International agreements and gender equality: an analysis of Mexico's obligations

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Resumen

El presente artículo se refiere a la relación entre la organización de las mujeres como sujetos genéricos, la elaboración y precisión de categorías y conceptos que interpretan la posición subalterna del género femenino y la instrumentación de convenios y acuerdos internacionales que inciden en la revisión y reorganización de la tradicional economía política sexual, sus símbolos, representaciones y códigos jurídicos. En especial, analiza los significados sociales y simbólicos de las obligaciones adquiridas por México al firmar y ratificar distintos convenios internacionales que conforman su política de género, enfatizando a la vez las implicaciones de cada acuerdo en lo que Giddens ha llamado "la democratización de la democracia".

Palabras clave: género, equidad de género, convenios internacionales, México.

Abstract

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This article refers to the relationship between women's organizing as gendered subjects; the elaboration and growing precision of theoretical categories and concepts that interpret women's subaltern social position, and the instrumentation of international conventions and accords that help shape the reorganization of national and local sexual political economies, their symbols, representations, and judicial codes. It specifically analyzes the social and symbolic significance of the obligations that Mexico has acquired by signing and ratifying various international conventions on gender equity, and which have directly conformed national gender policies, emphasizing at the same time, the implications of each agreement on what Giddens has called "democratizing democracy".

Key words: gender, gender equity, international agreements, Mexico.

Introduction

With the start of validity of the General Law for Equity between Women and Men[1] (*Ley General para la Igualdad entre Mujeres y Hombres*) —in agreement with commitments acquired along five lustrums by means of the adherence to a series of international treaties and agreements intended to eliminate the gender discrimination women experience

[1] Said law was approved by the Congress of the Nation on December 2nd, 2006.

—a new stage in the evolution of the constitutional approach of the relation between genders in Mexico. The juridical patterns for the yearned full civic incorporation of Mexican women are settled from the ruling principles of equality, non-discrimination and equity. In this article we appeal the new national juridical phase to combat gender discrimination, within the analysis of the discursive elements potentially transforming therein international agreements related to women's situation and gender equity. Certainly, the contents of gender equity have been broadening and made progressively precise during these four decades of globalized feminist and feminine agenda. These contents have been transversally stated in the inter-governmental reflections and conventions referred to the subject of gender equity, which have made Mexico progressively incorporate the perspective of gender to institutional functioning, according to the contents, orientations and criteria of said documents, from the legislative elaboration, the formulation of public policies and the design of budgetary exercises.

The Mexican State and government, then, have been taken up the modification of beliefs, attitudes and actions that express or promote gender discrimination. Therefore, the orientation of such agreements urges Mexican State to create the conditions for democratization of the public, private and intimate environments, thus re-symbolizing and re-signifying the very national collective imaginary while women are give greater parity conditions in order to fully become involved in the egalitarian exercise. Said agreements include mechanisms of periodical evaluation of the achieved advancements and different international institutional devices to revise and attend civic unconformity before the reached advancement pace and the specific registered violations of the signed agreements.

Along the three decades after the First International Conference of Women, 1975, we have witnessed a process of progressive understanding of the complexity of gender discrimination; understanding immerse in the tension between the desires of the formal equality's discourse and the differences' concrete implications —physiologic, socio-historical and experiencial—for the full realization of said equality. By means of a conceptual bridge between equality and discrimination, the 'gender equity' category articulates an evener field of interrelation through the recognition of the differences in production and reproduction of subordination and discrimination. Gender equality is a concept forged and refined from the practice of multiple women's organizations, which for the last four decades have elaborated agendas of gender and justice and socio-political democracy increasingly complex and precise around the world.

Intertwining them with the new realities the structural globalization's rearrange of the transit decades between centuries have fixed in men and women's lives. In this sense, the evolution of the concept of gender equity witnesses a dialectics of intense interrelation between the progressive influence of a globalized expansive social movement, dynamic and decided to modify the uneven relations between genders, on the one side; and the vigorous theoretical elaboration that allowed discovering and visualizing feminine oppression, identifying its varied and complex expressions, the precision of empowering[2] strategies and the re-conceptualization of categories as significant for societies and social sciences as the private and public, power, the political, democracy, citizenship and human rights. Located in the complex fabric of the social relations, said concept remits to the field of justice as it is a way for freedom realization and equality (Mouffe, 1993: 79); however, differently from this social end of liberal societies —equality (Bobbio, *et al*., 1981: 846)—, equity incorporates the notion of biological and socio-cultural difference, the social recognition of it and the consequential formulation of positive transitory policies as requisite to establish the conditions of equality.

During the four decades since the emergence of the 'second feminist wave',[3] the theoretical exercises, applied and institutional which have influenced on a

[2] The word empoderamiento (in Spanish language) is a lending from the English language *empowerment.* Initially associated with the exercises of popular organization in the 1960's and the proposal —in Freire's fashion— of social conscience-awareness of subordinate sectors; proposal focused on self-valuing strengthening —individual and collective— and the renegotiations of the existent power relations. Rapidly, the notion empowering found a natural place in the strategies of dispute in the gender meanings, significance originally in the process of subjectivation which women experienced when altogether their subordinate social conditions and adopted actions in the intimate, private, or public spheres that marked a repositioning in power balance. To the extent the feminist strategies diversified in the 1990's decade and it was proposed to fully enter into the design and application of public policies, the term also became well-known, being leaked into the discourses and validating a widespread and imprecise version which circulates as evolutionary part of a regulated change —yet somehow, more diluted— of gender relation. Ardite (Troutner and Smith, 2004: 9) points out that currently empowerment is a multidimensional process which includes three fields: an individual level, which involves conscience-awareness and capabilities development; an organizational level which includes the learning of collaborative abilities for collective work; and a level of public policies which implies the command of the facets of elaboration, promotion and application of legislations and official programs that assist gender discrimination.

