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**GENDER AND POLITICS: THE ROLE OF WOMEN AS
MEMBERS OF FAMILY, SOCIETY AND POLITICS**
A Study on Susan Moller Okin

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

III

1. Introduction: Gender and Politics

2. Moller Okin on Justice and Gender

 Idealized Family

 Vulnerability by Marriage

 Justice as Fairness: For Whom?

3. Justice from Sphere to Sphere and the Politics of Gender

4. The Multiculturalism theory of Susan Moller Okin

5. Conclusion

BIBLIOGRAPHY

RIASSUNTO DELL'ELABORATO

PREFACE

Gender and politics is part of the branch of social sciences, and analyzes concepts like women and politics and the politics of gender. It is an immense topic and what I believe is the best way to explain it, is by giving some definitions of how “Gender and Politics” is built up. Politics is known as the process of making decisions to apply to all members of different groups. It is the art of government, known as public affairs, as compromise and consensus and as the study of the distribution of power in a given community. Gender, apart from politics, is the state of being a male, a female or a neuter in many different subjects or contexts, like for example in social sciences. To understand and comprehend the entire meaning of Gender, might take a lot of time, since the term itself includes all the expectations society has towards the role of being either a male or a female. According to gender polarization, most often, women and men have a different nature, since males are considered to be dominant in gender, usually independent and competitive, while females are always seen as the ones having the motherly sensitive role, usually kind and weak.

When everything began, civilizations and societies were described as men centered. Men appeared as universal humans, always ready to hunt and to take care of the family’s needs, while women usually appeared as mothers, staying at home, taking care of the domestic part of the family, growing up infants and hardly educated or free to approach any kind of education. This belief has deep roots. Societies were created as patriarchal, because it was in the male’s physiological needs to create his space as dominant. This is what Michelle Goldberg, an American journalist and author wrote in her book “*What is a woman*”. Anyhow, the situation of women during centuries has had a quite impressive change. In most nations of the western world (Europe, North America and Australia) women are respected and almost given the same importance as men. Women can have and create their own careers even though they might have to decide to renounce to something. Most of them decided to give up having a child at early age, because they might experience the weight of being vulnerable in front of the fear of losing their jobs and their independence. Today’s modern society can be considered tougher to live in then the one back in the early years of the 19th century, because the need of women to be independent has increased and they are somehow trapped in the old conception of their gender.

Strictly speaking, when we combine Gender and Politics, we think about men considering women less acknowledged about politics and not worthy of such an important subject. Politics has been always considered as a private masculine subjects, in which men could dedicate their time. The exercise of politics was a private thing men used to do, a private practice they could do in the

peace of their consulting room with other gentlemen, usually drinking and smoking, while women were dedicating time to their toddlers. The disparity between men and women then was not only biological, but a real rift created by men who were jealous of their spare masculine time and of their political power. It is accustomed that men are inclined to perceive higher incomes, to approach the political career and to obtain a higher level of education, according to the different cultures they come from. A teacher of political communication and public opinion, Kate Kenski, is convinced that even in countries with a high proportion of females, institutions work more emphatically towards men than towards women¹. Somehow women, thanks to this silent oppression, have started to change and to fight for their rights. The feminist movement, work night and day to protect women's rights all over the world, helping them to grow stronger and to rebel against the gender-structure ideal. The first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: "we are all born free and equal in dignity and rights. Women should not be considered as a second-class gender"². No woman nor man should be discriminated for her or his race, gender, sexuality or place of provenience. Patience, respect and determination, mixed together can create a path to the construction of equal rights and to the destruction of gender inequalities between men and women. Young women should be educated in countries in which education is partial, and given only to men, because as All women of all ages, starting from the youngest, should be educated and no country should have the right to consider education partial and available only to males. Advocate for the rights of women and girls, Aung San Suu Kyi, has dedicated her life to bring democracy, dignity and human rights to Myanmar's citizens. She won the Noble Peace Prize in 1991 for her non-violent rebellion to achieve democracy and human rights and understands the struggle of baby girls which do not receive the same attention of boys. Discrimination begins there, because girls start thinking that they are less than boys³. Education can lead to freedom and to an equal and just society. No society can consider only half of the components, everyone should count the same, because there is no winning if you only count on some components of your team. In order to address all these important issues, like gender inequalities, rights and justice, I will first introduce in chapter 1 the concept of Gender and Politics giving brief examples of women who have been involved in public discrimination and showing the point of view of Susan Moller Okin moving through the chapters. I will then move to discuss chapter 2 which will analyze the concept of Justice and Gender, deeply moving into three dif-

ferent arguments: Idealized Family, Vulnerability by Marriage and Justice as Fairness:for whom. Chapter 3 will be about Justice from Sphere to Sphere and the different beliefs of Mrs. Okin. Finally in chapter 4 I will discuss what is the general point of view of Susan Moller Okin, explaining her thesis on Multiculturalism.

CHAPTER 1

GENDER AND POLITICS

To understand why women's situation today is so delicate, I looked for an historical background in order to give a short timeline of what roles women could obtain in the past, and what roles are achieving today. During the early years of our history, women often had very important roles. They became women's rights activist, musicians, politicians, humanitarians, female poets, and scientists. Some of them, changed the conception of female gender in their societies. Cleopatra from years 69 to 30 BC, strongly influenced her people and wanted to defend Egypt from their enemy: the Roman Empire. Achieving this goal she also built a relationship with the most important leaders of Rome, Marc Anthony and Julius Caesar. Another important figure was, Bouddica during the first century AD, who was an inspirational leader of the Britons. She revolted against the Roman occupation and at her lead, the troops initially succeeded to sack Colchester and then London. Moreover, Joan of Arc from 1412 to 1431, who had inspired a French revolt against the occupation of the English. She was a very strange heroine, only seventeen but very successful in leading her troupe to win in Orleans. Her life ended in a terrible way, but today she is recognized as the patron saint of France. Last but not least, closer to our days, Margaret Thatcher, the first female Prime Minister of Great Britain. She has been able to govern for over ten years, emphasizing individual responsibility and strongly believing in free markets. She was leader of the Opposition and as Prime Minister obtained many critiques. Racial tensions increased during 1977 where her statements were harsh and concise: she believed that the minorities living in Great Britain were becoming a big one, and so forth frightening English people. Many other women had succeeded to be leaders of very important societies, without being considered different or less than a man. They were powerful and very intelligent. The years are full of feminine names of writers, scientists and nuns whose only aim was to make the world a better place.⁴

In democracy, women are believed to be equal partners in the development of the democratic process and so forth it is essential to support women all around the world. This is why, across the European Union, women should have more power in decision-making. Only twenty-eight percent of members of the single or lower houses of parliaments, in the different European countries, are women⁵. Many organizations had started innovative and targeted programs across the globe to enlarge the number of women as civic leaders, voters, candidates and political party representatives,

fairly elected and supported as a normal male politician. Through the innovative programs women can strengthen their skills and can be able to organize themselves according to different backgrounds and shared goals to contribute to the development of their societies. What is positive in Europe is the presence of women in ministries, in parliaments and, in some cases, as heads of parties and as chancellors. This role, although very impressive, have a cost for women.

