

Georgian Feminism or Feminism in Georgia

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JFDP-2011 American Councils

Two main pushes form my research work existed:

- ◉ Why do we remember the past which has no influence on actual society? Where were women in our recent past?
- ◉ In “Women’s Emancipation Movement in Russia”, the American researcher Richard Strait where deals with the period of 1860-1930.

He speaks about Russia, but not the *Russian* Empire.

Her-story, which would fulfill He-story

Until re/deconstruction of Georgian discourse, it was necessary to create a conceptual construction, woman's/ feminine's representation or writing **Her-story, which would fulfill He-story** and restoration of social-cultural justice as political justice in the knowledge sphere.

Two works which played the main role in rationalization

- Harriet Taylor's "Women's Emancipation"
- Fani Levardi's book "For the Benefit of and Against German Women",

Both translated in 60-70s.

Women's elucidative activity in 60-70ies

- Enrollment in the social activity which spread reading and writing among Georgians (1879-1927)
- Concern for opening women's schools

The first resistance



“It is really astonishing that any member of society or social managers had no idea to think of women’s fate. Would it be bad to decide in their favor and if all schools were for women and men, as they speak about the schools of Batumi and Tbilisi?...”

Ekaterine Gabashvili

The First Result

Despite this letter and many protests, there was no money invested in women's education. As a result they decided to create a school which would support itself and give an education to girls. The new professional school of working women from 1897-1922 was such a school.



Olga Guramishvili

Georgian society logic

Translated literature and actualization of the women's question were the essential logic of the dependence of Georgian society towards these themes; from the very beginning men opened the door to feminist ideas, while real and active women appeared in the field. From the moment of their "visibility" a discussion began about women's inclination for narrow-mindedness and immorality.

Answer by a “woman”

“Oh, poor women, oh your sin! You can’t read any issue of a newspaper where there is no reprimand written about you, no hour passes so that a stone wasn’t thrown towards you by guilty people and from guiltless as well. I am not going to conceal that our women are more idle members of society than men. Among them you can see women having fewer morals, gossips and with other bad morals. But I’ll ask, what’s the reason of women’s lesser morality? Is it an inborn feature that women are in this state or does there exist another reason?!”

Answer by a “woman”

“What factors did woman’s humiliation cause?
– Education hasn’t been given to them, nor rights, nor direction by men who don’t take liberties to speak about them... Tell me, who deceives a woman, who separates her from the family, husband and children, who humiliates them morally? The same man who fawns on her and tells her that she is a God and then laughs at her. Can a woman be lewd if a man won’t be her participant? So, why are only women criticized for lewd and not man? It happens because social opinion is always compiled by men and their interest is to hide themselves.”

Answer by a “woman”

“Destroy, Misters, the reason for women’s humiliation and believe me, the result will be destroyed itself. Give us the right, the education which you’ve got and then we can see if we’ll stay behind. Give us a friendly hand, look at us as your brothers, recognize us as human and not a thing for your amusement, and then, believe me, women will be able to implement their role and no one will hate speaking about them.”

“Woman”

“A Small Conversation”

Ilia Chavchavadze
publishes “A Small
Conversation” where
he legalizes concept
“wife” as expression of
a woman’s human role.



The “Woman-man”

“Wife” becomes “woman” and “man” – “boy” – it’s a horseman falling down, the transformation of big to small, the dying of opinion. A man will not lose many things by becoming “boy”. A boy may have the name of man. “Woman-man” is not said together. Maybe because woman is weaker, she isn’t able to carry a “man’s” hard name. It’s even true the word doesn’t suit the subject and vice versa. Woman is woman and not man!..

The “Woman-man”

The transient world is a walking garden for a woman, for a wife it's a house of honest work, filled for arable land, a cornfield, a walk of life battling with intellect and her own right hand. A woman is a wife with a shield and sword, and a wife is a woman with shield and sword and how can they be together!... Oh, wives are gone, they don't exist anymore and only “women” are left and we think that here is the source of our misfortune.

Fighter suffragism

To improve the picture of the women's movement, it's necessary to know, that with the educational movement there exists a wave of fighter suffragism, which appeared in 10s of the XX century and which supports women's political activity. Kato Mikeladze led to this movement. According to her, to improve woman's political status, a fundamental criticism of culture is necessary.

What should Constituent Assembly give to women?

- It must establish and consolidate recognized equality of one's rights with one's job, i.e., within the law.

What can women demand from the Constituent Assembly?

- Full personal freedom and then – political rights. Women must be electors of representatives, as elected by the people's representatives.
- A woman should begin to defend their interest.
- Women should have the vote on their side; men should not replace them.
- It's ridiculous to speak of representatives when half the people's representatives are excluded.
- The future Constituent Assembly should consolidate the right of active and passive votes of both sexes equally, sexual equality is a right in the social and in the personal sphere.
- It's obvious that with education women fall behind in labor rights.
- The Constituent Assembly should establish equal labor for the both sexes.
- It should eliminate tyranny, regulation of prostitution and all people who purchase a woman's body should be punished as other criminals.

Constituent Assembly should change:

- Intelligence supervision should be abolished as such supervision of only one sex, when the other spreads venereal diseases freely, decreases a wife's personality and doesn't reach any positive result; legislative protection on women's labor in any form should be established.
- Establish district and civil laws; eliminate the difference standards of punishment and civil rights between the sexes.
- Hereditary sexual difference and privilege of the father's rights regarding children in the family should be eliminated as well.

conclusion

Georgian feminism exists, it is not the mere arrival of coming ideas, but their adaptation and adjustment to the necessities/problems of institutions, which determine the face of women's movement. This means that translation of these ideas in Georgian socio – cultural language happens and not – their constrained, artificial transplantation into new and strange ground.

Thank you