A Lecture on Gender Issues

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Table of Content

Foreword

Publication of this "A lecture on Gender Issues" is another contribution of the Kosovar Centre for Gender Studies in our efforts to further the development of gender studies in Kosovo.

This publication addresses important concepts, historical developments, and contemporary contexts of interpretations and debates in the field of gender issues.

This collection of articles is being published in the framework of the project "Development of Gender Studies," which was organized as a cycle of lectures in the field of gender studies organized in cooperation with the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Prishtina.

Authors presented in this publication of the Kosovar Centre for Gender Studies (KCGS), come from the Albanian and international academic circles.

Initially thought as a cycle of lectures and later collected in this publication, they aim to present a clearer account of the trends of contemporary thought related to gender issues and relevant studies.

The broad frame and diverse range of the selected articles and studies has allowed the authors to present comparisons, dilemmas, statistics, and references in order to provide as accurate an account as possible in their writings of identified issues, also by establishing relations between these issues, from stories of women about the last war in Kosovo through to various contemporary phenomena, such as: divorce, identity, sexuality, masculinity, gender roles, religion, etc. In their efforts for a detailed analysis of addressed issues, authors have applied a socio-philosophical approach, which was fully in line with the original determination of the KCGS project.

I believe that this collection of various works and authors will serve as a source of knowledge that will trigger debates and instigate further insights in this field, as well as to increase the level of interest among students, their professors, researchers, and others on gender issues in general.

Luljeta Vuniqi
Executive Director

Anna Di LELLIO

Narratives of Women in War: the Kosovo case

In March 1998 Serbian troops surrounded the compound of the Jashari family in Prekaz and for three days made it the target of heavy shelling. Though outmatched, those inside responded to the attackers with fire. Nobody survived the siege except a girl, but Adem Jashari, then a leader of the nascent Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) with his brother Hamzë and his father Shaban, emerged as the *komandant legjendari* (legendary commander) of the Albanian resistance against Serbia. Today, his iconic representation is ubiquitous. Nobody remembers the name or knows the likeness of Adem's wife Adile, who was the first to die in the attack, apparently as she was bringing fresh ammunition to her husband.

It is not surprising that the role of Adile, or her mother and sisters-in-law Zahide, Feride and Zarife, and her oldest nieces (Hidajete, Valdete, Selvete, and Afete), all putatively armed during the siege, would be relegated to private mourning and all but forgotten by the more general public. In the immediate aftermath of the massacre, a cult of the male hero acquired hegemonic status and trumped any consideration of women's participation in the same resistance against state repression. This is not unique to Kosovo, because the agency of women is the first casualty in war. The reason is not simply that male domination, extended to discoursive practices, sidelines women in general, and in particular during war, which is a male activity par excellence. On the contrary, women are crucial to the representation of war, and of men in war. More often represented than representing themselves, women are constituted as an abstract, passive category in order to support equally abstract notions of masculinity and power. The result is that if women are silenced,

as feminist criticism has successfully demonstrated, so are the men who carry stories that deviate or contradict what becomes the hegemonic narrative.

In order to explain this argument I want to focus on the outsider's viewpoint, specifically how the "West's gaze" of women in distant wars is constructed, and I will ground it in the case of Kosovo. Here, the construction of women's passivity mirrors the marginalization of narratives that counter the heroic storyline of national rebellion, or the transnational moral and political script of protection. From its inception, the Kosovo conflict was, like other conflicts, sexualized. Before, during and after the war, the warring parties aptly used a discourse of gender to define the opponent in derogatory, if not racist terms. Such strategies, based on engendering ethnicity and war, ultimately confirmed received stereotypes of Balkan backwardness and Western superiority, which are the powerful tropes that legitimized three very different processes: the success of nationalism in monopolizing Serbia's political system during and after Milosevic; NATO's mission to rescue the Albanian civilian population in 1999; and the ensuing international protection/control of the new Kosovo state.

Defining a backward society

In the mid-1980s, on the eve of Slobodan Milosevic's ascent to power in what was then Yugoslavia, local Serbs and Belgrade-based nationalist intellectual and clerical circles started a campaign against "ethnic rape" in Kosovo. Albanians, as the argument went, were engaged in an orchestrated plot to rape Serbian women in order to humiliate and terrorize Serbs, thus pushing them to emigrate from their ancestral land. There was never any evidence that the number of inter-ethnic rapes or rapes in general was higher in Kosovo than in any other Yugoslav Republic. Judicial records show that sentences handed down to rapists in Kosovo were no more lenient than anywhere else; on the contrary, they were more severe (Bracewell 2000: 568). Yet, the campaign continued unabated.

The connection between the alleged Albanian rapes and nationalism was quite explicit. Equally explicit was the characterization of Albanians that this accusation put forth: a strongly racialist idea of Albanian primitivism revealed by abnormal sexual mores. Dehumanizing portrayals of Albanians had been a commonplace in Serbian nationalist circles for some time (Georgevitch [Djordjevic] 1913), but were curiously confirmed by contemporary intellectuals. In 1987, a well-known psychologist, Djordjije Vukovic, wrote in the philosophical journal *Theoria* that "Albanians rape violently and everywhere: in the streets, in the fields, on buses,

in hospitals, in the factories." (Kullashi 1998: 181).

The campaign against rape was accompanied by propaganda on Albanian demographic expansion in a province that was still considered "Old Serbia," but where Serbs had long been a minority. With an annual population growth of 2.4% in 1987, Kosovo had the highest birth rate in Yugoslavia, mostly due to its majority Albanian population and especially in the rural areas. Like other developing countries, this rate of growth reflected rational coping mechanisms with severe local economic and political conditions. However, for Serbian nationalists the Albanian "demographic bomb" was both an offensive strategy against the Serb minority in Kosovo, and another indication of Albanian exceptional primitivism: the "occupiers of Kosovo" were oversexed and animal like, the women "breeding-machines."

In the arsenal of the engendered propaganda possessed by Serbian nationalists, the Martinovic case in 1985 had special traction in representing Albanians not only as less than human, but also as foreign, distant from the civilized European family; in sum, Muslim. Martinovic was a Serbian peasant who showed up at the hospital of Prishtina one day with a broken bottle in his rectum. He stated that two Albanian men had assaulted him. The investigation that followed found an alternative explanation for the accident, partly based on the victim's subsequent testimony, later recanted, pointing to an act of self-gratification. No evidence of assault was ever produced, in the absence of a conclusive investigation. But the episode became a rallying cry for Serbian nationalists against an alleged Albanian attack on Serbian manhood and nation; in its titillating character, it suggestively evoked stories of impalement and "Turkish" cruelty.

This propaganda had a powerful impact on Serbian politics, with the promotion of an idea of a Serbian traditionally rough masculinity, closely tied to national identity (Bracewell, ibid.). But it also perversely succeeded in pushing Albanians to a defensive position, from which they rallied around their degraded traditionalist society and mores, by upholding it, against corrupting outside influence. One should read in this context the curious – and extreme – case of the respected regional leader Fadil Hoxha, who publicly invited importing Serbian prostitutes to perform functions Albanian women could not possibly perform, thus solving the "epidemic" of rapes.

At that time, for Western observers who turned their attention to the exploding crisis of Croatia and Bosnia, the focus was always on Serbian nationalism, with scarce understanding of the diversity of Kosovo society. As critical as their appraisal was of the nationalist propaganda, they still bought into the idea of an opposition of two worlds (Mertus 1999). The representation of the Albanians in Kosovo as a society ruled by ancient customary law – the *kanun* - was supported by an over determination of anthropological studies which began to shed light on a little known culture (Reineck 1993). Professional women, community leaders

and political activists played a crucial role in the dynamic civil and political society developed during the two decades that followed Tito's death in 1980. Like the men, they went to jail as members of the clandestine movement for independence. When Milosevic banned Albanians from jobs, schools and hospitals, women took their full share of responsibility in the organization of the Kosovo self-styled republic. And at the height of state repression, women took to the streets, waving loaves of bread to protest the massacres of civilians in rural areas.   Yet, they remained invisible.

Serbian nationalists could not possibly grasp the reality of Kosovo democratic life, but that was also true for Albanians. When Belgrade's repression homogenized their society into a defensive position, their experimentation with liberal pluralism ended and civil society turned into a solidaristic flock, under the paternal and paternalistic guidance of Ibrahim Rugova. Alternative voices were stilled, or felt silent. Paradoxically, local actors contributed to perpetuate stereotypical images of Albanians, when the suppression of multiple actors on the social and political scene did not silence only women; it rendered the society acquiescent and weakened its capacity of clearly staking a claim to independence. Too easily overlooked by Western diplomats, Kosovo did not gain a place at the negotiating table at Dayton in 1995, a failure that only prolonged and aggravated the crisis.

Intervention as a rescue mission

Nowhere is the impact of this dynamic more evident than at the time of the NATO intervention in 1999, which followed a narrative of humanitarian emergency and rescue. When in 1998 the war between the KLA and the Serbian state developed in earnest, it played on the international scene as an echo of the Bosnian war, a connection openly evoked by UN officials and broadcast by the world media. Haunted by the specter of Europe's appeasement of an aggressive Germany before WWII (Di Lellio 2007), US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright led the diplomatic offensive against Belgrade and built international support for NATO intervention. In March 1999 the war started, Kosovo was sealed to foreign observers, and Serbian troops escalated their violence against Albanian civilians. Reports of troops separating genders and engaging in summary executions of men immediately evoked the logic and dynamic of WWII's total attack on civilians. There were mass expulsions.

The April 1999 cover of *Time* magazine was the close-up of a woman in traditional rural garb and a headscarf, nursing her baby, at the head of a long line

of desperate refugees. The headline was, "Are Ground Troops the Answer?" (Kozol 2004). Throughout the whole war, women played the role of ultimate innocent victims, following a formulaic "Holocaust script." Pictures of mostly peasant women and children refugees, with men in a supportive but still subordinated position – carrying old women in a wheel barrow, for example – covered the newspapers and blanketed the airwaves. They drummed up consensus at home for military intervention in a part of the world whose existence had barely registered with Americans, but also Europeans, before the crisis.

The iconography of defenseless poor women, often in the context of a devastated rural background, is not unique to Kosovo. It is such a commonplace in fact, that it features in the film Wag the Dog (1998) as a crucial device in a Hollywood hyper-realistic production of humanitarian intervention. It takes an overwhelming role in the discourse legitimizing at one point the invasion of Afghanistan, or in the debate on the ongoing Darfur crisis, for example, to support the idea of a Western intervention to stop the violence against women. Although this form of propaganda is not simply a plot embraced by warmongers, but also the product of liberal ideas favoring liberation and emancipation, its outcomes are problematic (Khan 2001). In 1999, Albanian women were journalists, covering the conflict in difficult circumstances. They were leaders and lobbyists for the military intervention against Milosevic. During the conflict, they often appeared on television to report on the unfolding humanitarian crisis. But what stuck with the worldwide audience was the image of women in headscarves, whom NATO went to war to rescue. This imagery represented a selective view of women in war, which completely obliterated the whole spectrum of women's activities, with significant consequences.

For Albanians, who were about to be overwhelmed by the full force of the Serbian security apparatus, the fact that the NATO humanitarian impetus was facilitated by images of innocent women as victims was a desired outcome. It was at this time that stories of widespread rapes emerged from the theater of war, as further supportive evidence of the necessity to stop a brutalizing enemy. Even the enemy agreed on this portrayal of victimization of women, but Serbian propaganda turned the Albanian discourse upside down, by blaming the mass killing and the humanitarian crisis on the KLA. It was the KLA, and not the Serbian army, as the argument went, that created the refugee crisis in order to obtain more help from NATO (Pavkovic 2000). According to this script, in the Jashari compound, on March 1998, the women and the children had been innocent victims of KLA leader Adem, a mindless bandit who let his family die to became a hero; there were no women fighters, because the KLA was a terrorist organization, not a popular liberation movement.

For the Western rescuers, what mattered most was the dramatization of their moral mission. Powerful, rich and modern, their exhibited a superior manliness by

rescuing women and children who could turn to nobody else for help (Rosenberg 2002). However, the very representation of Kosovo victimization also drove home the sense that Albanian men were not capable of defending their women and the KLA was not capable of winning the war. The West did carry the same rescue theme into the post-war reconstruction period. With the establishment of an international trusteeship led by the United Nations to govern Kosovo, local citizens were reclassified as wards, subjects to be led by foreign-staffed and unaccountable institutions, because they were incapable of demonstrating independence.

Need for Protection

During the post-war period, women's role in the war was completely forgotten. It would be more precise to say roles in this context. Women were directly involved in fighting, though as a minority as is customary in any war. Women were the supportive backbone of the resistance, providing crucial logistics functions. Most importantly, they kept together communities that had been devastated by the sudden absence of thousands of men. There was no reminder or acknowledgment of these leadership roles. Even the issue of rape disappeared from public discourse, depriving women from much needed help or justice. The suggestion that women's silence on this issue might be a symbol of resistance rather than powerlessness is very fertile (Luci 2002), but in order to be verified requires demonstration of a real possibility of choice about speaking up and seeking treatment, or remaining silent.

There could be no room for women – whether leaders or victims - in the official Albanian narrative of liberation, centered on the iconography of the male hero-martyr. Acknowledging the complexity of women's lives during the war would have meant a truer and more complex depiction of the Albanian struggle for independence, in which resistance took different forms and victimization was the other side of heroism. The post-war Albanian society instead built a simple, streamlined narrative of heroic resistance to restore the traditional sense of manhood that had been lost with the impossibility of defending women and country. But it is exactly this narrative that the very international presence – NATO troops, the UN trusteeship, and now the EU rule-of-law mission and the EU high representative with Bonn Powers -, denies. The international presence is constructed as evidence that Kosovo did not liberate itself, but was liberated by NATO. But this is a telescopic view of the struggle for liberation, which focuses on the military aspect of it, and weakens the agency of the entire nation.

There is another powerful construction, linked to the above: the supervised independence obtained in February 2008 as a negotiated concession to solve an intractable problem. This view, shared by western diplomats, tries to impose itself over the local interpretation of the same event as the answer to the nation's century-old aspiration to self-determination. In the Western understanding of Albanians as a rescued nation, and Kosovo as an immature democracy-in-training, there is a perpetual need for supervision. The international institutions that governed Kosovo until 2008 continue to function as a "Raj" after independence, constantly redefining the standards to measure the readiness to join Europe. Not to be confused with accession to the European Union, this process looks more like training in the principles of civilized statehood, with no end in sight. Among the most arbitrary standards, there is a strict reading of gender equality, which imposes levels of women participation in the workforce that can be hardly found in developed economies. In Kosovo, lack of success in this field is yet another evidence of lack of preparedness for sovereignty. Where women quotas had been positively imposed and implemented, as in the case of the 30% participation in national elected offices, it has resulted in tokenism.

More spectacularly, in the immediate aftermath of the war women returned as victims and signifier of men's backwardness, with the hysteria over the abductions of young girls and the sex-slave trade. Thanks to the porousness of borders in the southern part of former Yugoslavia, the instability of the whole region after a decade-long conflict, and the large international military and civilian presence, trafficking of all sorts of goods, including women, had been prospering for a while. It began to thrive in Kosovo as well after 1999, and it attracted the attention of the international media. Once again, despite the fact that the traffic originated in the East, and found easy bridging routes to the West through Serbia, Macedonia and Bosnia, it was Kosovo that captured the headlines. Once again, women needed protection from a criminal and backward society – never mind that most of the patrons of local brothels were the same international staff sent to do the protecting protectors.

In conclusion, it should not surprise that the struggle for independence in Kosovo has achieved results that only ten years ago were unthinkable, but international supervision is still impeding full freedom from outside constraints. Powerful stereotypes of local backwardness and immaturity, played by nationalists, traditionalists and rescuers, contributed to this outcome. Women have been unwilling pawns in this unholy convergence.

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Brief note on the author
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Anna Di Lellio is the editor of *The Case for Kosova. A Passage to Independence* (London: Anthem Press, 2006), a collection of essays on Kosovo history, politics and culture. She has published essays on the construction of post-war Pan–Albanian master narrative. Her new book, *The Battle of Kosovo. An Albanian Epic*, will be published in 2009 by I.B. Tauris. She has worked for years in Kosovo, most recently as political adviser to the Prime Minister; from 2001 through 2003 as Media Commissioner (the interim regulator of broadcasting and print media for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo); in 2003-2004 as research analyst for the International Organization for Migration on the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) program of reintegration and as political adviser to the UN Kosovo Protection Corps Coordinator. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Columbia University and a Masters in Public Policy from the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University.

Eglantina GJERMENI

Gender and media in Albania: with a focus on women in decision-making

Role of media in shaping of public opinion

Media have turned to be one of the most powerful means of communication in the whole world. Images and massages broadcasted through the media present the economic, social, and cultural reality of a society. Media play an essential role in presenting the current gender roles and stereotypes. Media are but also among the main instruments that can play a key role in gender integration and in achieving gender equality. Elimination of these stereotypes is the main component for accomplishing gender equality and justice.

Even though media may not be responsible for individuals' actions, attitudes, or behaviour, they are, however, definitely all-powerful in shaping the public opinion, and in pointing out of issues and perspectives that can be at the focus of public debates.

"Media do not engage in simply distributing specific messages to passive audiences. In stead, through news and entertainment, they produce and distribute numerous sources – information, ideas, ways of thinking, beliefs, values, descriptions – which we continuously use to understand and reflect on the world, the others, our relations and ourselves. Media sources shape our perception of the world,

which directs us and guides our individual activities and collective processes of decision-making, policy-making in the public and private sphere. Therefore, media can play an important role in brining about social change and in promoting gender equality".[1]

Image of girls and women in the media influences their role and status in the society, and this image changes the way they are perceived by the others. Unfortunately, this image is more often negative than positive, thus promoting intentional stereotypes and application of social prejudices and refractory attitudes which are deeply engrained.

Elimination of gender stereotypes is in fact an obligation of human rights, aiming at a fair and equal representation of men and women, as a primary condition for a democratic society and for economic development of Albania. Alternatively, if media do not promote equality, than they are actually promoting gender discrimination and, consequently, turning into an impediment to the process of development.[2]

Media efforts to increase public opinion awareness focus on breaking of taboos and in addressing the problem of gender inequality or domestic violence as an issue that concern the entire society. Assessing the role of media as "shapers" not only as mere "informers", we refer to their extremely important and unique role and contribution in preventing a series of social problems, such as domestic violence or trafficking of girls and women.

Having in mind that media are a product of a society and that they represent its level of economic, social, and cultural development, then they are too part and parcel of this very reality. In most of the cases, Albanian media see women in the same way as the society does. They are presented as dependent on men, weak, unfit for professional activities and fit only for house chores, unstable, and other similar social stereotypes that the Albanian society saves only for women.

The international context of gender equality and media

All needed measures to achieve gender equality and to empower women are succinctly presented in: the United Nations Conference of 1995 – the Beijing Platform of Action, the United Nations Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as in other international docu-

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[1]   Kafiris, Krini *"Gender and the Media: a wake up call"* from "Gender and Media Handbook", Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, 2005, pg. 8.
[2]   Gender Alliance for Development, 2006. Printed Media in Albania – a brief review,Tirana.

ments and conferences.

Guidance given in these documents to governments of various countries touch on most critical dimensions of existing gender inequalities including: *gender based violence, gender stereotypes, trafficking and prostitution, armed conflicts, political lives, legal status and legislation, state structures, media, education, health care, poverty, environment, life in rural areas, family planning, marriage and family relations.*

The **Beijing Platform of Action**, signed by United Nations in 1995, in its section J, pays special attention to the integration of gender perspectives in the media and to strategies for accomplishing the same.

Recommendations of this Platform directed to governments, NGOs and media institutions, have the following main objectives:

1. Increased participation and access of women to the media and new communication technologies in order to be able to express themselves and to involve in decision-making.
2. Promote balanced in stead of stereotyped images about women in the media.

   The Beijing Platform points out:

   • The importance of gender perspective in media policies and programs;
   • Integration of gender perspective in media build on their continuous monitoring;
   • The role of media as agents of change towards achieving gender equality.

   The Beijing Platform of the 4th World Conference on Women of 1995 included "Violence against women" as one of the 12 critical issues that need to be addressed by governments and other actors. It also called for focused attention of the media regarding "violent or pornographic media productions … which have a negative impact on women and on their participation in the society."

   In years following the Beijing Platform of Action, discussions about relations of the media and violence focused on two key issues:

1. [Level of] negative and stereotypical presentation of women in the media, may contribute to the gender violence in a given society;
2. Media coverage of incidents of violence against women.

   Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a convention adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979. CEDAW is also known as the international law on women's rights. In Article 5 of **CEDAW** it is stated that: "*State parties undertake all adequate measures with an aim to: Change the existing schemes and models of social and cultural behaviour of men and women, in order to achieve elimination of prejudices and customary practices, or practices of any kind grounded on the idea of inferiority of superiority of*

one or the other sex, or with a stereotypical role of husband and wife."

In the Recommendations on Equality of Men and Women in the Media, adopted by the Council of Europe, it is stated that: "media play an important role in shaping of individual's attitudes and values and serves as a useful instrument for social change."

Standards of the European Union regarding equal treatment of men and women are part of the legislation, provided by several articles of the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997.

- Article 2 of this Treaty declares equality between men and women as one of the main responsibilities of the State Parties of the European Community.
- Article 3 (item 2) underlines that 'In all activities related to this Article, state parties of the EU aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women.

Whereas in Roadmap to Gender Equality 2006 - 2010 of the European Union, six fields priority are pointed out for 2006-2010, including:

- Economic development for both men and women;
- Concurrence between personal and professional life;
- Equal representation between women and men in decision-making;
- Minimization of all forms of gender based violence;
- Elimination of gender stereotypes; and
- Promotion of gender equality in development and foreign policies.

This Roadmap also expressly provides that, "Countries wanting to join the European Union must have achievement of gender equality between men and women as their fundamental principle ... Monitoring and harmonization of legislation on gender equality and its implementation will be among the EU priorities of the enlargement processes."

Main national documents

Constitution of the Republic of Albania (1998), in its Article 18, provides that "all citizens will be equal before the law and no one should be discriminated on grounds of: gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, and political, religious or philosophical conviction, social, economic, or educational status."

The "Law on Gender Equality", adopted on July 24, 2008 is based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination and on other principles, sanctioned

by the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, by CEDAW Convention, as well as by other relevant international acts ratified by the Republic of Albania. The "Law on Gender Equality in the society" prohibits any discrimination in labour (public or private) relations. This Law introduces, among other things, an equal treatment and protection from discrimination on gender grounds in the media. Article 26, titled *Gender equality in the media,* provides that:

1. "Media help in increasing general awareness on equality of men and women:

a) by applying non-discriminating reporting on gender grounds,

b) by using gender neutral terminology,

c) by avoiding gender stereotypes in their activities.

2. It is prohibited to broadcast, print, and publish materials and information consisting of or implying denigrating or offensive distinction, exclusion or limitations on one of the sexes grounded on discrimination based on gender.

Women in decision-making and in media

We tend to accept or believe more things we watch more often on television. We can not imagine things we never (or rarely) see presented on television (for instance, women are not or can not be decision-makers or policy-makers as long as we never see them in such roles).

Women who have entered the political arena already present "a problem" for the media. As women that they are, they try to challenge the masculine authority, whereas as strong and active women personalities they are difficult to be determined within the existing gender stereotypes. Often, media representatives prefer to treat them as women rather than as politicians.

Various studies show that media are very willing to address achievements and positive experiences of male politicians, but when it comes to women politicians the focus often switches over to their family situation and their presentation. Even in cases when media deal with the domestic issues of all politicians, this portrayal is still not the same. A study in Netherlands (2000) found that media presented families of political leaders as a source of support, whereas families of female politicians were presented as a source of conflict for career development. In general, one of the most frequent questions asked when women politicians are interviewed is the way they balance their family and private to their public and professional life. Male politicians are never asked such questions because of societal expectations that it is for women to take care of their families. Whereas, in cases

when women do not "observe" rules of feminine behaviour, they are portrayed by the media as "iron ladies" or as "aggressive".

Various studies in the USA show that the public opinion seems to have a more affirmative attitude towards women political candidates when their behaviour is in line with stereotypical feminine attitudes. Numerous studies have analysed portrayal of Hillary Clinton by the media only to prove the force of stereotypical interpretation in the media. As a "First Lady" (the President's wife) she was presented as a "gender outlaw", simply because she extended beyond the conventional female figure and role – that of the private life. As a candidate in elections (in her right) she was attributed as "too ambitious and thirsty for power." Only when she was portrayed as a victim - during the discussion of the case of Monica Lewinsky - Hillary Clinton could draw the attention and sympathy of the media on a wider level.

