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Polina MILORADOVICH,

Georgia

frankly speaking

DON'T WORRY, HONEY, I AM HERE

genders have already exchanged their characteristics, but we keep ignoring it

I have a husband, Misha and we often argue with each other. Sometimes we argue as it is described below:

Me: I'm sick and tired of doing stupid dishes! Just imagine, Misha, that you have to go to an important meeting and have a lot of thing to do; would you do the dishes first?!

Misha: Just leave it alone. I'll do it later.

Me: Sure. I know the way you do it - two or three weeks after being asked.

Misha: No way, it will be earlier.

Me: ..and you will leave half of them dirty...

Misha: So what do you want?

Me: I want you to be able to replace me.

Misha: So that you'd replace me, huh?

Me: I have practically replaced you already, Misha.

Misha: Yeah, sure.

Me: What do you mean - "yeah"? Who picks you up by the car? Who plans the budget and keeps in mind all the expenses?

Misha: Don't forget to mention about who earns more.

Me: Yes, I will. Why in the hell all the men get so proud about their earnings, and are more than likely to ignore your wives' salary? Even if it is twice as big as the husband's? And if I mention it, why do you, Misha, start feeling brokenhearted?

Misha: You've become impossible; you are mean and nervous. I can't even tell you anything.

Me: And you, Misha, you've become too weak. I'd say you've become small-minded. You are not prod of me anymore, are you? You get mad about my business success, don't you? Let's just break stereotypes and life will be okay. I'd be earning money, and you'd take care of the family. Do you remember me doing all that when our kids were little? I was doing pretty well...

Misha: And I also should be the one who has babies, right?

Me: Comon, Misha. We already had babies, long time ago. Just stop it, if you have nothing to say in reply.

Here I start feeling sorry for Misha and blame myself for being too rude with him. I love Misha and I am ready to do everything to make him happy. But Misha doesn't want me to feel that way; he just wants to be a Big and Strong Man. When we walk together in the street, he holds my hand just as he would be patronizing and directing me. This is one of the weaknesses of him. We walk holding each others hands, but I know that this is me, who leads and directs him.



photo by Diana Petriashvili, Georgia

Rano BOBOJANOVA,
Tajikistan

double standards

ARE YOU MARRIED?

Many young women are more than likely to hear this question, when they try to get a job. There is an unofficial regulation for those who chose staff for governmental structures: in order to build a successful career a woman has to be married.

Experience, education and skills will be automatically undervalued in the case if a woman applicant is divorced. A woman I know applied to a position at khukumat, where she was already registered as a potential worker. When asked about marital status, she replied saying that she was divorced, and was not accepted for the position.

A woman, during her entire life 'reports' to parents, neighbors, and colleagues. A lot of divorced women feel themselves guilty and as not-equal representatives of the society. A divorced woman is judged by relatives, neighbors, and friends. She is automatically considered guilty; while divorced men have no problems at all. Each of them have a chance to get married again, moreover they can marry a virgin woman. For these men it's a matter of prestige and pride. At the same time, not every divorced woman can marry even a widow or a divorced men, while the candidacy of a single man is considered as absolutely impossible. Sometimes divorced women become unofficial third or fourth wives.

This is why Tajik women get divorced only when it is absolutely impossible for them to live in the family. The percentage of divorced couples in our country is very low. In 1988 it made 7.9 per all registered marriages, in 1998 it reduced to as low as 0.4%. Generally, these divorces take place in the age interval between 20-30. Divorces depend on the term of marriage, most often divorces take place during first 5 years of marriage. Previously the number of children in the family played the major role in keeping the family, but presently there is the tendency of reducing the importance of this factor. Urban residents have more chances to create a new family. But the index of divorces for these new families is 75% higher, compared to the first marriages. The second marriages can be formed through Nikokh tradition, and oftentimes they are not registered officially. Women undertake this step even knowing that their rights to divorce and to have a share in family property can be protected only in the case marriage was registered officially.

Vyafa SALEH, Lala MUSAEVA,
Azerbaijan

reality

MEN JEALOUS ABOUT WOMEN'S SUCCESS

while women do their best to act 'as it is supposed to' in order not to hurt men's feelings...

