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EDITOR'S NOTE: THE NORTH WEST GENDER CONFERENCE 2014

The second annual North West Gender Conference was held at Lancaster University on 22nd April 2014. The conference was attended by 80 postgraduate students from across the UK who came together to discuss gender in a variety of contexts.

The day began with a keynote speech from Professor Sylvia Walby, *Distinguished Professor of Sociology, UNESCO Chair of Gender Research, OBE*, who spoke on 'Gender, the crisis and violence'. This was a fantastic introduction to the conference before delegates separated off into the various panels they wanted to attend. Nine panels took place during the course of the day and spanned a range of themes, including 'international gendered identities', 'gendered violence' and 'gender through a historical lens'. There was also a roundtable session which focused on female experiences of contraception, sexual and reproductive health. Three or four papers were presented in each panel on a range of diverse and interesting topics that allowed for a fantastic exchange of ideas, discussion and debate. In total 35 papers were presented at the conference. During the lunch break there was also an opportunity for delegates to view posters detailing research submitted by those who were unable to attend the conference.

Throughout the day delegates made use of the hashtag #NWGC14 to exchange their thoughts on papers and keep others up-to-date on what was going on in their panel. The hashtag was a fantastic way to keep updated with what was happening at the conference, especially for those who were unable to attend. The conference was enjoyed by both the organisers and delegates alike and preparations for the North West Gender Conference 2015, to be held in Manchester, are well underway.

This special issue of *The Luminary* contains a selection of conference papers which were submitted for publication. The diversity of the papers highlights and reflects the range of research areas that were represented at the conference.

Gender and Power: Sterilisation under the Emergency in India, 1975-1977

Gemma Scott, Keele University

Abstract

India's Political Emergency (1975-1977) has not been subject to a gendered historical analysis. This is particularly disconcerting in relation to the infamous sterilisation policies of this period. They were the most vigorous family planning programme pursued by the Indian government since independence and involved the widespread use of coercion and force. This paper will analyse the programme of coercive sterilisation in gendered terms. It argues that the programme's entrenchment within gendered identities was central to its disempowering nature and also to its involvement in the wider workings of the disciplinary power structure of the Emergency State. The paper will first conceptualise these sterilisation policies as being directly linked with state power and then consider their gendered nature, in terms of both masculinities and femininities.

On June 26th 1975 the Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi imposed a state of internal Emergency in response to rising opposition and unrest in the country. Gandhi deemed the imposition necessary to protect law and order and yet it was also a response to a personal crisis for her. The Allahabad High Court found her guilty of electoral misconduct on June 12th and in her opinion, this ruling and the activities of the opposition constituted a 'deep and widespread conspiracy' against her (Gandhi, 1984, 177). Overnight, the authorities incarcerated members of the political opposition and other dissenters and detained them without trial. They also imposed oppressive censorship on the press, eliminated parliamentary functioning and effectively rendered India a one party state. The government also used Emergency powers to pursue intrusive slum clearance and family planning policies, which, in such a political climate, meant the destruction of thousands of homes and a

vigorous programme of forced sterilisation. In March 1977 Indira Gandhi's government finally held elections. Indian voters overwhelmingly rejected it and the Emergency that it had imposed.

The historiography of the Emergency has been dominated by literature from perspectives such as political science, political economy and legal history.¹ There has been less attention paid to the Emergency government's policies of sterilisation than to other facets, such as explaining its imposition or analysing its constitutional amendments. This is despite the fact that, as noted by Vena Soni, these policies were 'more intensive and aggressive than any other birth control programme in India' (Soni 141) and were arguably the state's greatest infringement of human rights during this period. There has been very little attention paid to how these policies actually functioned as part of the Emergency government's wider power and politics, or to understanding how they impacted those who were affected.

Emma Tarlo's anthropological study has gone some way to addressing this gap. Tarlo conducted archival work on documents from the Delhi Development Authority and amassed an extensive collection of oral narratives from residents of one colony about their experiences of Emergency policies. Her study provides a unique subaltern insight into this period, as she described her use of Gandhi's Emergency as 'a trope through which to explore the emergencies of daily life for poor and marginalised sections of the Delhi population' (Tarlo 5). Rebecca Jane Williams' recent article, following extensive work in the archive of the Shah Commission of Inquiry (set up to investigate excesses committed by authorities under the Emergency) has also shed light on these events. Williams emphasised the historical roots of Emergency sterilisation in family planning policies since independence and argued that they were entrenched within the government's wider economic schemes. However, the gendered nature of these policies has not been critically analysed. This is the case for the Emergency period at large, but is particularly surprising in relation to sterilisation, given

the way in which its impacts on the body, reproductive functioning and family roles explicitly raise gendered questions.

This paper will begin to address this gap in the historiography of the Emergency, drawing on the now well-established arguments for using gender as a tool for historical analysis. Joan Wallach Scott was one of the first to set out such arguments, insisting that 'gender is one of the recurrent references by which political power has been conceived, legitimised and criticised' (Scott 1074). This paper will analyse the presence of gendered references and images in these sterilisation policies. From this perspective it argues that the entrenchment of Emergency sterilisation within conceptions of gender accounts for its disempowering impact, and for the place of these particular policies in the wider disciplinary power structure of the Emergency state. The paper will begin by considering the interrelation between these policies and state power. It will then consider how conceptions of masculinities and femininities were central to this programme – in terms of how it was articulated and implemented by the Emergency government, and to how it was perceived and experienced by Indians.

Sterilisation and Emergency Power

The Emergency government used sterilisation policies as an exertion of power during this period. This is evident from the ways in which they were detached from genuine family planning. The Emergency state pursued a programme of unprecedented scale; during September 1976 alone 1.7 million people were sterilised, equalling the annual average for the preceding ten years (Gwatkin 29). During the year 1976-77, the target of 4.3 million sterilisations set by the Government of India was exceeded by 190% (Shah Commission of Inquiry 5-6).

In his 1978 series on the Emergency in *The Times*, British journalist Bernard Levin used such statistics to denounce the sterilisation programme. He also cited letters, written during the Emergency from the Central Government to officials in various states, complimenting those who had already completed more sterilisation operations than their targets required. Worryingly, these letters also encouraged continuance, as the quotas set by the Central and State Governments became unrealistically high and great pressure was placed on people to meet and exceed them (Levin, 1st November). News agency Reuters similarly realised that the realities of these policies had been severed from sensible planning. In a dispatch from Delhi during the Emergency it reported that the targets had 'become something of a national game...States and the various regions within states have been encouraged to vie with each other in performance' (qtd in Mehta 153).

Government officials were not concerned about who was used to meet these targets, as authorities performed many sterilisations on people ineligible for family planning. The second report of the Shah Commission of Inquiry cited 'five-hundred-and-forty-eight-complaints regarding sterilisation of unmarried persons' (267). Underground newspaper *Satya Samachar* reported similarly that, 'young, old and even invalid people were dragged off to sterilisation camps' (qtd. in Guha 574). The Shah Commission reported the testimony of one particular doctor working during the Emergency period: he emphasised the general pressure on medical staff to sterilise ineligible cases, claiming that 'as the civil officers were keen to achieve their sterilisation quotas, they habitually brushed aside objections raised by doctors' (Government of India, August 1978, 32). The Emergency authorities' complete disregard for actual family planning is further evidenced by perceptions of the campaign. Emma Tarlo concluded from her field work that 'the total absence of reference to the question of whether or not they had wanted more children' was the most striking feature of many citizens' accounts (Tarlo 176).

A distinguishing feature of Emergency sterilisation was the authorities' widespread use of force and coercion. On April 16th 1976 Dr Karan Singh, Minister for Health and Family Planning, announced the government's new National Population Policy in a statement to the nation. His statement made it clear that the central government sanctioned and even encouraged states to legislate for compulsory sterilisation. In it Singh claimed that the 'vast implications of nation-wide compulsory sterilization' and the inability of India's medical and administrative infrastructure to cope with these implications were the only reasons that the Central Government had not included compulsion in this policy (Singh 22). However he went on to stress that in spite of this, where an individual state felt that the 'facilities available to them [were] adequate to meet the requirements of compulsory sterilisation' and that the time was 'ripe and it is necessary to pass legislation for compulsory sterilisation', then 'we [the central government] are of the view...[that] it *may* do so' (my emphasis, Singh 22).

During the Emergency more incentives and disincentives for sterilisation were instituted than ever before and these often equated to direct force. Incentives had historically been a facet of Indian family planning policies, yet the scale of their implementation increased during this period and they became extremely wide ranging. In response to a question in the Lok Sabha in August 1976 the Deputy Minister for Health and Family Planning described the extent of these measures. He stated that the disincentives were:

Broadly in the shape of denial of privileges and concessions like maternity leave, loans/and advances for different purposes, allotment of accommodation/land, free medical treatments, freeships/educational allowance for children and employment opportunities for public servants and members of the public, as the case may be, who do not limit their family to a prescribed number of children or fail to undergo sterilisation (Shah Commission of Inquiry, 20).

Despite being termed 'privileges' it is clear that for families lacking other means to access these facilities the element of choice was minimal. Other disincentives overtly related to necessities rather than 'privileges' included the stoppage of salaries and denial of ration cards for citizens who refused operations. This served unofficially to provide the compulsory sterilisation that Singh leaned towards in his policy outline. As a result of this inclination for compulsion and the broad spectrum of incentives and disincentives instituted, sterilisation became a means of accessing basic amenities rather than a way of planning families during the Emergency.

A collection of circulars and newsletters from the Assam Branch of the Indian Tea Garden Association provide a typical case of what the government was 'offering' people in exchange for sterility. The issue from May 1976 stated that the deputy secretary to the Government of Assam's Health and Family planning Department had 'confirmed that any voluntary organisation including tea garden hospitals will be entitled to receive diet money, payment for drugs and dressings, motivators' fee and acceptors' fee' (Assam Branch Indian Tea Association, May 1976). This demonstrates the pervasion of these incentives – from the Central Government in Singh's recommendations of compulsion, to state governments and further down to the organisations and individuals within them. This collection of circulars also helps to historicise the increased pressures of the Emergency period compared to pre-Emergency family planning. Monetary incentives did exist before June 26th 1975, but the circulars show that 'the Government of Assam had notified enhanced rates of compensation with effect of 1st May 1976', in line with the increase advocated by the Central Government in the National Population Policy announcement. This increase meant the Association now offered the higher rates as set down by the Centre: Rs 150 for those who undertook a sterilisation with two surviving children, Rs 100 for those with three and Rs 70 for those with four or more (Assam Branch Indian Tea Association, August 1976).

With the focus almost solely on these measures to achieve the required number of operations, Emergency sterilisation was completely detached from family planning. Prior to the Emergency the Indian government took a 'cafeteria' approach to this policy, with family planning campaigns promoting IUDs, condoms, spacing methods, and other forms of contraception besides sterilisation (Government of India, August 1978, 32). The complete severing of the relationship between sterilisation and family planning by the Emergency government is starkly evident by the rejection of this approach. Instead, the sole emphasis was on achieving the targets set for terminal operations. A striking example of this detachment is evident in the Government of Haryana's instructions regarding the sterilisation of its employees. The Finance Secretary to the State Government set out in an order that, 'it is to be clarified...that no government servant will be granted exemption from sterilisation operation merely because his/her spouse has had an IUD insertion or claims the use of condoms' (Government of Haryana, 63-4). For the purposes of achieving the small family norm, this was clearly redundant. The goal of protecting couples with contraception had been lost sight of in favour of the ruthless imposition of sterilisation operations, as an arm of the Emergency state's power over its citizens.

In order to understand how these coercive policies functioned as an exercise of power by Emergency authorities, they must be considered alongside the relationship between power and the body. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault emphasised the important role of the body in social discipline. For him, the body 'is directly involved in the political field; power relations have an immediate hold on it; they invest it, mark it, train it, force it...to emit signs' (25). Many aspects of this analysis correspond with the Emergency state's exertion of power over bodies through sterilisation. The government, by implementing coercive policies, removed individual agency and instead placed these family planning decisions in its own hands. Decisions to accept sterilisation were brought to the forefront of the political field and in doing this the Emergency government invested in bodies, making the acceptance of operations an economic exchange. With coercion widespread there was force involved in these

policies, and as we will see, these operations impacted the gendered performances, signs emitted, of those who received them.

The Emergency government also entrenched sterilisation within its wider power relations. A key facet of Foucault's work is his emphasis on the way in which certain kinds of punishment form regulatory power. There is much evidence that Emergency authorities sterilised people as punishment. For example, in October 1976 riots broke in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, as people campaigned against Emergency policies (including sterilisation). State police reacted to these riots by seizing rickshaw driver and stall owners and forcing them to accept vasectomies. With the rioters still active two days later, police attempted to subdue the crowds by rounding up more sterilisation 'volunteers', including two men over the age of seventy-five and two boys under the age of eighteen (Mehta 163).

The Shah Commission documented a similar incident in the village of Uttawar, Haryana. On December 6th, after around eight hundred villagers refused to co-operate with Emergency family planning, police raided the village with 'armed rifles [and] tear gas' (Government of India, August 1978, 28). Following the raid they sent many villagers to Hathin police station for 'interrogation' and took a further one-hundred-and-eighty to nearby family planning centres at Mandkola for vasectomies. Staff at the centres carried out these operations under the same pressures previously discussed. One villager who testified before the commission described having been operated on 'despite his plea that he had only one issue, a daughter'. This man stated that 'initially the doctor had refused to operate on him, but later on was pressurised by the police to undertake the operation', a statement that numerous medical staff corroborated (Government of India, August 1978, 31).

