A RADICAL DIMENSION OF NORMALITY: BEAUVOIR AS DIVINER OF MASCULINE MADNESS IN ORDINARY MEN

UMA DIMENSÃO RADICAL DA NORMALIDADE: BEAUVOIR COMO ADVINHA DA LOUCURA MASCULINA NOS HOMENS COMUNS

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ABSTRACT

Simone de Beauvoir witnessed Hitler's Nazis systematically murdering six million European Jews, as an unremarked second genocide excluded Woman in the Western cultural imaginary. Ever prescient she divined this eruption of masculine madness not as something exceptional but as the surface condition of masculinity, of ordinary men capable of unordinary acts. For centuries endemic patriarchy subjugated and oppressed women, but ordinary men argue that the exclusion and oppression of women, and particularly the violence inflicted on women, is not their fault: that nature or biology, reason or rationality, a beast stirring beneath their consciousness, makes them do it. Beauvoir divined this as the radical dimension of normality, men, ordinary men, doing unthinkable things.

KEYWORDS: Simone de Beauvoir; masculinity; oppression of women

RESUMO

Simone de Beauvoir testemunhou os nazistas de Hitler sistematicamente assassinando seis milhões de judeus europeus, assim como um genocídio despercebido excluindo a Mulher no imaginário cultural ocidental. Sempre presciente ela adivinhou esta erupção de loucura masculina não como algo excepcional, mas como a condição superficial da masculinidade, de homens comuns, capazes de atos não corriqueiros. Durante séculos, um patriarcado endêmico subjugou e oprimiu as mulheres, mas homens comuns argumentam que a exclusão e opressão das mulheres, e em particular a violência infligida às mulheres, não é culpa deles: que a natureza ou a biologia, a razão ou a racionalidade, uma besta mexendo abaixo de sua consciência, é o que os obriga a fazer isso. Beauvoir adivinhava esta como a dimensão radical da normalidade, homens, homens comuns, fazendo coisas impensáveis.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Simone de Beauvoir, masculinidade, opressão das mulheres

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1. Introduction

Simone de Beauvoir at the height of her powers in the mid-twentieth century divined the radical dimension of normality, as men, ordinary men, doing unthinkable things. She witnessed the atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and watched as Hitler's Nazis systematically murdered six million European Jews, including one million children and two million women. Ever prescient she divined this eruption of masculine madness not as something exceptional but as the surface condition of masculinity, of ordinary men capable of unordinary acts.

For centuries endemic patriarchy subjugated and oppressed women, but ordinary men argue that the exclusion and oppression of women, and particularly the violence inflicted on women, is not their fault: that nature or biology, reason or rationality, something else stirring beneath their consciousness, makes them do it.

2. Nature or Biology

Is biology to blame?

The human being is not just animal, not just nature. Humans have the capacity to go beyond nature, beyond sentience, to self-consciousness, subjectivity, ethics and morality. According to Simone de Beauvoir it is impossible to propose ethics to man (human) if one defines him as nature, as something given. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel tells us in the last part of The Phenomenology of Mind that moral consciousness can exist only to the extent that there is disagreement between nature and morality (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 10).

Despite that, evolutionary psychologists frequently liken contemporary humans to their hominid antecedents, claiming that modern humans are just an evolutionary Nano-second away from their predecessors who lived in caves. Prehistoric men, the story goes, were dominant providers and women were subservient food preparers, sex slaves and mothers. We are today, they claim, cave dwelling primates in suits and skirts, subject in everyday life to our biological differences; we are, in short, social beings whose status and behaviour are determined by biology.

Biological determinism forms the basis of a structural system of masculine advantage and misogyny that draws on structuralist universality, and a lineage of ancestral and biological causality that is entirely consistent with the views of great thinkers like Charles Darwin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Hegel.

Hegel's contribution to the discourse of biologically determined masculine advantage and the exclusion of women sees him comparing men to vital animals, and women to dumb, static plants. He warns that if women are put in charge, we are all in danger because their decisions will be based not on universal principles but on arbitrary inclinations and emotional opinions. He writes in his Philosophy of Right:

> Women may be well educated, but they are not made for the higher sciences, for philosophy and certain forms of artistic production which require a universal element. Women may have insights, taste and delicacy, but they do not possess the ideal. The difference between man and woman is the difference between animal and plant; the animal is closer in character to the man, the plant to woman, for the latter is a more peaceful [process of] unfolding whose principle is the more indeterminate unity of feeling. When women are in charge of government, the state is in danger, for their actions are based not on the demands of universality but on contingent inclination and opinion (HEGEL, 1991, p. 207).

