traditions still persist. On the other hand, and especially through Christianity, which today accounts for an overwhelming 80 per cent of Basotho people as compared to only 20 per cent who adhere to traditional beliefs (CIA, 2002), some changes in matrimonial law and gender relations were introduced. For example, Christianity freed women from certain archaic and abusive traditional practices, such as genital mutilation, polygamy, forced marriages and total subservience to male relatives. Christianity, however, also entrenched certain aspects of gender domination and female subservience to males. For example, by elevating the husband to the unquestionable household head it further disempowered women. Similarly, by eroding the support mechanisms of the traditional extended family, kinship ties, and the 'economy of affection', colonialism exposed women to greater vulnerabilities and insecurities, and to "Western forms of sexism, which are often more oppressive to women than previously existing social relations" (Sacks, 1982, p. 1). In fact, as in the pre-colonial era, the sex division of labour at the economic level and the ideology of patriarchy at the political level continued to limit women's access to power.

Independence was attained in 1966, but it has not brought about fundamental changes in gender relations. Patriarchal in orientation, the state has pursued gender discriminatory employment practices which have resulted in massive under-representation of women in both the private and public sectors. For example, of the estimated 25 per cent to 35 per cent unemployment, 66,5 per cent are women (Mapetla & Petlane, 2007, p. 29). With such high levels of unemployment among women, and with 100 females for every 97.8 males in the population (Bureau of Statistics, 2003), the situation of poor women in Lesotho is dire. As in Swaziland, women continue to experience "unequal treatment in the political, economic, social, legal and cultural spheres because of systematic gender discrimination" (Nyawo & Nsiband, 2014, p. 47). The government seems ill-equipped to eradicate poverty, let alone deliver on its development plans to redress gender injustice, as promised, for

example, in the *Kingdom of Lesotho, Third Five-Year Development Plan, 1980–1985*. With their needs fading into policy insignificance, poor women were to join en masse the informal sector.

The Informal Economy

Since Hart (1971) coined the term ‘informal economy’, the status of this economy, its scope, features, contribution to development, relation to the formal economy and to the state, have been hotly contested issues. On the one hand, the informal economy is depicted as ‘the other path’ which offers the “promise of new income generating activities which would help the poor, ‘without any major threat’ to the rich” (Worsely, 1984, p. 210). From this optimistic perspective, the informal economy is supposed to further development because it is less capital intensive and less dependent on foreign exchange and technology than the formal economy; it’s supposed relative autonomy gives it further potential for expansion (MacGaffey, 1991).

On the other hand, the informal economy is denigrated as unhealthy, exploitative, repressive, bordering on illegality, and as harbouring criminals. Portes and Walton (1981) criticize the informal for exploitative and of subsidizing big capitalists of the mainstream economy; as a source of cheap goods and services for their labour force it allows them to pay extremely low wages. Others condemn it as a ‘sinkhole of exploitation’ (Preston-Whyte & Rogerson, 1991) that perpetuates underdevelopment. Yet others (Broomley, 1992). advance methodological objections: Why assume there are only two sectors? Are the formal and informal sectors really independent of each other? The reality is, whether its effects are good or bad, the informal economy, known variously as ‘underground’, ‘parallel’, ‘unrecorded’, ‘second’, ‘hidden’, ‘shadow’, ‘endogenous’, ‘irregular’, ‘alternative’, ‘unofficial’ or ‘black economy’ exists alongside official economic activities in most countries in the world (Keith, 1971; MacGaffey et al 1991; Preston-Whyte & Rogerson 1991).

Maseru’s informal economy is indeed flourishing and expanding rapidly, and it exhibits a more complex picture which defies rigid analytical categories. A closer look suggests that, in spite of its negative image and effects, the informal sector has immensely enhanced the human security of the traders, contributed to narrowing gender inequalities, and stimu-

lated economic growth and development. The relation of the informal economy to the formal economy, and to the state, is complex, and is sometimes cooperative and other times confrontational.

The Emergence, Expansion and Impact of the Informal Economy

Today the informal sector is the fastest growing sector of Lesotho's economy. Its history dates back to the pre-colonial era where 'the economy of affection'¹ and kinship ties were central to economic organization and production. Since formal economic systems and institutions are still embryonic in much of rural Africa, this informal mode of economic production and organization is being reproduced—especially by those emigrating from rural to urban areas, and who cannot find jobs—in urban areas at an alarming rate. Thus, unemployment and poverty have been the midwife for the emergence of this specific kind of capitalism. Dispossessed and disempowered through the dominant development models, poor women—and men—have flocked to the informal economy. The informal economy is attractive primarily because of its easy entry requirements: although decisive of one's chances of success and prosperity, capital, qualifications or experience are not required, and no protection is offered in the informal economy.

Women in the Informal Economy of Lesotho

The Maseru City Council (MCC)'s register of informal traders reveals that by the end of 2003 a total of 2 744 informal traders were operating legally in the city. These registered informal traders paid a fixed monthly fee to the city council, which varied according to the location of the market, security and facilities provided by MCC (MCC, 2003). The register further reveals that about 70 per cent of registered informal traders are women and only 30 per cent men. An official of the MCC explained it thus: "Men don't register" (MCC, 2003). Indeed, some men informal traders do not

¹ Economy of affections means trade relations are tempered by love, that is, unlike under strict capitalist trade where you get only what you pay for, buyers are often given a little extra portion, partly to lure them into becoming regular customers. In this economy, kinsmen do not always exchange their labour for a wage; sometimes they just do some jobs for free, to help out of love.

register but, however, from the survey 65 per cent of informal traders are women. Why are women a weak majority in Lesotho's informal sector?

The numerical domination of the informal economy by women can be traced back to the discovery of gold in the Transvaal in the 1870s when Basotho men started seeking employment in South African mines, leaving their wives behind in the rural areas to endure rural poverty and economic insecurity. Rural poverty forced some of the women to migrate to urban areas where they engaged in informal economic activities. According to the Bureau of Statistics (2003, p. 51), past influences of fertility, mortality and migration have also contributed to this gender bias in the informal sector. For every 100 females there are 97.8 males in the age groups of 5–34 years in urban areas, and this could be due to higher male mortality and emigration as well as of net female migration from rural to urban areas (Bureau of Statistics, 2003).

In addition to past influences and migrations, the gender discriminatory policies and practices of both the public and private sectors have further contributed to forcing women into the informal sector. For example, while in the economically active group there are more females than males in the urban centres (Bureau of Statistics, 2003), the sexist ideology of the state encourages the employment of males in both the public and private sectors. As the Bureau of Statistics (2003) point out, although "literacy levels, school attendance, and level of education completed are higher for females than for males... labour force participation rates, at one in two males and one in four females, were much lower for females than for males". Similarly, long-term unemployment is higher for females than for males and higher at older ages than at younger ones; after the ages 50 years unemployed females are unlikely to ever obtain employment (Bureau of Statistics, 2003). Consequently, "females are about three times as likely as males to be economically dependent, just as males are twice as likely as females to be heads of households" (Bureau of Statistics, 2003). As more women join the informal economy and become economically independent, these figures are slowly changing.

Who are the Informal Traders?

The opportunity structure provided by the urban economy conditioned the processes of informal entrepreneurship. Housewives, single mothers, widowers, pensioners, and unemployed youth constitute the

majority of informal traders. Retrenched male workers have also sought refuge in this sector. Although some criminal and illegal activities do occur in the informal economy, the majority of female informal traders are innocent citizens trying to eke out a living. Most informal traders come from the lower social classes. Some are happy working in the informal sector while others dislike their work, 56 and 44 per cent respectively according to Shea (2003). The majority of women traders are sole owners of their businesses and, according to Kotelo (2003), about 70 per cent of female informal traders are sole breadwinners, while the remaining 30 per cent are either supplementing their family's incomes or searching for profits. Below is a schematic discussion of the demographic attributes of a sample of 100 female informal traders of Maseru city.

Table 1. Age of Informal Traders

Age	Percentage
10-19	4
20-29	49
30-39	23
40-49	16
50 and above	8

As Table 1 above indicates, 49 per cent of informal traders are within their twenties. This suggests that youth and recent school leavers are failing to get formal employment. Given the universal early marriage in Lesotho, in which 48 and 47 per cent of males and females, respectively, aged 15 years and over are married (Bureau of Statistics, 2001), this age group is comprised of young parents who have young dependent children, and who therefore have more pressing financial needs.

Table 2. Education of Informal Traders

Education	Percentage
None	6
Primary	58
Junior Secondary	26
High School	10
Total	100

At 58 per cent, the majority of women informal traders have only attained primary education. Yet, education is the major determinant of the type of informal enterprise that one engages in, and hence the incomes earned and chances of success. Women with high school education tend to engage in more sophisticated businesses such, as for example, confectionery, which are more financially rewarding, while the uneducated mostly engage in less rewarding businesses such as, selling vegetables.

Table 3. Marital Status of Informal Traders

Marital Status	Percentage
Single	34
Married	55
Widowed	7
Divorced	2
Separated	2
Total	100

At 55 per cent, and as in Mafeteng (Kotelo (2003)), the majority of informal traders in Maseru are married women. Why? First, having been retrenched, their husbands can no longer adequately provide for their families. Second, some women need to supplement their husbands' poor wages. Third, others have absentee and irresponsible husbands who spend all their earnings on beer and other women. Finally, the patriarchal control of resources within the household force some women to find ways of income generating to cater for things—such as hairdressing and manicure—not deemed essential by their husbands.

Motives for Informal Trading

The immediate motives for starting informal business ranged from the need for basic survival, supplementing income to making profit and generating wealth. The overwhelming majority of respondents cited poverty and failure to get decent formal jobs as the reason for starting informal trading. When the motive is survival, the entrepreneurs tend to

be content with just enough income to survive, and often when the target is met business closes. If profit is the motive, often the working hours are longer, and the potential for growth greater.

Sources of Capital

Dispossessed and without capital, the majority of informal traders are not eligible for bank loans as they have no collateral. Demonstrating the resilience of kinship ties and the economy of affection, 44 per cent of the respondents got initial capital from relatives and another 10 per cent from friends and lovers. Out of the 44 per cent, and as evidence of the gender-based economic imbalances, 18 per cent were wives who got money from their husbands. A significant proportion of women had used savings from the poorly paying Chinese garment factories (Baylis & Wright 1993). In a nutshell, different women in the informal sector got initial capital to start off with from different sources, and these reflected their social status, personal histories and networks.

Sources of Goods: The Formal/Informal Divide—A False Dichotomy?

Virtually all the goods traded in the informal sector are obtained from the formal economy, either from wholesalers in Maseru city or SA. To this extent the informal sector provides a ready market for the formal sector. Second, some goods being sold on the formal market are acquired from the informal economy, for example beef from cattle rustling and smuggled electronic gadgets. Third, most of the customers of informal traders are poorly paid workers in the formal sector, and thus the informal sector is subsidizing the formal sector. Clearly, the informal economy and the formal economy mutually feed on each other, and the dichotomy between them should not be exaggerated.

Challenges of Informal Trading

Informal traders face a host of challenges that adversely affect their operations. These challenges include, stiff competition and low incomes, harassment by the MCC police, the perishability of goods, the failure by

debtors to repay, and rising transport costs. Stiff competition within the informal sector, and with formal business, is considered the most serious challenge. Contrary to classical economic theory, which posits that competition leads to efficiency and better quality goods and services, in the informal economy competition leads to many other things such as: unviable under-pricing; negotiating and reducing prices on the spot; sweet-talking customers; conflict among traders; the use of magic and witchcraft; moving from place to place; barter trading; selling goods in the smallest possible quantities; working for longer hours; and selling to people who come from the same village. Clearly, some of the strategies, such as working late, are not only too dangerous for women, but also impractical for women as they need to go home early to attend to household chores. In short, fierce competition means that 'business ceases to be profitable' and incomes fall.

The second major problem is low and falling incomes, which is a result of competition and falling disposal incomes in the formal sector. The incomes earned per day vary considerably from nothing to over US\$60, and this depends primarily on the type of goods being traded. Goods with high value added could fetch as much as, or even more than, middle income earners in the civil service. While clothes fetch more money, sales from clothing per day are usually low as many people buy clothes at month ends, and often in bigger shops. Food, fruit and vegetables, unlike clothes, are bought on a daily basis, but for much lower prices. Partly due to the traditional gender division of labour, and partly due to their lack of skills and previous experience, most women sell raw goods, such as food and vegetables, which fetch small or no profits.

The third challenge facing informal traders is harassment by municipal police. According to one informal trader:

The MCC police is our major threat, because it wants us to move from this place. But we do not know where to go, for the market place (built by the government) is full.

Another street vendor commented thus:

The government and the MCC are removing us from the streets because they do not want the visiting SADC heads of states and governments to see the abject poverty we are experiencing in this country (Thakalekoala, 2003, p. 2).

Whenever the MCC police raid the vendors, the confiscated items are rarely returned, often leading to a total collapse of business.

On its part the MCC (2003) accuses informal traders of not cooperating with the government:

If informal traders cooperate with the council Lesotho would, like Botswana, develop rapidly. But unfortunately, the informal traders of Maseru like spending their time striking and rioting.

Such clashes and counter-accusations are counter-productive. Efforts should instead be directed towards building mutual trust and a new economic contract between the state and informal traders. In addition to the police harassment, fellow traders fight, steal or destroy rivals' goods (Kotelo, 2003).

The fourth most common problem is the perishability of goods, such as, vegetables and food, which result in heavy losses. Most informal traders sell the same type of goods, especially vegetables, and the glut in the market means that some of these goods deteriorate in quality before being sold. When that happens, informal traders undersell their products or simply throw them away, either way incurring losses. Since the provision of cold rooms seems a remote possibility, perhaps traders should aim at diversification into inexpensive non-perishable goods.

The fifth problem, which is a constant threat, and which can lead into bankruptcy, is defaulting clients and debtors. Business and contract law are all meant to deal with such problems, but applying these laws in the informal economy is almost impractical, for contract documents and transaction receipts are usually non-existent. In demanding payment, some men informal traders resort to using physical force, an option not available to most women traders. In short, informal traders face numerous challenges, and they have turned to the government for assistance.

Informal Traders' Demands

Informal traders have made numerous demands to the government. In order of priority, these include: business loans; safe markets; jobs creation; study and training scholarships; mediation between MCC and informal traders; subsidies for informal traders; and a ban on supermarkets from selling certain goods. Informal traders want business loans because lack of capital is the major obstacle facing these aspiring 'capitalists without capital'. Without capital these barefooted capitalists will not be able to graduate into fully fledged entrepreneurs. Remedial policy

should therefore aim at providing credit facilities to women informal traders.

Safe and sheltered markets were needed, for poor shelter attracted thieves, and in rainy weather goods were damaged and business disrupted. The sheltered market built by the city council for informal traders in the city periphery was always empty. Informal traders were reluctant to use it because it was located 'too far away from customers', and hence not good for business. While building a market for informal traders was a noble idea, democratic consultation between the MCC and informal traders was necessary to ensure that the practical needs of both parties were met.

The calls for the creation of more formal jobs suggest that some informal traders were in the sector as a temporary stop-gap measure, hoping to get a formal job at some point in the future; this attitude partly explains the less than optimum operation of the sector. The creation of more formal jobs would decongest the informal sector, reduce competition and therefore ensure reasonable returns. But Lesotho is flying in the opposite direction as the reforms, retrenchments, privatization and bureaucratic streamlining are creating more unemployment. Thus unless there is a change of direction, the quest for more jobs will always remain a far cry from this unforgiving reality.

Informal traders wanted study and training scholarships because poor education and the lack of necessary business skills limited their developmental potential. In the contemporary informational era, application of knowledge—based information is an indispensable ingredient of success in any business venture. In order to prepare good plans, invest wisely and grow rich, informal traders need to apply knowledge-based business systems, which they can only acquire through further education and training.

Informal traders also demanded that government intervene to end confrontation between the MCC police and informal traders, which cause destruction of property and injuries to people. The regular running battles between informal traders and the MCC police demonstrate that the reciprocal expectations of informal traders, as citizens, and the state are frustrated. Policy should therefore aim at harmonizing the needs of informal traders and the interests of the state.

Some informal traders felt the government should subsidize them in order to enable them to sell their goods at prices affordable to the poorest. Nothing demonstrates the extent to which the reciprocal

expectations of informal traders and the state are at odds than this naïve hope, instead of subsidizing informal traders the state wants to tax them and suppress their activities.

The demand expressed by a small minority that government should ban supermarkets from selling certain goods sold by informal traders is not only unacceptable in free market economy like Lesotho, but also reflects the extent to which informal traders have rather misplaced faith in the government, which panders to big capital. Perhaps informal traders should specialize in areas where they have a comparative advantage. In short, although some demands of informal traders are unrealistic, others could be addressed through policy that builds on the synergies between the formal and informal economy and that promotes gender equality.

The Informal Economy and Gender Transformation

Epprecht (2000) in a title of his book on Lesotho asks: *Is This Matter of Women Getting Bad?* The dynamics of the informal economy have made this matter even more complex and ambiguous. On the one hand, with more and more women informal traders enjoying enhanced human security, increased financial independence, and more political power, things seem to be getting better. Yet, on the other hand, things are getting worse, as patriarchal stereotypes and the worst excesses of capitalism are reproduced in the informal economy.

The 'matter' seems to be getting better for a number of reasons. First, the fact that a significant proportion of women are now active in the informal economy is a revolution in itself, for in the past women were looked after by their male relatives. Second, and related, incomes from the informal sector have improved the human security and welfare of traders and their families. Women in the informal sector are using their income to buy food and clothes, pay rent, school fees, tuition and pay for leisure. Remarkably, some are even managing to send their children to university. Were it not for incomes from the informal sector many more would be hungry, poorer and destitute or even criminals or sex workers.

Third, increased access to income has reduced women informal traders' risks of dependency on men, and has given them some financial autonomy. As Ntabeni-Bhebe (2011), an enterprising woman, asserts, financial independence is what every woman needs. Not dependent on

men for their basic needs, some women informal traders are now more in control of their lives and incomes.

Forth, access to income has helped women increase their decision making powers within their households, and to reverse some traditional gender roles. Remarkably, and suggesting a reconfiguration of power between the sexes, an overwhelming 88 per cent of women informal traders said they decide for themselves what to do with their incomes; only 10 per cent decide together with their partners. Some women have become household heads. This is a radical departure from traditional patriarchal practices, which made it men's prerogative to make decisions on such important household matters. In a related radical gender role reversal, about 6 per cent of women informal traders claimed to be supporting their husbands with their incomes. In yet other cases of gender role reversal, successful women informal traders employed men as body guards and chauffeurs.