Parry - Giles (2000) came to the conclusion that "*we fear powerful women and we admire women with a status of the victim.*"

According to Rhode (1997), marginalization of women occurs not only by not representing their perspectives, but also by not accepting and recognizing them as independent agents, separate from their relations with men. The author points out that such hierarchic values are presented even in a cartoon, in which an editor is presented lecturing to a woman journalist on the article "Woman on a wheel chair climbing the Mount Everest," by saying: "You have left out the key things: Who is her husband? What does he do? Where would she be without him and Why is she not at home taking care of her children?"

Continuous media monitoring has shown that without concrete measures, it is not possible to achieve media and electoral coverage of women and their interests and to change the media orientation to have men at the centre political activities.

Results from media monitoring in Albania

Media monitoring in 2005
The Centre of Gender Alliance for Development (CGAD) is engaged in monitoring of the printed media in Albania since 1996, by monitoring presentation of gender issues in the main daily newspapers in Albania. Monitored articles treating these issues are saved in a database with is built around key words. This organization continuously carries our research and publishes reports on the ways media treat various gender issues and problems. For 2005 (a year of parliamentary elec-

tions), the organization implemented monitoring of media on the way of presentation and the space electronic media gave to women and men candidates during the electoral campaign.

Monitoring of electronic media was implemented between May 18 and July 1, 2005 by four journalists, who monitored main news editions of the following television channels:

- Albanian television (TVSH), 465 news editions
- Koha Jonë television, 98 news editions
- Arbëria television (TVA), 396 news editions
- Klan television (59)news editions
- Vizion Plus television, 261 news editions
- Top Chanel television, 120 news editions
- The total number of monitored news editions: 1399.

The monitoring showed that only in 83 news editions comments were given on the candidates (with comments coming from party leaders or from journalists), whereas 1316 other news editions did not make any comments whatsoever on the candidate(s) but focused solely on policies of the candidates' party policies.

The monitoring found that most of the comments were focused on efforts against corruption, aptitude or inaptitude of party leaders, presentation of names of new candidates and outlining of existing problems in the country, but nothing constructive serving for solving these problems or paying special attention to the given candidate or to respective plans.

During these news editions, even women candidates who were present there or able to introduce themselves, they were only given a few seconds to speak or to be in the focus of cameras.

We can conclude that women candidates of all parties had an extremely limited time to introduce themselves, their program, and ways in which this program related to the program of the party they represented. In some cases, male candidates were offered in average 1-3 minutes, whereas women candidates, regardless of the party they belonged to, were each given maximum 30 seconds, with one of them getting only in total 14 seconds for her presentation.

Only 131 out of 1399 news editions focused around women candidates. No complaints were filed with the Central Election Committee on the issue of the little time given to women candidates. They did not even think about focusing their cameras on women candidates in order for the voters to get to know them at least visually. Most probably, it was for these reasons that in most of the cases women candidates did not manage to win the needed voter support.

The weak media presentation of women candidates during the electoral campaign for elections of July 2005 resulted in a disproportionate representation of men and women in the Parliament. One of the reasons for this problem rests

with the underrepresentation of women and girls in the leading positions in Albanian media.

Thus, we come to identify problems with a prejudiced attitude against women politicians, which comes as a result of the following reasons:

- It is men who do the assessment of women's "merits" and "abilities".
- In Albanian media there is no competition based on professional standards, but appointments are done based on preferences of the leaders of these media.[3]

So, as can be seen, news editions on women candidates were not only too few in numbers, especially when compared to the total time made available, but the attention given to them by the journalists, the opportunities offered to them for presentation, as well as nature of comments made about them, also point to severe shortcomings in the quality of presentation of women candidates.

Results from the media monitoring in 2006

The Gender Alliance for Development Centre monitored two daily newspapers ("Shekulli" and "Standard") in Albania and a weekly magazine ("Klan") for a period of 15 days (1-15 March 2006). A detailed scan was made of the monitored newspapers and magazine, whereas the selected articles were categorized based on the following key words: men /en in politics; men / women in business; men / women in culture (arts, sports, literature); men / women in fashion / beauty; men and women in family, including domestic violence.

The total number of monitored articles was 331, with men in politics getting most of the attention with 67 % of monitored articles, compared to 12.7 % of articles dedicated to women in politics. The monitors noticed that the newspapers paid more consideration, attention, and space to presenting biographies of men, at the same time paying very little or no attention at all to women biographies and personalities.

Monitors notices that articles about women in politics did not address them as individuals or their careers, whereas articles addressing political issues quoted women only occasionally or never as sources of information and much less space is allocated to them compared to male politicians. Even in articles describing a female politician, the journalist is all along keen on raising doubts on her abilities and on damaging her image. These articles describe them as weak individuals and entities accompanied by men.

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3   Mark Marku, "Structure of media in Albani, a reflection of social gender streotypes," published by the Gender Alliance for Development, "Gender issues in the focus of printed media," January 2005.

"An article written in Standard on March 8 is very interesting. A large photo on its cover page shows a woman in her nightgown showing her naked leg. The caption is even more important. There is says that "when speaking about women, we speak about beauty," "and men at their weakest, are women," etc., which only emphasizes the existing stereotypes about women - beauty and sexuality. The Article continues telling about women and their status in the society, always ignoring the key issue: gender inequality in all spheres of life."

How can gender perspective be included in the media?

Role of the media in today's dynamic society has been proven to be very important, not simply as a source of information about events, but primarily for steering the focus, shaping the public opinion, and even educating public inclinations and positions of a given time. (Griffin, 2005: 403).

There are several arguments in favour of the need for integration of gender perspective in the media, such as:

- **Arguments in the fields of justice**: Elimination of gender stereotypes is in fact an obligation originating from the human rights corpus: Article 5 of CEDAW, requires from states that have ratified it (including Albania since 1993) to undertake all needed measures to eliminate prejudices and practices based on stereotyped roles of men and women.
- **Arguments of reliability**: If media institutions do not promote gender equality (for instance if they do not adopt this as their policy), one can say that they are in fact promoting gender discrimination. Media institutions that are more transparent are at the same time more reliable.
- **Arguments of efficiency**: Gender equality is in fact a key condition for a full economic and social development of a nation and media can be a very efficient means for empowering gender equality and, consequently, economic and social development.
- **Arguments of alliances**: For states aspiring to become members of the EU, it is important to underline that one of the key objectives of the Commission for promotion of gender equality is to promote changing of gender roles and stereotypes. Here, too, media are mentioned as primary field.
- **Argument of chain reaction**: Since media bring various issues to the attention of the public opinion and often set parameters for public debates, it can be a very useful means for solving a range of gender problems in a

number of sectors and in policy making. Therefore, it is crucially important to ensure a gender perspective in the way that media position themselves.[4]

We all need to think, reflect, and to act together to change and to develop a society of equal opportunities. Media play a very important role in educating the public opinion. They have an impact in creating: patterns of public behaviour, their attitudes and their mentality. Regardless of the fact that media reflect the actual reality or the level of development of a society, it nevertheless, through representation, information, and modelling of new behaviours, has the power to change and develop a society to a higher level of democracy, respect for human rights, and equal opportunities.

Some of the ways of including gender perspectives in the media are the following:

- Gender issues can be included in editorial policies, codes of ethics and marketing policies. One example of such a policy is utilization of a non-sexist language and elimination of gender stereotypes.
- Media analysis and monitoring. They can be used to highlight portrayal of men and women by the media.
- Trainings and awareness building on gender issues;
- Training programs for media managers on the topic of negative impact and consequences of gender stereotypes among men and women.
- Training programs for spokespersons and press offices of government institutions.
- Inclusion of experts for gender issues in media "watchdog" institutions may contribute in monitoring of gender stereotypes in the media.
- Media representatives must become familiar with international covenants ratified by the Albanian state regarding human rights in general, and women's rights in particular; they should also use their media to present ways for practical implementation of these covenants.
- To promote and encourage positive models in the media, by instigating positive attitudes and behaviour, as well as efficient ways of communication.
- Drafting and utilization of codes of conduct for all types of media, in order to allow for respect of every individual's right to equality, justice, and honesty.
- Continuously attracting expert opinions in treating social problems in general, always aiming at not only adequate information, but also education of the public opinion. When discussing social problems priority should be given to analysing causes and identifying ways for prevention

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4   UNDP, Gender mainstreaming in practice:a handbook.; Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS, Astrida Neimans, 2006

of the same.

- Presence of women experts/ journalists also at the decision-making levels of the media creates opportunities for addressing gender issues from a new perspective. Participation of both men and women in the mass-media is an important issue of access and control in the media. While it is true that there is bigger number of women in the media, it is also true that men dominate decision-making positions. Presence of women may not also imply a guarantee for more dedication and drive in promoting gender issues, but equal access of both genders will at least make room for a wider range of perspectives, thus bringing about more pluralism in the contents of the media. All these elements aim at building a culture, which will treat all individuals as citizens and not as mere audience and consumers.

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Brief note on the author
Eglantina GJERMENI

Ms. Eglantina Gjermeni obtained her Master degree in social work from the "Grand Valley" State University, Michigan, of the United States of America and holds a Doctoral of Sciences degree in Social Work from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tirana (2002-2005). The topic of her dissertation was on issues of "Migration of Women in Albania." For many she has given her valuable contribution in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Social Work of the University of Tirana (1995-ongoing), not only as a lecturer but also as author of various study programs.

Eglantina Gjermeni has been working as Executive Director of the Centre for Gender Alliance for Development (1999-2009) and has published a range of articles on gender issues, including domestic violence trafficking of girls and women, gender equality and education, balancing of professional and personal life, etc. She sits as a board member of several organizations. In April 2005 she was awarded the A Certificate of Appreciation for her dedication, inspiration, and contribution to women's issues by the "Motrat Qiriazi" Albanian – American Organization of Women.

In December 2006 she received an award on "Albanian Leadership," in the category of Civil Service, by the Co-Plan and NET (Network for Exchange and Training). Currently, Ms. Gjermeni has been elected as Member of Albanian Parliament from the ranks of Socialist Party.

Gëzim TUSHI

Ontology and phenomenology of sexual harassment

Introduction

The subject of sex and sexual relations in our time has become so labile, chaotic, and antagonistic that it is not easy to be involved and not be judged or prejudged. Problems of the flesh and spirit and their relations have become so hard to interpret and "grind" openly in the "word mill". Nevertheless, knowing the ambiguous human nature as a contradictory being within itself in the flesh-spirit relations, as a biological and social being, as well as his variable relations with sex, and especially the open discussion on modern phenomena between legal and illegal in the sexual life sphere as the most disgusting form of power abuse ... I am convinced that in modern time civilisation, standards have interfered with sexual relations. We are concerned with this part of the intimate world, since it looks that the future of civilisation does not depend so much on life's material conditions, as it does to citizen's virtues, marriage rules and the way one uses sex.

Liberalization of the sexual system in modern society

At any moment, a society has a set "sexual system" determined by many factors of historical, political, and cultural nature from tradition, habit, sexual stereotypes, etc. Therefore, there is always a set of social rules and general principles in this sphere of intimate life that make the sexual system functional, that distinguish what is allowed and what is forbidden in sexual relations, at a given time. The Sexual relations' system determines the boundaries of sexual morality at any time; "sexual boundaries" that determine the line between what is "allowed" and what is "forbidden", what is moral or immoral.

There is a natural social concern in Albanian society of our time that shows that sexual relations in our society have a tendency to diverge from the socially set ways and forms and tend to become more and more eccentric.

Actually, this problem is complex and contradictory in itself. In general, it should be mentioned that sexual relations' liberalization in Albanian society has been a significant social advancement. However, the standards of sexual life are compatible with public perception on moral and legal laws of the time. In this context, for a society to be normal, it should have not only unambiguous political and social relations but an unambiguous "sexual system" that deals with human "flesh" and "spiritual" relations, with society's sexuality, and with the way people build their sexual relations.

Changes in the sexual system of modern society started to appear sensationally since the 70's of the last century, when the French student movement, inspired by the ideas of Sartre, Marcuse, Simone de Bovary and Bertrand Russell, went to streets asking for changes of the "sexual system", the old typology of Victorian "closed" marriage, in addition to changes of the conservative political system. The sexual system and marriage were at the epicentre of the student movement, and that is why this period is known as the "sexual revolution".

While, in the Albanian context, the sexual life system has been liberated in the past two decades, it has even started to be deformed from eccentric acts. The old taboo of sexual relations and pleasure outside of marriage was broken. Marriage was the only official and real institution that allowed people to have sexual life. Any other form was forbidden by law, moral codes, tradition and habits. However, times have changed, and the biblical imperative "Do not perform the flesh act outside of marriage" is not so prevalent any more.

Of course, times have changed, and the sexuality game has broadened its span by breaking the old role of marriage that "determined the allowed limits of sexuality." Before, it was emphasised that the first sexual act is also the founding act of a marriage. While today the first sexual act is becoming a dominant pre-marriage social phenomena and the virginity taboo has already fallen, which is an emanci-

pating sign for the modern citizenry.

Until lately, the idea of sexual utilitarianism prevailed to mean the sexual act was only as a means for society's reproduction, but not as a necessary means for one of the greatest pleasures. Today, marriage is no longer an exclusive institution that allows having sexual relations. More so, today's sexual system recognizes all the other forms of sexual relations that are realized outside and regardless of marriage, starting from free private sexual relations, unconditioned, from heterosexual sexual relations to homosexual relations.

Looking at the long historical evolution, the finding of the French philosopher Michael Foucault that "... we are today in a "sex" society or more correct in a "sexuality" society ..."[1] seems very right.

Nowadays lectures on sex and sexual relations have become more open. Problems of sex have become a reality of modern human beings' life.

It is a big triumph of the modern civilisation that society in its postmodern, post materialistic and post metaphysical phase freed itself and human beings from "long and rigorous oppression of sex, from suppression of old-time asceticism, extended, wasted, sometimes reused badly and sometimes maliciously from the needs of bourgeois economy dictate." These are the words of Michele Foucault said from the height of observing modern society of the 20th century.

From the sociological point of view, it seems that society and modern human beings are facing a massive process of materializing their aims, ideas and ideals. Human beings are hooked like never before in the materialistic triangle: money, sex, and consumption as an aim in itself.

Human beings' sexual intentions have become dominant, chaotic and outside the sexual discipline system. As sociologists say, today's sexual chaos creates the idea that in today's sexual relations "polygamy is becoming a rule and monogamy is remaining a myth."

Modern time has invented a type of human being that tends to become dominant or a universal phenomenon of modernity that has no longer the "indirect pleasure" but rather the "direct pleasure" for as much money, consumption and sex as possible!

Women and sexual harassment

Modern society is also facing the phenomena of a "sexual system" deformity, since cases of harassment, tendencies, and sexual crime are increasing. Sexual harassment of females has become a wide spread phenomena, its occurrence has

1   Michel Foucault, "History of sexuality", page 202

even become a social ill, which is associated as a rule by physical, psychological and moral trauma. Ever since the time of great German illuminist philosophers it was predicted that sexual freedom will be misused due to human nature by spreading the sexual relations dissipation, deforming the married couple's intimate relations, spreading prostitution in all its forms, widening the typology of sexually open families on one side or torn on both sides.

In a way, "sexual freedom" from human rights for sexual sovereignty is becoming society's means that is converting it into a simple market value.

Modern society as a "society of pleasure"

Herbert Marcuse, the German-American philosopher, has presented his thesis that "The Principe of Pleasure is absorbing the Principe of Reality; sexuality is liberated (or it is liberated more) in socially constructive."[2] He was convinced that in modern times there would be more freedom, more resistance to social taboo's implementation. Marcuse even thinks about a process of "converting the energy of instincts in social use."

Therefore, not accidentally, one's "work time" in modern times will not only be "work time". And the body is no longer only a working tool, but also a tool for pleasure and spiritual and sexual natural desires, which do not only occur at home and in private environments, but also in the work place with one's colleague, supervisor, etc. Marcuse wrote that, "the body is allowed to expose its sexual features in the everyday working world and work relations, without ceasing to be a working instrument. This is one of the unique achievements of industrial society that were made possible through the decrease of hard physical work, through the existence of cheap, appealing clothes, cosmetics and body hygiene. Sexy girls in offices and sexy saleswomen, new handsome, energetic bosses, and department supervisors in malls are good trading commodities, and owning a suitable mistress, once a special right of kings, princes and lords, makes the carrier easier..." Sex is being integrated in work relations and in public relations and in this way, its (controlled) accomplishment becomes always more and more possible. Technical progress and an easy life allow systematic involvement of libido components in the world of production and the exchange of goods[3]

In modern times, human sexual life has become more open and poly-functional. The biological function of using sex as a reproduction instrument is decreasing more and more and the erotic extra reproductive and extra family functions

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2   Herbert Markuze, "One dimensional human being" page, 93
3   H.M. po aty page 93 - 96

are expanding. A chaotic sexual life is tending to become *modus vivendi* norm for modern civilisation. Sexuality standards have become confused, chaotic, biologist. We live in a modern, open society that is quite the opposite of the "Victorian moral" society or the closed society of communist totalitarianism. Now, sexual places have become heterogeneous.

There is a cacophony of sexual relations at present day, a huge ontological difficulty to distinguish between what is "allowed", and what is "forbidden". It is one of the significant indicators of modernity that society ended the era of "sexual oppression" that was typical for the capitalist society of 19th century and for communist totalitarian regimes of the 20th century. "The sex cause– one of its freedoms, but also the right to express it, of recognizing what it allows – reaches full legitimacy, like the respect of a political cause, and sex belongs to the future, as much as the others," writes Michel Foucault[4].

What is sexual harassment?

All types of unwanted sexual advances by mimics, verbal or physical acts, offensive words, discriminating expressions in the work place by which a female feels offended, insulted, ashamed, or harassed.[5] The simplest description is paying attention to a female against her will, which could take the form of:

- A verbal proposal
- Physical contact like touching with the hand, touching hair, spanking bottom, etc
- Using inappropriate words to offend her
- Hanging female nude photos or intimate erotic photos in the work place.
- Harassment in the street, bus, train and any form of public transport.

According to the French modern sociologist Marie- Vitori Lui, there are two important things that relate to female difficult terrain, because they are often objects of sexual harassment: First is the acceptance of the term "sexual harassment", which according to her was drawn by Anglo-Saxons, and second, the use of this definition as an ideological, public, propagandistic and legal means to denounce, analyze and condemn the unacceptable existence of sexual violence against women in the work place.

In general, women are constantly victims of sexual harassment in the work place. Harassment is not a single plan phenomenon of physical nature. It is more complex, since it has minimally synthesised three main aspects like violence, sexual

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4   Michel Foucault. History of sexuality, page 12-13
5   Miranda Davies "Violence and women", page 91

harassment, position misuse, as well as abuse of power in the work place.

Forms of sexual harassment and female reactions against this harassment are different, depending on the circumstances, incident, personality, and endurance of the harassed female. The problem is complex: culturally, morally, legally, related at the same time with the Labour and Penal Code. As the sociologist Mari-Vitori Lui says, "sexual harassment is a problem relate to working conditions, hygiene and security, power abuse and personnel management..." According to her "it is necessary to develop a clear preventive policy, rather than fighting against sexual harassment consequences."[6]

The sexual harassment phenomena in Albanian society

From a research and statistical point of view, there are no complete data or exact figures on the social frequency of sexual harassment, geographical spread and urban or rural differentiation. There is no analysis yet, including panoptical studies, to do an evaluation and analysis of sexual harassment of females at work, home, in the street, in the public transport environment or at school.

However, it should be accepted that in the Albanian society all typical forms of sexual harassment are present. In a way, they are the most problematic part in our masculine culture of sexual harassment. Some of the most typical are the following:

- Harassment by male dirty language in any public, private, intimate or social environment.
- Negative impact and sexist tones of media interpretation.
- Sexual harassment in work places and during work from male supervisors or colleagues.

Essential consequences of sexual harassment

Evident consequences of sexual harassment are related to the masculine mentality of our society that considers female as a being with a "sexual destination". In fact, this attitude is in contrast with the values of contemporary civilisation. Societies that still value females from their sexual identity are non-modern or in-transi-

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6   Miranda Davies, "Violence and women" page 96

tion societies and exist far from modern civilisation standards and parameters.

- From the analysis on "obvious consequences", we can affirm without doubt that sexual harassment makes women's work and survival in the labour market quite difficult.
- Female sexual view and employment favour as compensation for sexual favour not only is a criminal act and morally disgusting, but also an enormous defect of civil service system that for extra professional aims breaks contest rules and repulsively deforms recruitment "meritocratic system" in the name of "erotic deformity" of this system.
- Women are prevented from having merited <u>career</u> and permanent qualifications, because in most cases if they do not break due to pressure in compensating sexual favours, they are "obliged" to find "compromise solutions" but which are not in their favour. In some cases, they are obliged to abandon work, to sacrifice career ambition, aiming at avoiding scandal.
- It is obvious that from constant sexual harassment women are often confused, numb, in a state of shock, frightened from the absurd persistent request for sexual favours. This abnormal situation in the work place causes a decrease in efficiency, emotional stability and destruction of spiritual calmness in the work place, destroying personal plans, objectives and professional creativity within a short period.

For a social confrontation with phenomena …

Let us not forget that eroticism is an individual internal characteristic of every human being. Therefore, we cannot and should not generalize the phenomena the wrong way, but evident phenomena requests that in official relations rules be more clearly called "forbidden", which should prevent uncontrolled sexuality. It is time to stop shameful sexuality that can be achieved in public position.

Therefore, modern society has determined as a way of solving this moment, the moral and legal understanding of the mechanism, according to which a moral person is one who "plays his part" according to the "position" he has. As a rule sexual harassment or relations in "boss-dependant" relationships has violence in its essence, in nominal or implicated understanding, direct or indirect. On top of this, such relations destroy not only partners that develop a relationship, but also the work itself. Therefore, at all times in "sexual freedom" in working relations and especially in boss-dependant relations there is a "limit" dividing "allowed" from the "forbidden".

First, this means we should set rules to "control sexuality of officials". Mechanisms of violating sexual morals from officials have become sophisticated and diverse, starting from recruiting at work by rewarding sexual favours, to favours for ways out of the country, etc. Tendencies of sexual relations with dependants, their supervisors use all the forms to realize their sexual aims, without being noticed by the public and by avoiding sexual scandals.

Until now, there have been rare cases of public denunciations against supervisors who have caused sexual harassment at work. Individual public reaction has been minimal, and social reaction has been at almost the same level. Actually, it seems there is a civilisation not completely formed in modern dimension, therefore there is a very devious attitude towards females, who being in this half-modern, half conservator terrain find it difficult to express their truths about sexual harassment at work. This is the reason why some males with power consider "the work place" as a favourable social terrain for antihuman acts that offend female personality and dignity.

Brief note on the author
Gëzim TUSHI

Scholar and author of several works in the fields of social and policy studies. Tushi has published the following books: "Politics: fatality of time," "Street children," "Culture of rural families," "Social problems and dilemmas," "Politics and the Citizen," "Civil Society," and "Modern Society and the bent men," and more recently, "Challenges of Civilization." He has participated in several national and international conferences and other events as keynote speaker. His studies focus around contemporary problems of the society. Tushi, is currently external professor at the "Ismail Qemajli" University of Special Pedagogy in Vlora, at University "Marlin Barleti" and in the Faculty of Social Sciences. He is member of the Institute for Sciologic Studies in Tirana.

Gjergj FILIPAJ

Masculinity Representation in Kosovo Television Media[1]
(Male presenters in entertainment shows in RTK, KTV and RTV 21)

Introduction

In September 2006, I was profoundly preoccupied with the dilemma of choosing the right proposal that would be shaped into my MA dissertation. At that

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1   In this dissertation, I will provide an analysis of masculinity representation in Kosovo Television Media (male presenters in entertainment shows of *RTK, KTV* and *RTV 21*). In my research, I argue about the changes that male presenters undergo while they are working in television entertainment shows. From this point of view, I will try to argue that these changes they had are in line with the changes that men are globally having. The phenomenon of metrosexuality in Kosovo and globally will be discussed in relation to the masculinity representation in Kosovo.