The writings of influential thinkers serve to establish and reinforce stereotypical social values disadvantageous to women; they make a contribution to the belief system that stops men facing the reality that their privilege is unearned and inequitable.

If biological determinists, including Darwin, Rousseau and Hegel were right, then they would be on safe ground. The question is, does their certainty about Nature's grand design privileging ordinary men have any basis in fact?

Beauvoir said that it is impossible to propose ethics to man if one defines him as nature; and of biology she says, "by its light alone we could never decide the primacy of one sex or the other" (BEAUVOIR, 1997, p. 68). Assessing the very fundamentals of biology and gender she acknowledges sexual difference, that males and females are different, but finds that 'never' could we use biology, biological differences or sexual differentiation to determine the 'primacy' of one sex over the other. Her use of primacy is interesting given its shared etymology with primate – from Latin primas, primat- 'of the first rank'. Primates enjoy primacy in the animal kingdom; humans have primacy among

primates; and there the primacy taxonomy ends. Evolutionary biology has delivered primacy to humans, but biology does not determine primacy of men over women.

Biological determinists reject the premise that in biology no primacy exists between the two sexes. Darwin for example, states unambiguously that male humans are superior to female humans.

Toril Moi accuses biological determinists of taking this even further when they claim that nature and biology ground social norms; that sooner or later biological differences will express themselves in the form of social difference. This is the bio-determinist lineage stretching from Rousseau 230 years ago, through Darwin 150 years ago to today and beyond: that biology has determined males to be the stronger, more fearless and in every way the superior sex, and that this biological advantage must apply in social relationships, i.e. between genders.

This argument is strong however only if evidentiary causality exists between biology and society. According to Moi, as soon as we deny there is a necessary relationship between human biology and social organization we can cheerfully accept that there are biological differences between men and women without believing that this gives us grounds for organising society in an unjust and non-egalitarian way (MOI, 1999, p. 384-385).

Beauvoir raises the stakes by declaring that in truth a society is not a species, for it is in a society that the species attains the status of existence (BEAUVOIR, 1997, p. 68). By society Beauvoir refers to the body politic, culture, and ultimately the social typology: man or woman. And by species she is referring to the body biological: male human or female human.

Scientist Stephen Jay Gould's devastating critique of selfish-gene theory destroyed the belief that in humans social behaviour is genetically determined, and in doing discredited the theories of Richard Dawkins. Sex in the language of Gould is genotypical, resulting from the expression of genes, while gender is phenotypical, resulting from the expression of an organism's genes as well as the influence of environmental factors and the interactions between the two (GOULD, 1990, p. 72-78). In this context environmental factors are social, political, economic. Gender is therefore phenotypical, an outcome of the complex interplay between sex, body, feminine/masculine, and social factors.

Borrowing from Šaumjan Soboleva, Julia Kristeva talks of a linguistic distinction between the genotext and the phenotext. Kristeva's genotext is composed of a space that is pre-linguistic and pre-subjective; it inhabits a place that is pre-gender; original sex: "Unstructured and unstructuring, the genotext has no knowledge of the subject" (KRISTEVA, 1969, p. 223). The phenotext is a complex outcome, a becoming, an interpretation; an algebraic way of constructing meaning, it contains the [non-Lacanian] mirror effect of germinating and producing infinitely elastic, motile meaning.

While Kristeva uses these terms to populate a linguistic universe, the parallels with pre-subjective genotypical sex, and the complex becoming of phenotypical gender are clear. Indeed they are allegoric for sex and gender: genotext for sex and phenotext for gender. Recasting Kristeva in Elizabeth Grosz (GROSZ, 1989, p. 51): sex and gender function together but not always in exactly the same way or to the same degree. This is an effect of socio-political and historical constraints as gender tries to minimalise sex intrusions disrupting and over-coding its desire.

Sex and sex drives will always intrude, through the body, on gender; just as gender with its socio-political, ethical and historical constraints will resist sex disrupting and over-coding its psyche to turn it back towards primary sex.