Fourth, women's new economic opportunities have helped them forge new social identities which centre around work, fashion and leisure, and which are based on class and western cultures. Reflecting the new autonomous identities, young women spend a significant proportion of their incomes on cosmetics, fashionable clothes and pleasure.

In short, as women responded to their situation not as passive victims but as active agents of change, there has been a remarkable improvement in their position vis-à-vis men. In particular, the informal economy has helped liberalize gender relations by forcing men, formerly the sole breadwinners and household heads, to let go and allow women to be bread winners and house-hold heads too. Emboldened by their new incomes, women are becoming more assertive in demanding equal rights and in redefining their identity. Such radical changes which empower women and enhance gender equality constitute a 'quiet gender revolution'. Yet, at the same time, especially through the acceleration of social differentiation, divisions among women, and the reproduction of some traditional gender stereotypes, women are being disempowered.

Social Differentiation and Division

The informal economy, while offering promises of emancipation for women, has also disempowered them by accelerating social differentiation and divisions among women. With some women bringing in skills and

savings from previous jobs, and others bringing nothing, the informal economy is both a site for accumulation of wealth and pauperization, social differentiation and class formation. Wealth acquired through the informal economy has led to the emergence of new small strata of the *nouveau riche*, which lives in relative opulence. This small but growing group is comprised of women informal traders in the more lucrative businesses such as, dressmaking, confectioneries, hairdressing, and food. The newly rich capitalists are building new houses in Maseru's sprawling suburbs, driving posh cars, and spending time and money in leisure activities – eating out, drinking, partying and 'braaiing' (barbequing). Such ostentatious enjoyment of the good life by a small minority of wealthy women should not blind us to the glaring gender inequalities in the larger society.

While rich women dine, wine and party, poor women eke out a marginal existence in the run-down neighbourhoods of Maseru. Although sharing the same geographical space, the life styles, tastes and habits of the upper class women are worlds apart from those of their poorer compatriots who live in squalor. To this extent, the informal economy has contributed to dividing and disempowering women along class lines. As Ford (2002, p. 1) put it aptly:

Just because women share sex-linked biological characteristics with one another does not mean that they embrace a single understanding of gender equality nor does it mean that they possess a group identity or group consciousness as women in a way that easily translates into political action.

The informal economy, by offering some increased incomes and prosperity, while offering others low and falling incomes, has contributed to the amplification of class divisions among women.

Traditional Gender Stereotyping

Notwithstanding their numerical superiority, women continue to face considerable traditional and cultural, economic and political barriers to effective participation in the informal sector and to free expression of their minds. Even though women numerically dominate the informal sector, men control the more lucrative business ventures in this resurgent sector. Paradoxically, patriarchal stereotyping, traditional representations of femininity and masculinity are being simultaneously challenged and reproduced in the informal sector. For example, and

reflecting the difficulties of overcoming patriarchal stereotypes, women are still expected to remain in the kitchen, cook and care for their families, perform tasks designated as feminine and be submissive to men. Independent, strong and successful women entrepreneurs who defy these stereotypes are often described as, 'she is a man in her own right', and stereotyped as 'unwomanly'. Similarly, the worst excesses of capitalism, such as crude oppression and super exploitation of workers, working under unhealthy and unsafe conditions, lack of employments benefits (pension, medical aid, leave etc) and poor customer care, are being reproduced with immunity in the informal sector. In short, while providing livelihood to many and giving women an unprecedented opportunity for challenging traditional gender power imbalances, the informal sector is also a site for wealth accumulation, social differentiation among women and reproduction of traditional gender stereotypes.

Implications for Feminist and Development Theory

Liberal, post-colonial and radical feminist theories tend to portray woman as a homogenous analytical category and to depict the informal economy negatively. These dominant theories cannot adequately account for the unfolding changes and models of development in the informal sector. Not only are they gender insensitive, but they also focus only on formal economic activities, the state, visible political institutions, and high profile public projects. For example, the modernization theories of the 1960s, which have largely informed post-colonial development policy in Africa, dismisses the informal economy as the 'traditional sector' which resists change and therefore an obstacle to development (Huntington, 1968). The truth is, women informal traders are not only embracing change, technology and new ways of doing business, for example, by using cell-phones and the internet to promote their businesses technology, but are also active agents of change. Marxists stress class conflict as the locomotive for social change, but Basotho women are not only united and divided by class, but also by age, education and religion, among others.

Similarly, the negative images of the informal sector reflected in its depiction—by officialdom, especially government bureaucrats only interested in tax collection—as a 'black economy', 'shadow' or 'sinkhole of exploitation' are not completely justified. As we have seen, informal traders are having a positive impact on society, the economy and national

development. In particular, they are contributing immensely to human and state security. Thus discourses dismissing and denigrating the women dominated informal sector seem to have a deliberate power agenda of entrenching the status quo, in which the unemployed poor are permanently disempowered. Also the negative connotations attached to the informal sector and traders can disadvantage and disempower them in many ways. To start with, informal traders do not get the recognition, reward and respect they deserve for the important work they are doing of enhancing human and state security. Furthermore, because of the negative stereotype, informal traders have difficulties in applying for bank loans. Even worse still, although they are important agents of change, informal traders are not prioritized in public policy, but are instead on the receiving end of policy. In short, the naming and labelling of informal traders in negative ways reflects an imbalance in power relations between the dominant male elite that controls the state and the subjugated poor females.

In summation, women informal traders in Lesotho are unique, and their situation is too complex to be amenable to mono-causal analysis. No doubt, the informal sector is more than just a 'traditional sector' that resists development or a 'sinkhole of exploitation'. Instead, the sector is the major source of hope and livelihood sustenance for poor women who seek financial freedom and who wish to free themselves from being prisoners of corporate capital. In the context of continuing economic crisis, limited natural resources, local retrenchments and rising unemployment, one cannot over-emphasize the benefits to society of the informal economy. Yet, the macro-economic environment in which informal traders operate continue to impose considerable constraints on their operations, expansion and contribution to development. Without a supportive policy framework, Lesotho's 'daughters will continue to bleed'. Therefore, the challenge is to create, through policy re-orientation, an enabling environment that promotes gender equality and unleashes the potential of the informal sector.

Policy Options: Empowering Women Through Informal Enterprising

Since women account for over half Lesotho's population, development would be incomplete, and even inconceivable, without gender equality. Gender inequality endangers not only the health and welfare of women,

but also of their families and society. Further, since the majority of economically active women are in the informal sector, society cannot develop or be democratic if these women do not have full economic and political rights. Women's economic rights are the key to unlocking Lesotho's future development: Economic "empowerment of women is the link between trade and development" (EmpowerWomen.org, 2015). As Joaquim Chissano, the former president of Mozambique and co-chair of the the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), stressed:

Women and girls are Africa's greatest untapped resource, and it is they, not diamonds or oil and minerals, that will be the foundation for solid, sustainable and equitable progress. ...Expanding the freedoms, the education and opportunities for women hold the key to kick-starting inclusive economic growth (NA, 2015, p. 45).

Remarkably, the 2015 African Union (AU) summit's theme was about empowering African women. Empowering women involves, as Dlamini-Zuma, the chairperson of the AU Commission declared, increasing women's representation in government, in the judiciary and other public and private institutions and their participation at the tables in peace negotiations (NA, 2015, p. 45)

First and foremost, remedial policy should identify the benefits of the informal sector, and on that basis, formulate a clear policy position on the sector. Some of the obvious benefits of the informal sector include: creating employment; providing incomes and livelihood for the poor; enhancing human security; creating wealth; contributing to national income and GDP; contributing to political stability and bolstering state security; supporting and subsidizing the formal sector; and entrenching the much needed entrepreneurial spirit and financial discipline. Yet, without assistance in accessing capital, technical know-how and the application of knowledge-based practices, the full potential of women informal traders will not be realized, and they may be doomed to 'boondoggling', that is, producing bad goods, with bad methods and tools and making bad returns (Lipkin & Gillis, 2000). Breaking this vicious circle of poverty demands a fundamental change in thinking about informal traders, from viewing them as a 'nuisance' to acknowledging them as entrepreneurs with a potential to contribute to national development. As Dewar and Watson (1991, 183) point out, there should be "a careful disaggregation... to determine exactly where the possibilities of expansion or contraction are likely to be".

In particular, a women empowering new policy framework should address the concerns and demands raised by women informal traders. It should also be aligned with the post-2015 sustainable development goals, which have superseded the millennium development goals (MDGs), and with the AU 2015 theme and vision 2063. In partnership with the private sector and donors, the government could establish a fund or trust, like the Swaziland Women Empowerment Trust (SWEET), which offers credit, training and skills to its members. The informal sector could also be taxed, and thus expand and boost government revenue. Customary laws and traditional practices that discriminate against women, for example on inheritance and ownership of property, should be abolished.

To recap, optimizing the developmental potential of the informal sector requires reconciling and harmonizing, through policy, the needs of informal traders and the interests of the state as well as strengthening the synergies between the informal and formal sectors. Addressing the many demands of female informal traders involves identifying strategic entry points which facilitate certain economic activities while suppressing others, such as sex work. As they reproduce themselves on an extended scale, these nascent capitalists without capital could graduate into formal entrepreneurs, and make greater contribution to human security, national development, and peace and stability. In a nutshell, the challenges of a gendered informal sector require a sensitive policy that treads a delicate balance between a naive celebration of this sector and its outright condemnation.

Summary

Marginalised by traditional patriarchal ideologies, the state, and the Bretton-Woods institutions, women informal traders are doing something to address the economic failures of post-independence development. In the informal economy, which is an 'enclave' of an enclave economy, some women are creating wealth and prospering while others are enduring exploitation and eking out a marginal existence. Straddling tradition and modernity, the informal sector does not constitute a new mode of production, but is instead a hybrid economic system that in its operation seems closer to the African realities than the formal sector. While engendering shifts in the gender balance of power between the

sexes, as age old values and norms give way to new ones dictated by the new economic reality, the informal economy has also created new cleavages and divisions among women.

To sum up, poor women are taking the initiative to expand their economic freedom by engaging in informal economic activity. Women's involvement in the informal sector has not only given them access to income and contributed to national development, but has also catalysed a 'quiet gender revolution', in which age old patriarchal relations are transformed as some women entrepreneurs graduate from financial dependency to autonomy. Women's new freedoms are manifested in their increasing decision making powers within the household and increased involvement in leisure activities. Yet, the informal sector has also precipitated social differentiation and divisions among women. In a nutshell, to effectively deal with the challenges facing Lesotho, there is need for a paradigm shift from a patriarchal and formalistic bias to a comprehensive gender sensitive approach that optimizes the potential benefits of gender equality and informal sector entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

The politics of gender and development in Lesotho is implicated in unequal power relations between the sexes. The informal economy has provided women with an economic base to articulate a new politics of emancipation and gender equality. But the state and traditional patriarchal ideology continue to undermine both the emancipation of women and the flourishing of the informal economy. In spite of this, poor women continue to flock to the informal economy as it is the only vehicle for escaping from poverty, accessing income, gaining financial independence, and being empowered. The momentum of the resurgence of the informal economy has been enormous and the strong increasing presence of women in this economy makes them important actors in change and development. Lesotho, therefore, needs to set free a new emancipatory vision that increases 'the freedoms', 'education' 'opportunities', and equal representation of women in positions of power as a strategy for eradicating gender inequality and poverty. In conclusion, the challenge is to develop a new emancipatory vision that transcends the parochialism of the dominant theories, and that gives a positive form to the struggle for gender equality and informal enterprising.

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Readiness to Resist: Biological Sex and the Cultural Definition of Femininity and Masculinity

ABSTRACT. The present study is a report on the differences in readiness to resist undesired social influences with regard to biological sex and gender types. The study was conducted using the two-way analysis of variance ANOVA. The results show that both biological sex and gender types, according to S. L. Bem's theory, do not adequately explain the following analyzed forms of resistance: inertia, opportunism, retaliation, and assertive confrontation. The measured effects did not sufficiently meet expectations, despite the clear entrenchment of these forms of resistance in the cultural definition of femininity and masculinity.

KEYWORDS: resistance, opposition, gender schemas, gender, sex, stereotypes

Introduction

Men and Women's social activity on a macro, but most of all, on a micro-social level, is reflected by their daily interactions through the prism of sex, of which S. L. Bem (2015) has written. Socio-cultural norms and everyday practices carry with them assumptions regarding sex and gender, treated as hidden and expressed in androcentrism, a polarization of gender, and biological essentialism.

Androcentrism constructs a world at the center of which male values predominate. Constituting the definition of the cultural norm, it simultaneously pushes female values to the periphery, and describes the latter as straying from the norm. Nowhere is androcentrism formally acknowledged; however it does leave its mark on patterns of perception. Analyzing photos on the cover of "Journal of Gender and Power", A. Gromkowska-Melosik (2015) has noticed that when a man and wo-

man are together in a car, it is always more likely that the man is the driver and the woman the passenger. According to Gromkowska-Melosik (2015), this results from the combination “man-car” being socially deemed more natural. This combination is a symbol of androcentrism precisely because the “natural combination” constitutes a male norm. And even in the 21st century, when a significant percentage of women are excellent drivers, the stereotype of danger prevails: “Beware, female driver”. This association goes against experience; it is, however, in line with androcentrism.

The polarization of gender is rooted in the dogma surrounding personality differences whose social perception has an impact on assigning different roles to men and women, that is, on building two polarized worlds (Bem 2015). These separate worlds are symbolically reflected in slogans found in pop-culture, for instance, “men are from mars, women are from Venus”. One should not trivialize the polarization of gender, however, because it is largely agreed to be one of the sources of social inequality.

Finally, biological essentialism is a reservoir for—putatively scientific—justification, which harks back to “natural law”, serving to prop up and enforce androcentrism and gender polarization (2015). Anyone overstepping the boundaries is brought back in line with the help of these justifications. In this way, authority over social meanings is solidified.

The present article attempts to examine one of the indexes of “gender polarization” linked with resistance, that is, with taking a stand against undesired social influence. The category of “undesired social influence” is strongly connected with the imposition of meanings on everyday interactions, not infrequently by appealing to essentialist truths. Upholding the androcentric order, or any “centric” position if we are discussing a “dominating narrative”, requires the activation of the apparatus of symbolic violence, which can manifest itself as the pressure to accept the “natural” order. A powerful mechanism of this social pressure is the wielding of influence. What seems paradoxical is the fact that stereotypes connected with biological sex place both women and men in the context of reacting to such influences. From the point of view of biological sex, one can easily find stereotypes that define men and women’s “natural” possibilities of reaction to undesired social influence. We’re not concerned, however, with enumerating these possibilities or constructing hypotheses aimed at explaining the mechanisms connected

with actions, since hypotheses in the scientific sense cannot be stereotypes, but only conclusions drawn from theories relating to empirical reality. Whereas here, what concerns us is the search for explanations regarding the triad of variables: biological sex, gender, and resistance to undesired influences, within the framework typical for a quasi-experimental study. In short, we are trying to explain the differences in reactions to undesired influences in view of biological sex and gender.

Taken this way, the subject of our study will be problematized with reference to S. L. Bem's gender schema theory (Bem, 1981) as well as the concept of the "readiness to resist", theorized by S. Pasikowski (2014a; 2014b; 2016). S. L. Bem's gender schema theory, which is extensively discussed in works concerning subjectivity and has the added virtue of being empirically verified, introduces two analytical categories. These categories draw on the extent to which people rely on social definitions of femininity or masculinity in describing themselves. If gender constitutes a central aspect of the *self*, then two types are commonly revealed; the first being gender-base, while the second crossed. The gender-based type designates a feminine woman or a masculine man, while in the crossed type, a masculine woman or a feminine man. If gender has no central place in forming the *self*, we witness types that fall outside the realm of culturally defined femininity and masculinity. These are the androgynous and undefined types. In sum, we are dealing with four gender types: gender-defined, crossed, undefined, and androgynous (Bem, 1981).

Resistance to social influence is a category that refers to the theory of negativism, disobedience, reactance, rebelliousness, and resistance (f.e. Porębska, 1968; Oleszkowicz, 2006). Therefore, on the one hand it is a situation of applied pressure on the individual to behave in line with expectations, while on the other hand it provides a space for describing people's reactions. S. Pasikowski maintains that one's reaction is "a function of interpreting the social situation in which they find themselves as well as one's subjective inner experience". That is why he introduces the concept of "readiness to resist", understood here as "an aware, conscious attitude, in which the subject, feeling aversion to the outer influence and perceiving him or herself as standing against these influences, is able to take up immediate action directed at minimizing its impact" (Pasikowski, 2016).

Pasikowski introduces four forms of resistance to undesired social influence on the basis of two dimensions: activeness and acceptance of one's partner.

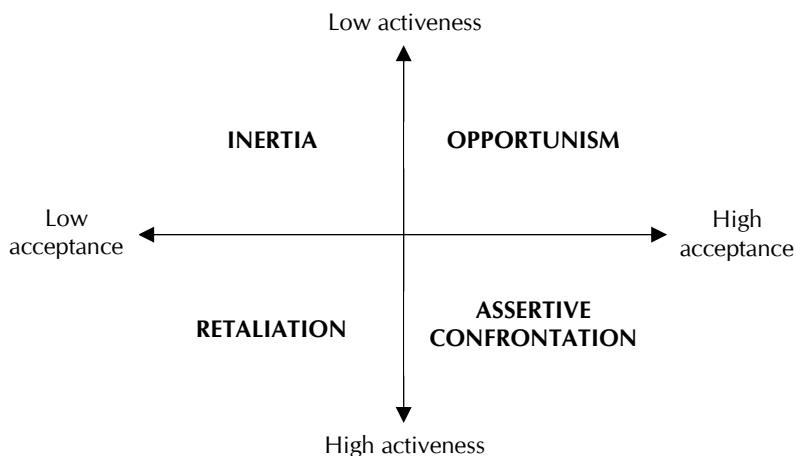


Figure 1. Forms of Resistance

Source: Author's analysis based on S. Pasikowski (2016)

At the junction of low activeness and low acceptance of the person applying undesired pressure there is “Inertia” (In), understood as an unwillingness to keep up relations, a low level of immediate defense of one’s interests, as well as using passive resistance in addition to ignoring the person or pressing situation. In the next square we have “Opportunism” (O), which is characterized by the individual instrumentally communicating his or her submission in the hope of minimizing losses, or realizing personal goals. This attitude is directed at maintaining relations, yet with a low level of defending one’s position. The third form falls at the junction between low acceptance and high activeness with regard to one’s standpoint. Pasikowski names this form “retaliation” (Od—from the Polish for retaliation: “odwet”). What takes place here is the expression of negative emotions and aggression, as well as taking up harmful actions against the other person. The last form, “Assertive Confrontation” (AK) takes place when there is a predominantly high level of activity along with a high level of acceptance. This is an immediate, open defense of one’s position, in a way that explicitly communicates one’s displeasure with the pressing situation. Along with this form of engagement comes consideration of the other person’s rights (Pasikowski, 2016).