A woman continues being behind men, considering variety of parameters; both statistics and real life proves this all the time. Politics and key managerial positions are occupied by men. According to the information provided by the employment service, unemployed women make over 22 percent of able body population; while the percent of unemployed men is as low as 16.2 percent. Despite legally provided equality of men and women regarding the property issues, the index of state assets' privatization is not included in the official statistics system. The privatization has 'male' image: 90 % of those who have privatized something are men. Only 7 % of privatized units belong to women. According to the results of one of the researches held in Azerbaijan recently, 85 % of women do not wish to start private business. As the main reason for this they indicated obstacles

created by men. Among the reasons listed was the absence of moral support from their families and husbands.

Men's jealousy towards women's activeness is a very serious obstacle. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Azerbaijani women have gained definite positions recently. But another fact is that they remain to be suppressed by men. This pressure can be both direct and indirect, when it involves the use of such abstracts as traditions, customs and mentality along with the formulations on "how things are supposed to be." For instance, our society watches very suspiciously those women who return home from work late. Where has she been? At work? At a meeting? Business trip? All this is not for a woman. An appropriate

Azerbaijani women should stay at home all the time, in the opposite, she will automatically become a subject for suspicions and rumors. It is quite often that women refuse from developing their career in order to avoid problems with "public opinion"



photo by Diana Petriashvili, Georgia

Sofia KASYMOVA,
candidate of philosophy science,

Tajikistan

role crisis

DO THE MEN OF TAJIKISTAN CHANGE?

the changes in their lives are essential, but not recognized by the society yet

These changes are very important for today's society of the country. According to the official statistics, during 1991-1996 men's labor activeness in Tajikistan decreased from 60 to 54 percent, while this indicator for women increased from 40 to 46 percent. It is widely recognized that the collapse of Soviet Union was followed by the destroy of previous economic system. Previously, a man used to be the head of the family and its main bread-earner; with the help of state social protection programs, free of charge education and health-care he could maintain a large family, while presently it is difficult for him to make both ends meet.

At the same time, women enter the labor market and. In the beginning of 90-s this was a forced solution not only for single women but for the majority of married as well. During the period of civil war, it was easier for women to transport within their country, than for men.

According to the evaluation of experts, presently Tajikistan faces the change of traditional labor distribution. Economic crisis resulted, besides other, in the problem of labor migration, which involves more than a half of able-bodied Tajik men. Despite women also participate in this kind of migration, their number is lower, while in some regions of the country, up to 80 percent of men aged 18 - 45 are presently involved in labor migration. Among these men there are qualified professionals, such as teachers, doctors, engineers, but all of them are occupied with heavy non-qualified labor in the fields of construction and trade. These men lose their qualification, and the return to their previous labor activity will be very problematic. Besides this, heavy physical labor, privation, and moral pressure abroad are more than likely to influence men's health and psychical condition.

Men's traditional role in Tajikistan is that of a bread-earner and an owner. But today's material difficulties lessened men's power in the family. Sometimes men still demonstrate it, but most of the times only symbolically. The situation leads to conflicts in the family, as the husbands, who are unable to bring enough income to the family express their aggression in the family. The aggression leads to the increase of such problems as drug addiction, alcoholism, suicide, criminality...

Definite researches prove that men dominate among the victims of serious types of violence. According to Tajic statistics, men twice as often as women die in accidents, murders, suicides.

This tendency can be seen in other countries of the former Soviet Union - in Russia, Latvia, Estoni, Kazakhstan and other.

Sergey LESKOV,
Russia

self-criticism

MESALLIANCE

why have Russian men become sterile

Everybody talks on politics today. There is an opinion that the level of nerve-strain in today's Russia equals to that back hundred years ago

History proves that every social revolution begins with that within the family. Despite other nations who tried revolution themselves, a Russian man finds himself unable to restore a normal life. He looks like a bad watchmaker, who took the watch to pieces to repair them and fails to assemble it again. Our reforms and initiatives which appeared during several recent years scare foreigners with common sense. Russian man can do only one thing - to sell his neighbors everything that the nature granted him. He can't do anything himself. A friend of mine who has recently returned from Kurban-Bairam from one of the regions with predominating ethnic minorities, said that Tatar women have a new fashion: they marry Russian men, because the latter are stupid and it's easier to control them. Don't get too upset, there is nothing new in this statement. An idiot - is the best hero of Russian folklore. Russian folkloric woman can be quarrelsome or greedy, but was never suspected in stupidity. Our woman is Vasilisa the Wise, and Yelena the Beautiful, but her husband is a full, a comic personage.