Luce Irigaray in saying that "across the whole world, there are, there are only, men and women," (IRIGARAY, 1996, p. 47) joins Grosz and Spivak in refusing to situate identity in gender. She also joins Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in arguing for recognition of difference between men and women, not the binary difference of Jacques Lacan that sees man as man and woman as non-man, but rather the difference of two irreducibly distinct entities. Gender is a crucial ontological factor in what makes humans human – being human requires gender – without the presence of gender humans are only animal.

A woman's sex-related body charged by feminine and masculine polarities, suffused through the psyche with the potentialities of becoming, and causally connected to gender, is what Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and Beauvoir call a situation. It is not a fixed, cast-in-stone object but a situation. It is situated physically and metaphysically along the gender continuum, and is in itself a situation in which all factors are at play.

Gender once initiated changes its meaning as it changes its location. As Linda Alcoff writes: "To say that location bears on meaning and truth is not the same as saying

location determines meaning and truth" (ALCOFF, 1991-92, p. 5). Put another way: to say that biology bears on the meaning and truth of gender is not the same as saying that biology determines the meaning and truth of gender. While biology undoubtedly influences, bears on, gender, it does not determine gender.

Biological determinists like Darwin, Rousseau, Hegel and millions of ordinary men concoct a meaning of the relationship between biology and gender that has no truth. What is true is that biology does not determine gender and as Richard Dawkins is fond of saying, if something is true no amount of wishing can make it untrue.

3. Modernity & the Tyranny of Reason

Beauvoir was a child of modernity. She was six when the First World War broke out and in her analytic prime during and after the Second World War. Few foundational feminists had such a vantage point from which to witness the masculine enterprise of modernity and the legacy it bequeathed to the twenty-first century. She exposed late modernity as ordinary men practicing the politics of indifference, persuading themselves that in ignoring the desperate plight of others they sacrifice nothing. Acting under the conditions of war a man becomes a tyrant, killing the enemy and raping the woman he does not know, sacrificing nothing, losing nothing; it is not his fault; someone else is responsible – a superior forced him to do it; a victim allowed him to do it. And in the peacetime of modernity, men ignoring and excluding women, sacrifice nothing, lose nothing; someone somewhere set the rules and men just do what is expected of them.

By the twentieth century, masculine madness and its tyranny of reason had reached its zenith. Ordinary men had always been, in the language of Thomas Hobbes, warriors, only this time the erupting violence became systematised, systemic. By paying attention to small details men in modernity had invented a taxonomically efficient bureaucracy, management systems, industrial production…so the shift to systematic violence was just a turn of the head. Masculine madness in the profoundly masculine epoch of modernity grew unfettered; it was radical in the eighteenth century; rampant in the twentieth century; and it was French, American, British, and German.

By the1930s, industrialisation had accelerated to such an extent that a world war was winnable only by the most industrialised nation state. War was no longer men against men, but one man's machine against another man's machine. The Second World War was a machine war, an industrialist's war – and above all a bureaucrat's war. The Jewish genocide was a masculine atrocity whose time had arrived. It was an atrocity made possible only by personal detachment, vast systematisation, an industrial production line mentality and a bureaucratic authority over individual agency. It was possible only in the rational epoch of modernity.

The Holocaust was not however the outcome of the cruel, retributive brutality witnessed in the French Revolution. When it turned its head modernity's ugly other face spawned a new kind of normative masculine madness that made murderers of ordinary men; not soldiers, not psychopaths, just everyday men. Over its cohesive trajectory towards authoritarian masculinity, modernity produced a new human condition: on one hand a new individuality and on the other a loss of agency – two paradoxical conditions in one. Beauvoir believed that modern men qua men in modernity felt this paradox acutely. "They know themselves to be the supreme end to which all action should be subordinated," she said, "but the exigencies of action force them to treat one another as instruments or obstacles, as means" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 8).
Men had throughout time exhibited in extreme circumstances the two faces of Man. Docile farmers going to war had behaved like murderers when forced to confront an enemy. In modernity however, the machine age transformed this into a meta-condition that dramatically amplified the scale of destruction, and men confronted by the exigencies of action treated enemies as instruments, as machines to be dismantled as non-humans.

The combination in late modernity of the dark-other face; the technical perfection of machine warriors; automaton against automaton; detached masters controlling the world only to find themselves crushed by uncontrollable forces; all pointed to a new kind of inhumanity.