This raid and subsequent forced operations serve as examples of how the Emergency state punished its citizens by sterilising them. Documents of official meetings unearthed by the Commission show that authorities were aware and discontented that this 'troublesome' village was not co-operating with their policies. They planned the raid to punish inhabitants of this particular village. In preparation, they cut electricity to buildings in the area and registered fabricated cases against a number of villagers for suspected possession of firearms to justify their intervention. The Shah Commission report concluded that the raid and subsequent sterilisations were 'planned deliberately' by officials because of the local populations' refusal to submit to state programmes (Government of India, August 1978, 32). Davidson R Gwatkin has argued that whilst this example is extreme, it was not an isolated incident (Gwatkin 46).

The presence of Emergency rule and these particular policies served to create a general climate of fear in line with Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, as 'panic prevailed' in the country during this period (Jai 57). A number of first-hand accounts demonstrate this, for example, *Satya Samachar* noted, 'the atmosphere of apprehension and mutual distrust and suspicion is so pervasive' (qtd. in Basu 32). That the Emergency caused an atmosphere of apprehension is unsurprising, as it invested authorities with powers to arrest, detain and sterilise people, all of which constituted a threat to citizens. Davidson R Gwatkin has illustrated how fear played an important role in the power wielded by the government in a manner similar to Foucault's panoptic regulation.² Gwatkin noted that:

The likelihood that a trip to the next village would lead to forcible sterilisation may indeed have been great; but it need not have been in order to explain the degree of unrest...Whatever the truth of the matter, many people, probably millions, believed their reproductive abilities [were] seriously jeopardised (49).

Similarly, the biographer of Indira Gandhi's son observed that, particularly in the Northern regions of India, 'the dreaded Nasbandi...struck demonic terror' (Mehta 142). Tarlo found many testaments to such terror in her conversations with Delhi residents, including one worker who claimed not to have stirred from his house unless absolutely necessary. He stated that his employer even encouraged this rather than see him face a forced operation (154). The number of examples of this prompted Tarlo, like Gwatkin, to conclude that this fear was widespread, entrenched in the many facets of the Emergency system and its broader impacts on citizens' daily lives. She asserted:

For those who had escaped the sterilisation net (through employment), hospitals, schools and government offices were places to be avoided. What emerges from people's accounts is a sense of a shrinking environment as all civic institutions and public spaces in the city came to be perceived as places of danger (160).

Clearly, emergency sterilisations functioned as much more than family planning. They became a means of government authorities exerting power, in ways that were embedded within the broader politics and climate of the State of Emergency. I will now turn to consider the impact of these policies on the gendered identities – in terms of masculinities and feminities – of citizens under Emergency rule, to further argue for their status as an exertion of power by the Emergency state.

Sterilisation and the Masculine

75% of people sterilised by the Emergency government were men. This is unsurprising given the pressures of the target system. The speed of operation, recovery time and lower risk of complications as compared with female sterilisation made vasectomy preferable for meeting the Government's demands. After a visit to Uttar Pradesh in September 1976, Joint Secretary for Health and Family Planning Serla Grewal identified a 'healthy trend...that tubectomy operations are declining while vasectomy operations are on the increase' (Shah Commission of Inquiry, 12). She also stressed this to be one of the only reasons that despite the state's poor infrastructure, 'the programme has caught up' (12). Regions in north India, including Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Orissa and Haryana

became popularly known as part of India's 'vasectomy belt' because the government achieved such high volumes of male sterilisations in these areas.

The disproportionately high number of vasectomies over tubectomies can also be explained by the Emergency government's entrenchment of many of its incentives and disincentives for sterilisation in the male dominated work place. The Tea Garden circulars demonstrated this, as the state offered monetary incentives for sterilisation through this institution to its workers. Elsewhere, as part of the state's wide range of disincentives, men were threatened with job loss and salary cuts unless they complied with sterilisation. This was particularly the case for, although was by no means confined to, those who worked within government and civic institutions. By threatening to remove men's contributions to the family home, the state affected the gendered identities of thousands of men faced with this coercion. The account of one government sweeper from Delhi serves to demonstrate the importance of a masculine sense of identity and gendered role as family head in his decision to accept sterilisation during this period. He asserted:

The officers said you could keep your job only if you get sterilised. I didn't have time to think.

When I reached my duty we were told this...I agreed to it because I had to save my job and bring up my family (Tarlo 152).

On the other hand, as the government offered cash in exchange for sterilisation – money which could be used (and for many people was no doubt desperately needed) to provide for a family. Thus, sterilisation was a means by which to attain additional economic benefits and retain work. At the same time, acceptance inhibited the possibility for men of performing the gendered identity of 'creator' of the family. For many men this pressure from the state precipitated a difficult choice of providing for existing kin or fathering more children.

Significantly, the government's deployment of elements of coercion and force seriously jeopardised a family's ability to make its own decisions regarding fertility. Many of the Emergency's incentives left little room for negotiation. The state removed agency from the household head with whom such decisions would usually lie placing it instead in the hands of the authorities enforcing Emergency policies. Studies of childbearing and family dynamics in India have stressed the importance of this role in forming familial and individual identities. Jeffrey et al for example, found in their village level study conducted shortly after the end of Emergency 'that an essential component of husband's rule is sexual power over his wife' (29). Emma Tarlo encountered specific instances of the Emergency state undermining this position. One woman described that the male heads of her family had tried to prevent the local authorities' attempt to sterilise their women. However, when officials offered the women food and other basic amenities in the absence of the men, these women yielded and accepted the operations. This, in turn, caused much conflict and disruption within the family (Tarlo 175).

Many men were embarrassed and emasculated by the forced vasectomies of the Emergency. This is indicative of a wider stigma; psychological studies have demonstrated strong links between vasectomy and feelings of emasculation. It was (and indeed, still often is) perceived as threatening to sexual functioning and damaging to family roles and relationships. Char et al's contemporary study focused on male perceptions of sterilisation in India. The researchers found responses such as 'if I get it done, people will laugh at me and say, "why are you doing this woman's thing?"' to be common amongst participants when asked about their feelings towards vasectomy (135). The anti-Emergency slogan 'Indira Hatao Indira Bachao' (which translates as 'Abolish Indira and Save Your Penis') is indicative of this stigma and sense of emasculation. It clearly aligned Gandhi, the Emergency state and its sterilisation policies as threats to men and conceptions of masculinity.

Fieldwork on the Emergency concurs with the sense of gendered disempowerment encapsulated in this slogan. Lee Schlesinger, in his specific study of one village's Emergency experience, found that for all who went under the Emergency state's knife 'the vasectomy operation [was] traumatic'. It was viewed by these villagers as 'a radical violation of one's body, and, for some, a purpose in life' and many who had received the operation found it difficult to discuss (Schlesinger 641). Emma Tarlo reported the same stigma. One of her correspondents put it clearly: 'a man is considered a woman after being sterilised' (172). The dominance of these perceptions was such that Tarlo highlighted the pervading presence of a distinct fear during the Emergency (and indeed following it) 'concentrated around the notion of lost virility and the idea that they would no longer be able to satisfy their wives'. She noted that this became the butt of many popular jokes and slogans during this period (172).

Much resistance to the Emergency centred on these feelings of emasculation and the oppressive facets of the sterilisation policies, and they contributed significantly to Gandhi's electoral defeat in March 1977. Tension and resistance over sterilisation arose before voters were allowed at the polls. In 1976 *Satya Samachar* published one observer's response to Gandhi's insistence that Emergency sterilisation was necessary for economic growth: 'Nobody has a quarrel with the economic policies of the Prime Minister, but the way in which they are being implemented, I'm sure, will lead to an explosion' (qtd. in Guha 514). The majority of post-Emergency writers have also identified fear and fury over sterilisation as a primary cause of resistance and antagonism from the voting public to the Emergency government. James Chadney for example, stated that coerced sterilisation was 'one of the most unpopular aspects of Indira Gandhi's rule and resulted in her electoral defeat in 1977' (84). Indeed, the ruling party itself appears to have been aware of this unpopularity. The Central Government hastily issued orders withdrawing the programme of disincentives in February 1977, following this withdrawal with a series of public statements denouncing the use of compulsion in family planning (Government of India, August 1978, 160). The demand for the government to remove restrictions on civil liberties and cease forced sterilisations also made up a large part of the Janata

Party's opposition campaign – their electoral success is clear evidence of the widespread discontent caused by this policy.

Sterilisation and the Feminine

Indira Gandhi and the Emergency government consistently articulated these sterilisation policies through the use of gendered discourses, emphasising the potential benefits for India's women and referring to the gendered images of wife and mother. Feminists since Mary Wollstonecraft have, in the West, emphasised a link between female emancipation and access to birth control. Indira Gandhi employed discourses of female emancipation to advocate Emergency family planning, but in this instance to remove women's control of their bodies and make a case for compulsion. In December 1976 for example, in a speech at Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University, Gandhi defended the government's use of coercion in sterilisation with the statement that 'those who oppose any element of pressure ought to remember that conservative groups once argued that forcing them to send their girls to school was a violation of their rights' (Gandhi, 1984, 605). In public addresses she consistently declared the aim of this policy to be restoring joy to motherhood (Gandhi, 1975, 76). Moreover in April 1976, almost immediately after the release of the National Population policy which encouraged the use of compulsion, she claimed that sterilisation 'redresses the balance of the sexes...giving women greater control over their lives and children a chance of a better life' (Gandhi, 1984, 605).

Prior to the Emergency in India international family planning agencies with imperialistic agendas used ideas of femininity to exert power in a similar way. Matthew Connelly has extensively analysed the imperialistic nature of these agencies and particularly the New York based Population Council. The council rarely discussed their plans as humanitarian efforts, but rather projected them as economic ventures, where the directors of local centres in India needed to combine the qualities of 'scientist, pioneer, diplomat and salesman' (Connelly 2006 627). Significantly, the writers of the

reports of this international agency used the same language as the Emergency government to articulate these policies, as one official noted that 'the program can be sold on the basis of the mother's health...there will be no problem getting in foreign countries on that basis' (633). The insincerity of this statement is striking. This representative of the council was not genuinely invested in the notion of healthy motherhood, rather it served as an image that could be easily and profitably manipulated as a selling point, a platform from which to 'get in' and establish power.

Elsewhere Connelly highlighted that such discourses, of medicine and disease, have historically formed a crucial component of rhetoric on overpopulation (2006, 200). This observation is applicable to the Indian context. Government and non-Government organisations have articulated policies and statements on population control in these terms, of waging a war on the 'disease' of high fertility, before, during and after the Emergency. This imagery – of disease, health and medicine – was prominent in Gandhi's Emergency discourse. Images of health and medicine ran throughout her official addresses and public justifications for the declaration, as she consistently referred to the threat of 'paralysis' that faced the government from the opposition (178, 181, 190, 227). Gandhi explicitly allied this medical discourse with the government's reasons for imposing Emergency rule in one broadcast, as she asserted that:

The country has developed a disease, and if it is to be addressed, it has to be given a dose of medicine, even if it is a bitter dose. However dear a child may be, if the doctor has prescribed bitter pills for him, they have to be administered for his cure...So we will give this bitter medicine to the nation (228).

As one of the Emergency government's central programmes, family planning formed part of the 'medicine' that Gandhi alleged to be administering to the diseased nation. The government, like the New York Population Council, used a discourse of female emancipation to 'get in' and advocate this controversial policy of forced sterilisation.

Gandhi's use of discourses of femininity and motherhood to promote Emergency sterilisation was insincere - comparable with the Population Council official analysed by Connelly. Elsewhere she adopted a distinctly anti-feminist stance. She staunchly distanced herself from pro-women ideologies. She responded to questions about the importance of her position as a female Prime Minister with the statement 'I am not a feminist. I am simply doing a particular job and would do it wherever I was placed' (Ali 182). During the years of Emergency, Gandhi spoke at a number of women's conferences, yet her addresses consistently opened with denunciations. In one instance she declared herself 'a bit allergic to such conferences', and in another she decried them as 'repetitive and costly' (Gandhi, 1984, 523 and 753). Furthermore, she often undermined the feminist cause and whilst she advocated general rights, she was consistently critical of any singular or special focus on women. For example, she urged that 'the under-privileged in the world are not only the women...Don't think that men are liberated by any means' (525). Gandhi's lack of investment in emancipatory discourses makes her mobilisation of them to advocate the use of compulsion in Emergency family planning particularly problematic.

If the Emergency government expressed its sterilisation policies through female gendered identities, particularly mothering and female empowerment, then there was little space for women to resist these policies. Resistance to the Emergency's programme of forced sterilisation formed a crucial part of resistance to the regime, and it was the most important factor around which the Indian voting public mobilised to remove it in 1977. As we have seen, this mobilisation was distinctly gendered with an emphasis on emasculation (as evidenced by the 'Indira Hatao Indira Bachao' protest phrase) excluding women from participation.

Moreover, the government placed women undergoing sterilisation under Emergency policies in a distinctly paradoxical position. Traditionally, from both practical and cultural standpoints, marriage and motherhood were (and are) primary goals and marks of womanhood, with 'any

deviation from these roles...considered inappropriate and negatively sanctioned' (Puri 36). The researchers of one village level study stressed that a childbearing 'career' was essential for women, and from their encounters they concluded that 'not to want children is unthinkable, to fail to conceive or have no living children is usually calamitous' (Jeffrey et al 87). Gandhi's discursive construction of sterilisation as pro-women was distinctly in contrast with this traditional cultural standpoint. Through the articulation of these policies in this way, the government not only recommended the renunciation of reproductive capacities to India's women, but depicted it as integral to their femininity.