If you search for “women in Italian politics” on Google, what suddenly appears to anyone’s eyes, is that women are ranked for beauty and sex appeal... and not for political importance or active participation in the political scene. The Italian elections of February 2013 demonstrated how the heart of the Italian political scene is stock. None of the many original parties gained the majority and the party with the most votes, Five Star Movement, did not succeed to form a majority in the government. But, one positive thing was recognized. The percentage of women elected to parliament increased from 20 to 30 percent. Those women who succeeded to be elected are usually very young MPs. It was a big surprise for all, since the proportion of women in Italian politics before the last elections, was one of the lowest in the world. On march 2013, the Parliament elected the new president of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Laura Boldrini. She is only the third woman to be in this role. The president Boldrini, spoke up for women and her speech led to a standing ovation in the Parliament. But despite these very positive approaches, life is still not easy for Italian women in politics. Unfortunately the country has a long background of sexism. Recently, female parliamentarians face serious insults and threats on daily basis. Laura Boldrini receives constant intimidations, including horrible images of her being raped and so forth⁶. And so does Cécile Kyenge, who was ministry of integration under the Letta government, who has to deal with racist attacks too. She was used to deal with racist comments and often made target of the anti-immigration Northern League. Roberto Calderoli, Vice-President of the Senate, was accused of incitement to racism and then absolved, after having said in a public meeting: “when I see Cécile Kyenge I can only think about an *orangutan*”. Scandal was brought back to the attention of the media when some PD deputies, many followers of Alfano and the Forza Italia party, have defended Calderoli from the charge against him since he was just kidding and that his thought is “unquestionable”⁷. Even with these events, women stand still and work hard for a political change, professing not to be afraid, because fear paralyzes and politicians have to be brave and act limpid. Today the only party pressuring for the term quota

rosa (the pink proportion) is Five Star Movement which selected its candidates online, of which 38 percent are female.

As I just mentioned them, the Gender Quotas are very significant to define clearly what is the real political situation worldwide. The idea behind the quota system is to trainee women into political position and to secure those who are not active in the political life. But isn't "pink" already a sexist term to describe quotas? The main quotas used today are: the reserved seats (which are constitutional and/or legislative), the legal candidates quotas (which are again constitutional and/or legislative) and finally the political party quotas (which are mainly of voluntary nature). Reserved seats regulate through a law, the number of women elected, while the legal and political party quotas, just set the minimum requirement for the share of female candidates in lists or legally set a statute for individual political parties. The quota system aims at the achievement of a critical minority of thirty or forty percent of women. In some countries, quotas are based on regional, linguistic, ethnic or religious divisions. It sounds incredible, how in a so called "developed country", women to be heard and to gain political importance, have to pressure the parliament to apply a law, assuring them a decent consideration. Gender Quotas have a double nature: some arguments are favorable, while some others are against their introduction into the political habitat. Those who are against them believe that quotas are against the principle of equal opportunity for all, that they are undemocratic, concluding saying that they violate the principles of liberal and modern democracy. But those who are pro, believe that quotas are certainly not discriminating women, conversely they compensate the actual barriers that prevent women from showing their importance on the eyes of men, they believe that women as citizen should have the right to equal representation and that their presence is a must for political life since the thoughts and opinions of all the citizens in the country have to be represented in a parliament. Most important to specify is the effect of imposing Gender Quotas. Do they really work as they should? The introduction of the quotas is controversial, because the increase of the favorable conditions of elected female politicians can lead to historical blows and until the discrimination and the sexism of men towards women exists, Gender Quotas or Quote Rosa (as in Italy) would not do that much change⁸.

In Vera Tripodi's book "*Filosofie di Genere - Differenza sessuale e ingiustizie sociali*" she analyzes, especially at the beginning, the reason behind the scarce importance of women in the scientific and philosophic communities. In many handbooks of philosophy, women are absent entirely or, in those in which they appear, their contribution to the discipline seems to culturally be limi-

⁸ This chapter has been reworked from a paper written by me for the Political Sociology course on "Gender and Politics -The women in politics" with professor Michele Sorice.

ted to the analysis of some themes considered closer to the female (like sexuality, emancipation, abortion etc.) sensibility. Which are the reasons for such exclusion? Why in the history of philosophy few women are present? Historically, philosophy has offered a negative characterization of the female gender and, propagating the conviction that rationality was a masculine prerogative, has contributed to exclude all women from the scientific practices and from the cognitive sphere. Is philosophy a practice that is suitable only to men and is it entirely expression of the masculine point of view indeed? What is the relationship between knowledge, body and kind? Is a divinity thinkable in the female gender? To answer to these and to other questions, the author illustrates as the philosophy and our scientific practices they are able not to be neutral in comparison to gender and to marginalize some people. To answer to all these questions she talks about *epistemology*, the study of how do we know that something is true, about the *sexual difference* and most importantly about *reproductive autonomy* and *religion*. What I would like to focus on is *reproductive autonomy* since the author enters into detail of *abortion*. Concerning the issue of *abortion*, those defending the legality of this act, believe that only one person can have rights, and that embryos - being cells and not people - do not have it. Moreover, those defending abortion as a permissible practice, believe that the only choice in concluding a pregnancy should be given to the the woman herself and to her own personal beliefs. Those opposing it believe that the fetus does not belong to the mother, since it is an autonomous being. At the basis of this thesis, there is the conviction that the embryo is a person to all intents and purposes and that women should not have the right to decide for another person's life. Even if women are given the possibility to host a child for nine months in their womb, they are not free enough to choose weather it is the right choice to continue a pregnancy or to end it for personal opinion.

One of the most important political thinkers that have tackled the political constitution of gender is Susan Moller Okin, liberal feminist, political philosopher and author. She was born in New Zeland and died at the age of fifty-four, after having lived a life dedicated to women, justice and multiculturalism. In the next chapters I will discuss some of her most important arguments on the politics of gender and the role of gender in politics, with the help of her books "*Women in Western Political Thought*", "*Justice, Gender and the Family*" and finally "*Is Multiculturalism bad for women?*".

CHAPTER 2

MOLLER OKIN ON JUSTICE AND GENDER

“Equality of opportunities is our professed aim” since as a society we don’t believe that people should be constrained by differences from succeeding in achieving desired positions of influence or trying to improve their well-being. Susan Moller Okin writes down in her book *Justice, Gender and the Family*, what it is considered common sense or common belief, but it is not actually that way. Substantial inequalities between sexes still exist in our society and especially women pay unwillingly the wage of being possible future wives and mothers, earning on average 71 percent of the earnings of a full-time working man and occupying half the number of poor households. Women nowadays are doing more paid work than their mothers did, but that does not mean that they are more equal. Most often they have low-paying or dead-end jobs, have to consider mostly part-time jobs with lack of benefits and some others stay home performing for no pay and are not even considered as workers. Of course, employed wife still do the greatest proportion of unpaid family work such as childcare and housework and most importantly, they are more likely to move because of their husband’s work opportunities considering their job at last. Nothing in nature obliges people to choose between being parents or workers, and nothing dictates that women should be the only ones in charge of rearing children and of understanding how it works. But this is what our society has made innate as characteristics of sexes. One sex should have more restrictions than the other and the male dominance that should have been eroded in the past century, still works powerfully trying to reinforce sex roles. Biological differences may and may not be at the core of the construction of gender, but what is most ignored is the highly political issue of gender. There is a wide range of contemporary theories of justice, that, like those of the past, are about men with wives at home. Of course today, this state of affairs is unacceptable for three main reasons:

1. Women should be included in any theory of justice
2. The equality of opportunity, for women and children of both sexes, is not taken into consideration in the right way because of the current gender injustice of our society.
3. In conclusion, family must be just if we want to have a just society, since it is family the first to help us develop morality and relationships.