In no other epoch, Beauvoir said, had men manifested their grandeur more brilliantly, but, "the more widespread their mastery of the world, the more they find themselves crushed by uncontrollable forces. Though they are the masters of the atomic bomb, yet it is created to destroy them" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 8-9).

During her lifetime annihilative science was a tertiary enterprise beyond the primary production of the fields and the secondary production of industry. This tertiary state was the radicalised consciousness of the modern condition; it was the instrument of awesome power assisting the drive to the ideal; and it was an unstoppable force threatening to destroy the very men who created it. Masculine madness was a quantum paradox in which men were simultaneously alive and dead: alive in an era of scientific achievement so transcendent it touched the sun of self-perfection; dead as they invented devices and ideologies capable of annihilating civilization; a monster murdering millions and simultaneously a gentle man with a child balanced on his knee.

Modernity was a masculine epoch inheriting as ahistoric hero the masculine character of dominance and oppression free of consideration of consequence; freed by the absolution, the blessing, of a viral ethos of exclusion; free to oppress and destroy in the name of a masculine social and self-perfection. Even in the most fundamental Hobbesian view, the natural state of man is one of war and strife, and while the French Revolution of the Enlightenment had grown out of the radical enlightenment of a bourgeois comprising both men and women, it too was unambiguously a masculine project. According to Hobbes, men's competitiveness drives an instinct to conquer and rule in a manner devoid of consideration for others (HOBBES, 1985, p. 215).

Beauvoir had a perfect vantage point from which to view the same subject. Writing The Ethics of Ambiguity only three years after the end of both the Second World War and modernity, she observed:

> The man we call an adventurer…is one who remains indifferent to the content, that is, to the human meaning of his action, who thinks he can assert his own existence without taking into account that of others. The fate of Italy mattered very little to the Italian condottiere; the massacres of the Indians meant nothing to Pizzaro; Don Juan was unaffected by Elvira's tears. Thus nothing prevents him from sacrificing these insignificant beings to his own will for power. He will treat them like instruments; he will destroy them if they get in his way. He cannot win the game without making himself a tyrant or a hangman. And as he cannot impose this tyranny without help, he is obliged to serve the regime which allows him to exercise it (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 61).

Beauvoir is not without her own ambiguities. In her many philosophical writings she uses the term man sometimes to infer humans and at other times to mean men. Re-examination of her texts, according to Sheila Malovany-Chevallier co-translator of the new

(2009) edition of Beauvoir's The Second Sex, reveals much more emphasis on gender than previously accepted by Beauvoir scholars[1].

In the extract from The Ethics of Ambiguity cited above, Beauvoir is unequivocal, unambiguous, in her meaning; she is referring to men. Her reference to men's inability to impose the masculine tyranny without help, without the regime that allows them to exercise that tyranny, is directly relevant to both the Second World War that ended modernity and the French Revolution that witnessed its first tentative steps. Beauvoir's allusion to a tyrant or a hangman evokes the terror of both the gas chambers of the Holocaust and the bloodthirsty guillotines of the French Revolution.

Modernity's theories, no matter how heroic their pursuit of a perfect future, always had a counter reality. This was the tertiary state of modernity. The heroic delivered for men a possible utopia and simultaneously delivered conditions for dystopia. The friendly face of the scientist had a dark other-face. In the radical dimension of normality, the liberator is simultaneously the oppressor. In the machine age of bureaucratic and technical perfection, ordinary men were capable of inhuman acts on the scale of mass murder.

Stanley Milgram, cited by Zygmunt Bauman, says inhumanity is a matter of social relationships. As social relationships are rationalized and technically perfected, so is the capacity and efficiency of the social production of inhumanity (BAUMAN, 2000, p. 154). Milgram, an American psychologist from Yale University, famously conducted social psychology experiments in the 1960s that measured the willingness of 40 men to obey a detached authority figure, a man who told them to apply an electrical shock to an innocent recipient they could not see. The voltage was increased over time in response to different reactions, and by the end of the experiments 65 per cent of participants administered the final, fatal massive 450-volt shock.

Unknowingly the participants were administering no shock at all; an actor playing the shocked recipient would scream and bang the wall to simulate appropriate injury.