Moreover, it is well established that historically, particularly at the grass roots level, population control has focused on outcasts and those lower down in the echelons of society (Connelly, 2008, 229). Emma Tarlo's findings on the 'forcible deal', as she terms it, of Emergency sterilisation concurred with this, as she stressed that 'the nature of the deal depends on where one is placed in the social system' (149). It is essential to remember that these policies operated within a heavily patriarchal society, with significant gender biases in employment, education access to resources and a multitude of other areas. Thus the ability to reproduce often served as a woman's the greatest source of empowerment.

Certainly, fieldwork from around this period has emphasised the power available to women from this position – Jeffrey et al provided some striking examples in their study. In the village that they observed, aside from the empowerment available to its women from being the providers of children, and particularly the bearers of sons, the nature and experiences of pregnancy and birth were empowering in their own right. The researchers described a typical post birth celebration:

Now they have time to celebrate the birth...From neighbouring houses come girls and babies aside their hips, their mothers...The courtyard buzzes with anticipation as some fifty women and girls crowd around (Jeffrey et al., 123).

This tableaux of female unity, a sisterhood brought about by the common ability of these women's bodies to reproduce and the subsequent shared experiences of pregnancy, birth and motherhood serve as empowering. The description continues, recording women singing songs with double meanings, entendres and comments about the stalling of their husbands' testicles and his reproductive and sexual capacities. Here we have a clear example of the act of childbirth itself, as well as identities of motherhood, being empowering in the daily lives of women – a power that the Emergency state forcibly intervened with, threatened and at times removed.

Moreover, where Emergency authorities removed much of a family's agency in the ability to decide on its own family planning, women suffered a double loss of agency. Women were often denied from this decision making process in any case – thus the Emergency state's intrusion into this through force meant that they had this decision made for them on two fronts. Tarlo's anthropological findings presented a number of women whose husbands had accepted a vasectomy during the Emergency, informing them only after the operation had taken place. She also encountered instances of husbands' attempts to negotiate the Emergency pressure to get sterilised and receive related benefits whilst avoiding their own operations. This often resulted in the sacrificing of their wives' bodies. Lee Schlesinger's village level study corroborated this. He also concluded that in 1976 the 'voluntarily' sterilised spouse was 'almost always the wife' (640).

One particular worker, a rickshaw driver, encountered by Tarlo described the coercive 'options' given to him by one government official: a choice to either get himself sterilised, provide someone else, or pay damages for refusing the operation. His response to this difficult situation proved to be a common one: 'we could not afford to pay for a case so my wife had to get sterilised' (Tarlo, 165). Furthermore, the fact that medical staff were working under intense pressure, caused by the central government's target system, meant that procedures were often rushed and conducted inadequately. Unsurprisingly as a result of this, many patients developed infections and some

operations were unsuccessful. Tarlo noted the particularly negative effect that this had on women in the colony she observed, with unsuccessful operations described by the residents as having resulted in accusations of adultery, marital splits and the marginalisation of allegedly adulterous wives (173).

Conclusion

This paper has argued that sterilisation during the Emergency did not function as family planning but as an exercise of power. From analysis of official articulations of these policies, the nature of their implementation and the ways in which they were perceived, it is clear that the Emergency government's sterilisation policies were disempowering to those on their receiving end. They were entrenched within the wider politics and power of the Emergency and formed part of the broader climate of regulation and suppression in this period. This paper has also demonstrated the gendered nature of this power. Analysing sterilisation in gendered contexts, this paper has begun to show that one of the crucial ways in which these policies functioned as disempowering was through their impact on recipients' gendered identities. By stressing the importance of gendered analyses to understanding the workings of Emergency sterilisation, the paper also hopes to open up this period as a whole to gendered historical analyses.

Notes

¹ See, for example S. Kaviraj. 'Indira Gandhi and Indian Politics'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 21.38/39 (1986): 1697-1708. Print; Puri, Balraj. 'A Fuller View of the Emergency'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 30.28 (1995): 1736-1744. Print; Omar, Imtiaz, *Emergency Powers and the Courts in India and Pakistan*. London: Kluwer Law International: 2002. Print; Hewitt, Vernon. *Political Mobilisation and Democracy in India: States of Emergency*. London: Routledge, 2009. Print.

² In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault used Jeremy Bentham's panopticon prison design to put forth his theory of disciplinary power. A key feature of the design was the position of the prison supervisor in a central tower. Each prisoner, in individual cells in a circle around the tower, could see structure in which the authority resided, but could never see the actual guard. Foucault asserted: 'Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of

power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary' (Foucault 201). Thus, Foucault argued for the importance of self-regulation induced by the awareness of state power, rather than only its actions.

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Queer and Transgender Representation, and the Queering of Language in the Works of David Foster Wallace: So What [is] the Exact Pernt to that Like [?]

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Abstract

Essentialist notions of gender, borne out of the ideology of identity politics, play a significant role in determining what and how research materials are used in gender studies. Consider David Foster Wallace's *corpus*. Much of the research that exists to date follows a hetero-normative line of enquiry, the bulk of it doing little to address Wallace's repeated use of non-conventional gender representation in his works of fiction. Instead, critics focus on common, over-worked themes such as irony (Goerlandt; den Dulk), addiction (Freudenthal), freedom of choice (Jacobs), and philosophical arguments (Olsen). This paper considers Wallace's use of queer and transgender, and Wallace's 'queering' of language. By conducting a close textual analysis of *Infinite Jest* (1996) and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* (1999), attention is given to those moments in Wallace's narratives that have been overlooked. Arguably, Wallace complicates issues of gender to such an extent that it becomes difficult to affix essentialist attributes to gendered roles, allowing for progressive debates to form. Studies in gender have largely been the domain of feminists and queer theorists thus far, and in spite of the dismantling of gender that has occurred within academia, little has changed out in the 'real' world where gender stereotypes thrive. Wallace's *corpus* serves to take the reading of gender into popular culture, thereby widening the debate.

David Foster Wallace was an exceptional academic, graduating *summa cum laude* from Amherst with degrees in English and philosophy. He was well versed in literary theory, and wore

many other caps, of which the following list is not exhaustive: talented junior tennis player, journalist, English professor (non PhD), essayist, philosopher, and writer of both fiction and non-fiction. Wallace's works speak of a second-wave in Postmodernism, a post-Postmodernism if you will, most notably in the manner with which the use of irony and meta-techniques (just two of the hallmarks of Postmodernism's forebears) for the sake of making the author appear 'clever' to the reader is rejected. The aim of Wallace's attempt at transcending Postmodernism seems to be an obsessive quest to reconnect humans to one another, through the medium of the written form, in what is an increasingly mediated society which seems to favour visual formats above all else. Wallace, who occasionally referred to himself as a 'privileged WASP male' and who admitted to being heterosexual, is not an obvious candidate with which to conduct research into the reading of gender (Wallace, 2011, 107). However, there are good reasons for choosing such an approach. This paper examines Wallace's, at times, unconventional use of gender, and the disruptions to gender stereotypes that appear throughout his texts, and also the queering of language which assists in this. Indeed, there are many such unconventional, disruptive, and queer moments to be found rupturing his entire *corpus*. Some are subtle, and some are less so. As an entry point for this paper, I begin with those concerning queer and transgender identities.

Definitions, Norms, and the Current Lack of Scope in Wallace Criticism

The definition of the word queer, in connection with queer theory, is made purposely problematic by queer academics because of their refusal to adhere to strict definitions. Indeed, queer academics put 'queer' to use under different guises, adapting its meaning as they see fit. Here are just a few such uses to demonstrate this: David Halperin, in *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*, defines 'queer' as 'whatever is at odds with the normal, the dominant, the legitimate' (62); Carla Freccero, in 'Queer Times', views 'queer' as 'the name of a certain unsettling in relation to heteronormativity' (485); Jose E. Munoz argues for 'queer' as a route to utopian futurity in *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*; Lee Edelman argues quite the opposite in *No Future: queer*

theory and the death drive; Elizabeth Freeman, in 'Still After', laments the way queer theory was pronounced by queer theorists as being 'over' soon after its inception (495); and finally, J. Jack Halberstam, writing as Judith Halberstam for *GLQ's* 'Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion', attempts to use queer as a method for motioning towards a 'time and space' separate from that of those who exist in 'hetero-temporalities' (181-182). For this paper I read queer as an unsettling motif, capable of casting doubt over axiomatic and essentialist thought, and as capable of destabilizing dominant 'norms'. For transgender, it is Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us* that helps inspire a definition of it as representing the move through or beyond gender (51-52). Where such a move may lead is difficult to know. However, there appears to be a need for such a move, if for no other reason than the ongoing gender disparity that exists in the world today.

The dominant norms associated with gender, and the ways in which these norms appear to be problematized through the use of transgender and queer characterization and narratives in *Infinite Jest*, have not yet been addressed in critical studies of Wallace's writings. Critics who appear to suffer from axiomatic beliefs about gender fixity ignore them, largely. Elizabeth Freudenthal lists 'gender status' as one 'aspect of personhood' that she views as 'fluid but [...] significantly out of one's direct control', without specifying what she means by this (207-208). Instead, Freudenthal dismisses the potential for discussions of gender as she chooses to analyse the obvious and well-worn topics associated with Wallace's *corpus*: narcotics, substance abuse and addiction. Thus, her argument appears to be constrained by essentialist notions of gender fixity.

Essentialist notions of gender abound in Andrew Delfino's analysis of 'masculinities' in *Infinite Jest*, where there are too many spurious claims about Wallace's novel to cite. Delfino claims that the novel 'marginaliz[es] female characters' but states that it does have 'one or two strong characters that cannot help but influence the male protagonists in the novel' (4). To state this is to

misread the text in a most serious way. Avril Incandenza both subverts and confirms her gender role as a woman and mother, paradoxically, and would make an interesting subject to discuss in relation to gender fluidity and the questioning of arbitrary gender roles. Equally so Joelle van Dyne (a.k.a. Madame Psychosis), who maintains a powerful presence in the novel despite her suicidal tendencies. Joelle's narrative is one of only a handful that traverse the two main locations of the novel, and that influence the novel's three main plots. Notably, it is the characters of Hugh/Helen Steeply and Remy Marathe who share this privilege with Joelle van Dyne.

Converse to Freudenthal and Delfino's critical approach, this paper's argument centres on the proposition that Wallace creates an awareness of gender fluidity in the text, suggesting instead that there is scope to read Wallace's writings as being capable of destabilizing dominant norms such as gender categories of male and female. Consequently, such an interpretation of Wallace's texts moves to position Wallace as a writer who disturbs and/or questions gender norms. Gender should be widely regarded as something that is imposed upon human beings, not as naturally occurring. Arguably, gender forms much of the binary construct that is so deeply embedded in the human psyche; so much so that it is easy for critics to dismiss characters such as Avril and Joelle as having 'political clout [that] goes no further than their domestic spheres' (Freudenthal, 200). However, it is not the binary of male and female, nor masculine and feminine, that is the focus here, it is the fourth (and later, fifth) character of the acronym L.G.B.T.Q. that is the focus of this discussion: transgender (through or beyond gender).

***Infinite Jest*: Disturbing Gender Norms**

In *Infinite Jest*, Unspecified Services Agent Hugh Steeply is first described in a 'skirt pulled obscenely up and his hosiery full of runs and stubs of thorns' (88). Hugh is referred to as he/him by the narrator and appears at this stage to be more transvestite than transgender. The agent is later disguised as 'enormous, electrolysis-rashed 'journalist' 'Helen' Steeply', and is referred to on a

number of occasions before the reader is introduced to Helen's character properly (142). The inverted commas placed around Helen's job title and forename add to the sense that these are part of a persona that has been constructed artificially, in keeping with a Field Services Operative's use of undercover disguise (88).

Whilst Steeply is in discussion with Remy Marathe during this opening scene (Marathe is a counter-agent, and member of the *Assassins des Fauteuils Rollents*), the narrator allows Marathe's point of view, and *Quebecois* English dialect, to influence the narrative [sic]:

He [Steeply] was a large and soft man, some type of brutal-U.S.-contact-sport athlete now become fat. He appeared to Marathe to look less like a woman than a twisted parody of womanhood. Electrolysis had caused patches of tiny red pimples along his jowls and upper lip. He also held his elbow out, the arm holding the match for lighting, which is how no woman lights a cigarette, who is used to breasts and keeps the lighting elbow in. Also Steeply teetered ungracefully on his pumps' heels on the stone's uneven surface. [...] Steeply's purse was small and glossy black, and the sunglasses he wore had womanly frames with small false jewels at the temples. Marathe believed that something in Steeply enjoyed his grotesque appearance and craved the humiliation of the field-disguises his B.S.S. superiors requested of him (93-94).

The initial description of Hugh/Helen Steeply given by the narrator, influenced greatly by Marathe's point of view, speaks to a readable gender position: male. However, given the content of the following extract, the prior description of Hugh/Helen as large and soft, brutal, ungraceful, and grotesque, seem to contrast spectacularly with Hugh/Helen's 'transformation' as the novel progresses; because as Hugh/Helen puts her/his 'field-disguise' to use, s/he is no longer viewed as a 'twisted parody of womanhood'. In fact, s/he would appear to be an object of desire:

She's more imposing than like most of our starting backfield. But weirdly sexy. The linemen are gaga. The tackles keep making all these cracks about does she maybe want to see their hard profile (247)

The quote is direct speech taken from a character, Orin Incandenza, a pro-football player who can best be described as a sex addict with underlying, unresolved issues with respect to his mother. The whole of the football team, familiar as they are with stereotypical female figures in the form of cheerleaders and the like, seem to be 'gaga' for Helen, judging not least by the innuendo concerning Helen's role as a 'soft profile' journalist. There are other moments in the text where Hugh 'passes' as Helen, even under close inspection, where one would expect Hugh's biological male status to be uncovered and perhaps ridiculed, if the purpose of her/his dressing in such a manner was merely to mock her/him.