[3] Second wave feminism refers to the social movement which by the end of the 1960's decade was shaped by women discontent with their social positioning in reason of gender, demanding not only human rights specific for women, such as the first wave did in the early decades of the last centurie with their demands of the right to vote, education, and gathering in syndicates. With a more radical, profound and holistic, the explicit objective of the second wave was the deconstruction of the vey structure of the androcentric order, completely entering into the symbolic level of the dispute of the values and representations of the social relation between men and women and thus prioritizing the axis of gender in their interpretation of the social world. Currently, some analysts consider that we have entered a third feminist wave, being supported on the interests, needs and perspectives of different sectors of women who articulate, integrate and prioritize diverse expressions of exclusion to their persons and in complex, multidimensional and pluri-identity agendas.

closer approach to gender equity —gradual yet constant, even if unequal according to region or culture— have stresses a fierce global dispute for the cultural senses, opposing the asymmetric, excluding, discriminatory and authoritarian traditional androcentric mode of organization and socio-cultural meaning to al alternate civilizing proposal of growing horizontalization of sexual hierarchies —and other— and of re-signification and innovation of their symbols and representations in the peoples' collective imaginary.[4] For four decades said proposal has been made complex, enriched, widened, changing from the initial collective exploration of the small groups of feminine conscience by the end of the 1960's, where they dare to mention the numerous offenses that composed "women's discomfort" (Tamayo, in Vargas, 2006: 391); being expressed in public demonstrations of the most robust social movement of the 1970's decade in developed countries and the most radical and influencing of many developing nations;[5] being shaped in the obligatory international conventions and agreements, which with a precision, profundity and extension more integral and transversal by the day have questioned the fields of production, reproduction and sexuality, education, health, social security, scientific research, politics, justice administration, statistics elaboration, and budgetary exercise at international, national and local levels.

[4] The feminist proposal of hierarchical deconstruction is not only circumscribed into the problem of gender, but the discovery of social subordination of gender set the conditions to visualize and include the other social subordinations, understanding that the feminine experience was not homogeneous but diverse and precisely because of the intersection and ordering of other expressions of exclusion and inclusion.

[5] The Mexican second wave feminist critical mass undoubtedly has influenced on the sensitization of the national conscience on the multiple social expressions of gender iniquity, their bonds with other iniquity entries and the cultural particularities of the Mexican androcentric nature, significantly contributing to the national process of democratization in the public and private environments. From its start in the 1970's with the small autonomous groups of reflection and the initial attempts of association and integration in larger coalitions, the Mexican feminist movement promoted voluntary maternity and the right to abortion, sexual education and the fight against violence toward women (Lau, 2006: 184). The process of evolution of the movement incorporated the category of class to its militancy, reorganizing some of its gender demands in correspondence with the needs and interests of the majority of Mexican women. Its influence in the media and educational institutions grant them a significant power in the symbolic plane, later allowing the consolidation of a hegemonic position in the dispute for the XXI century's cultural meanings (Maier, 2006: 33). In the 1990's decade, the integration of many a feminists to the task of public polices and the political parties extended and legitimated said perspective, strengthened and oriented by the international commitments Mexico has signed.

In the present article I try to analyze the meanings of the obligations acquired by Mexico when signing and ratify different international commitments on gender equity, hereby seen in the light of the dialectic between the international and national feminist and feminine agenda and the elaboration, application and evaluation of the different instruments that have profiled the transformation of gender relations as a primordial goal of the XXI century.[6] As a first moment for the later analysis of the advances, knots and challenges of gender equity at local level in the Mexican States, this essay tries to offer a referential framework that explores the most distinguishable meanings of the agreements signed by Mexico. The text has different entries which analyze conventions, declarations and protocols which compose Mexico's gender policy, emphasizing the greatest contributions of each instrument and their relation with the feminine agenda and women's movements.

Women, rights and citizenships

In the animated gatherings —official of governmental representation and parallel of feminine and activist women— that constituted the International Conference on Woman in Mexico (*Conferencia Internacional de la Mujer en México*) in 1975, three main conclusions were reached with orienting implications for the transformation of the feminine gender in the world:

1. The universal human rights[7] carried a masculine historical tendency, not only resulting in their uniform application for men and women were thwarted by discriminatory practices deeply instilled in the cultural fabric, but even graver was the fact that the very references to the meaning of the human emanated from the historical practice of masculine gender, thus becoming a universal practice which only addressed half the population[8] (Facio, in Jelin, 1997: 68).

[6] The Goals of the Millennium approved by the countries of the world in the year 2000 as a strategic map which attends the planetary debts with social justice explicitly include gender equity as one of the main goals of the following decades.

[7] Universal Bill of Human Rights was approved by the UN General Assembly in 1948, applicable to all of the world's population with no gender, race, ethnics or religion distinction.

[8] Contemporary criticisms to the human rights' universalism come from different subjects in the world's stage. Linked to the argument of masculine trend as universal model the feminists formulated, other social actors —in particular, indigenous peoples— have noted the occidental and individualist trend of such human rights, during the elaboration process of collective and cultural rights. Jelin (1997: 69) draws to the UN Special Rapporteur for indigenous peoples, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, to propose a sort of third way which overcomes the tension between both positions, pointing out that the harmonization of them is to be found in the recognition of the collective rights as human rights only when the conditions to promote individual human rights of their members.

2. Women's biological reproductive function and sexual division —laboring, juridical, material, sentimental, of values and symbolical— of societies pointed toward the need to establish conditions, recognitions and specific rights — temporary or permanent— for women to be situated in equality conditions with men, from their own historic existential experience.

3. Among women there were differences of strata, ethnicity, race, religion and national experience, which made gender discrimination be experienced in diverse manners. Hence, the universality of discrimination lived by women in all of the cultures was recognized, the impact on the gender experience upon other identity dimensions was recognized and implicit distinction between equality and equity was established. A subtly intertwined distinction in the subjacent strategies in the 16 sections of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), whose responsibility was the primordial resolution of the First Conference on Woman and the first goal of the Decade of Woman (1975-1985).

CEDAW is, undoubtedly, the foundational Constitution of women's rights. It sketches a social map of the fields where gender discrimination appears. It shows the devices which enable the reproduction of said discrimination in each field and pinpoints the strategic patterns the signing States are obliged to assume for its full reversion.[9] Even if at first it could have been seen as a first approach to the problem of women's subordination, due to the lack of more detailed sources in respect to the autonomy of body, sexual and reproductive rights and gender violence, later on CEDAW is distinguished as an integral guidance, which has served as referential pattern for future international conventions and conferences.