Working from within this problematic, we are designing a research scheme in which every form of readiness to resist will be diagnosed in

the context of biological sex (female, male) and gender (gender-defined, crossed, undefined, and androgynous). Utilizing the terms of two-way ANOVA, we will be addressing the main effect of biological sex and gender types, the possible effect of the interaction of these variables, and also the possible simple effects, that is effects pertaining to individual values—which belong to one constant variable—on the values of another.

Method

The present study was carried out following a quasi-experimental design based on a statistical two-way ANOVA analysis of variance. Both biological sex and Sandra L. Bem's gender schema theory, operationalized by A. Kuczyńska's "Gender Assessment Inventory" (Kuczyńska, 1992), played the role of fixed variables. The single random variable was the readiness to resist, reconstructed and operationalized by S. Pasikowski (2016) in the "Readiness to Resist Questionnaire" (KGP).

The Readiness to Resist Questionnaire is a tool made up of four scales corresponding to four forms of resistance: inertia, opportunism, retaliation, and assertive confrontation. The hypothesis concerning this particular questionnaire structure was validated using factor analysis. The author performed several analyses, reducing the number of position in the questionnaire to 20. Ultimately, factor loadings fell between 0.56 to 0.84. They were, therefore, high. The "retaliation" factor explained 19.39% of the variance in results, the "Assertive Confrontation" factor—17.46%, the "Opportunism" factor—12.25%, and the "Inertia" factor—8.18%. The results attained confirm the theoretical accuracy of KGP.

The average values of Cronbach's Alfa were also indicators of the questionnaire's satisfactory level of reliability, amounting to 0.83 for retaliation, 0.80 for assertive confrontation, 0.76 for opportunism, and 0.71 for inertia. In addition, the discriminatory power of position KGP fell between (0,41—0,7) and indicates that it sufficiently differentiate the subjects of the study.

The author of this study also prepared Sten score norms on the basis of a study of 599 students studying different faculties. The analysis of the results for women and men encouraged the author to work out distinct norms for each sex. Statistically significant differences appeared between sexes, which is interesting from our point of view, in terms of the "retaliation" and "opportunism" components. Men scored higher values

on the basis of these scales than women. There was, however, no difference in terms of "assertive confrontation" or "inertia".

The KGP is made up of 20 statements on which studied subjects were asked to take a position, marking values on a seven-point scale (from never to almost always). Before filling-in the questionnaire they were prompted to pay attention to the following introductory instructions:

Mark how you BAHAVE when you feel that someone is trying to HEM YOU IN OR INFLUENCE you, for instance by narrowing your choices, attempting to convince you of a certain point of view, a piece of advice, an order, a prohibition, command, or is encouraging you to form demands and expectations with which you don't agree in part or wholly.

Raw data was compared with Sten norms, guaranteeing an interval scale of measurement.

We used A. Kuczyńska's "Gender Assessment Inventory" (1992) to examine gender types, which allowed us to evaluate the extent to which the schema pertaining to one's self *gives in* to the influence stemming from cultural concepts of femininity and masculinity. This is the reason the tool consists of 35 adjectives which describe stereotypes connected with femininity and masculinity, to which the studied subjects were asked to respond on a five-point scale. The measurement results, being indicators of gender types, was obtained through cross-referencing values acquired on the femininity scale (15 adjectives) with the masculinity scale (15 adjectives). Five positions were neutral and based on stereotypes surrounding sex, and were not taken into consideration while calculating the results.

The above mentioned tools were standardized. The calculated values pertaining to discriminatory power met criteria of four-fold point correlation, indicating a satisfactory differentiation of the studied sample. According to the Kundera-Richardson formula, reliability amounted to 0.78 for each of the scales. In turn, the theoretical accuracy was assessed on the basis of a study of transsexual individuals. The value of the "t-student's" test affirmed that transsexual subjects taking the Gender Assessment Inventory attained values corresponding to those of subjects whose sex was identical to what transsexuals psychologically felt they were. The last stage of standardization was carried out by relating the raw data obtained to the median values in the normalization sample, which allowed us to assign them to their corresponding sex type (Kuczyńska 1992).

Using both of these tools, data was obtained from a random sample of 240 students studying at different faculties: the faculty of humanities, social sciences, and natural science. Ultimately, we input the figures for 231 people (114 men and 117 women) into SPSS. This sample revealed at most an average level of the variable, social approval, which was also controlled for a potential confounding variable. The measurement of readiness to resist turned out to be vulnerable to the movement of this variable.

Results, Analysis and Interpretation

Prior to inputting data into the two-way analysis of variance model ANOVA we checked the necessary requirements for its execution. The number of groups and the interval level of measurement were assured during the introductory stage, while the distribution of samples and homogeneity of variance were verified with partial success. Both the assumption as to the normality of the distribution and homogeneity of variance were not met in the case of the assertive confrontation (AK) variable. Lavene’s test turned out to be statistically significant $p < .05$. In the remaining case it was insignificant. Because of this, the analysis of assertive confrontation was removed from ANOVA and nonparametric tests were used instead.

We obtained no statistically significant effects after bringing biological sex and gender types into the space of inertia. What this means is that neither biological sex, nor gender types differentiate inertia as a form of resistance against social influences.

Table 1. Effects of 2-Way ANOVA for Inertia

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Constant	Hypothesis	16819,138	1	.	.	.
	Error	.	. ^a	.		
Schema	Hypothesis	19,813	3	6,604	,187	,899
	Error	106,093	3	35,364 ^b		
Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	9,026	1	9,026	,291	,621
	Error	111,344	3,593	30,986 ^c		
Schema * Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	106,093	3	35,364	2,637	,051
	Error	2991,161	223	13,413 ^d		

Source: Author’s own research

Returning to the theoretical fundamentals of inertia, it is worth noting that what we are dealing with here is a form of engagement based on low activeness and low acceptance. With regard to stereotypes relating to sex, passiveness and submissiveness describe femininity, while a low level of concentration describes masculinity. It might be that situating this form of resistance on precisely this axis means that potentially everyone, regardless of sex, will in certain situations, described in the questionnaire under factor In, adopt this strategy in taking a stance in the face of unacceptable social influences. One can similarly look at this in the context of gender types. Moreover, the interpretation that typed-individuals for whom sex is not the main factor in self-description, will, in the face of undesired social influences, take a random stance rather than resort to stereotypes, seems cognitively appealing for all the analyzed forms of resistance.

The second form of readiness to resist is opportunism. Table 2 shows that the effect of biological sex, not gender type, is statistically significant. Men revealed a higher average (19.69) than women (17.10) and both averages are made up of more scattered than concentrated values, something that is attested to by similar standard deviations that cannot be deemed very low for both. Nevertheless, biological sex did have an effect.

Table 2. Effects of 2-Way ANOVA for Opportunism

Source		Type III sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Constant	Hypothesis	50595,938	1	50595,938	169,423	,074
	Error	247,947	,830	298,637 ^a		
Schema	Hypothesis	8,595	3	2,865	,074	,970
	Error	115,842	3	38,614 ^b		
Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	327,255	1	327,255	8,761	,037
	Error	163,541	4,378	37,354 ^c		
Schema * Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	115,842	3	38,614	1,196	,312
	Error	7202,531	223	32,298 ^d		

Source: Author's own research

From the perspective of situating this form of resistance on the side of low activeness and high acceptance of the other's rights, and relating this state back to stereotypes tied to sex, one could anticipate an inverse

relationship. It is rather femininity, not masculinity, that is connected with caring about the interaction, striving to keep up relations that respect the other's rights, and simultaneously with passiveness and avoiding aggressive behavior. The results under discussion show that readiness for opportunism in the face of social pressure was not associated in our study with stereotype. Although this is not necessarily evidence of the anachronism of stereotypes, it is at least a warning as to their limited relevance. What is interesting is the fact that there was no gender effect, even though in this situation one could—to a certain degree—expect it. Most likely, the earlier mentioned interpretation which sees individuals with mixed gender types reacting randomly to social influences remains valid.

Table 3. The Effect of 2 – Way ANOVA for Retaliation

Source		Type III sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Constant	Hypothesis	44318,380	1	44318,380	3279,635	,865
	Error	,294	,022	13,513 ^a		
Schema	Hypothesis	35,930	1	35,930	,287	,623
	Error	454,228	3,630	125,123 ^b		
Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	342,217	3	114,072	,803	,569
	Error	426,222	3	142,074 ^c		
Schema * Biol. Sex	Hypothesis	426,222	3	142,074	2,489	,061
	Error	12730,535	223	57,088 ^d		

Source: Author's own research

The next form of resistance that was introduced into the two-way ANOVA model was retaliation. As with factor "In", table 3 now also reveals an absence of any kind of main effect. Neither biological sex nor gender types differentiate the retaliation form of resistance in a statistically significant way. Looking at the placement of this variable on the axis of activeness and acceptance, certain associations with masculine stereotypes arise. Both the disregard for the quality of one's interactions and aggressive practices of self-defense form the stereotype of masculinity. At the same time, as one can see, individual differences seem to have a higher variance than biological sex with regard to explaining retaliation. The averages for women and men are clearly approximate to

each other, with equally high standards of deviation. Thus, there exists a similar probability that this form of reaction to pressure will be taken up by both men and woman. The absence of any gender type effect seems to affirm this observation. Inasmuch as one can consistently expect a random distribution among studied subjects with types free from the cultural definition of sex (the androgynous and undefined types), we can also expect a clearer tendency to prefer this form of action in the face of pressure in the group of defined and crossed-types, were we of course to depend on stereotypes connected with sex. These effects, however, were not noted.

The last form of resistance to social influences which we introduced to the analysis is assertive confrontation. Not meeting the requirements of distribution normality as well as homogeneity of variance we were forced to use nonparametric statistics. With regard to the variable pair, biological sex and assertive confrontation, we tested the null hypothesis for U Mann-Whitney test (2 samples). The statistically insignificant result encouraged us to accept it. What this means is that biological sex does not differentiate assertive confrontation, perhaps because the AK factor emerged at the junction between high activeness in defending one's position and high acceptance of the rights of the pressuring party. In a certain sense, this is a combination of the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Although, one could also alternatively claim that connecting caring about relations with activeness should not be associated with what is—stereotypically—regarded as masculine aggression in a situation of conflict. It is difficult to say which interpretation is more accurate.

With regards to the pair type gender and assertive confrontation, however, we used Kruskala-Wallis variance test, which was statistically significant, indicating the part played by gender type in explaining the variability of assertive confrontation. A statistically significant difference concerned the pair undefined—androgynous. This is quite an unexpected result since it is a pairing which is free from the cultural conception of femininity and masculinity. The result shows that the undefined type scores higher than the androgynous type. The association of assertive confrontation with a positive approach toward defense and with having regard for the rights of the interacting party, is rather, as mention earlier, closer to stereotypes of femininity than masculinity. However, this observation does not seem to explain much, since the highest scores were attained by undefined types, and thus those that were free from the cultural definition of sex. What pops up here is the strong possibility

that factors which could not be explained by the current study's conceptual model had an impact.

We can conclude our analysis and interpretation with the observation that the category of sex stereotype had no explanatory function in our study. The readiness to resist social influences, at least in this study, was not explained by either biological sex or gender types. Both of these variables had little part to play in the noted variance in the majority of forms of resistance to social influence. Perhaps this is indirect evidence of the inadequacy of type-based categories for the differentiation of human values with regard to biological sex.

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The Effects of Exercise on Academic Performance for Boys and Girls

ABSTRACT. Research has well documented the effects of physical education on the academic performance of students. This manuscript will present the studies which detail the benefits of exercise on the improved cognition of school-age boys and girls.

KEYWORDS: effects of exercise, academic performance, boys, girls, gender

Introduction

In the United States, children spend six to eight hours a day in school. The time spent in the school setting provides opportunities to reinforce understanding of problem solving, life skills, communication, decision making abilities, and conflict resolution as well as health and well-being. Instruction across content areas—Science, Social Science, Math, and English—provides the foundation to help students reach a level of literacy that will prepare them to move on to higher education and obtain a job. In addition to academic instruction, physical education and movement is vital to the development of children. Vail (2006) reports that physical education and academics were previously thought to be two separate areas – one area was working on the body while the other area focused on the mind. However, researchers have found that boys and girls who are provided with many physical activities and experiences at an early age develop an abundance of neurons and develop strong synapsis enabling them to become better learners (Tremarche,

Robinson & Graham, 2007). Jensen (1998) discovered that when students are allowed to move, “More neurotransmitters are released, more endorphins are released, and more neural networks are developed...” Vail (2006) supports these findings and reports that exercise and physical movement “might actually affect brain function” helping students to maintain cognitive functioning and do better in the classroom. It is possible that increasing a child’s heart rate, five days a week can be beneficial; endorphins are released into the blood and at this point then the students can settle down (Vail, 2006). Further, “research has shown that exercise provides more oxygen-rich blood, which nourishes the brain” allowing the students to concentrate and attend to the classroom tasks (Tremarche, Robinson & Graham, 2007, pg 2).

The Benefits of Physical Exercise for School-Age Boys and Girls

Students who receive regular physical education and exercise have demonstrated that they are better able to concentrate when in the classroom (Vital, 2006). Regular exercise and physical movement can relieve anxiety, stress and depression, while boosting self-esteem (Vital, 2006). The length of time that students spend in physical education (30 minutes vis-à-vis 60 minutes) has been shown to have measurable benefits in both math and English comprehension (Tremarche et al., 2007).

Research has found that physical activity in public schools has declined in order to meet the demands and mandate of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in the United States (Smith & Lounsbery, 2009). Due to overwhelming criticism, NCLB was replaced with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December 2015. However, ESSA still supports the mandate of standardized testing. While ESSA has given control back to individual states, it still holds teachers, schools, and school districts accountable. Due to the demands of this academic accountability, school districts are removing physical education from students’ school day in order to provide the additional teaching time required to achieve predetermined scores. Students are being asked to sit in classes longer, pay attention for a greater length of time, complete more homework, and endure added stress.

Certain types of exercise can relieve stress and improve focus (Vail, 2006). If students are stressed out, they are not going to be able to learn;

their mind, body, and brain are not able to access the curriculum (Vail, 2006). Furthermore, boys and girls are less able to experience childhood through play, learn from their peers, and navigate social interactions on the playground. When physical activity and movement are incorporated into the classroom, a considerable difference can be seen in children and their readiness to learn (Hannaford, 2005). As a result of added pressure to have students perform on state mandated assessments and the removal of physical fitness (Thomas, 2004), students are displaying more undesirable behaviors, have become overweight (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011; Hillman, Erickson & Kramer, 2008), and are less likely to be successful on standardized tests (Tremarche et al., 2007). In combination with educational demands, technological advancements have been infused into societal culture and children have become more sedentary, making the inclusion of physical activity into students' daily routines even more important given how vital it is for cognitive development and growth (Tremarche, Robinson & Graham, 2007). Students are physically healthier if they are participating in physical activity daily, and have a better attitude when attending school (Vail, 2006). Teacher implementation of movement within the classroom before instruction takes place enables students' bodies and minds to be alert and ready to learn, supporting better concentration, academic achievement, and an increase of on-task behaviors. Incorporating movement within the classroom setting helps many students to concentrate and to pay attention (Vidal, 2006). It can also enable the teacher to meet the needs of students who might not normally be reached especially young boys.

Finally, child obesity rates have continued to increase, as more schools are cutting back or eliminating physical education; especially in elementary schools to make time for more academic teaching (Vail, 2006). Educators have a professional responsibility to examine all the brain research on the correlation of academic achievement and physical movement and utilize the information available for application within their classrooms; teaching strategies, curriculum, special education, and assessments (Tremarche, Robinson & Graham, 2007).

It is important to note that the majority of studies that have been done on the effect of physical activity on cognitive development were at the elementary level. Some studies have been done with middle school students; this is an area where more examination is needed. Further, little research has been done on the effect of in-class movement; e.g. 5-10 minutes of physical activity immediately prior to the beginning of

instruction. Teacher buy-in is a vitally important aspect of incorporating movement and activity into daily instruction. Some innovative teachers have been on the forefront of such classroom innovation, although additional studies that show significant benefits from in-class physical activity are needed in order that a broad spectrum of teachers, administrators and districts buy in to the incorporation of physical activity into daily learning.

The Correlation Between Exercise and Cognition/Academic Achievement

According to Smith and Lounsbery (2009), when students “engage in physical activity, their cognitive performance significantly improves” (pg 42) along with their concentration on assessments (McNaughten & Gabbard, 1993; Vital, 2006). Tremarche, Robinson & Graham (2007) found that “movement is a vital aspect of the brain’s ability to cognitively function” (pg. 3). This is a significant finding because of the demands of state assessments by ESSA. Vial (2006) states that denying students movement is depriving them of vital tools that would support them to do well within the classroom setting. There was a study done on the link between academic achievement and physical fitness in 2004 by the California Department of Education. This study found that students who were more physically fit did better on academic achievement tests. “The results indicated a consistent positive relationship between overall fitness and academic achievement and appeared to be stronger for females than males” (Vail, 2006, pg 15). The study also stated that “there is evidence that physical education has a direct positive effect on important educational domains such as reading and mathematics” (Vail, 2006, pg 15). It could be argued that physical movement and exercise are not extracurricular activities, but vital components to the academic success of students.

Despite the fact that children have become increasingly sedentary due to the technological advances of today, there has been minimal research on how this sedentary lifestyle is impacting the developmental cognitive health of children (Hillman et al., 2008). The researchers conducted a review of multidisciplinary literature examining the influence of physical activity (aerobic exercise) on selective areas of brain function. The researchers stated that there have been many studies that have

documented the positive correlation that aerobic exercise has on some aspects of brain function; however, flexibility and muscle strength were unrelated to academic achievement. Hillman et al. (2008) found, with both people and animals, that aerobic exercise can improve different aspects of cognition and performance (Hillman et al., 2008). The researchers report that physical activity has been associated with a reduction in mental disorders (depression, anxiety, stress) and physical disorders (obesity, cancers, cardiovascular disease). Recent evidence has suggested that children are becoming increasingly more sedentary due to the changing culture and lifestyle resulting in a negative impact of cost for a sedentary lifestyle on developed and developing countries (Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education, 2007 as cited by Hillman et al., 2008). According to Colditz (1999) as cited by Hillman et al. (2008), the medical expenditures in 1995 were 2.4% and in 2000 were \$76 billion dollars for sedentary lifestyles (Pratt, Macera & Wang, 2000 as cited by Hillman et al., 2008).