What the experiment showed was that ordinary men given the right set of conditions will act in cruel and destructive ways in direct contravention of their personal moral or ethical framework. The participating men were not students or academics. Milgram advertised in newspapers for construction workers, factory workers, clerks, labourers,

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[1] Primary research, June 2012 – personal conversation with Malovany-Chevallier at the 20th International Simone de Beauvoir Conference in Oslo, Norway.

barbers and others. Authority, over these ordinary men, in the guise of white collar, well-educated academics, steeped in the bureaucracy of one of the most famous universities in the world, highlighted one of the critical preconditions for industrial scale genocide – loss of agency in the face of both individual and institutional authority.

The results of the experiments caused wide controversy. As Bauman puts it, disquiet and rage were caused by Milgram's belief that cruelty is not committed by cruel individuals but by ordinary men trying to acquit themselves well of their ordinary duties; and by Milgram's findings, that while cruelty correlates poorly with the personal characteristics of its perpetrators, it correlates very strongly indeed with the relationship of authority and subordination, with our normal, daily encountered, structure of power and obedience (BAUMAN, 2000, p. 153-154).

Even men who enjoy strong ethical beliefs can become potent examples of masculine madness; a man who, with inner convictions, loathes stealing, killing, and assault, may find himself performing these acts with relative ease when commanded by authority. Behaviour that is unthinkable in an individual acting on his own may be performed without hesitation when carried out under orders (MILGRAM, 1974, p. xi).

Beauvoir agrees, "For the military man, the army is useful; for the colonial administrator, the highway; for the serious revolutionary, the revolution – army, highway, revolution, productions becoming inhuman idols to which one will not hesitate to sacrifice man himself" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 99). In other words men, in surrendering to the structure, the process, the goal, lose full agency and abandon their individuality and moral compass. They become things. Since we can only conquer our enemies by reducing them to things, we have to become things ourselves.

Bauman adds, "The more rational [and detached] is the organization of action, the easier it is to cause suffering – and remain at peace with oneself" (BAUMAN, 2000, p. 154). This does not however absolve men from their acts.

Beauvoir, quoting Jean-Paul Sartre, "a being who makes himself a lack of being in order that there might be being", says he means that men's passion is not inflicted upon them from without (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 11). They choose it. She adds that men are dangerous because they naturally make themselves into tyrants. "Dishonestly ignoring the subjectivity of his choice, [a 'serious' man] pretends that the unconditional value of the

object is being asserted through him; and by the same token he also ignores the value of the subjectivity and freedom of others, to such an extent that, sacrificing them to the thing, he persuades himself that what he sacrifices is nothing" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 49).

In war crimes tribunals oppressors frequently invoke the Nuremberg defence, also known as superior orders. This is a plea in a court of law that a perpetrator not be held guilty for the actions ordered by a superior.

Adolph Eichmann, one of the principal organisers of the Holocaust, was, after many years living in Argentina arrested and tried in Israel in 1961. He was charged with fifteen criminal offences including crimes against humanity. Throughout his trial Eichmann insisted he was a small cog in the Nazi machine and was just an ordinary man doing what was expected of him. He was found guilty by the three presiding judges and sentenced to death.

Hannah Arendt, in Eichmann in Jerusalem, reports that psychiatrists certified Eichmann as normal; Eichmann had Jewish relatives he helped; and he viewed himself as an ordinary law-abiding citizen. He had never killed anyone and personally had nothing against Jews (ARENDT, 1994, p. 22).

The 'small cog in the machine', the 'just an ordinary man' defence was not only invoked by perpetrators of war crimes like Eichmann blaming their superiors, but also to blame their victims. According to Arendt, of the Jews who acquiesced to Nazi instructions and ended up in death camps, only 1 per cent survived. Conversely, those who refused to submit and fled had a survival rate of 50 per cent (ARENDT, 1994, p. 25).

Simone de Beauvoir believed the oppressor would not be so strong if he did not have accomplices among the oppressed themselves. In one sense this may mean that the Jews in the death camps acquiesced on their extermination, were accomplices to their own genocide. This may also mean that the soldiers and clerks who conducted the exterminations were acquiescent accomplices to genocide and as a consequence should be held guilty for the actions ordered by their superior (ARENDT, 1994, p. 124).