Enclosed into a heap of rights in political citizenship, education, employment, marriage and familial coexistence, with special mention and articulation of reproductive rights, the fields of education and employment as well as emphasizing on generically sensible civic rights, CEDAW offers a series of fundamental contributions to the field of women's rights, thus the very paradigm of Human Rights. Altogether with modernity's ethical philosophic spirit, which appears the character innate to human being and said human rights and grants them the character of inalienable (Mues de Shrenk in Maier, 2001: 119), the Convention

[9] CEDAW was approved by UN General Assembly in 1979, coming into force in 1980, when it was opened to the State's adhesion. Mexico signed it that year, ratifying it in 1981. In 2002, Mexico signed and ratified the Facultative Protocol, a complementary document which reinforces the obligatoriness of said Convention of the States ascribed in the national and international jurisprudence.

comprehends woman's discrimination from the notion of the inherent human dignity and the principle of formal equality between people, which rule modern societies. Discrimination against women is the conceptual pivot that supports CEDAW's strategic development, contrasting with the ethical egalitarian principle and its differencing definition of equity. The very definition of discrimination against women is one of the most significant CEDAW's contributions to the field of human rights, because of its implications for both women and other discriminated groups and social sectors. It is precisely stated in Article 1:

> For this Convention's effects, the expression 'discrimination against women' will denote every distinction, exclusion or restriction based on gender which has as an object or end damage or nullify the recognition, enjoyment of exercise of women, independently from their marital status, upon the base of men and women's equality, human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economical, social cultural, civil spheres as well as in any other.

Separately, from acknowledging the difference, CEDAW emphasizes the State's obligations to guarantee the full realization of pregnancy, birth and lactation, distinguishing and visualizing the social function and value of human reproduction and indicating the need to provide special conditions in order to facilitate women the performance of such function in the public spheres of labor and social and political participation. Its emphasis in the social sense of motherhood reconfigures the tasks linked to it in a socially necessary work, thus denaturalizing and demystifying women, thereby distinguishing feminine contributions to the processes of national development. In opposition to the devaluated feminine symbolization in the traditional collective imaginaries, the exclusive association of the feminine with reproduction responsibilities and the frequent labor and social discrimination women experience when performing their reproductive function, CEDAW stresses the importance for the processes of development the traditional feminine roles in daily and generational reproduction of the family, exhorting at the time the participation of both genders in the socialization of children. Hence, it recognizes and values traditional roles of women, yet it gives way to deconstruct them, segregating the biology of reproduction and denaturalizing the historical sexual division of labor femininity has built —largely— by means of child upbringing. In its introductory section CEDAW reminds the Part States:

> Bearing in mind the great contribution of women to family welfare and society development, thus far not fully recognized, the social importance of motherhood and the function of both father and mother in children's upbringing, and aware that women's role in procreation must not be cause of discrimination, but children's education demands shared responsibility of men and women and society as a whole.

The last great innovation CEDAW provided the paradigm of human rights is centered in the extension of State's responsibility before the violation of women's human rights. The State has been traditionally considered and its representatives as the only subjects who violate human rights, being the public sphere their geography *par excellence* and the only social sphere of their validity. Because of this many of the offences women experienced apparently escaped from the field of human rights as they were located in the sphere of the private, in the complex symbolic and material fabric of the spousal and familial dynamics, being private individuals the violators and not the States' representatives. Thus, making the State responsible for the behavior, attitudes and perceptions of the particular citizens, expressed in CEDAW by the commend to "modify the socio-cultural patterns of men and women", it makes a kaleidoscope's turn to the paradigm of human rights to allow the entrance into the sphere of the individual and private and into the deep dimensions of the *habitus*. Article 5 commits the States to take appropriate measures to:

> Modify the socio-cultural behavioral patterns of men and women, in views of reaching the elimination of prejudices and consuetudinary practices of any nature based on the idea of inferiority and superiority or in stereotyped functions of men and women.

The dialectic between women's social movements in the world and the progressive feminine theorization and typification of their rights in the international instruments (and later national), exemplified from CEDAW, slowly allowed naming and institutionalizing what previously did not have a name, therefore, it did not exist, it was invisible, ignored, naturalized and accepted. (Vargas, 2006: 3).[10] Uneven salary for equal workload, double laboring day, women's body

[10] Braidotti (1997: 61) point out "the feminist theory is a project of double level involving the criticisms of existing definitions and representations, as well as the elaboration of alternative theories on woma(e)n. Feminism is the movement which brings to practice the difference by means of the criticism to gender as an institution of power…" (Authoress' translation into Spanish language).

commercialization, domestic violence, sexual abuse, lack of sexual pleasure, sexual violation in marriage, violation as political torture and spoils of war and femicide are some of the gender deeds discovered by the feminist word which named them, visualize them and introduced them to the world's collective imaginary and its institutionalism, hence disputing the cultural senses which cement the *habitus* of men and women and informed the juridical typification in all the nations barely some decades ago.

Women's rights as human rights

In this sense, CEDAW contributions to Human Rights' paradigm are recognized in the Declaration of World's Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, in 1993, when it makes explicit that: "women and girls' human rights are an unalienable, integrant and indivisible part of universal human rights…"

Recognizing women's human rights from the principle of indivisibility that integrates human rights in a paradigmatic set with no hierarchy of importance points toward two innovative aspects: a) it places women's human rights at the same level of right to life, freedom of expression, right to labor, political citizenship or health, just to mention some of the indivisible rights, thus recognizing their legal age as right with full validity, actuality and transcendence; b) it places future human rights —currently in process of elaboration or not yet— within the sight of gender perspective; this is to say, it puts them to the test before the analysis of how they differentially impact men and women, instead of annexing women to the rights which emerged or emerge from the perspective and experience of men, as it had historically been the case thus far. Including the feminine experience in the very construction processes of the human reconfigures at the time the very notion of the human, diversifying, enriching and democratizing it. At the same time, embracing the experience of women as priority in the determination of the direction of social development and the elaboration of the juridical and ethical criteria which orient international and national coexistence, as it is indicated in the Declaration of Vienna,[11] it necessarily implies "to place the body in the focus of sight and, thereby, place it in the political agenda"(Vargas, 2006: 3).

[11] The entry 18 cited above continues as "… The full participation, in conditions of equality for women in public, civil, economic, social and cultural life at the national, regional and international levels and the eradication of all discrimination forms based on gender are the main objectives of the international community".

Reproductive and sexual health[12]

By means of this, the definition of reproductive health and its location as entry in women's right to health,[13] made explicit in the Declaration of the Conference on Population and Development held in El Cairo in 1994, ratifies late modernity as the age of sexual liberation of obligatory reproduction, thus distinguishing the correspondence between the explicit women's interest —as individuals— in regulating their fertility and the demands of an increasingly overpopulated world.[14] At the time, the definition of reproductive health once again is enclose in the dialectic between the demands appeared from women's organizing, the advancements of the feminine theory on the corporalization of gender discrimination and their expressions in international instruments which as new patterns contribute to the reconfiguration of the collective imaginary of the world's people. Indubitably, the possibility to regulate pregnancy is a historical fact of humongous signification that revolutionized relations between men and women, granting women the possibilities to see themselves from the category of time free from reproduction tasks, look at themselves from the mirror of a progressive subjectivization and have the time and space to break into the educational, laboring, cultural and political fields.