The purpose of this study is to examine the positive effects of aerobic activity on cognition and brain functioning at the molecular and behavioral levels (Hillman et al., 2008). This research was conducted on animals and humans, although for the purpose of this paper, the focus will be on the data regarding humans. The researchers examined the effects of physical exercise on the cognitive processes. These cognitive processes were assessed using computer-based assessments and pencil-paper assessments to determine if there is a positive correlation between the two variables. In addition to the assessments, neuroimaging techniques were used, such as event-related brain potentials (ERP) and a functional MRI, to document the connection between physical exercise and cognitive function. Hillman et al. (2008) examined the “Physical activity effects on cognition during childhood and young adulthood” (p. 58), “physical-activity effects on cognition during older adulthood” (p. 60), and “neuroimaging studies of physical activity in humans” (p. 61). The findings suggest that physical activity and aerobic activity can have a positive effect on cognition and multiple brain functions (Hillman et al., 2008). These findings are significant since brain function was looked at on a molecular level through neuroimaging techniques.

In addition to the findings of Hillman et al. (2008), Donnelly and Lambourne (2011) found a direct correlation between the decline of physical activity and exercise in public schools and childhood and adolescent obesity rates. Hedley (2004) found that childhood obesity has mo-

re than doubled and adolescent obesity rates have tripled. Dehghan, Akhtar-Danesh, and Merchant (2012), as cited by Donnelly and Lambourne (2011), report that 25% of children living in the United States are overweight and 11% are obese. Research finds that children are now experiencing health related issues to obesity that are typically experienced in adulthood, such as: type 2 diabetes, low HDL-cholesterol, and elevated blood pressure (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011). In children, there seems to be a strong correlation between fitness and obesity rates on academic achievement (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011). Many researchers have made the connection of the rise in a more sedentary school day among children who sit from six to eight hours a day in academic instruction, and the lack of physical experiences that could be provided in schools. The physical experiences that typically occur in schools has the potential to impact childhood obesity (Thomas, 2004). This is vital information because it shows that the physical state of children has a direct impact on their ability to attend and learn in a school environment. Donnelly and Lambourne (2011) examined the relationship between physical activity, fitness, fatness, and cognitive function on academic achievement. This study was a large-scale, longitudinal, cluster randomized trial to evaluate the impact of classroom-based physical activity in body mass index and academic achievement. The data suggest that in cardiovascular fitness, cognitive function, and academic achievement, children that are fit are able to concentrate more on attentional tasks requiring greater amounts of cognitive function (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011). Additional research shows that increasing physical activity in children may increase their executive functions in the areas of self-control, self-regulation, and goal-directed behavior (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011).

Although Hillman et al. (2008), Donnelly & Lambourne (2011) found significant results in their research, Martin and Chalmers (2007) report there have been many studies that examined the correlation of physical activity and academic performance among school-age students which produced inconsistent results. Researchers looked at school-age boys and girls and the correlation between the Presidential Physical Fitness test and the academic achievement based on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills). The large sample size consisted of 5,847 students in grades three, five, six, and eight across 46 elementary schools, nine middle schools, and five non-public K-8 or K-12 schools in the Seattle School District.

The researchers found a small correlation between physical fitness and academic achievement. Martin and Chalmers (2007) stated that

professionals working in health related fields or physical education would find the correlation acceptable to support the claim that physical fitness and academic performance improve a student's academic performance. Physical fitness and educational programs have many positive effects on student's health, physical development, and cognitive achievement. However, rationalizing the correlation of physical movement and academic achievement, more research is needed in this area (Martin & Chalmers, 2007).

The Length of Physical Education Classes on Academic Achievement

Due to the increase of, and public attention on, adolescent obesity rates in America, educators have wondered about the impact obesity has had on academic success (Chromitz et al.) Simultaneously, pressure to meet academic standards and excel in state achievement assessments have shifted resources and time away from physical fitness programs and more towards academics (Chromitz et al., 2009). Researchers have examined the length of a physical education program and how it impacts student's academic achievement. "A physical education program that provides a wide-variety of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences to children can have profound results on academic achievement (Tremarche, Robinson & Graham, 2007, pg. 3). Researchers studied the effect when fourth grade boys and girls from two different schools, received increased physical education time and measured the impact on their academic achievement on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). According to Tremarche et al. (2007), both school sites had similar physical education curriculum and the teachers had equal amounts of teaching experience. However, each school site had different time periods of quality physical education provided during the school year. The first school provided 26 hours of physical education instruction and second school provided 56 hours of physical education instruction. Scores were analyzed and it was determined that students from the second school who received more hours of quality physical education instruction received higher scores on the English-Language Arts portion of their academic achievement test. However, there was no significant difference in the area of math between both schools (Tremarche et al., 2007). Even though there was not a significant

increase on math scores, there is sufficient evidence to state that more hours of physical education can increase scores on certain subject areas of specific achievement tests (Tremarche et al., 2007). "The results of this research study help to support the belief that students who receive more hours of physical education each week should score higher on the standardized tests than those students who received less hours" (Tremarche et al., 2007, pg. 3).

To build on the research that Tremarche et al. (2007) reported, Chromitz et al. (2009) aimed to determine a relationship between physical fitness and academic achievement, through standardized measures, in a large urban public school district among students in fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. Chromitz et al. (2009) hypothesized that physical fitness can be directly linked to academic achievement and performance on standardized test among students in fourth through eighth grade. This study was a randomized cross-sectional design with a large sample population from the Cambridge Public School Department (CPSD) in a large urban school district. Researchers examined data on height, weight, BMI, and physical fitness level on students in grades 4th through 8th across 12 elementary school sites. For the purpose of this study, school records used included fitness data, physical fitness levels, and standardized test scores from the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) which is a criterion-referenced test.

The data found a significant relationship between students' academic achievement and their physical fitness; there was an overall positive relationship between fitness levels and English and math academic achievement (Chromitz et al., 2009). However, after researchers controlled for the effects of socioeconomic status (SES), gender, weight, grade and ethnicity, "student's fitness level was more strongly associated with math achievement than English achievement" (Chromitz et al., 2009, p. 34). Researchers stated that the limitations within the design of this study are founded on the cross-sectional design and a longitudinal randomized design would be more beneficial to study the long term effects of improved fitness on academic achievement.

Coe, Pivarnik, Womack, Reeves & Malina (2006) agreed that pressure of standardized testing is increasing the need for more time in academic classes; therefore, physical education classes have been replaced in an effort to increase scores on standardized tests. The author's purpose of this study was to determine if there was a correlation between physical activity and academic achievement and success of middle

school students over one academic school year. The research team hypothesized that students enrolled in physical education would have better academic success than students who were not enrolled in physical education due to increased levels of physical activity within the class period. Additionally, the research team hypothesized that the students who meet Healthy People 2010 guidelines for endurance of physical activity would achieve the highest academic achievement.

At the beginning of the 2002 school year, 214 sixth-grade students volunteered to participate. Each sixth-grade student was randomly assigned to four different teams which included a teacher from core academic classes (English, math, science, and world studies). Afterwards, the four teams were then put into two groups. Group one participated in physical education during the first semester of school and the second group participated in physical education during the second semester of the school year. Each participant was assessed—height, weight, and body mass index—three times throughout the school year; beginning, middle, and end. Coe et al. (2006) stated that no pre-test measurement was given to document the academic growth from the beginning of the school year to the end. The only data collected was during the end of the first semester and at the end of the second semester which did not give the researchers a pretest grade and posttest grade. The academic success of each participant was not influenced by which semester (timing) physical education was taken during the school year (Coe et al., 2006). Data revealed that students engaged in moderate-to-vigorous activity an average of 19 minutes out of 55 minutes during physical education. Nonetheless, the researchers stated that this low level of physical activity may not be enough stimulation to influence academic achievement. However, the data did reveal that students who participated in vigorous physical activity that met or exceeded the Healthy People 2010 guidelines on levels of intensity achieved higher academic scores than the other participants (Coe et al., 2006). Although, Shepard (1996) suggested increased physical activity during the school day may increase attention span, concentration, and may be related to increased self-esteem which would increase positive classroom behaviors and academic success. Coe et al. (2006) stated it may be a specific level of physical intensity that needs to be met in order to produce the desired increase in academic achievement. This could explain the results of the present study since moderate physical activity was reached. Coe et al. (2006) reports that students that participated in a physical education class did not

perform better than the students who received 55 minutes more of instructional time.

Smith and Lounsbery (2009) conducted a literature review and determined that educators and parents believe that physical education is a significant element in student's curriculum. A national survey taken by parents of boys and girls in grades kindergarten through 12th grade and teachers reported daily physical exercise was supported (NASPE, 2003) as cited by Smith and Lounsbery (2009). Additionally, more than 75 percent of educators and parents oppose eliminating physical fitness due to budgetary restrictions to meet the increased demand on academic standards (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2003 as cited by Smith & Lounsbery, 2009).

During this changing time in education, standardized assessment is a priority in public education, holding administrators and educators accountable for scores achieved by the student population as described in NCLB (as of December 2015, ESSA) (Smith & Lounsbery, 2009). Due to the distribution of funding, physical educators are facing challenges in reductions of staff, larger class sizes, and inadequate facilities and equipment. Data-based evidence is what drives changes in education. Smith and Lounsbery (2009) stated that data needs to be credible when advocating for the importance of keeping physical education in our schools and the impact it has on academic achievement. The authors found that there was a limited number of studies that measure the affect physical education has on academic achievement due to the complexity and the variables involved. The researchers looked at different studies to determine if there was a correlation between "academic achievement, physical activity-related outcomes of physical education, or physical activity in general" (Smith & Lounsbery, 2009, p. 40).

Conclusion

Studies on physical education and academic achievement determined that the measurement of both variables was challenging due to various factors within the research (Smith & Lounsbery, 2009). However, based on the literature that was reviewed, the following was determined: (1) learning occurs more rapidly when there is more curricular time devoted to physical activity, (2) the effect of daily physical educa-

tion on school-age boys and girls as they progress through elementary school is that their academic performance becomes significantly better than students who are not exposed to daily physical education, and (3) students learned self-regulation skills for behavioral management and goal setting when more physical activity was incorporated into the school day. Thus, it is vitally important that educators ensure that significant physical activity is available for every school-age boy or girl so that their academic performance is at its best!

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Determinants of Infertility among Couples in Urban India and its Impact

ABSTRACT. In Indian society infertility is important not only in context of its physical entity but as a social milieu too. Here, this is seen as linked to an act of God and punishment for sins of the past, while people in developed countries view infertility as caused by biological and other related factors. The rate of infertility among women is increasing, especially among urban working couples. Various modes of enjoyment in global life i.e. pre-marital sex and late marriage lead prolonged use of contraceptives, distinct dietary habits, and the result of witchcraft are also seen as causing childlessness. On the other hand, long working hours and stress often lead to infertility because it often results in hypertension, high blood pressure and heart disease. Further hectic lifestyles polycystic ovary diseases through excess production of hormones and lack of ovulation, genital tuberculosis fallopian tube defects, etc are significant causes of infertility. Life style choices such as smoking, tobacco consumption, drinking, obesity and hormonal imbalances such as polycystic ovaries and hypothyroidism are also responsible contributing factors. This study explored the determinants of infertility i.e. pre-marital sex, late marriage and changing lifestyle choices, etc among couples of urban India. For the purpose of the study, data collected from 5 ceremonial houses where various social and religious functions organized on rental basis located at southern part of Kolkata Metro City of Eastern India. About 400 marriage parties were ceremonized in past 10 years. Through a lottery, 100 couples were selected for this study and basic information i.e. name, address and telephone numbers were collected from the registered of these houses. Then these couples were contacted via telephone to get information regarding their fertility status and prior appointment was taken and through using separate questionnaire data collected about their social and religious background, education, occupation, age of marriage, and details of their life style and infertility history and treatment, etc. From these information, it revealed that 63% of them were infertile and they were undergone prolonged treatment. But they were not hopeful to meet their desired need of biological child. They also shared that their lifestyle choices and pre-marital sex along with use of contraceptive, frequent abortion and late marriage was also contributing factors for their infertility. So, the continued education and awareness from their teens might be saved them from infertility.

KEYWORDS: couples, infertility, liberty in life, life style & life choice, pre-marital sex, urban India

Introduction

Infertility is a worldwide problem in recent times. According to the English demographic terminology, infertility is defined as the inability to bear any children, either due to the inability to conceive or the inability

to carry a pregnancy to a live birth. Medical studies referred infertility as the inability to conceive. It is also termed as “infecundity” according to the English demographic language which also refers the inability to conceive after several years of exposure to the risk of pregnancy. World Health Organization (1991) defines infertility as failure to conceive despite one year of cohabitation and exposure to pregnancy. However, infertility is considered commonly in demographic studies to use a period of five years (Rutstein & Shah, 2004). Medical science classifies infertility into two categories. Primary infertility when the couple never conceives despite cohabitation and exposure to pregnancy for a period of one year and it is estimated that globally 60–80 million couples suffer from infertility every year and in case of India, it is 15–20 million (Shivaraaya & Halemani, 2007) and rate is up rising day by day. It is linked to social and behavioural pattern of eligible couples at their reproductive age and significantly, late marriage is important. The infertility rate is high among urban women because of their attainment in higher education level for meeting own aspirations and delayed marriage, etc considered as ‘voluntary infertility’, a typical urban Indian syndrome Urban working women face stress in their profession with long working hours and erratic timing of work. Their lifestyle diseases like endometriosis, rising obesity, irregular menstrual cycles and any more are determinant factors of infertility (Ganguly & Unisa, 2010).

Like many countries, in Indian culture motherhood, a supreme achievement for a woman and demonstrates her physical and psychological adequacy is synonymous with womanhood and motherhood is the most desired goal for a married woman (Inhorn, 2003). It is a cultural practice for feminine identity and the desire for children is universal. Childbearing among married couples / spouses is important because it fulfills the goals of completeness, happiness and family integration. It renews the race. Therefore, it brings family acceptance and emotional well-being and it changes dramatically once she (married woman) becomes pregnant. Pregnancy offers a resolution to insecurity, doubt and the shame of infertility. Pregnancy marks the beginning of a woman’s adult identity (Wadley, 1998).

Psychologically, infertility is considered as the cause of mental ill health of the infertile couple, causing anxiety, depression, social isolation and sexual dysfunction. Further, it is treated as a stigma associated with male and female infertility due to the perception and societal beliefs regarding childlessness (Tolulope, 2009). There are some misconcep-

tions and myths about childlessness. Gender norms also play a role in marital relations with reference to the infertility among women (Barua et al., 2004). It results generally a change in traditional societal interactions causing a high level of psychosocial distress with a direct impact on the couple's marital and sexual relations (Valsangkar et al., 2011). The infertile couples suffer from negative feelings, low self esteem, poor social support, less freedom and less number of opportunities as compared to normal couples (Ganguly & Unisa, 2010).

Social, familial, religion and culture bear a sense of failure, loss and exclusion of infertile couples. It facilitates a difficult condition to the individuals and couples in the society (Jejeebhoy, 1998). It is considered as a private matter to be resolved individually. But the World Health Organisation (WHO) recognizes it as a public health issue worldwide. Various studies showed that women had to face several unexpected harassment (physical and emotional) as an impact of infertility which ranged from separation and divorce, etc. (Gijssels & Wambura, 2001; Darr & Merali, 2001).

Studies reveal that the causes of infertility are complex and associated with multiple factors. According to Emily (2004), physiological dysfunctions, preventable factors and unexplained issues are major sources of infertility. Daar & Merali (2002) found out that physiological problem i.e. tubal blockage, abnormal ovulation, congenital malformation and endometriosis are the causal factors of female infertility and in case of male infertility, sperm counts, motility and equality and ejaculatory dysfunctions are mainly responsible factors. Sexually transmitted infections through chlamydia and gonorrhoea are most preventable factors of infertility (Fidler, 1999; Datta & Okopnoff, 2002; Butler, 2003). Further physical, behavioural and socio-economic, biological and environmental and life style related factors are also causing infertility. There is some occupation factors, especially chemical exposure i.e. mercury, chloroform, organic solvents, etc (sometimes metals like lead, steel, etc) causing infertility in both males and females (Lindohm et al., 1990; Dahl et al., 1999; Valanis et al., 1999). Life style (dietary habits and obesity) (Pasquali et al., 2003) and life choices (excessive intake of caffeine, smoking and consumption of alcohol) (Fenster et al., 1997; Ness et al., 1999; Tolstrup et al., 2003; Juhl et al., 2003; Eggert et al., 2004) in daily habits have an impact so far as infertility is concerned.

In a study, Syamala (2012) explored various determinants of infertility—place of residence and education of women, time of child bearing

and habits of drinking of self or the partner or smoking or chewing tobacco. According to this study, rate of infertility is high among urban women in India due to late marriage for their education and career aspiration, etc. It is linked to their life style and life choices which indicate their habits of smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol, etc. Sexual mobility, premarital sex, divorce, extramarital sex and prostitution are associated with infertility (Rutstein & Shah, 2004).

So, this study explored the determinants of infertility among couples of urban India.

Method

Urban married couples of Kolkata within the age group of 20–40 years married for about 5–10 years had been selected for this study. The researcher selected 5 ceremonial houses (a rented house where various social, religious and cultural ceremony celebrated) located at the southern part of the city, Kolkata, only metro city of eastern India and as per their records, it was estimated that about 400 marriage ceremonies took place within 10 years. From these, 100 couples were selected through a lottery method. Then the information i.e. names and addresses of these couples collected and contacted them via telephone and discussed the purpose of interaction—whether they had child or fertility status. Of them, 63 couples were suffering from infertility / childlessness. All of them were under treatment and some them shared that they might search for adoption of a child. Then he finalized an appointment of meeting them to know the causes of infertility and childlessness. A common questionnaire was prepared to collect information regarding their age, age at marriage, place of residence, religion, caste, education, current working status, and standard of living, etc. Further, there was a separate part of questionnaire for both couples to know their history of pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, use of contraceptives, miscarriages, sexuality before marriage, personal lifestyle habits and behaviours, etc. It also assessed who (male / female) was responsible for their infertility. Interaction with them helped to assess their mental anxiety and distress, thrust of conjugal and family relation and future planning and so forth. Finally, overall observation and collected information were transcribed and analysed with tables.