IDEALIZED FAMILY

The family is the most crucial and determinant opportunity in our life to become something tomorrow. We are not born isolated, but in a specific family situation and it does not matter if it is in the social middle, poor and homeless, or super affluent, if parents are soon-to-be-separated or are having a long lasting love, any claim that equal opportunity exists are completely unfounded. Equal social services like health care, employment training or drug rehabilitation should be available for all those who need them and even if all these disparities were somehow eliminated there would still be no equal opportunity for all. This is a very important statement since one of the factors influencing our opportunities in life is the social significance attributed to sex. The opportunities of girls and women are affected by the family structure and being “family” gender-structured, especially in the past years with the increased rates of single motherhood, separation and divorce, it was predicted that inequalities between sexes would become the first part of the problem.

The notion of justice, when talking about families, was not appropriate according to Hume and Rousseau. But yet, it is important now. Rousseau argues that the governance of family, should not be founded on justice like a political society, but upon love. He says that the father of the family “in order to act right, ... has only to consult his heart” and concludes that women can both be ruled within the family and denied the right to participate in the interests of politics, since the husband will do the best for the family unit. Hume argues that justice in families is useless because unnecessary. The most important value for families is enlarged affections, in which justice is inappropriate because “all distinction of property be, in great measure, lost and confounded ... Between married persons, the cement of friendship is by the laws supposed so strong as to abolish all divisions of possessions; and has often, in reality, the force ascribed to it.” Rousseau and Hume thus have explained a similar message, which brought affection and unity of interest to prevail on justice (irrelevant to them).

Nowadays the point is that justice is considered important since it is essential for our daily lives but not because it is considered one of the highest of virtues. Rawls, states for this reason, that there are moral principles and sentiments that are higher and more noble in cause than justice. Any how it is essential that these moral sentiments and principles would be underwritten by a foundation of justice. Families play a fundamental role in the stages by which justice is acquired, but if families are to help form just individuals and citizens, surely they must be just families. Obviously if we are talking about just individuals, just families and just societies, it must be given to women the same opportunities as men to develop their capacities, to participate in political power and influence social choices. The idealized vision of family of John Ruskin as “the place of Peace; the shelter, not

only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt and division” was a central argument of those opposing the rights of married women in the nineteenth century. The context of distributive justice was not only important for the context of family but mostly for women since everything about them (their body, children, properties and legal rights) belonged to their husband. Thus, even if something had slightly changed during the twentieth century, and even if wives never had the occasion to ask for their just share of the family property due to the spontaneous affection of their husband, they would still be scared to ask because it is not difficult to imagine the kind of response they would have received. In summary, what Susan Moller Okin wants to underline is that, yet justice is very important, it takes away from intimacy, harmony and love. But why? Why can't they coexist together? Because if we take into consideration justice, we can see clearly that in an institution like family, there are higher virtues. Those higher virtues should prevail in fact and be morally superior to those that are just. Ideal families normally operate in accordance with feelings of love, generosity and of course provide justice when certain circumstances arise. Only when all family members care about one another and share common ends, still being distinct people with hopes and dreams, then justice will be a crucial virtue. In families women change their course of life because of family commitment, and so forth we can not consider family as analogous to other relationships like friendship however strong the bond may be. Nowadays, even the thought that marriage is forever, cannot be assumed anymore and the decreasing permanence of families makes issues of justice more critical than ever.

VULNERABILITY BY MARRIAGE

Those who discuss the family without paying attention to the inequalities between sexes, are blind to the fact that the gendered family poses limits on equality of opportunity of women and girls of all classes. The increasing prevalence of families headed by a single woman, increased their socio-economic vulnerability in front of their children. It is not easy to think about marriage and family in terms of justice. Especially contemporary gender-structured marriages, have raised the issues of justice when talking about power and vulnerability. The moral philosopher Robert Goodin and the economist Albert O. Hirschman had both established convincing arguments about power and vulnerability in contemporary marriages. Goodin's theory is particularly applicable to marriage since its concern is not only about the protection of the vulnerable, but also about the moral status of vulnerability itself. As he states, some instances of vulnerability that may appear as natural, such as people who are ill or infants, have different degrees of importance according to the different social arrangements. Because “asymmetric vulnerabilities create social obligations, which may fail to be fulfilled, and because they open up opportunities for exploitation ... they should be minimized”.

The ideal of mutuality or asymmetry of a relationship is also described by Albert O. Hirschman, in two books. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* written in 1970 and *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade* written almost twenty-five years earlier, both explain that the two-member institution such as marriage, has special dynamics when one partner exits the institution, because it does not just weaken the institution but rather results in its dissolution. Whether or not the other party wish to exit, the potential of the exit option for the two components is crucial for the relationship's power structure. Hirschman showed how person A can increase its power when in a relationship with person B, and while both people get something from the trade between each other, the less dependent person can use his/her power to make the more dependent person comply with its wishes. Spouses may vary in the extent of their love or emotional dependence with one another, but in gender-structured marriages women are involved in a cycle socially caused by vulnerability. The division of labour within marriage makes the wife more likely to be under control than the husband. Women today are rendered vulnerable by the fact that they are disadvantaged at work and because the world wage work, including professions, is still structured around the idea of wives being housewives. Moreover they become even more vulnerable if they become the primary caretakers for their children. But women are inevitably the primary caretakers of their children. It is not just children whom make them vulnerable, but the economic and social dependence form a significant part of the all vulnerability by marriage. Almost all women and men marry, but marriage is a much greater impact on the life choices of women rather than of men. "Having a good marriage and family life" is far more important for girls than for boys, since their expectations are to be primarily responsible for children.

Although the number of young women who plan to be housewives has decreased, women working life is still affected by their "early age expectations" about the effects on family life. Participation of women as labour force has continued to rise but the the jobs they are finding are still low-paying jobs with little or no prospect in advancement leading to a segregation of the work place. It is no secret that most women are even before marriage in an economic position, which leads them to be vulnerable in future, unprepared for their family life, about to find themselves in a position of having to do with providing for themselves and their children. Inequalities between sexes in the workplace and at home aggravate each other. The decision of participating to the job market, by married women, may not be so simple or voluntary since the "choice" to become domestically oriented and to have children may result from their blocked situation at work. But today women have reversed many aspects of their gendered-structured family life, by opening up to new unusual and unexpected opportunities of work advancement which opened up to them.

JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS: FOR WHO?

