

Exploratory workshop "The impact of Cultural and Religious gender Models in the European Formation of Socio- Political Human Rights"

Executive summary and scientific content of the event.

The exploratory workshop "*The impact of Cultural and Religious gender Models in the European Formation of Socio- Political Human Rights*", took place from the afternoon of 11th November to the morning of the 13th of November. The workshop was held in the Aula Magna (main room) of the Faculty of Economy "*Federico Caffè*" of the Rome University, Roma Tre.

Every speaker who had been invited to the workshop was present except Mrs. Kari Børresen, Mrs. Nelly Buday and Mr. Marramao. However Mrs. Børresen and Mrs Buday had sent their papers (the documents were read by Mrs. Jorunn Okland and Emanuela Lombardo). Mr. Marramao's paper was not received. Some colleagues of the Faculty of Humanities of Roma Tre, some students of the Master course "*Man and woman equality & equal opportunities*" which takes place in the same Faculty and some Professors of other roman Universities were also present during the meeting.

The workshop started with the reading of a letter sent by Mr Guido Fabiani, Rector of Roma Tre. In the letter the Rector thanked the ESF for financing a project proposed by two members of the Roma Tre University (Mrs Sara Cabibbo and Mrs Francesca Brezzi). In his letter Mr. Fabiani underlined the importance of this meeting not only because of the scientific results and the international participation but also because of the cultural and political meaning of the topics developed during the workshop. Themes like: the complexity of the European identity, the development of human rights and the question of woman's rights.

Mrs. Sara Cabibbo opened the workshop by drawing the attention of the audience to the main theme of this exploratory workshop: the interest of the organizers (a theologian, a philosopher and a historian of modern age) to examine different subjects.

- 1) Women's social and cultural autonomy, related on one hand to the analysis of the construction of the female identity and on the other hand to the concepts of universal equality and rights.
- 2) The influence of the religious gender models on the social politics of the different European countries.
- 3) Christian religions' internal rights and their impact both on the civil and international legislation of the national states and on the behaviours of men and women - be laics or believers - living in a secularized and pluralist society.

Mrs. Cabibbo also stressed that, when planning the workshop and choosing the speakers, the organizers had adopted two criterions: first the differences and similitude of the gender models in the Judaic-Christian tradition using the different points of view of various disciplines and the complex problem of women rights in contexts – past or present – marked by a continuous settlement and negotiation of women's juridical, social, religious and cultural identity: as far as getting to the comparison between human and women's rights.

Secondly the organizers had chosen a perspective able to underline the breaks and continuities in the Judaic-Christian anthropology and of the legal systems, and able to underline the importance of social customs and symbolic representations during the centuries.

Finally Mrs. Cabibbo underlined how the realization of the multidiscipline workshop "*The impact of Cultural and Religious gender Models in the European Formation of Socio- Political Human Rights*", which was attended by researchers from different European countries (England, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Norway, Romania, Italy), contributes to the reflection on themes appearing on the European political *agenda* and on cultural and political debates of the different countries.

There is a new attention towards European Christianisms, towards civil rights and towards religious minorities, towards the connection between religious rights and civil rights, and towards women's claims. It refers to the debates during the making of the European constitution, the problems of the European parliament in respect of the ministry of justice and liberty, the importance given by the international press – laical or confessional, catholic or not – to the letter written by Cardinal Ratzinger at the end of July 2004 "*Letter to the bishops of the Catholic Church on the cooperation between men and women inside the church and in the society*".

The first session of this workshop – *Religious studies* – took place on Thursday the 11th. During this first part where presented the papers of Kari E. Børresen (Religious gender models versus women's human rights), Pirjo Markkola (Lutheranism and Nordic gender models. A historical perspective), Liliane Vana (Les femmes dans l'espace public: regard sur la société juive à l'époque hellénistique et romaine), Jorunn Økland (Enlightenment interpretations and uses of St. Paul's texts on women and gender), Rosin Lambin (La signification du voile des femmes dans le christianisme), which dealt with the feminine religious model in the Judaic-Christian tradition from the theological and the religious anthropological point of view. During this first part there was an *excursus* spanning from the ancient times to the present ones which led to a discussion about breaks and continuities in times and spaces of the Judaic-Christian tradition. The five papers dealt with the subject of the feminine religious models in the Judaic – Christian tradition from the points of view of the theological analysis and of the religious anthropology. The sources and the documentation - belonging to different historical periods – presented by all scholars were examined applying a gender analysis.

The a.m. method evidenced that the human discourse on God, as expressed in religious doctrine and symbolism, is consequently understood in terms of verbalised male or female experience. The different contexts analysed showed the continuity and the space and spatiotemporally breaks of Christian theological thought and the actual conflict between gender-specific rights and duties established by God given religious law, and universal human right for both sexes established by secular international law.