Russian man doesn't want to learn anything. But he does not get ashamed because of his stupidity, but even is proud of this just it's a service in battle. All our leaders we had recently are not the smartest persons in the world, speaking frankly. We do not want to have smart leaders. We even publish books with their stupid quotations and feel happy about all this, instead of being ashamed in front of the entire world.

Nowhere else wives insult their husbands as often as in Russia: "My husband is a loser." It is quite often that a Russian husband entirely depends on his wife's earnings. It is surprising that Russian men can be fathers. But even this happens more seldom than previously.

Source:
<http://izvestia.ru/columnist/article1074593>

Bermet TUGELBAEVA,
senior lecturer, chair of criminal law
Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University,
Kyrgyzstan

scientifically

MEN'S ROLE CHANGED

*it presently faces a crisis,
 which needs reconsideration of gender stereotypes*



photo by Umida Akhmedova, Uzbekistan

The studies of gender socialization of an individual proves that, gender roles changes are sometimes very negative for men. This can be viewed at three levels - individual, interpersonal and social.

At the individual level, a man's efforts to keep his position of the bread-earner and the head of the family places him in the circumstances of severe psychological and economical pressing.

In Kyrgyzstan, average live length of men makes 65 years, which is 7- 6 years less than analogous index for women; the coefficient of suicides, at the same time, is 4 times higher among men and equals 49.8 per 100000 of population.

According to the suicide preventive service of Moscow, since 1992, among the men's suicides reasons, stress situations were recognized as those most common. The researches of I. Kalbakhina in Russia proved the dependence of men's death-rate on the gender factor. The previous reasons for men's mortality, such as low self-preservation, use of alcohol, etc, remain to be important and cause the first peak of mortality at the age of 20-30 years for men. But there appeared also the second top of the problem, which targets men of 40-50 years old, when men face severe crisis of their traditional gender roles.

At the same time the myth regarding men's endurance and resistance to stresses remains wide-spread, and it is believed that men can overcome their problems better than women. Men's intercourse in general does differ from that of women, but psychologists state that oppressed emotions can seriously damage a person's energy potential.

A men's gender role becomes undermined by economic and social-physiological factors, while idealistic assumptions regarding "men's behavior" have practically remained the same. As a result, men's gender-role conflict becomes the source for additional worries and tensions. In these circumstances, a lot of today's men experience negative stress feelings, such as constant worries, depressions and other. The fact that able-bodied men's death rate in Kyrgyzstan is almost three times higher than women's can be considered as evidence.

(fragment from the speech at international conference *Genderstan-2004: Cooperation of Men and Women for Achieving Gender Equality*, Bishkek, November, 2004)



photo by Diana Petriashvili, Georgia

Galina PETRIASHVILI,
Georgia

hard style

HIERARCHY UNAVOIDABLE!

*it keeps turning over and
returns to its initial and
biologically conditioned
situation*

When talking on the problem of achieving gender equality, or at least of coming closer to it, we reasonably mean equal legal protection, proportional representation at power bodies, equal distribution of family duties, etc. This is all correct. But these minor demands are supposed to give some result to the global situation, what is that result? Achievement of balance is the try to even that fantastic contortion, faced by our civilization. It might be useful to think what should be received as the result? Is it possible to obtain gender equality evolutionally? And gender equality - in general? Or it is, maybe, an utopia, just as the equality of classes?

Different reproductive abilities of the genders, different, unequal reproductive functions are the objective reality. Is it possible that this reality is the exact reason for the gender hierarchy? From this point of view, today's men's domination is the culture-historical incident, when the power was obtained by men because of some misunderstanding. The conclusion can be that we are presently facing the very beginning of

global gender power redistribution. The result of this stage will be just as unfair from the idealistic positions, but probably more logical. That will be the new hierarchy, or, in other words, old hierarchy, but just turned over.