The most important influence of any work of contemporary moral and political theory was written by John Rawls's "A theory of Justice". John Rawls was an American political philosopher of the liberal tradition. His theory of justice as fairness describes a society of free citizens having equal basic rights cooperating in an egalitarian economic system⁹. Rawls, like many other political theorists, employed generic male terms of reference. This would not be of much importance if Rawls had not been the one subscribing a long tradition of moral and political philosophy, only using male terms, to exclude women. Today we think that the head of family must not necessarily be a man. Certainly in the United States for example, there has been an incredible increase in the proportion of female-headed households; anyhow it is referred to households where no adult male is present to take over a female. Rawls talks about the heads of family in order to address the problem of justice in between generations and does not intend to be sexist.

The Justice as Fairness theory is the theory of justice in a liberal society. As a member of the liberal political conceptions, the theory provides a framework for the legitimate use of political power. Legitimacy itself is only at minimal standards of political acceptability since a political order can be acceptable without being just. Justice for Rawls is of major importance when talking about moral standard because it gives a full description of how institutions in a society should be ordered. Rawls builds justice as fairness around the specific liberal idea that citizens are free and equal and that society should always be fair. The political philosopher thinks that justice as fairness is the most egalitarian and plausible interpretation of liberalism's fundamental concepts. He believes that his theory can answer to the demands of both freedom and equality and can pose a challenge on the socialist critique of liberal democracy and on the conservative critique of the modern warfare state. Justice as Fairness looks similar to a social contract theory, which is believed by Rawls, to be of superior importance to understand justice in the context of the dominant tradition of utilitarianism in political philosophy¹⁰.

To deepen the understanding of Rawls's theory, it is crucial to describe its aim: the arrangement of the most important political and social institutions of a liberal society. Political constitution, the legal system, the economy, the family and so on form the basic structure of a society. In this basic structure, justice is needed to distribute the main aids and duties of social life like rights, opportunities and social recognition, to all its citizens. This basic structure affects the life of its citizens in all

ways, influencing their goals, attitudes and relationships. Since it is considered unrealistic to leave the society, Rawls believes that “there are enough resources for it to be possible for everyone’s basic needs to be met¹¹”. Social cooperation is necessary for citizens to lead a modest life, but yet they are not immune to the differences of benefits or burdens divided among them. For this reason, Rawls divides his theory into a combination of positive and negative thesis. The negative thesis is that citizens at first, do not deserve to be born rich or poor, male or female, in a kind of racial group or in another. If a citizen is born rich and white and male there is no reason for him to be favored or disfavored by social institutions. On the opposite side the positive thesis considers equality-based reciprocity. All goods have to be distributed equally and for everyone to take an advantage of them. Equality must be respected, and any inequality discovered must be used to improve a specific situation.

The theory of Justice as Fairness is explained in two principles of justice:

1. Each person has the same inalienable claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme of liberties for all;
2. Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions:
 - a. They are to be attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity
 - b. They are to be the greatest benefit of the least-advantaged members of society (the difference principle)

The first principle is used to design the political constitution, while the second applies mostly to economic institutions. To fulfill the first principle is much more important than to fulfill the second principle, and the fair equality of opportunity of the second principle has the priority over the difference principle. The first principle affirms for all citizens familiar basic rights and liberties since they are for Rawls of an incredible importance. Priority is one of the two distinctive features of the first principle and it states that the basic rights and liberties must not be traded off against other social goods. The second feature requires fair values of political liberties which concern the rights to hold public office, to influence elections and many others, regardless of the person’s social class, sex or race. The second principle has two parts. The first requires that citizens with the same talents and willingness to use them, should have equal educational or economic opportunity whether they are born rich or poor. The second part, the difference principle, regulates the distribution of wealth and income. It requires social institutions to be arranged so that inequalities of wealth and income

work to favor those who will be worse off. A certain citizen does not merit more social goods simply because he was lucky to be born in favorable circumstance, but it does not mean that everyone must get the same goods. Citizens with talents and abilities can use them to make everyone better off¹².

Susan Moller Okin, focuses on the position Rawls takes and on the arguments he makes about the application of his principles of justice to the family and to women. At first Rawls believed that the family is just only for the moral development of the child and Okin accused him, of building his structure of moral education on an insecure ground. On his latest book Rawls clarifies his point of view taking into considerations the critiques of Susan Moller Okin. He says that his principles of justice apply completely to the family even though he never clarifies which ones. Children should be treated according to political principles by parents. All parents should follow the concept of justice and fairness and respect their children within certain limits. Rawls principles of justice were finally not considered sufficient to remedy the gender-structure system analyzed by Okin and nor did the distinction between the different point of views of family members¹³.

CHAPTER 3

JUSTICE FROM SPHERE TO SPHERE AND THE POLITICS OF GENDER

Susan Moller Okin, in the sixth chapter of her book, talks about Justice from Sphere to Sphere and analyses Michael Walzer's book *Spheres of Justice* which is considered to be among mainstream contemporary theories of justice and it gives importance to all women and gender. Because of his attention given to women, Walzer goes against most moral and political philosophers which, like Rawls for example, have made their theories men centered. Walzer's book analyses both strengths and weaknesses of gender: weaknesses which are often the result of a domination of some groups of people over other, and strengths where different inequalities happen to exist side by sides far as no dominance situation is created. The author argues that justice does not crave an equal distribution of social goods in each sphere, since what is just in each sphere depends mainly on what the sphere is all about. In the sphere of politics, for example, the influence of money should be limited since it would directly create "dominance". Walzer says criticizing dominance "no social good x should be distributed to men and women who possess some other good y merely because they possess y and without regard to the meaning of x ¹⁴" and believes that social justice consists in the distribution of "different goods to different companies of men and women for different reasons and in accordance with different procedures". Gender it self is a social and pervasive case of dominance. Feminists believe that there is a need for social change for what regards the separate spheres criterion of justice and the argue that the unequal distribution of rights, responsibilities, benefits and powers within a family, are very similar to the inequalities in the political and social life. Walzer like feminists, points out to what extent women are still defined by their position in the family analyzing the usage of titles Miss and Mrs. Since there is no universal title, and women keep being excluded from the social universe, the author starts pointing out that there are many different kinds of things which are not evenly distributed between sexes. Political power and office, money and commodities, security, are not equally assigned to women who are potential wives and mothers, primary parents or subjects who might me dependent upon a man. Introducing in his discussion of

oppression of women, Walzer argues that “the real domination of women has less to do with their familial place than with their exclusion from all other places”. He believes that moving out from the political and economic sexism begins outside the family, because no social good must be distributed to women accordant to the woman’s familial role. In all distribution of goods, whether they are rights, favors, power or responsibilities, there is always a possibility for them to be just or unjust. For example work is divided into paid work and unpaid work. Women work hours a day outside the house, generally underpaid, and when they get home they continue to work for the family without receiving any compensation. Paid domestic work could be the solution for those women who choose to work and to look for a recognition in the outside world, but still want to take care of their families. But, as Walzer argues, it can not be a solution, since paid domestic work may lead to an “inevitably little tyranny” with a woman as a live-in-servant. In a just society, markets should raise the wages of unskilled workers, close to the skilled in order to decrease the desire of accepting a degraded work. According to the separate sphere criterion, family and personal life are considered just only if they contain no inequalities at least among adult members. Since marriage and the family make all the relations self-regulating, women and men should be able to make us enjoy security and equality. Any how, any kind of equality, between sexes or in family or at work, does not simply come alone, because only political, legal and social changes can make the inequalities disappear.