My work on this subject offers a look at the masculinity representation in Kosovo and treats the phenomenon of change in men, their behaviour and lifestyle. In this research, I will offer also a short and rough introduction of the masculinity representation of Albanian men in Kosovo in the last 4 generations.

Based on data provided from interviews with men who actually work in the television entertainment section, I offer a view of how the change occurred during their work in television, how the changes occurred and how they have accepted these changes. Also in my work, you can find information about the Kosovo as a patriarchal society, which in academically circles is also called as the hegemonic masculine society.

I hope that through this research I offered a drawing of what kind of masculinity representation exists in Kosovo television media for the moment and how the audience perceives it, especially how hegemonic males look at the representation of the other masculinity forms that are embodied by the male television presenters.

As in any other society, even the Kosovan people have undergone changes in their masculinity because Kosovo is no exception from other societies, and I hope that through this research I have not hurt anyone's feelings especially those who are subject of this research on masculinity representation.

time, many ideas were going through my mind. First of all, I was very decisive to have a dissertation that would treat an issue such as how gender representation is perceived in Kosovo society. The initial thought was brainstorming in relation to the gender representation in Kosovo television sitcoms such as *"Tre Gjermanët e Trashë"*, and *"Kafeneja Jonë"* that were offering shows full of stereotypes of women in Kosovo (Filipaj Gj.A, How Do Forms of Mass Media Contribute to the Cultural Representation of Gender? What Do We Know About The Way Audiences Are Positioned By Or Negotiate With Such Forms Of Representation? 2005, KIJAC). Nevertheless, this theme expressly became part of the past and at this stage, I was focusing on the representation of masculinity in Kosovo television media.

In a blink of a second, my interest changed 180 degrees and went from women to men. Representation of masculinity, and the way in which men are portrayed in the three national Kosovo television stations, compared also with ordinary men who do not have glamour jobs, suddenly merged as an interesting topic to be researched.

I am fully convinced that analyzing masculinity representation in Kosovo television media is a very challenging issue especially when bearing in mind that the Kosovan society is a truly patriarchal one where masculinity is perceived as an open display of men as breadwinners and heads of families.

I have to specify that in this research I am focusing on masculinity representation in Kosovan television stations and not on maleness issues (OXFORD Advanced Learner's dictionary explanation)[2]. Also in Kosovan society, unusual male characteristics displayed by men may create a social issue and can be considered as a sign of homosexuality. For a person living as gay in Kosovo life has changed during these years after the war but there are still present difficulties and problems that do not allow gay people to live, as they want to; living with fear, stress makes gays have an insecure life. (Elysium brochure, Vol. 2, May 2005, page 8).

Bearing in mind this sad fact taken from www.gaykosova.org my MA dissertation would be considered a venture that would strike the peak of the paintouching the discussion about different masculinities in Kosovo. The debate about other forms of men in a society that has strongly built up stereotype of hegemonic masculinity (Connell R.W and Messerschmidt W. James, Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. Gender and Society, Vol 19 No.6 December 2006 829-859). This topic is very intriguing to be analyzed and Kosovo offers a great ground to explore this theme.

In Kosovo as in other parts of the world, representation of masculinity is changing from old-fashioned style men to modern urban and professional males

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2   OXFORD Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines word masculinity as a noun, the quality of being masculine. *He felt it was a threat to his masculinity;* The same dictionary word masculine explains as an adjective, having the qualities or appearances considered to be typical for men; connected with or like men. *He was handsome and strong, and very masculine. A bold masculine design. That suit makes her look very masculine.* While the word maleness in the dictionary it is referred as a noun. *The chromosome that determines maleness.*

that are more interested in grooming and wearing designer clothes rather than being greasy macho men who perceive masculinity as a tool in subordinating women. My idea to research how masculinity is represented and constructed in Kosovo television media caused a lot of debate amongst the students of the first generation at Kosovo Institute of Journalism and Communication (KIJAC).

A large part of the *male* students claimed that this thesis is not very serious and that I as the author will have a hard time getting Kosovo male presenters to talk about their masculinity and the way in which they present their masculinity while they conduct different gossip, music or entertainment shows on TV.

These comments were given mainly for the reason that when other forms of masculinity that do not represent hegemonic masculinity, are talked about in Kosovo, then the discussion is oriented towards the different man — the gay man. Historically the relation between hegemonic and homosexual masculinity has involved the criminalization of mal- to-male sex, as well as intimidation and violence outside the law (Connell R.W 1995 *Masculinities,* Australia Sydney, Published by Allen & Unwin pages 154-155). Hegemonic masculinity is understood as a pattern of practice of things done that allowed men's dominance towards women (Connell R.W and Messerschmidt W.J Gender and Society 2006, Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept, Vol 19 No.6 December 829-859).

More or less the same experience can be also found in Kosovo, where sexual physical contact between two men is condemned as a thing to be ashamed of. Partially my fellow students at KIJAC were right because each time when other unusual forms of masculinity are mentioned people in Kosovo start to think about weak men, effeminate men and gays.

Therefore, my study was designed in such a way that every form of masculinity discussed in my research would be treated equally with no preference towards anyone form of masculinity that is discussed about in my MA dissertation.

Men form slightly less than half of Kosovo's population and they are an important part of Kosovan society so there is a need to portray them as they are represented as media professionals and also make a comparison with the media representation of other men that are not professional television presenters but ordinary people that can be seen in every corner of Prishtina. In my research called *"Masculinity Representation in Kosovo Television Media, (Male presenters in entertainment shows in RTK, KTV and RTV 21")* I have used three questions that in my opinion would serve as cornerstones to build up my MA dissertation. The first question is related to the influence that Kosovo television shows on music/gossip/entertainment have on their male presenter's look when they are in front of the audience. This query is focused on the experience that male presenters encountered in their daily work and the changes that they might have undergone after becoming engaged in the television industry. These changes are discussed as thoroughly as

possible. The second question raises the concern that is related to the control that three

National Kosovan TV stations have over the look of their television show male presenters. Television stations in Kosovo have a tendency to influence the image of their male presenters of entertainment shows in order to make them look a lot like foreign presenters in similar entertainment/music/gossip shows.

Male presenters in Kosovo's television stations tend to look a lot like metrosexuals. Metrosexuals are considered those heterosexual men whose lifestyle, spending habits and concerns for personal appearance are likened to those considered typical of fashionable, urban, homosexual men (www.UrbanDictionary.com). Another explanation for the term metrosexual man is that he is a straight 21st century male trendsetter, urban man with heightened aesthetic sense, a man who spends time and money on appearance and shopping, a man that is willing to embrace his feminine side (Flocker M. 2003, The METROSEXUAL Guide to Style: A Handbook for the Modern Man). This explanation can create a serious misunderstanding in Kosovo especially if the men in question are television show presenters, when sexual orientation would especially be debated. Discussion about the way these male presenters look is an important part of my MA dissertation.

The third research question in my dissertation thesis is related to the way masculinity is presented to the Kosovo public opinion through different entertainment television shows.

From these three initial questions derived a list of another 12 questions that were asked to two male presenters who are engaged as hosts of various television shows in *Radio Televizioni i Kosovës (RTK)* and in *KOHAVISION (KTV)*.

Masculinity in Kosovo during the 90' apartheid

In order to shortly clarify the past, present and the future of the men's lifestyle in Kosovo it is crucial to explore the patriarchal elements of the Kosovan society and the factors that have influenced a creation of such a patriarchal society. As all the countries that were under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, Kosovo Albanians inherited the patriarchal system of values where the male was on top the female in every aspect of life. This situation continued until the end of the Second World War when things started to modernized. This modernization process in Kosovo was at its peak from year 1970 to year 1990. In 1990 when the apartheid or also known as the parallel life in Kosovo had begun and at this time the patriarchal elements of the Kosovo society started to re appear on the surface more then in earlier years. It

has to be stated that the Kosovan society was not always in a position, as it is today free of a regime that in the past has suffocated this province through its harshness. Kosovo during the 20th century has been a political, cultural and a war battlefield between Albanians and Serbs who both claimed ownership over Kosovo then a Yugoslav province ruled in the past by Serbia. This roughness of the Serb rule in Kosovo was especially evident in the last 10 years of the 20th century from year 1989 when Albanians were forced to leave the public sector until year 1999 when the NATO led army invaded Kosovo. During this apartheid situation, Albanian majority survived through the organization of the parallel system of education, which kept them alive as a society. In this period things started to change due to the repression of the Serb regime when mostly were appreciated strong men who mostly reflected hegemonic masculinity rather then other forms of masculinity that depicted week men.

According to nationalist reasoning, different men attributed as the others' are inferior, and are assigned a feminized position and this feminization of the other, or threat of feminization by another ethnic group, is of global recurrence in nationalist thinking dominance and power (Bracewell in Norocel *Performing Masculinity within the Nationalist Discourse across the EU* page 22). According to Norocel the version of Serbian nationalism both required and reinforced a particular masculine ideal (tough, dominant, heterosexual) and a complementary feminine one (passive, maternal, vulnerable, [Bracewell in Norocel page 20]. Norocel agrees with other researchers that in an ethno- nationalist conception of the gender relations, the white heterosexual men, part of the majority group, stay at top enjoying the dominant position in patriarchy and counter hegemonic masculinities are denied any public voice. Cristian Norocel argues that the sense of disempowerment thus produced could be seen as one of the ingredients in the appeal of nationalist re-masculinization rhetoric, or in one of its corollaries - the violent homophobia (Živković in Norocel page 20).

Kosovan families in those troubled times were among the few societal shelters for young to socialize. As such, the institution of the Kosovan family, especially during the apartheid period has played a crucial role in defining what was good and what was wrong in the behavioural aspect in the social life. At that, time men hanged out together, especially before getting married, when they would stop their male bonding and commit to their families. The best picture of this male bonding would be *çajtoret* (tea drinking places where men would mostly meet); these places were popular especially in the 80'

while later in the beginning of the nineties modern coffee shops started opening firstly in Prishtina following also in other towns of Kosovo. Men in Kosovo before the war differed depending from the region they were from, where the most hegemonic males were concentrated in Drenica, Dukagjin. In other regions

as Prishtina, men (especially the new generations) were a more relaxed type of men who could be identified as the other men, especially during the last months of 1998, when the conflict was still outside the Kosovo capital. However, when it is discussed about the denial of the male-to-male physical contact I have to say that in the not so distant past, physical contacts between men were mot always considered unnatural. In a certain stage of the Albanian culture/lifestyle sexual contact between young men was not seen as something to be ashamed. The most known cases are those between the *ashik*, which in Arabic means *passionate love* and a dylber which in Turkish it means *beautiful.* According to these historical practices, Albanian men aged from 16 to 24 courted boys from 12 to 17 years old (Von Hahn J.G, Albanian Studies, 1854, pp.166).

While most prevalent among the Moslems, they are also found among the Christians, and receive the blessing of the priest in church in a ceremony known as vëllameria (from the <u>Albanian</u> vëlla, "brother" and marr, "to accept"), analogous to the <u>Greek</u> adelphopoiia ("brother making") (<u>http://www.eskimo.com/~nickz/orth_gay.txt</u>). This form of physical contact among young men at that time was considered as a ritual that needed to be performed on young men. During time, this phenomenon among Albanians has been interpreted as a perverted act and this influenced in creating a mindset, which condemns homo-socialization that is materialized into a physical contact between men. During history in social gatherings Kosovo, men and women would be always separated while participating at a social event. Whether it is a funeral, wedding, Flag Day men would stay at one part of the house while women would occupy another place. This practice is still alive today although nowadays exist tendencies to change it. Even nowadays women are less present in bars, coffee shops than men are. In the Kosovan, patriarchal society women are considered weak while men who would act differently in certain circumstances would be consider week therefore, they would be seen as effeminate or less masculine, which was and still is a shameful social stigma for men. In the parallel system in the 90' family was the more or less the only institution that functioned in Kosovo and as such it could operate only as a traditional patriarchal one. After the Kosovo, conflict ended in June 1999 the base of the Kosovo society as a patriarchal one started to change. Different global trends started to influence Kosovo young men who started to be and feel different from the older generations of men. As a result, men started to embrace various lifestyles, which by old men were considered as effeminate and less masculine. Ten years ago a man with blonde dyed hair was hard to think of while today this picture is something that does not attract any more attention as an avant-garde element.

Today the situation has suffered changes when it comes to the representation of masculinity among young men of Kosovo. Ordinary men have the tendency to become metrosexuals while this belief groves stronger about men who

work as television presenters of entertainment/gossip/music shows on national televisions, who are under the influence of the latest fashion mode. This happens because male presenters are bombarded with information on lifestyle, grooming, dinning and so on and as a result, they undergo changes while influenced by their job. From all photos offered, there is a clear picture of the changes that men in Kosovo have undergone in the last 100 years, from highlanders, to our grandfathers, fathers and finally to the sons known as the modern urban males.

Analysis and Findings

Men in Kosovo are definitely on route to changing from the old stereotype of the so called "the 400 dërhem man" (Albanian expression for the traditional male) into modern men that do not hesitate to use cosmetic products and who often go to depilate, exfoliate and keep their skin clean. Hmmm interesting, is everybody going gay, one might ask himself. Well a good answer to this question can be found in the work of Michael Flocker a former actor at the daytime American soap opera ''The Bold and the Beautiful''. He argues that lifestyle differences between straight and gay men around certain parts of the globe are disappearing more and more. Flocker says that the style of a man is his mirror in society. As a *dedicated* metrosexual, he is, this is what Flocker talks about in his handbook dedicated to metrosexual men:

The once great divide between straight men and gay men has lessened considerably in recent years. As gay men have embraced life at the gym and a more masculine ideal, straight men have begun to realize that they have unnecessarily restricted themselves to the sidelines, clad in a bland uniform of pleated khakis and buttoned-down boredom.

(Flocker M, 2003, THE METROSEXUAL Guide of Style: A Handbook for the Modern Man, pages xi and xii, published by Da Capo Press USA).

Flocker in his guidebook says that the use of a shampoo with a conditioner or going to the gym does not affect the sexual orientation of men as much as it changes their appearance and personal hygiene. Multiple spa treatments, fashion design clothes, engaging in interior home decorations have created the new man – *the metrosexual* – (Mark Simpson in Michael Flocker). According to the sources gathered in this research an interesting passage I found in the book *The rise of the übersexual and what he means for marketing today: the Future of Men* where its authors say that gay men's lifestyles are being "occupied" by the straight men. This theft of lifestyle of gay men according to the authors is being done through the

large amount of the so-called gay marketing or gay vague commercials whose gay connotations are missed by most of the straight consumers (Salzman M, Matathia I and O'Reilly A, 2005, The rise of the übersexual and what he means for marketing today: The Future of Men pages 157-158, Published by Palgrave Macmillan). This statement made by the authors of the *Future of Men* gives a depiction of the fact that straight men tend to copy the lifestyle of gay men because it seems that it emphasizes their masculinity more. A whole industry has grown up around trying to access our desires, shape them, and convert them into spending habits, in other words, potentially anything can be made into a commodity. This includes people, footballers; Beckham is evidence of this process, and of the culture, that has advanced it (Rahman M, 2004, Beckham as a historical moment in the representation of masculinity, 69 (2). pp. 219-233, Labour History Review).

There was a time, not so long ago, when male vanity was seriously frowned upon. In the minds of many, it still is. However, the modern, metrosexual man knows something that the sceptics don't care to acknowledge. Taking care of yourself and taking pride in your appearance not only heightens your confidence, it makes you far more desirable in the sack. (Flocker M, 2003, THE METROSEXUAL Guide of Style: A Handbook for the Modern Man, page 99 published by Da Capo Press USA).

These enlisted statements of people who have studied the phenomenon of male grooming in more depth lead me to the fact that change of men is considered as something unmasculine how a certain number of people who are more rigid when masculinity qualities are disputed. Nevertheless, according to the above mentioned facts that refer to the global change of men it can be stated that the Kosovan man is also slowly becoming more interested in the following different fashion trends, rather then for example going hunting in the woods with his friends or drinking beer with his buddies on a Friday night. The global trends are also affecting Kosovo and this can be seen mostly through the influence media have. Starting from newspaper design, jingles for prime time television news, different TV entertainment demonstrates that Kosovan media is being influenced form western media experiences. However, this is not enough to have persistent changes of men working in Kosovo media due to the patriarchal society in Kosovo. The patriarchal Kosovo can be considered as a stronghold of hegemonic masculinity and changes that men do, tend to be more difficult to be accepted then in other countries due to the little progress of their mentality, which for the issue of masculinity looks from the macho point of view[3].

3 Express newspaper founded in November 2004 has chosen a layout that is common to the Norwegian print media. KOHAVISION news jingle it reminds on BBC's jingle.
Connell R.W, 1995, Masculinities, page 67, published by Allen&Unwin: In it modern usage the term
Masculine) assumes that one's behavior results from the type of person one is. That is to say an unmasculine person would behave differently: being peaceful rather than violent, conciliatory rather than dominating, hardly able to kick a football, uninterested in sexual conquest and so forth.

Patriarchal culture has a simple interpretation of gay men: they lack masculinity and these beliefs are not coherent (they have difficulty with the fact that gay men are attracted to each other) but they are persuasive. Accordingly, they create the dilemma about masculinity for men who are attracted to other men. (Connell R.W, 1995, Masculinities, page 143 published by Allen & Unwin).

Men in Kosovo have the tendency to condemn the other men who in a sense represents a different form of masculinity. These other men are considered as if they have lost their masculinity through different practices. This fact I found while talking to the randomly chosen people for this research. Hegemonic masculinity is basically defined as the configuration of gender practices which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or it is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell R.W 1995 Masculinities page 77 published by Allen & Unwin). But, nevertheless due to the fear of being a different male, men in Kosovo, as in other parts of the globe, have the tendency to imitate local and global celebrities.

With all the money that modern men has begun to spend on pampering and coiffing himself, and with all the talk about men "finding themselves" and "exploring their feminine side" (or even worse "their inner child") we might be forgiven for thinking that traditional masculinity has entirely given way. (Salzman M, Matathia I and O'Reilly A, 2005, The rise of the übersexual and what he means for marketing today: The Future of Men page 38, Published by Palgrave Macmillan).

These kinds of changes also happen in Kosovo, but not at the same level, these changes have just started to happen and they are in the embryonic phase now. In this direction the presence of Allaudin Hamiti, Dardan Selimaj and Labinot Gashi – Labi, in the three national television stations, has an impact on young men on what to wear, what type of hairstyle to have and what sort of accessories to buy, say the interviewed professionals

form the fields of media, fashion design and psychology. Being handsome and famous in Kosovo is enough to have an affect on other men's looks. This claim is legitimated by the following line of my research on masculinity representation in Kosovo television media. Two of the three male presenters that have entertainment shows in *RTK,*

KTV and *RTV 21* say that they are not aware of the influence they have on young Kosovo men and their choices of style, however they like the idea of being role models for other men. This partly happens because after a while they considered their presenter work as just another job that has to be carried out at the end of the day.

Psychologist Mytaher Haskuka a PhD candidate at *Ludwig Maximilians University, Munchen in Germany* on the theme of Psychology and Clinical Psychology

says that the job a man has affects the way he looks during his working hours. Each individual according to Haskuka tries to be identified with his or her own job and this is evident especially with the way a person dresses publicly. Haskuka says that if an individual does not go along with the latest fashion trends then there is a possibility of him not getting success at work.

Therefore, if a person is working as a television presenter of an entertainment show and it is not identified with its shows than the presenter tries to adjust himself to the actual fashion trends.

(Interview with psychologist Haskuka M a PhD candidate at the Ludwig Maximilians University).

The gradual transformation of men in Kosovo according to the former journalist Virtyt Gacaferi, is related to the business of producing and selling beauty products that are dedicated for men only (Gacaferi V. former journalist of KOHA Ditore, and Christian Science Monitor contributor: Interview September 11 2007).

Gacaferri says that global sport and movies stars are those who started this trend of colouring their hair and using more make up and other products that are dedicated for men only. He also argues that the Kosovo local celebrities may be influencing the audience with their appearance.

Footballer of LA Galaxy and of the England national team David Beckham for example he dyes his hair and has colored his nails and at the same time he is worshiped by women and this happen because major cosmetic producing companies want to double their markets selling products designed only for men". (Interview with former journalist/Public Relations Specialist Gacaferi V).

An interesting topic mentioned by Gacaferi is the fact that women tend to choose successful men who are open to the use of cosmetics and this can make them men that set trends in fashion. "If singer Shpat Kasapi dyes his hair then someone can copy him but if Prime Minister Agim Çeku does that then no one will copy him", argues Gacaferi.

The job of a television presenter is considered a job that a person can get very rarely and in a way represents a job that each man would fantasize to have at some point in his life.

In a 2003 poll of American men 89 per cent agreed that grooming is essential in the business, and nearly half of them (49 per cent) said that there is nothing wrong with a man getting a facial or manicure (Salzman M, Matathia I and O'Reilly A, 2005, The rise of the übersexual and what he means for marketing today: The Future of Men page 38, Published by Palgrave Macmillan).

To demonstrate that men are more into using different cosmetic products an interview has been conducted with Luljetë Belegu retail manager of EBC Cosmetics Company from Prishtina.

Belegu says that the world known and quite expensive cosmetic lines for

men like Lancôme Clinique and Biotherm are very popular among Prishtina men. "Biotherm is the most required brand among men and I can say that it is quite expensive", she says while adding that among other products men prefer skin care products such as anti aging creams, which are very popular. In the last two years, in 2006 and 2007 the sales of men's dedicated cosmetic products have risen says the retail manager of EBC Company from Prishtina (Belegu L. (luljete.belegu@ebc-company.net) 26 September 2007, retail manager at EBC Cosmetics. To Filipaj Gj. (filipaj@gmail.com). .

Men in Prishtina in the last two years have started to buy more expensive skincare products as women usually have done during the years, but they still are behind women in these kinds of purchases (Interview with Belegu. L, EBC Company retail manager).

Men that have money to spend on expensive cosmetic products, men who like fashionable clothes, men who take care of themselves, these facts seem to be more related to London or to New York City men but they can also be seen in Prishtina's streets. Men that are defined, as metrosexuals are mostly those that are engaged in specific professions such as television shows, sportsmen, artists and a small number of men who are engaged in public duties.

Krenare Rugova (owns KR and KRZ fashion brands) a fashion designer graduate at the Parson's School of Design in New York City explains that Allaudin Hamiti, Dardan Selimaj and Labinot Gashi — Labi, would not look trendy if they were not working in entertainment shows on the three Kosovo national televisions stations.

Their looks are easy to elaborate says Rugova adding that they have the recognizable look of young men that can be seen more in Prishtina rather then in other larger cities around Kosovo. The types of TV shows where these three men work define their style and if they were not working in television shows then they would definitely look differently from now, says Rugova.

If any of the three mentioned televisions presenters would be working for instance as a presenter of a television show on economy than its main interest would be economical news instead of the way how it would look like while on air. (Interview with Rugova K, fashion designer from Prishtina).

Fashion designer Krenare Rugova argues that greater economical opportunities, media influence and the creation of a wider horizon that offers more choice influences men to start to have need for more clothes in their wardrobe. Especially men who work in the

same office as women tend to be more modern, she adds. The phenomenon of metrosexuality for this alumni of the Parsons School of Design in NYC is a totally a new thing that has emerged slowly in Kosovo especially after the war when many new entries have been recorded in the society and among them met-

rosexuality.

A girlfriend of mine has a shop of cosmetics and she told me that the most sold product is a piece of men's cosmetics. The idea that men are spending money in make up offers a view that the Kosovan male is changing regardless of the fact if he is living in Malishevë or in a larger Kosovo city such as Prizren. (Interview with Rugova K, fashion designer from Prishtina).

This group of men that prefer having a more groomed look are influenced by the world known designers and by other smaller details that make the clothes stylish (Rugova K, Prishtina 2007). Rugova argues that at first sight men who groom a lot look a bit less masculine and that women are those who are influencing this look of Kosovo men.

Men in the past according to Krenare Rugova have not been presenters of entertainment shows but they have had duties that are more conservative. Actual males that are

represented in Kosovo television stations according to her are less conservative , that care about their looks and always want to be the trendsetting guys who are admired by other men. Krenare Rugova says that the three male presenters prepare stories of global celebrities and they are influence by them (global celebrities) when it comes to the usage of make up and other cosmetics. According to her, this is one of the factors that has an impact on the way male presenters in Kosovo look when they are on air.