Result

Social and religious background of couples (informants)

Educational attainment, occupation, marital age and selection of partial partner, etc depend on the social and religious background of an individual in Indian society. Global progress in science and technology has an impact to overcome the barriers of social and religious backwardness in relation to the above index of human development. In this study, the research tried to explore this changing pattern of individuals of various social and religious background. The demographic profile of the couples (informants) describes (table 1) that 61% of these couples were Hindus, 16% were Muslims and 23% of them were Christians. Among the Hindus, 10% couples belonged to SCs and 16% of them belonged to OBCs. Among the Muslims, 5% belonged to OBCs and it was 6% in case of Christians.

According to their age group, it was found that chronologically number of couples was higher to lower from older age groups (36–40 years) to younger age groups (20–25 years). Only 4% of them were under the age groups of 20–25 years and 3% of them (1% belonged to OBCs) were Muslims. Only 1% of them were Hindus belonged to SCs. Of them, 11% couples were within the age bracket of 26–30 years of age. And 4% of these couples were Hindus belonged to socially backward community (2% each of them belonged to SCs and OBCs respectively). But this age group (26–39 years) were dominated by Muslim (6%) and out of which, 3% were from OBCs. Only 1% of them of said groups were Christians of general categories.

Table 1. Religion and social categories of the couples according to their age group

Age groups of the couples	Religion of the couples							Total (n, %)
	Hindu			Muslim		Christian		
	Gen (n, %)	SCs (n, %)	OBCs (n, %)	Gen (n, %)	OBCs (n, %)	Gen (n, %)	OBCs (n, %)	
20–25 years	-	1 (1)	-	2 (2)	1 (1)	-	-	4 (4)
26–30 years	-	2 (2)	2 (2)	3 (3)	3 (3)	1 (1)	-	11 (11)
31–35 years	5 (5)	1 (1)	4 (4)	6 (6)	1 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)	21 (21)
36–40 years	30 (30)	6 (6)	10 (10)	-	-	13 (13)	5 (5)	64 (64)
Total (n, %)	35 (35)	10 (10)	16 (16)	11 (11)	5 (5)	17 (17)	6 (6)	100 (100)

Source: *Field work* (Gen—denotes socially general categories, Scheduled castes as SCs and Other Backward Classes as OBCs. Among Hindu social categories are constitutionally classified into three groups—general, SCs and OBCs, while Muslim and Christian are into two—general and OBCs. Hierarchically, OBCs are upper stage than SCs.)

Second largest group of the couples (34–35 years) was 21%. Percentage of Hindus was highest (11%) and of them, 1% belonged to SCs and 4% of them belonged to OBCs. Muslims of 31–35 years age were 7% and most of them (6%) was under general categories. Then 4% of them was Christians and out of which, 1% of them were from OBCs. Highest percentage of the informants (64%) was within the age bracket of 36–40 years. And they were from Hindus (46%) and 18% of them were from Christian community. Among the Hindus, 30% of them belonged to general categories, 10% of these couples were from OBCs and 6% of them were SCs. Among the Christians, 13% of them belonged to general categories and 5% belonged to OBCs.

Educational and occupational background of the couples (informants)

From table 2, we get a picture of educational and occupational status of the couples studied. The couples' minimum educational background was graduate in general streams. Out of 18% graduate, 12.5% of them were females and highest percentage (6%) of them were in private sectors job of receptionist, public relation officer, clerical and so forth front office

Table 2. Education and occupation of the informants

Educational status	Occupational status						Total (n, %)
	Public sectors /public undertaking		Private sectors		Self employed/IT pro- fessional /consultants/ media professional, etc.		
	Male (n,%)	Female (n, %)	Male (n,%)	Female (n, %)	Male (n, %)	Female (n, %)	
Graduate general streams	4 (2)	8 (4)	6 (3)	12 (6)	1 (0.5)	5 (2.5)	36 (18)
Post graduate general streams	3 (1.5)	10 (5)	12 (6)	15 (7.5)	4 (2)	9 (4.5)	53 (26.5)
Professional degrees (engineering, tech- nology, medical, journalism, media management, etc	2 (1)	2 (1)	22 (11)	20 (10)	46 (23)	19 (9.5)	111 (55.5)
Total (n, %)	9 (4.5)	20 (10)	40 (20)	47 (23.5)	51 (25.5)	33 (16.5)	200 (100)

Source: *Field work* (In this table, we considered total number of informants as 200—2 x 100 couples because each of them had separated educational and occupational background)

non-ministerial and 4% of them were in public sectors/public undertaking which was either school teacher job or clerical jobs. Of them, 2.5% females worked as media professional or consultants or self-employed.

Males graduate were 5.5%. Of them, 2% were in public sectors/public undertaking jobs as school teachers or administrative or clerical job. Three percent males graduates were in private sectors as sales or marketing executive, etc and 0.5% of them were self-employed/medical professional, etc. It was estimated that 26.5% of these informants possessed post graduate degrees in general streams. Among them, 17% females were post graduates in general streams. Of them, 5% females were in public sectors//public undertaking jobs (basically school teachers, administrative jobs and clerical jobs, etc). 7.5% of these females engaged in private sector jobs i.e. public relations, marketing professional and so forth) and rest of them (4.5%) was self-employed / consultants / media professional. Comparing with females, males who were post graduate level of education 1.5% were public sectors/public undertaking (school and college teachers, administrative jobs and so forth), 6% of them were private sectors jobs (marketing professional) and 2% of them were self-employed / consultants / media professional. It was revealed that majority (55.5%) of them possessed professional degrees (engineering, information technology, management, medical, journalism and media, etc). 25.5% of them were males and rest of them (20%) was females. Out of 25.5% males, 1% males were in public sectors, 11% of them were private sectors and 23% males were self-employed / IT professional / consultants, etc. Among these females informants, 1% females were in public sectors, 10% females were in private sectors and 9.5% of them were in self-employed / IT professional / consultants, etc.

Age of marriage and nature of marriage tied up of the couples

Table 3 describes age of marriage and nature of marital tied up of the couples of this study. Educational attainment, career aspiration and liberty in life were primary causes of late marriage of these couples and statistic shows that 48% of them married within the age groups of 26–30 years and majority of them (33%) settled their tied up by self-choice / romantic relationship and male and female ratio was almost

Table 3. Age and pattern of marriage

Age groups of the couples	Nature of marriage and age of marriage																		Total (n, %)
	Selection / choice of marriage partner by parents						Self-choice through romantic relation												
	20-25 years		26-30 years		31-35 years		36-40 years		20-25 years		26-30 years		31-35 years		36-40 years				
M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)		
20-25 years	-	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 (2)	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8 (4)	
26-30 years	2 (1)	4 (2)	1 (0.5)	-	-	-	-	-	8 (4)	4 (2)	-	-	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	22 (11)	
31-35 years	4 (2)	1 (0.5)	6 (3)	4 (2)	-	-	-	-	1 (0.5)	6 (3)	8 (4)	2 (1)	2 (1)	7 (3.5)	10 (5)	2 (1)	-	42 (21)	
36-40 years	1 (0.5)	6 (3)	8 (4)	10 (5)	8 (4)	7 (3.5)	-	1 (0.5)	12 (6)	6 (3)	26 (13)	22 (11)	7 (3.5)	10 (5)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	128 (64)	
Total (n, %)	7 (3.5)	13 (6.5)	15 (7.5)	15 (7.5)	8 (4)	7 (3.5)	-	1 (0.5)	25 (12.5)	18 (9)	34 (17)	32 (16)	9 (4.5)	12 (6)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	200 (100)	

Source: Field work

equal (17:16). On the other hand, 15% of them got married with the partners selected by their parents. And here male and female percentage were equal (7.5%). Second largest groups i.e. 31.5% of them got married at their age of 20–25 years and 21.5% (12.5% were males) of them chose their partners by romantic relationship. Rest of them (10%) of them got married to partners selected by their parents. And here females (6.5%) were almost double than males (3.5%). Then, it was found that 7.5% of them married to the parents' selected partners at their age of 31–35 years. But 10.5% of them married at their age of 31–35 years by their self-choice partners and females were 1.5% more than males. Only 0.5% females married to their parents' selected partners at their age of 36–40 years and 2% (1% each male and female) married to their romantic partners at their age of 36–40 years. This table also indicates that 64% of them were in long time marital relationship. Among them, 7.5% (including 6% females) got married at their age of 20–25 years, 33% (including 16% females) married at their age of 26–30 years, and 16% (including 8.5% females) married at their age of 31–35 years. On the other hand, lowest percent (4%) of them were in marital relationship for less than 5 years because they married at their age of 20–25 years. It was also observed that education, occupation and other changing interaction pattern broke the social and religious barriers of selection of marriage partners. About 12% of them were inter caste marriage and 4% marriages were inter race marriage.

Fertility status of the couples

Table 4 describes fertility status of these couples. It was estimated that 63 of these couples were infertile or they had no child. It was highest (49%) among the couples of 36–40 years of age and they married for 10 years or more. Out of 64% of them, only 15% couples had child. It revealed that out of 21% couples within the age group of 31–35 years, 12% had child and 9% of them had no child. Eleven percent of these couples of 26–30 years of age, 9% had no child and it was 2% in case of couples within 20–25 years. It was informed that the couples of 20–25 years and 26–30 years who had no child were not prepared for parenting and other reasons (not physiological).

Table 4. Fertility / child status of the couples

Age group of couples	Fertility status		Total (n, %)
	Having child(ren) (n, %)	No child (n, %)	
20-25 years	2 (2)	2 (2)	4 (4)
26-30 years	8 (8)	3 (3)	11 (11)
31-35 years	12 (12)	9 (9)	21 (21)
36-40 years	15 (15)	49 (49)	64 (64)
Total (n, %)	37 (37)	63 (63)	100 (100)

Source: *Field work* (18% of these couple within the age bracket of 25-35 years having two children)

Causes of infertility and treatment of the couples

In the Table 5, causes of infertility / childlessness explored. These causes were categorized into two—primary and secondary. Primary caused showed that 9.5% males and 14% females had physiological problems. Then it was recorded that 7% males were suffering from sexually transmitted infections and it was 1.6% in case of females. Occupational hazards/stress caused infertility among 12.5% couples, out of which 9.5% were males. 9.5% females were infertile because of abortion and miscarriage. Frequent use of contraceptives caused infertility among 6% females. Late marriage & others life style and life choices in daily life were considered as secondary cause. It revealed that 38.5% of these couples including 23.5% were males were infertile due to secondary causes. It also gravitated that among them, 20.5% males were under infertility treatment and 41% females were under infertility treatment.

Discussion

Education, occupation and liberal life of the couples

The informants of this study lived in the urban area of Kolkata metropolis. They enjoyed the scope of attainment of higher education and their parental motivation and support were also beneficial for their education. They were under modern education system and most of them completed their school education from English medium school. They possessed higher degrees and professional / technical education due to

Table 5. Cause of infertility according to the sex of the couple under treatment

Causes of infertility	Responsible either partner of infertility		Total (n, %)	Under fertility treatment		Total (n, %)
	Male (n, %)	Female (n, %)		Male (n, %)	Female (n, %)	
	Primary					
Physiological problems	12 (9.5)	18 (14)	30 (24)	26 (20.5)	52 (41)	Out of 126 informants (63 couples), 78 couples were under treatment
Sexually transmitted infections	9 (7)	2 (1.6)	11 (9)	-	-	
Occupational hazards / stress	12 (9.5)	4 (3)	16 (12.5)	-	-	
Abortion / miscarriage	-	12 (9.5)	12 (9.5)	-	-	
Frequent use of contraceptive	-	8 (6)	8 (6)	-	-	
Secondary						
Late marriage & others life style and life choices in daily life	30 (23.5)	19 (15)	49 (38.5)	-	-	-
Total (n, %)	63 (50)	63 (50)	126 (100)	26 (20.5)	52 (41)	78 (61.5)

Source: *Field work* (n= 63 because in the sample of this, out of 100 couples, 63 couples had no child or they were infertile and under fertility treatment at the time of this study)

primarily their good performance in various school examinations. Their parental financial back up and other supports were secondary. They learned modern life styles relating to their status and life choices from their family and of course, pattern of urban living was enough to determine their (informants) living pattern. Their grooming (socialization) was oriented towards life for enjoy with liberty. From their school days, their habits and behavior were not monitored and controlled for value orientation in life. They were more focused towards a job and it was obvious for management of their own. After getting job, they were free from any financial burden or they were not only independent financially, it facilitates self-decision in their daily life as well as future hood. Their self supported life was a determinant for “do as you like”. They shared their finances very rarely to their parents. As a result of this, they used to excessive intake of caffeine, smoking and consumption of alcohol. Even females were habituated with these while in India society, it was socially not permitted for females (it might be a patriarchal dominance or gender related stereotypicality). They were habituated to attend late night parties and friendship and premarital sexual relationship were their other mode of enjoyment. They stated that their life choices to make them stress free in their hectic occupational hazards—work schedule, work load (assignment) and working hours. It helped to refresh and rejoin in their work. They did not bother future of their physiological and psychological life. Their parent viewed that they were adults and self-dependent so they did not like to interfere about their life style. It was their way of life.

Marriage, conjugal relationship, and family tied up of the couples

From this study, it was observed that informants had full faith on marriage institution as a process of renewal of their race and family tie up. They firmly believed on normal conjugal relationship to be tied up according to traditional rituals, but it should be legally sanctioned. They did not prefer single life. Conjugal relationship was a targeted determination. They shared that marriage was for legal sanction of male-female relationship and it would socialize their offspring without any hindrances. Simultaneously, these couples told that nuptial tied up would be limited their boundaries of life with some role and responsibility. This limitation would generally hamper their liberty in enjoyment in life. So, they chose later marriage and conjugal relationship. Thus, they did not consider that later marriage would be cause of infertility / childlessness. Majority of these

couples (61%) married in late between 26–35 years of age. They opined that their working life was more important than their conjugal relationship and they were not prepared for parenting at early phase of marriage. Their family was a rest house for a certain period and they used to celebrate their conjugality through frequent long drive or short tour. Further, they lived in the house separately from their parents. So, they were only members in their family and only they were accompanied by domestic help for particular hours daily. In this venture of their nuptial/spousal relation, they were not prepared to bear child at early days of married because it would be burden for their career advancement and liberty in their life. So, they (6%) had to use contraception to protect/prevent pregnancies. Further, 9.5% of them aborted their unwanted pregnancies. The informants (couples) very secretly and individually shared some aspects of their romantic relationship, and premarital sex when the researcher built up rapport and he assured confidentiality with the couples. They were involved in romantic relationship from their high school and college days. About 42% of the couples altered their romantic partners once or twice before their marriage. Of them, 86 % had romantic partners, but they married according to their parental choice. When they were attached with their romantic partners, they had physically and sexually involved as process of love making and enjoyment. Mainly it was a demand to keep in relation and by that time, broken love relation was a psychological obstacle. They were limerent partners with each other. It was also process to be kept themselves “happy go lucky”. They remarked that it was a smart and golden period in their life. It saved them from inferiority complex comparing with their peers/friends. They (78% of the couples) used to use contraception to protect unwanted pregnancies. If they got pregnant they aborted it secretly when their parents or family members did not informed. About 26% of them aborted once and 18% of them aborted their unwanted pregnancies twice or more because unmarried motherhood and pre-marital sex were not ritually and legally permitted in Indian law and society. Further, they were not prepared to take their responsibilities of parenting financially and mentally.

Decision of the couples on child bearing

The life style and life choices of these couples oriented towards modernity in the global era. Their educational attainment or possession of degrees was according to global need and demands based present mar-

keting system. Their occupation was also market oriented—work for money and money for enjoyment. Traditionally Indian boys settled in their marital life after a secured job and girls of so-called well off families married after possession a level of education. Their settled marital and family life was primarily concerned of their parents or seniors of their family. After effect of modernization as well as globalization, it was changed and they were free to take decision of education, occupation and marriage by their own. They did not permit interference of their parents or seniors relating to their future. They were enough self dependent to make any decision in their future hood. They preferred to set up their family separately from their parents. After getting marriage, their parents had expectation for their grandchild and they alerted to their offspring in this matter and it was a great enjoyment to their later life. In this study, majority of these couples lived separately and they had only infrequent attachment with their parents. Further, they did not allow to gossip on the matter of grandchild. As a consequence of this, they preferred child after a certain period of marriage because they had work pressure and aspiration towards career advancement. Further, they interested to enjoy married life without child. They also shared that they were not mentally prepared for parenting. So, their joint decision was parenting at late.

Parenthood, treatment of infertility and psychological effect of the couples

Parenthood (fatherhood / motherhood) is a cultural practice (Rich, 1995) in every society. Parental satisfaction is determined by parenthood and child usually renews their race. Socially parents who are infertile/have not child suffer from the stigma of barren in Indian society. But it is more considered as stigma in educationally and culturally progressive families. Child brings happiness among parents and attachment with the child helps to recover their fatigue and it is also a future investment for psychological well-being. In this study, the couples were eagerly expecting a baby to get relief from exhausted and fatigued life. They felt that their family/household was physically dark without any child and they were psychologically in depressed and anxiety. Occupation and entertainment were not merely brought mental stability. They were broken for their late decision of child. Their younger stage of life

and style of enjoyment were their curse. They had done wrong without any restriction in life.

They were very much exhausted about infertility treatment mode and procedures. It was too expensive and uncertain because concerned fertility practitioners failed to assure of success. Physically and physiologically they were suffered from trauma. The situation of childlessness/infertility hampered their routine life. They did not get any mental stability in their work and home. The couples interacted hardly while they were under one roof. Their unhappy life was the cause of conflict. Even, 5% of these females couples attempted suicides. About 26% of them visited religious priest, *tantric* for a baby. They did not preferred surrogacy. Only 4% of them conducted adoption centre for a baby.