Reproductive health's definition is understood from the identification of health as an integral physical, psychic and social welfare, not only as the absence of sickness. Hence, reproductive health does not only refer to precise reproductive facts, but remits to a wide contextual range that facilitates the access to information, to reproductive health services during all life's stages and to the fertility control means better indicated for each person, establishing sexuality as a field linked to reproduction, yet with life of its own, immerse in the interstices that articulate right to health, right to pleasure and right to freedom. Thereby, the

[12] I hereby thank the discussion on this topic and the information kindly provided to the candidate to doctor Sara Fernández.

[13] The concept of reproductive rights begins to shape the worldwide discourse on rights from the International Reunion on Women and Health in Amsterdam (1984), leading to unseen paths of widening of the very paradigm of Human Rights as the intimate of reproduction and sexuality was positioned as violating fields of women's fundamental rights and indicating at the time their necessary attention for the complete realization of women's citizenship.

[14] In this sense, it is worth mentioning that even if overpopulation is officially identified as one of the greatest obstacles for sustainable development, its articulation to the asymmetric distribution of the access and use of natural resources cannot be ignored in order to fully understand the threat to planetary integrity. In this sense the Declaration of the International Conference on Environment and Development, held in Brazil in 1992, pinpointing the unequal access, distribution, and use of natural resources, altogether with overpopulation, as factors that block sustainable development.

principle of election that invites men and women to be subjects of their reproductive capacity and fertility —deciding with information and responsibly the children's number and spacing, and theoretically, counting on the necessary conditions to respect said decisions— is closely associated with the principle of satisfactory sexuality and it is also informed through the incorporation of the socio-cultural and cultural contexts as depending variables on the full accomplishment of reproductive health (Salles and Tuirán, 2001).

> Reproductive health is a general state of physical, mental, and social welfare in every aspect related to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. This implicitly carries the right of men and women to obtain information and have access to safe, efficacious and affordable methods of their choice so as to family planning, as well as other methods they choose to regulate their fertility, which are not legally prohibited, and the right of women to have access to health services the propitiate pregnancies and births without risks. The attention of reproductive health includes sexual health whose objective is life and personal relations' development (International Conference on Population and Development, Chapter VII, Section A).

Visualizing violence

The history of the evolution of women's right stated in the international agreements verifies a globalized contemporary process of increasing feminine citizen-becoming, which is concreted in the national and local contexts in exercises of growingly socio-political democratization. Said citizen-becoming process, deepened into late modernity with the generalized development in industrialized countries of women's conscience on the right to have rights (Arendt, in Jelin, 1997: 67) in the 1960's and 1970's decades, was focused, in 1980's decade, on the implications of the differences to the realization of gender equality, demanding in 1990's decade compensatory mechanisms in order to create an evener game field where equality could be articulated. This process evidenced that the traditional economic, social, political and cultural rights were not enough to grant the women's full citizenship, but the condition of gender labels them vulnerability dimensions anchored to the intimate of the body or to the private of feminine tasks' distribution in sexual division of labor, which at the time crosses or makes transversal the territory of the traditional political, economic, social and cultural rights. In her pioneering article, written 15 years ago, Alda Facio (1991: 18) emphasizes this, noting that for women:

> The satisfaction of housing, education and labor rights does not mean she is free of domestic violence, sexual harassment and 20-hour laboring days. The absence of war does not carry peace at home. The absence of an authoritarian and dictatorial regime in the country does not mean personal freedom for women…

It was only until the last lustrum of the 1980's decade when some feminists started to name gender violence in couples and families as domestic violence,[15] which enabled the visualization and typification of the most habitual, socially accepted and culturally extended violation to the right to physical and psychical integrity —and even the very right to life— of a particular sector. Historical violence against women illustrates the most extreme and authoritarian exercise of gender power. Said violent practices exist in all cultures, implying the prior definition of the feminine body as addressee of socially accepted punishments and disciplinary actions, with the end —as Foucault would say (1976)— to produce and reproduce submissive and subordinate bodies. Traditionally tolerated and even veiled by them —because of a series of social, psychological and structural factors which from the hegemonic logic of symbolic inversion between victim and aggressor verifies the dynamics of the category of symbolic violence by Pierre Bourdieu—,[16] this brutal form of violence is added to other multiple expressions of gender aggression directed toward women and discovered, named, dissected and denounced by the feminist analysis and the agency of groups and organizations of women. Rape, sexual abuse, women smuggling, forced prostitution and sexual harassment, altogether with domestic and psychic violence toward women were progressively articulating a conceptual puzzle of social violence of gender nature —generalized, recognized, accepted and normalized—, puzzle which responds the traditional cultural meanings which represent the different manifestations of violence toward women as a private occurrence, whose causes are generally in the actuation of the very attacked women. In this sense, gender violence was conceived until very recently as a deserved violence, since it was considered as a justified response to any transgression to the proper feminine behavior.

[15] A special acknowledgement because of their relentless devotion to this international dispute to re-signify ethical and juridical parameters to Charlotte Bunch and Alda Facio.

[16] Bourdieu's (1997: 15-23) concept of symbolic violence contributes to understand the devices used so that subalterns accept as natural their own subordination. Essential for the Bourdieuan interpretation is the notion of the ubiquity of the relation of domination, which does not only organizes the social institution's objective structures, but also permeates deep into the collective imaginary and the individual unconscious, even being somatizing it in gestures, postures and men and women's corporal molding appearances. Thus, Bourdieu affirms, the relation of domination becomes natural, leaving few alternative spaces to conceive and action expressions of radical resistance, this is to say, from the root.

Not long after the signing period of CEDAW, during the 1980's decade, the feminist movement's voice of alarm about gender violence, identifying it as a socio-cultural, naturalized and damaging fact not only for women, but also for their children, familial and laboring health, as well as for the development processes begun to be heard. By means of the Article 5 of CEDAW which adjudges responsibility by individual behaviors, discriminatory attitudes or actions by gender reasons to the signing States, the women's movement placed said violence in the core of the human rights' field. The dispute for the discursive hegemony penetrated into the large international governmental institutions, the mass media, human rights organizations, academic bodies, non-governmental organizations and political organizations, confronting the traditional discourse of privatization and naturalization of violence with the socio-cultural, collective and massive sense of the phenomenon. Very soon an international consensus was generated in favor of the typification of gender violence as an unacceptable social fact, damager of human rights, being profiled as a topic of broad consensus between political forces of every color and diverse religious trends.

The Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate Violence against Women (OEA, 1994) retakes this vision, making explicit that violence against women is anchored in the asymmetry of power distribution in gender relationships. The document's contributions to women's rights —by then recognized as human rights in the Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993— are multiple being distinguishable once again the dialectic between private and public actors in the responsibility of the violation of human rights of women. In this instance, the State assumes the responsibility for the persistence or change of attitudes, actions and aggressive and violent behaviors motivated by gender reasons. One of its greatest contributions is the precise, integral and holistic definition of violence against women in Article 1:

> For the effects of this Convention violence against women must be understood as any action or behavior, based upon gender, which causes death, damage or physical, sexual, psychological suffering to women, both in the public and privates spheres.

In Article 2 it is defined:

It will be understood that violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence:

a. Occuring within the family or domestic unit or in any other interpersonal relation, either the aggressor shares or shared the same household as the women, and that comprehends, among other, violation, mistreatment and sexual abuse.

b. Occuring in the community and is perpetrated by any other person and comprehends, among other, violation, sexual abuse, torture, people smuggling, forced prostitution, kidnapping and sexual harassment in the place of work, as well as educational institutions, health units or any other place.

c. Perpetrated or tolerated by the State or its agents, wherever it occurs.

Its second contribution is centered on the victims' assistance and crime typification, spurring the States to revise their penal, civil and administrative legislation, modify or abolish current laws or consuetudinary practices which result into the persistence and tolerance of violence against women and adopt juridical measures to protect the affronted women, facilitate their aggressor judgment, fix punishments in accordance with the graveness of crime and provide compensatory measures to repair the damage.

The third contribution of the Inter-American Convention is found in its Article 8, where different measures the Part States must adopt in order to fight against gender violence are detailed, retaking CEDAW contents and applying them to gender violence. The measures indicated are: the promotion of knowledge and respect to the right of women to life free of violence, in correspondence with the historical premises of human rights; the design of formal and non-formal education programs in order to modify the cultural patterns of men and women which become stereotyped and prejudicial practices and beliefs for both genders and are based on the inferiority or superiority of gender; the fostering of the capacity and sensibility of police and juridical personnel in violence against women issues; provide specialized services for affronted women, such as shelters, orientation, assistance to girls and boys and laboring training; promote programs to make public opinion sensible on the subject of gender violence, and finally, guarantee the research and gathering of statistics on causes, consequences and frequency of violence against women.

Accordingly, Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate Violence against Women placed the topic of gender violence in the country's public agenda, socializing, politicizing and criminalizing fact thus far considered private and personal, thus exemplifying the feminist motto of the first years of the second wave 'the personal is political'. Politicize the personal and private defines a paradigmatic rupture with the premises of a modernity that segregated the public environment from the private one as base of its productive mode, at the time sets the patterns to consolidate a new way to perceive and live the social reality, the relation between genders and sexual division of labor, at the time it provides a new reading of human rights which takes care for violations in both spheres.[17]

The institutionalization of the gender perspective

The declaration of the Fourth Conference of Women (Peking, 1995) and its Plan of Action did not mean another paradigmatic rupture in the field of Human Rights, but rather represented the development and precision of advancements previously recognized and strategic reformulations on the theater of action where the construction of gender equity must be effectively be fostered, on the on side; and the identification of all the actors required for said enterprise, on the other. One of their greatest contributions is centered on the conditions to boost the spreading of the agenda of gender equity, identifying the operative steps to apply public policies, the establishment of gender institutionalism at national level and the assimilation of the gender perspective, the premise of the equity in all of the institutions and mandates of the State (ECLAC, 2004: 8). Being a strategic map directed toward the elaboration of public policies, legislation and clear information, the plan of action provoked a radical landmark in the way of making gender politics, replacing the former approach, that of individual and collective direct awareness, by means of the small groups of feminist conscience and the workshops of popular education, by formal political participation, lobbying,

[17] In Mexico, the General Law on the Access of Women to a Life Free of Violence (*Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia*) came into force on February 1st, 2007, with the objective to coordinate the Federation, its states and municipalities in the prevention, sanction and eradication of violence against women, establishing the principles and institutional mechanisms to guarantee the access to a life free of violence for their full development and welfare.

institutional advice and the institutionalization of the gender agenda.[18] In this manner, Peking represents a transition and methodological finishing for the promotion, application and deepening of the paradigmatic changes reached by feminisms and women's movements in previous Conventions and Conferences.[19]

Previously, 30000 women of the world gathered in Peking —from which 20000 represented the national civil societies (Molyneux and Craske, 2002: 11)— had participated into complex regional processes of reflection and elaboration of analysis and proposals on the advancements and drawbacks of gender equity in their places of origin. Hence, the orientations stated in the Platform of Action were informed by the amount of experiences, analyses and recommendations of women who represented governments, international organizations and civil societies of all the regions and cultures of the planet, labeling twelve areas for diverse strategic interventions from the gender perspective.

Approved by 189 countries, the document agglutinates, organizes and broadens the advancements in relation to gender equity presented in previous conferences and conventions, which includes the following areas: a) women and poverty; b) women's education and training; c) health and women; d) violence against women; e) women and armed conflicts; f) women and economy; g) women in power positions and decision making; h) institutional mechanisms for women's advancements; i) women's human rights; j) women and media; k) women and environment; and l) girls. These entries, altogether, articulate the multiple dimensions where women experience iniquity and discrimination. What is more, in the document the following is emphasized:

> The importance of use gender analysis to confront the systematic and systemic nature of discrimination against women in order to fully develop the human rights of every population (PA, paragraph 229, cited in Secretary General, UN, 2001).[20]

[18] In Latin America this new political proposal was (and is) intensely responded by a sector of feminism which argues the indispensable of the autonomy before the State and political parties to guarantee the authenticity and radicalness of the movement. Likewise, they point out as a negative fact for the cohesion of the movement the segmentation of the feminism from said strategic determination and the deepening of growing level differences and life style produced by the economic benefits of the professionalization and institutionalization of certain individual feminists and NGO; whereas other do not enjoy these benefits and consider they must be autonomous before said structures.