An example of 'passing' occurs as Helen Steeply arrives at the Enfield Tennis Academy. Something remarkable seems to have occurred, Hugh/Helen is readable at a glance to all those s/he meets there: as a woman. The language used by the narrator when the reader meets Hugh/Helen in her/his infiltration of the tennis academy largely supports the notion that Hugh/Helen is readable as a woman. However, the narrative voice does complicate this occasionally as the narrator retains elements of the mockery shown via Marathe's point of view when describing Hugh/Helen as possessing 'a certain thuggish allure but hardly the pericardium-piercer that Orin had made her sound like, to Hal' (652). Although Hugh/Helen is again made to sound somewhat ridiculous, it is worth noting that the pronoun use of 'her' now dominates the text from this point; and we know that s/he is being scrutinised carefully whilst visiting the tennis academy: '[O]rders that [Aubrey] deLint keep the mammoth soft-profiler [Helen] in direct sight at all times were explicit and emphatic' (652).

If, under such close scrutiny, Hugh/Helen is able to 'pass' in this manner as both a woman, to some, and at the same time as a man, to others, is there scope to consider this as a form of non-typical gender representation, an example of a move through or beyond gender boundaries? Close scrutiny is certainly what is required of the reader where the next two extracts are concerned. The language concerning Poor (Queer) Tony, yrstruly, and C's narrative differs from that of much of the rest of the novel. It is dialogue specific to a certain sub-set of society, those who identify as queers, fags, and male prostitute drug addicts [sic]:

It was yrstruly and C and Poor Tony that crewed that day and everything like that. The AM were wicked bright and us a bit sick however we scored our wake ups boosting some items at a sidewalk sale in the Harvard Squar where it were warm upping and the snow coming off onnings and then later Poor Tony ran across an old Patty citizen type [...] [W]e got enough \$ off the Patty type to get straightened out for true all day and crewed on him hard and C wanted we should elemonade the Patty's map for keeps [...] but Poor Tony turns white as a shit and said by no means and [...] we just left the type there in his vehicle off Mem Dr we broke the jaw for insentive not to eat no cheese and C insisted and was not 2Bdenied and took off one ear which there was a mess and everything like that and then C throws the ear away after in a dumster so yrstrulys' like so what was the exact pernt to that like (129).

... Poor Tony is hiheeling rickytick over over C zipping up sayng he screams sweety C but and stuffing the feather snake from his necks' head in Cs' mouth to shut him up from hipitch screaming... (134).

A knee-jerk approach to such dialogue would be to identify ridicule in its deployment, indicating an attempt at isolating the 'queers' and 'fags' from the more traditional, or hetero-normative representations of character. Indeed, there is a good example of this type of knee-jerk reaction that occurred around a *Saturday Night Live* skit entitled, 'It's Pat'. In the introduction to

Female Masculinity, Judith Halberstam blends academic theory with popular culture televisual references. Halberstam uses the *Saturday Night Live* skit 'It's Pat' to demonstrate that conventional society relies on gender classifications, and to expose the ways in which 'people insist on attributing gender in terms of male or female on even the most undecidable characters' (27). Halberstam notes the comedic effect that is produced by Pat's regular 'sidestepping [of] gender fixity' before moving on to discuss the 'paucity of classifications' that exist for gender (27). In *Gender Outlaw*, Kate Bornstein takes issue with Pat's character and the fact that the comedic elements stem from Pat's appearance as a 'slobbering, unattractive, simpering nerd' and that in fact 'It's Pat' is just the 'latest instalment in a sadly long tradition of comedy that objectifies, vilifies, and dehumanizes an otherwise voiceless [transgendered] minority' (130).

Whether one finds Pat (or Hugh/Helen, Poor Tony, yrstruly, or C) amusing, or the people who have difficulty reading Pat's (or Hugh/Helen's, Poor Tony's, yrstruly's, or C's) gender amusing is beside the point here, for it is the visibility of the crossover of queer issues into mainstream culture that is interesting, both in this example, and in Wallace's text. It is also worth noting that Marjorie Garber, another queer academic, refers to an earlier *Saturday Night Live* production, 'Quien es mas macho?' a 'mock game show [...] in which contestants vied with each other to make gender distinctions' (353). This slight aside has nothing to do with the 'intention' of the T.V. programmers, or Wallace for that matter, but with the effect that such moments have on the viewer/reader. The *Saturday Night Live* productions ask questions of those viewers watching, questions that perhaps remain ignored without such examples. Questions can also be asked of Wallace's text: how does Wallace's language affect the reader in these examples? Put simply, the reading of the text is slowed down, and repeated reading is required to clarify the meaning of certain words and phrases: 'elemonade—eliminate'; 'Patty's--party's'; 'maps—mouth'; and finally, 'to not eat no cheese--to not testify against' (note also that the double-negative, 'to not eat no', does not work as it is intended). This slowing down has the effect of bringing the queers and fags closer to the reader, potentially, rather than merely distancing them as

some have suggested - and in this way Wallace's texts can be viewed as disturbing and/or questioning gender norms.¹

Moving away from issues of queer and transgender representation, there are also sporadic moments where language is 'queered' throughout the text. Queer, although used at times as an adjective throughout the paper, is most effective when thought of as a verb for the purposes of my on-going research--queer (*verb*): to spoil or ruin. Take for instance the following three extracts. The first of these appears in relation to a midterm paper given to the students at Enfield Tennis Academy by Mary Esther Thode. The 'methods' employed by M. E. Thode appear questionable as the narrator mentions her most recent 'psycho-political offering, 'The Toothless Predator: Breast-Feeding as Sexual Assault'. The midterm paper the students are about to receive is titled: 'The Personal Is the Political Is the Psychopathological: The Politics of Contemporary Psychopathological Double-Binds'. It cites an example of a 'pathologically agoraphobic' and 'pathologically kleptomaniacal' individual and asks how does the individual leave home to steal when the individual cannot bear to leave home to steal. Prior to this appears the following instruction in bold capitals:

KEEP YOUR ANSWERS BRIEF AND GENDER NEUTRAL (Wallace, 2006, 307).

Just how does one arrive at a gender-neutral answer and, given the ambiguity of this instruction and the complexity of the question, how is a student meant to keep the answer brief? In the second such extract [sic]:

A female girl in a little fur coat and uncomfortable-looking bluejeans and tall shoes clicks past on the sidewalk and goes up the ramp into Ennet's back door without indicating she saw

somebody with a really big head standing braced by a police lock on the lawn outside the kitchen window (Wallace, 2006, 591).

Equally perplexing as the prior instruction is the notion of the need for 'female girl' as a useful descriptive element. If the definitions of female and girl are in effect interchangeable, why is there a need to use them together in this manner? Is female used as an adjective to modify the noun of girl? Or are both appearing in noun form? And what distinctions can be made between the two? How does a girl differ from a female? Do they indeed differ from one another?

The third extract concerns the term 'gender-dysphoric' [sic]:

Krause [Poor Tony] and S.T.C. [Susan T. Cheese] had met them at Inman Square's Ryle's Tavern, which had Gender-Dysphoric Night every second Wednesday, and attracted comely and unrough trade, and which Poor Tony passed now (Ryle's), just after the Man o' War Grille, now only a block or so from the Antitois' glass-and-novelty-shop front, feeling not so much quite ill again as just deeply tired, after only five or so blocks [...] (Wallace, 2006, 691).

Dysphoria is a medical term used to diagnose those feelings and beliefs a person may hold with respect to their gender identity; and medicalization speaks of illness/sickness, and something that has the potential to be 'cured' and made 'normal'. Genre-dysphoric also appears in the text, where deLint, speaking to Hugh/Helen, offers another aside as he tells her/him that 'the son [Hal, Orin's younger brother] described his father as quote "genre-dysphoric"' (Wallace, 2006, 682). The inclusion of gender-dysphoric alone may serve to promote notions that there is a sense that characters such as Hugh/Helen, and more so Poor Tony, suffer from a state of feeling acutely hopeless/unhappy.

However, the inclusion of genre-dysphoric questions the legitimacy of attaching arbitrary labels to persons in order to categorise them (in much the same way as 'female girl' does). How then can Hal's father be said to be genre-dysphoric? What does that actually mean? If genre means a type/sort/category of text, whether visual, spoken or written, is not the grafting of it onto Jim's personality a fallacy of the highest order?

And if one considers this as fallacy then why not when it is used in conjunction with gender: itself a construct that flourishes although it has been dismantled by the likes of Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Kate Bornstein, J. Jack Halberstam, Marjorie Garber *et al*? Is one witness to a queering of words and ideas here? I suggest that Wallace's use of gender-dysphoric is one of several instances where gender is queered in the narrative through a queering of language. This perhaps offers an interesting paradox when considering the medical roots of the word dysphoria. It is ridiculous to think that genre could be affected by a form of medical intervention, as a thing to be diagnosed and treated; but when one considers the close etymology of genre and gender, there is perhaps an opportunity to question the influence and reach of 'hetero-normative' societal practice, because if genre-dysphoric is nonsensical, then why not gender-dysphoric? The queering of language shown here in Wallace's text thus serves to disturb and/or question gender norms.

Brief Interviews with Hideous Men: Disrupting Gender Binaries

The queering of language evident in *Infinite Jest* is also evident in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. However, it is worth noting that the collection of short stories' main concern does appear to be with hetero-normative male-female relations, and not with queer or transgender subjects. For some critics the dynamics of these male-female relations is particularly problematic, as Wallace is viewed as promulgating yet another form of misogyny. When Clare Hayes-Brady states that Wallace's 'hyperawareness of gender difference, paradoxically, paralyses his authorial capacity for empathy, leaving oblique engagement with femininity the only available means of exploring gender

issues', it seems to confound my belief that there is much to gain from a reading of gender of Wallace's works (Hayes-Brady, 132). Indeed, Hayes-Brady's argument relies 'on an Hegelian master-slave dialectic' that unambiguously states that the 'gender power dynamics in Wallace's writing both depend on and reinforce the active presence of the masculine and the absent opacity of the feminine' (Hayes-Brady, 148). Hayes-Brady makes the objectives of her essay clear in her introduction as she complains of a 'surprising absence of direct feminine narrative: those female characters that appear are remarkably quiet', whilst going on to say that 'by contrast, the masculine figures that populate Wallace's writing are physically solid, vibrant and vocal'. Furthermore, in somewhat of a Foucaultian move she goes on to note:

Wallace's awareness of the inviolable strangeness of the female to the male consciousness leads to the opacity of his female characterizations, providing an oppositional balance with the forceful, dynamic males. Wallace's women, who wield the influence if not the power, form the silent, shifting center around which his representations of masculinity can locate their stable orbits (131).

So it would seem that Wallace, according to Hayes-Brady, does nothing interesting or original with the topic of gender. Indeed, he would appear to be the sort of writer that is merely a step away from the kind of misogyny that sees woman as second-class citizens.

But what if it were the case that in much of Wallace's writing it could be said that masculine does not always, by default, serve to signify male? And what if feminine does not always signify female?² When Hayes-Brady claims that her essay 'explores the layered complexity of Wallace's approach to language, gender, and power, in particular the power relations between masculinity and femininity' (132), it would seem that she has issues of clarification to address before her claims can be considered. Hayes-Brady seems to be using feminine/female and masculine/male in what would appear to be unproblematic ways, as if the terms themselves are interchangeable. There should be unease with respect to Hayes-Brady's use of these terms in this way. Here it seems appropriate to

pause and consider the concepts of biological sex, gender, and gender traits, concepts that seem all too fixed, until we focus our attention upon them and notice that they are not.

Biological sex and gender would appear to be inseparable at first glance of a dictionary, for both are said to represent the 'state' of being either 'male' or 'female'. However, this notion is soon complicated when one considers 'deviations' to the norm. Transgender, and hermaphrodite are two such deviations that problematize dictionary definitions of sex and gender (and there are also those with ambiguous genitalia). For instance, should a transgendered person, for whom her/his biological sex at birth differs from/contrasts with their own notions of gender identity (identity being the key word), continue to be assigned the gender label that corresponds best to her/his biological sex at birth? What gender category is to be assigned those individuals whose biological sex affords them both male and female genitalia?³ And what of those people born with ambiguous genitalia, where doctors happen to decide the gender of the child? These simple questions are enough to complicate and separate sex and gender, so that categories of biological sex are reduced to the facts of one's genitalia design: penis = man, vagina = woman, penis and vagina or ambiguous genitalia = ambiguity (potentially both man *and* woman?).

So where does that leave gender? Gender is a tool for classification, for it is certainly intended that way (again, note its origins from the word 'genre'), but it is often confused with biological sex. If gender is conveyed through recognizable essentialist attributes, then we are by extension dealing with lots of elements that combine to make up gender. These elements are the so-called 'traits' of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. Traits are designed to mark differences in people, but are we expected to believe that all biological males only ever display 'masculine' qualities, and that females only ever display 'feminine' qualities? Of course not, and there are many academics whose works render such thinking archaic.⁴

Yet in her approach, it is clear that Hayes-Brady considers only feminine *qua* female and masculine *qua* male, a conventional and somewhat vapid repetition of the binary mode of thought that serves to portray men as strong and women as weak, along with other harmful ‘axioms’ that do nothing here to suggest that a reading of gender of Wallace’s work is a useful way to proceed. In fact, this way of thinking does little to further our understanding of gender studies at all because it emanates from essentialist notions of sex and gender that have been thoroughly dismantled by feminist and queer academics for over three decades.⁵ That being said, such dismantling seems to have done little to alter the gender inequality, disparity, and/or discrimination that continue around the globe, outside of the world of academia.⁶ Given that Wallace does not seem to fit the stereotypes usually associated with research into gender, there is still the question of how best to proceed at this moment in time with just such a reading of Wallace’s *corpus*?