Beauvoir, despite her belief that the oppressor would not be successful without the complicity of those he oppressed, has a qualified if somewhat metaphysical sympathy for the superior orders defence: that men are not guilty if their adhesion is not a resignation of their freedom. Facing the reality of destructive masculinity however, she acknowledges that

freedom is readily assigned to the oppressor and even the most seemingly innocent of participants is still an accomplice of the oppressor, enabling oppression. "When a young sixteen-year old Nazi died crying, 'Heil Hitler!' he was not guilty, and it was not he who we hated but his masters. The desirable thing would be to re-educate this misled youth; it would be necessary to expose the mystification and to put the men who are its victims in the presence of their freedom. But the urgency of the struggle forbids this slow labour. We are obliged to destroy not only the oppressor but also those who serve him, whether they do so out of ignorance or out of constraint" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 98). As Arendt says, the acquiescent accomplices should be held guilty for the actions ordered by their superior.

Above, Beauvoir said: though men are the masters of the atomic bomb, yet it is created to destroy them. Blind to risk, invention infected by masculine madness invites dystopia.

Ignorance to the risk inherent in blind obedience to the enshrined reason and rationality of modernity encouraged men to adopt destructive behaviour so dangerous that as modernity evolved, freeing Western culture from the past, a dominant, conscious, interconnected, infectious patriarchy became its leitmotif. Modernity was inaugurated by men, delivered by men and ultimately destroyed by men.

In modernity men ignorant of the risk, established through science, politics, economics and social practices the conditions for the dispossession and exclusion of Woman; a dystopian and annihilative condition of Eden without Eve.

Viewing society through the lens of masculine madness is not common. The traditional orthodoxy is that both men and women participated, played visible roles in the epoch of modernity and its applied cousin modernism. Were not women writers, architects, psychologists, academics? And were they not present in the texts of modernity? Irigaray believes that while present, women were excluded. Anne Witz and Barbara Marshall believe that while women may have been present we have misrecognised and failed to interrogate, in the canon, the utter and explicit masculinity of modernity, and the legacy of this with which we continue to struggle as theorists (WITZ & MARSHALL, 2004, p. 21). Women were in modernity but not of modernity.

4. Twin Genocides by Ordinary Men

The Second World War was the deadliest conflict in human history resulting in more than 50 million deaths. It was the first war to eliminate the boundaries between civil and military resources, infrastructure and of course, between civilian and military casualties. Millions of civilians were killed in the Holocaust and by the atomic bombs invented by scientific heroes and dropped by military heroes on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

This was not the eruption of enlightened reason witnessed in the French Revolution. This was cold tyrannical reason, rationality so deep and surgical that it signalled the end of modernity.

Michel Foucault referencing Kant summarized the Enlightenment as "the moment when humanity is going to put its own reason to use, without subjecting itself to any authority…its role is that of defining the conditions under which the use of reason is legitimate in order to determine…what must be done" (FOUCAULT, 1984, p. 38).

It is hard to imagine a better description of how the Enlightenment's poster child 'reason' reached such unparalleled levels of violence during the Second World War; of how men put reason to use without subjecting themselves to any authority; of when reason was used to legitimise 'what must be done'. The tyranny of reason could not survive as the lifeblood of an epoch that had at its apotheosis one of the greatest acts of genocide in history. And if structural reason had destroyed itself on the pyre of masculine madness, modernity had no way of surviving.

The Second World War and the Holocaust do not however stand alone as evidentiary grounds for modernity's demise.

Undeniably, the genocide of European Jews during the Second World War is widely regarded as the zenith of masculine madness in the Western cultural imaginary; a madness referencing not the defence of insanity, but rather a non-agentic masculinity out of control in its everydayness, exhibiting little or no self-awareness, self-control or self-regulation. This phallocratic condition of modernity produced another genocide: a modern genocide that in its lack of examination, of interrogation, condemns us to, in perpetuity repeat the sins of modernity.

The unremarked second genocide of modernity was as pivotal to the death of modernity as the Holocaust: it was the exclusion of Woman in the Western cultural imaginary. It was a means to the end of permanently subjecting free women to gender slavery.

According to Carole Pateman the story of the sexual contract reveals that the patriarchal construction of the difference between man and woman is the political difference between freedom and subjection, and that sexual mastery is the major means through which men affirm their manhood. The construction of the difference between the sexes as the difference between freedom and subjection is not merely central…the very structure of our society, and our everyday lives, incorporates the patriarchal conception of sexual difference (PATEMAN, 1988, p. 207).