Their job has a huge influence on their looks and for example, Allaudin would not look as he is now if he would not be running an entertainment show on television says Rugova.

Women tend to like men like Adrian Gaxha, Shpat Kasapi, Ermal Fejzullahu and this can be considered as an indication that many men are adopting this lifestyle, which is very popular in the region. (Interview with Rugova K, fashion designer).

Conclusion

During this research, I was constantly thinking will I able to prove that men in Kosovo are changing in line with the global trends that are gradually transforming the image of men in society. The topic in discussion masculinity representation of men in entertainment shows broadcasted in the three national television stations has been sometimes a hard issue to be discussed. In every step of my work, the research I was conducting was often called as an issue that is known and does

not need to be talked about. Many men I talked to, would say to leave men apart from the gays. This situation confirmed my thoughts that in Kosovo it is early to discuss an issue such as masculinity representation. Kosovo is still is a patriarchal society where the change of men is seen as a deviation from the route of real masculinity. Nevertheless, this issue did not discourage me from conducting the research from beginning to end in order to come to the desired results that some men are changing in Kosovo towards a form of metrosexuality. Indeed men in Kosovo are changing and this is not just an observation of mine, it is a statement that derives from the gathered information of my research. However, I have to stress out that the level of change of men in Kosovo is not the same in other countries, it is at a lower level but it is still there. This change can be understood from the interviews conducted with the two main characters that are subject of this research and from the interviews of other professionals included in this research. The interviews in my opinion are the crucial part of the research that leads to the confirmation of the subject discussed.

On the other hand the referrals to books, journalist, websites, and other information are used to illustrate the changes outside Kosovo in western society. These references helped me understand the issue of masculinity representation and the change of men in the West so an idea could be created about the changes of Kosovo men and where they are leading. The issue that men in Kosovo are changing and a sharp eye can understand this even if one is not reading books on metrosexuality and masculinity representation. One needs just to go out to the trendy coffee shops and look at men that are there. It seems that they are competing who is going to look more modern, who has the best haircut, the best shirt and so on. A number of people that I have interviewed said that they are realising that they changed only now that they are talking about their changes. Men in 2007 spend more money on clothes, grooming, going out, than in years before. The desire to look and smell better is becoming an incentive and normal issue for most of the men in Kosovo's urban areas. Therefore, the modern Kosovan man is going through a period of change, which to him does not look as something that should be considered as change. This can be seen in the interviews and the answers that are provided. And the males who work as television presenters are a sample for other men that prefer that kind of lifestyle (of a metrosexual). A message that I would like to be carried by my research is that no man should be afraid of undergoing the process of change, which might change his look and the way these changes show his masculinity in public.

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Brief note on the author
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He is currently working as coordinator of courses of written/internet based journalism at the Kosovo Institute for Journalism and Communication (KIJAC). At the same time, he teaches several courses at this institution, like: "Introduction to journalism", "Written journalism", "Writing of features, Opinions, and Editorials" and "Interviewing Techniques."

From 2003-2005 he taught courses "History of Albanian Printed Press" and "History of World Printed Press" in the private school of journalism "Faik Konica".

For seven years he worked as a full time editor in Albanian and Kosovo printed media. In Albania, he cooperated with the "Shekulli" daily newspaper, "Spektër" and "XXL" magazines, with the "Albanian News Agency" and the television channel "Vizion+".

In Kosovo, he has worked as a journalist for the daily newspaper "KOHA Ditore" (2001-2004).

Gjergj Filipaj is a co-founder of "Express" daily (2004-2006), where he was engaged as editor of the "Nacionale" rubrique.

In 2007 he graduated in the department of Documentary Films/Television Journalism of KIJAC. During his master studies he realized 2 short documentary movies **"Islam and Alcohol"** (2006) and "Anton Pashku — a Forsaken Author**"** (2007).

Hasnije ILAZI

Identity in Transition

One of the most frequent synonyms of the modern society, namely identity, parallel to concepts like globalization, multi-culturalism, human rights, integration, democracy, has already overcome the limit of a simply theoretical concept within a social discipline. This concept is linked now with the countless use of daily expressions, experiences, behaviors and convictions through which evidence is sought on the qualities that characterize us, our advantages and features in relation to the others.

Attempts of science and philosophy to define the notion of identity, especially after its emergence in the second part of the past century, has mainly gone towards two directions: in the acceptance of identity as the reality, and its denial as fiction on one hand, and on the other hand the dilemma whether identity should be defined on subjective or objective grounds. With regard to the second one, the question is imposed, whether the basis for determining identity should be reason, emotions, or something else.

The tendency for simplification of the notion of identity is also evident, carrying all its complexity under the umbrella of a common name, therefore, today we speak of personal and social identity, individual and group identity, cultural and political identity, modern and traditional identity, national and social/class identity, of kind and gender, religious and secular, rural and urban etc.

Difficulties in defining the notion derive from identity itself, which is perceived as a phenomenon that is omnipresent, that everyone is familiar with to the extent that everyone knows what it is, but no one can articulate it clearly.

There is not one definition of identity, around which theoretical consensus

has been reached, though there is consensus on questions through which the identity issue can be defined: who am I; to what extent does social fate define me; can I have my identity for myself, or do I need someone to recognize it and approve it; is identity against nature, or is nature part of identity; is persistence despite external influence the main attribute for identity, or is its essence the constant change in conformity with the reality. There are authors that agree that only an identity crisis within the modern society has made identity emerge and has brought about added interest on the notion.

In a diversity of opinions and starting points in facing the notion of identity, three unavoidable problem orientations can be identified in its explanation: 1. identity between subjectivity and objectivity 2 individual and collective identities 3 natural and social basis of identity. These orientations characterize all stages of the history of the notion of identity. In addition, they provide a stable basis for the analysis of one of the most disputable forms of identity, the gender identity.

Two parallels of the history

Understanding identity in overcoming its theoretical basis, means placing it in two planes: as philosophical categories (speculative) and as a practical matter. Despite the fact that identity has strongly emerged in the scientific world and in the social life in the last ten years, as a notion it has been present much earlier on philosophic discussions, since ancient times. Naturally, not in today's definition of the work, which mainly relates to personal identity and provides the answer to *what I am,* but in terms of congruency of a subject with itself (A=A). In order to understand the various forms of identity, we need to use both such viewpoints, but especially, the relationship between the notion itself and practical social life needs to be analyzed.

In the process of going through its development stages, parallel to the development of society itself, identity is presented as a historically noted process closely linked with modernity.

An individual that is integrated into traditional society; has not asked any questions on identity in the way such questions are posed today. Raising the issue of identity is a consequence of destruction of communities, encouraged by individualism. However, individuals are not emancipated and raised from traditional frames on their will and power. Traditional and homogenous society itself, has constituted and defined social individuals, thus identity as well as individualism has a social origin.

This social origin of identity is linked to the tendency for administrative regulation of the new society. With politics becoming autonomous, the state has created its "world" which is separate from the "subordinates". This was the start of determining criteria upon which the state would identify those who are "on the other side", by reducing the complexity of reality into "identity" on paper.

In all countries, the first identity cards were based on signs through which the persons "identity" was memorized: birth date and year, residence, and description of physical characteristics. Finally, two main elements for distinguishing "identity" were the picture and identification number. This fixation of identity into some words, numbers and pictures reflects the importance given to the body since the beginning, and highlighting the biological side in determining personal identity. Today's society has similar preferences: return to the body (identification through DNA, blood group, etc.), and "disappearance" of identity in a numerical form (health insurance number, account number, internet).

The transition through which identity has passed is closely linked to two periods of modern times, which reflect upon changes to spiritual viewpoints: the period of social structure reflex and the period of identity revolution.

Coming out of amorphism, which is always society driven, the individual becomes a regulatory center of social construction of reality. The identity crisis on that stage represents clear signs of improvement of the subject position. But in the first stage of modern times, the meaning of life is still determined from above, from society itself. Created identity is at the service of fulfilling society's needs, and it is lost in the social role. At this stage identity is simply a reflex of the social structure.

The identity revolution period brings a distanced subject from the socialization framework, and the above becomes autonomous. Identity passes from reflex (of structure) to reflection (upon himself and the society). This internal change has been followed with personal insecurity which is characterized with searching for oneself, nostalgia for the lost ontological 'care', tendency for finding an individual path, liberation from tradition, stopping to imitate nature, a feeling of unhappiness and discomfort. In a word, the revolution period, with all its positive sides, brings a major identity crisis.

In such a situation, the construction of a modern individual falls into paradox: he starts to redefine himself within the meaning of collective belonging. When the individual development, subjectivity, searching for oneself, finding the meaning of life becomes too difficult and too tiresome, passing on to collectively accepted truism, in a kind of depersonalization that deprives identity of every attribute, is presented as relaxing and comforting. It suffices to say "our identity", and this means everything we are not, even more than that: our identity reflects upon the surplus of its meaning.

Subjectivity and objectivity

During our daily lives, we at least once thought about how attractive it would be to take part in our funeral. We would have the unique opportunity to hear how others perceive us. Thus we would understand how little we were ourselves, though others have perceived us only in such a way how we have offered ourselves for perception, and then again we reflected upon ourselves on the basis of their perceptions and opinions.

An undeniable connection between individual identity and the relationship to others becomes visible in cases of memory loss, where, in addition to biological features, everything about the self is learned from information provided by others. The memory is "refilled" with information relevant to the individual social being and identity is recreated on this basis.

But how important is "the other one" to identity? Where is identity between the process of socialization and self-construction? Modern theories of identity point out the irreplaceable role of society in the individual's self-presentation as a unique subject. According to them, we are identified as "similar" or "different" in relation to others. We are also part of the culture, tradition, separation of social roles, and we have constant need for someone to recognize and accept our identity.

To Jean Claude Kaufmann identity is a subjective construct which cannot ignore the factual reality by which it is influenced, and it is continuously under the view of others, who accept or deny the offered identity.

The old question that the thinkers have been sharing for a long time, as to the extent to which identity can be reduced to a subject only, to an internal individual opinion, has created to opposing thoughts, those who proclaim social and cultural dependency on one side, and the supporters of free will and personal creativity on the other side. The issue of social impact in the creation of identity is important, especially in terms of the relationship between personal identity and ethics. Moral values are deeply entrenched in the rational meaning of subjectivity as autonomous power, as the ideal of freedom and justice, as well as personal self-actualization.

New theories on identity mainly criticize the idea that the individual may only be an internal non-mediated awareness. They highlight the identity as a continuity of the same, on one side, and as "dialectics of the self and the other: (Paul Ricoeur). Representatives of communitarism (Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer, Michael Sandel) have provided strong criticism of liberalism by not accepting the assumptions that the individual may be fully autonomously understood by the community he/she lives in and within which he or she was educated. Instead, they propose the concept of the individual, who points out the role of the community in forming values, mental processes and his/her attitudes.

On the other side, representatives of the philosophy of individuality (Volker Gerhardt) point out the identity, on basis of which an individual can offer oneself to the others, as something that the individual gives to oneself, mainly through the notion of responsibility. In this way, responsibility, even though initiated by others, is really the duty of a human toward oneself.

It seems that there is a double dilemma: 1. what I am, what I am born and what I become during my life, and 2. am I what I am for myself (at a fixed point of the factual situation) or what I am accepted from others, the latter can be referred to the identity as an internal process, with the tendency to be accepted as special and at the same time directed towards different social frames.

Biological or psychological origin?

The alternative way of treating the identity problem is its biological and/or social origin. The importance of treating the problem from this respect arises from our questioning our essence. If I am more than one thing at the same time, e.g. an adult, a professor, a driver, a voter, it is clear that none of these attributes is my essence, since I may exist without being any of them. Therefore, identifying the essence of human beings means to identify the conditions of their persistence through time.

The question on biological origins of identity consists in an old philosophical, theological and scientific matter on the body, respectively, the mind.

Theoreticians, who support psychological criteria, often point out being a person and psychological continuity as what preserves identity. However, there are authors who do not agree with the thought that a psychological basis provides the persistence of being human. Their arguments are related to changes of personality during periods when an individual goes through different stages of psychological development, such as adolescent, teenager, child, fetus...!

Those who support biological criteria also offer an assumption on the possibility for an individual to accidentally remain in vegetative state, when personality is almost completely disappeared, and only the organism remains. According to them, the most plausible answer on the essence of man is precisely the biological body.

However, there is a considerable number of those who consider that biological inheritance is irrelevant, in particular, when we discuss the ethical and individual responsibility aspects. Many experiments strongly suggest that we have rational expectations, self-concern, moral responsibility, which may be justified

even in the lack of biological continuity. The most relevant example is the so called "transplant intuita" (Olson/DeGrazia). This is related to a hypothetical transplant of the brain from one body to another. What will happen with the identity of two persons? There are thoughts that the receiving body of the transplanted brain will become the person who donated it. If we add another assumption according to which the person, brain donor has committed a crime, and if identity implies responsibility, the question is who will be responsible for the crime: the first individual, who received the brain and personalized with the donor, or the second individual, who is just an organism surviving without the donated brain?

If the basis for our practical concerns requires psychological continuity, but psychological continuity presupposes biological continuity, then the basis for our practical concerns also requires biological continuity. However, this conclusion does not explain the close relation between identity and our practical concerns. Because, if biological continuity may preserve our identity through time, then psychological continuity will be necessary as a basis for solution of our practical concerns and our interest in ethical, legal and similar consequences.

Therefore, the issue whether the essence of identity is the body or whether identity is how we are within our body remains open.

Gender identity: pro or against nature

All respects mentioned up to now, the numerous dilemmas raised on the issue of identity are more or less valid for all forms of this notion. However, when we talk about gender identity, dilemmas are even more stressed due to the consequences that may arise from the relationship between the biological basis, individual reflection and social reaction.

The gender identity basis may be reduced in difference between organic and social substrates (material basis and the process of defining meaning). If the biological basis is considered as a given on birth, then gender identity should have been understood as something that owns the irreplaceable physiological basis. However, the difference between these two and the social substrates of identity is evident. How important this is shown by the fact that within identification documents, gender is ranked first as an attribute, immediately after name and last name.

The statement that the emergence of an identity process, what brings a "crisis" happens at the point when identity is no longer determined through a social framework, confirms that identity is not a product of society, but that society

changes. Does the same apply on the natural basis? Are men irrevocably men, clearly separate from women on a biological basis?

The fight against providing a simple answer up to banality to this issue is the basis for feminist movements. In year 1949 Simone de Beauvoir stated that "no one is born a women, they become a women". During the seventies, with the use of the gender concept, the role of nature has been visibly marginalized in determining the difference between men and women. The perspective of developing identity as a process has enabled the emergence of some new elements. Identity is presented as influential on all bases of socialization, including the ones that are mostly resistant to change, such as the biological identity.

However, one cannot forget that the body has its own history, with visible impact on social processes. Every society and every culture have had different approaches towards the female body. The most obvious example is the naturalization of the female body, a social process that has brought a biopolitics of gender relations within modernity itself. Historically, starting from the most ancient cultures, the most ancient societies were dominated from nature, whereas modern societies are distinguished by culture.

However, there have been exceptions to this rule: medicine has used a new method of body perception since ancient Greece until the end of the Medieval times, being based on more common elements and less differences between the male and female body. The end of the XIX century has brought about the reverse process: medical experts expand the differences to include all body parts (bones, blood vessels, hair). The logical question to be posed in this context is where the "woman essence" biologically concentrated is?!

In different stages in time, the "essence" was said to mean one organ or another, and this continues even today, where the basis for differences between men and women is ironically, the brain!

The criticism to this method of determining the basis for an inferior position is not related to the tendency for denial of biological differences between genders. However, this is where the identity problem is raised. This refers to a process, which for the largest part of its development is in contradiction with natural facts. There are two issues that need to be accepted and stressed: 1. today, thanks to science and technology, body is shown more and more as an unstable reality, and 2. historical analysis of the social creation of the female nature shows that influence of natural characteristics is much lesser and much less important than it is thought to be. In relation to the latter, Francoise Parot goes even further in neglecting the biological side and pretending that nothing which is natural within the human being is human in the full sense of the word, and nothing that is fully human is natural.

The main problem, which hinders creation of the identity, is not the biological difference between men and women, but it is the artificial stressing of the natu-

ral part; the tendency of the society to biologically categorize gender identities. This categorization paradoxically creates a larger hindrance than nature itself.

In fact the "female identity" is nothing more than a social role, whereas the basis for division of social roles into those of "women" and "men" is not defined on bodily differences. Despite this, the women are required to take on such a role as a reflex (just like in earlier societies when identities were set through social roles), even though inventing the identity today attempts to destroy this framework.

According to Kaufmann the issue to be raised is whether "identity" is a genetic condition that includes a group of people, and thus adjusts to a social or biological configuration (being primarily a woman), or whether this refers to the process of endless diversification, which should only count on certain social or biological facts (being primarily a person, who attempts to realize his/her dreams without any *a priori*)" (Kaufmann, 2006:80). If there are a million ways of being a woman, this is a sufficient fact to question the existence of a "female identity".

However, can life be understood without relying on gender assets? This is incredible and destabilizing today, thus there is a societal need for bi-categorization.

On the other hand, is my identity how the society "categorizes" me, or is it, as Olivier Roy points out, that "my identity is my convictions"? In an attempt to respond to such a concern, it becomes clear that in relation to this, the real revolution of identity has not started yet.

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Brief note on the author
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Hasnije Ilazi is a Master of Sciences and lecturing assistant at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Prishtina. Ilazi received a master degree at the University of Zagreb with her thesis "The role of transcendental imagination in the Kant's theory of knowledge".

Issue of identity of modern man is a part of her philosophical reflections and consequently also of her doctoral thesis. MSc. Ilazi is currently working on her doctoral thesis on the topic of "Notion of man in the philosophy of Charles Taylor – creation of modern identity."

In the international conference "Kant's Philosophy – 200 years after," she presented her key-note titled "Metaphysics of man and modern identity."

MSc. Ilazi has given significant contribution also in the field of gender studies. "Women and Men in Kosovo," "Gender review in education," participation as co-author in drafting of the Gender Equality Law, are only some of her engagements in publication and a public policy development.

Kadri METAJ

Natality and plurality in Hannah Arendt

Hannah Arendt[1] (1906- 1975) is undoubtedly one of the most intriguing names in the field of the contemporary political history. She is the most productive author in this field, and perhaps the first to sense the risk of disappearance of politics; her political analyses are very inspirational, to a large extent stemming from her personal experience both as a woman and a member of Hebrew community. These aspects of her works make her one of the more widely read and quoted author in political philosophy and even wider in the field of social sciences, together with Karl Popper, Tocqueville and other well read authors.

Herself of Hebrew origin, Arendt feels the burden of totalitarianism and lack of freedom, but also the menace of physical extermination as had happened to tens of thousands of her compatriots; she elevated this personal experience at a higher theoretical level of articulate analyses on freedom, birth rate, plurality, authority, politics, culture, revolution, and other categories of contemporary political philosophy. In 1933 at the age of 27, she was made to leave her country (Germany) where she had had the opportunity to learn from renowned philosophers like:

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1   Born in Hannover in a Hebrew family, Hannah Arendt very early showed her extraordinary talents and intellectual capacity. At 22 she defended her doctoral dissertation titled: "Concept of love in St. Augustine", mentored by Karl Jaspers. In l933, when Nazis came to power, she leaves Germany to settle as a refugee in France until 1940. There she engaged in activities to protect Hebrews together with Sartre, Reymont Aaron, Stephan Zweig and Berthold Brecht. In l941 she immigrated to USA with her mother and her husband. With her work "Origins of Totalitarianism" in l951 she won herself her reputation and became a preferred speaker in American universities with her lectures being regularly published, such as "Crisis of Culture" (l961), "Condition of the Modern Man" (l958), "Essay on Revolution" (1963), etc. Until her death she worked as a professor at the "New School for Social Research" of New York. Her unfinished work titled "Life of the soul," was published posthumously in l978. Hannah Arendt reached Albanian letters much later – in l998, with her "Eight essays on political thought," published by "Onufri" and with her book "Origins of Totalitarianism," published by "Dija", Prishtina, 2002, as well as with "Human State" published only recently.

Heidegger, Husserl and Jaspers. There she experienced the painful encounter with the totalitarian state, but she also had the rare opportunity and honour to study philosophy from most renowned authors. These authors but had been challenged, in the human aspect, by the fascist ideology and had treaded into intellectual blunders – as was the case with Heidegger. Arendt had involved in very delicate relations with the latter, including emotional relations and a witness in his support during his trial related to Nazi crimes.

The full and rich opus by Hannah Arendt can only be grasped in its totality, whereas her fullest account on politics can be found in her book "The human Condition" (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958) and in other publications, including those published posthumously.

Notions *natality and plurality,* as used by this author, can be analysed by pursuing anthropologic analyses of the "Vita activa' theory. Here she addresses forms of human activities: *work*, which aims to provide for living, *production*, creating an artificial world of things competing with the world of nature, and *action* which makes us different from animals. In the latter category she argues with Marx's opinion about humans as producing and even reproducing beings; it seems that it is on this particular aspect that she builds her brilliant opinion about gender issues. Numerous articles by Arendt are in fact arguments with Marx, in which she expresses her disagreements with his views. We notice her different approach at the very beginning when she treats work as something related to "bios," initially of a philosophical and anthropologic nature and later in relation to what anthropologists call 'the essence of man.'

At the level and context of action, it is not one man, but all of them together who prove themselves as beings created to act and communicate through language, thus turning into beings adapt for politics, cooperation and social life. Action is the only human activity that brings people in direct relation with one another, free of any intermediation by object or matter, which are dominated by determinism and lack of freedom.

Hannah Arendt's conception about man and politics has a common denominator – freedom, which is not only a political, but also a philosophical-anthropological and ontological notion. She starts from several ontological premises, which are also assumptions of political ontology. Erudite in existentialist philosophy of Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre, in her analyses Arendt is vitally interested to preserve characteristics of human existence or the individuality through which man has renounced immortality, unlike animals which have gained collective immortality and eternity by belonging to their species and by contributing to its renewal. (Remember here the brilliant points Nietchze makes regarding discussion Zarathustra has with animals and humans and the resulting distinction between limited time for man and unlimited time for animals). Man, according to her, is not

as Aristotle thought "a political being automatically and by itself," but that it turns into one when interacting with other men, discussing and agreeing with them. Whereas freedom is the field and context in which people act. Acting in a context of freedom is the highest opportunity for man, since they are able to communicate there, make their identity known, tell "who" they are, and together with others they climb the worldly stage, in which they had been invisible before that. As a result, Arendt says that the meaning of politics is freedom and the man's ability to achieve it and to extend the space of freedom, which is not granted, but has to be earned. In her renowned essay titled "What is freedom," she writes that "*la raison d'être* of politics is freedom, whereas action is its field of accumulation." There we witness the leap from natural determinism to human freedom, also known as "metabolism between man and nature: "bios" and "zoes", (good life - bios, upon a mere physical existence - zoe) ", fertility and biological concepts and brilliant analysis, in relation to productive slavery and non-productive freedom.

In her book "Human condition," Arendt points out that by freedom she understands the most important thing, which deals with the opportunity to start new things. To act is to take an initiative (from Greek "archein", start). Man is "initium", a newcomer in the world and novice by birth. Based on this existential and anthropological fact, Kierkegaard has interpreted the original sin and the risk of freedom, which means that the responsibility and challenge of freedom is inborn and brought about by birth … This new beginning of man is not the same as the genesis, since we come onto a world that is older than us, and even when we leave it we are still younger and it remains eternal. If acting as a beginning, corresponds to the fact of birth or accomplishment of human state of birth (birth rate), then speaking corresponds to the fact of diversity and is an accomplishment of multitude (plurality), which is considered as social life, as living the life of a distinct and unique being among equals. Hence may derive interesting views on gender, race, or nation and culture, as particularities and their relation to the entirety – or human nature.

The best way to prove coherence and consistency of Hannah Arendt's works and the fact that freedom is their common denominator, is to look at the way her works and articles with different titles complement one-another. Thus, if we turn to her essay "What is freedom," she points out that freedom is the essence of man and, by remaining loyal to her principle uniqueness of the individual as a value in himself, she explains that man is free exactly because every individual person is a new beginning. This is not the same with the nature, which is characterised by continuity and eternity, also encountered with animal species. Man asks the other person "who are you"? and finding out about one's identity is implied both in words and deeds of the other person.