[19] An exception is to be found in the sexual rights field, which, as Molynuex and Craske (2002: 11) point out are tacitly recognized in the Declaration and Platform of Peking, which was not achieved in El Cairo.

[20] Authoress' translation into Spanish language

The Platform of Action of Peking is a detailed and ambitious strategic proposal to deconstruct gender asymmetry. It is supported in the active participation of diverse actors, being the governments the collective actors which carry the most responsibility for the genesis of a propitious environment to formulate policies in this respect. Nonetheless, also inter-governmental institutions —particularly UN, its regional commissions and other organization of said organizations—, other international organisms, women's groups and the rest of non-governmental organizations are committed to become involved in the processes of periodical evaluation on their application. In this sense, one must emphasize the influence and potential unrest of multiple expressions of civil society in the interpretation, directing and application of the signed agreements, as well as the revision of their efficacy.[21] The contribution of the aforementioned actors becomes tangible at different levels —international, regional, and local— and manifests in multiple manners, being a central part of the strategy of the Platform of Action the articulation and coordination of the actions at all these levels (UN, 2001: 5).

There is a three-sided mechanism to promote the Peking's Platform agreements' transversalization in other treaties and international programs and in order to guarantee its fulfillment at national level. The very General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are in charge of spreading of the sense, mission, and specific points of the Peking Platform in the management and elaboration of future instruments and international policies on multiple issues,[22] while the Commission on the Status of Women is in charge of the monitoring of the Platform's state of implementation which the governments —in their official reports— and civil societies' organizations —in their own reports— periodically present.

[21] To the extent to which the international and national institutional machinery for the defense of women's rights and gender equity has been strengthened, said spaces have become a territory disputed between opposing interpretations on gender perspective and opposed projects on the meaning of life and autonomy of the feminine body. Hence, we more frequently find individual or collective representations of institutions and religious organizations of conservative or fundamentalist orientation in the councils of Women institutions, the secretariats of Women or in the very international conferences and national gatherings, impugning the feminist positions —especially around reproductive and sexual rights— and promoting a limited and fragmented agenda of women's rights, thus subverting the meaning of gender equity as they ignore and make the dialectic between women's subordination and discrimination and the socio-cultural control of the feminine body, sexuality and reproduction invisible.

[22] The Declaration of the Objectives of Development of the Millennium (2000) exemplifies said task, identifying the promotion of gender equality and women's autonomy as part of the eight high-priority objectives to world's development in XXI century and paying attention at the time to the rest of the objectives by means of the transversalization applied to gender perspective.

Here the premise of transversality stated in the new methodological perspective of the Platform of Peking is essential for said spreading, being:

> A strategy to take into account the interests and experiences of women, in addition to those of men, as an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all of the political, economic and social spheres, so that women and men become equally benefitted and inequality will not be perpetuated… (Art. I. A, in Sec. General, UN, 2001).[23]

Hence, gender analysis —by means of the use of the methodology of gender approach— becomes one with the strategy of transversality and become an obligatory mandate for the formulation of proposals, programs, measurements, laws and evaluations in all of the spheres of the public policies for the adherent countries. Nevertheless, specialists, such as Vargas (2006: 6), state that said methodological application must not be

> a technologic look, (from) an experts' sight, (from) a genderists' sight, a look which tries to adequate plans and programs, incorporating the word gender without variations of dogmas and laws which feed power relations.

It rather remits us to a deep economic, social, political and cultural reevaluation, which incorporates the experience, necessities and interest of women —in the complete extension of their diversity in reason of their strata, race, ethnicity and lifecycle, among other dimensions— to the analytical reading, elaboration application and promotion of the strategies of socio-economic development and governing, process that is not possible without the official adaptation of effective mechanisms of monitoring and the assignation of the adequate financial and human resources.

Linked to the transversality of gender perspective in the integral management of the public affairs and the State's functioning, the Platform of Action is supported on four more premises or approaches, which are intertwined in a rich

[23] The Hispanic voice for transversalization is the most accepted way to translate the term *gender mainstreaming*, which represents one of the orienting strategic methods from the Plan of Action of Peking with the greatest paradigmatic tuning. In Spanish language the concept of transversalization points toward the penetration of the gender approach in all of the spheres of the official tasks and the articulation or intersection and reinforcing of all the gender specific public policies. However, not all of the specialists consider that both terms are interchangeable. For instance Meentzen and Gomáriz (2003) suggest that the subtle distinctions between them become significantly different strategies, being *gender mainstreaming* a methodological strategy, which does not only put forward the gender approach in the formulation of public policies but locates it in the center of the "structural matrix", in the heart of "public action", thus becoming part of the societies' perceiving and doing. In this sense, gender approach is a civilizing pattern and gender democracy a paradigmatic premise.

and complex orientation directed toward the creation of conditions of full equity among men and women. The approach of lifecycle allows identifying the particularities, shared conditions and necessities of each life stage of women, delimiting at the time the discriminatory practices that anchor in each vital period to their gender condition. Women's subaltern position, their reproductive capacity, the emphasis on this function and social disciplining to guarantee its realization mark clear stages of biological and social coherence which correspond to values, behavior patterns, lifestyles and reproductive health technologies (UN, 2001: 8-9).

A third approach the Platform shapes is the comprehension of a gender category from its relational character, distinguishing the importance of a comparative reading of the masculine and feminine experience, the impacts on the lives of men and women of the occurrences, laws, policies, programs projects. Likewise, emphasis is made on the co-responsibility of men and women for care and attention to the family and in the obligation of the States of providing incentives, supports and legislation to fulfill this end. Therefore, the manner to unleash women from the exclusive obligation of care and nourish the family, which traditionally has informed the hegemonic discourses constituent of collective imaginaries and blocked full feminine participation in the economic, social and political spheres. Said emphasis in the redistribution of the symbolic familial capital and the reorganization of their responsibilities and tasks sets the conditions to broaden and enriching democracy; «democratizing democracy» Giddens would say (1998: 76).

The relational look of gender meaning invites to search for creative and effective ways to include men as active actors in the deconstruction of sexual unevenness, emphasizing the unavoidable of changing patterns and hierarchical beliefs, stereotyped attitudes and privileged behaviors in order to reach equitable societies. Peking Declaration spurs the governments to foster male participation in all the discussions and actions that inspire the constitution of a new culture of equity: visualizing, de-privatizing and politicizing aspects of the personal and disputing in this juncture between the public and the private the very conceptualization of that which is politics. It is in this sense that Lechner warns, "the political struggle is always a struggle to define the prevailing conception of what is understood by politics".