Genocide, according to the original United Nations General Assembly resolution 96 (1) on 11 December 1946, one year after the death of modernity, is "a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups. Such denial of the right of existence is contrary to moral law. The General Assembly, therefore, affirms that genocide is a crime under international law whether the crime is committed on religious, racial, political or any other grounds." Recasting Tony Barta (BARTA, 1987, p. 48), genocidal society, as distinct from a genocidal state, is one in which the bureaucratic apparatus might be expected to protect innocent people, but in which an entire human group is nevertheless subject to remorseless pressures of destruction inherent in the very nature of the society.

Modernity was therefore not only a masculine enterprise but one that with active hostility excluded Woman. As a period or epoch, masculinity imprinted on it and on the Western cultural imaginary a competitive, aggressive, brutalism that was insuppressibly dominant and oppressive. War and warrior behaviour characterized, even defined, the epoch. Modernity was for example, characterised by what Rita Felski calls "the progressive domination of a fundamentally phallocentric reason, with catastrophic consequences" (FELSKI, 1989, p. 48).

The prototypically masculine nature of reason, rationality, systematization, bureaucracy, and the industrial assembly line, privileged men and subjugated women; and simultaneously the metaphysical sense of woman as Other in modernity rendered Woman as non-existent. The catastrophic consequence was a second, a largely unexamined and

unremarked genocide: the genocide of Woman, characterised by the systemic exclusion of women by a genocidal society, and the violent death of modernity in the 1940s.

Were the Nazis and their accomplices at every level what Milgram, referencing his electric shock experiment, described as ordinary men who given the right set of conditions would act in cruel and destructive ways in direct contravention of their personal moral or ethical framework? Hannah Arendt poses that a major hurdle to overcome in the death camps was the animal pity by which all normal men are affected in the presence of physical suffering (ARENDT, 1964, p. 106). Arendt's animal suffering could not, according to Bauman, be overcome by turning to other base animal instincts primarily because animal instincts weaken the organisational capacity to act; they are disorganised emotional responses with no utility and seriously diminished agency. "A multitude of vengeful and murderous individuals would not match the effectiveness of a small, yet disciplined and strictly coordinated bureaucracy" (BAUMAN, 1989, p. 20). He also questions how everyday German clerks and teachers could be transformed into genocidal mass murderers.

Moral inhibitions against violent atrocities are eroded once three pre-conditions of detachment are met. First, the violence is authorised by, for example, official orders coming from a legal authority; second, all actions are routinized using, for example, rules, regulated practices and precise role definition; and third, the victims are dehumanised or made appear less human in the eyes of wider society (KELMAN, 1973, p. 29).

That is why the Nazis were so systematically relentless in casting into abjection those they wanted to destroy in the Holocaust. Beauvoir believes the disgust that the victims felt in regard to themselves stifled the voice of revolt and justified the executioners in their own eyes: "the more miserable [the Jews] were, the more contemptible they seemed, so much so that there was never any room for remorse" (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 101).

Bauman believes modern civilisation was not the Holocaust's sufficient condition; it was, however, most certainly its necessary condition. It was, he says, the rational world of modern civilisation that made the Holocaust thinkable (BAUMAN, 1989, p. 13).

Genocide can be by omission as well as commission. Women were barred from the masculinity of modernity, made irrelevant in its enterprise. Witz and Marshall, as we have seen, assert that women were prevented from taking their place in the landscape of

modernity; that within modernity and the newly systematised institution of patriarchy, women could not participate in the masculine enterprise. Irigaray is clear that women were excluded from masculine modernity. Again, they were in modernity but were never allowed to be of modernity. For Woman this was beyond dispossession in the nature of colonial oppression, this was genocide.

That this modern genocide has to date been unexamined joins it with the Holocaust in a frightening recognition: both are the acts of the everyday, of complicit ignorance and the politics of indifference. It would be fatally flawed to consider the eruption of destructive masculinity during the Second World War in general and the twin genocides in particular as aberrative, an atypical moment in time of inexplicable insanity, or a temporary or transient condition. Neither genocide was the antithesis of modernity. They were modernity.

Reading Bauman, the unspoken terror permeating our collective memory of the Holocaust, and the masculine metanarrative of modernity, is the gnawing suspicion that the genocides could be more than an aberrative, more than a deviation from an otherwise straight path of temporality, more than cancerous growths on the otherwise healthy body of the civilized society. The twin genocides could merely have uncovered another face of the same genocidal society whose other, more familiar, face we so admire. Bauman suspects that, "What we perhaps fear most is that each of the two faces can no more exist without the other than can the two sides of a coin" (BAUMAN, 1989, p. 7).

