



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN ACTION: FROM PAST TO PRESENT

Sergii V. Dzholos

Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, Cherkasy, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0001-5523>

Oksana Koshulko

Alfred Nobel University, Dnipro city, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1571-2695>

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Abstract

The article presents the results of research concerning women's empowerment from the past to the present. In the article, the places, and actions of women in the ancient world, in the Middle Ages and Modern period, in the late XIX - early XX century, as well as in the present time have been explored. The methodology of the research consisted of primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data consisted of field research, collected in some countries of Europe and Asia during 2014-2020, as well as the secondary data that have been collected from the books, chapters of books, articles, web resources, and previous studies by an author on this topic. Besides, some important issues concerning women's empowerment in action in the present time have been analyzed. In conclusion, women's empowerment develops because some of the issues on women do not solve in some countries, among the issues are violence against women in general and domestic violence.

Keywords: *Women's Empowerment, Women's Role, Ancient World, Middle Ages, Modern Period*

1 INTRODUCTION

In different periods of the world's history, women played different roles (Koshulko, 2020; Koshulko, 2021). Sometimes, these roles were significant, sometimes not. The article is devoted to the exploration of the roles of women and women's empowerment in action from the past to the present: from the ancient world to the present day.

The methodology of the research consisted of primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data consisted of field research, collected in some countries of Europe and Asia during 2014-2020, such as Turkey, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, and others, as well as the secondary data that have been collected from the books, chapters of books, articles, and web resources on this topic.

Address of the corresponding author:

Oksana Koshulko

[✉ oksanakoshulko2015@gmail.com](mailto:oksanakoshulko2015@gmail.com)



2 EXAMINATION OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE PAST

2.1 The erroneous stereotype about the insignificant women's role in the old times

It is believed that for centuries and even millennia, women have been almost completely deprived of civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. The last German Emperor (Kaiser) and King of Prussia Wilhelm II formulated a classical formula describing the social role of women in the German conservative value system, known as the 3Ks: "Kinder, Küche, Kirche" ("children, kitchen, the church") (Paletschek, 2001).

In September 1934, German dictator Adolf Hitler told during his speech to the National Socialist Women's Organization that for the German woman her "world is her husband, her family, her children, and her home" (Doramus, 1990).

Therefore, it is believed that only after the Second World War 1939-1945, to wit in the middle of the XX century, the restoration of justice was started based on gradual equalization in the rights of men and women.

2.2 The role of women in the ancient world

At the same time, deep knowledge of history refutes the stereotype about the millennial rightlessness of women.

First, it is necessary to say that matriarchy was spread in prehistoric society. Some researchers even say that all human societies were matriarchal in the past (Eckstein-Diener, 1932).

Women played a significant role in Ancient Sparta (X – II centuries BC) because men were often away fighting. Plutarch wrote interesting information about Gorgo, Queen of Sparta and the wife of Leonidas: "When some woman, a foreigner presumably, remarked to her, "You Spartan women are the only women that lord it over your men", she replied, "Yes, for we are the only women that are mothers of men!" (Plutarch, 1961, p. 363).

According to Herodotus, Sarmatians (V century BC - III century AD) were descendants of Amazons and Scythians, so their females followed

their ancient maternal traditions and had rights, equal with men (The History of Herodotus, 1890).

In Ancient Rome, women played a significant role, even in the political aspect. This is confirmed even by numismatics: wives of many Roman Emperors were represented on the coins (Manila Scintilla, Julia Aquilia Severa, Claudia Octavia, Caecilia Paulina, Gaia Cornelia Supera, Egnatia Mariniana, Sulpicia Dryantilla, Licinia Eudoxia, Annia Galeria Faustina, etc.). The political activities of Valeria Messalina and Julia Agrippina are also well known.

Therefore, we may say that in many countries of the ancient world women played a great role and even ruled the state.

2.3 Women in the Middle Ages and Modern period

The situation was changed in the Middle Ages because Christianity could not forgive Eve the original sin, as it was described in the Bible, Gen. 3: 1-24. As one of the punishments, the woman was given under the rule of man (The Bible, 2005).

Therefore, the woman began to be perceived as a weak creature, and therefore not independent. Also, the physiological features and physical weakness (compared to a man) doomed a woman to dependence on a man.

At the same time, military duty was the main type of feudal service, so, naturally, in the Middle Ages men played the main role in the family, in society, and the state.

The Salic law was the ancient Salian Frankish written legal code, adopted at the beginning of the VI century, which included the rules of the folk right (customary law). The Salic law merely prohibited women from inheriting ancestral "Salic land" (Lex Salica, 1880).

In our time, it should be discrimination. However, it was a logical necessity in the period of the Dark Ages and Middle Ages because the lands were the main means of production in agrarian society and land ownership rights determined the personal status of a human. In such a way, a king (or a lord) received the military (or, sometimes, other) services of his vassals and had the opportunity to control the territory of the country. Of course, a woman, due to physical weakness and maternal functions, could not be a good warrior, could not

provide military service, and receive land for it. Therefore, her status was determined by the status of her husband or father.