In the second session – *Philosophical and Political Thought* – Friday morning the 12th the papers of Eberhard Gruber (Emmanuel Lévinas au féminin. Femmes, féminin et différence sexuelle, comme impératif étique pour une structuration sociale), Mireille Calle Gruber (Figure de la mère et circoncision de la langue: lectures de la différence sexuelle chez Jacques Derrida), Francesco Saverio Trincia (The fragility of human rights: a

comment on Martha Nussbaum), Andreas Føllesdal (Exit, choice and loyalty. A liberal contractualist response to dilemmas in Europe between Religious liberty and gender equality) were presented.

These papers drew the attention to the blind allies of the contemporary philosophical and political thought and to the language of women's right and sexual differences.

In this section the scholars stressed that: a) Beliefs and practices based on religious views often have drastic impact on girls' and women's aspiration to participate in paid work and offices with political influence, affecting their exercise of choice however formally free; b) There are different normative sources that determine the attitude toward the practice of sexual difference; within the liberal democracies, this religious normative directions are connected with human secular rights. This situation involves a double form of loyalty which reflects itself in rights. The first and absolutely basic form turns to the legal system of the state, which authorizes and protects the freedom both of believers and non-believers. The second form turns to religious normatively.

In the third section - *Canon Law, Civil Law, Human Rights* – (Friday afternoon) the papers of Titia Loenen (Women caught between religion and equality. Developments in international and European human rights law), Katrine Ore (Ambivalent state feminism: how can Cedaw be implemented in Norwegian law), Magda Tomei (Religious integralism and fundamentalism versus women's human rights) , Emanuela Lombardo (The influence of catholic church on Spanish political debates on gender policy 1996-2004), Marco Ventura (Women and religion in European law: challenges and opportunities), Hege Skjeie (Equality law and religious gender discrimination) were presented. These papers showed, from different points of view and by using the example of some nations, the *gender rights* theme. The subject was related to the lows of the various religious confessions and national countries.

From this section emerged that the women rights are affected by religion in three main ways: 1) Religion is highly influential on the cultural background of the law (both on the roots and on the development of a given legal system); 2) The second way religion affects the law is politics. Religious authorities exercise their social powers in lobbying and pushing civil authorities in order to obtain certain legal reforms which are both strategic for the social expansion of a given belief and for the protection of specific religious interests. In this perspective, the attempt to shaping the secular law in a way more conform to a certain religious tradition is a matter of both ideology and power; 3) the third channel of interaction between religion and law is the legal regulation of the religious phenomenon and so called cooperation between civil and religious authorities.

Finally in the fourth session, held on Saturday morning – *Social Practices and Symbolic Representations* – Nelly Buday (Gender roles mirrored through images of the Hungarian and the Hungarian speaking gypsy religious folk tradition: read by Emanuela Lombardo), Judith Herrin (Femina byzantina: social and political practices in the medieval Byzantine empire), Marina Caffiero (Entre juifs, chrétiens et convertis: mères juives et droits sur les fils. Aux racines d'une question contemporaine), Helen Hills (Let's not lose sight of the visual: thinking gendered architecture and social relations of power), Nicoleta Turluc (Perception of orthodox and secular gender models in the contemporary Romania) and Adriana Valerio (Beyond law: Divine revelations to women) presented their papers.

The sources and the contexts expressed from the speakers proved that the so called rights of women mature constantly within the strain between the rules and their infringement, between the steadiness of the absolute principles and their subversion, in the name of a more universal ground of the law. Those documents showed from an historical point of view and from the rebuilding social and cultural movements point of view an important theme: the role of woman inside the different past societies and the different codes ruling men's and women's lives.

At the end of this last session Prof. Kyriakos Demetriou came and was present at the final discussion and eventually introduced the ESF and its initiatives.

Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

An interesting discussion occurred at the end of every section stimulated by the different geographical and temporal contexts and by the presence of different disciplines.

We all agreed on the necessity to carry on our work and our contacts. We would like to create a research network involving all disciplines implicated in this workshop. This project will be submitted to the Standing Committee for the Humanities of the ESF a scientific programme of medium-to long-terms focused on: 1) historical and cultural analysis on the religious gender models in the orthodox, catholic and protestant areas (involved disciplines: history, philosophy, theology); 2) socio-political analysis in a gender perspective on the welfare state in the countries of the north, south and western Europe (involved disciplines: sociology, law, political studies, gender studies); 3) historical and legal analysis in a gender perspective on the role of the religions in the interior and international policies for the promotion of human rights (involved disciplines: history, civil and canon law, international law). This network project is aimed analysing how *religious gender models* have influenced the *welfare State* organization and the social politics in the different historical, social, cultural and religious traditions of the European countries. Secondly it intends to clarify the weight of religious gender models on the international debates on human rights.

Concerning the publication of the workshop's acts the scholars have been asked by Sara Cabibbo to send her their papers (in their final version) by the end of January 2005. The papers will be published by an Italian or foreigner publisher. The publication of the acts, expected to occur in 2005, will be funded, in addition to the ESF's contribution also, by Roma Tre University.

