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SOCIAL GENDER INEQUALITY IN SLOVENIAN POSTSOCIALIST CONSCIOUSNESS

Sociological Conference:

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE SOCIETIES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE SINCE THE FALL OF THE IRON CURTAIN

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The guiding question:

How the revived multidimensional misogyny orientation is expressed in the consciousness of adult population?
1 Changes in gender order during socialist system

Slovenia - the **early stage of socialism** (1945-1991, SFRJ) – gradual (slow) destruction of traditional androcentric institutional order (of „his story“), the diminishing of the discrimination against women and the strengthening of women‘s emancipation through:

- **egalitarianism** (regarding class, gender, religion) as official ideology (Communist party);

- political **driving forces**: women‘s organizations (autonom to 1953, later on as a part of the Socialist Alliance of Working People integrating men and women), caring for the shaping of necessary conditions for the factual gender equality;
1 Changes in gender order during socialist system

- **important legal acts** (particularly in the last two decades considering the work-family reconciliation, strategy of the „socially responsible parenthood“):

  - 1946: Constitution grants men and women equal rights;
  - 1974: Constitution grants women the free decision on giving birth; prolongation of maternity leave (from 135 days to 6 months);
  - 1976: the legal possibility of sharing of maternity(parental) leave;
  - 1986: the paid maternity/parental leave prolonged to 1 year
1 Changes in gender order during socialist system

Some indicators of the implementation of gender equality policy:

- increase of women‘s employment (1952: 33.3%, 1990: 47%), equal pay for equal work / value, economic independence;

- increase of women‘s enrolment in universities (undergraduate 1950: 30.6%, 1990: 59.6%; MSc degree / PhD 1975: 18.2% / 17.7%, 1990: 35.6 / 26.4%);

- increasing women‘s participation in political decision making (1986: 24% of delegates in the Assembly of RS);

- particularly in the 1970s and in the 1980s fairly well-developed welfare system with a network of social services (shaped without tutorship of the state: kindergartens, elderly homes, health centers).
1 Changes in gender order during socialist system

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The broader social environment in the second part of the 20th century:

discrimination against women – worldwide issue.

- **UNO** Decade of Women 1976 – 1985; world conferences (strategy) since 1975;

2 Transition and revitalization of sexism, misogyny

Slovenia:
since 1990 multiparty democracy, 1991 independant state, 1992 UN member, since 2004 member of EU.

The main characteristics of social context:

– **transition** from (selfgovernmental) socialist to capitalist economic system, justified by the „Europeanization“ (to come close to Western democratic societies) and permeated by the multiple hostility toward „communism“ and its social achievements (by the equalization of the „soft“ mode of selfgovernmental socialism with the model of strong state socialism in other Eastern countries);

– the **legitimization** of the transition mostly followed the **pattern of „integrated perversion“** with included multiple dehistorization, visible in the definitions of the opposite types of society:
2 Transition and revitalization of sexism, misogyny

... 

a) socialist society = „totalitarian“, bad, concentrated „evil“, it
should be destructed;

b) „developed democratic society“ is totally purified of all
negative structurally produced features and presented as a
concentrated well-being, respecting the „natural“ gender order.

− worsening of the social position of majority of people
(unemployment, increase of poverty risk), particularly of women
(overeducated), greater shares of women among unemployed,
parental leave is mainly used by women, etc.;

− revitalization of (latently continous) androcentric order:
  - „modernization“ = retraditionalization, recatholicization;
  - ...
2 Transition and revitalization of sexism, misogyny

... 

- „Back to the family“ and to the women‘s „natural“ role – the prevailing slogan, particularly of the right parties (Slovenian Christian Democrats and the issue of maternity leave, abortion, family law);

- nearly total exclusion of women from the political decision making (till 2000 under 10 % of women in parliament, till 2011 around 13 %, 2011 – 32 %);

- the role of the Catholic Church (direct and through the „civic iniciatives“) regarding the gender equality (attempts to redomestication of women, to control the reproductive behavior, etc.), Catholic Feminism.


– the activity of various women‘s organizations.
2 Transition and revitalization of sexism, misogyny

The broader social environment (world – EU) at the beginning of the 21st century:

− the increase of the social (class) inequality (SJM 2011/1 – the richest stratum is less in favour of gender equality);
− late capitalism and the (jeopardized) wellfare state;
− (in)compatibility of the economic efficiency (rationality) with the well-being system („human rationality“);
− the gender different (to the detriment of women) consequences of the shortening of the social state;
− gender equality issue in the crisis – „luxury“?
− antifeminist organizations and activities (religious fundamentalisms)
2 Transition and revitalization of sexism, misogyny

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– EU: gender equality – **one of the fundamental values** and one of the priority strategic objectives and action area in terms of the implementation of gender mainstreaming policy on all levels and in various fields; the base for the **effective diminishing of inequality between women and men**: a large number of measures of EU considering the practice and its regular monitoring (EC acts, directives, recommendations, documents, projects, publications, reports, conferences, workshops).
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness ...

The main **common direction** of mass consciousness regarding the gender (in)equality: from the egalitarian orientation through re-traditionalism (in the 1990s) to the prevailing egalitarianism with some traditionalist ingredients (in the second decade of the 21st century).

The **key tendencies** of the changeable mass consciousness of the adult population, shown by some representative indicators and based on the results of the opinion polls from 1991 to 2012 on the representative samples (Slovenian Public Opinion Survey – the same questions as in the ISSP, ESS, WVS):
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness...

Rejection of the one-bread-winner ideology and acceptance of two-bread-winner ideology (egalitarian standards). It is expressed by the (dis)agreement with the statement:

“A man‘s job is to earn money; a woman‘s job is to look after her home and family“.

![Graph showing (strong) agreement and (strong) disagreement over time for men and women.](image-url)
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness ...

„Both the husband and wife should contribute to the household income“
Decrease of attitude to the woman’s dependence, expressed by the agreement with the statement: "Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person".

**Graphs:**
- **(strong) agreement**
  - 1992:
    - Men agree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
  - 2003:
    - Men agree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
  - 2012:
    - Men agree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
- **(strong) disagreement**
  - 1992:
    - Men disagree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
  - 2003:
    - Men disagree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
  - 2012:
    - Men disagree: [Value]
    - Women: [Value]
Increase of acceptance of the principle of equal opportunities for the employment, shown by the rejection of the male priority, expressed by the agreement with the statement: "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women."

(strong) agreement

(1992) (strong) disagreement (2011)
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness ...

Diminishing of the „natural“ main woman‘s wish to be a „family being“, expressed by the agreement with a) the statement: „The job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children.“
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness ...

b) „Being a houswife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.“

(Strong) agreement

(Strong) disagreement
Decreasing conviction that the woman’s / mother’s employment is carried out to the detriment of children and family expressed by the agreement with two statements: 
a), “A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.”

![Graph showing trends in (strong) agreement and (strong) disagreement over time between men and women.](image-url)
3 Gender (in)equality in postsocialist consciousness...

b) „All in all, family life suffers when woman has a full-time job.“

(Strong) agreement

(Strong) disagreement
Everyday gender different participation at the housework (and care), expressed by weekly hours (in 2003): men 8, women 22. The support of greater inclusion of men into the household work, expressed by agreement with the statement: „Men should practise more household works than they are doing now.“ (2003)

![Bar chart showing gender difference in agreement with the statement.](chart.png)

The conviction that „men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children“ is prevalent at men and women (2008) 96%.
Thank you!