Men give up their positions slowly but inevitably. Nothing special happened this far, actually; there were just some minor battles won, which is the appearance of feminism, which is only some 200 years old. Industrial, scientific and technical revolutions and globalization can also be considered as small victories. The process of women's first efforts to understand themselves has just started...

It is necessary to note that, man gained the very maximum from evolutionary fact of our joint stay in the caves. But during all our post-cave history, he kept degradation - slowly but steadily. The issue of privileges had been becoming more and more important, as the aggressive environment and the necessity to protect someone physically went farther. Why - privileges?

The deity of female reproductive function, was not understood by the man, who undermined the function to the level of banal common action (it can be imagined what dividends would the man get, if he'd have this function). This is the metaphysical guilt and the problem of the man.

The problems of today's society are the problems of men, and they are caused by the discrimination of a woman. To pardon a woman and to treat a man - this is basically what the idea of gender equality is aimed at. Man's problems are the problems of discrepancy, the subconscious feeling of this lays in the aspiration to keep the supremacy, which occurred only a c c i d e n t a l l y. Thousands of years of human history were spent for this purpose. But the logic of normal state of affairs is - the supremacy of a woman. She has far more resources than a man. The main difference is the ability to give birth.

Let's also keep in mind certain achievements of scientific-technical progress. Isn't it possible that the most forcible argument belongs to Scottish lamb Dolly? Regardless the evaluations and opinions on cloning, might become a woman's global revenge, and a man's final technological fiasco. Besides it, the conditions for existence become more difficult and require from a person to be 'multi-profile' for being able to resolve many tasks and implement different functions. Only woman can lull a baby, cook dinner and think about her doctoral thesis at a time... Her ability to orient in several tasks at a time gives her way more competitive advantage, in contrary to a man, who feels more comfortably doing his tasks in turn.

As a result, we are presently facing the beginning of the turning point, which is caused by thousands-years-old men's chauvinism. Action equals counteraction. What happens after the roles are redistributed? A terrible power, matriarchate will appear; and the huge women's experience of discrimination, internal knowledge, accumulated for the future, and intuition will be the scary components of the power

*("Verdict: Woman. Diagnosis: Man,"
fragment of the article)*

**Alma BEKTURGANOVA-ANDERSEN,
Denmark**

searching harmony

MEN AND WOMEN EQUAL IN THE FACE OF LORD

*says Birgitta Poulsen, pastor at one of
Copenhagen congregations*

Soon after my arrival to Denmark, in last summer, I was invited to christening. I was very surprised when discovered that the ceremony was lead by a women-priest

Birgitta Poulsen, pastor at one of Copenhagen congregations agreed to be interviewed.

She did not like as a priest, as I imagined them: she was wearing blue jeans, and an informal shirt; she is energetic and laconic.

- *Why did you decide to become a priest?*

- I'm coming from the priests' family and know this job well. My grandfather and both brothers of my mom are pastors. But that was not the only reason, of course... When I was 18 , I lost my friend. His death affected me so much, that I could not stop thinking about all these issues. I've been always in close relations with my grandfather, but we became even more close after this sorrow that I experienced. We started talking a lot, I kept asking variety of questions. I began reading more, studying more. It was a long way..."

- *Do you think your profession is usual for a woman?*

- Nowadays - yes. There are more girls than guys at theological departments. But I would like to have gender parity, so that one gender does not dominate over the other. Although, today, there are no women priests in the most conservative part of Denmark, in the country's North-West."

- *How did you family react to your decision?*

- Uncles and grandfather supported me. And the entire family treated my decision with understanding. My parents are social workers; our house has always been full with different people, we hosted homeless children or a woman who had to leave her husband because of violence against her. This also affected my choice.

- *Are there any professional differences between woman and man priests?*

- There were no differences when we were at the university, but once we started direct work, these differences appeared. I'd say that women prefer individual work with particular person, they visit parishioners very often; they work individually with olds, women, children. Men indeed are stronger in preaching, they direct people towards God through public conversation with them. They are good at convincing large groups of people. The way we preach is also different. Men are more personalized, they talk a lot about their own views, examples, they are more categorical. Women pastors, as a rule, forget about themselves, their sermons are more directed to others.