The “Personal is Political” is the main message of the feminist critique of the public/domestic dichotomy. Feminists have fought centuries for the abolition of the oppressive legal status of wives who has to deal with political and personal domination by men. The first claims of personal is political, came up in the 1960s and 1970s, arguing that since the family is the root of women’s oppression, it must be destroyed. This belief of anti-family was brought to exaggeration by radical feminists and what was once a simple attack to the oppression, became a general rebellion against all types of families. Contemporary feminists still criticize the gendered structure of families but do not criticize every kind of family. Many of them believe that family is the nucleus of commitment and of connection of different people living together. They refuse to accept the division of labour as unchangeable and began realizing the importance of potential forms and practices of family groups. Of course feminists say that the family is inevitably gendered structured, but believe that this notion

can be challenged. Nontraditional groupings and the division of labour are encouraged nowadays and until this will happen, there will be no hope of equality for women in either domestic or public spheres. Anyhow, feminists have not only given importance to family, but also to politics, which became the underpinning of most feminist thought. Almost all political theories underline that the spheres of family and personal life are separate and clean-out from the rest of social life. Susan Moller Okin, establishes that domestic life needs to be just and in order for justice to be enforced, there has to be an example given by the state and the legal system. Too many women are rendered vulnerable by the marriage and by the social status of motherhood and injustice should stop growing. The most pervasive spheres are the domestic and the non domestic aspects of our lives, which affect women more than men. The first aspect of the domestic/non-domestic dichotomy is power. Domestic and personal life are not immune from the dynamics of power. Power within the family, husband over wife, mother over child, it is still not recognized as such since it is assumed to be natural and used for the interests of the entire family. The other form of power, acting as physical violence, should not be a factor of family life. It is now well known unfortunately, with wife abuse, and many hidden or unreported cases. Thirty percent of all female murders in 1986, were victims of their husbands or boyfriends. Nowadays family violence has a wider visibility and it became a serious problem to deal with. The family is private and nonpolitical because power is an insignificant factor in it. The second aspect of this dichotomy is that, since a more private domestic sphere exists, the limits that define it and the behaviors that are considered acceptable or unacceptable, are all results of political decisions. The State determines marriage and the common law has always had always deprived women of their legal personhood upon marriage. Although many years have passed since married women started gaining rights over properties and divorce, marriage still remains a contract. Only when the “divorce revolution” which washed out the traditional role sex, Lenore Weitzman wrote “the common law assumption that the husband was the head of the family remained firmly embodied in statute and case law until the last decade” meaning that something, in 1985, started changing.

A curious debate started when the New York Times published two front page stories. The first took the example of a tiny elite of women: those working as lawyers for the country. It was explained that if these women decided to have children with someone whom they

want to spend time with, they can consider themselves off the partnership track, with no prospects of advancement and on the “mommy track”. These firms believe that a nine-to-five shift is a part-time and women usually report that after working 12 hours a day, and usually having weekends busy, it is pretty hard to find someone with whom they would like to create a family. Of course, most of these women on the “mommy track” have children with men working in the same firm and that would never take a parental leave since, a male lawyer can be seen as “wimp-like”. The other page of the New York Times, brought a major case of abortion rights at the attention of everyone. The case was decided by the Federal Appeals court in Minnesota. It was decided that a woman under eighteen years, who wishes to obtain abortion, has to notify both her parents (even if they are divorced or separated) or has to receive a special approval from a state judge. If analyzed together these two cases happen to get along with each other very well. The case of abortion was decided by male judges and women who work in law firms, usually can not advance with their career since the desire of having a family inhibits them. This is only one of the “personal is political” cases which were taken into consideration by feminists.

THE POLITICS OF GENDER

There is a basic way to determine what Politics of Gender is: sex, gender and sexuality. Sex denotes biological diversities, gender describes the social meanings given to the biological differences, sexuality refers to the sexual relations and the sexual orientations. The most typical tendency is to represent sex as female, gender as feminine and sexuality as homosexual. Sex and gender are then treated as similar terms, always referring to women. Feminists, as we have seen, have pioneered new uses for the term politics. Although we might think of politics as elections, referendums and parliament, it has assumed different meanings in the last years when talking about gender. The women’s movement activists have included informal politics in the dynamics of everyday life. Social movements, according to them, are believed to be forms of participation which slowly have included also the relations within the private sphere of home and family. Any how, feminists and post-modern theorists believe that politics is not only the politics of State and of social movements, but it is the politics of language, of exchange and of representation. The politics of gender therefore wants to study the various aspects of women’s political activity including all kinds of social

movements, political parties or the State. It is important to underline that gender and politics gives attention also to the masculine aspects of politics, but comprises a more focused attention on what are the power relations behind the definitions of sex, gender and sexuality. Since many subjects like sociology, anthropology, and philosophy talk about politics in a more extended way, gender and politics wants to analyze the role of women in politics, the gender and politics and the politics of gender.

The first research of gender and politics included highlighting women's exclusion from all kinds of formal politics and the subsequent incorporation of women in the political framework. The second phase shifted its attention on the activities done by females and analyzed their participation in both formal and informal politics. Although many say that the number of women involved is growing, the study of many cases showed that politics is still full of inequalities. The third and most recent phase studies how sex and gender are able to permeate all aspects of political life with the intent to break down these dichotomies. The third phase is important since it gives importance also to the masculine behaviors in politics. The continuous will to break down these dichotomies, has brought scholars to explore the effects of gender on a broader range of political activities. They have examined the right to vote of women and the gender gaps in voting support; women and social movements, in terms of participation and the presence of feminist movements; women in political parties, analyzing the amount of women as candidates for a specific category or for a party; women and parliaments, when talking about the access to the political office and the behavior in the political office. Gender and politics researchers have found a way to analyze how state contributes to the regeneration of gender hierarchies, or of the inequalities in the different public policies. It is clear that the State, with such policies, still give major attention to male issues, sometimes ignoring (even if partially) certain women's issues.

As I wrote about the Politics of gender, I believe that it is strictly correlated to our current national and international situation today. We listen to and watch the news talking about migrants leaving their homes, women of many different nationalities giving birth to children on our land and asking for political asylum and we never consider the culture and cultus of those women. It is essential to analyze the effects gender has on multiculturalism, and how, Susan Moller Okin, has dealt with it in her thesis. There is a certain need of justice when talking about politics, family and society but until now I have just talked about it in a

very general way. In the next chapter, I will analyze, thanks to Okin's book "*Is Multiculturalism bad for women?*" the point of view on minorities of feminists (today and in the past) in the major cultures.

