

Feminist theory of IR

Feminist analysts argue that perhaps this lack of feminist ideas in international politics has been because for many years it has been thought that the international politics elite is just for men. Therefore, only men and not women are capable of dealing with the issues of international politics, under those circumstances, foreign policy actors and decision-makers are male (Enloe, 1993).

In the sense of this debate, we have Professor Ann Tickner, who represents one of the most radical feminist authors who defend the incorporation of the issue of women as a study in international relations. Its importance lies in the fact that it takes up one of the classical authors of the realist view of international relations, Morgenthau, and complicates it in such a way that it shows that the international system is structured and understood by a male, partial, and incomplete vision therefore proposes to add a female perspective which help to conceptualize a world different from the existing view and generate a feminist epistemology of international relations which proposes to build an alternative feminist allowing to make it more accessible to the field of international relations to women, which would then permit overcome this partial view of the debate on international relations, building a more complex vision but comprehensive while in the world.

Despite these criticisms to the realistic vision of the power of Morgenthau, Tickner not discredits in your same theory, but that argument simply that it was very limited, since he lacked a feminine approach in terms of its epistemological perspective and therefore in the construction of the international agenda.

The central argument is that Morgenthau use definitions agreed upon under a male tradition, so your rational theory of politics, responds mostly under the parameters of the male values, therefore proposes redefining the principles of political realism from define masculinity and femininity from feminist theories of the time.

Another point of discussion, is the fact that part of the reflection, that the vision of the conflict as a fundamental part of international relations, could change under the logic of a vision of feminist, since it could move from the idea of an abstract to a concrete, morality in which sensitivity, tolerance could become a bridge towards building an international community under the parameters of the construction of social consensus and States.

Tickner (1992), states that the world of international relations is a masculine domain, therefore many male scholars suggest that a change in the way world politics is conducted is needed. Because all the knowledge about the behaviour of states in international relations depends on assumptions that come out of men's experiences, "it ignores a large body of human experiences that has potential for increasing the range of options and opening up new ways of thinking about interstate practices"

Feminist contributions to international relations are not just about adding women to the study of international politics, they are deeper. During the late 1980's in the third debate "feminist scholars contested the exclusionary state-centric and positivist nature of the discipline primarily at the metatheoretical level" (True, 2001, p. 243). Many of those feminist contributions sought to deconstruct and subvert realism, one of the dominant power politics explanation for post-war international relations. These new theoretical and epistemological challenges to international relations opened the space for critical scholarship, in where "they begged the question of what a feminist perspective of world politics would look like substantively and how different would be".

During the 1970's and 1980's a huge amount of material on women's lives and the role of women in international economic development (mainly in the third world) was generated. That provided a base for themes of peace, justice, development and among others. As a result of this, a new field was emerged known as Women in Development (WID), which documented how male bias in the development process has led to poor implementations of projects and unsatisfactory policy outcomes. WID seek the empowerment of women, including through participation in development

decisions that affect their own lives (Pettman, 2001). From this point of view, women are not outside of development; rather, women's contribution is central to development.

In the realm of environment, feminist scholars suggest that "it is masculine national and global institutions dominated by instrumental rationality, including science, the state, and the ecoconservationist establishment, that structure the relationship (of domination) to the environmental calamities" (True, 2001). As a response to this issue, eco-feminist critiques deconstruct the masculine gender bias of those institutions and suggest environmentally sustainable alternatives, which stress women's autonomy and local self-reliance within and in relation to eco-systems.

In the area of foreign policy, feminist analyses reveal gender as a variable by exposing the dominant male gender of policy-makers and the gender assumption that these policy-makers are strategically rational actors who make life and death decisions in the name of abstract conception of the national interest. Some scholars claim that women are rarely insiders of those actual institutions that make and implement foreign policy (Randal, 1982). Feminist foreign policy analyses have opened new substantive areas of policy-making and research in the relation between states. In addition, feminist empiricists analyse the persistent gender-gap in the foreign policy beliefs of men and women foreign policy-making elites and citizens, some researchers argue that women leaders in western states are more likely to oppose the use of force in international actions and are typically more supportive of humanitarian interventions.

The sphere of security, have attracted sustained scrutiny from feminist scholars because of their centrality to international relations theory and practice, and because of their particularly strong masculine bias. Many, including Grant (1991), have identified national security structures and the attendant ways of thinking as the sources of much of the gender bias in inter-national relations theory as a whole. She argues that the initial gendered separation of the public and private spheres in the organization of state and society produced an exclusively male concept of citizenship.

Men were given the military role of defenders of the state, thereby acquiring a privileged and active status in national life. Women were invisible, did not have access to the state machinery and did not participate in national decision-making. Domestic concerns played little part in shaping "the national interest".

Zalewski and Enloe point out the extent to which beliefs about gender differences have been deliberately constructed in the security sphere. The ideas of the masculinity of war and the image of the macho soldier have reinforced the patriarchal order. The traditional exclusion of women from armed combat was a mechanism designed not primarily to protect them, but to protect male privileges. Beliefs and myths about masculinity and femininity act on their own, or are consciously manipulated by the authorities, in the process of escalating or terminating armed conflict.