- *How do parishioners like you? Is there anything special between the attitudes towards men and women pastors?*

- I think they like me. I feel no special attitude about me being a woman. For them it is important my individuality, and not my gender. There are two pastors in our parish, and both are women. We are different and we have different views at theological problems. Every parishioner



photo by Alma Bekturganova-Andersen

HISTORY OF THE ISSUE

In Island, the first woman priest appeared in 1974 under the law adopted in 1900, which stated the equality of men and women regarding the equal rights of holding governmental positions. In Denmark and Norway, the laws granting woman the right to become a priest were adopted in 1938 and 1947, while first women priests appeared in early 1960-es both in Norway and in Denmark. In 1980-is there appeared first women abbots, in 1990 a woman, Carolina Kruuk was elected as the primarius, the abbot of Dom Cathedral in Stockholm. First woman bishop, Maria Yeleen was elected in 1992 in Hamburg. After her, A. U. Larson was elected to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of America. In Denish Church, presently every the third priest is a woman, while every the fourteenth priest (14 percent) expresses his protest against women priests.



photo by Alma Bekturganova-Andersen

chooses the one he likes more. My colleague is more expressive, she is a rhetorician; while I am a shy person.

- *Is the appearance of women pastors related to the women's fight for their right?*

- It is hard for me to answer this question, but I think yes, it is related. In 1960-es-1970-es, the women's movement of Denmark was very strong, today it is less relevant, I think. But the fight for women's rights of course was necessary. All people are equal, Jesus said this.

- *Do priests in Denmark participate in pre-election agitation?*

- As private persons we participate in elections, at the sermons we can express our opinion regarding an issue. For example, while preparing Sunday speech, I always watch TV and read newspapers. If there is a publication that I find interesting I can mention it to the parishioners.

- *Is it possible for a priest to be a party member?*

- Yes of course, I know a lot of my colleagues who are members of certain political parties.

Natalia DOMAGALSKAYA,
Kyrgyzstan

diversity

TWO STORIES of men and women lives

STORY NUMBER ONE

A REAL POLICEWOMAN!

Little Kulupa liked most of all when there was order and justice around her. Back in her childhood, she was strict but fair towards her little brothers; parents used to tease her: "just look at that policeman!" And finally Kulupa became a policewoman. Presently Kulupa Musuralieva is a lieutenant colonel and heads the republican Inspection on Underage Children

At the very beginning of her career, she was appointed as the head of department at the only Kyrgyzstan's women's colony in Stepnoe village. She did her best to understand all the problems of the prisoners, recorded all their requests and always tried to fulfill them, as she believed that behind every woman prisoner there are also children - not guilty and yet punished. She lived at the territory of the prison, in the non-comfortable barrack, as did not have her own apartment and it would be too hard for her to travel every day to Stepnoe from the city. She worked a lot, participated in night checks of the prison along with male ensigns. And was also taking care of her son - all alone, as

divorced her husband. The husband was an opera singer, who graduated from the arts institute with her support; it finally became impossible to control his unpredictable behavior, resulting from alcohol use and Bohemia lifestyle. She never married again despite men liked her, feminine, beautiful, optimist and jolly. But every time, when a new admirer would find out her job, romantic relations disappeared.

The most part of the lieutenant colonel's life is presently related to the work at the underage children inspection. A bag with everything necessary for a sudden business trip is always ready to be used; the trainings at gym and shooting-ground take place very often, despite Kulupa is already a grandmother. Sharp rebukes by the command, including those absolutely unfair do not foresee any difference regarding genders.

She is generally occupied with "kids" - this is the destiny of those women who want to work at the police, regardless of preferences, a wish to develop career and earn a higher pension.

But her men-colleagues respect Kulupa. Because she's a real policewoman: gentle, despite working equally with men; always ready to help and to burst out laughing - at herself, at someone's good joke or just because of just being happy.

STORY NUMBER TWO

GIRLS AND THE SNAKE

He just demanded not to use his real name:

- Just stage-name. I am the Snake, the entire town knows this pseudonym.

- *Why the Snake?*

- Because I am as plastic as a snake. And besides this, I am a seducer for many.

We talk in the littery cloakroom of a nightclub. It is almost a midnight and music is plaid really loud. The audience is impatiently waiting for the Snake's performance; that will be the very climax for tonight.

- *How old are you?* - I ask him.