At the same time, even in the Middle Ages, women were not oppressed beings, deprived of rights. There are few different systems of primogeniture in the monarchical states, which differ in the scope of women's rights to inherit the throne (the Salic, Semi-Salic, Quasi-Salic systems, Absolute primogeniture, Agnatic primogeniture, Male-preference primogeniture, even matrilineal primogeniture). However, even in medieval and early modern France, where the Salic law excluded women from the inheritance of thrones, they played a great role in the political processes. The experience of Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de' Medici, Marie de' Medici, Anne of Austria, Duchesse de Chevreuse, Marquise de Montespan, Marquise de Pompadour, and others prove it.

In the Middle Ages, famous women, such as Princess Olga of Kyiv, Duchesse Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen Isabella I of Castile, Queen Elizabeth I of England, etc. ruled the states and played a significant role in politics. Therefore, noble women's fate was not sad in the Middle Ages.

Many women also were queens in Modern history, for example, Catherine I, Anna Ioannovna, Elizabeth Petrovna, and Catherine the Great of Russia, Maria Theresa of Austria, Queen Anne of Great Britain, Queen Christina of Sweden, etc.

Therefore, despite the widespread stereotype of the insignificant role of women in ancient times, history proves, that women have played a great role in social and political life in Antiquity, Middle Ages, and the Modern period.

2.4 Women in the late XIX - early XX century

In the late XIX - early XX century women started an active struggle for their economic, political, social, and cultural rights, particularly in the form of suffragette and feminist social movements. At the same time, we should remember that such known as "the second generation of human rights" was formed only in the late XIX - early XX century (Vasak, 1977).

So, empowerment of women and their struggle for rights were one of the elements of the general expansion of human rights that took place in this period (next to the abolition of slavery and selfhood, prohibition of corporal punishments, adoption of democratic institutions in the field of justice and state governing, struggle of the labor people for the improvement of social and economic conditions of their work and life, etc.).

3 THE WOMEN'S ROLE ACCORDING TO THE MAIN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES: LIBERALISM, CONSERVATISM, AND SOCIALISM

The history of legal and political studies knows many different political doctrines, but, in general, there are three main political ideologies - liberalism, conservatism, and socialism (James, 2015).

Therefore, it is necessary to describe the women's role according to these three doctrines.

The main ideas of liberalism are enthusiasm for freedom, toleration, individualism, and reason, on the one hand, and disapproval of power, authority, and tradition, on the other (Dunn, 1993).

Therefore, according to the liberal ideology, women should have the widest freedom, be equal with men in all aspects, including participation in politics. It is necessary to note, that the extreme form of the liberal evaluation of women's role is such a known "childfree ideology", rather popular today, especially in the countries of the Western civilization, and especially among the highly educated women. It is well known, worldwide, higher educated women are statistically more often choosing voluntary childlessness (Water, 2020).

Modern researchers found that the higher the level woman's education, the less likely she is to bear children (or if she does, the fewer children she is likely to have). Childless couples are more educated, are employed in higher professional and management occupations, receive a higher salary and, as usual, live in urban areas. Also, they are not deeply religious, do not subscribe to traditional gender roles or conventional roles (Kristin, 2005).

Therefore, liberal doctrine gives preference to the unlimited women's freedom, her career ambitions,

refusal to perform the functions of motherhood assigned to her by nature, etc. The increase in the number of women with this worldview in the states of Western civilization led to the depopulation of a titular nation, a decrease in the population, and the level of education of the next generations. Therefore, millions of migrants from countries with low levels of culture arrive in Europe and America, and it leads to the rising of economic tensions and crime rates.

According to the liberal ideas of the social contract and natural law, women, besides the usual forms of political activity, have the right of rebellion against the men's despotism, political tyranny, and they may participate in different actions of protest, etc.

The next great ideology is conservatism. It was formed as the reaction to the events (horrors) of the French Revolution 1789-1799. Its main ideas were written in a famous book by Edmund Burke "Reflections on the Revolution in France" (Burke, 1999).

As Edmund Burke put it, we must see ourselves as involved in "a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born" (Burke, 1999).

Therefore, the main ideas of conservatism are the preservation of historical traditions; counteracting innovations and transformations in society because they may destroy it; coordination of selfish interests of a person with the needs of society; inadmissibility of social upheavals, the possibility of only a gradual change; a great role of the state and traditional values in the life of society (James, 2015).

Therefore, according to the conservative doctrine, the main role of a woman is to be a good wife, good mother, and preserver of the hearth. Nevertheless, as it was described above, in the period of a traditional society and feudalism the real role of a woman depended on her social status. Queens ruled states in the Middle Ages and the Epoch of Modern, and noblewomen were highly educated and ruled their manors when their husbands were involved in military or another service for the monarch. At the same time, women not of noble rank, of course, did not have the

fullness of modern human rights, however, as well as their self-husbands.