Conclusion

Infertility is not no more considered as social stigma in Indian society because it is not a sin to the couples rather it is due to physiological, environmental and behavioral causes. Rapid education as well as modernization in global India is largely impacted on daily life of people, specially in urban area. Urban life style and life choices are very much media and market oriented. It reduced the traditional social and religious barrier in Indian society. In this study, these barriers did not affect in their educational and social life. It was found that both-males and females of all races possessed their higher education and they were employed in various public/private sectors or self-employed in their professional life. It was about 55.5% of the couples who possessed professional education i.e. engineering, information technology and management, etc. From their early childhood, they were socialized for a life with enjoyment with modern facilities. To keep their style alive, their occupation for earning was urgent. Their financial independence supported their own way of life with own choices of life. It changed their behavioral pattern according to global cultural syndrome. Education and occupation had broken the barrier of mixing of males and females. Almost all of them were in romantic relation from their teenage and about 38.5% of them married with their romantic partners. But they also changed their romantic partner mutually more than once. They were also involved in physically and sexually with their partners. To protect them from unwanted/early pregnancies they used frequently various contraceptives and even, they

aborted their unwanted pregnancies. The meaning of life to them was considered as enjoyment and they used to excessive intake alcohol, smoking, etc respective of their sex. Finally, they believed on marriage at later or parenting at later age for fulfillment of their life goal.

From this study, it revealed that modern life style and life choices as secondary causes were primary causes of their infertility because their life style and habits as behavior were prime determinants of physiological problems of infertility.

There is need of control in life in certain aspects. Enjoyment in life is not a goal to an individual as social being and society has expectation from every one. Male and female sexual encounter is not only restricted for enjoyment in married or unmarried life. Marriage is a scared institution which permits/sanctions male-female sexually relationship because for recognition of their child as social products and the child is the future of a nation. Further, premarital sex and protection and presentation of unwanted pregnancies are not causing physiological harms of the couples. Marriage institution does not support because it would lose its importance in every society. Media and entertainment industries are promoting their business for their large profit. As social responsible being we should restrict imitation in our life to save ourselves and our future.

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Violence Against Women Living in Marginalized Social Environment— Romani Women

ABSTRACT. One of the most problematic allegations claimed by the proponents of certain cultures is that relations between men and women are determined by their culture and that members of other cultures have no right to intervene. However, violence against women to the extent where it is supposedly legitimate to torture them or take their life, is not merely a matter of a specific culture, as in our time it is a criminal act. Nowadays, women all over the world react to violence by defending their personality. And in the Romani culture, the values of hitherto patriarchal attitudes of men to women assume more democratic forms. Although it is not an easy process, as our article shows, using the example of a Romani woman named Jeanette Maziniová; it is necessary and has certain positive results, despite many difficulties.

KEYWORDS: Roma ethnicity, Romani woman, culture of the Olah Roma, patriarchal attitude to women, emancipation of Romani women

Traditionally, the woman had an inferior position in the family. While the woman had a relatively broad range of competences (over the family's hygiene, management of the household, children's education, as well as the role of a sister-in-law in the bride's education), she personally was subordinate to her husband who had the right to make decisions about her, cheat on her, beat her, or abandon her, if she did not have children. (Scheinostová, 2006, p. 67)

Today, Romani women are wiser than ever before. In the past, women only knew how to give birth to children, take care of their children, husband and the household. Present-day Romani women can read and write, and are often smarter and more educated than their men. They no longer want to tolerate their husband's promiscuity. A man gives his wife a slap and she goes berserk. (Poll response in Scheinostová, 2006, p. 67)

When discussing the culture of the Roma, which also includes relations between men and women, we often hear sentences about traditional Romani culture, including notions of patriarchal dominance of men over women. This attitude is ingrained in the Roma ethnicity, ROMIPEN, and is particularly strong in the culture of the Olah Roma, which is based on the inequality between men and women. As author Ivan Rác [Raats] writes in Chapter 7.1 entitled *Romani Women in the Community of the Olah Roma* of his publication named *Violence Committed Against Women in Partnerships*, he writes

Olah men are extremely jealous and do not trust their women. Women must be really careful so as not to make a major mistake, because they know what to expect for being unfaithful. If a Romani woman commits adultery, disfigure her face with a razor blade, leave her and send her back home to her mother. Cutting a woman's hair is done because long hair is a symbol of her beauty and cutting it short is a symbol of shame. The woman is then ashamed to show herself to the public. Men have the right to rule the house and make decisions, because they wear a hat, whereas women wear a mere kerchief. In certain situations, the strong-minded woman may be sent into isolation somewhere in the corner, because it is not allowed to oppose her man publically (Rác, 2015, p. 71).

The Olah Roma even hold their own court sessions, called KRIS, to defend their patriarchal customs. Their judicial system and other customs are brilliantly described in a book by Petr Stojka [Stoyka] and Rastislav Pivoňa [Pivonia] entitled *Our Life – Amaro Trájo*, using the following words: “In the community of the Olah Roma, man is the most important person in the family. He is his family's leading representative amongst the Olah Roma. He is responsible for family through thick and thin. The Roma man is always the head of the family...” (Stojka & Pivoň, 2003).

However, traditions are corruptible. They are subject to unstoppable developments, even with respect to the position of women in the community. The author Ivan Rác presents two research projects that monitored the position of women in Romani communities, especially in the area of asserting human rights of women in segregated and separated or ostracized communities. The first research project, realized by the Cultural Association of the Roma in Slovakia¹, tried to identify the similari-

¹ *Dáta O Ľudských Právach Rómskych Žien* (2009) Banská Bystrica: Kultúrne združenie Rómov Slovenska.

ties and particularities in the reality experienced by Romani women and men, as well as their attitudes and opinions on the basic role of women and men in present-day Slovakia. The results of the research indicated mainly the fact that the women's responses addressed primarily "the breaking of traditional models, e.g., education and work engagement of women in juxtaposition to family cycles and models. As impediment to the possibility of their assertion in the society, they most often mentioned lack of education and jobs..." (Rác, 2015, p. 72–73).

The second research, which according to Ivan Rác explored the situation and assertion of the human rights of Romani women in greater depth, was a project initiated by the civil association named Quo Vadis², and was realized in 2012. This research, too, confirmed that "life in certain communities, where several of the monitored women live, is still based on the patriarchal principle that is characterized by man's authority over women... However, there also exist other models that indicate a more positive trend." (Rác, 2015, p. 74–76) The new models lie in emancipation that also applies to Romani women, many of which have a good education today and seek liberation from the engrained mechanisms of patriarchal dominance of men. As the research showed, their emancipation efforts are being impeded, *inter alia*, by their economic situation, poverty, and under-education, all of which help uphold the status quo.

Despite the above factors, the future of Romani women leads to their emancipation and education. Their path is often paved by lack of understanding on the part of their men and their jealousy aimed not only against other men, but also their position in the society. Consequently, real domestic violence continues to arise in the Romani communities, too. The crystal clear form of the violence is described in *Janette Mazzini's* publication *Cigánka*:

"This sweater again? You're supposed to wear when you go out with me!"

The sparks in his eyes were promising nothing but trouble. What provoked him was a little blue and white sweater that I happened to find in a second-hand shop. Lately, I no longer know what to wear so he would not go berserk. Even a quick glance at the clock, because it is time to go for the afternoon, he translated for himself as follows:

"Can't wait to see him, eh? That's how it is."

² *Obraz Rómskej Ženy. Kvalitatívny prieskum participácie rómskych žien na verejnom živote* (2012) Zvolen: Quo Vadis.

“Oh, stop it, it’s only in your head. You make up something and then you believe it,” I said in indulgently, as anything in voice could cause him to explode into uncontrolled fury. Nothing stops him, not even our nearly six-year-old Marek who is sleeping in his room.

She was surprised to see that he did not start to act up, even though I was already prepared for everything. The last time, some three months ago, he destroyed all my make-up things, scattered them all over the floor, and tore up half of my clothing. I couldn’t believe it when I saw the mess. As if he was changing right before my eyes from someone who had been a fairly good husband into a monster who wasn’t able to control himself ...

I couldn’t tell you how and when his transformation would happen. Although he may always had it in him, but it was as apparent or frequent. Besides, I used to be a home. With him. Dependent on his assistance.

As soon as began to go to work, his outbursts of jealousy became ever more frequent. He would always find a pretext – too pretty underwear, nice T-shirt to work, too little lipstick (surely so as not to get smudged somewhere), return a few minutes later from work, or leaving a little earlier for work ...

At the beginning, I thought he would get used it, as would merely take time. I knew it certainly easy for him to accept the fact that he was staying at home on a disability pension ad maternity leave, and I go to work. I tried to talk to him, emphasizing everything he does for the family. After all, he cooks, keeps the household clean, and takes care of Marek...

At first, he understood. He would apologize, letting me know how much he loves me. He kept repeating that he wouldn’t be capable of hurting me.

And I believed him.

I wanted to believe him ...

The librarian told be once that only he who understands is able to forgive, as it is a sign of man’s maturity. I don’t know whether I was or wasn’t mature enough, but the truth is that I forgave him – once... twice ... three times ...

I don’t know any more how many times, as I stopped counting at some point ...” (Maziniová, 2012, p. 145–148).

This excerpt from Janette Mazzini’s book demonstrates merely one dimension of her life, which is however symbolical for many Roma. It explains the origins of the phenomenon of violence that arises from social and economic situations and impacts on the relations between the Roma and the majority as well. Having learned a lesson from frequent misunderstandings that she experienced as *Cigánka* and also from her health handicap, as well as the education she got in the field of social work, Janette Mazzini managed to give her suffering a name and de-

scribe it, like other women all over the world in many of individual stories (comp. e.g., Schwarz, 2011 or Armstrong, 2015):

Emotional abuse has a peculiar aspect. It does not leave any bruises. All it leaves behind is a bad aftertaste from living with a person who acts in such an absurd way. At first, you have the impression that it was just a so-called fit; then you think you must have provoked it. The greater the frequency of such fits, the greater the intensity. The greater the intensity, the more anger against oneself and shame for letting it happen, as if it were one's own failure. Maybe one is too proud to admit to oneself that someone who had warned you was right. Never, never, can it be otherwise. Had I known this earlier, I would not have done so much wishful thinking – as soon as I realized it, I filed for divorce (Maziniová, 2012, p. 148).

The authentic story of Janette Mazzini—who describes in her book not only relations between Romani men and Romani women, but also the fixation of these relations in the social and often tough conflicting conditions of the rejection of the Roma by the majority—shows the need to focus on the gender relations within the Romani community.³ Research of these particular relations (concretely, in the Czech Republic, with the participation of 30 Romani women and 30 Romani men) simultaneously forms the basis of detailed findings about violence of men against women in the Romani environment, too. The task was brilliantly carried out by a team of young specialists from the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice headed by Alena Kajanová, as part of grant project GAJU 098/2013/S entitled *Current Position of Romani Women in the Family and Society*. In the preface to her book, *[Un]equalities in Romani Communities*, editor Kajanová explains the objective and reasons for the research:

³ Janette Mazzini book and blogs made her famous in Slovakia. She also told her life story several times through the organization named “FIM—Forum of Inspiring Ideas”. This organization invites personages who describe in their stage presentations how their life has changed thanks to their own endeavors and will, but also the help of other people who had a positive attitude to them. The organization's motto is: “Meet genuine personages and change your life” (www.inspirativnemyšlienky.sk, Fórum inšpiratívnych myšlienok). In one of the organization's performances for an audience, Janette Mazzini told her life story, along with other performers, were she spoke of her Romani as well as female and professional identity. Her main thoughts were based on her personal experience written on the blackboard behind her: “In the society, there are plenty of people who want to change something, but only few of them have the courage to face the challenge, because they know they might not succeed” (Maziniová, 2012).

Although the need for paying attention to the cultural characteristics of the Romani minority, there are very few research studies conducted in this area; older-date ethnographic and socio-anthropological studies cannot be considered relevant, given the present-day dynamic changes in Romani families in the last decades. The Romani minority is often presented as an entity (covered under the generic term “the Roma”), in other words, without regard of gender specifics. We find it inadequate in the contemporary era, where emancipation effort are beginning to penetrate into Romani communities and Romani women are becoming aware of the considerable inequalities between the male and female population, especially in terms of the rights and obligations related both to family and public life. Today, a Romani woman may find herself in a completely paradoxical situation, where she is being denied her right to emancipation by her partner, yet is still unable to meet the requirements of the society. The moment a Romani woman wants to be emancipated, she exposes herself to the danger of being rejected by her own family and the society as well (Kajanová and Assoc., 2015, p. 10).

Kajanová writes, “In the Czech Republic, the theme of the emancipation of the Romani woman and her position in the family and society is new at a time where human rights ought to be a standard matter, similarly to gender equality and inclusion of minorities.” (Kajanová & Assoc., 2015, p. 10). In our opinion, this fact is, as the excerpts from Janette Mazzini’s book and stories, is a current issue in Slovakia, too. As latest research in Slovakia proves, the situation of Romani women in Romani communities, where the need for dealing with this theme has been indicated, often involves prevention of domestic violence. This is particularly relevant for our work, as far too often hidden violence affects women with a health handicap, not only in the majority society, but also in Romani communities. The degree and extent remains to be identified through further in-depth research. The breakthrough in this theme in Slovakia can be traced to the research work of the author Rác and his team of associates, whose research conducted with 21 women by 14 specialists reveals concrete events of violence and tendencies to violence against Romani women. Let us cite what the research team of authors guided by Ivan Rác presented:

According to the authors’ monograph, Romani women are particularly threatened by violence. The main objective and purpose of the planned scientific monograph is to focus on the existence and impact of violence committed against Romani women, as well as the degree, extent, and effectiveness of specialized social services in the area, provided by selected experts

in the field. The aim of the scientific monograph corresponds to the main objective of the national project named In Support of Elimination and Prevention of Violence Against Women, especially through supporting social inclusion of the endangered women by means of higher quality social services. The purpose of the document and the objective of the national project pursue the main objective of the 2nd Operational Program: Employment Opportunities and Social Inclusion⁴, which concentrates on reinforcing the integration of socially ostracized or excluded persons and support for the harmonization of family life and work.

The issue related to violence committed against women is phenomenon of concern to the whole society, and it is part of the solutions addressed in gender policies. The gender policy is one of the youngest public policies to be implemented in Slovakia. We may speak of the gender policy as a complex system from the beginning of the 1990's (also in connection with the establishment of the Slovak Republic), as that is when the first instruments of the gender policy and the basic institutional framework began to be adopted and applied in Slovakia. The Slovak gender policy was formed under the influence of the relevant strategic EU documents, which Slovakia recognized and assumed the obligation to implement gender equality in the Slovak legislation in the context of the European Union. The formation and development of the gender policy in Slovakia may be observed as development of the objectives and tools of the gender policy adopted in the form of governmental materials, especially in the course of the last 15 years. We studies to what extent these documents derive from the international obligations, how the initial objectives assure gender equality in the job market, how they support participation of women in public life, how they harmonize work and family life, and finally, how success fully they eliminate violence against women.

Slovakia, as a country, does not have a specific law on gender equality or on the abuse of women and children. The Slovak Constitution guarantees merely the right to general equality to all citizens. This legislative deficiency has been partly compensated by international documents, in which Slovakia undertakes as signatory to meet certain obligations on the premise of its EU membership. However, the European Union criticizes Slovakia for shortcomings in the adopted gender policy instruments in the form of governmental materials aiming to eliminate the unequal position of Romani women in the society and the abuse of Romani women.

We may therefore say that the position of Romani women in the society and the elimination of violence against Romani women is not specifically dealt with in the governmental materials. The only exception is the Medium-

⁴ Available at: www.esf.gov.sk [accessed: 30.12.2016].

term Concept of the Romani Minority's Development in Slovakia, named Solidarity Integrity – Inclusion, 2008-2013. This is the only document that addresses specifically the issue of gender equality of Romani women, whereby it suggests concrete recommendations for elimination of violence against Romani women. In addition to the above-mentioned governmental materials, the instruments of elimination of violence against women have been hitherto set out in general terms only, without regard to the specific and concrete needs of the Romani women (i.e., without regard of their status). Instead, they call for a more personalized approach that takes into account the multifaceted deprivation ingrained conditionally in ethnic gender stereotypes. Lack of respect for these specifics may continue to lead to ever deeper inequality of the Romani women's position in the family, community, and society, and ongoing acceptance of violence committed on Romani women, which consequently impacts greatly on the whole society.

On this note, permit us to express our gratitude, on behalf of the research team, to the participants for their willingness to cooperate with us on the scientific monograph. In particular, we thank the 21 Romani women who were victims of violence and were, despite various barriers, willing to tell us about the traumatic and difficult events in their life" (Rác, 2015).

In our opinion, the tendencies and objectives of the research project correspond to the general global trend leading to overall assertion of feminist pursuits initiated in the 1960's and 1970's. Sally Armstrong, a writer and journalist, named her book on violence against women occurring practically in all parts of the globe, as *REBELLION: Dawn of a New Era for All Daughters of Eva*. In her often emotionally expressive argumentation, she writes:

Today, women are getting opportunities at last. Most women in the western world believe that the moment of our opportunity came during the second wave of the feminist movement in the sixties and seventies of the last century (the first wave was represented by women's fight for the right to vote, headed by the suffragettes in Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA, and Canada more than half a century earlier). Even though considerable success has been achieved in the area of equality, many women in the western part of the world have not reached the target level and, in the rest of the world, it seemed that the target level is an unattainable dream. That is no longer so. The catalysts of current changes are women both in the east and west, as well as in Africa. These women have been getting massive support from prominent personages from the area of mainstream economy, strategy, and political life, who realized that education, better opportunities, and the rights of women and girls mean progress (Armstrong, 2015, p. 12).

To this proclamation of the global framework of changes concerning much needed legal trends in the pursuit of the emancipation of Romani women, who are handicapped not only by their ethnicity, but also by the phenomenon of concrete domestic violence, which bars women from education, etc., we want express our conviction that our civil society need not tolerate outbreaks of violent behavior leading to the abuse of women who want to liberate themselves in many parts of the world. As an alarming example, let us mention the story of the sixteen-year-old Malala Yousafzai

who became the spokesperson for girls from all over the world, as she personifies the changes that have been inexorably spreading amongst nations. Mere few years ago, we would not even hear of her life story. When members of the Taliban shot her in the head on October 9, 2012, for daring to go to school and pursue the education of girls, it would not have been surprising, if the people living in the Svat Valley in Pakistan had commented the event as follows: “Well, so what? It’s only a girl!”, and maybe we would have expressed compassion: “Isn’t it dreadful, how they treat girls in that place? However, there is nothing we can do about it (Armstrong, 2015, p. 14).

Thanks to the attention of global dailies and radio and TV stations, Malala has recovered. At the beginning of March, she appeared in the news, with her pink school bag on her back, on her way to school. On July 12, 2013, the day of her 16th birthday, she stood up before the UN assembly and, using the rhetoric of an experienced lawyer, she gave a speech as an advocate of girls’ education.