Starting from these philosophical premises and knowing that she is influ-

enced by existentialism, we can divide her works in two large parts: The first part has a theoretical character endowed with a toolkit consisting of fundamental political categories such as act or action, plurality, politics, freedom, revolution, tradition, truth, authority, etc, whereas the other part can be classified in the field of research, which would include her inspired writings on totalitarianism, crisis of culture, lies, etc.

In her contemplations about politics, she does not deal with definitions or pragmatic politics, aware that this would narrow the meaning of politics. She believes that the chance of the world should be at the heart of politics since politics should be responsible for a dignified and free life. Thus, her works are modifications of politics rather than politics or guidelines to politics. She had once even promised her publisher from Munich, Klaus Piper, a book titled "Introduction to politics." Scholars are of opinion that Hannah Arendt never fulfilled this promise primarily because of the conditions of the Cold War times, when she felt a peril of "annihilation" of politics.

"Here we refer to one of the fragments remained from her sketches for the "Introduction …" Hannah Arendt wrote this article around the late fifties, when the Cold War dominated all political activity and thought both East and West, and when Werner's plan in Germany was seen as the last, perhaps irrational revolt, against the partitioning of Germany and Europe, which instigated a passionate wrangle on the behaviour of Germany during the Cold War …"[2]

In fact there was a discrepancy between understanding politics as a '*vita activa*', a human action, a dialogue and mutual persuasion, and as a search for a common course, with the unbearable atmosphere of totalitarianism and cold war in which the individual citizen or man felt unimportant, even unneeded and threatened. In such a climate, politics started to be identified with dirty affairs (Karl Schmidt) and dominated by a Machiavellian sense that goals justify means, even though when he formulated this idea, Machiavelli started from the main premise that there should be a good goal.

Hannah Arendt wanted to promote a concept of active citizenship and, as a result, she could not harmonize her ambition with the actual political circumstances; hence, in order perhaps not to disappoint her students she may have opted not to write her "Introduction to politics" at all.

Taking politics as a complex notion, Arendt sets out to analyse this intricacy both in its historical and actual dimension. In her analyses, Arendt made room for new opportunities for politics, but also "re-established" the ancient world. According to her, politics, that is democracy, has seen two golden periods, namely the ancient Greek one and the one in the modern American democracy. Speaking about these two models, in stead of using definitions, she makes use of metaphors to

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2   Erhard Epler, Rikthimi i politikës (Return of politics), ISPS & Rinia 2000, Tirana, 2001.

discuss "the space of free action," elevating political action to the level of political action. She reminds us of this sense originally seen in Aristotle's works (*"bios politicos"),* whereby similarly to other ways of life chosen freely by the free man, dealing with politics was connected to the beautiful, in this case the beauty of action."[3]

Taking further her concept on politics, Hannah Arendt reminded the modern world that the political space should not only be a space of free action, which can be implied, but it should also be a space of dignity and beauty of human acts.

By comparing the mortal human nature with the physical-natural and animal world, Arendt stresses human words and acts that reveal their ability for immortal acts, "with the opportunity given to them to leave solid trace, in spite of their transience as beings, they elevate to immortality and prove to possess heavenly nature."[4]

Arendt thinks that, seen from the historical perspective, this is the first beautiful experience of man in our civilization, and to this political trait and to this primary experience of man – we should always return. Action, which according to Hannah Arendt implies politics, requires public space and this again implies a respective audience. This condition to enter in politics also entails that a precondition for political action is our readiness to accept the others. Starting from this, Arendt will set out to analyse the conflict between the party system and system of Counsels, in relation to revolutions of the twentieth century (here she recalls Soviet workers' counsels, and others during the history of social-democracy, when even her mother had served as secretary to Rosa Luxemburg). She saw those initial experiences, before they were distorted, as positive attempts connected also to the contribution of a woman, an emblematic name in European social-democracy, the name of Rosa Luxemburg.

Apart from totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt also paid due attention to violence since, according to her, power and politics are not the same thing. Violence, she maintains, is illegitimate and, as such, completely opposite to power. She then goes on to write that violence occurs as a sign of weakness of power, in places where power and governance are not functional. Violence conveys weaknesses of the power, maybe even loss of power. In her works, power means authority of persuasion and especially law and, therefore, use of force for enforcement of law is a legitimate means, and should be distinguished from violence. In her article "Tradition and the modern era," Hannah Arendt writes that the European tradition of political thought is closely linked to the exceptional contributions of Plato and Aristotle and to the tradition of Greek *polis*. Detachment from this tradition, according to her, came through Marx's analyses on the societal anatomy. More so, she thinks that this philosopher marks the end of tradition by having "a philosopher (Marx) moving away from philosophy in attempt to "accomplish" it is politics. Only think

3   H. Arendt, Condition de l' homme moderne, Calman Levy, Paris I983, p. l8.
4   Ibid., p. 20

of Marx's "gruesome" idea of philosophy as the theoretical firearm of the proletariat and proletariat as the material firearm of philosophy! Both at the social and individual level Arendt finds him to be a historic materialist and determinist, who did not manage to understand the problem of freedom and, as a result, was made to address it through the prism of ideology. She thinks that Marx "brought his theory in harmony with the oldest insights on the nature of human work, which, in the same way as birth, according to Hebrew and classical tradition, was closely linked to life." Following the same line of argument, she considers that the real rediscovered meaning of productivity is identified with the gender fertility and this brings back to the "order of genesis to be fertile and to multiply!", which may sound as if the voice of nature is speaking to man …

By developing her concept of *action* and *acting*, respectively the politics of *Vita activa*, Arendt develops a very productive argument with Marx who, in her view, seriously challenged the positive European tradition by considering act and violence as of being identical, that is by stating that violence is the "*midwife of history*". Arendt maintains that if we follow the Greek tradition, especially the type of analyses carried out by Aristotle, which defined man both as a '*zoon politicon*' and 'zoon logon ehon' (a political and speaking being), only then will we understand that the distinction between Aristotle and Marx comes from the fact that Greeks in their coexistence within the *polis* organized their activities through words, through persuasion (*pithin*) in stead of violence and silent coercion. In her analyses, making the distinction between (political) action and production, characterises the latter as a violent action, illustrating this with the example of carpenter who, in order to produce a bed has to distort the wood and/or metal, in order to impose a given form of product, since in his (producer's) hands everything is just a material. As a result, if the same pattern is applied in politics then we will end up justifying violence in the name of efficiency and results. Arendt is committed to a careful division of political action from violence, which can be seen as a division of *praxis* from *poiesis*, always in line with the excellent tradition of Greek *poleis*. Political action, according to Arendt is one of the fundamental human experiences.[5] Action is a feature of mankind and through it man, as a mortal being and limited by time leaves a trace in life. However, in order for this to happen, she maintains that the so called human conditions are needed, and continues saying that two of them are the most important: birth or natality and plurality. Arendt, unlike her former professors like Heidegger, Jaspers, etc, thinks that human condition (fate) is not determined only by death, but also by human birth.

When we are born, we come to a world older than us and we are faced with misunderstanding, simply because our birth is an absolute beginning followed by a life and a future, which sometimes escape the parents' guardianship.

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5   H.Arendt, Condition de l'homme modern, Calman- Levy, f. 225.

As a result, according to Hannah Arendt, to act means to be able to take initiative, to start something new, but not alone, as a craftsman would, acting only with the help of his tools, resources and crude materials. Action, which is also a political action or interactive action, carried out with the others and influencing the same through words. "I cannot act without addressing them."

By initiating action I have brought about a typical social situation, which results in several positive or negative consequences, of which I am more or less conscious. Regardless of this, I am responsible for something that occurs through my existence even if I am not its direct maker. Therefore action, or better to say actions, make up the political community. It brings together free and equal individuals. In relation to this Hannah Arendt opposes the so called technical concept of politics (technocracy) and its rule, since this concept sees politics as a material, which can be shaped also in a violent way. Political act or action is characterised by debate and persuasion; and it is the inclusive debate which makes up the human community of dignified equals, kept close together by the *word*.

Vita activa is different from *Vita contemplativa,* and therefore a debate is not a theoretical speculation as would the case be with a philosophical discussion. Referring again back to the ancient tradition, Arendt writes that: "Political philosophy necessarily implies the philosopher's position on politics; its tradition starts with the philosopher distancing himself from politics, then with his return, aiming to reinstate standards in the frame of human relations …"[6]

Arendt points out that distinction is not the same as otherness. Otherness or being different is a very important aspect of plurality, and reason why all our definitions are idiosyncratic is that we cannot say anything before we distinguish one thing from another. Otherness in its most abstract shape is encountered in the inclined multiplication of inorganic objects, since all organic lives show their uniqueness and prominence. Of all beings, only man can communicate oneself and is able to express hunger, thirst, affection, hostility, etc. Being different, which distinguishes man from the rest of the living beings, makes man unique, whereas human plurality is a paradox of unique beings. Hannah Arendt refers to this anthropologic introduction to explain action and discussion as revealing features of this uniqueness. It is through action and discussion that man manifest themselves – in stead of being distinctive. Thus, we are talking, it is the modes in which human beings are presented to one another, not as physical beings but as *"qua men"*. Humans can live doing nothing, and they can make other people work for them. Life of a slave and that of an owner, together with the life of an idle parasite can be very unfair, but nevertheless they are all human being. However, a life without any debates and discussions is a wholly dead life, says Arendt, simply because it is not a human life. She thinks that devoid of those qualities it is not possible to live

6   H. Arendt, Tradita dhe epoka moderne (Tradition and the modern era, translated in Albanian), Onufri- CEU l998, Tirana.

among humans. She also quotes the anthropologist Gehlen, who maintains that by words and actions we insert ourselves in the world of humans, and this insertion is like being born again; this is how we strengthen ourselves and take off the original appearance. This insertion does not come as a result of necessity, as is the case with work and production which gain thrust from benefits. It is triggered by the presence of others who we live with, whereas the main drive comes about with our birth and when we respond to the challenge by starting something new on our own initiative.

It is in the very nature of starts that things initiated cannot be predicted either by our previous experience or based on what others have passed on to us, including out parents, with best of their intentions. Man, says Arendt was created to start something, even before there was something else. But this beginning is not also the beginning of the world as we know it - it is rather a start of someone who himself / herself is a beginner.

The mere fact that man can endeavour an action proves that the impossible can be made possible and that he/she is able to do things which are against all odds, always having in mind the unique character of the human kind. If the action as a beginning corresponds with birth and proves the condition of human natality, then in the same line of thinking discussion corresponds to human plurality and proves man as a unique being among equals. Action and discussion are closely related. The first question in this plurality of human community is "who are you?" The manifestation of who is who, according to Arendt, is implied both in action and in discussion. It is also known that there is closer resemblance between word and revelations than between word and beginning, and this in spite of the fact that most doers act through discussion. If not accompanied by discussion, action looses not only it revealing character, but also its very substance.

Even though human action can be made visible through its physical appearance and without a verbal account, it can however gain relevance only through words, which identify man as an actor by expressing what he does, has done or is planning to do. There is no other human performance that needs the company of discussion more than action. Through action and discussion people show who they are, actively reveal their unique identity and manifest themselves in the human world. Their physical appearance is visible even without any human activity. The manifestation of "who", different from "what", that talent and the quality that man reveals or hides, is the one that shows who does what. These can be hidden through complete silence or through perfect inactivity, but it is certain that they can not be expressed as desired or planned. This revealing quality of action and discussion emerges in the mere presence of other people, not as a position for or against them. The shear character of action weakens with the loss of human association and this occurs when men are alone going against or in favour of others.

Arendt illustrates this with the example of modern wars, where men take action and use various forms of violence to achieve their objectives. In such cases, people do not utilize discussion, or resort to it only in order to deceive the enemy or to brainwash people's minds with propaganda. Words do not reveal anything here. Action, says Arendt, is meaningless if not accompanied by a word. Monuments of unknown soldiers are a proof of how important codification or glorification is to find a "who" as a source of identification. Action can not be undertaken or even understood as an isolated situation; this because even leaders identified as the 'sturdiest' cannot endeavour actions if they are isolated, simply because action, the same as discussion, do not make any sense without a partner or a group of supporters. If a politician is not able to identify his/her right supporters and if he cannot make good use of that fact, then he will probably fail.

Similar to her writings in the field of culture (such as "Crises of Culture), when discussing politics, action and discussion Arendt resorts to tradition and refers to the etymology of the word "action" for which there are two terms each in Latin and in Greek. In the end it was the term that described the end {achievement}, that finally outweighed the others to qualify action.

This because, as Arendt says, action etymologically has also the meaning of accomplishment, achievement, and not only setting things in motion as a lip service of just for the sake of starting. At the same time, the two words that in Greek and Latin express start of action, acquired a meaning of "leading" which is nowadays commonly used in the political vocabulary more than in the general sense of "action."

Arendt mentions several characteristics of act or action. Firstly, she maintains that action is boundless, which means that by its very origin and nature it refuses any limitations. Secondly, action always contains its other side that can be characterised as a result. Thus, apart from the doer, we also get the object of the action and the many-sided effects of the action, which are definitely difficult to measure since an action results in numerous outcomes that only serve to better prove boundlessness of action. Inherent unpredictability is yet another characteristic of the action. Even from the times of ancient Greek *poleis* the sphere of politics came straight from cooperation, that is from dividing and joining words and work. Action is consequently the key ingredient of public life. Deeds and words of every citizen of the polis had to be saved through the "collective memory." Therefore, a political body and a public sphere are needed for the man to live but also to appear and interact with the others. The public sphere can only exist when people are together through discussion and action, and in fact it is this process that brought about governments and created constitutions to our very days. On the other hand, it is power and authority that keeps the public sphere alive, as a space to appear for those who give speeches and discuss and act in cooperation with others.

In her efforts to analyse the nature of power, Arendt creates an apposition of terms force and strength in order to better analyse semiotic differences. Power, according to her, is always a potential, which can not be measured or predicted, but can be realized though interaction and cooperation. Otherwise, the force of a person, human power, and action are boundless and do not depend only on one side, but on interaction. Thus a person's force does not disappear as long as he/she lives, unlike his power, which can vanish since it depends from interaction. History has taught us that a small and well organized group can hold under its rule or power a large number of people, whereas a person's physical force cannot do this, regardless of his/her size.

Therefore, regarding power, Arendt concludes that the only irreplaceable fabric of power is an association of people, that is being together through discussion and action. Any power will disappear without this fabric and, unlimited as it is, it depends on a community of people who bring it to life only through interaction and cooperation.

There is a connection between power, freedom, and authority. Making a review of arguments between liberalism and conservatism regarding the issues of tradition and authority, Arendt writes that: "Regarding these processes, one can say that frequent upheavals of the public opinion in the last one hundred and fifty years have moved from on extreme to an other in regular intervals, ranging from liberal to conservative positions and alternately bringing up authority and freedom; these upheavals have undermined both sides of the range by perplexing issues, by distorting bordering lines between authority and freedom, and in numerous cases, by destroying the political meaning of both."[7]

By making a distinction between notions, often very similar on the surface, such as work, production and action, Arendt points out that the space within the world where man needs to appear at its fullest, comes more as a result of his work than of his hands or of his body. What does this mean from the perspective of politics such as *Vita activa*? The conviction that man can succeed deals more with the aspects of time and oneself and is in contradiction with the conviction of "homo faber" that the man's product can be bigger that man himself, similar to *animal laborans"* who strongly believe that the peak of man's goodness is life. Both these approaches are too strict and limiting, says Arendt, because they are clearly apolitical and strive to label discussion and action as laziness.

Without the space to appear and without the trust in action and discussion as the only ways of being together, it is impossible to understand anybody's reality, his/her identity and the world that surrounds us. In production people are in one process, next to one-another, often depending and connected to one-another, but as they work they live in separate worlds, thinking about themselves, their families,

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7   H. Arendt, Op. cit, p. 91.

in which all activities are in the same level with the metabolism of the human body, with the nature, and there is no exchange – only consume. Producing societies, according to Arendt need action and discussion to produce something and to take the produced good to the end.

Her review on action Arendt closes in a way similar to Nietzsche's about the artist, who he thinks is the real man, that is the "eternal return of the same", because the child is the true artist. So, Arendt concludes her analysis with a finding that "appearance of the phenomenon of the genius and the frequent identification of artists with this name had caused unanimous reactions."

Artists aspired to express their perfection identically with the craftsmen who are perfect in their field. The only element they carry in themselves is their unique character and distinctiveness, which can only be accomplished by being original within their craft, namely through dialogue and action within human plurality.

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Brief note on the author
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Prof. Dr. Kadri Metaj has got a 33 year long experience in academic endeavours. Prof. Metaj has been teaching at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Prishtina from 1979, where he earned all his academic titles from junior assistant to the current full time professor. He obtained his master degree on the topic of "Method of interpretation of history by Jean Paul Sartre", which he completed under co-mentorship in 1984 in the Universities of Sarajevo and Sorbonne. In 1987, Prof. Metaj earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Prishtina with his dissertation on "Aesthetical theory of Georgy Lukach". He has published dozens of articles in home and international scientific journals and has translated from French language numerous professional writings in the field of philosophy, including: "Political Philosophy," by Eric Weli, "History of sexuality" by Michel Foucault, "To educate a citizen" by Patrice Canivez etc. Kadri Metaj is an associate with "Cotutelle" in the University of Paris 8 and Lille 3, as well as lecturer at the SEEU.

Mandeta MINXHOZI

Gender communication and identity

Power and gender identity

The word "power" may bring numerous misunderstandings regarding its identity, form, or content. When we say power, we do not imply only the power as an assembly of institutions, but also the dependence of the citizens within a state and further within a family or between two partners (woman – man or husband-wife).

Power is often seen as a way of supremacy between people whereby one individual exercises his/her power over the other by putting oneself in a superior position and the other as an inferior. This form of perception of power is applied as a required rule for implementation, as is the case with patriarchal societies, whereby one gives orders and the other one obeys, namely the husband ordering and the wife applying his orders.

In this case we are dealing with a general system of rule of an individual over another one or of a group over the other groups. This rule is manifested in the society in the form of gender discriminations, which evolve from a form of lecturing starting in childhood, through introjections of behavioural paradigms, finally transforming into a social and spiritual body of norms. Multitude of power relations in the field of gender give shape to partner relations, which are transformed,

strengthened or overturned through permanent dynamics of fights, collisions and struggles.

In fact it is through complexity of their relations that partners should look for their point of support, common strengths, and identify power relations between them in order to later build an unbreakable chain or system. On the contrary, if they allow contradictions and animosities win over good and common things revealed by them over years, then this could only result in them isolating and distancing themselves from one another, from their relatives, friends, and from common social groups.

Effective strategies for building gender partnerships are an important element for breaking matrimonial monotony, which often turn into sources of conflict. Man is a biological, social, and personal being; all these make them complex beings with biological needs, with needs for socialization and respect of their personality. Exercise of power should be seen from the perspective of the dynamic foundation of power relations, which produces an unstable and changing relationship as a result of mutual inequalities whereby power switches over from one partner to another. Partners, men in particular (in respect of tradition), are inclined to exercise power on every point, or put more accurately from one to another point within every relation.

Power is all around, not because it includes everything, but because it comes from everywhere. Once the singular "power," is manifested somewhere, then it has the tendency to become repetitive, reproductive, and it is nothing but a set of outcomes of partners moves who aim to feel dependant at the same time with efforts to violate the other's freedom and personality. Often because of customs and culture, men cannot see women as an identity independent and unconditioned from their own identity; an identity which is shaped independently from him, but made up and inherited from the family with all its specific values and cultural norms. First of all, we need to understand that there cannot be two identical husband-wife consciousnesses, the same as there cannot be two identical identities, identical human beings, or identical social groups. Men often abuse women's freedom in the name of patriarchal customs, especially when this is related to the lack of understanding of concepts of freedom and power, and when power is seen as a possession of the other. The husband thinks that he owns the wife in her totality because this is how he was brought up since his childhood (customs, family tradition, influence of the society and of the patriarchal mindset), and consequently he is made to believe that he possesses and manages his wife's freedom and personality, unable to see her as a social being capable of managing her own freedom.

This becomes the source of authoritarianism with the husband endowing himself with attributes that do not genuinely belong to him, making the woman feel dependant on her husband when facing challenges of life. In fact, it is in this

way that men win against women by making them believe that they are unable to cope with challenges of life without her husband's support.

From the physical perspective, the modern man should continue to exercise control over machines, which requires some sort of intelligence - not muscles. In fact, human beings, both men and women, are born with equal rights to education, emancipation, integration, etc. However, it is society with its stereotypes that considers the woman as a socially lower being (which should not be given much power), and man as a stronger being (which therefore deserves a lot of power). These stereotypes, therefore lead to gender discrimination, which comes as a result of differences in thinking, different mindsets and prejudices, and not as a result of differing physical abilities.

Negotiation of identity is the lowest needed communication activity between partners. However, it is important for partners to bear intelligence in nourishing their relation with positive attitudes and longevity, also by exploring ways to acquire the needed knowledge about his own and the other persons' identity in civilized exchanges.

Intercultural gender communication consists of several components, such as:

- The basic dynamics of identities and respect of partner's identity serves for a good communication between partners and with other persons.
- It is a fundamental need of matrimonial partners of all cultures to feel motivated and confident regarding their identity; this in return serves to extend the life span and stability of their relation.
- Matrimonial partners tend to stick to familiar cultures that offer the feeling of security to their identity and, at the same time, try to avoid situations when their identities could be put in harms way in culturally strange environments.
- Matrimonial partners, especially women, need to go through experiences of trust identity when communicating with their partner. The feeling of trust is very productive and important, whereas the opposite brings about mistrust and continuous trusts.
- Woman feels a stronger need for affective interpersonal relations through close interaction with their partner, but at the same time they also need more autonomy in marital relations.
- Partners convey stability of identity in predictable cultural situations and tend to reveal changed identities or chaos in culturally unpredictable situations.
- Cultural, personal, and situational dimensions have an impact in understandings, interpretations, and esteems that partners have for one-anoth-

er regarding their identity.
- A satisfactory negotiation of identity includes the feeling of being under-stood, appreciated, respected, and supported by the partner.

- Numerous changes of identity will make a person a useless one, without moral grounds, and with an identity crisis; for these reasons, partners need to have the three following motives in order to be able to engage in a successful intercultural communication with each oth-er:
- the need to feel safe that things are as they appear.
- the need to feel predictability and trust in the other persons.
- the need to feel included.

However, all this are underpinned by the communication culture and abil-ity. Such tolerant and flexible factors of personality facilitate promotion of security of identity and inclusion of oneself and of the others.

Communication, gender, and culture

What happens when matrimonial partners coming from different cultures engage in communication?

In this regard, Hall has dealt with the concept of "silent language". He in-cluded various levels of consciousness in the process of communication, ranging from awareness to the unknown. According to him, the interpersonal communica-tion does not involve only the "visible" message - the one that is carried over via the mere audio process. This communication involves also other less "visible" messages which relate to various symbolisms they carry in different cultures or subcultures. As it happens, often this 'secret' message is not accomplished, or it is not readily grasped by the partner, often causing frustrating reaction, which can lead to open hostilities by the addressee.

We are all sensitive of the finest changes in the behaviour of the others. In cases when such behaviours have a negative or unpleasant connotation in our culture or subculture, then they will result in an unfriendly reaction on our part toward our partner.

It is wrong to feel "relaxed" and immune in marital life because the human world offers a diversity of behavioural and communication models. Man should consider oneself to be in permanent competition with the others and in continu-

ous search of perfection of behaviour and communication in order to better face challenges and competition.

People from various cultures have different ways of expressing oneself through gesticulation. In some cultures people show agreement by nodding or by moving their head left and right. In other cultures, this means refusal. A large part of communication between people is done through gesticulation, which means that it is important to pay attention to the other person's words and attitude. By understanding the language and gesticulations of other people, we can become good listeners. There are cases when people do not express their consent with words, due to emotional reasons. Of course, the most effective form of communication between people is when they perceive: a) verbal and b) non-verbal expressions.

According to ethnologist Konrad Lorenz "aggressiveness is a needed ingredient of life, without which life as we know it would probably be impossible." Even Zhan F. Liotard thinks that the process of communication is a power struggle and that parties participating in producing it use it as a power struggle and each plays to win. Regardless of the difficulties one faces in defining what a good gender communication is, we can still discern several general features:

- The good partner in communication does not have a fixed way of communication, but a broad spectrum of methods from which he/she is able to choose the one that best fits a given time and space.
- The partner who is a good communicator should be able to perfform his/her communication well. For instance, he / she should be able to not only use the language of words, but also the body language for a more efficient communication.
- The partner who is a good communicator should be empathic. Being empathic means to have the ability to see things from the perspective of the other person. This allows one to understand reasons, motivations, intensity, and limitations of communication with the other person.
- The partner who is a good communicator must analyse the position and the potential reaction of the other person. Bad communicators usually disregard these aspects.
- The partner – good communicator – should be able to observe oneself in the course of communication, in order to improve his communication through reflection.