Participants:

Exploratory workshop: *The impact of Cultural and Religious Gender Models in the European Formation of Socio-Political Human Rights*

In addition to the scholars who presented their paper at the workshop there were others scholars (not only from Roma Tre University) interested in gender, religion and human rights as for example: Professor Marta Pieroni Francini (university of Roma Tre) and Professor Anne Jacobson Schutte.

There were also some students of a Master directed by Professor Brezzi, most of the students were women. There was also a researcher from Malta. A lot of other persons (both women and men) expressed their interest in attending the workshop but we told them that this kind of workshop is not open to the public.

A journalist from the Italian television (RAI 3) and the Italian scientific review (Genesis) was present during part of the workshop and interviewed the scholars.

Statistic on participation

The scholars who attended at the exploratory workshop "*The impact of Cultural and Religious gender Models in the European Formation of Socio- Political Human Rights'*" were 21, 17 women and 4 men.

Most of the participants were Italian, seven Italian scholars work in Italy and one in Spain (6 women and two men). Five speakers were Norwegian; one of them working in England (four women and one man). From France there were four scholars, one of them working in Germany (three women, one man). England was represented by two participants (two women), one scholar arrived from Finland, one from Romania and one from The Netherlands.

The age brackets of the participants were equally divided in two ranges: 35-40 and 50-60.

Final PROGRAM

Thursday 11 November 2004

15.00

Greetings from the Rector of Roma Tre, **Guido Fabiani**

Introduction au seminaire par Sara Cabibbo

Religious studies

chairperson: **Francesca Cantù** (Università di Roma Tre)

KARI E. BØRRESEN, University of Oslo (read by J.Økland)
Gender Models versus Women's Human Rights

PIRJO MARKKOLA, University of Tampere
Lutheranism and Nordic Gender Models. A historical Perspective

LILIANE VANA, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris
Les femmes dans l'espace public: regard sur la société juive à l'époque hellénistique et romaine

Coffee Break

JORUNN ØKLAND, University of Sheffield
Enlightenment interpretations and uses of St.Paul's texts on women and gender

ROSINE LAMBIN, München
La signification du voile des femmes dans le Christianisme

Discussion

Dinner

Friday 12 November 2004

09.00

Philosophical and Political Thought

chairperson: **Francesca Brezzi** (Università di Roma Tre)

EBERHARD GRUBER, Université de Paris VIII-Vincennes
Emmanuel Lévinas au féminin. Femmes, féminin et différence sexuelle comme impératif éthique pour une structuration sociale

MIREILLE CALLE GRUBER, Université de Paris VIII-Vincennes
Figure de la mère et circoncision de la langue: lectures de la différence sexuelle chez Jacques Derrida

FRANCESCO SAVERIO TRINCIA, Università "La Sapienza", Roma
The "fragility" of human rights: a comment on Martha Nussbaum

Coffee Break

ANDREAS FØLLESDAL, University of Oslo

Exit, Choice and Loyalty. A liberal Contractualist Response to Dilemmas in Europe between Religious Liberty and Gender Equality

Discussion

Lunch

15.00

Canon Law, Civil Law, Human Rights

chairperson: **Roberto Rusconi** (Università di Roma Tre)

TITIA LOENEN, University of Utrecht

Women caught between religion and equality? Developments in international and European human rights law

KATRINE ORE, University of Oslo

Ambivalent State Feminism: How Can CEDAW be implemented in Norwegian Law?

MAGDA TOMEI, Fondazione Internazionale "Lelio Basso", Roma

Religious Integralism and Fundamentalism versus Women's Human Rights

Coffee Break

EMANUELA LOMBARDO, Universidad Complutense de Madrid

The Influence of Catholic Church on Spanish Political Debates on Gender Policy (1996 - 2004)

MARCO VENTURA, Università di Siena

Women and Religion in European Law: Challenges and Opportunities

HEGE SKJEIE, University of Oslo

Equality Law and Religious Gender Discrimination

Discussion

Dinner at Casa Valdese

Saturday 13 November 2004

09.00

Social Practices and Symbolic Representations

chairperson: **Sara Cabibbo** (Università di Roma Tre)

NELLI BUDAY, University of Budapest (read by E.Lombardo)

Gender Roles Mirrored Through Images of the Hungarian and the Hungarian Speaking Gypsy Religious Folk Tradition

JUDITH E. HERRIN, King's College London

Femina Byzantina: Social and Political Practices in the Medieval Byzantine Empire

MARINA CAFFIERO, Università "La Sapienza", Roma
Entre juifs, chrétiens et convertis: mères juives et droits sur les fils. Aux racines d'une question contemporaine

Coffee Break

HELEN HILLS, University of Manchester
Let's not lose sight of the visual: thinking gendered architecture and social relations of power

NICOLETA TURLIUC, University of Iasi
Perception of Orthodox and Secular Gender Models in Contemporary Romania

ADRIANA VALERIO, Università "Federico II", Napoli
Beyond Law: Divine Revelations to Women

Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
Kyriakos Demetriou (Standing Committee for the Humanities)

Discussion

Lunch

14.30

End of workshop



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