She became a citizen of the world. It seemed as if the population of the planet Earth had lifted a veil and could suddenly see with their own eyes the immense stupidity of the people who were refusing to let girls go to school and simultaneously the consequences of kowtowing before extremists purporting to be acting in the name of God, when they shot in the head a girl who only wanted to learn to read. Mr. Ki-Moon, UN general secretary, stated: “By attacking Malala, the extremists disclosed what they fear most: girls with a book!” (Armstrong, 2015, p. 15).

As far as the issue of violence in Romani communities and emancipation of Romani women, we believe in the validity of the words that Malala said that memorable day of July 12, 2013: “There were days where female activists asked men to defend their rights. Nowadays, we take this role upon ourselves!” (Armstrong, 2015, p. 15).

Moreover, the emancipation of Romani women corresponds not only to the global requirements of women, but with those of the women in Slovakia. The following is taken from the latest materials issued by the Alliance of Women in Slovakia:

Violence against women is a serious social problem that jeopardizes the safety, as well as the physical and mental integrity of women. The cause of this phenomenon lies in the unequal position of women in relation to men in their family and in the society, as well as the prevalence of gender stereotypes and traditional patriarchal patterns of behavior. The abuse of women goes hand in hand with the history of marriage and family as an institution, where the unequal position of women was encoded in the law and cultural and religious standards that used to regulate and preserve this status quo – in fact, they still do (Alliance of Women in Slovakia, 2016).

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Technology and Special Education: Implementation and Instructional Practice for Students with Special Needs

ABSTRACT. Educational laws have been mandated to dictate how students with disabilities should be served in the school systems. Technology is a factor that is highly included in the laws and legislations of male and female students with special needs. Various laws surround the education of students with special needs and the use of technology as a means of *access* in particular for students with disabilities.

KEYWORDS: technology, students with disabilities, special education

Over the past few decades, technology has advanced in society and is everywhere. From businesses and households to pants-pockets and purses, technology has become integrated in a person's daily life and function. According to reports, children and adolescents between the ages of 8 and 18 spend an average of 7.5 to 8.5 hours a day on a type of media entertainment or digital device (Dessoff, 2010; Rideout, Foehr & Roberts, 2010). Although the exposure to technology can vary depending on socioeconomic status, geography, and ethnicity, the overall amount of time adolescents spend in front of a screen has dramatically increased and will continue to show growth as technology advances (Giedd, 2012). With this amount of exposure, researchers have been studying the effects of technology and the current generation's young minds, and how technology has impacted education.

Notably, researchers found differences between male and female students' perceptions of technology curriculum (e.g., science, mathematics; Gomleksiz, 2012). Female students were found less interested in technology and science compared to male students. This compels teachers to look at how rich the learning environment is and what activities are practiced in class. Additionally, there has been a shift in the way information is presented, practiced and processed. With the increase of technologic innovations, the current generation has been exposed to more technology than previous generations. According to Herther (2009), children born after 1980 are more engaged while maneuvering through a webpage compared to reading text on paper. Furthermore, the current generation of children has evolved in their abilities to adapt and multi-task when provided information with technology (Gladwell, 2002; Herther, 2009). With these changes in the way children process information, education systems need to stay up-to-date with the learning styles and diverse needs of their male and female populations (Gomleksiz, 2012).

Throughout history, laws have been mandated to ensure the access of education to all children regardless of their gender, race, and / or disability. In *Brown v. Board of Education Topeka 1954*, the Supreme Court ruled the segregation of individuals in education as unconstitutional (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). This movement provided civil rights to minorities in education and catalyzed the progression of laws involving the education of students with disabilities. In addition, laws such as the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973 (P.L. 93-112), Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975 (P.L. 94-142), and Individual with Disabilities Act 1990 and 2004 (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476) granted students with disabilities more access to free and appropriate education as well as high quality researched-based education (Blackhurst, 2005).

The inclusion of students with disabilities in educational settings has raised concerns in how to appropriately meet the needs. Technology has been a tool that assists students with disabilities in granting them access to education by helping them reach their potential in their deficit areas. Due to the importance of technology to assist in the education of students with special needs, the government has mandated laws regarding technology to ensure appropriate education for students with disabilities. One of the earliest acts concerning technology can be found as far back as 1979. In the Act to Promote Education for the Blind 1979

(P.L. 45–186), the federal government funded the American Printing House for the Blind to produce material in Braille (Blackhurst, 2005; Dove, 2012). This act paved the way for additional laws regarding technology for students with special needs.

Nearly 10 years later, the federal government continued to pass laws regarding the use of technology for students with disabilities. In 1988, the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act (P.L. 100–407) enabled funds to be allocated to help states develop a variety of technologies that can be used as an assistance for children and adults with disabilities in order to maintain or improve the function of everyday life (Blackhurst, 2005). Through this act, the idea of assistive-technology (AT) was set in motion for students with disabilities in the school setting.

In 1997, the perception of AT began to take effect. The Reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 105–17, IDEA, 2004) required that assistive-technology must be considered when developing a student’s individualized education plan (IEP). According to IDEA, AT can be categorized in two sections: devices and services. The definitions of AT devices and AT services are described in Section 602:

The term ‘assistive technology device’ means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

The term ‘assistive technology service’ means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Such term includes:

- (A) the evaluation of the needs of such child, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child’s customary environment;
- (B) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by such child;
- (C) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing of assistive technology devices;
- (D) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- (E) training or technical assistance for such child, or, where appropriate, the family of such child; and
- (F) training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substan-

tially involved in the major life functions of such child. (Blackhurst, 2005, p. 13–14; U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 34).

In acceptance of the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education act 1997, the following year, the United States federal government extended additional funding in “promoting awareness about assistive technology, provide technical assistance, outreach, and foster interagency coordination” (Blackhurst, 2005, p. 14). Furthermore, No Child Left Behind in 2001 (P.L. 107–110) promoted the use of technology in the school systems. With the continual focus and importance placed on technology by the government for students with disabilities, educators, parents/caregivers, community leaders, and researchers are compelled to explore the effects of technology on people with disabilities.

Technology and the Brain

During adolescence, the brain goes through many complex changes; changes in behavior are observed in adolescents. These behaviors are described as: an increase in risk taking, increase in stimulation and sensation seeking, increase in time spent socializing with peers, decrease in time spent with family, and an increase in adaptability to environmental factors (Giedd, 2012). With the massive increase of technology in society, children and adolescents have been exposed to a different type of culture in which they need to make adjustments in order to function in society. Changes in the human brain and behavior have been found a person’s ability to adapt to one’s environment and multi-task (Gladwell, 2002; Herther, 2009).

Researchers looked at the effects of brain activation while surfing the Internet on participants who were familiar with technology compared to participants who were unfamiliar with technology (Herther, 2009). After comparing the MRI scans of the participants, researchers found that the brains of those familiar with technology showed more brain activity than the participants unfamiliar with technology. Furthermore, researchers found more engagement in the brain when navigating through the Internet versus reading a book. This may suggest that students in today’s society have developed “a different type of brain” or a different process of thinking. In order for learning to be optimized,

teaching strategies need to adjust and align with the current trends of a technology driven society. With all the visually appealing graphics, unlimited access of information/entertainment on the Internet, and with digitally enhanced video games, students become bored with the delivery of education offered in today's schools (Prensky, 2001). To keep up with current culture, school systems need to adjust technological practices to fully engage male and female students in learning and to decrease the gender inequality in different disciplines such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) (Halpern et al., 2007; Jeng & Liu, 2016).

Technology in Schools

As the use of technology increased in society, the incorporation of technology in the classroom increased too. According to an *Educational Technology Timeline* compiled by the University of Illinois (1999), the first computerized teaching system implemented in schools was the Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations (PLATO) in 1962, the first hand-held calculator was reported in 1967, and the first personal computer utilized in the classroom was the Altair 8800 in 1975. By comparing the first integration of technology in the school setting to schools in the present day, technology has dramatically increased in prevalence. Schools are now equipped with computers in classrooms, computer labs, Smartboards, document cameras, projectors, wireless Internet, iPods, and iPads. With the escalation of technology seen in schools and classrooms, technology can be utilized as a support for students with diverse learning needs and a supplement to instruction.

Technology as a support in learning. The incorporation of technology in schools and classrooms has changed the traditional dynamics of instruction and how teachers can support culturally and linguistically diverse male and female students. With the increase of class sizes, increase in student-teacher ratio, and the addition of English language learners (ELLs) and students with special needs in the general education classrooms, the ability to support all learners can seem an unreachable task. However, with the utilization of technology, supporting the needs of these learners is hypothesized to be attainable.

White and Gillard (2011) looked at the effects of technology-assisted instruction and achievement with ELLs. They examined the effects of

a computer-assisted pronunciation training (CAPT) program called PARLING on ELLs in the early elementary. The experimental group received instruction from the computer-assisted program daily. Students were given visual cues by the computer program and had to verbally respond to the information given. The program's automatic speech recognition (ASR) takes a recording of the student's response and if the words responded were pronounced incorrectly, the students had to repeat their response. The researchers explained that with the use of technology, schools and educators are more capable in meeting the individual needs of learners, are able to create an interactive and engaging view of the content, maximize learning time, and decrease downtime (White & Gillard, 2011). Instead of viewing technology as a key to learning, schools and educators can focus on technology as a way to enrich and supplement instruction for male and female students with disabilities.

Technology as a supplement to instruction. Although technology can support student learning, technology does not increase student achievement solely on its own, but may be utilized to supplement instruction (Achacoso, 2003; White & Gillard, 2011). For example, technology can provide students quicker access to information, provide supports to understand content, and provide access to multimedia environments to meet a student's specific learning style (Delialioglu & Yildirim, 2008). In other words, technology could not be expected to increase a male or female's learning ability, but should be administered correctly and used to supplement lessons.

Pilli and Aksu (2013) explored the effects of educational software (i.e., *Frizbi Mathematics 4*), on typical fourth grade students in the areas of mathematical achievement, retention, attitudes about math, and attitudes about computer-assisted learning. The control group consisted of 26 students who received traditional lecture-based instruction and the experimental group consisted of 29 students who received the technology-assisted educational software. The results indicated that students who received the technology-assisted instruction had significantly higher scores in the areas of achievement and attitude, however, in the area of retention, the group who received the traditional lecture-based instruction scored significantly higher. Students may have better retention rates when they engage in both face-to-face interactions and computer-assisted learning.

Overall, growing up in a 21st Century technology-rich environment, there has been a change in the way male and female children with disa-

bilities learn and operate in a classroom. Although not all studies show a strong correlation between the use of technology in the increase of student achievement, research does indicate the importance of utilizing technology as a support in learning and as a supplement to educational experiences (McMurray & Pierson, 2016). Research in technology has suggested positive effects in engaging learners, creating positive attitudes, allowing easy access to information, aides in understanding concepts, and providing access to meet an individual specific cognitive and academic need (McMurray & Pierson, 2016). By incorporating technology as an additional support to instruction, teachers can optimize learning time, decrease downtime, and offer differentiation of instruction for the vast learning differences in males and females with disabilities.

Technology and Students with Disabilities

With the laws governing the use of technology in the education for students with disabilities in place, the education of students has been tremendously affected. The following section is divided into four focused areas: (a) technology and students with visual impairments, (b) technology and students who are deaf or hard of hearing, (c) technology and students with autism, and (d) technology and students with learning disabilities.

Technology and students with visual impairments. Since the Act to Promote Education for the Blind in 1979, the education for students who are visually impaired has improved dramatically. IDEA defines visual impairment as “impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness” (Categories of Disability, 2012, p. 4). Through technology, students with visual impairments are able to access more information. According to Banks and Coombs (2005), technology has the potential to increase independence in students with visual impairments through adaptive computer hardware and software.

Students with visual impairments are limited in the way they can receive information, especially in today’s world where the majority of information is produced digitally. Adaptive computer hardware and software makes content accessible to students who are visually impaired through synthetic speech and screen reader software (Banks & Coombs, 2005). Synthetic speech is a computer-based hardware and software

that manipulates digital text into audible sounds. Although this text-to-speech software grants access to digital information, it has limitations in the accuracy of word pronunciation (Banks & Coombs, 2005). Furthermore, screen reader software enables access for male and female students with visual impairments to the digital world. Screen readers enable them to hear key strokes as they input information onto the computer. Students can “hear back” the information produced on the screen (Banks & Coombs, 2005).

Overall, access to information for students who are visually impaired has grown in extensiveness. However, schools and educators must be aware and competent in maneuvering through the adaptive software. For example, when presented a picture or a graph, text-to-speech software cannot be utilized unless the teacher is aware on how to make descriptors of the information (Banks & Coombs, 2005). Additionally, gaining access to information such as spreadsheets or complex mathematics may be more taxing for students who are visually impaired compared to those with normal vision (Banks & Coombs, 2005). A female student with normal vision can quickly view the data, whereas a male student who is *visually impaired* may have to hear and process the information one part at a time. Moreover, technology has limitations in how it can present complex mathematics to students who are visually impaired due to the intricacies of higher mathematics (Banks & Coombs, 2005).

Technology and students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Technology has granted access to male and female students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Under IDEA, hearing impairment is described as the irreversible or varying loss of hearing that can negatively impact the educational performance of a student (Categories of Disability, 2012). Students with hearing impairments struggle in the areas of vocabulary development, grammar, and expression (Scherer, 2005). Due to the lack of oral language received since infancy, students with hearing impairments have additional struggles in the area of reading comprehension (Mich, Pianta & Mana, 2013). However, with the innovation of technology, students with hearing impairments are now better able to access higher quality learning.

Mich et al. (2013) revealed that technologies support students with hearing impairments in the area of literacy learning. Technologies were described as sign language-enhanced videos, graphics, animations, media engaging animation for written stories, interactive texts books

equipped with sign language videos, concept maps, comprehension questions, and highlighter tools that allow key concepts to be distinguished in text (Mich et al., 2013). Furthermore, through the exploration of literature on technology and hearing impairment, additional supports for students with hearing impairments can be seen in the use of devices. These supports include amplification devices, telecommunication devices, and captioning (Scherer, 2005).

Amplification devices. Amplification devices are used in classrooms to amplify sounds for male and female students who are hard of hearing. These devices can be in the form of a wireless gadget with a microphone sending signals to a receiver that is attached to a student and a volume control sound on a telephone (Scherer, 2005). Amplification devices grant students with hearing impairment educational access. For example, a male student who is hard of hearing can utilize a receiver device while the teacher speaks into microphone mechanism. The sound would be transmitted wirelessly and amplified for him to hear through a headset.

Telecommunication devices. Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) or Telecommunication Typewriter (TTY) are means that aid people with hearing impairment in communicating with others on a phone. These devices can encrypt words spoken by the speaker into captioning (Scherer, 2005). This form of telecommunication can benefit male and female students receiving an education through an online environment. Students can view a teacher's lecture by utilizing the captioning feature and respond to discussion (e.g., via written format).

Captioning. Scherer (2005) notes captioning as a form of assistive technology that provides access to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Captions are translations of words into a form of text. A computer device can translate the teacher's lectures and display the lecture as captions on a student's screen (Scherer, 2005). Notably, captioning may support a male and female student with hearing impairments in a general education or special education classroom environment.

Overall, there are a variety of mechanisms available to assist in the lives and education of students with hearing impairments. These learning tools and devices presented can grant students greater access and engagement in education. However, even with the technologies presented to students with hearing impairments, achievement scores continue to be significantly lower than their hearing peers (Mich et al., 2013). Further investigation can be made in the new innovation of technology

that can assist in bridging the gap in the academic achievement among students who are hearing impaired and typical hearing students.

Technology and students with autism. With the current laws governing the use of technology and assisted devices, researchers and educators aim to investigate technological interventions that will enable effective communication and promote positive social interaction and behavior among students with autism (Tincani & Boutot, 2005). According to IDEA, autism is defined a “developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. Additional behaviors are engaging in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences” (Categories of Disability, 2012, p. 3). Additionally, one of the major deficits students with autism face is impairment in communication (Tincani & Boutot, 2005). Fifty percent of children with autism will be mute throughout adulthood (Peeters & Gillberg, 1999). Due to the severity of poor communication skills in students with autism, an abundant amount of technology research has focused on this domain.

In order to better support males and females with autism, there are technology created augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems. AAC systems can be seen through the use of Voice-Output Communication Aids (VOCAs) and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) (Peeters & Gillberg, 1999). VOCAs can be seen as a computer or hand-held devices in which words, sentences or phrases are prerecorded and can be activated by the student’s push of a button; PECS is a communication support system (i.e., pictures or picture-based sentences) students who are mute can use (Peeters & Gillberg, 1999). With the use of AT supports such as VOCAs and PECS, male and female students with autism can communicate their thoughts and needs more effectively in and out of the classroom setting.

In addition to using technology as a communication support, researchers and educators promote technology (McMurray & Pierson, 2016) to support positive social interactions among students with disabilities, in particular males. Hagiwara and Smith-Myles (1999), researched the effects of interactive social stories on the social and compliant behaviors of three Caucasian males with autism. Neely, Rispoli, Camargo, Davis, and Boles (2013) found two male students with autism *escape-like* behaviors decreased with the use of iPads. Their on-task behaviors in-

creased during academic instruction when compared to traditional instruction.

Assistive technology has made a tremendous impact on the access and education of male and female students with autism (McMurray & Pierson, 2016). Communication devices and systems such as VOCAs and PECS can improve students' participation in completing tasks and promote access to inclusive environments. Technology integrated instruction helps create an engaging learning environment that promotes and encourages student participation and involvement (McMurray & Pierson, 2016).

Technology and students with learning disabilities. With the incorporation of technology in education, students with learning disabilities (LD) are now more capable of demonstrating their knowledge of academic material (Ashton, 2005). Under IDEA, these students qualify for special education services due to a "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations" (Categories of Disability, 2012, p. 4). With a form of assistive technology, male and female students with LD have the opportunity to enhance their writing and reading skills (Lewis, 2005). The extensiveness of assistive technology can range from an inexpensive pencil grip to the innovations of computer software programs (Ashton, 2005).

Although, research suggests that word processing software can enhance the appearance of student writing as an assistive device and reading software can positively affect reading skills for students with LD, the belief that word processors and reading software programs can correct the writing and reading deficits of students with LD is unsupported in the research (Lewis, 2005). Regardless, assistive technology has the potential to individualize supports, thereby fostering learning outcomes for both male and female students with disabilities (McMurray & Pierson, 2016).