The last great ideology is socialism. Its main ideas are the critique of individualism, harmonization of personal and social interests, and the duty of the state to guarantee not only political but also economic equality and freedom of citizens (James, 2015).

At the same time, it should be noted that real equality between men and women takes place in countries with socialist ideology because it is not enough if the state only declares equality, but in fact, does nothing to implement this principle. According to the data of the European Institute for Gender Equality, Sweden and Denmark have the highest level of the Gender Equality Index (The Gender-Equality Index, 2019).

4 DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE PRESENT IN SOME COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER USSR

Now, women's empowerment continues to develop. In two decades of the 21st century, in the majority of countries worldwide, including the former USSR countries, women were or are a part of the top management of their countries.

For example, since the collapse of the former USSR, the majority of the countries had or currently have female leaders at the highest official posts.

In Lithuania, the former President of the country of 2009-2019 is Dalia Grybauskaitė. In Ukraine, a former prime minister of the country is Yulia Tymoshenko. In Georgia, a former Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia is Nino Burjanadze.

At present time, Kersti Kaljulaid is the President of Estonia, Salome Zourabichvili is the President of Georgia, Mehriban Aliyeva is the 1st Vice President of Azerbaijan, Sahiba Gafarova is the Speaker of the Azerbaijan Parliament, Ināra Mūrniece is the Speaker of the Latvian Parliament, Zinaida Greceanii is the Speaker of the Moldavian Parliament, Valentina Matviyenko is the Speaker of the Russian Parliament, Natalia Kochanova is the Speaker of the Belarusian Parliament, Gülşat Mämmedowa is the Speaker of the Turkmen Parliament and Tanzila Norbaeva is the Speaker of the Uzbek Parliament.

At the same time, it is necessary to note that in the post-Soviet countries sometimes a woman may be a Chairperson of the Parliament or a President, but only in few cases, she may be the chief of the government and rule the executive branch of power.

In Belarus, in 2020, three women, among them Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, Maria Kolesnikova, and Veronika Tsepikalo are leaders and symbols of the Belarusian protests of 2020 (The Guardian, 2020).

However, of course, it is not enough for gender equality and women's rights. These and any other states of the world suffer from gender inequality, violence, discrimination, sexism, and any other kinds of challenges.

Moreover, some of the states even did not try to recognize some of the problems in their territories, in particular violence against women in Ukrainian families, i.e. domestic violence.

For example, in 2020 in Ukraine has been researching violence against women in that country because the level of violence against women there is very high, but the current Government of the country does not recognize the problem. The paper 'Exploration of importance of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention of Violence against Women by the Ukrainian Government' (Koshulko & Makazan, 2020) has been written to show the problem of violence against women, as well as the lack of reaction of the Ukrainian Government. To start solving this problem in the country, the Ukrainian Government should ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention of Violence against Women:

'From the 47 member countries of the Council of Europe, 45 of them have signed the Istanbul Convention, including Ukraine. From all members of the Council, only the governments of 11 countries have not ratified the Convention, and Ukraine is one of these. Ukraine needs to ratify this convention as soon as possible if it wants to uphold its international reputation. It is also important for Ukrainian families to be able to live without violence. Pervasive violence is destroying Ukrainian families and Ukrainian society. It must stop. It is for these reasons that representatives of international organizations in Ukraine, such as

ILO, UN Women, UN in Ukraine, and others have urged the Ukrainian President and Parliament to ratify the Istanbul Convention in Ukraine in 2020' (Koshulko & Makazan, 2020).

Thus, existing of this and similar problems concerning women in some former USSR countries, and other countries worldwide stimulate and develop the women's empowerment in action for its solving.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In the article, the examination of women's empowerment in the past and the present have been conducted. History shows that even in the Ancient, Medieval, and Modern period women played a great role in political and social life. Moreover, the empowerment of women in the XX and XXI centuries is the logical continuation of the centuries-old process.

The main political ideologies (liberalism, conservatism, and socialism) evaluate women's roles in different ways. Liberalism pays attention to women's freedom, equality with men, career ambitions, etc. The conservatism says that women's fate is to follow the traditional role of a good wife and mother. The socialistic ideologies pay attention to the necessity of state activities to guarantee the real equality of all men and women in political, social, and economic aspects.

Nowadays, sometimes women are the presidents or the queens of the countries or the chiefs of the parliaments, but only in few cases, they rule the governments as the main organs of the executive power, which have the most importance on the real management of the state. Therefore, the main task of modernity is the development of women's empowerment.

Also, in the article, the development of women's empowerment in the present has been explored women's empowerment in some countries of the former USSR, including Ukraine.

The article also explained why women's empowerment develops in the example of Ukraine. It happens because some of the issues on women do not solve in some countries; among the issues are violence against women in general and domestic violence.

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