CHAPTER 4

THE MULTICULTURALISM THEORY OF SUSAN MOLLER OKIN

Until few decades ago, it was normal to expect that minorities would try to get along with the major cultures. Today, this desire of aggregation is most often considered oppressive and many western countries search for new political ideas in order to achieve less cultural differences. Policies have different results and vary with different contexts: in countries like England and France both cultural and religious minorities collide with the equality of gender. At the end of the 1980s, in France, a violent dispute started to decide if Moroccan girls could have the right to wear the hijab to go to school, which is a type of outfit considered appropriate for all Muslim girls who had passed the age of puberty. The most aggressive defenders of non-religious teaching lined up with some feminists against such practice. The majority of the old left supported the multiculturalist demands for more flexibility and asked to respect diversities. However in the same period, public opinion did not express any thought on a much more important problem for the many Arab women living in France: polygamy. Along all the 80s, the French government allowed immigrants to bring into the country more than one wife, counting two hundred thousand polygamous families just in Paris. Anyhow, about this situation it was strange that such a denigrating practice was so easy to introduce despite the warnings given by some women involved in these practices. Women started considering those practices inevitable. Apartments full of people and missing space for each wife, created many hostilities and resentments and sometimes also violent disputes between the wives and the children.

The request of such rights started increasing in number and many started believing that such group rights and privileges have to get along with the cultures that “in a liberal society tread on single rights and privileges”, if their minority status does put in danger the continuity and persistence of their culture. Others believe that, in a liberal society, not all group minorities have to have specific rights, but everyone has the right to receive peace and understanding. The majority of the cultures, is patriarchal and many group minorities which fight for their rights, are the most patriarchal. It is not a surprise then if in such ethni-

cities, men want to have the full control on women¹⁵. The major western cultures, thanks to the feminist fight, have reached amazing goals to contrast the brutal treatments received by men and to limit the excuses used for such behaviors. Not until long ago, men could obtain a reduction of liability in cases of femicide, if they were able to explain their conduct in terms of crime of passion, driven by jealousy and anger for the infidelity of his wife. Similarly, until very recently, female rape victims who did not have a spotless past and did not try to resist the aggression - even if it meant endangering their lives - were systematically blamed for the attack received. Nowadays, to some extent, things have changed and with no doubt, concerns about the direction taken by the defense of cultures, are due in part to the concern to preserve certain achievements. Another reason for the concern is that defending cultures can distort perceptions of minority cultures, placing undue attention on their negative aspects. Anyhow the main concern is that, by failing to protect women and sometimes children of minority cultures from male violence, and in some cases motherly, cultural defenses violate the rights of women and children to have the same protection by law. When a woman belonging to a patriarchal culture arrives in the United States (or in any other fundamentally liberal western State), why would she be less protected from male violence than any other western woman? Many women of minority cultures have protested the different standards applied to their attackers.

Part of the solution may need a feminist point of view. As I said, from a feminist point of view, it is not at all clear whether the group rights for minorities are “part of the solution”. They might somehow aggravate the problem. In the case of a more patriarchal minority culture established in a majority culture being less patriarchal, you can not claim, on the basis of self-respect or freedom, legitimate reasons for female members to keep preserving their culture. In fact, their situation could improve if the culture they were born in, was to become extinct (so that its members would be obliged to integrate into a less sexist culture) or much better, if it was encouraged to change in order to strengthen women’s equality - at least up to the level where this value is defended by the majority cultures. Of course it should also take into account other factors, such as whether the minority group speaks a language that needs to be protected, or if the group is a victim of prejudice such as racial di-

scrimination. But it would need significant factors to counter balance evidence that a culture severely limits women's choices or comprises their welfare in other ways. I will now give some examples of the oppressive practices, approved by the society and the culture against women, which are often hidden in the private and in the domestic sphere. The case of the marriage of Iraqi children, was brought up and became of public knowledge because the father was addressed by state officials. Moreover, in 1996, the US Congress passed a law that made illegal the clitoridectomy practice, and was harshly objected by many american physicians who believed that it was a private matter and that it "should be decided by your doctor, the family and the child"¹⁶. It takes very extraordinary circumstances for such abuses on girls or women to become public and to enable the state to intervene and to protect them. So it is clear that many instances of discrimination against women, which for cultural reasons, take place in the private sphere and have no chance to become of public interest and could be settled in courts where women's rights can be enforced, are labelled as illiberal violations and there fore considered unjustified for the physical and psychological integrity of women. Establishing group rights to enable some minority cultures to preserve themselves may not respond to the interest of girls and women of those cultures, although it would benefit men. Those who advance liberal arguments for group rights, therefore do not have to worry about the inequalities within them. It is important to take into account the inequalities between sexes, since probably, they are not public, and therefore not easy to be recognized. In addition, the policies designed to meet the needs and demands of cultural minorities should take seriously the need to adequately represent the members of the group which has power. Since the attention given to group minority rights must have, as its ultimate goal, the promotion of the welfare of members of these groups, it is not justified to assume that the leaders of groups (male and old) represent the interest of all their members. Unless women, and more specifically young women, are not fully represented in negotiations about group rights, their interests could be rather damaged than favored by granting such rights. Recognizing specific group minorities rights, puts in risk the recognition of the oppression of women, which is most of the times, hidden behind the veil of the domestic sphere.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, at the basis of Susan Moller Okin's theory, family is found. Family is the foundation of gender and it reproduces from generation to generation without being just enough for women and children. Everything I wrote, underlines a slight sense of justice given by family and despite the request of equality between sexes, the traditional division of family still overcomes everything else. Women are still vulnerable, constructing their lives around the responsibility of being mothers and wives. They are still working for low wages, and in events like divorce or separation, they usually take in charge what remains of the family without an adequate support of their ex-partners. The increase of marriage dissolutions, has created a traumatic experience for today's kids, whom will be future husbands and wives and will eventually recreate the same gender-structured type of family. Susan Moller Okin suggested that family needs to be a just institution, because women should not be neglected or ignored. It is certainly true that everyone of us believes that, certain facts about sexual differences and sex roles are part of us because of the influence of a gender-structured society. But is it right? We must work to achieve a future in which we are all free to choose the right mode of life, better if without any "gender". Imagine living in a world where no assumption on male or female roles is made, and where men and women could equally be responsible for domestic life or for children rearing. Raising a child would not just be a female prerequisite anymore. Abortion and rape decisions, divorce settlements and domestic violence, would not be so frequent as they are now. But of course to achieve such changes, we have to wait more than a night or a week. Many new policies should be made and institutions should minimize social differentiation between the sexes. How? First, public policies and laws, as Okin says, should assume no social differentiation between sexes whatsoever. If we start believing that women and men share equally the role of parents of their children and share the responsibility to care for them and to economically support them, then work life would change, since either parent can seek for a period of time in which they will only take care of a small child. Children should be educated about the current situation of inequality, ambiguity and uncertainty of marriage. They should be discouraged from thinking that their sex can be a discrimination for their future work life. Schools like families, should start providing high-quality after school programs, in which children can play safely and partici-

pate to creative activities. With the help of schools, parents can prepare their children for a future in which the sexual difference between males and females is weakened.

In a genderless society everyone can receive benefits. Children would not suffer anymore like now because of injustices done to women. Equal opportunity to become what we want to be can be possible wiping out gender differences and creating the public policies necessary to back all these changes. Fairness, justice and respect should be the most powerful examples that parents wish to give to their children and even if it is a long term goal to achieve, if we start creating a new society starting from the young ones, we might have one day, the perfect just society.