- Twenty six. But please write that I'm twenty three.

I shrugged my shoulders - there is no principal difference between 23 and 26, but I continue asking him: were did he study, what he wanted to become in childhood, how did it happen that he became a strip dancer, how much does he earn, and do women bug him?

The Snake grew up in a happy family with moderate income, he was the only child. In childhood he dreamed about becoming a hockey-player, but that never happened, as there is no ice in Kyrgyzstan. Snake says this makes him angry, as if he'd play hockey, his life could be absolutely different.

He also wanted to go to army, but changed his mind when reached the army age.

Finally he became seriously interested in dancing. Began trainings, which lasted for many hours daily, and started doing pretty well. Parents reproached for not earning his money, as it is not easy to make money by dancing in our town. But finally he succeeded: because of the money he earns now, parents stopped their reproaches and are now okay about him not being at home in the night.

- *Do they know exactly what you do for life?*

- Not exactly, but I think they guess. Let's not talk about this, I don't like this topic.

- *Okay, never mind it. What is the most important in your art?*

- I always try to perfect myself; I used to dance alone, but now I generally chose the prettiest and energetic girl from the crowd dance with her, and not only get naked myself, but undress her as well. I know how to do it, girls generally like it.

- *No problems appear about undressing girls?*

- It happens sometimes Just the other day - I was undressing a girl, and suddenly her boyfriend came from the outside, it turned out that he just went out for a smoke. I simply did not see him, I would not play with his girl - there are so many single girls around. That guy turned out to be the police captain, and hit me in the face Finally I had to leave the place from the back door, despite I was wearing my stage suite. I kept calling here all night, wanted to come and finish the job, but the administrator advised me not to do so, because that Othello gathered an entire police unit, and they were waiting for me. In reality I just pleased his girl, he could thank me

- *What about the girl?*

- Have no idea. I was too busy this spring March the 8th is the beginning of the season; after this date I often receive calls for perform at someone's home. This is how the girls make birthday presents to their friend sometimes. It doesn't happen in winter, but in spring and summer there are a lot of corporate meetings, picnics, pool parties

- *Do they pay okay?*

- Well this is a secret, actually. But I will tell you. Sometimes I earn up to \$ 200 a month.

I was shocked, but I guess the Snake did not really understand my reaction. And than the celebrity of half-illegal clubs said something that I just have to capitalize. He said: "What surprises you? I could be getting more, but WOMEN TAKE A REST SO SELDOM!"

Some employee of the club opened the door and said: "come on, baby! Get ready. There are three guys - two Canadians and an American. Make them like you." I figured out that the interview was over; the Snake should go to the arena.

Alla PYATIBRATOVA,
Kyrgyzstan

consider for a moment

THE CONFLICT - BETWEEN THE WOMAN AND THE SOCIETY

*Men always, historically watch women very carefully.
 They seem to be afraid that we somehow become equal with them*

Just think about these popular word-combinations: men and woman, boy and girl Even the language keeps the forms indicating the "proper" position to women. Only 'ladies and gentlemen' is the rare exception, which highlights the general rule.

The 'secondarity' of a woman can be seen even in the constitution of Kyrgyzstan (I assume that not only in Kyrgyzstan), which does not include grammatical feminine gender for the word 'citizen'.

Here is another example: the classical Russian writer Maxim Gorky wrote: "the health of a nation can be defined by the society's attitude towards a woman." It turns out that a woman is not the member of the society, doesn't it? The society views woman as some separate substance.

A well-known postulate also confirms the thesis: "the main indicator for the well-being of the society is the status of women and children." It again highlights that "women" are not the "society." An children of course, are considered as people only nominally.

The same division can be read in the Tibet Gospel, where Jesus says, when calling on respecting women as future mothers: "The love towards woman ennobles a person." A woman and a person are again separately. The sentence would be different if, there would be a period mark after the word "ennobles": "The love towards woman ennobles."

But of course we can assume that someone recorded Jesus incorrectly...



photo by Umida Akhmedova, Uzbekistan

SOS

This is the sixth edition of the magazine "CaucAsia".
The magazine is prepared on volunteer basis.
The success, which our work has, will hopefully interest some donors.
We look forward to your proposals!
Sincerely,
"CaucAsia"

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