Why Read Wallace *and* Gender?

The answer to the above question, it would seem, is that the need for conducting a reading of gender via Wallace’s *corpus* stems from close readings of the text, where attention is paid to those moments that are at times ambiguous, and not readily or easily explainable, and that are subsequently ignored by critics. Take for instance the opening story from *Brief Interviews* (shown here in its entirety), ‘A Radically Condensed History of Postindustrial Life’, where there is the small matter of the queerness of the pagination to contend with as we begin our reading on page 0:

When they were introduced, he made a witticism, hoping to be liked. She laughed extremely hard, hoping to be liked. Then each drove home alone, staring straight ahead, with the very same twist to their faces.

The man who’d introduced them didn’t much like either of them, though he acted as if he did, anxious as he was to preserve good relations at all times. One never knew, after all, now did one now did one now did one (0).

Having the collection start in this way defies convention by placing all odd numbered pages on the recto page, whereas all even pages appear as verso pages, and produces a form of transgression via integers, if you will. There is also the queerness of the title. The title gives us a rough indication of the period of time it is concerned with, and in effect, perhaps thirty or forty years of history are condensed into a mere seventy-nine words on a page, with the bulk of the page represented by empty space (note the similar effect to that of M. E. Thode's paper in relation to her instructions for the students sitting the paper to keep their answers brief and gender neutral). The title also helps to locate the story in a Western consumer/service-industry society, most likely U.S.A., in its use of 'postindustrial'. Postindustrial suggests leisure and 'free' time with its connotations of the service sector and consumerism. Theodor Adorno's 'Free Time' is a useful lens with which to view what is happening here when he speaks of how 'people are unaware of how utterly unfree they are, even where they feel most at liberty, because the rule of such unfreedom has been abstracted from them' (165). The binary terms of male/female, man/woman, and masculine/feminine, have been abstracted to such an extent that unfreedom rules (but we seem hopelessly unaware of the fact).

There is a hint of this unfreedom in the non-specific language of the text. Both 'he' and 'she' appear to be ill at ease (unfree) judging by the way they behave in their desire to be liked. His witticism and her extremely hard laughter speak of such unfreedom where being oneself in certain social situations is inappropriate, thereby speaking of societal pressures of adopting personae to best suit a situation. Indeed, the man who introduces them is seen to operate out of a sense of preserving good relations at all times. Note the man's anxiety here, which itself speaks of his unfreedom, along with the 'very same' twist to the faces of 'he' and 'she' as they drive home alone. The pain that each of the three nameless characters endures speaks of shared experience and has the effect of 'flattening out' gender differences and distinctions, especially when one considers the sparse use of descriptive language throughout the short piece and the over-riding feeling of shared human

experience that attempts to connect them, but that ultimately fails due to their inability to be, or know their true selves.

There are obvious problems with attempting to conduct such a reading of gender of Wallace's texts, as stated in this paper. There are also problems with using queer theory as an integral part of a methodology with respect to a writer such as Wallace, because much of his work concerns relations between hetero-normative males and females; and because Wallace was considered by others to be, and he considered himself as, a privileged, straight, white male. However, the queering of language and non-typical use and representation of gender in Wallace's works seems to indicate a transcendence of identity politics, where boundaries are shifting and fixity is replaced by fluidity, allowing for change at any given moment. Critics for far too long have ignored the ways in which gender norms are disturbed and/or questioned throughout Wallace's *corpus*. It is with this in mind that such a 'reading of gender' of Wallace's works should be viewed as being of importance, because there is the potential to forge connections where notions of identity tend to resist, whether hampered by issues of class, ethnicity, or sexuality, for example. It may be that queering gender via concerns of a 'hetero-normative' nature, as this paper suggests happens throughout Wallace's *corpus*, may open up new spaces for discussion in gender studies, and may begin to disrupt the dominance of gender norms and gender inequality outside of academia.

Notes

¹ Catherine Nichols does so in relation to Hugh's field operative disguises in, 'Dialogizing Postmodern Carnival: David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*', 2001, (9-10). However, Nichols relies too heavily on the point of view of Remy Marathe, Hugh Steeply's opposite number in the world of espionage, thus not considering that there may be another, less obvious way of reading Hugh/Helen.

² This way of thinking has been around since Gayle Rubin brought it to the fore of academic research in the early 1980s.

³ James Vernon, in the intriguing case of Colonel Barker, discusses such an example of ambiguous genitalia. James Vernon, "'For Some Queer Reason": The Trials and Tribulations of Colonel Barker's Masquerade in Interwar Britain', *Signs*, Vol. 26, No. 1, (Autumn 2000), 37-62.

⁴Two such interesting examples are Judith (J. Jack) Halberstam's *Female Masculinity*. Durham: Duke University, 1998; and Lisa M. Diamond and Molly Butterworth's 'Questioning Gender and Sexual Identity: Dynamic Links Over Time,' *Sex Roles*, Vol. 59, 2008, 365-376.

⁵In no particular order, here are a just a few of those academics: Gayle Rubin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler, Pat Califia, Kate Bornstein, Marjorie Garber, Lee Edelman, and J. Jack Halberstam.

⁶The fact that the United Nations Development Programme feels the need to collect data for its 'Gender Inequality Index' speaks to this.

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Gender and energy issues in the global south: implications for the post-Millennium Development Goals agenda after 2015

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Abstract

Due to the conditions of gender inequality that limit women's access to and control over environmental resources in remote rural areas, unfavourable environmental conditions tend to have more negative effects on women than on men. The same considerations can be applied to the lack of access to energy services, especially given women's traditional roles and responsibilities as housekeepers. This happens more consistently in areas where people are directly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. This paper will explore how access to energy services is essential to improving the living conditions of women in off-grid rural areas of the global south, and, in the end, to contribute to global poverty reduction. It will highlight how for a long time energy projects have been treated as "gender neutral", founded on the belief that energy issues and solutions were the same for men and women. However, the reality is different in most countries in the global south. The paper will outline how gender sensitive policies and programmes are necessary to address women's specific needs. Finally, the paper will focus on the post-Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agenda and underline how the new framework has the potential to offer opportunities to integrate energy access as a priority goal. Small-scale decentralised energy options could also ensure better participation at local level of under-represented groups such as women and push for better gender equality.

Introduction: Energy issues in the Global South

According to the World Energy Outlook 2010, 1.4 billion people, about 20% of the global population, lack access to electricity. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimate that an average of 40% of the global population relies on the use of biomass for cooking (Niez, 2010). They project that by 2035 1.2 billion people will still live without access to electricity and 87% of these people will live in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa, India and other Asian countries not including China (Niez, 2010). Studies show that not only do poor countries lack access to electricity, but also that the demand for energy services in such areas is increasing and new projects and policies will be required to address this phenomenon. When developing such policies, it is necessary to consider the roles of both men and women, as energy is a concern of the society as a whole. The social interactions between men and women, their relationship with energy in terms of access, demand and use is not 'gender neutral' and this needs to be accounted for (Skutsch, 1998, 946-947).

Women's role in energy development in mainstreaming energy planning has been ignored in the past. However, awareness about gender concerns in energy projects and policies has been growing thanks to the pressure that women from both northern and southern countries have applied to have better recognition of their needs and rights (Cecelski, 1995). There is a growing understanding that the issues of price, kind and availability of energy have separate and distinct effects on women and men since both genders use energy differently. Also the level of access to energy differs between the two genders and changes in energy policies or interventions might 'bring different problems and opportunities' (Skutsch, 1998, 946-947). In addition to different impacts, uses and benefits deriving from energy access, consideration should be given to the issue that the actions of one might influence the opportunities of the other (Clancy, 2004, 1).¹ Finally, there also appears to be confusion in the jargon between the use of 'women and energy' and 'gender and energy' in the global south as it seems they can be interchangeable. However, whilst the latter includes the first, the opposite does not automatically happen (Clancy, 2004, 1).

Gender refers to the roles of both men and women in society; that is why the literature refers to this term rather than to 'sex', which implies only biological differences. Gender roles and responsibilities vary in different cultural and geographical contexts and over time (Schultz). For this reason, continuous participation in the decision-making on energy policies of both men and women should be required at strategic level.

Differences in energy use between men and women: benefits and constraints

As stated previously, over the years some disparity in the use of energy between men and women has been recognised due to their different roles and responsibilities. In particular, it has been acknowledged that women's responsibility for fuel procurement in order to support the household consequently has health implications due to the drudgery of the work and the frequent exposure to the burning fuels; these factors have been the objects of policy changes and projects implementation. However, very often gender differences and issues in relation to energy have been limited to household management and cooking practices (Klingshirn, 2000 and Kanagawa, 2008).²

Instead, women became more and more involved in economic activities requiring energy, such as small business enterprises (Skutsch). Access to energy could initiate new opportunities for women's economic growth through the set-up of local businesses (Kaygusuz). Moreover, sustainable energy services are fundamental to shift out of poverty and to contribute to a feeling of wellbeing, which is one of the most important objectives of development (Clancy, 2004).

Drawing on theories of empowerment and equality, feminist theories on development have emphasised that empowerment is a transformational process. 'Em-power' entails giving power to

those marginalised and oppressed. Empowerment works at different levels in the society and includes the individual, the household and the institutional level. Women should be given the 'power to' participate in the decision-making process, access resources, and be able by themselves to solve problems and situations; the 'power within' their life to develop self-confidence and awareness, and the 'power with' which to organise themselves to achieve common goals (Kabeer, 1999 and Oxaal and Baden, 1997). Also looking at theories of equality between genders in society, these imply a fair system of distribution of rights, power and money between men and women (Skutsch, 1998 and Unterhalter, 2005).³

Equal distribution and access to energy services directly contributes to foster gender equality and women's empowerment by releasing women's time constraints due to chores and heavy work, and indirectly by opening up opportunities to work in the energy labour sector, set up micro enterprises or to be engaged in educational activities (Kaganawa).

On the basis of these theories, there are some important aspects that planners need to reflect upon when planning for energy projects. Having recognised unequal gender relations in society, gender planning should ensure that policies, programmes and projects will address gender differences to enable equal participation and benefits (Wieringa, 1994 and Clancy, 2004). For instance, once a village is provided with electricity it might be difficult to identify which gender benefits from improved energy services: it becomes hard to tell how energy is used and by whom. Also, if the price of kerosene increases it can be challenging to know who is going to be affected the most between men and women (Skutsch, 1998).⁴

Moreover, concerns should arise in regards to the amount of metabolic energy that women waste on household work, mostly due to water and fuel collection, field preparation and lifting

weights.⁵ These survival activities can take up to 20 hours or more per week. Women's metabolic energy is also used to travel to the resource location (Mehretu, 1992 and UNDP, 2007). Pumps, mills and other electrical machinery could ease women's work and improve their health conditions. Also transport options for household fuels and agricultural produce can help minimise women's drudgery. These kinds of solutions are an example of gender related energy solutions as the tasks they could be applied to are gender specific (Mehretu, 1992 and Bryceson, 1994).

The table below (Table 1) summarises the main constraints faced by women in accessing and benefitting from energy services. Decisions in regards to fuels used, domestic infrastructures such as type of cooking stoves and ventilation, energy appliances in the house and lighting choices are usually made by men, although women are the ones directly affected by these decisions in their daily lives (Mohideen). When women's drudgery is eased by the introduction of energy services, they will be empowered by having the opportunity to participate in economic and community activities, which in the end will benefit the whole family (Clancy, 2004).

Table 1:	Women's constraints in accessing and benefitting from energy services
Lack of control to land and property	This limits women from benefitting from energy systems that require land such as solar systems or wind turbines.
Lack of income	Women have little or no income as everything is spent for the household needs so they cannot invest in machinery to ease their work.
Lack of access to	Women cannot develop professionally and increase their income.

technology	
Lack of participation in decision making	Women's needs are not represented and they are not able to make a choice for themselves.
Lack of education and training	This creates a constraint to their professional development and, as a consequence to develop their income generation opportunities.
Lack of access to credit	Most women in developing countries do not have a bank account, so they cannot benefit from financial and extension incentives and they cannot participate in the business sphere.

Source: Danielsen, 2012 and Oparaocha, 2011.

Gender inequality and discrimination is also evident in the energy labour market and education; only men take part in training and they are the ones subsequently employed in the energy market. Women have often been seen as 'passive users and consumers of energy' (Clancy, 2004, 19). However, this is not the case: this kind of discrimination prevents women's empowerment and the development of their working skills. Studies show how clean rural electrification can contribute to women's empowerment and gender equality and also achieve better women's and children health (Saxena). Also, a strong relationship between access to electricity and income has been recognised. With an income increase it becomes easier to access electricity, and conversely, access to electricity can increase income opportunities. However, it is not only the access to energy that needs to be taken into account; its reliability should also be considered to ensure sustainable economic growth (Oparaocha).

Given that most women led microenterprises are home-based, access to reliable energy and electrical appliances is essential to improve their production and the quality of their products, and ensure enterprise development. However, to start up a business or to expand it access to capital would be required. As mentioned in Table 1, usually women cannot access credit as they are not allowed property rights.⁶ The most commonly used solutions to overcome these issues are accessing microcredit schemes and joining women saving groups. However, there are two important considerations to be made. Firstly, project-based microcredit schemes usually lend a small amount of money for a defined and brief period. In this case then questions arise in regard to the sustainability of projects in the long term. Secondly, it is unknown how much of the credit is solely used by women in their household, and to what extent the credit is actually accessed by men as well. Often saving groups might offer better ownership for women and have an impact on the resources of the community rather than relying of external financial support (Denton).