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RIASSUNTO DELL'ELABORATO

La mia tesi parla di Politica e Genere e del ruolo della donna nella famiglia nella società ed in political. Ha uno stampo di tipo descrittivo, poiché ho condotto uno studio mirato sulle tesi della scrittrice Susan Moller Okin, aiutandomi con i suoi tre libri “Le donne e la giustizia. La famiglia come problema politico”, “Diritti delle donne e multiculturalismo” e “Le donne nel pensiero politico occidentale”. Ho suddiviso la tesi in quattro capitoli diversi, collegandoli tra loro con l’idea di trasmettere cosa è veramente necessario per raggiungere un’uguaglianza nei diritti tra uomini e donne: la Giustizia.

Nella Preface ho introdotto il significato di Politica e Gender. Per politica intendiamo il processo attraverso il quale prendiamo decisioni che si applicano a tutti i membri di un determinato gruppo. Gender, al contrario di Politica, è lo stato di essere maschio, femmina o neutro in contesti e materie diverse, come ad esempio nelle scienze sociali. Per comprendere l’intero significato di genere, bisogna capire che il termine in se comprende tutte le aspettative che la società ha verso il ruolo di uomo o donna. La polarizzazione di genere stabilisce che la natura di uomini e donne è molto diversa e che dal momento che i maschi sono considerati il genere dominante, indipendente e competitivo, le femmine sono considerate sensibili e con un ruolo pre-impostato dalla natura: essere madri. Come ho aggiunto nella tesi, le prime civiltà erano per la maggior parte patriarcali e mettevano l’uomo al centro del mondo e lo consideravano come l’unico essere in grado di prendersi cura dei bisogni della famiglia all’esterno della sfera domestica. Verso la fine della prefazione ho iniziato ad introdurre la soluzione che ritengo più giusta per risolvere il problema delle disuguaglianze di genere cioè l’educazione. L’educazione inizia in famiglia e continua negli anni con la scuola e la vita quotidiana insieme a chi ci circonda. Per affrontare tutto questo ho analizzato diverse battaglie affrontate nel corso degli anni da moltissime donne per arrivare fino ai nostri giorni.

Nel primo capitolo ho introdotto il concetto di genere e politica analizzando il vissuto e le diverse discriminazioni subite dalle donne nel corso dei secoli. Paradossalmente, le possibilità di diventare donne rispettabili, era più semplice migliaia di anni fa di quanto lo sia ora. Cleopatra per esempio, ha influenzato il suo popolo ed ha difeso l’Egitto dai nemici tra cui l’Impero Romano raggiungendo obiettivi come diventare amica fidata di leader come

Marco Antonio e Giulio Cesare. Bouddica, come Cleopatra, diventò una leader ispiratrice dei Britanni nel primo secolo dopo Cristo. Si ribellò contro l'occupazione romana e con la sua guida l'esercito riuscì a saccheggiare Colchester e poi Londra. Giovanna d'Arco, ispirò la rivolta francese contro l'occupazione inglese. Diventò un'eroina a soli diciassette anni e condusse la sua truppa verso il successo ad Orleans. Anche se la sua vita si concluse nei peggiori dei modi, ancora oggi è riconosciuta come la Santa Patrona della Francia. Per finire, Margaret Thatcher, diventò la prima donna primo ministro della Gran Bretagna. Ha governato per oltre dieci anni, credendo fortemente nel libero mercato. Anche se queste donne furono capaci di dare il loro contributo all'intera società, oggi molte di queste donne ricevono insulti, critiche e discriminazioni su base giornaliera. Basti pensare a ciò che ha subito Cécile Kyenge, ministro dell'integrazione con il governo Letta. Ricevette tantissimi attacchi razzisti durante la sua carica e fu spesso bersaglio del movimento anti-immigrazione della Lega Nord. Tutto questo perché la politica è sempre stata vista come una materia e un passatempo maschile. Se si prova a cercare donne in politica su una qualsiasi piattaforma web, quello che ne esce fuori è una classifica delle donne più belle in politica, delle deputate più attraenti, dell'abbigliamento più provocante indossato da una ministra. E questo perché? Perché le donne sono viste come oggetti di desiderio e come persone non in grado di fare politica. Ho pensato che analizzare il libro di Vera Tripodi "Filosofie di Genere - Differenza sessuale e ingiustizie sociali" fosse opportuno per descrivere la scarsa importanza data alle donne nelle comunità scientifiche e filosofiche. In moltissimi manuali di filosofia, le donne sono assenti quasi del tutto poiché considerati poco attinenti al genere femminile. Nei manuali in cui il genere femminile è presente, il loro contributo è culturalmente limitato all'analisi di alcuni temi considerati vicini alla sensibilità femminile come la sessualità, l'emancipazione e l'aborto. L'esclusione delle donne dall'ambito filosofico o politico, avvenne poiché fu mostrata un'immagine negativa della donna priva di razionalità. La filosofia era considerata una pratica adatta solo al genere maschile, ma il perché è stato spiegato dall'epistemologia. L'epistemologia è lo studio di come riusciamo a capire o a sapere, quando una cosa è vera in ambito delle differenze sessuali e soprattutto riguardo l'autonomia riproduttiva e la religione. Vera Tripodi mette in risalto soprattutto l'aborto. Chi difende questo atto crede che solo una persona può avere diritti e che gli embrioni essendo cellule e non persone, non possono ottenere diritti. L'ammissibilità di questo atto fa sì che la donna sia libera di sce-

gliere come e se mettere fine alla propria gravidanza. Gli oppositori dell'aborto credono fermamente che il feto non appartenga alla madre in quanto considerato un essere autonomo. Quest'ultimi considerano l'embrione una persona a tutti gli effetti e pensano che le donne non dovrebbero avere il diritto di privare un altro essere umano della sua vita. Avere la possibilità di portare in grembo un bambino per nove mesi non dà loro il diritto di scegliere se continuare o concludere una gravidanza.

Nel secondo capitolo parlo della teoria di Susan Moller Okin sulla Giustizia e il Genere. Il capitolo è suddiviso in tre paragrafi diversi: la famiglia idealizzata, la vulnerabilità trasmessa dal matrimonio e per concludere giustizia come equità. Ad oggi crediamo che la nostra società pensi che le differenze fisiche, culturali o sessuali, non dovrebbero limitare i nostri obiettivi, ma migliorare il nostro benessere. Susan Moller Okin nel suo libro "Le donne e la giustizia. La famiglia come problema politico" spiega che è esattamente il contrario. Diseguaglianze sostanziali tra i sessi esistono ancora nella nostra società e in particolare molte donne pagano ancora il fatto di dover essere future madri o possibili mogli, guadagnando spesso la metà di un uomo e quando single, costituiscono la metà delle famiglie in povertà. Mancanza di benefit, lavoro spesso solo part-time e la paura costante di essere licenziate a causa di una gravidanza, sono vessazioni che quasi tutte le donne devono subire ogni giorno. Le donne sono considerate come capaci solo di badare alla famiglia, dedite solo ai lavori domestici e niente più. Spesso sono le donne a seguire le carriere dei mariti, mettendo la loro carriera all'ultimo posto. Ma non dovrebbe essere così. Nessuna donna dovrebbe sentire l'obbligo di diventare madre e nessuna donna dovrebbe essere l'unica responsabile per l'allevamento e la crescita dei bambini. Nella parte sulla famiglia idealizzata ho descritto la famiglia ideale come quella nella quale i lavori domestici e la crescita dei bambini viene condivisa tra i diversi membri, senza pensare ai ruoli primordiali di uomo e donna. La nozione di giustizia non era propriamente condivisa da Hume e Rousseau, ma è molto importante oggi. Rousseau sosteneva che il governo e la famiglia non dovrebbero essere basati sulla giustizia come un'istituzione politica ma sull'amore. Il padre di famiglia dovrebbe consultare il suo cuore quando deve insegnare una lezione di vita ai suoi figli e conclude che le donne possono essere governate e possono essere escluse dalle decisioni poiché l'uomo in casa è già in grado di occuparsi del nucleo familiare. Hume invece sostiene che la giustizia nelle famiglie è inutile perché non necessaria. Il valore più importante per