It is explicit in the document that male consideration will always be subject to the interest in gender equity, without disregard for the importance of distinguishing the needs and interests of women as discriminated sector. It is

recognized that the implicit dilemma in requiring the incorporation of men to the task of gender equity is disquieting due to many reasons, being distinguishable among them, because of pragmatic motivations, the distribution between genders of the finite economic and human resources devoted to this entry of social justice. Because of this, the Platform of Action makes it explicit that labor with men must not damage the projects and individual or collective initiatives of women, whereas it recognizes the indispensable of masculine cooperation for the ends of gender equity and the deconstruction of the structures and objective and subjective devices of asymmetry.

Nonetheless, this methodological proposal formulates challenges that surpass the distribution of the accessible resources, being centered instead on the subjective dynamics of hegemony, the gratifying of its privileges, its comfort — the pleasure of power, to say it somehow— and the complex and contradictory logic of its renunciation process. If, indeed, the strategies of equity cannot only rest upon the access to greater opportunities and empowering of women without men's surrender as collective actors to the discourse of the justice of the equity, it is not less certain that men's participation cannot only be centered on the instrumental proposal of modifying women's condition. A process of exploration and discovery of the benefits for men of the democratized democracy is required.

Separately, Peking Platform exemplifies the tendency pointed out by Molyneux and Craske (2002: 10) of transiting from the perspective of feminine interests and needs, analytically hegemonic in the 1960's and 1980's decades,[24] to the consolidation of the approach of rights that in the 1990's decade progressively articulated a more civilized proposal of the exclusion and feminine subordination problem, pinning up a revised vision of the women's social place in the functioning and development of their countries and cultures as complete subjects. In this sense, a fourth orienting premise incorporates and highlights the main conclusion on gender of the International Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, which recognizes women's rights as human rights; however, understanding that that equitable inclusion of women in the economic, social, political and cultural movement of their societies is not the result of a decree, but it is the result of a long, complex and gradual process of negotiations and watched advancements,

[24] It was Molyneux (1985) who proposed the segmentation of the interests of women in practical and strategic in her classical work on women in the Nicaragua Sandinista in the 1980's decade, referring on the one side to the quotidian interests —generally linked to gender articulation and social strata— and the interests specifically anchored to the reversion of their gender subordinate condition, on the other.

the Platform explicitly responds to its thematic goals by stage of application. Whereas the approach of rights involves and orients the complete document, human rights' precision as a critical area of attention to establish precise goals in the advance toward equity inverts it at the time with paradigmatic and pragmatic meanings.

The last approach that nurtures Peking Platform comprehends development from the notion of human development, which integrates economic growth, equality between men and women, social justice, environmental conservation and protection, sustainability, solidarity, participation, peace and respect for human rights in a larger framework of goals oriented to multiply the population's possibilities, which tries to facilitate a more egalitarian access to opportunities, guarantee the sustainability of physical, human, financial and environmental resources and power a macro-economic environment centered on people, which powers men and women to appropriate the activities, occurrences and processes that model their lives (UN, 2001: 11-12).

Mechanisms and devices of vigilance

The Protocol of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women, signed by Mexico in 1999 and ratified in 2003, reinforces the mechanisms of international and national institutionalization for the full realization and respect to CEDAW's statements. Said protocol enables the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the Committee) to receive communications presented by people or citizens' groups of an adherent country on violations to the rights stated in CEDAW, thus making civil and democratic the process of application and fulfillment of the acquired commitments. Hence, the committee becomes an international observatory, recognized and vested by the part states with the authority of the vigilant intervention, the evaluation of situations of civic disconformities and the formulation of recommendations ethically obligatory for said States. In spite of not being a mechanism of immediate attention, given the timing stated by the process of access to the Committee, which requires exhaust national instances of denounce and the terms

of research of the Committee and the responses delivery from the State, six month each, undoubtedly the Committee is a symbolic international authority, a democratizing device of attention to disconformities and civic denounce and a referent of pressure for the States to fulfill CEDAW.[25]

Separately, the Plan of Action of Peking commits the adherent States to deliver periodical reports to the commission for Women's Status (the commission), created in 1996, on the design and application of strategies and plans of action directed to the achievement of gender-egalitarian national societies. The commission has as a mandate the responsibility of monitoring, revising, evaluating the advancement and challenges to apply the Platform of Action in the twelve areas of the State labor in promoting gender equality, the Commission also incorporates into its evaluation of the same period the shadow-report elaborated by the associations and organisms of civil society of each adherent country, which from a critical perspective revises the advancement and challenges of the fulfillment of the acquired commitments. In this sense, the Commission potentially works as a democratic broadening device, promoting the participation and influence of civil entities in informing, promoting and evaluating the public policies on gender and at the time the State's actuation in this field.

Final considerations

During the last seven lustrums, the discourse of justice of gender equity disputes its hegemony in the Mexican collective imaginary with the traditional notion of the naturalness of feminine segregation, exclusion and discrimination. Progressively, said discourse has been entering the laboring, cultural, political and juridical interstices of the structural and ideological reordering propitiated by the new model of liberal globalization, completely penetrating in the recent decade

[25] The researches and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Committee on the femicides in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, and the pending investigation of the case of the women in San Salvador Atenco, State of Mexico, sexually harassed and raped when they were apprehended, as instances of the sort of denounces the committee receives from offended citizens. In 2006, the committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women uttered its first preoccupation to Mexican government because of the high pace of maternal mortality in Mexico, the lack of access to safe services of abortion and generalized contraception, stating that the Independent Group for Reproductive Rights (*Grupo Independiente por los Derechos Reproductivos, GIRE*) had elaborated a shade report on the subject. The committee recommended that the Mexican government expanded the coverage of reproductive health and developed a comprehensive strategy to secure women an effective access to safe abortion. Undoubtedly, the de-penalizing on abortion in Federal District, approved in March 2007, partly responds to the sanitary worries expressed in said recommendation.

into the core of the State's functioning and into the formulation of public policies. Due to its immersion into the complex reordering of the global economic and cultural context —undoubtedly an unfinished process— it has had contradictory repercussions in women's lives, on the one side making them independent and empowering them, and on the other, overloading them with multiple working days, social roles and responsibilities. Linked to the very demands of the economic and social processes of the new accumulation process, the main impulse of the promotion of the sexual equality discourse is the result of a delicate articulation and mutual reinforcement between three agencial dimensions:

1. A radical, pushing and prodigal feminist and women's movement restarted afresh in the 1960's and 1970's decade, nationally and internationally, which named the feminine discomforts, made its genealogy historical and theorized the components, dynamics and devices of functioning, production and reproduction of gender asymmetries.