Training on the safe use of electric appliances and energy efficiency, as well as on the use of renewable energy technologies, should be provided in the household especially due to the frequent power cuts and unreliable quality of energy supply (Mohideen). Issues of energy and technology ownership might arise not only in consideration of gender discrimination, but also in regards to the caste system. Access to energy by women might be uneven among castes and ethnic minorities (Mohideen). Women often have traditional knowledge in resource management; however, rural women continue to be marginalised and discriminated and are not able to further develop their knowledge as part of renewable energy development (Kelkar).

The perceptions of the benefits deriving from energy access are also different between men and women. The latter will invest in children's education, improving healthcare and household safety and reducing the workload. However, men for example would mostly use fuel for tractors to reduce their own workload. This will not have any positive impact on women and children in the household.

Moreover, very little priority is given by governments to investment in public services, such as street lighting, which could reduce women's vulnerability and improve their safety (Mohideen). Financial support for women led businesses, gender sensitive policies and regulations, as well as the collection of sex-disaggregated data, are essential to foster opportunities resulting from energy access (Mohideen). The collection of gender disaggregated data is important as their analysis can offer a better understanding of women's needs and priorities. Efforts should be made to encourage the collection of gender-disaggregated data of energy use, supply and impacts by governments and gender analysis in project evaluation, which do not consistently happen (Cecelski, 2000, Clancy, 2012 and Hafner-Burton, 2002).

Projects and policy implications

A gender analysis that would look at the community as a whole and at the relationships between men and women would acknowledge that access to modern energy services is essential to improve people's lives through the provision of clean water, sanitation and healthcare. Electricity provision will also ensure reliable lighting, heating, cooking, telecommunication services and mechanical power useful for income generation activities which will benefit both, women and the broader community (Batliwala, 2003, Kanase-Patil, 2010 and Chaurey, 2004). Approaching planning and project implementation with a gender perspective can be advantageous for both the project management and the community (Clancy, 2004).

In order to address gender disparity, at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, Objective G of the Platform for Action called for gender mainstreaming 'in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively' (ECOSOC, 1995). On the same line, in 2001, governments committed to 'support equal access for women to sustainable and affordable energy technologies through needs assessments, energy planning and policy formulation at the local and national level' (ECOSOC, 2001).

For the first time the existence of gender and energy issues was officially recognised. However, still these policies are not implemented in practice by governments.

Although more recently, liberal democratic governments have gradually incorporated the gender component in their policies and programmes, potentially promoting women's empowerment by adopting gender equality, project practice does not always reflect policy aims (Skutsch, 2005).⁷ This is what Derbyshire refers to when she talks about 'policy evaporation' (Derbyshire, 9). 'Policy evaporation' refers to the situation in which policy goals and objectives are partially or not at all pursued, and this happens particularly because most of the projects, even if participatory, do not start as a blank sheet (Derbyshire, 9). Instead they offer beneficiaries a limited range of possibilities to address their aims. To achieve a transformation in the gender relations, empowerment and equality need to be pursued not only at regulatory level but also in daily life by changing the social and cultural relations and ensuring women's access to resources. In this case, the focus shifts from the development of women as a 'women's concern' to becoming a societal issue (Skutsch, 2005).

To ensure that the gender component is present at every stage in the planning process, good practice would be to develop a set of indicators related to gender goals. This is a way to mainstream gender consideration into energy provision. Indicators and goals should be dictated directly by the beneficiaries who better know their priorities, rather than being decided by external agents (Karlsson, 2003). A step forward would be integrating gender issues into the project cycle model. Over the years several authors have looked into defining energy project objectives in terms of men and women (i.e. formulating gender goals), identifying opportunities and limitations to the involvement of women in projects, and considering any eventual negative impacts that could affect women (Karlsson and Clancy). These author's experiences show that by asking gender related questions at each stage of the project cycle, women's priorities, access, control and project impacts can be better addressed. It also shows that while there is no blueprint to be followed but by proceeding in this way it is easier to

address gender questions (Skutsch, 2005).

Energy initiatives at international level

Several funding opportunities and initiatives at international level have been established to support energy access for the rural poor. For the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative, for instance, to be successful in achieving Universal Energy Access by 2030 a requisite should be the recognition of a full range of energy services for the local communities and not just the connection at household level. Recommendations by Practical Action include the promotion of service-based access to electricity rather than a supply-based approach (Practical Action, 2013).

Affordability is another important issue to take into account when looking at energy diffusion. For low-income households the upfront cost for connections is usually very high (Bhattacharyya). Households might spend up to 10-30% of income on energy. This means that even if the electricity is available, not every household can afford to pay for it. According to a study carried out by Practical Action, in order to increase equality in accessing electricity, the limit on electricity expenditure per household should be 10% of the income (Bensch et al., 2010 and Practical Action and GIZ, 2011). Therefore, even where energy services are available, lack of affordability excludes poor women from accessing the services. To improve household connectivity, public consultations should take into consideration the issue that high tariff levels do not reflect women's income and create a constraint to their access to energy. Affordability criteria should be gender sensitive and establish grants or cheap credit facilities for poor women (Mohideen).

Looking at the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations, it is evident that neither their targets nor their indicators refer to energy. However, access to electricity must play a variety of essential direct and indirect roles in achieving the MDGs, as various studies have shown (DFID 2002, Kanagawa and Nakata, 2008 and Sovacool, 2012). Yet, also looking at the gender

component of the MDGs, there is only one goal that specifically refers to ‘gender equality and empowerment of women’ (Goal 3). Ideally though, each MDG should consider gender as a key component (Ramani, 2003 and Havet, 2003). Table 2 below provides an example of how gender and energy can be linked to each of the MDGs in supporting the provision of essential services.

Table 2:	Gender and Energy in the MDGs
Goal 1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Access to modern energy assists economic growth by providing more efficient and healthier means for both household and productive activities. Electricity can be used for water pumping providing drinking water and for machines to irrigate agricultural fields. Women in particular spend less time processing agricultural products and can boost their production by using machineries.
Goal 2	Achieve universal primary education. In poor communities children can often spend a significant amount of time fetching water and fuel-wood, access to electricity can increase their school attendance. It can also contribute to their education through access to means of communication and lighting. Increase in women’s revenues allows mothers to send their daughters to school.
Goal 3	Promote gender equality and empower women. Women living in poor communities, spend a considerable amount of time gathering cooking fuel and water. Access to modern energy sources reduces the physical burden associated with wood carrying and also widens women’s employment opportunities by spending more time in productive activities. Additionally, street lighting improves women’s mobility and safety and allows them to take part in community activities.

Goal 4, 5 & 6	<p>Reduce child mortality; Improve maternal health; and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Given that most staple foods require cooking, access to clean energy will diminish the exposure to fumes that can cause respiratory diseases. By boiling the water the spread of waterborne diseases will be decreased. Modern and more efficient energy services support the functioning of health clinics and hospitals. Excessive workload and heavy manual labour may affect pregnant women's health and well-being. Also, electricity provides lighting of maternity wards and better delivery conditions.</p>
Goal 7	<p>Ensure environmental sustainability. Modern cooking fuels and more efficient cook-stoves can relieve pressures on the environment caused by the unsustainable use of biomass. The promotion of low-carbon renewable energy is congruent with the protection of the environment locally and globally as traditional cooking fuels contribute to local deforestation, soil degradation and erosion. Using cleaner energy also reduces greenhouse-gas emissions and global warming. Women have a better knowledge of natural resources management.</p>
Goal 8	<p>Develop a global partnership for development. Electricity is essential to improve information and communications technology applications for the community. Women will have better chances to be informed.</p>

Source: Content adapted by the author from Oparaocha, 2011 and Shyu, 2014.

As the MDGs are due in 2015, members of the UN have since 2010, been debating about a new framework post-2015. Based on a review of the MDGs the post-2015 UN development agenda should aim at ensuring access to electricity and meeting minimum basic electricity needs of the 'energy poor' (Shyu).⁸ One of the goals of the Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change (AGECC),

established by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, is achieving universal 'access to clean, reliable and affordable energy services for cooking and heating, lighting, communications and productive uses' by 2030 (AGECC, 2010). This proposal represents a landmark in relation to the issues related to energy access. However, given that it will evolve in the future, it is of critical importance for governments and the international community to discuss the implications for the poor of the definition of 'access to energy' (Shyu).

It should also be remembered that in the past, big infrastructure projects have often prioritised the demands of urban areas and industrial consumers rather than addressing the needs of the rural poor. In addition, they ended up satisfying the interests of people in power, encouraging corruption rather than democratic control over the resources and investments (Bosshard).⁹ Community managed systems can ensure better transparency of the control over and access to the resources shared by the community and, therefore, be less prone to corruption (Verzola).

Similar critique is supported by a study of ActionAid in India, for which, notwithstanding increased investments in electricity production by different sources (such coal-fired power plants and large hydropower stations), household energy issues in rural areas have only marginally or not sufficiently been addressed (Bast). The study also highlights that small-scale decentralised energy systems enable better 'bottom up' participation of poor women and other marginalised groups. Small-scale decentralised energy options are more suitable for rural areas in that they offer cost-effective and reliable alternatives to the grid (Byrne). By giving ownership over the energy scheme, they ensure better inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable groups: women for instance can contribute to the schemes through self-help groups (Batliwala). The whole community can benefit from the energy service for irrigation, food preservation, crop procession and other activities (Kanase-Patil). Decentralised systems are also less expensive and more efficient in terms of energy distribution as they are closer to the point of use (Chow).

The MDGs have been criticised under many aspects. In relation to what is analysed in this paper, it is worthwhile mentioning the issue that they have been strongly dominated by northern Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) rather than southern civil organisations. Also, although providing a clear framework for their achievement, they were concerned on inputs rather than on outcomes (Karver et al).¹⁰ Another major critique that by someone has been seen as strength is that the goals were too narrow focused and did not take into account different geographical or county-specific contexts (UN Task Team). Hence, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should seek a more bottom up approach with decisions taken at national level and with the involvement of the civil society. They would need to focus on the outcomes, to be supported by the development of a set of indicators for each goal and be more context-specific (Loewe).

Universal goals need to be split into specific targets at national level as some countries should be prioritised against others depending on their development, capacities level and the availability of resources. The SDGs also need to show a degree of flexibility over time as county conditions might change (Nilsson et al). There is consensus that the SDGs should look at disaggregated data in order to assess the development progress of social and economic aspects (including also gender and energy) of more marginalised communities. Inequalities have often been covered by measuring development in an aggregate way (Higgins). Also, a discussion on the policy mechanisms to address gender relations in the energy spectrum should be ensured together with a special focus on training and capacity building for those communities (Gupta).

Conclusion

Worldwide 1.4 million people lack access to electricity, the majority of which live in rural areas of the global south. Studies have shown how access to energy services can improve the living conditions of people residing in off-grid areas. The absence of the provision of energy services impacts the local environment due to deforestation and the diffusion of greenhouse gases (Li).

Relying on unsustainable sources of energy such as charcoal and kerosene, and being exposed to the fumes deriving by such sources of energy, women especially suffer the consequences of energy service deficiency from different angles such as in terms of access, use, benefits, training, income generation and participation in the decision-making process (Dutta).

In order to tackle these issues and to ensure the efficiency of projects focusing on energy provision, the process of planning, implementation and maintenance of energy services needs to be gender sensitive (Clancy, 2012 and Skutsch, 2005). Governments at international level have committed to mainstream gender in policy and planning and in achieving universal access to energy. However, there is still a lack of consistency between what is on paper and the implementation of gender aware policies on the ground. One of the critiques to policy and planning creation and implementation is that often they are still based on aggregated data and they still miss gender-disaggregated data. These can give a better perspective on women's needs and priorities (Higgins). Solutions to energy poverty at local level can be offered by small scale decentralised energy services; these are proven to be more prone to community engagement and are more cost-effective (Rabbani).

The MDGs are due next year, and, in light of the absence of a goal focused on energy and of a specific link to gender equality in energy, the post-MDGs agenda could look into offering opportunities for contributing to energy poverty reduction by implementing decentralised renewable energy solutions in off-grid rural areas of the global south. The new agenda should also seek to address gender equality on energy access and use by developing gender aware policies on energy. The framework could represent a unique opportunity to influence policy making at national and global level and could contribute to institutional change (Higgins). However a continuous dialogue at national level should be ensured throughout the process looking also at country specific issues (Nilsson et al).

Moving forward, to address gender disparity in energy use the SDGs not only should look into improving or expanding the access to energy services, but also to transform gender relations and roles in the society in a way that would take into consideration women's interests and needs both in terms of their daily routines and for the long term (Gupta). The SDGs should also aspire at much higher achievements on energy provision and service with a vision on industry, public service and businesses growth (Bazilian, 2013 and World Bank, 2013).

Notes

¹ Clancy (2004) provides an example of how activities that require the use of electricity in the household can have different impacts on men and women. For instance, for security issues, men would probably locate the light outside the house, whilst women would maybe install it in the kitchen to allow all households members to benefit from it.

² Household energy is seen by many authors as linked to other sectors such as education (after-school study for children), health (nutrition, absence of smoke deriving from the burning of cooking fuel) and income generation (working from home) and not only the more traditional cooking use (Klingshirn, 2000).

³ An elaboration of the theories on empowerment and equality goes beyond the confines of this article.

⁴ Poor households in rural areas usually spend 20% of their income on fuels and its use is often restricted to lighting (Barnes, 1995).

⁵ Women end up spending several hours a day gathering fuelwood lots of 20 kg or more (Smith, 1999).