una famiglia è l'affetto tra i vari membri e la giustizia diventa inadeguata perché l'unico collante per un nucleo familiare è il rapporto che i vari membri instaurano tra loro. Ma Susan Moller Okin vuole sottolineare che la giustizia è molto importante anche se ci allontana dall'intimità, dall'armonia e dall'amore. Nonostante ciò si può cercare di mettere tutto insieme. Le famiglie ideali operano in conformità con i sentimenti di amore e di generosità e possono agire anche agendo nel modo più giusto. Solo quando tutti i membri della famiglia si preoccupano gli uni degli altri, allora si potrà considerare la famiglia come ideale. Le relazioni intra-familiari dovrebbero essere più forti di qualsiasi altra tipologia di relazione.. anche del matrimonio. Come ho scritto nel paragrafo riguardo la vulnerabilità trasmessa dal matrimonio, coloro che discutono riguardo la famiglia senza dar peso alle disuguaglianze tra sessi, non tengono conto dei limiti posti alle opportunità delle donne e di ragazze di tutte le classi sociali. La crescita delle famiglie formate da una donna single non ha che peggiorato la vulnerabilità delle donne. Non è facile pensare alla famiglia e al matrimonio come istituzioni "giuste". Il filosofo Robert Goodin e l'economista Albert Hirschman hanno entrambi descritto con argomenti convincenti l'uso del potere e la vulnerabilità nei matrimoni contemporanei. La teoria di Goodin afferma che alcuni casi di vulnerabilità possono essere considerati naturali come ad esempio la vulnerabilità dei neonati. Come ultimo paragrafo ho parlato della giustizia come equità. Il filosofo politico John Rawls pensava che la giustizia intesa come equità fosse la parte fondamentale di una società egalitaria e liberale. Egli riteneva che la sua teoria fosse in grado di rispondere alle esigenze di libertà ed uguaglianza e che poteva rappresentare una sfida alla critica socialista sulla democrazia. Susan Moller Okin si concentrò sulla posizione di Rawls e sull'applicazione dei suoi principi di giustizia nella famiglia e con le donne. In un primo momento Rawls ritenne che la famiglia doveva essere "giusta" solo per lo sviluppo morale del bambino e accusò la Okin di scrivere tesi senza un terreno sicuro. Nel suo ultimo libro Rawls chiarì il suo punto di vista prendendo in considerazione l'idea di Susan Moller Okin e considerò sufficienti i principi di giustizia per porre rimedio alla divisione di genere della famiglia.

Nel terzo capitolo ho deciso di parlare della Giustizia nelle diverse sfere di vita quotidiana, basandomi sul sesto capitolo del libro "Le donne e la giustizia. La famiglia come problema politico" di Susan Moller Okin. Lei stessa ha dato credito alla teoria di Michael Walzer sulla giustizia, considerata una delle teorie principali che critica il pensiero di molti

filosofi come Rawls. Walzer analizza i punti di forza e di debolezza della differenza tra generi. Le debolezze sono spesso dovute al dominio di un gruppo di persone su un altro. Lo scrittore sostiene che la giustizia non brama un'equa distribuzione dei beni sociali dal momento che ogni sfera dipende da ciò che essenzialmente essa contiene. Ad esempio, la sfera politica dovrebbe ottenere un'influenza limitata del denaro poiché potrebbe creare una posizione indirettamente dominante in un individuo. Le femministe d'altro canto credono che ci sia bisogno di un cambiamento sociale per quanto riguarda le diverse sfere sociali e sostengono che la distribuzione non uguale dei diritti, dei benefici e dei poteri all'interno della famiglia assomigliano moltissimo alle disuguaglianze sociali e politiche. Walzer come le femministe, fa notare che le donne sono ancora accompagnate da un titolo come Signora o Signorina prima del loro nome e poiché un titolo universale ancora non esiste, la disuguaglianza tra i due sessi continuerà ad esistere. Nella seconda parte del terzo capitolo ho descritto come determinare la politica di genere: attraverso il sesso, il genere e la sessualità. Sesso denota diversità biologiche, genere descrive le differenze sociali come conseguenza delle differenze biologiche e la sessualità si riferisce ai rapporti sessuali e agli orientamenti sessuali. Sesso e genere sono trattati come termini molto simili anche se molto diversi tra loro. Politica non è solo elezioni, referendum e parlamento, ma anche movimenti di donne attiviste che hanno provato per anni ad introdurre la politica nelle dinamiche di vita di tutti i giorni. La politica di genere studia i vari aspetti dell'attività politica delle donne come anche i partiti politici. Ovviamente la politica di genere non studia solo i movimenti femminili, ma anche quelli maschili.

Nel mio quarto e ultimo capitolo ho analizzato le tesi di Susan Moller Okin. Nel libro "Diritti delle donne e multiculturalismo" si parla delle diverse discriminazioni subite dalle culture minori e le politiche discriminatorie create per alleviare gli usi e i costumi di queste culture. In Francia e in Inghilterra, le minoranze culturali e religiose si scontrano con l'uguaglianza di genere. Nacque in Francia negli anni 80, una violenta controversia per decidere se impedire o meno alle donne marocchine di indossare l'hijab. L'hijab è per la cultura araba un tipo di abbigliamento appropriato per tutte le donne musulmane appena superata la pubertà. La sinistra francese ha sostenuto le richieste multiculturali, per rispetto delle diversità mentre la destra francese ha ignorato le richieste di queste minoranze. Un altro episodio importante fu il problema della poligamia sollevato in quel periodo. Per tutti gli anni

80, il governo francese ha permesso agli immigrati di portare nel paese più di una moglie, aumentando così la presenza di famiglie poligame nel paese. Sottolineando le differenze culturali Susan M. Okin vuole semplicemente analizzare la situazione delle donne non solo nel mondo occidentale ma anche nelle culture minori. Spesso le donne subiscono discriminazioni non solo in ambito culturale ma anche in ambito religioso, e molte di loro in silenzio per anni affrontano violenze e vessazioni da parte di mariti e spesso genitori.

In conclusione, spero che la mia tesi possa aprire gli occhi riguardo una situazione denigrante quale quella delle disuguaglianze di genere e delle discriminazioni razziali, di genere e di cultura. Nessuno ha il diritto di decidere cosa far fare ad un altro essere umano, ma ognuno di noi dovrebbe seguire delle regole giuste e che riescano a portare tutti ad essere considerati sullo stesso piano, senza alcuna differenza.