

## “Don’t Give Up! Don’t Give in!” Gender in International Relations and “Curious” Feminist Questions

In her recent book published after the election of Donald Trump as the US President in 2016, Cynthia Enloe argues that the patriarchy, similar to our smart phones, has updated itself as a reaction against the achievements of the second and third wave feminisms. The updated patriarchy has this time renewed itself through the beliefs and values about the ways the world works (2017). The competing foreign policies representing the hypermasculine hegemonic masculinity of the current world politics and its authoritarian leaders are the outputs of this new updated version of patriarchy. Enloe doubts that having gained sustainability with its updates, the patriarchy could be fought against simply with street demonstrations, as it was before. The patriarchy could be forced to retreat only by incessantly asking “curious” feminist questions that would expose all masculine patterns of life (2017). Continuously asking questions without giving up or giving in would make the patriarchy transparent and vulnerable. In the face of curious, non-stop questions from a gender perspective and the conscious use of the terms supporting gender equality, the patriarchy, albeit updated and sustained, does not stand a chance.

Enloe explains the reason why incorporating gender in International Relations has been considered irrelevant by the power- and security-dominated character of the discipline. Also, because the heavy majority of the academics associated with International Relations are male, it is them who choose what is important and worthy of ‘serious’ investigation (Enloe, 2004, 96). This masculine attitude, however, has been clearly excluding multiple human experiences and hindering their capacity to create new possibilities for peaceful co-existence in international relations (Youngs, 2004).

As a matter of fact, when we look at the emergence of International Relations as a separate discipline, and the political theories that it takes as its first point of reference, the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (*Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen*) - the human rights document at the time of the French Revolution - Machiavelli’s *The Prince*; and *Man, the State and War*, written in 1959 by Kenneth Waltz, the founder of neo-realism, were the mainstream writings that brought liberal (libertarian) and realist perspectives to the discipline of International Relations, respectively. The fundamental aim of these texts was, in fact, to make an analysis based on *history* and ‘his’ problems. Although these texts put forward a desire for rights and freedoms, as well as the achievement of peace, these values are mostly targeted towards men. Thus, over time, the prominent concepts of International Relations, such as security and hegemony, were defined from a masculine and patriarchal perspective. For instance, from the theoretical view of realists, hegemony is attributed to the order established and led by the most powerful state of the international system- both militarily

and economically- while sovereignty evokes the Hobbesian *Leviathan* (the Devil), with its masculine nature and might. Raewyn Connell responds to these masculine conceptualizations by pointing out that hegemony includes organized social domination in all spheres of life, from religious doctrines to mundane practice, from mass media to taxation (1998: 246). As Connell reminds us, “hegemonic masculinity” expresses the domination of men over women intellectually, culturally, socially, or even politically, thus establishing an unequivocal linkage between gender and power (Connell, 1998).

Just as the Western approach to reading and identifying the East and its fiction found an answer in Edward Said’s critique of *Orientalism*, the theory of political realism put forth by Hans Morgenthau was criticized by Ann Tickner for conceptualizing international politics through the lens of an assumed masculine subject (Tür & Koyuncu, 2010: 9). Critical theory and post-modernism, as alternative approaches in International Relations, drew attention to the *otherization* of different geographies, civilizations and identities. Yet, on the issue of gender equality, the *otherization* of women has not been sufficiently recognized; the superiority of man and patriarchy is made possible through the othering of women. From this point of view, it would be beneficial to make a holistic reading of the International Relations literature, and to dismantle these masculine concepts by asking “curious” questions of the discipline

In Terrell Carver’s words, “Gendering IR” is...a project; “gendered” IR is an outcome” (Carver, 2003: 289). In order to achieve such outcome, it bears utmost importance for the gender-equality advocates to insist on, institutionally and practically, gender-based approaches and to not agree with the priority list of the masculine agenda. Security, order, control and retaliation increasingly dominate the discourse shaping the world politics. The gender perspective in International Relations develops to create alternative paradigms that would break this vicious circle of (in)security.

Feminist theory in International Relations has demonstrated significant progress since the 1990s and opened pathways in an uncharted territory. Cynthia Enloe, Ann Tickner, Spike V. Peterson and Christine Sylvester, among others, are the most prominent forerunners of this field. Through their works, feminist theory has adopted a perspective critical of the masculinity and the masculine values of international politics by taking not only ‘women’ but a wider category of gender into its centre. These feminist scholars have deconstructed International Relations theories by posing gender-related questions and displayed the masculine prejudice embedded in the definitions of security, power and sovereignty. The feminist theories of International Relations have thus distinguished themselves from the other theories of the discipline by paying a ‘curious’ attention to the power hierarchies and relation structures through inclusiveness and self-reflexivity (True, 2017: 3).