⁶ Banks are generally reluctant to give loans to women as they don't have assets (Baden et al, 1994).

⁷ Gender equality strives for the integration of gender into planning and practice (Walby, 2005). Rees (1998) recognises three models of gender equality. The first, defined as 'tinkering' with gender inequalities pushes for sameness between men and women in male dominating rules; the second, called 'tailoring' identifies gender differences and seeks to fit women needs; the third, described as 'transformation', dictates a new standard for everyone to change gender relations (Walby, 2005 and Rees, 1998).

⁸ An agreement will also be required on the definition on basic electricity needs.

⁹ For instance a report by International Rivers that criticised the infrastructure strategy of the Group 20 and the World Bank shows that between 2000-2008 less than 1% of the World Bank investments were for biomass energy and cooking in Africa and globally (Bosshard, 2012).

¹⁰ For example the MDGs aimed at achieving education and equality in accessing education rather than targeting learning, literacy and gender equality (Camfield, 2013).

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The De-Construction of Masculinism in the Two Contemporary Nationalist Schools of Thought: Primordialism and Modernism

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Abstract

Feminist analysis has uncovered the gendered nature of nations and nationalism. Adopting such a perspective, the interrelation of masculinist language and the failure to regard the question of women in the two antagonistic conceptions of nations and nationalism; primordialism and modernism, have formulated a perpetuated masculine identity of the nation and located women continually outside the nationalist discourse. In this sense, this paper interrogates the construction of masculinism in the nationalist narrative in the two contemporary schools of thought; primordialism and modernism. Hence, this paper will uncover the constructions of masculinity within the nationalist discourse from a feminist perspective. This unearthing of the theoretical rooting of masculinism in the dominant theorisations of nations & nationalism will be detected in the writings of the four nationalist theorists; Harold R. Isaacs, Clifford Geertz, Hans Kohn, and Benedict Anderson.

One may reduce the preoccupations of national literature into two universal schools of thought; the primordialist and the modernist conception of the nation.¹ The universal theoretical debate between the two schools of thought is mainly based on two different conceptions; organic/natural or civic/modernist.² Primordialists view the nation as formulated by blood ties and kinship. This organic perception asserts that the nation is a 'given' and a natural extension of the family. However, the modernist school suggests that the modern concept of the nation has generated out of certain process of modernisation such as industrialisation (see Gellner), democracy (see Kohn

1954), print-capitalism (see Anderson), or state (see Breuilly). In surveying the theories of these two dominant schools, it becomes obviously apparent that their perspectives lack any gender consideration (men over women in the discourse and imagination surrounding nation).

Whilst the burgeoning scholarly literature on this topic suggests a growing commitment to exposing the ways nationalist narratives are underpinning a radicalised gendered imagining. However, the originality of this paper lies in proposing a new way in assessing the characterisation of each nationalist thinker thoroughly in terms of the usage of language and the conceptual nationalist ideas that overtly expose the long-standing disadvantage of women in the two dominant schools of thought; primordialism and modernism.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to examine the questions of how the notion of nation has been narrated, considering whom is doing this narration and to who the narration is addressed. In order to answer these questions, my analysis will be based on investigating this bias in discourse propagation through language and the absence of women in that 'imagining' by the prominent contemporary nationalist thinkers. I will address this masculinism in the writings of four theorists; two from the primordialist camp, Isaacs and Geertz, and two from the modernist school, Kohn and Anderson. Hence, this paper intends to address the nexus between nationalist appropriation of narration and the masculinist language of its writers that denies a specific gender its natural place in it.

Situating Gender in Narrated Nations

While examining these two schools of thought, the constructions of masculinism can be overtly detected in their theorisations of the nation. The conception of national identity can be traced in the way the narrative of the nation is structured, which is highly a reflection of normative masculinity. Within this context, an overview of how nationalist narrative has been contextualised

from a feminist perspective is essential for the assessment of how national identity is constructed, emphasised and contextualised by the formation of language.

It might be argued that given the time these texts were written that it is part of the tradition of the writing style to use the term 'man' as a substitution of 'human being'. However, the effect of this use on the perception of national identity is huge and significantly relating women to the domain of irrelevance. This is not to be considered a 'mere semantic hairsplitting', but rather 'provide one illustration of the ways nations are gendered-casually, implicitly, subtly' [and]... to make it clear that men are the natural proprietors of the nation, women are, at best, an afterthought' (Hogan, 5).

In relevance to the above, feminist scholarships on the construction of masculinism in the nationalist discourse expose the implication of this writing tradition on the inclusion of women in the political arena. As Susan Moller Okin argues:

it must be recognised at once that the great tradition of political philosophy consists, generally speaking, of writings by men, for men, and about men. While the use of the supposedly generic terms like "man" and "mankind", and of the allegedly inclusive pronoun, "he", might lead one to think that philosophers have intended to refer to the human race as a whole, we do not need to look far into their writings to realise that such an assumption is unfounded (1980, 5).

Okin further asserts that 'the dangerous ambiguity of such linguistic usage in a patriarchal culture...proceed to exclude women' (1980, 5).

Sheila Rowbotham goes further to illuminate that this exclusion in language is a reflection of women's absent image and voice from history. In her own words, she explains:

as soon as we learn words we find ourselves outside them. To some extent this is a shared exclusion. The word carries a sense of going beyond one's self, theory carries the possibility of connecting and transforming in the realm beyond self. Language conveys a certain power. It is one of the instruments of domination. It is carefully guarded by the superior people because it is one of the means through which they conserve their supremacy' (1973a, 32; see 1973b).

On the same track, Cynthia Enloe's demonstration of the affinity between women's missed image and the construction of nationalism is highly reflective of the fact that nationalism has 'typically sprung from masculinised memory, masculinised humiliation and masculinised hope' (1990, 45). This masculine imagination of the nation is further implied in the masculinist language structured by the most dominant nationalist theorists. Maurica Berger et al, argues that, 'the formation of gender differences in language-that is, the ways in which categories of the masculine and the feminine are defined by and eventually ingrained in language-most often produces a rigid and fictive construction of reality' (1995, 3-4). In this sense, this fixity of masculine language in the writing of the nationalist narrative constitutes 'the assignable difference between masculine and feminine' (Lyotard and Clarke, 9) and further postulates the masculinised perception of how a nation *is/should be* imagined.

Another important observation proposed by Joan W. Scott (1993), who masterfully demonstrates that the challenges of the problem of writing the history of the 'other', the history of 'difference', has gone unquestionable and become unthinkable. This linguistic bias can be traced in the writings of most contemporary theorists, by which their masculine language has become a naturalized given (397). He contextualises the authority of masculine writing infused with presenting one dimension of 'experience' and excluding the 'other' which is in turn reflected in the production of national identity (412). Hence, this subjective 'authority' reflected in the theorists nationalist language and perspectives have alienated the other (women), and more importantly produced

masculine biased mainstream (403, 405). On the same track, Homi Bhabha's influential book *Nation and Narration* (1990), laid the foundation for a new substantive tool in analysing the nation, right in the introduction he states: 'Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye' (Bhabha, 1).

In this sense, the national narrative is intimately the domain of an idealised *masculine* mainstream (Mayer, 2000, 9-11). As Jean-Francois Lyotard and Deborah J. Clarke, illustratively suggest that 'writing is a fact of virility' (1978, 9). Therefore, language portrays a form of power, the missing representation of women in the language of nationalist narrative further juxtaposes the deep emphasised masculine theorisation of nation. Hence, in the light of these observations, the masculinist terms used by the chosen theorists (Isaacs, Geertz, Anderson and Kohn) have formulated a biased perception of nationalism in the contemporary nationalist thought that is based on recognising men as the sole definers of the nation.

Harold R. Isaacs (1910-1986)

His book *Idols of the Tribe* (1975) provides a detailed analysis of the function of the primordial ties in formulating the group ethnic identity (36). In the light of the changing political circumstances, Isaacs offers an original reconsideration of the 'essential characteristics' shared between members of the group. He enlisted five essential characteristics that define the identity of a given group: body, name, language, history and origins, and religion. Although his core aim is to approach these identifications within the new political change, yet still the question of gender is systematically ignored.

Before surveying the definition of each characteristic, it is essential to look at how Isaacs defined the 'basic group identity'. He claims that the group identity is composed of 'the ready-made

set of endowments and identifications that every individual shares with others from the moment of birth by the chance of the *family* into which *he* is born at that given time in that given place' (emphases added, 38). This definition highlights three essentialist notions of the primordial theorisations of the nation. First, Isaacs argues that these shared characteristics are universal and given; second, he points at the naturalised inheritance of these ties through being born to this 'family'; third, and most importantly, this definition illuminates the linguistic masculine bias detected in Isaacs' language through using the pronoun 'he' in a way that shuns women from being included or considered. Furthermore, paradoxically, whilst Isaacs affirms the identification between 'family' and the 'group', the question of women is completely ignored.

On the same track, this failure to recognise women's ethnic contribution to the formulation of the group identity is overt in his argument of the 'shared physical characteristics' (38). He argues that among the initial set of inherited identifications with the given group is the 'parental genes-skin color, hair texture, facial features' (38). However, the term 'parental' cannot be but a reference to the father as overtly in his reference to the new-born child into the group (39).

Starting with what Isaacs called 'primary' physical identification; 'the body' (46), it is considered the most fixed given characteristics compared to others. He argues: 'the body is the most palpable element of which identity-individual or group is made. It is the only ingredient that is unarguably biological in origin, acquired in most of its essential characteristics by inheritance through the genes' (46). In addition to this definitive conception of the centrality of the body to the construction of the ethnic identity, Isaacs also claims that features such as 'skin color' plays central role in 'shaping' the identity of a given group. On the other hand, in order to preserve these 'physical sameness' (63), Isaacs argues that a preoccupied notion of 'purity' is condoned and practised by the sanction of intermarriages that threatens these 'physical sameness' (63). However, despite the overt relation to women in reproducing this indispensable physical feature, Isaacs exclusively considers this

'ancestral' inheritance as unrelatedly feminine by not demonstrating women's role in these physical formulations (46).

The second symbol of identity is the 'name', Isaacs defines the name as the 'most literal, and most obvious' (71). It's meaning is related to the acquisition of language and the construction of thought (71). Moreover, the name does not only represent the individual personal identity (75), but it also holds a set of social, political and historical dimensions of the whole given group (79). However, one cannot deny the fact that the meaning of names are composed of a specific version of a specific culture. They have an essential dimension in signifying the cultural formation of a given group. Hence, it can be argued that since names serve as codes of a specific ideological and cultural perceptions, women cannot be marginalised from being part and parcel in contributing to the socio-cultural meaning of the name which in turn serves as a symbolic identification of the whole group.

One further substantial strand to Isaacs's set of primordial ties, is language. According to traditionalist theorists, language serves as the most connoted identification of 'the self and the development of individual personality' (94). It is another cultural expression that defines the identity of the group (99). The significance of language is debated by Isaacs in the bond between the child and his mother-tongue. From the outset, this feature is signifying the gender bias of Isaacs's theorisation. He states: 'the mother tongue [is] among the earliest sounds a child hears...It conveys to *him* some of the first sensations, emotions, and meanings that he begins to experience' (emphasis added, 93). This definition, of course, is highly significant, in which it demonstrates two infused realities of Isaacs's approach. First, although arguably language is referred to as 'mother' and further the experience of its acquisition is identified with 'motherhood', but he ignored the roles of women in preserving it. Second, and more importantly, Isaacs's linguistic use of the pronoun 'he' is highly suggestive of his gender bias.

On the same track, the fourth primordial characteristics analysed by Isaacs is 'history and origins'. Again, the mother-child experience is masterfully juxtaposed with the group's relation to past. He states: 'The connection to the past, hardly less than umbilical itself, is made at almost the same instant the actual cord between baby and mother is cut' (115). These words are significant in further emphasising Isaacs's masculine bias against women, for whilst the use of motherhood is importantly denoting to the essentiality of women in formulating the identity of the group, on the other hand, it highlights the intended marginalisation of women in nationalist narratives.

Finally, religion is another definitive feature in a given group. It is a cultural identification inherited from the past (144). It serves as a 'bond and a tradition' preserved by the community in order to be shared among other members (145). Again, Isaacs disregards the centrality of women in transmitting and preserving religion through generations, which in turn leaves the impression that women's invisibility is heightened and emphasised.

In addition to the stated characteristics Isaacs's contextualisation of the transition from the tribe to the nation, also provides an essential characteristic of the masculine nature of his theorisation. Again, the question of women in the new defined political order is missed. In this regard, the nation in Isaacs's perspective is theorised as an expression of 'powerful primordial associations projected from one's own birth and one's own parents' (172). The term itself 'the nation' is further connoted by Isaacs as 'motherland' and in Latin 'to be born' (172); hence the very absorbed notion of the nation in Isaacs's theory has gender implication, yet it is ignored and marginalised.

Therefore, there is an oddly paradoxical relation between Isaacs's notion of ethnic identity and the question of women. On the one hand, these primordial characteristics play central role in defining the 'inwardness' of the individual in the group (45), yet this naturalised notion of the given

identity cannot be separated from women's genetic and cultural role in reproducing the identity of the group. Furthermore, throughout the exploration of the five defining primordial ties, one can notice that the question of gender has been systematically neglected. This bias is further heightened by the excessive use of the pronoun 'he' which is juxtaposed with identifying the experience of mother-baby relationship to the formation of the primordial ties. Hence, in the light of this apparent paradox, exploration of the set of primordial ties has been pursued by Isaacs with discriminative masculine and gender biases

Clifford Geertz (1926-2006)

The primordial perspective of the origin of nations postulates that nations are given and natural, this is further illustrated by one of the pioneering primordial figures, Clifford Geertz, who encapsulates that the primordial phenomenon:

stems from the givens...of social existence. [Moreover], one is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbour, one's fellow believer, ipso facto; as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself...For virtually every person, in every society, at almost all time, some attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural-some would say spiritual-affinity than from social interaction (1994, 31).