Every ingredient of the twin genocides, all those small discriminations and prejudices, all those small compliances and complicities that made them possible, were normal: normal in the sense of everything we know about society, not abnormal. They were society's guiding spirit, its priorities, its immanent vision of what it wants from itself and what it wants to be. The masculine society of Germany wanted to be free of Jews and the masculine society of the European cultural imaginary wanted to be free of Woman.

With the genocide of Woman, the crime of omission takes the shape of the masculine politics of indifference; the crime of commission fits Herbert Kelman's preconditions for genocide: oppression and the exclusion of women from modernity is authorised by the Phallocracy, routinized in everyday life using regulated practices and role definition, and dehumanised by being made appear less human in the eyes of wider society.

5. The Stirring Beneath

While the oppression of women is endemic, frequently it ruptures into bestial behaviour in the streets, cities and countries of the world. The expression of this peculiarly masculine bestiality is Bauman's second face. Men on one side live a conditional life mediated by social and ethical imperatives but the other, second face, is always present, ready to participate in terrors small and large, and frequently with unimaginable consequences. This is the Jekyll and Hyde narrative of the unthinking beast coexisting in the same body with the educated, socialised gentle man. This is the face of freedom and agency, and the other face of acquiescence and complicity.

The two faced human is however a well-worn trope. What is needed is a fresh figurative or metaphorical, allegorical even, doppelgänger, and we need look no further than the façade of a Masonic Temple. What better allegory for the genocidal exclusion of Woman than Freemasonry? The sphinx, a composite creature, human above the navel and beast below, has long been emblematic of Masonic architecture, viewed as a symbol of mystery and sculpted onto Masonic temples or engraved at the head of Masonic documents (REGIER, 2004, p. 54-59).

In the twelfth century a Byzantine philosopher Michael Psellos portrayed sphinx and man as a composite being able to operate on several ontological and psychological levels. "Each of us is an animal," he wrote, "but the animal life, the life of the body, is something to surpass in rising to intelligible reality" (MILES, 2012, p. 5). Writing in Volume 1 of his Philosophica Minora, Psellos explores the allegory of the sphinx and in presenting it as a composite monster, likens it to man[2].

The sphinx, according to Psellos, is nothing but a human put together from dissimilar parts. "Our existence," he says, "is a thing of parts." Being human for Psellos is a matter of extremes: an ontological amalgam. At one of these extremes live speechless dogs and pigs and wild animals; and at the other extreme live angels and "children of God."

A great chasm separates a beast from a god, so it is necessary, Psellos says, "to posit a middle life which some of the Chaldean oracles call partly light and partly dark, but

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[2] I am grateful to Graeme Miles, a classics scholar at the University of Tasmania, for his translation from the ancient Greek of relevant sections of Psellos' Philosophica Minora. No published translation exists.

which I would simply call a man" (MILES, 2012, p. 6). The riddle of man is how in one being he can simultaneously be monster and angel; how he can be mild mannered teacher one year and the next, part of the killing machine of the Third Reich, and the next a doting father and mild mannered teacher; partly dark and partly light, but still one man.

Beauvoir says that after a period of inhuman violence one is astonished to see men rediscover human life, to return from the dark into the light. Why do courts hesitate in the face of the massacre of millions, she asks, when the men on trial coldly conducted the massacres, murdering them like animals? The reason is that once the period of crisis has passed, they aim to re-establish the individual man within his rights. The soldier must become a citizen again (BEAUVOIR, 1948, p. 107).

According to Psellos the sphinx does not merely convey a riddle about the nature of man, but is itself the image of man: half beast, half human. Ordinary men are capable of heinous crimes – masculine madness is the contagion of the sphinx. This is the story of twin genocides.

Modernity's bastard son was destructive masculinity en masse; it was masculine madness. It was organised, it was dangerous and it was always going to kill the father. Modernity was crushed at the hands of ordinary men in a war that was as predictable as it was shocking, and by a genocidal masculine society in which women were subject to remorseless pressures of destruction inherent in the very nature of that society. Beauvoir witnessed it, it was her epoch; and she divined in it the radical dimension of normality. Then the sphinx resumed its ancient pose, revealing only the human, acceptable half of ordinary man. But as the beast once again slipped temporarily out of sight, we heard the drone of masculinity and witnessed, as did Beauvoir, a shadow descending.

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