2. The supra-governmental institutional ones, such as UN and OAS, which in conferences, covenants, agreements and international protocols, as from 1975 as the First International Conference on Women, assimilated and promoted said discourse as essential part of the paradigmatic proposal of human rights.

3. The adherent Nation-States, whose ascriptions and ratification of said international agreements commits them to accept their premises and statements, integrating them and applying them from the center of command of the political tasks of the States' structures and institutions. The dialectic between these three actors —organized feminist civil society and that of women, supra-national entities and the States and their governments— has defined the field where nowadays the cultural and social meanings of the gender economical politics are disputed, marking a gradual —yet nohow linear— advancement toward a gender-egalitarian society.

The conventions, plans of actions and international protocols hereby revised have identified, defined and progressively detailed the components of gender discrimination: working altogether as an elaborated strategic map of redesign of the shape and background of the social relation between men and women, and reformulating in this way the very notion of democracy to incorporate in its competence field the relations rooted in the private and intimate spheres. The contributions from the knowledge of said international agreements to the comprehension of the gender problematic start with the very definition and censorship of what sexual discrimination is, identifying the sexual division of labor

that historically has made women responsible for the quotidian housework and familial nourishment, as a reproduction device of gender asymmetry. Distinguishable are the value of the contributions of women's participation in the processes of national development from their traditional insertion in said labor division, at the time they indicate how such insertion and the ideology which accompanies it limit the full feminine participation in all of the society's spheres. Linked to the role of the traditional sexual division of labor in the reproduction of gender discrimination, such documents apportions multiple devices and social mechanisms that secure women's subordination, namely among other, the matrimonial patterns, the ways to access nationality; the lack of access to education and training; the absence of control on their own body, sexuality, and reproductive capacity; economic dependency and unevenness; the lack of equitable opportunities; the exercise of gender violence in all of its forms and the impediments to the complete exercise of feminine citizenship. They recognize as an obstacle for the construction of gender-equitable societies the contexts of war, foreign occupation and colonialism and neo-colonialism. At the time they emphasize the doubly discriminatory impacts of the intersection of several identity dimensions of exclusion, such as it occurs in the case of poor women, the indigenous, the Afro-Latin, the heads of family, elderly ladies and girls, pleading for a special consideration and attention to guarantee the setting of mechanisms and policies which promote equitable and compensatory processes of gender inequality deconstruction. Finally, they consider the interrelation of different theoretical-methodological tools to intensify the processes of cultural transition toward gender-equitable societies, distinguishing methodologies such as: gender mainstream, or the tranversalization of gender perspective in all of the spheres of governmental action, the approach of lifecycle that articulates the condition of gender with the different vital stages and the active participation of men and women in the enterprise of social and familial democratization.

Once established the mechanisms of observation, monitoring, evaluation and recommendation, the summary of these international agreements —which totally or partially assist the proposal of gender inequality disarticulation and the achievement of equity conditions— offers a methodological strategic model for its appropriation and defense from the civil sector, not only at national level, but also at State and municipal levels. The formal inclusion of official mechanisms to evaluate the Committee Against Discrimination Against Women and the commission for the Status of Women of the civil actor as active vigilant agent of the implementation of the agreements and plans enables civil associations —in

a sort of re-edition of the classical democracy's conceptualization— to directly influence in the revision, direction's evaluation, extension and intensity of the realization of the acquired commitments.

Said civil participation fundamentally considers the non-governmental organizations (NGO's), yet it also requires the specialized and based academic analysis. The National Institute of Women of Mexico (*Instituto Nacional de la Mujer de México*) has elaborated annual and quinquennial reports that the Commission asked from all the country members, while the different non-governmental organizations of recognized actuation produced the shade-reports, thus far from a national vision emanated from the center of the country, with emphasis on the most notorious violation facts.[26] Nonetheless the ascribed agreements are valid in all of the national fabric, offering the opportunity of multiple levels of local participation and analysis in all of the municipalities and States of the country, which eventually have relation not only with the enrichment and precision of the shade-reports and the denounce of concrete cases of violations to women's human rights, but also orient the molding of the very gender policy in the State and local spaces along said vigilance network. This is what these agreements, plans of action and protocols devoted to promote gender equity potentially have to offer, a institutional space for the civil agenda in the construction of a more democratic, equitable and free society. Without said active and vigilant participation of women —and men— who understand the genealogy and meaning of gender approach and without the pressure of groupings and organizations of women who express their needs and insist in the realization of their rights stated in said agreements, we are at risk of assimilating these radically transforming proposals of the social order to a diluted, assistance, fragmented, bureaucratic and even pre-formative exercise, whose final impact

[26] NOG's which prepared the 2006 shade report are: Coalition against Women and Girls' Smuggling in Latin America, Civil Association (*Coalición contra el Tráfico de Mujeres y Niñas en América Latina y el Caribe, A.C., CATW-LAC*); The Reality of Purepecha Women, Civil Association (*La Realidad de las Mujeres Purhepechas, UARHI, A.C.*); Mexican Commission of Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, Civil Association (*Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, A.C., CMDPDH*); Committee of Latin America and the Caribbean for the Defense of the Rights of Women (*Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer, CLADEM*); Popular Defenders, Civil Association (*Defensoras Populares, A.C.*); Friendly House, Center of Crisis, Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua (*Casa Amiga, Centro de Crisis, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua*); Equity of Gender, Citizenship Labor and Family, Civil Association (*Equidad De Género, Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia, A.C.*); House of the Women from San Cristobal de las Casas, Civil Association (*Casa de las Mujeres de San Cristóbal de la Casas, A.C*); Group of Information on Chosen Reproduction, Civil Association (*Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida, A.C, GIRE*); and IPAS; Cimac Mexico.

is the mere modification and rearrangement of the current gender order: re-symbolizing and re-signifying sexual roles, yet finally reproducing a gender order which is still segregated, hierarchical and discriminatory. In this sense, the key of sexual asymmetry deconstruction is to be found in the active and growing contribution of participants of the equitable vision to the cadent contemporary dispute by the cultural senses of gender.

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