This naturalised perception of the nation is continued in his other books. For example, the title of his book *The Interpretation of Culture* (1993) is highly suggestive and denoting 'culture' as the most determining factor in formulating the nation. However, Geertz defines culture as 'webs' that spun the 'man' (5).

It could be argued that Geertz is not different from other theorists, his notion of the primordial ties and importantly the conception of culture is masculinist. A detailed chapter in his book

called: 'The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man' presents an illustrative connotation between the 'man' and the perception of culture. In more clear words, Geertz states:

what man is may be so entangled with where he is, who he is, and what he believes that it is inseparable from them. It is precisely the consideration of such a possibility that led to the rise of the concept of culture and the decline of the uniformitarian view of man (1993, 35).

The nature of this notion bears a close relationship to the development of the idea of culture as merely depends on man's conception of the nation. Instead of conceiving the notion of culture as related to women who play central role in reproducing and transmitting it from generation to generation, they are completely disregarded. Therefore, the ultimate meaning of culture in Geertz's assumption is problematically reduced and limited to the naturalization of masculine bias.

Another functional factor in constructing the dimension of culture is customs, which is described by Geertz as sufficiently represented by men (1993, 37). Oddly enough, the tradition of custom and dress is usually preserved by women as they are bearers of the 'spirit of collectivity' (Yuval-Davis, 45), yet Geertz presents the cultural perception as affected solely by men.

Modernist Thinkers

Hans Kohn (1891-1971)

Hans Kohn, in his book *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background* (1945) provides a detailed analysis of the origin of nationalism. His interest lies in analysing the roots of modern nationalism, without ignoring the 'universal' impact of nationalism on other parts of the world. In spite of his assertion that nationalism can be detected in the past (3), Kohn argues that in an age of revolutions (the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) the rise of nationalism cannot be unlinked to the growth of democracy and industrialism. Therefore, Kohn suggestively illuminates that

the transformation from old 'separate civilisations' to the modern notion of nations can be attributed to the 'ever-quickenning and ever-widening process of acculturation, economic exchange, and intensification of communication' (vii).

Kohn defied the naturalised conception of the nation, and rather affirms that it is 'a product of the growth of social and intellectual factors at a certain stage of history' (6). Rather, Kohn masterfully defines two fundamental factors to the formulation of modern nations: the objective factors such as a common geographical and political territory that is the *state*, and on the other hand that in order to formulate 'nationalities' there should be an 'active corporate will' that conceptualises the modern notion of nationalism (14-15). On the same track, Kohn criticised further the primordial based definition of nation on 'blood and race' and explicitly states: 'to base nationality upon "objective" factors like race implies a return to primitive tribalism. In modern times it has been *the power of an idea*, not the call of blood that has constituted and moulded nationalities' (emphasis added, 16).

Within this context, the correlated question is whose this 'idea' is envisaged by? How is it imagined, constructed and represented? And more importantly to whom is it addressed in Kohn's nationalist writings? In order to answer these questions, there is a need to look at how Kohn conceived the rise of the nation & nationalism. First, it must be argued that Kohn's theorisation is influenced by Renan's subjective conception of the nation. He affirms that the most essential factor in the formation of the nation is 'a living and active corporate will' (15) and a 'political organisation' that encompasses its members. It is quite noticeable that Kohn's extensive use of 'man' is part of his theorisation, he argues that:

nationalism is a *state of mind*, permeating the large majority of a people and claiming to permeate all its members; it recognises the nation-state as the ideal form of political organisation and the nationality as the source of all creative cultural energy and of economic

well-being. The supreme loyalty of *man* is therefore due to *his* nationality, as *his* own life is supposedly rooted in and made possible by its welfare' (emphasis added, 16).

Kohn deduced that nationalism is a psychological phenomenon that is legitimised by the will of the majority to live together. However, a close reading of his theorisation exposes his masculinist perception of the nation as formulated by the will of men.

Another illuminating definition of the rise of nationalism is that it is 'a state of mind, an act of consciousness', which since the French Revolution has become more and more common to mankind. The mental life of *man* is as much dominated by an ego-consciousness as it is by a group consciousness' (emphasis added, 10-11). Within this context, these definitions explicitly illustrate Kohn's bias against women; it is clear that the imagining of the nation is restricted to *man's* *consciousness and mind*, and what postulates the nation is a right exclusively given to men.

To this end, two fundamental phenomena can be summed from Kohn's theorisation; first, in spite of Kohn's opposition to the primordial identifications; blood, culture, and language, as the basis of the formulation of the nation, in his criticism he never refers to the role of women in defying this 'purified' notion of the nation perceived by the traditionalist. Second, his suggestive idea of the formulation of the nation as grounded solely in the will and the ego of the 'man', as shown earlier, importantly implies his masculine distinct imagination, infused and heightened by his ultimately masculinist language.

Benedict Anderson (1936-)

Not essentially different from Kohn's modernist perspective, Benedict Anderson's influential idea 'imagined communities' is strikingly similar to Kohn's perception of the nation as a political

organisation existed in the *man's mind*. Anderson's conceptualised notion of the nation is emanated by solidarity of 'brotherhood' (153). He provides an illustrative definition of the nation as 'an imagined political community-and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (5). He further conceived the nation as 'a deep, horizontal comradeship' and continually asserts that 'it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings' (7).

These definitions, therefore, are coercively masculine in ways that eliminate any theoretical consideration of gender. Directly related to this are the questions surrounding the imagination of the nation; by whom is it imagined, and to whom does the imagining relate? In order to answer these fundamental questions, I need to examine Anderson's argument of the demoted cultural 'certainties' (36) of the nation before it is 'imagined', and how he theorised the nation as an imagined, cultural product. Arguably, according to Anderson, nationalism is defined as 'cultural artefacts' (4) which in return laid the foundation for the emergence of imagined nation as a mere cultural production. This consideration is impressive in the light of the manly construction of the nation as grounded on the masculine prowess.

More worryingly, Anderson's insistence on the masculine construct of the nation is overt in his argument that once the nation is imagined it established its links between 'fraternity and power' (36). Hence, Anderson's argument is based on the belief that the rise of the modern conception of the nation is essentially based on the interlinked principles among masculinity, authority, and further contextually identified with the notion of 'patriotism' (141), and the dying for one's country (144).

Among the most predominant masculine encapsulation of the nation in Anderson's perception is the centrality of the 'Unknown Soldier' as an underpinning force in the 'national

imagining'. The Unknown Soldiers are a way of the constructed 'national imaginings' stirred up by Anderson as a mere masculine representation of the nation and nationality, that those strong soldiers had sacrificed themselves for the country/ the feminised body (9). Furthermore, Anderson argues that the emblems of the Unknown Soldiers signify 'the cultural roots of nationalism with death' and on the other hand, its relation arbitrary with 'immortality' (10). This cultural significance of the sacrifices of men in constructing the national imaginings of the nation is prominent in Anderson's analysis of the nation. He is further emphasising this contingent nexus in his conclusive remarks that the nation is only remembered of its dead sons, those who sacrifice for their fatherland (205-6), which significantly concludes that women have no place within this heroic context presented by the patriot man.

Moreover, Anderson remarkably signalled the interrelation between the rise of 'imagined nations' to the effect of the rapid economic change and increasing communication, and most importantly the impact of 'print-capitalism' which triggered the essence of deep personal reflection related to others (36). He further advocated the 'intellectual communication' among the intelligentsia who propagated a particular imagining of the nation (140). In this sense, this notion further asserts the masculine role elaborated by these intelligentsia in imagining the nation.

On the same track, Anderson attributed the birth of imagining the nation is only wherein certain 'cultural conceptions...lost their axiomatic grip on *men's* minds' (emphasis added, 36). In other words, the very initial process of imagining the nation, according to Anderson, was historically initiated by *men*. In this regard, Anderson argues that the theoretical debate of the historical origin of the 'imagined' nation encompass the decline of three fundamental *masculine* cultural conceptions. The first notion is that a certain 'particular script language' is believed to have an advantaged access to the 'ontological truth' (36), however, Anderson asserts the centrality of language and its rootedness in the past and he further argues its 'naturalisation' implication but never attributed its

preservation to the 'mother' (144-145).

This conceptualised notion of the language is further juxtaposed with Anderson's reference to the bond between mother and language, but never mentioning women's impressive contribution, he states: 'What the eye is to the lover-that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with –language- whatever language history has made his or her mother-tongue-is to the patriot. Through that language, encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed' (154). The significance of these wordings lie in the paradox implied in Anderson's notion of language as, on the one hand, a cultural production of imagining the nation, yet disregards the role of the mother.

Another demoted cultural conception that led to the possibility of 'imagining the nation' (36) is the disbelief in the naturalised conception of social hierarchy, and the claim that the dynastic order is divine. On the one hand, Anderson eliminated any conceptual recognition of the familial hierarchal bond among members of the family and emphatically ignored what he estimated elsewhere of how family was historically perceived as 'the domain of disinterested love and solidarity' (144). Within this context, he neglected the social hierarchy presented within the family between the man and the woman. Moreover, paradoxically, in spite of Anderson's awareness of the centrality of the 'dynastic marriages' in the formulation of fused populations (19-20), his theorisation of imagining the nation completely lacked any consideration of gender (19-20).

Third, and most importantly the notion that 'the origins of the world and of men [is] essentially identical' (36) indoctrinated masculinise affinity between the origin of men and the world. This, however, is not to be distinguished when most of Anderson's cultural conception of the emergence of nationalism is enunciated by a hegemonic masculine ideology.

To sum, although Anderson's perception of nationalism is very influential in generating original theoretical notions on the rise of nations and nationalism, but in the light of the above observations, it can be added that his theorisation is confined exclusively to the masculine-imagining of the nation. Even when the assumed impact of 'print-capitalism' is reproducing cultural conceptions of the nation, he eliminated the influentially rapid development of communication to the writings of 'intelligentsia' (140) and not to the fact that more women become illiterate accordingly and that their national role might be more significantly in need to be reconsidered.

Conclusion

In the light of the above illustrations, the contextualised interrelation between nationalism and the 'missed' representation of women within nationalist discourse (the writings of Isaacs, Geertz, Kohn, and Anderson) has been substantiated by the two contemporary schools of thought; primordialism and modernism. In this sense, the obsessive representation of the nation as a community of men, imagined for and by men has modelled the normalised masculine identity of the nation.

There can be no denying the fact that this empowered masculine identification between the nation and men is a reflection of what Tamar Mayer (2000) so masterfully states as 'nationalism is the exercise of internal hegemony' (2000, 1). While this hegemonic masculinisation of the nationalist narration constructs gender-stereotypes, the nation within these narratives is becoming 'gendered and radicalised' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 127).

However, it is essential to note that this alliance between nationalism and gender bias has been deconstructed by prominent theorists.³ Anne McClintock (1991) significantly indicates that 'all nationalisms are gendered, all are invented, and all are dangerous'. According to McClintock,

nationalisms are dangerous in the sense 'that they represent relations to political power and to the technologies of violence' (1991, 104-105). Moreover, Mosse argues that 'nationalism had a special affinity for male society and together with the concept of respectability legitimised the dominance of men over women' (67). Therefore, after the exploration of the narrative in the nationalist discourse, we are faced with the question of repressed women. The exclusion of women that demonstrates the 'reconsolidating centralised control of authority...including gender privilege' (Pettman, 138).

To conclude, this masculine bias traced in the dominant theorisations of nations & nationalism cannot be a 'coincidence', but rather stemmed from a 'male-defined' world where women are obscured in 'brotherhood'. Not to underestimate the excessive masculinist language used in the nationalist narrative, which is a revelation of the 'intense rejection' of women in history, furthermore, a reflection of how they are trapped in a world constructed and represented predominantly by men (Rowbotham 1972, 11). In this sense, this 'invisibility' underpins a distorted image of the nation confined to a masculinised propagation in nationalist discourse (1972, 12).

Hence, throughout this paper, it has been argued that constructions of the dominant theorisations of nations & nationalism, masculinity and gender biased language are not distinct realms in the narrated nationalist discourse; nor can their influence on creating a masculinised national identity be ignored or not examined. Rather, their relation to each other, though conflicting and contradictory- have invented an authoritative male-dominated imagination of the nation. Such articulations of the absence of gender theory and the imposition of masculinist language, detected in the four contemporary national theorists have articulated a macho-categorisation of the nation.

Notes

- 1 For further reading on this historical theoretical debate between these two universal schools, see Anthony Smith (1999); John Breuilly (1996); Michael Ignatieff (1994).
- 2 The contingent nature of the field, can be found in the writings of the founding fathers; Ernest Renan, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Johann Gottlieb Fichte. These philosophical

thinkers perceived the origin of the nation differently and highlighted different ideological tools that formulate and construct the ideology of nation's belonging. Arguably, the conceptualised views of these thinkers have been the ideological roots of the two emerged dominant schools in theorising nationalism; primordial/civic origin of the nation.

- 3 For further reading see: Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland*, p. 21; Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pp. 2-6; Victoria De Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922-1945*, pp. 2, 5-6; Tamar Mayer, *Women and the Israeli Occupation: the politics of change*, pp. 1-15; R. Radhakrishnan, 'Nationalism, Gender, and the Narrative of Identity' in *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, pp. 77-95 (p.78); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, p.4; and Jennifer Heuer, 'Gender and Nationalism' in *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview 1770-1880*.

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