
Memorandum

TO: *POSC 3300 International Security Studies*
FROM: *Allexus Bain*
SUBJECT: *The Patrilineal-Fraternal Syndrome*
DATE: *September 20th, 2022*

Executive Summary:

Women's rights are neglected in many nations and states around the world. There are opposing male forces who challenge it because of misogynistic beliefs, while others are fixated on cultural norms. Many of these ignored women are forced to learn coping mechanisms to manage their diminished roles in their respective societies. Some may find ways in using their weakness as a strength, in being heard by their husbands and families. Though, this should not have been the case to begin with, patrilineal practices, in some cultures, prevent women from the basic forms of equality they deserve.

Subordination and Devaluation of Female Life

There are cultural customs where families do not consider females a part of their immediate families, other than biological relations. In some of these cultures, the family may only view the female as a future wife to a male of another household. "They are considered burdens, like 'watering a plant in another man's garden.'" (pp.42). This form of inferiority subordinates a woman in the social class structure.

Some recently married women have to endure being placed on the lowest level of their in-laws' family hierarchy, as well as their biological family's hierarchy. As it concerns to the in-laws, the new bride may be perceived as an outsider, capable of changing the family's current way of life. In other words, the new bride may be seen as a threat to the family's values. Nonetheless, there are ways that a woman can orchestrate these beliefs into means of influence if she knows how to persuade her husband.

Anthropologist *Charles Lindholm* observed that a woman can cause a man to feel shame in sexual relations. If a woman comes off as demanding to a man, or as Lindholm mentioned, 'repulsive', in extreme cases, that can lead a man to homosexual behavior. That is due to the same sex having an attitude identified as less demanding, compared to the female. However, these events strongly depend on the individual and what's considered culturally acceptable. A woman can also cause confusion in the home if she refuses to cook for the family. This would mainly affect practitioners of old-world principles where the man provides, and the woman

maintains the household. If a woman refuses, or abandons, her tasks, it can change the state of the home. *Lindholm* stated that a woman embodies ‘both weakness and strength.’ (pp.43)

Some cultures often try to depict women as being burdens. Even though it is the design of the practiced culture which places women in such contradicting positions. Often times, the importance of the woman’s role is missed, or simply ignored. Interestingly enough, husbands can easily notice when the female presence is absent. “What is not concealable, however, is the subordination of women. Therefore, observation of household-level phenomena is key to lifting that carpet under which the bulldogs fight, we assert, because it is the site of identity reproduction.” (pp.29)

Analysis

It is disturbing, forasmuch, that some cultures behave poorly towards women. It’s one thing for a female to have a fixed role in society, but then it’s another when the rule of law, or tradition, works against her. ‘The First Political Order’ identified several key issues women experience in some traditions. The issues that arise from marriage was most interesting. Women would be able to utilize marriage as a way of ensuring their voices are heard, but in some cases, marriage can also diminish the already small social position women possess. Many women in the western world today, and in prior years, have made stellar achievements, aiding in the promotion of feminism. One can only hope that someday, more strict nations can follow a similar path in advocating human welfare for females.

Reference

Hudson, Valerie M., Donna Lee Bowen, and Perpetua Lynne Nielsen. 2020. "The First Political Order: How Sex Shapes Governance and National Security Worldwide." New York: *Columbia University Press*.