Therefore, man as a social being, living in a complex environment, has to adapt to the surrounding in the best way possible. In these conditions, partners feel the need for an appropriate communication.

Gender communication and integration

In the process of European integration, an integration of partners towards an improved, modern and European communication with mutual respect of partners is inevitable. This because development of the society leads to the development of families, relations between couples, and to development of women regardless of patriarchal traditions.

- Integration in a European society is inevitable for relations between couples, and for the Albanian woman both in Albania and in Kosovo.
- Education facilitates changes in the social status, whereas integration takes place through changed social status of women.
- Integration requires a European communication, which also requires a modern communication between people, and between couples, in particular.

In order to build a modern gender communication, the following is needed:

- **Prevention of conflicts with partners**

Opportunities for action: Encouraging communication, accurate observation, talking with the other, clarification of initial indications. For this purpose, it is needed to:

- Strengthen the feeling of self-esteem, offer opportunities for development and for opening up, engage in respect of rules, and get used to living with problems.

- **The phase of outbreak:** In cases when we fail to prevent the conflict and are already in the phase of open conflict with the partner, then the following action is possible: discussing, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, court proceeding, conflict mitigation, elaboration of conflict, compensation of interests, possible intervention of third parties, etc.

For this purpose, the following is needed:

Readiness for peaceful conflict resolution, separating persons from things, get external help in the right time.

The explanation phase:

Possible action: negotiation of compromise, finding a solution, allowing further cohabitation, reconciliation, setting out rules and a new start.

For this, the following is needed:

- To take on responsibility, to apologise, to compensate, etc.
- Successful gender communication – sound relation in a couple

Mutual respect that implies acceptance of the partner's values, as well as efforts to meet one's needs without violating other people's needs are several basic

elements that should be applied in relations of couples.

Thus, in order to prevent submission of women by men, husbands should try to meet their needs without treading on women's needs.

Since the Albanian society is moving towards integration into European societies, it is realistic to expect that relations between couples will also be Europeanised as part and parcel of this society and this process.

Brief note on the author
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She graduated from Philosophy and Social Work in the University of Tirana. After her university studies, she attended a post-graduate one year specialization in social work in Norway. She completed a second level master degree on the thesis: "Understanding based on the act of speech" and is currently involved as head of the research and teaching group of philosophy and head of Department of Philosophy - Sociology.

Marcie HUTCHINSON

Jane Addams: Democracy in Action

Introduction

Democracy is a political system where government derives its powers from the consent of the people. It is often characterized by mass participation, the belief that each citizen has civic responsibility. Democracies operate under the concept of majority rule determined by free and fair elections. Essential democratic principles hold that all persons are born with equal rights and that the government must protect those rights. However, as a nineteenth century American woman, Jane Addams did not have the legal right to vote. A government that did not permit her to vote governed her. Society expected her to become a devoted wife and mother upon adulthood. As an educated woman she could choose between the traditional female professions of teaching, library work, or nursing. Despite her lack of voting rights and limited opportunities, Jane Addams believed in democracy and practiced civic activism becoming one of the most prominent community organizers in American history. This activism would demand her idealism, intelligence, collegiality and diligence. Jane Addams rose above the restraints imposed upon her sex. From her we can learn one of the great lessons in the history of democracy, the possibility of change. She is a role model for activists around the world, yesterday and today.

A Path to Activism

Jane Addams was born in 1860 to a large, wealthy family in Cedarville, Illinois. Jane suffered from a congenital spinal defect throughout childhood and as a young adult. As a result of her mother's death in childbirth when Jane was two years old, she became devoted to her father, John H. Addams. He was a prosperous miller and banker who became a founder of the Republican Party and an early supporter of Abraham Lincoln.   Active in the Quaker church, this sixteen-year veteran of the Illinois State Senate taught Jane the value of education, philanthropy and a strong work ethic.

John H. Addams also sat on the board of the Rockford Female Seminary that was established to instill Christian values of "duty, responsibility, and helpfulness to others," as well as the societal values of what American historian Barbara Welter has termed "The Cult of True Womanhood: " piety, purity, domesticity and submissiveness. However, many of the seminaries such as Rockford offered a liberal education based in the classics, determined to give daughters an equal education to that of sons while training them in domestic skills and manners. Jane started attending the school in 1877 and flourished in its intellectual environment. At Rockford she met other like-minded, highly educated, energetic women such as Ellen Gates Starr and Julia Lathrop who would remain life-long friends. Jane, who was the president and valedictorian of her class stated upon graduation in 1881, "We stand today united in a belief in beauty, genius and courage, and that these expressed through truest womanhood can yet transform the world" (Baldwin 23). Just six weeks after graduation her beloved father died. In 1882 she received her Bachelor of Arts degree, as Rockford had just become a college.   She tried medical school in Philadelphia, had surgery to correct her spine, and went on a shopping trip to Europe. Feeling useless and impotent, Jane Addams sank into depression. Her sense of desperation would be relieved in books.

One book in particular greatly impacted Jane's life. Tolstoy's *Then What Must We Do?* exposed the widespread problems of poverty and encouraged social action. Tolstoy's message was based in Christ's teachings. "And the multitudes came to Him, saying what then must we do? And He answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise" (Luke 3: 10-11).   According to Tolstoy, one could ignore the plight of fellow human beings or work diligently to alleviate their suffering. Jane strongly felt the call to serve the poor. By the winter of 1887, her health was good and she had an inheritance of $3,000 a year. She arranged a second trip to Europe with Rockford friend Ellen Gates Starr and her teacher Sarah Anderson.

While in London, the women were encouraged by the former rector of St. Mary's Church, William Fremantle, to visit Toynbee Hall Settlement.   Toynbee Hall,

named for the British social reformer and political economist Arnold Toynbee, had been founded in 1884 and was flourishing under the direction of Fremantle's follower, Canon Samuel Augustus Barnett and his wife, Henrietta.   Toynbee was a community of resident male reformers who settled in the area of London's poverty-stricken East End to help their neighbors. These men, who paid for their own accommodations, engaged in relief work and designed educational and recreational activities while living among the people. Toynbee Hall had a gymnasium, lecture hall, library, and dining facility. In Toynbee Hall, Jane Addams found a reform community model, the settlement house, that she could transport to Chicago. As she stated in her book, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, "I had confidence that although life itself might contain many difficulties, the period of mere passive receptivity had come to an end, and I had at last finished with the everlasting 'preparation for life' however ill-prepared I might be" (74).

Chicago

By 1890, one-third of all Americans lived in cities. America's cities grew at twice the rate of the nation's population.   This population explosion was due largely to industrial expansion. Ninety percent of all American manufacturing occurred in the nation's cities. Chicago, a transportation hub, had grown to become America's second-largest city with one million inhabitants; forty-one per cent of them foreign-born.   The immigrants came from Russia, Poland, Italy, Greece, and Ireland to labor in Chicago's lumber mills, garment factories and meatpacking plants. Workers experienced job insecurity, long hours, low pay and industrial accidents. They lived with their families in crowded tenements in impoverished ethnic neighborhoods with serious environmental problems: air pollution, filthy water sources, and garbage.

With the use of the newly discovered social sciences, Jane Addams employed a systematic process to confront the problems of an industrial city such as Chicago. Problems would be thoroughly investigated through observation and the collection of empirical evidence. Theories were developed and solutions created. Living among the people in one of Chicago's immigrant neighborhoods would provide the opportunity to use this systematic process. Her connections to prominent Chicago families expedited the search for a suitable site. To engage in this type of relief work, the community of women reformers had to be learned, idealistic and dedicated individuals.   Using her inheritance, Addams rented Hull House in 1889 on Chicago's Near West Side creating one of the nation's first settlement houses.

The women who would join her in this effort would be college educated, middle class women who had few options to use their intellect and creative energies in American society. These women were eager to employ their talents to reform society building upon the tradition of women reformers of antebellum America. Like the men of Toynbee Hall, they would live as a community at Hull House observing, serving, and creating programs that would benefit the poor. As Ellen Gates Starr said of these women, "Nobody ever shows them a place and says, 'Here do this.' I *know* what girls want to *do*. I have talked with enough of them, poor little things! They are sick and tired of society simply because it's a man's recreation, but it's a woman's business" (Baldwin 128). Hull House and its immigrant neighbors would be Jane Addams's "business" for the next 46 years.

Actions

One of the reasons Addams picked Chicago for the site of her settlement house was because the city was home to many reformers. Consequently, she set about making connections with members of the clergy, like-minded business or civic leaders and well-educated wealthy women as a network in support of Hull House activities. Hull House reformers were determined to fight ethnic isolation in the immigrant population. As a settlement house, Hull House's reform community was engaged in the political and cultural lives of the immigrant community. Ethnic groups were encouraged to celebrate the gifts of their traditional cultures. All cultures were honored in recreational and cultural activities such as dances, crafts, music performances, and theatre productions created by the immigrants. Addams said of the immigrants, "Perhaps the greatest value of the Settlement to them was in placing large and pleasant rooms with musical facilities at their disposal, and in reviving their almost forgotten enthusiasms" (171). The settlement house residents applied their intellect and launched exhaustive investigations of child labor, infant and maternal mortality, sweatshops, and industrial disease. They created innovative educational programs such as a night school providing classes in English, Italian, geometry, physics and chemistry. A lending library was opened. Citizenship and nutrition classes were offered. Immigrant women, many of them peasants from rural areas of southern and eastern Europe, were taught urban cooking and shopping techniques. Sanitation was a critical issue that had to be addressed. Addams stated, "We had also arranged many talks for the immigrants, pointing out that although a woman may sweep her own doorway in her native village and allow the refuse to innocently decay in the open air and sunshine, in a crowded

city quarter if the garbage is not properly collected and destroyed, a tenement-house mother may see her children sicken and die, and that the immigrants must therefore not only keep their own houses clean, but must also help the authorities to keep the city clean" (202).   A gymnasium, auditorium, coffee house, dining hall, children's building and club houses were opened within fifteen years to accommodate Hull House's many programs. As Addams reflected in *Twenty Years at Hull House*, "Perhaps even in those days we made a beginning toward that object which was afterward stated in our charter: 'To provide a center for a higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises, and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago'" (89).

The following list illustrates the professionalism and dedication of the women of Hull House to this mission:
- First public playground, gymnasium, swimming pool, public baths and free art exhibits in Chicago,
- First little theatre in the United States,
- First citizenship preparation classes,
- Investigations for the first time in Chicago of: truancy, sanitation, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, distribution of cocaine, midwifery, children's reading, infant mortality, newsboys, the social value of the saloon,
- Investigations that led to creation and enactment of the first factory laws in Illinois, and the first model tenement code.

Many of these achievements can be attributed to Jane Addams's outstanding colleagues at Hull House. Alice Hamilton, a graduate of the University of Michigan's medical department, established medical education classes and well-baby clinics at Hull House. Hamilton published her autobiography *Exploring the Dangerous Trades* in 1945 detailing her work investigating industrial health conditions. Hamilton became the first woman professor at Harvard Medical School and is considered the founder of occupational medicine. Florence Kelley, inspired by her education at Cornell University and the University of Zurich, was dedicated to economic and social justice. She spent her career protecting women and children from exploitation and was responsible for the passage of child labor laws in Illinois after publishing an extensive report detailing the conditions of sweatshop labor. She founded the National Consumers League dedicated to establishing a minimum wage and limiting the working hours of women and children. She also lectured at college campuses inspiring a new generation of reformers. Ellen Gates Starr, was very active in the campaign to reform child labor and industrial conditions. She lectured on history and art and established a bookbindery at Hull House. She established the first painting loan program in the city of Chicago. As a mem-

ber of the Women's Trade Union League, Starr supported and helped organize the garment workers strikes of 1910 and 1915. Julia Lathrop, another Rockford schoolmate who graduated from Vassar, inspected institutions such as poorhouses, orphanages, shelters and mental health facilities. She established the first juvenile court in the United States and was appointed by President Taft as the head of the Children's Bureau in 1912.

Democracy and Social Ethics

The University of Chicago founded the first Department of Sociology in the United States in 1892. The department chairman, Albion Small, a frequent visitor to Hull House, founded the *American Journal* to publicize developments in the new discipline. Addams wrote articles for the publication and was approached to become a member of the faculty. While declining the position for fear of losing her independence, Addams did agree to give twelve lectures called "Democracy and Social Ethics." The lectures while featuring sociological concepts were based in the real experiences of the reformers' work at Hull House and in Chicago. The lecture topics included: interdependence, social engagement, education, trade unions, child labor, and feminist issues. In 1902, these lectures and many other articles she published would become the basis of her book *Democracy and Social Ethics*. A major theme of the book was based on having observed many societal relationships. Having witnessed the tensions between Hull House reformer and immigrants, large factory owner and the factory workers, and employers and servants, Addams reflected on the sources of conflict between citizens. However, she strongly believed the social obligations of democracy could provide the means to social cohesion. Democracy must be built on mutual benefit. As Jane Addams said in the book, " . . . the individual struggle for life may widen into a struggle for the lives of all" (269). According to Addams, the possibility of change could and should be based in democracy due to citizens' obligations to each other. She said in the last chapter, "We continually forget that the sphere of morals is the sphere of action, that speculation with regard to morality is but observation and must remain in the sphere of intellectual comment, that a situation does not really become moral until we are confronted with the question of what shall be done in a concrete case, and we are obliged to act upon our theory" (273). The promise of any democracy is equality. Jane Addams with her deeds and now words in *Democracy and Social Ethics* would inspire reformers across America to live up to its creed as stated in the Declaration of Independence "that all men are created equal; that they are

endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Impacts

Jane Addams's lectures, articles, books and the Hull House model emboldened activists. By 1910, there were 400 settlement houses in the United States, half of them started by women. Many visitors came to Hull House each week. They observed, gathered data and then went on to push for reform. One such visitor was Upton Sinclair, who wrote the muckraking novel *The Jungle* after Hull House reformers showed him how to collect information on the filthy and desperate living and working conditions of immigrant laborers in the meatpacking plants of Chicago. This novel was directly responsible for the passage of federal laws such as the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act in 1906. John Dewey, the leading spokesperson of the influential Progressive school movement in the United States, observed the variety of educational methods employed at Hull House and advocated the development of a "creative intelligence" in students that could be utilized in reforming society. Dewey believed democracy depended not only the right to vote, but an informed electorate as well.   Frances Perkins, the first woman cabinet member, appointed as Secretary of Labor by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, considered Hull House labor activist Florence Kelley her inspiration and most important mentor. "To the very last of my ability I shall try to do what you expect of me, and partly I shall try because it is you who is expecting so much. Your demand for good work and results has always been an inspiration, quite as much of an inspiration, I think, as your continual stream of new ideas" (Downey 116). Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins authored the Social Security Act of 1935 that provided for old-age pensions and unemployment insurance. Perkins was also the person most responsible for the passage in 1938 of the Fair Labor and Standards Act that mandated a 40-hour workweek, established a minimum wage and abolished child labor. These activists felt responsible to the legacy of the Hull House women and were agents of change in their own way.

Hull House also gave birth to a number of civil rights organizations. Jane Addams was a founding member in 1909 of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) that continues to overcome the legal and economic barriers to equal opportunity. She was the vice-president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association that led the effort for the passage of the woman suffrage amendment to the Constitution in 1920. In 1920 she also helped

create the American Civil Liberties Union, which still provides assistance in cases where civil liberties are threatened, and lobbies Congress and state legislatures on civil liberties issues. This organization of political activists boasts half a million members today. In 1915 Jane Addams was the chairperson of the Women's Peace Party in the United States. A pacifist, Addams wrote books and lectured in favor of peace during World War I, and was especially opposed to America's entrance in the war. She attended the International Women's Congress in 1915 and was elected the president of the newly formed Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, a position she held until 1929. After the war she spoke in favor of the League of Nations and helped Herbert Hoover in the humanitarian food relief efforts in Europe.

Jane Addams checked into a Baltimore hospital with a heart condition on December 10, 1931. That same day she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the first woman to receive the honor. A committee member, Halvdan Koht, said in his presentation speech, "Little by little, through no attempt to draw attention by her work but simply through the patient self-sacrifice and quiet ardor which she devoted to it, she won an eminent place in the love and esteem of her people. She became the leading woman in the nation, one might almost say its leading citizen. Consequently, the fact that she took a stand for the ideal of peace was of special significance; since millions of men and women looked up to her, she could give a new strength to that ideal among the American people." Jane Addams died in 1935; her funeral service conducted in the courtyard of Hull House, and was buried in her hometown of Cedarville, Illinois.

Jane Addams still is a force for change among the American people. Her words and work empower activists today. Consider her legacy in this speech delivered by President Barack Obama, himself a former Chicago community organizer, at the graduation ceremony at Arizona State University on May 13, 2009.

Each of them, at one point in their life, didn't have any title or much status to speak of. But they had a passion, a commitment to following that passion wherever it would lead, and to working hard every step along the way.

And that's not just how you'll ensure that your own life is well-lived. It's how you'll make a difference in the life of this nation. I talked earlier about the selfishness and irresponsibility on Wall Street and Washington that rippled out and led to the problems we face today. I talked about the focus on outward markers of success that can lead us astray.

But here's the thing, graduates: it works the other way around too. Acts of sacrifice and decency without regard to what's in it for you - those also create ripple effects - ones that lift up families and communities; that spread opportunity and boost our economy; that reach folks in the forgotten corners of the world who, in committed young people like you, see the true face of America: our strength, our goodness, the enduring power of our ideals.

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Brief note on the author
Marcie Hutchinson

Marcie Hutchinson is a history education consultant to the History Department at Arizona State University. She has thirty-one years experience teaching American and European history in Norwich, New York and Mesa, Arizona. She also sponsored Model United Nations at the Mesa schools. This year she worked in Kosovo on the Future Voters project, writing the lessons that were used by primary and high school civics teachers in Prishtina and Gjilan this fall. She was also an Arizona participant in a citizens exchange project, "Faith Communities and Civil Societies," which visited Kosovar and Macedonian religious communities in May of 2009. Both projects were developed by Arizona State University and funded by the U.S. State Department. She is married to Mike Hutchinson, the former city manager of Mesa. Their daughters Erin and Mary Beth are both history majors at Arizona State. Marcie received her Masters Degree in History from Arizona State University.

Milva EKONOMI

What does the phenomenon of divorce represent nowadays?

The number of divorces is on a general rising trend today. What does this tendency tell? Weakening of family ties, or a crisis of marital relations? A decline of the social status of marriage and family perhaps? The Albanian family is too threatened not only by traditional factors such as death, sickness, physical impairments, various calamities, poverty, etc., but also by deviant behaviour, conflicts, violence, intoxication, drug abuse, adultery, desertion, sexually transmitted diseases, homosexuality, prostitution, etc.

Dynamics and rhythm of divorces are indicators also of changes in all other elements in the society, in general, and in the family, in particular. Divorce is one of the key issues of social sciences, and especially of sociology and psychology.

Marriage and its change over the years

Marriage is a social, religious, spiritual, or legal union of two individuals that leads to creation of family bonds. This communion can also be called marriage, or matrimonial relation, whereas the ceremony marking its beginning is usually called marriage. Marriage is an institution through which state and religious authorities, sometimes both at the same time, recognise interpersonal (intimate and sexual) relations. Marriages are often seen as a contract. Civil marriage is the legal concept

of marriage established as a state institution in line with the legislation providing for marriages. Once accepted by the state, the religion practices by partners, or by the society in general, the act of marriage changes the personal and social status of individuals entering the wedlock.

People get married for various reasons. The most common reasons include: legal, social and economic sustainability, setting up a family, getting children, educating and raising them, legalization of sexual relations, public avowal of love, or obtaining of citizenship.

Marriage can take on various forms: for instance, a union between a man and a woman as husband and wife in a monogamous heterosexual marriage; polygamy – in which a person marries more than one spouse – and which is common in several societies. Some states and religions have legalized marriages between persons of the same sex.

Anthropologists have documented various practices of marriages in different cultures. The three volumes of the "History of human marriage" (1921) by Edward Westermarck define marriage as a "relatively strong bond between a man and a woman, which lasts beyond the mere reproduction act until the birth of the descendant." Whereas, the anthropologic manual "Notes and Questions" (1951) defines marriage as "a union between a man and a woman so that the woman's offspring are legitimized by both parents."

Edmund Leach has proven that the same definition of marriage cannot apply in the same way to all cultures. He provided a list of ten rights related to marriage, from sexual monopoly to the rights related to children, with specific rights depending of given cultures.

The more modern the Albanian society gets, the more marriage will become a challenging social institution for both individuals and the society. Apparently, in spite of its consistency and typological sustainability marriage maintains as a classical social relation of a bonded pair, it still cannot escape its 'sanctity', that is the necessity of 'reformation' of some of its substantial elements. Of course, in the context of current social changes of marriage, and in order to assess its present and its future, it is important to be able to distinguish the direction of change, "unchanged" and "the changing," as well as the extent of change. All these indicators of change are directed against the "old typology." This is a broad, massive, and universal social process taking different shape in all modern societies.

Swift, even radical changes are also taking place in our society, where there are apparent indicators of pressure calling for significant changes in form and content of the marriage. In this context, and in spite of the conservative and patriarchal nature of our society, it seems that marriage in modern times is not any more the former institution standing on a solid structure of social bonds between the couple, taking a conservative and obstinate attitude against modern patterns of marriage

and the against universal changes of the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Marriage, as one of the strongest and most intimate relations of a human couple, in spite of its organic functions as a bond, a relation, and as a structure, is undergoing change, which in my view, are becoming deeper and more shocking day by day. We are not dealing any longer with that typology of marriage or closed in family structure that built around the couple, their children and its other members and performed mainly basic economic, sexual, social functions determined by husband and wife relations. The stable monogamist nature was its most apparent, essential, and substantial feature. Marriage was in some way an institution of "moral security" which warranted the right to privacy of relations towards its other members; this was the only institution, mode, or typology of our society in the past that gave the opportunity and alternative to involve and engage in regular, systematic and normal sexual relations. All other forms of sexual intercourse were prohibited, banned, immoral and liable to punishment in all possible ways, depending on the level of development of our society. What features are manifested by marriage as an evolving institution, or more accurately going through a normal phase of transition?

Firstly, we are witnessing a reduced role of marriage as a "structure of social existence." Now when work and money have become available for all members of the family, there is diminished role of the marriage as a uniting institution to provide existence for its members.

Secondly, marriage has lost its nature of a stable relation, as a holy and permanent bond between two persons. It is already showing to be one of the fragile and unstable social institutions, irreparable damaged by recurrent conflicts, violence, and divorce as the most frequent and a "counter-typology" of marriage. Regardless of the numerous causes, and regardless of the socially accepted view of the divorce as a right and expression of human freedom, it has become a huge social problem that makes us think of other, deeper reasons stemming from more natural grounds, perhaps a bisexual nature, that has turned divorce into a phenomenon experienced by more than one third of the marriages in Albania.

Marriage cannot seem to be able to hold on to its "sainthood" as a monogamist sexual relation, as a private right of acquiring mutual sexual favours within it. Friendly relations and extramarital relations are becoming so frequent, so that it appears that monogamist sexual relations are an exception and a myth of modern times. In a broader sense, there is an inflation of the reality of "masked marriages" and its double moral standards. Existence of parallel erotic and sexual relations of the couple involved in other "alternative extramarital" relations, which undermine the very nature, essence and substance of marriage as an institution. In a way, erotic and sexual relations, parallel to marriage, are mentally and subconsciously motivated as attempts to avoid the sexual monotony and vanity of marriage, to

alleviate the growing distance and loss of sexual interest for the partner, and to eliminate the weakening of spiritual motivation and cohesion of the couple.

Marriage is in this respect vitally threatened, since its very core of existence has been marred, and the very privacy of intimate relations threatened - which was and remains a unique characteristic of the institution of marriage. All other functions of the marriage (such as the existential function) can gain a social nature and can be recuperated by other alternative, even if not better, solutions. However, distorting the erotic function and the closed sexual relations of the couple, is one of the most substantial problems, which is turning into a real pressure to accept by all means this departure from the "old existential course" and to "process" other alternative ways of existence of "a new kind". This new kind is completely different from the classical model of marriage as a conditioned closed sexual relation between two persons, who engage in keeping afloat the free and voluntary institution of marriage.