Summary

School systems are obligated to compete with the science and technology-rich culture in order to maintain students interests and to adapt to student learning (Gomleksiz, 2012). In an attempt to keep up with

current trends, schools have integrated technology as a means of support for male and female students (e.g., with and without disabilities). Technology supports students with disabilities by allowing them access to individualized lessons that focus on their areas of strengths and weakness (White & Gillard, 2011). Technology-assisted instruction has promoted student growth in the areas of attitude towards learning and academic achievement.

Through understanding the shift in society and its effects on education, research confirms the importance of technology as stated by the laws governing students with disabilities. These forms of technology support the education and lives of students with disabilities. Assistive technologies can be seen as text-to-speech (Banks & Coombs, 2005), amplified devices, telecommunication devices, and captioning (Scherer, 2005), communication devices such as VOCA and PECS (Peeters & Gillberg, 1999), word processing application (Lewis, 2005), and interactive reading software (Lewis, 2000). Overall, as educators become more familiar with technology integration and how to modify programs to meet the needs of their students, increases in learning outcomes and academic skills may be noted for male and female students with disabilities.

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BOOK REVIEWS



Ruth Wodak. *The politics of fear: what right-wing populist discourses mean*. London 2015: Sage, pp. 238.

As Europe (an Union) is undeniably undergoing radical changes, it is paramount to understand some of its historical and present events. In relation to this, the volume here reviewed is an important resource to explore how the political phenomenon of right-wing populist parties (RWPPs, henceforth) entered and, operates in the national and international public spheres.

Ruth Wodak is an outstanding academic whose contribution ranges from politics to gender, from identity to power, from racism to language policies. Her seminal work includes DHA (Discourse-Historical Approach), a theoretical and analytical framework that continues to inspire researchers and academics worldwide within the field of Critical Discourse Studies. While this book borrows theories and methods from her influential work, it is situated within a much needed and timely field of inquiry, i.e. language and linguistic strategies of right-wing populist politics (see Betz, 1994; Berlet & Lyon, 2000; Diamond, 1996 for a political account)

This review is divided into two sections: I first provide an overview of the seven chapters (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8) which deal with the rise of RWPPs as well as with the linguistic strategies used, and I then delve into chapter 7 which discusses gender from several perspectives, i.e. female/male RWPP voters, manipulation of images of women as carriers of *outside-ness* and, female RWPP leaders. The rationale of this structure is to offer an overview to researchers in politics and, specifically, researchers in gender, politics and—power.

When approaching this volume, one notices that relevant terms—e.g. RWPP, body and border politics, politics of denial—are recurrently used throughout the chapters, facilitating the understanding of the overall argument concerning the principles of RWPPs. At page 7, Wodak describes RWPPs as “a political ideology that rejects existing political consensus and usually combines *laissez-faire* liberalism and anti-elitism” which appeals to and promotes “the *common* man or woman” (my emphasis). The RWPPs examined are Jobbik (Hungary), Golden Dawn (Greece), FPÖ (Austria), FN (France), UKIP (UK), SVP (Switzerland), Lega Nord (Italy). By no means, though, is this presented as a comprehensive list and, in order to identify

RWPPs in other part of Europe and of the world, researchers are invited to investigate language of parties and movements which could share a similar ideology. One of the foundations of this ideology, thoroughly discussed later in this review, is conceptualizing an ‘us’—native people as part of a *pure* community (my emphasis)—as opposed to and antagonist towards ‘them’—minority groups but also the political elitist establishment.

Starting from how politics is *done*, the solid historical background of the cases examined precedes the linguistic perspective through which RWPPs are investigated in this volume, suggesting the importance of engaging with the context, which is a central argument in Wodak’s leading work (see *DHA*). *Doing* politics has to be seen in relation to its two stages: front stage – when the public/voters are present, e.g. rallies—and back stage—when politics is done behind the scene. RWP politicians are seen as performers (specifically in the front stage) conveying “empathy, discontent and anger in simple and simplistic terms (p. 125)”; together with some *catchy tunes*—e.g. ‘we are against the elites, against ‘those up there’—they aim to convince voters that they are like and among the common men and women (defined as ‘me/everybody politics’).

Chapter 3 is the first to outline language strategies in relation to specific politicians (e.g. Haider in Austria) or, more broadly, RWPPs. The linguistic analysis takes into consideration the recent and more distant past history of the countries in which RWPPs operate as well as peculiar events and sources (e.g. European Treaties); it specifies that RWPPs tend to use: coded language, micro-politics, hints to a ‘common sense’, argument and legitimization strategies, euphemisms, calculated ambivalence and, provocative statements¹. Such language is employed “to justify the unjustifiable or speak the unspeakable” (p. 46), and purposefully used to avoid being legally or politically persecuted for racism or inappropriate remarks. In turn, this language sends a powerful political message across which reinforces the RWPP’s ideological construct that some people are *naturally* included within the social life of the country and some are excluded on the basis of similarities and differences in beliefs and attitudes, lifestyles as well as social and religious practices.

For those who are familiar with Wodak’s prominent work in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis, the detailed account of an *imagined* community of ‘us’—the common women and men—versus *constructed* community/ies of ‘them’—foreigners or those who look or behave differently—as promoted by RWPPs, does not come as a surprise (see Wodak, 2008, 2009; Wodak &

¹ Among the merits of this volume, there are informative and clear tables of linguistic strategies (e.g. in chapter 3, there is an explanatory table on fallacy) as well as detailed descriptions of events (see vignettes throughout the volume).

Matouschek, 1993). What this publication adds to the existing notion of 'us vs them' is the meticulous and convincing argument concerning the political nature and orientation of RWPPs based on body and border politics, revisionist narratives of the past and, nativist nationalism. These ideologically tend to include some and exclude others on what seem to be ad hoc constructed values for in- and out- members.

Specifically, those groups labelled as 'others' (immigrants as well as minority groups) are seen in opposition to fixed national identities (e.g. 'real' British, Hungarians, etc.). In chapter 4, there is an in-depth de-construction of how individual and collective identities are used as pawns by the RWPPs to justify their views on who should be considered as suitable in-members in order to participate in the social, cultural and political life of *their* countries (and who should not). In these, migrants are not seen as 'real' and 'authentic' members (p. 88) because of the difference in relation to their mother-tongue, religion and other practices². For both insiders (national identities) and outsiders (others), homogeneity is applied with the aim of building RWPPs' political agenda (and in some cases success³) on the basis of disconnected and unintelligible groups in society.

Chapter 8 discusses the normalization of some groups' exclusion, presenting, or rather reiterating how some linguistic strategies—e.g. scapegoating, blaming the victim, victim-perpetrator reversal, trivialization and denial as well as the so-labelled 'right-wing perpetuum mobile'⁴—contribute to the creation of a convincing political argument which includes, as in the case of Heider in Austria, revisionist history, a nativist chauvinistic construction of *the* country nation, anti-immigration feelings, islamophobia and antisemitism in between politics and entertainment. Wodak dedicates a chapter to antisemitism, which I argue could be used as a basis to explore other religious/culture 'phobias', where she decisively argues how antisemitism still shamelessly occurs in indirect, subtle and coded forms, functionalised and employed to fulfil RWPPs' political aims.

² Relatedly, a reference to this book has recently appeared in an article published by a widely-sold UK broadsheet endorsing Wodak's argument on inclusion and exclusion. It explains how the Brexit, as well as past political campaigns, favoured the creation of people's fear towards immigrants. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jul/02/brexit-triggers-racism-climate-of-fear> [accessed: 15.04.2016].

³ Wodak reminds the readers that 129 right-wing politicians are sitting in the European parliament following the election in 2014

⁴ This term defines a set of strategies used together to make ideological points, i.e. 1. A scandal is launched 2. The offensive meaning denied 3. Calculated ambivalence and double-messages conveyed 4. RWPP victimhood declared 5. Event is dramatized and exaggerated 6. Freedom of speech as a justification strategy is invoked 7. A debate around another topic is triggered 8. An alleged conspiracy is blamed 9. A new scandal is revealed and 10. A 'quasi-apology' provided (p. 22–23).

I now move to review the chapter titled 'Gender and the body politic: the politics of patriarchy' (chapter 7), which focuses on how gender fits or is exploited with the aim to fit the RWPPs' ideology. Previously, I have mentioned how RWPPs' appeal to 'common men' or 'common women'; these are seen as embedding widely accepted gender(ed) roles within a heteronormative body politics. However, in a changing world where women are renegotiating their role in society, the stable position of men as *the* powerful group seems to be threatened by what they do not know or represent ('them', women from the in-group and both men and women from minority groups as 'others') as well as by different morals (e.g. right to abortion). In fact, these are perceived not to be part of their imaginary and imagined set of values which are mainly based on Christianity. The following paragraphs explain how RWPPs interact with gender in relation to female politicians, voters as well as exploring representation and construction of female *others*. They are discussed in terms of new developments in the investigations of gender and/in politics.

RWPP female politicians are here described as instruments to reproduce patriarchy, for instance, by maintaining "conservative values and gendered disciplining policies" (p. 167). Among RWP female politicians, we find among others Marine Le Pen (FN, France), Pia Kjaersgaard (Danish People Party, Denmark), Krisztina Morvai (MEP for Jobbik), Barbara Rosenkranz (FPÖ, Austria). The performance of these women, e.g. Sarah Palin's idea that women can run the state as they run the 'family', is convincingly discussed through the lens of a gender hierarchy in the public sphere, where female politicians are only given a restricted role. This section is particularly relevant to investigations into the increasing number of women in politics within an institutionalized male-oriented political structure (in RWPPs as well as in others).

In relation to votes cast in past and recent elections, women seem to have chosen RWPPs in Eastern more than in Western Europe, where women, at some point in time, shifted their political preference towards parties which promoted women's equality and related rights. However, (young) men from the lower classes voted for RWPPs in both Western and Eastern Europe in their quest to fight against immigration and unemployment—the common/constructed idea of 'they steal our jobs'. The perspective on voters contributes to the understanding and the re-positioning of gendered society roles and participation in political agendas.

From an interesting perspective, Wodak investigates gender on the base of one of the RWPPs' ideological underpinnings, e.g. 'us vs them'. Specifically, some women and their bodies are manipulated to construct *otherness* (them) and promote fear (among in-group members, us). The cases investigated present how, for instance, images of Muslim women have been exploi-

ted by RWPPs to embody the danger that threatens supposedly gender-egalitarian societies. These women are seen as recognizably 'different' wearing headscarves and subduing to men and to a patriarchal and sexist culture, therefore marking the disconnection with the in-members and their culture. This is a new and thought-provoking direction in the investigation of representation and construction of (segments of) gendered groups in political contexts (e.g. the burkini ban in France and the discourse of freedom and fear of the female 'other').

To sum up, chapter 7 is relevant to researchers in gender, politics and power from several points of view: theoretically, as it discusses the unmasking of the political manipulation of women; and methodologically as it inspires to investigate similar examples, starting from the topics discussed, e.g. debates on abortion rights, female politicians' roles, women from *in* and *out* groups used as carrier of mainly negative values.

To conclude, this volume is highly recommended for researchers interested in right-wing politics and gendered politics. Thus, for example, recent events (e.g. the UK Brexit Campaign, the POTUS Trump campaign, the burkini ban in France) can be investigated through the lens of the right-wing ideology, as some of its elements seem to be also pervading 'elite' politics, e.g. fear towards immigrants. In the last pages of her book, Wodak also leaves a clear final message with the aim of providing solutions in dismantling the politics of fear in favour of building a politics of solidarity. The message, addressing the media, the public opinion and the politicians, encourages the exposure of politically manipulative dynamics in the media, a fair understanding (and treatment) of *in* and *out* groups in society and the promotion of values such as equality, justice, democracy, education, multilingualism, diversity and solidarity in political speeches.

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Dorota Hall. *Searching for a Place: LGBT Christians in Poland*. Warsaw 2016: IFiS Publishers, pp. 395.

Presented publication focuses on a problem that is raised among many social and humanistic fields of science. Functioning of LGBT members of our society in different bases is researched e.g. in order to increase their life's quality. If our aim is equality and restraining discrimination we have to learn as much as possible to improve actions designed for the benefit of minority groups.

Dorota Hall's book concentrates on an issue that is important and delicate at the same time. Researching the problem of combining non-heteronormativity and faith / religion demands from a scientist to be tactful and sensitive but also not liable to other individuals' opinions. The author of analysed publication seems to be perfectly prepared for this role because of her wide experience related to conducting researches among LGBTs and due to her academic education and work in a field of sociology (she is an assistant professor in the Department of Religion Studies which belongs to the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology PAN). Dorota Hall published her articles in Polish and foreign collective works and scientific papers. She concentrates her interests on sociology of gender, sociology of religion and on issues of sexuality. What is more, for three years she has been a national expert of counteracting discrimination on behalf of European Economic and Social Committee. In 2011 she became a national expert for field researches in FRANET system which is coordinated by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

The work contains an introduction, six uneven chapters, conclusion, and apart from an inevitable part of the book—bibliography—it also includes extensive list of sources that can be useful for anyone who would like to penetrate analysed issue even more.

Publication's aim is to answer the question about articulatory possibilities of LGBT Christians perceived as subjects in social game of hegemony. The introduction, where the aim of the study is stated, is quite extensive. In this section the author explains the whole process of her study and its changes, main fields of research, methods of gathering and analyzing data, characteristics of interlocutors and a structure of the book. Thanks to wide range of information collected in this part of work, the reader commencing

each chapter has an ability to connect discussed aspect with others that have already been briefly drafted.

The first chapter is focused on a standpoint of Christian institutions towards LGBT individuals. It consists of two subsections: the institutional context and academic analyses. The first mentioned part of the chapter starts with historical review of scientific achievements in the range of LGBT and religion coexistence. The review is made on an Anglo-Saxon basis. Subsequently, the author refers to official documents of Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches to show the manner in which both institutions treat non-heteronormativity. Last but not least, the Polish religious organisations that are specialized in the issue of LGBT are described. The main research field, which is the group called 'Wiara i Tęcza' (ang. Faith and Rainbow), was not presented in this section because of its extensive description in the introduction.

In the second subchapter the author shows historical review of researches involving interesting issues. Dorota Hall concentrates on foreign and Polish achievements, emphasising the direction of changes in this topic. On the Polish basis it can be seen that the LGBT issue in the context of religion is analysed and researched depending on social and political climate.

'Theoretical workshop' is a second chapter of the publication. The scientist states and describes theoretical approaches and modifications that she applied to them. The main theories are: Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe discourse theory, intersectional approach, a social relations analysis and Pierre Bordieu's theory of practise. She declares the critical perspective of the research and she bases on the methodology of ethnography. What is more, Dorota Hall presents vastly her experiences referring to relations between her and interlocutors. The process of their development is described in details.

The third chapter considers descriptions of LGBT-religion relation that appeared in Polish press. The scientist shows historical review of articles starting with the 1990s and she leads her analysis to 2014. Quoted publications come from secular and denominational newspapers. It is transparently shown how the narration has been changing depending on pursued politics, the newest foreign researches referring to LGBTs and social changes. Finishing this section of the book, Dorota Hall summarises chronologically the articulatory possibilities of LGBT Christians which lets the reader systematize provided information.

'Discourse vs. experience' is another part of the work which is divided into two subchapters. In the first one the interlocutors' process of reconciliation between non-heteronormative sexual orientation and religious beliefs is shown. The author remarks that age is the aspect which differs researched group of people – their experiences are conditioned by this element.

Further, as the second subsection, the reader is acquainted with the problem of specific areas of silence. LGBT individuals are often constricted in their attempts of naming themselves as trans-, bi- or homosexuals in broadly defined religious contexts. They also have to make a peculiar religious coming out in their LGBT environments. Interlocutors' attempts, problems and experiences connected to above are described in this subchapter.

The fifth part of the work has three sections. Its aim is to present socio-economic position of researched individuals and to quote extensively their narrations. The scientist shows reasons and ways of continuing Roman Catholic tradition among LGBTs, but she also describes stories of searching for alternative worships. Analysing each conversation, Dorota Hall seeks for dependencies between postulated non-heteronormativity-religion agreement and interlocutors' narrative possibilities. What is more, she drafts specific material conditions of researched people, thereby it is possible to determine which resources foster their emancipation and which restrain that process.

Last chapter raises the question of LGBT's articulatory strategies. It is underlined that the most important force of non-heteronormative Christians as subjects, is an emancipatory articulation of LGBT organisations. The author organises her results in two sections. The first, entitled 'Exclusions' focuses on questions that cause intra-group tensions which are part of constituting the LGBT Christian subjectivity. This subjectivity is also formed by 'Wiara i Tęcza' members' emerging endeavours that are connected to changing their position in Church tradition and practice – the second subchapter, named 'Inclusions' undertakes these aspects.

In the conclusion the researcher emphasises the importance of positive identification as a lesbian or a gay in the process of sexual orientation and religion reconciliation. Finally, Dorota Hall summarises each chapter once again underlining their most significant premises.

The publication has a transparent structure. Chapters' headings inform the reader about its contents comprehensively. The sections arrangement is logical and is a result of the aim appointed by the author. The language used in the work is for professional recipients.

Each section of the book is rich in information. The whole process of preparing to the research and the study itself is extensively described. The reader is under the impression that the author is well acquainted with existing literature of subject and that she designed her research workshop very precisely. Dorota Hall proves her vast knowledge of the issue in each chapter, her conclusions and references to other publications seem to be on the highest level of accuracy. Thanks to detailed introduction the rest of the book is more accessible in reception since the reader already has a basic knowledge of following information.

The great advantage of the publication is faithful description of conducted interviews. The author contained extensive quotations in each chapter. Involved approach to the research gives high credibility to the narration. What is more, Dorota Hall describes her positive and negative experiences with researched group and events she attended. Anyone who would like to conduct a similar study can draw important conclusions from her actions. It also can be easily seen that the scientist feels very certain with undertaken methodology, she used its premises efficiently and considerably.

Presented book should be a benchmark for anybody who conducts research with reference to the issues of LGBT and religion. The paper shows not only articulatory possibilities of non-heteronormative individuals, but it also features their broadly defined life's situation as members of Polish society. Researcher's profound theoretical preparation seen in the book can be an academic help for any scientist.

Dorota Hall declares a desire that her book might, even to a small extent, contribute to create conditions in which LGBT people could express their aspirations freely. Thanks to her commitment and incisiveness included in presented publication I believe she achieved her aim.

Marta Dziarnowska
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