As Cynthia Enloe puts it, the gender perspective in International Relations must first be guided by a feminist consciousness (2004: 97). The feminist International Relations, however, although more than a quarter of century has

passed since its emergence, are still struggling with the masculine theories to be considered as an equally legitimate way of understanding how the world works. Various epistemological, ontological and ethical debates may have enriched the field (True, 2017: 1), but at the same time, *too many* as they are, such debates may paradoxically be accusing the spreading-thin of the gender coalition. The capacity of the feminist International Relations' ethical principles to participate in the global politics has been limited to the United Nations Security Council's decision number 1325 and the Swedish feminist foreign policy.

The feminist attempt to facilitate substantial change and interaction by creating a normative agenda has been called 'normative feminism' by Jacqui True (2013: 242). Normative feminism is a project of institutionalising gender in foreign policy by focusing on socio-economic and political changes. The special issue here is our attempt to partake in this project of change in international relations. We have aimed to enhance the visibility of the gender norms of behavior and decision-making with the presupposition that they would pose an alternative to the masculine norms in International Relations by better supporting the human priorities of peace and co-existence.

Adopting Judith Butler's notion of performativity, the feminist existence in international politics has an undeniable connection to engaging in continuous activities. As Rihannan Bury suggests, "what gives a community its substance is the consistent repetition of these 'various acts' by a majority of members." "Being a member of community," therefore, "is not something one is but something one *does*" (2005: 14). In Turkey, too, in order to challenge the recognition of the 'hyper' version of the hegemonic masculinity as the only viable world view, gender-charged normative discourses, interactions and agendas must be continuously created and multiplied. We hope that the Turkish literature-review and the articles published here will serve this purpose.

As is the situation in all disciplines, the feminist International Relations has nurtured many onto-epistemologies, some in competition with one another. Such multitude, though definitely a richness, has been challenging the feminist stance's capacity to stand united against the hypermasculine hegemonic masculinity. In her latest book, Enloe calls for a continuous struggle of a new and wider feminist coalition against the updated authoritarianism of the patriarchy -inspiring our title "Don't Give Up! Don't Give In!" Such expanded coalition could rise on the common purpose of fighting male dominance and ignore the differences of discourse created by the debate on identity. The gender-guided change and transformation desired in international politics could be achieved more easily in this way (Hemmings, 2012: 148, 155). On this account, in parallel with Enloe's proposal of establishing a wider consensus simply on peace and co-existence (2017), a new era, in which questions of identity will, for some time, not be asked, may be dawning. A grand coalition of consensus has better chance of resisting the authoritarian leaders of hyper hegemonic masculinity.

Our special issue of Gender and International Relations opens with a Turkish literature review with the aim of introducing the topic to Turkish readers. Çiçek Coşkun, against a historical background, presents some of the prominent feminist scholars who have left their footprints in this very masculine area with their fresh gender perspectives. In doing that she offers us a comparative framework in which works by the Turkish and international scholars could be assessed simultaneously. Nezahat Doğan's article seeks to establish the relation between global peace and gender by using the data obtained from the Global Peace Index, Gender Inequality Index and Social Institutions and Gender Index. In this way, adopting a currently trendy approach, Doğan investigates the interaction between gender and International Relations through a quantitative method. Zehra Yılmaz's article discusses the temporary position of Syrian women asylum seekers in Turkey from the perspective of the post-colonial feminist concept of subaltern. The article aims to combine feminist migration studies and post-colonial feminist literature within the context of International Relations. Sinem Bal's article questions whether the EU has designed its gender policies as an aspect of the human-right norms of the European integration or as a way to regulate market economy. Bal pursues such questioning through the reading of the official documents of the EU that prescribes what Europeanization is for Turkey. Thus, all articles constitute a well-rounded understanding of what gendered approaches can achieve in the current practice of international studies.

The co-authored article written by Bezen Balamir-Coşkun and Selin Akyüz examined how the images of women leaders in international politics were presented in the international media. The selected images the three most powerful women political leaders list of *Forbes* in 2017 -Angela Merkel, Theresa May and Federica Mogherini were analysed in the light of the political masculinities literature from a social visual semiotics perspective. It is believed that such an analysis will contribute to the debates about gendered aspect of international relations as well as the current debates on political masculinities. Gizem Bilgin-Aytaç points out that the global policy that emerged after the Cold War and the emergence of the new way of approaching the IR from a feminist perspective have improved the scope of conceptual analysis in peace theories as well. Bilgin-Aytaç discusses global peace conditions with a gender perspective - in particular, referring to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, with a focus on exemplary contemporary issues. Fulden İbrahimhakkioğlu, in her article, discusses the debate between Ukraine-based feminist group FEMEN staged several protests in support of Amina Tyler, a Tunisian FEMEN activist receiving death threats for posting nude photographs of herself online with social messages written on her body and the Muslim Women Against FEMEN who released an open letter criticizing the discourse FEMEN used in these protests, which they found to be white colonialist and Islamophobic. Thus, İbrahimhakkioğlu aims to examine the discursive strategies put forth by the two sides of the very debate, and unveiling the shortcomings of liberalism as drawn on by both positions, the

author attempts to rethink what “freedom” might mean for international feminist alliances across differences.

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