Thirdly, the Albanian society is trying to solve the problems faced by the marriage as a relation with certain functions within a couple. The society is trying to "correct" its endemic problems, such as vanity, monotony, and loss of interest not through the classical way of resorting to divorce, but by reforming it both as a typology and a function and by elaborating and accepting new solutions, which elegantly touch on "its most delicate spot" as is the problem of privacy of sexually determined relation. In this context, the society is making efforts of tackling the very essence of marriage but maintaining the external appearance of a monogamist relation. In essence, we can clearly discern attempts to change its "old existential paradigm" by creating opportunities for modern people to accept, legally and socially, new forms of sexual relations internally, externally and parallel to marriage, starting with the model of "living together," which can also be seen as a free, purely sexual relation of the couple, but free of respective social responsibilities of marriage. Found under constant pressure from the society to correct socio-biological defects of marriage and to find other solutions to meet the spontaneous erotic and sexual desires of its members outside of marriage, sociologists have had to recognise that the society is being faced with a new phenomenon and a new typology called "open family", which allows retaining of marriage as a social institution performing reduced formal and essential monogamist functions. This typology is a mode of coexistence that accepts living together in a family, but free of the old strict limitations of private sexual relations that was permanently closed to other alternative interferences and extramarital and parallel relations. This form of marriage, which implies a tacit agreement of the couple for the partner to have another relation parallel to the official one, is in fact a "silent consensual solution of the couple" who agree to preserve intact other relations coming as a result of marriage, but remain open to the right to satisfy erotic desired also outside the marriage.

This phenomenon of "open family" is perhaps the most universal phenomenon encountered in the modern society.

Divorce

Divorce or breaking of marriage is the termination of a marriage, suspension of legal marital obligations and responsibilities and breaking of the marital bond between two persons. In many countries, divorce requires the approval of a judge or of another authority in a legal process in order to fully complete a divorce. The divorce does not declare a marriage annulled or cancelled, but it suspends the civil status of the parties allowing them to marry another person.

The legal process of a divorce may involve issues dealing with conjugal support, child custody, child support, distribution of wealth and division of debt, even though these issues are related and come as a result of breaking of marriage.

The topic of divorce as a social phenomenon is an important research topic in sociology. In many underdeveloped countries, divorce rates have increased significantly during the twentieth century. Countries in which divorce is a common issue are the United States of America, Canada and Scandinavian countries. Japan, France, and Italy have a lower rate of divorces with a falling tendency in the recent years.

I. Legislation regulating marriage and divorce in Albania

Looking beyond legal aspects, one can say that marriage is a pledge and a commitment, a continuous exchange between a woman and a man. Terms pledge and commitment are connected with the mutual rights and obligations of the married, whereas the term continuous exchange expresses the fact that marriage produces a continuous interdependence between two married persons.

According to scholar Diane Vaughan (1988), marriage is considered more than a civil contract, whereby two independent individuals coming from different families and genders, join to set out to build a sub-world of their own, in which to live as a couple. From this union of two individuals a new identity is born. This does not mean that the individual is alienated or losses his or her own identity in marriage. In fact marriage creates conditions for a fuller and more complete accom-

plishment of one's personality. Thus, marriage is personality plus identity. Therefore contradiction between these two may be the main contradiction of the marriage, which can also result in its termination.

Breaking of marriage – divorce – also involves a series of other problems: children, wealth, etc. So, divorce is definitely more complicated. It is for this reason that its legal aspects are more striking. Divorce, as a phenomenon, has been historically conditioned by the customary law. In and a situation of complete lack or limited application of the bureaucratic rule of the state, our customary law was the main law in our country. On the other hand, in spite of all efforts for emancipation during the second part of the twentieth century, family and family relations remain among the most affected by the customary law. Until the end of the twenties, marriage and its break up was regulated in harmony with the provisions of the customary law or with heterogeneous religious norms, fragmented as per religious affiliation of the population.

The state bureaucratic law in the field of family relations in Albania, started with the Civil Code of 1929. In this Code, norms providing for marriage, its annulment and termination were built completely based on the French Civil Code and Swiss one of 1907.

After the Second World War, significant changes took place in Albania in the field of family and matrimonial relations. These changes included "The statement on civil rights," (Berat, October, 1944), which marks the first time in the history of Albania when rights of men and women were sanctioned, in all spheres of life, including family rights.

After approval of the Constitution of 1946, and as part of its implementation, the law on "several special provisions on divorce," which aimed to put an end to "terminated" marriages, but which were legally unsettled.

Two years later, in 1948, the Law "On Marriages" was approved. The first Family Code, in the history of Albania, was adopted in 1965, whereas the second one was approved in June 1982.

This Code still continues to serve as a source of family law. Closing and vreaking up of a mariage is regulated by law – the legislation on regulation of divorce in Albania,1 and thereof also the legal status of divorce.

Marriage, as legal cohabitation, is built on moral and legal equality of spouses, on the feeling of love, on mutual respect and understanding, as a basis of unity in the family. Marriage and family enjoy special protection by the state.2 Marriage can be concluded between a man and a woman over the age of 18. The local court where the marriage is closed may, for important reasons, allow for the

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1   Constitution of the Repiblic of Albania, Article 53 pg. 22.
Available at http://www.qpz.gov.al/botime/kusht_kode/Kushtetuta_alb.pdf
2   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, Article 1, pg. 8.
Available at http://www.qpz.gov.al/botime/kusht_kode/Kodi_Familjes.pdf

marriage to take place even before that age.3 The marriage is locked before the civil registrar with the free consent of the two future spouses.4

When the spouses agree to dissolve their marriage, together with the request, they submit to the court a draft agreement that foresees the way in which consequences of the marriage will be dealt with. This petition for divorce can be filed by the spouses or by their respective representatives.5 Each of the spouses may ask for dissolution of the marriage because of terminated cohabitation, after having lived separate lives for a period of three years.6

Division of property

Division of common property may be required in court in cases of disability or maladministration by one of the spouses, when his or her way of administration of common property endangers interests of the other spouse or of the family, or when one of the spouses does not contribute to meet family needs in right proportion with his/her aptitude and working abilities, and when there has been an actual division of common property. Division of property may be requested by one of the spouses or by his/her legal representative. Debtors of one of the spouses can not ask for division of property without the consent of the other party. The court decision for division is effective starting from the day of petition, placing spouses under e regimen of divided matrimonial property, as foreseen by this Code.7

II. Dynamics of divorces – statistics

Number of divorces in the period between 1993 and 2001 fell by 12%. In Albania, in 2007, the average age of marriage for women is 23.3 years, whereas for men it is 29 years. Compared to period 1960 - 1970 there has been an increase by two years in the average age of marriage for both sexes. Among young people of both sexes up to the age of 34, there is an almost equal level of marriages. The situation appears different with the age-group of 34-39, where there are over three

3   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, Article 7: Mosha e lidhjes së martesës, pg. 10.
4   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, Article 8: Pëlqimi i bashkëshortëve, pg. 10.
5   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, II Chapter: Cases of marriage dissolution, Article 125: Mutual consent of spouses, pg. 46.
6   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, II Chapter: Cases of marriage dissolution, Article 129: Dissolution of marriage for termination of cohabitation, pg. 46
7   Law No. 9062, of May 5, 2003, Family Code, Article 98: Dividing of property, pg. 37-38.

times more married men of age over 30 than women of the same age.

The 'older' average age of marriages brings about also more stable families. The indicator of "dissolved marriages" (divorces) in 100 marriages has grown from 9.6 in 2001 to 15 in 2007.

If we compare these indicators with those from other countries we will see that the level of divorces in Albania is still relatively low, because for the sake of children Albanian women put up with an unworthy husband even if they are being maltreated or suffering psychologically all along. The highest level of divorces is encountered with childless couples. Almost 40 % of registered divorces in 2002 happened between couples who had no children. This corresponds with the high flux of men leaving the country and their families during the same period.

III. Costs of divorce

How much does a divorce cost? Most of the people forget to include a number of various factors regarding this issue. This aspect remains to be regarded of a low priority related to supporting two households. When referring to rich people, this factor may not be so important. Surprisingly perhaps, but this factor is not so important even when dealing with very poor people. But when dealing with the middle class, one needs to take financial aspects in consideration before starting procedures of divorce.

Some of the costs of divorce include:

a. Divorce costs related to children
If the couple have children and they have still decided to divorce, they need to take in consideration maintaining two households. At the first stages of divorce, the husband and wife are faced with additional life expenses, which make life difficult if a certain life style wants to be kept going.

b. Post divorce everyday expenses
Some married couples share financial responsibilities, especially when they are both employed. Such married couples in general find it easier to adjust to separate finances. Luckily or unluckily, spouses happen not to be both working or their monthly salaries are not equal. Sharing the same home decreases other expenses, too. Communal services and mortgage are among services that are good to share. This helps increase the living standard and bigger savings for cases of emergency,

holidays, investments and for retirement (pensions fund).

During single life (post-divorce situations or divorce), life expenses increase because everything is taken from 1, which means that only things that are directly paid for are used. It is easier to understand this if we compare this situation with the situation of four sharing the same house. Costs of basic needs are here taken from factor four.

c. Payments for legal representation and other professional payments related to divorce

If one of the spouses provides income for the family, or is the main support-er of the family during married life, then he/she will pay for the legal representation for him/herself and for the spouse; this is so only because he/she is employed and, therefore, is the only one of the two who can afford these payments.

d. Medical and health costs during divorce

The load taken on by the body can not be measured in money terms. Many people loose years of their life as a result of emotional exhaustion caused by di-vorce. Their physical appearance and health wilt with time. These are all costs for chronic illnesses like depression, high blood pressure, and heart diseases which can not be recuperated. Medication and hospitalization for a month are signifi-cantly less expensive.

e.Children's traumas

Taking on responsibility. In general, children do not like divorce. The sub-stance of life changes, and this makes one feel confused and out of control. And, finally, children are not those who make decisions about divorce, it simply happens to them. One way that children experience divorce is by feeling guilty, as if every-thing had happened because of their fault. This may not make sense, but many children in fact believe that had they behaved better, their parents would not have furious, would not have fought one another, etc. When a child feels that he / she is guilty, then at least he/she feels to have some control and can have an influence over things. The feeling of guilt allows the child to avoid blaming parents, which again allows him/her to continue caring about both parents with minimum con-flict.

However, in the long term, blaming oneself is a destructive habit. It can lead to low self-esteem, depression, and chronic problems with behaviour. Parents can help to minimize / limit self-blaming by referring responsibility where it belongs – with the parents.

Why must children loose one parent? For children it is also difficult to adapt

to the logistics of separated parents. Home was in the same place with heart – all in one place. Where is home now? It is bad enough not to know where your bedroom is. But what happens if mom and dad are angry with each other? Who do I love now? Will I hurt feeling of one if I love the other one at the same time?

Children may feel undecided if parents do not help them with these questions. Unfortunately, some parents make things that only aggravate things. One such thing is to say bad things for the former partner before children, forgetting that children identify with and love both parents, not only one of them. Even at school, children react fiercely against any insult against their parent. Think how painful it is when this comes from one parent about the other.

Having in mind that divorce is a stressful time for adults involved in them, it happens that children's needs are frequently ignored. And the more furious and angrier the adults, the higher are risks of harming children during the fights. Thus, one should pay due attention to oneself by taking good food, by having someone to talk to, in order to avoid over confiding to children. Other children can be their friends, whereas parents should retain their genuine role –their parents.

IV. Causes of divorce – why do Albanians divorce?

A basic premise of studies about divorce carried out during the twentieth century was that the level of divorce is higher in countries with lower social integration. Today's theses are focused on determining specific indicators of social integration and the level of their influence on divorce rates. Analyses of these indicators are done for given analytical units, that is analyses for a given population, a region, a group of regions, a whole state, etc.

a. A sociologic and psychological study carried out in Albania[8] has inferred the following causes of divorce in Albania:
b. Differences in character and temper 29.9 %.
c. Husband betraying wife 11.2 %.
d. Wife betraying husband 14.7 %
e. One of the spouses is an alcoholic, drug abuser, addicted to gambling, prostitution, etc. 5.0 %.
f. Huge age difference 1.2 %.
g. Causes related to economic difficulties 7.5 %.
h. Differences in intimate and sexual life 0.7 %.
i. One could not have children 3.2 %.

8   Beqja. H, Sokoli. L, Divorci: *Vrojtime dhe Refleksione*, (Observations and reflections), Dudaj publishers, Rinia 2000.

j.   Conflicts triggered by parents 13.7 %.
k.   Other causes 12.9 %.

ANNEX A – Statistics

Years	Marriages		Divorces	
	Total	For 1000 inhabitants	Total	For 100 marriages
1990	28,992	8.9	2,675	9.2
1991	24,853	7.6	2,236	9.0
1992	26,405	8.3	2,480	9.4
1993	25,963	8.2	2,251	8.7
1994	27,895	8.7	2,108	7.6
1995	26,989	8.3	2,331	8.6
1996	27,690	8.4	1,901	6.9
1997	24,122	7.3	1,430	5.9
1998	27,871	8.3	2,005	7.2
1999	27,254	8.1	2,114	7.8
2000	25,820	7.6	2,168	8.4
2001	25,717	8.4	2,462	9.6
2002	26,202	8.4	3,494	13.3
2003	27,342	8.7	3,634	13.3
2004	20,949	6.5	2,968	14.2
2005	21,795	6.9	3,929	18.0
2006	21,332	6.8	4,075	19.1
2007	22,371	7.0	3,305	14.8

Marriages and divorces for years 1990 - 2007

*)Source: Ministry of Justice

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Souad T. ALI

Women in Islam and Civil Society:

An Overview of the Disparity between Religion and Culture

The main theme of this overview reflects on women's rights in Islam based mainly on the *Quran* as compared to the position of women in contemporary Muslim society. In order to highlight this, the article specifically addresses the discrepancy between aspects of women's rights as delineated in the Quran and Hadith (the two primary and authoritative sources of Islamic legislation) on the one hand, and the actual position of women as culturally and traditionally practiced in some contemporary Muslim societies. The issue of women's rights in Islam has been central to Muslims' lives since the rise of Islam. Beginning with the 19th century there has been a serious debate between scholars addressing Muslim women's issues in general. This is clearly reflected in a thorough literature written by both men and women emphasizing women's rights in the Islamic tradition. During the 19th century, this literature was represented by the works of such Muslim reformists as Imam Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905); as well as such revolutionary figures as Qasim Amin (1865-1908) and Huda Sha'rawi (1879-1914), among others. Currently, such Muslim feminist scholars as Leila Ahmed, Fatima Mernissi, Nimat Barazangi, Asma Barlas, and Amina Wadud are examples of new voices that have been advocating the re-evaluation of the interpretation of the Quran by qualified Muslim

women possessing the scholarly tools to undertake such a task. These and other scholars have reflected on aspects recognized in Islamic history, that Muslim women during the Prophet's time were active participants in the society; they attended mosque and entered into the council of the Prophet Muhammad and argued their cases with respect to issues affecting their lives such as marriage and divorce. This is clearly documented in chapter 58 (She Who Pleads) of *Al-Quran al-Kaim* (the *Holy Quran*) as this article will explain. Nonetheless, today many Muslim women are deprived of this and many other rights that they enjoyed during the early days of the rise of Islam.

Before delving into discussing the disparity between religion and culture with respect to women's issues in Islam, it is important to highlight the fact that this discrepancy is largely blamed on a misinterpretation of Islam, specifically, the *Quran*. Amina Wadud, for example, discusses three categories generally used to interpret women's rights in the Quran: Traditional, Reactive, and Holistic. She argues that Traditional Tafsir or interpretation provides interpretations of the entire Quran, from classical or modern times, with specific objectives in mind: legal, historical, grammatical, rhetorical, or esoteric. However, while Tafsir may be different based on each of these objectives, all objectives share an atomistic methodology. This includes interpreting each Verse of the Quran separately beginning with first and ending with the last. What Wadud sees as problematic of this particular traditional interpretation is that it does not look at the Quran thematically nor does it discuss in detail the relationship between these Quranic Verses. Given that this Tafsir was written exclusively male interpreters, only men's perspective and experiences were taken into consideration to the exclusion of women's experiences and perspective. A major point that Wadud draws the attention to is that the lack of women's voice, in this context, is perceived as voicelnessness reflected in the Quran Text itself.[1]

The second category of Quran interpretation that Wadud discusses is the "Reactive interpretation." This is primarily expressed by some modern scholars, who may be opposed to Islam in general or the Message of the Quran in particular, who use the poor status of women in some Muslim societies as justification for their negative reactions. She maintains that such reactive interpretation also failed to draw a distinction between Text and interpretation. Wadud further argues that although some feminist ideals and rationale might contribute to this reactive interpretation, this can be overcome through demonstrating the link between liberation and the primary source of Islamic theology.[2]

The last category discussed by Wadud is the "Holistic interpretation" that reconsiders the whole method of Quranic exegesis with respect to different social, economic, moral and political concerns, including the issue of women. It is on this

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1   Wadud, Amina. *Quran and Women: Rereading the Sacred From a Woman's Perspective.* Oxford University Press, 1999, 1-2.
2   Ibid, 2.

category of interpretation, which is relatively modern, that Amina Wadud grounds her book.[3]

Against this background of interpretation, and given the broad nature of the topic, this short article addresses three areas (of the numerous areas of divergence) to demonstrate this conflict between religion and tradition within Islam with respect to women's rights. These areas include education, polygamy, and aspects of equality/inequality. It is important however to emphasize that given the nature of this presentation and the limited time, the following is an overview of these three areas rather than a detailed study.

Education

The first area in this conflict between religion and culture is education. One of the most shocking events that took place at the closing of the 20th century occurred when the former Taliban of Afghanistan came to power during the early 1990s. The first action widely documented that radical extremist group did was closing girls' schools throughout Afghanistan and depriving the entire population of women of their legitimate right to education. Although the Taliban example was extreme it is by no means unique. The irony is that those who commit such acts claim that their decision to deprive women of education is based on Islam.

Such claims are easily refuted by numerous examples in the Islamic tradition both from the Quran and Hadith. According to Islamic history, the very first Verse revealed in the Quran was "Read in the name of your Lord who created; created the human being from clots of blood. Read in the name of your most noble Lord who (al-insan) by the pen taught man what he did not know" (Quran 96:1-5). Consistently, and through many other Verses, the Quran emphasizes the importance of knowledge and education. Not only that, but from a gender perspective, one of the earliest educators of Islamic studies was the Prophet's wife 'A'isha who taught both men and women according to the Hadith Narratives, one of which emphasizes that that Prophet advised Muslims to "take half of your religion from that woman," in reference to 'A'ishah. With regard to education and preaching, "the *Quran* makes no distinction between men and women in this regard, and the Prophet Muhammad in a famous *Hadīth* advised his companions to "learn half of your religion from that woman," in reference to his wife 'A'isha who transmitted[4] "some 2,210 *hadīth*" narratives to the "foremost early Muslim traditionists"[5]. Further, Hafsa, the Prophet's wife

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3   Ibid, 3.
4   Ali, Souad T. "Women, Gender and Women Preachers and Preaching: Sudan." *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*. Brill Academic Publishers. Volume 5: 2007, 346-347.
5   Ahmed, Leila (1992), 73.

and daughter of the second Guided Caliph, Umar, was entrusted with the original hand-written copy of the Quran at her father's death bed[6]. One of Hafsa's brother was 'Abdullahi, the son of Omar who was considered among the most pious and devoted Muslims; nonetheless she was entrusted with the Quran before she delivered it to the third Caliph Othman. Other Hadith Narratives emphasizing education include the following: "seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave." "Seek knowledge even in China."

Such a quick look at the example of the Prophet's wives and the emphasis on education irrespective of gender demonstrate an egalitarian behavior at that early age in a surprisingly contemporary manner.

Polygamy

Another area of conflict between religion and tradition or culture in Islam is the way polygamy is practiced in some Muslim societies as opposed to the teaching of the Quran on this issue. The subject matter of *Surat al-Nisa* (Women), the fourth chapter of the Quran, deals with the social problems that the Muslim community had to face immediately after the *Uhud* Battle in the seventh century. The Quranic Verses on polygamy are among the 176 Verses that comprise this *Surat* that distinctly addresses the subject of women, orphans, inheritance, marriage, and family rights. While the particular occasion of the existence of a huge number of widows and captives of war, following the Uhud Battle, made the necessity of restricting the number of wives a man could marry urgent[7], the principles laid down have permanently governed Muslim Law and social practice[8]. It might be significantly important to address the logical progression and the general theological environment that this has laid down as the essence of human life and the relations between the sexes. The first Verse of *Surat* al-Nisa begins as follows:

> O mankind fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul [min nafsin wahidah], created (out of it) its mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women. Fear Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and be Heedful of the Wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you. [9]

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6   Ibid, 74.
7   It is important to mention that the prevalent practice of the day in the misogynous pre-Islamic Arabia, until the revelation of the Verses on polygamy, was that a man could marry an unlimited number of wives as he wished.
8   *The Holy Quran: English Translation of the Meaning and Commentary*, p 204.
9   Quran 4: 1 (Yusuf 'Ali's translation).

According to Islam and other Monotheistic religions, the beginning of the Creation was marked by the creation of Adam and Hawwa (Eve). The word '*wahidah*' (one) in the above Verse is crucial: With this Verse, this chapter, *Surat* opens a whole discussion on women, orphans, and family relationships with all the Laws that govern them. The phenomenon of the monogamous marriage between Adam and Eve invites the assumption that monogamy is the ideal state of marriage according to the Divine *Shari'a* stipulated by *al-Shari'*: God. Such an argument stems from an analysis of the Creation of Adam and Eve and their monogamous marriage. In other words, if God intended polygamy as the ideal state of marriage, He would have created for Adam more than one woman. It follows that, if He created only one wife for Adam, then his intention was that monogamy, not polygamy, is the ideal state of marriage. In his interpretation of the Verse, "if you fear that you shall not deal justly between them [women], then only one," the prominent nineteenth century Egyptian jurist and Islamic reformer, Muhammed Abduh (1849-1905), argues that, "it is forbidden (*yuharram*) for the man who fears injustice [in dealing with multiple wives] to marry more than one"[10].

It is interesting and equally important to notice that the Verse on polygamy comes third in *Surat* al-Nisa. Another interesting point that has been largely overlooked by almost all translators of the Quran is the grammatical use of *waw al-'atf* (the Arabic conjunction 'and') that links the second and third Verses of *Surat* al-Nisa to the first. In Arabic grammar, *waw al-'tf* (this conjunction 'and') always signifies that what follows it must be *ma'tuf* back to what precedes it. Thus, before polygamy was introduced many options were laid down to protect the orphans. Yet, only if these were impossible to meet or achieve, the conditioned-polygamy option was mentioned. This becomes quite clear when we read the second and third Verses that continue discussing the issue of the orphans that was introduced in the first Verse:

> [And] To the orphans restore their property ([until] they reach their age). And substitute [Not] (your) worthless things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by mixing it up) with your own. For this is indeed a great sin.[11]

Only then, the third option of polygamy was introduced:

> [And] If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly

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10   Abduh, Muhammad, *Tafsir al-Manar*. Cairo, 1325 Hijri, Vol. I, p. 350.
11   Quran: 4: 2.

(with them), then only one… that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice.[12]

But even this third verse was not thrown in a vacuum. Every Quranic revelation is associated with (*asbab al-Nuzul*: the reason behind revelation). In the context of this specific *Ayah*, the immediate occasion for the promulgation of this Verse (3) was the aftermath of the *Uhud* Battle in the seventh century, when the Muslim community was left with many orphans, widows, and some captives of war. The treatment of those orphans, as Yusuf 'Ali explains, "was to be governed by principles of the greatest humanity and equity. The occasion is past, but the principles remain. Marry the orphans if you are quite sure that you will in that way protect their interests and their property, with perfect justice to them and to your own dependents if you have any. If not, make other arrangements for the orphans."[13] But it is important to mention here that this was when the unrestricted number of wives of the *Jahiliyyah* (the Age of Ignorance) in pre-Islamic Arabia was strictly limited, through this verse, to a maximum of four with the firm condition that they must be treated equally. Notwithstanding that polygamy was made permissible with the greatest reluctance, a clear statement intended to discourage the practice was added. This statement claims that in a polygamous family situation, it is absolutely impossible to be fair and just to all, even if one ardently desires to be so.[14]

According to Tafsir al-Tabari (one of the most prominent and respected Muslim historians and religious scholars of the 9th century) (838-932), the Quran's reference, "if you fear that you can not deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, three or fours" "*Wa-in khiftum alla tuqsitoo fi alyatama fainkihoo ma taba lakum mina al-nisa*, the order of *nikah* (zawaaj: marriage) here in His saying (*fainkahoo*) is not an order by way of requirement or obligation (*laisa amran 'ala sabil alwujub wal ilzam*), but it is an order by way of *ta'dib* (discipline), *Irshad* (guiding), and *i'lam* (informing). As you feared not do justice to the orphans, fear *jam' al-Nisa* [the combining of women]."[15]

A close reading of the above-mentioned Quranic Verses, particularly in light of Tabari's tafsir, clarifies that the permission to marry more than one wife is not the original intention of the Quran. Many points in evidence can be drawn to support this claim. First, polygamy had already been in place heavily practiced in the pre-Islamic era by the Arabs, Jews and others[16]. Thus, rather than *tahlil* (making the practice permissible), the Quran in fact has restricted the open-ended number of wives a man could marry with a clear discouragement pronounced in Verse 129

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12   Quran: 4:3.
13   The Holy Quran: English Translation of the Meaning and Commentary, p 206.
14   Ali, Souad T. "Postcolonialism and Emergence of African Feminism: An Islamic Perspective." Masters Thesis. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1994.
15   Tafsir al-Tabari Vol. IV, pp. 231-234. Original was in Arabic, English translation mine
16   The Bible, Torah, and Talmud attest to that.

of *Surat* al-Nisa that: "you are never able to do justice between wives if it is your ardent desire."

The second evidence is that, whenever polygamy is mentioned in the Quran it is always within the context of or in association with the issue of the orphans. In this sense, there is not one single Verse in the Quran that discusses polygamy in isolation of this issue as in Verse 3 of *Surat* al-Nisa mentioned-above in which marrying more than one wife was only a clause that is conditioned by a significant 'if,' as the Scripture goes: "If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one." Not only that, but Verse 129 states clearly that, "you are never able to do justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire." (Quran 4:129). Hence, Imam Muhammad 'Abduh's Fatwa (of prohibiting polygamy) based on the Quran's clear emphasis on the impossibility of justice in dealing with more than one wife.

Thirdly, the *ibahah* (the decreeing of something permissible or an obligation), according to the style of the Quran, has usually been made through such expressions as: *kutiba 'alikum* (it is decreed upon you); or *la junaha 'alaikum* (there is no sin in your doing); or *wa uhilla lakum* (it is made permissible for you), in addition to other Quranic formats signifying *ibahah*.

However, none of these expressions is used in the Quran in relation to the already prevalent practice of polygamy. Given this analysis, a close reading of the above Verses, within the context of the prevalent norms of the day, signifies that contrary to widely held interpretations of the Quran, in fact, it was the orphans, not polygamy, that was the Quran's main concern.

Finally, the Quran clearly warns those who oppress and subjugate women:

> O, you who believe. You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dowry you have given them except when they have become guilty of open lewdness. On the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you take a dislike to them, it may be that you dislike something and Allah will bring about through it a great deal of good. (Quran, 4:19)

The above is yet another good example of the clear discrepancy between what the Quran actually states and the different forms of interpretation or misinterpretation rather. Unfortunately, the consequences have largely and negatively affected, and continue to affect women's lives in many different Muslim societies today.

Equality in General Terms

Examining the cultural practices of inequality between men and women in different Muslim societies within the context of this disparity, one can easily see, for example, a very clear representation of gender inequalities in the human, political, and social fields. The argument that has always been projected by the religious elite in Muslim societies to justify this inequality focuses on what they refer to as *khosoosiyya*, 'the private or special social status' of women that they claim should be confined to their biological function of child-bearing, nurturing, and house-keeping, etc. Thus, comes the second justification that women should not be sub-jected to situations that might lead to any kind of unacceptable practice. Hence emerges the importance of segregation between the sexes and the deprivation of those rights in this group's perspective.

Conversely, the Quran emphasizes and repeatedly speaks of equality be-tween men and women in many Ayahs (Verses) as it equally addresses both men and women mostly using such phrases as: "Oh believers," (ya Ayyoha al-Mu'minun); "Oh humankind" (ya Ayyouha a-nnass), in equal terms with no gender specifica-tion. Although the Verses on equality are numerous in the Quran, the following are only a few examples in illustration:

For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. (Quran, 33:35)

"O humankind fear your Lord, who created you from a sin-gle soul [min nafsin wahidah], created (out of it) its mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women." (Quran 4:1)

Other examples from the Quran include the following:

"Their Lord responded to them: 'I never fail to reward any worker among you for any work you do, be you male or female, you are equal to one another." (Quran 4:195).

"Enter into Paradise, you and your wives, with delight." (43:70)

"Who so does that which is right, and believes, whether male or female, him or her will We quicken to happy life." (16:97)

An additional notable example of how the Quran deals equally with men and women is reflected in the story of Adam and Eve. According to Quranic Scriptures, both Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were thus equally responsible for their sin; they were both expelled out of Heaven and were both forgiven equally (Quran 2:35-36).

Not only does the Quran speak of equality between men and women in reward but also in punishment for such offenses as theft, adultery, among others. Many Verses from the Quran give excellent illustrations of this equality in punishment including the following: (24:2; and 5:38)).

Another powerful example in the Quran of not only gender equality, but also of women's prominence is reflected in a whole Quranic Sura or chapter titled, (*She Who Pleads*). This remarkable whole Sura in the Quran [Chapter 58 [al-Mujadilah] was revealed and dedicated to alleviating a woman's indignation of her husband's injustices, and thus issuing a Divine Verdict that abolished a sacrilegious misogynous social custom (zihar) that Islam had inherited from the pre-Islamic era: "Allah has heard and accepted the statement of the woman who pleads with you (the Prophet) concerning her husband and carries her complaint to Allah, and Allah hears the arguments between both of you for Allah hears and sees all things..." (Quran 58:1). Surat 24 Verses 4-6 also give evidence of women's prominence even in testimony and when they are falsely accused by their husbands as in the following example:

> And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegation), flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their evidence ever after: for such men are wicked transgressors. Except those who repent thereafter and mend (their conduct); for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful (Quran 24:4-5).[17]

Similarly, the Hadith of the Prophet practice is identical to what the Quran preaches on equality, evidenced by the many stories of Muslim women working side by side with men in almost all fields of life including serving in the ranks of warriors during war time. For a documentation of this see Leila Ahmed's *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*.[18]

Abu Hurairah reported that a man came to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and asked: "O Messenger of Allah, who is the person who deserves my companionship and kindness the most." The Prophet replied, "Your mother." The man continued ask repeatedly: "Then who?" He replied, "Your mother." "Then who?" He replied, "Your mother." "Then who?," only on the fourth time the Prophet replied, "Your father." The Prophet is also quoted as saying: "The more civil and kind a Muslim is to his wife, the more perfect in faith he is." In another Hadith report, the Prophet is also quoted as saying: "Women are the twin halves of men." This further confirms what the Quran emphasizes with regard to the essential unity of men and women

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17   Furthermore, in the case of a husband falsely slandering and accusing his wife of adultery, according to verses 6-9 of the same *Surat al-Nur*, a woman's oath by which she defends her self against her husband's accusation of adultery 'shall avert the punishment from her;' in other words, her words shall weigh heavier than his: "*And it shall avert the punishment from her if she bear witness before Allah four times that what he said is indeed false.*"

18   Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of A Modern Debate*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, 72-73; 46.

in the following Verse: "They (your wives) are your garment and you are a garment for them. (2:187). A whole body of scholarship is available on Hadith on women; for a thorough examination this particular aspect of this discussion, see Mohammad Ali Syed, *The Position of Women in Islam: A Progressive View* (SUNY 2004) as an example.

Based on the above, it becomes clear that from both primary sources of Islam: the Quran and Hadith, the recent conflict in Muslim societies between religion and tradition with regard to equality is a typical form of gender stratification in our current societies in which the male religious elite tries to legitimize their own misinterpretation of Islam. As Fatima Mernissi has argued, "if women's rights are a problem for some modern Muslim men, it is neither because of the Quran nor the Prophet's tradition but simply because these rights conflict with the interests of a male elite."[19]

Conclusion

Given the above, the main question that forces itself here is that: if this is what Islam preaches, why does this conflict exist between religion and tradition/culture in current Muslim societies? The answer to this question might be sought within social scientific interpretation rather than religious interpretation. Many Muslim societies have been experiencing gender stratification that relegates a lower status to women in all human, political and social aspects of life. Such stratification appears to be an accumulation of a number of developments. Chief among these are the following:

(1) A colonial experience that emphasized certain patterns of economic life that gives primacy to the male. Accordingly, the concept of division of labor changed significantly where the female role was confined to reproduction, the raising children and household work. (2) The postcolonial state condoned those new structures in the society. (3) Eventually, it became very important to maintain this situation to find some kind of legitimacy that went beyond any mundane explanation. Accordingly, some among the religious elite were quite selective in choosing certain events related to the Quran, re-inventing them, and popularizing them to legitimize the political and economic agenda of their own power elite.

The culture war that began in different parts of the Islamic world, including the Middle East, in the early 20th century has been taking different shapes through time, and it is obviously not over. The current debate within women's movements

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19   Mernissi, Fatima, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam,* trans. Mary Jo Lakeland (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991), ix.

also constitutes only one part of a long emancipating and liberating process. As mentioned earlier, since the 19th century, issues of modernity and authenticity, or religion and tradition have been at the center of debate in Muslim societies around the world. On the one hand, the history of early Islam speaks of a tradition that improved the status of women significantly and elevated their position in an unprecedented manner given the misogyny of the period immediately preceding the rise of Islam in Arabia where female infanticide was the norm of the day. On the other hand, Muslim women in subsequent centuries have been struggling, in most of their own societies, against many aspects of the oppression that Islam had denounced since the seventh century through Quranic Scriptures that stipulated, in the clearest manner, powerful laws in favor of women. Muslim women scholars believe that the possibility of gender equality already exists in the *Quran* itself. The problems identified by these women, as Elizabeth Fernea has argued, include malpractice and the misinterpretation of a sacred text[20]. As Naila Minai elucidates, in her book, *Women in Islam: Tradition and Transition in the Middle East*, what Islam brought to women is:

A feminist bill of rights [that] filled an urgent need… It was a religion that concerned itself heavily with women's rights, in a surprisingly contemporary manner. A woman was to be educated and allowed to earn and manage her income. She was to be recognized as legal heir to her father's property along with her brother. Her rights in marriage were also clearly spelled out: she was entitled to sexual satisfaction as well as economic support. Nor was divorce to consist any longer of merely throwing the wife out of the house without paying her financial compensation.[21]

As Margot Badran has elucidated in her insightful article, "Feminism and the Quran," "In developing their feminist discourses, women have looked to the Quran as Islam's central and most sacred text, calling attention to its fundamental message of social justice and human equality and to the rights therein granted to women."[22]

It is difficult to do justice to the issue of women's rights in Islam in such a limited space given the broad nature of the topic that can not be fully discussed in such a short article. Alternately, in the previous pages, I have attempted to shed light on the importance of the issue with a few examples to highlight women's rights in Islam as clearly stipulated in the Quran with regard to the three areas discussed: education, polygamy, and equality in general terms. Conversely, I have also shown how women in contemporary Muslim societies have been denied these same rights offered to them by the Quran. In the final analysis, a close look at the Quran clearly shows that, "in nothing does Islam maintain its fitness to be con-

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20   Fernea, Elizabeth W. *In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey*. New York, Doubleday, 1998, 414.
21   Minai, Naila. Women in Islam: Tradition and Transition in the Middle East. NewYork: Seaview Books, 1981, 4.
22   Badran, Margot, "Feminism and the Quran," in *The Encyclopedia of the Quran*, vol. 2, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill N.V., 2002), 199-203.

sidered a modern world religion than in the high position it accords to women. According to the Quranic teachings, men and women are equal before God in all essential aspects[23]," as Imam Muhammad Abduh argued.

Amina Wadud's has suggested that, Qur'anic guidance can be logically and equitably applied to the lives of humankind in whatever era, **if** the Qur'anic interpretation continues to be rendered by each generation in a manner which reflects its whole intent.[24] It remains to be seen whether or not this method is able to demonstrate its adaptability to present and future realities.

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23   Quoted in Soha Abdul-Kader's book, *Egyptian Women in a Changing Society: 1899-1987*. Boulder and London: Lynne Reinner Publisher, 1987, 53.
24   Wadud, 104.

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Brief note on the author
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Dr. Souad T. Ali is Head of Classics and Middle Studies, Professor of Middle East & Islamic Studies in the School of International Letters and Cultures at Arizona State University. She is the author of, A Religion, Not A State: Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's Islamic Justification of Political Secularism (University of Utah Press, 2009). Her other publications include, English Translation of 'Abd a-Raziq's Book: Islam and the Foundations of Rule (in progress). Dr. Ali's interdisciplinary research has been widely presented in leading academic conferences including the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA); the American Academy of Religion (AAR); and the Middle East and Central Asian Studies Association of North American (MECA); among others. In addition, she has been a frequent Guest Lecturer on diverse issues including Islam and Secularism, Arab and Muslim women's Rights, Egyptian Women's Movements, etc. Dr. Ali received her Ph.D. with Honors in Middle East Studies from the University of Utah (2004), a Masters Degree in English with a focus on American & African-American Literature from Brigham Young University (1994), and a B.A. in English and African Literatures from the Polytechnic of North London and the University of Khartoum (1991).

Shemsi KRASNIQI

Gender roles in Kosovo in a comparative perspective

1. Introduction

Significant changes in all spheres of life have taken place during the last decade in Kosovo. One of the key changes in the Kosovar society has been the empowering of women and the changed perception of gender roles, in particular those related to property, household, children, etc. This breathtaking change announces the end of the patriarchal and traditional era in the family and the start of a new era of modernism and postmodernism where stereotypes, clichés, and rigid models of behaviour and action are expected to be broken; at the same time this era brings an evaluation and perception of gender roles and relations, as well as development of new perspectives on gender and belonging.

However, in spite of these immense changes in the Kosovo society, in spite of numerous projects and activities in the field of empowering of women, and despite the fact that young people present the vast majority of population, we still can say that the Kosovo society, similar to the Albanian society in general, is characterized by a significant level of patriarchalism and traditionalism. This is shown by data from empirical research carried out in the post-war Kosovo.

2. On the research carried out so far

Data that will be compared are collected from two quantitative researches with a representative sample of the Kosovo population. One of these is the research *"Social structure of the Yugoslav society,"* carried out by the end of eighties (of the last century) by the Institute of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, in cooperation with respective institutions of social research in the entities of the then Yugoslav federation. In Kosovo, the field research was carried out by the former Institute of Philosophy-Sociology, which operated as a unit of the Faculty of Philosophy and within the Department of Philosophy-Sociology. This research included 1032 respondents, Albanians, Serbs, and other ethnic communities living in Kosovo.

Part of the data from this research will be compared with the data from another research carried out after the war in Kosovo. This is the research "*Contemporary Balkan Societies"* (2003), implemented by Albert Simkus (University of Tromzo - Norway), in cooperation with main universities in the respective countries. The purpose of this research was to collect data on the social structure, values, and attitudes in relation to family, moral, religion, identity, nation, democracy, etc. This research involved 2504 respondents (2000 Albanians and 504 Serbs).

3. Culture of gender equality

Data from these two researches show a significant presence of the traditional form of perception of gender roles among Kosovars. It is also worthwhile pointing out that in spite of the significant presence of this form of mindset, a comparison of post-war data with those from the eighties, we see a trend of rapid decrease of patriarchal spirit and an increase of what we have called the culture of gender equality. Gender equality is functional only when it turns into culture, that is, when it is naturalized or established; once it becomes a daily and common issue, a normal action and position for all agents participating in the broad network of social interaction, and when it becomes a lifestyle and way of thinking of Kosovo men and women.

Here, we will try to present only few of the main premises of this culture: decision-making in the family, attitude regarding employment, division of gender tasks and roles, and education. These aspects will be presented in tables giving comparative data between two different historical periods, always with the purpose to ascertain the dynamics of the trend of changes in the Kosovo family and society.

Women's modernism and men's conservatism

Having in mind the high rates of illiteracy and unemployment among women, taking in consideration their absence from the public sphere, aware of the insufficient inclusion of women in the economic, social and political life, and the discrepancy between their respective participation in activities of economic production and consumption, we can conclude that women, and in particular those living in the past in rural areas, were a conservative segment of the family and society.

In the post-war period, women appeared as a strong force of modernization. Their determination to abandon the rustic lifestyle and to steer the family budget towards improved quality of life either by migrating to town or by carrying out construction works on the family house, their interest for education and employment, and for participation in the decision-making processes in the family and in society, their increased awareness about their rights and opportunities, etc., have had a direct impact on the modernization and urbanization of the Kosovo family and society.

What is the symbolic meaning of rural and traditional life, and what is the symbolic meaning of urbanism and modernization with women and men? Village, among other things, reminds women of raising cattle and farming, overcrowded home and poverty, staying in all time, tiresome chores, quarrels, tedious trips, and numerous risks to her, her husband, and to her children. Consequently, lack of affective connection with the village makes deserting it an easy enterprise.

To men, village and traditional life represent memories of their ancestors, the inherited property, various investment and sacrifices to extend the family property and estate. To them, village is a kind of «oath»; it is their birthplace and that of their ancestors. Their sentimental connection and nostalgia makes abandoning of the village a difficult issue. In light of this, to the extent that they are turned to the traditional lifestyle, we can say that men appear as a conservative and non-modernizing force in the family and in society.

3.1 Decision-making in family

Family certainly is the primary setting to try and implement the culture of gender equality, but, at the same time, we ought to know that it is also the "ultimate stronghold" of patrarchalism and traditionalism. When listening to debates on gender equality, one gains the impression of a discrepancy between levels of

decision-making and Kosovo women's activism. They are more focused at decision-making on the two extreme poles of the society: in the family and in politics; but, they seem to be less present in decision-making in middle levels of the society, such as, in local communities business, academic communities and in the civil society, to mention a few.

Table 1. It is better when husband has the last word

	1989	**2003**
Agree completely	61.0	36.9
Agree	23.5	39.6
Do not know	7.7	9.2
Disagree	4.7	11.7
Disagree completely	3.1	2.6

When talking about decision-making in the family, the appreciation of the role of the women has changed tremendously since the eighties. Whereas over 60 % of the respondents agreed completely that the husband should have the last word in the family, only about one third of the interviewed Kosovars agreed completely with this position after the war.

In fact, still a lot remains to be done for the accomplishment of shared decision-making between spouses in the family. However, data in this case, express the formal side of the reality rather than the informal one. When stating their positions regarding models of behaviour and tradition, there is tendency with respondents to follow the traditional model. Even though they may not really think so, in their statements they are inclined to pursue that paradigm, which is 'accepted' by the society – which is the model granting the husband key authority in decision-making.

3.2 Advantages for employment

Differences between the eighties and the post-war years are even more striking when referring to unemployment. Whereas in the eighties around 80 % of Kosovars gave advantage for employment to man, in the post-war period only one-third of Kosovars reserves this right for them. This tendency of more balanced approach on the role and positions of spouses regarding work and employment has not come only as a result of the difficult situation with unemployment in Kosovo, but also due the changed mentality resulting from education and general devel-

opment, as well as from more activism on the part of women in the society, from the strong impact of their unreserved engagement in breaking the stereotype that man is the one who provides for the family, whereas the woman has to stay home and serve him.

The mere fact that the percentage of those strongly disagreeing with this stance is five times bigger in the post-war years than in the eighties, shows that there is a strong trend of changes and a swift dynamics of 'reconfiguration' of gender roles in Kosovo regarding decision-making in the family and that it is moving in the direction of promoting a modern Western model. Certainly, there are numerous factors that have influenced for this distribution of competences, but we need to always keep in mind the multitude of issues and the multitude of ways of decision-making on the same.

Table 2. If only one of the spouses can be employed, then it should be the husband

	1989	**2003**
Completely agree	61.6	17.3
Agree	19.9	18.6
Do not know	6.5	8.1
Disagree	4.5	39.1
Completely disagree	7.6	16.8

3.3 Division of work in the family and gender roles

The third main premise with the culture of gender equality deals with the division of work between spouses and with gender roles. If the basic model of division of work between spouses in the traditional society implied that the husband worked outdoors and the woman indoors, or that the husband did public affairs, whereas the woman did housework, the post-war period saw a different model quickly winning ground and becoming part of the family culture and thinking in Kosovo. The comparison of data shows that there is a three times smaller number of those who agree completely with the basic traditional model of division of works between spouses, on one side, and that the number of those who disagree with this has grown several times, on the other.

Table 3. House chores are for the woman, whereas the husband should work outdoors

	1989	2003
Agree completely	58.0	21.3
Agree	26.9	37.2
Do not know	7.8	10.5
Disagree	4.5	25.4
Completely disagree	2.7	5.5

There is significant difference in the position that outdoor work is an issue for men and that indoor chores are reserved for women. A lot has been done in the post-war period to encourage participation of women in the public life. Certainly, credits for this policy do not go only to men, be they local or international, but in the first place it is a merit of women who worked continuously and persevered to convince all social, political, and legal mechanisms, as well as civil society and media and to demonstrate their will abilities to make changes happen, and consequently to build a new mindset and spread a new culture.

Table 4. Outdoor work is only for men, whereas indoor chores are for women

	1989	2003
Agree completely	55,2	23.6
Agree	25,7	36.2
Do not know	11,5	13.7
Disagree	4,1	21.7
Completely disagree	3,5	4.8

3. 4 Equal education for boys and girls!

Education is the sphere of life that has had the strongest impact in social changes in Kosovo since the second part of the twentieth century. Its impact is reflected in multitude ways in the personal, family, community and social life in general. Participation of women in this process has mode for the complete change of prejudices and stereotypes about women. It is notorious truth that there was strong resistance within patriarchal families in the beginning against education of girls, with the resistance mainly coming from fathers or grandfathers – heads of families. They wanted to continue the tradition of "masculinity" and "family

honour" inherited from previous generations and to pass it on intact to coming generations. It seems that "masculinity" entered a crisis at the time when letters and newspapers had to be read at home, when documents needed to be filled in, prescriptions needed to be followed, television images to be understood, and media news and information to be explained and interpreted, etc. Who else was to do this but educated boys and girls? Schools and educated people gained an unprecedented positive image. As a result, and in spite of difficulties with education before and after the war, and despite the high levels of unemployment, all generations of population are now fully aware and rightly appreciate that education is the best option for all.

Table 5. University education is more important for a boy than a girl

	2003
Agree completely	9.0
Agree	12.3
Do not know	9.9
Disagree	36.9
Completely disagree	31.8

A very important premise for the culture of gender equality is the awareness that education is equally important for both men and women. Over two thirds of the respondents in the post-war research oppose the position that university education is more important for a boy than a girl. Of course, this position will further evolve to become the prevailing stance of the absolute majority of the society, but the conservative part, as few as they may be, will be able to cause significant damage to the feminine youth and consequently also to the social progress in Kosovo.

4. Conclusion

From the comparison of data we find that modernizing trends in the Kosovo family and society are very dynamic. The culture of gender equality has become part and parcel not only of the mindset, but also of the everyday life and practices in the Kosovo families. This culture is supported by all relevant social mechanisms, but its agents need to know that there is no stopping and that there is not a sufficiently high point or level for gender equality, until women's rights are not respected and accomplished to the fullest, until the same opportunities are not provided for the development of theirs intellectual abilities and social skills.

Brief note on the author
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Shemsi Krasniqi, teaches Sociology of Culture, Social Ecology, and Sociology Practice at the Department of Sociology of the University of Prishtina. He completed his master studies at the University of Strasbourg (France), and is currently doing his PhD studies in the field of Social and Cultural Anthropology also at the University of Strasbourg. Since 1999 he is engaged intensively in social research as a research manager at "Index Kosova" company. He has participated in several projects and international conferences where he presented data collected from quantitative and qualitative research in Kosovo. He has published several professional articles in newspapers and journals in Kosovo, and has also translated several from French into Albanian language.