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Public sphere and private sphere
– masculinity and femininity

The sphere is a natural determinant of social relations, and thus should be an important category in the social sciences. Moreover, a broader analysis should be conducted over it. Discussions on sphere in the social sciences (in the narrow meaning: sociology and politics) include both the issue of physical sphere as well as the concept of sphere as an idea. In the political context it is attempted to connect sphere with a description of political phenomena, power, violence, force, the sphere of freedom, etc. It should be observed that sphere as a public sphere is treated as a metaphor for political participation, particularly in the context of civil rights. What should be distinguished from the ordinary sense of public sphere, the means sphere of public access or sphere with specific features useful to society. In the first meaning of the public nature, which for our considerations is more important, sphere would be recognized as a sphere of participation, which means as a special kind of interaction, presentations, and the legitimacy of collective or individual identity (of various types of particularities).

It should be noted that the specific understanding of politics and power should be connected with the traditional recognition of sphere, social spatial behavior, a determinant of aggression or demographic description of society. It seems that you can draw a hypothesis that a specific type of description based among others on the above-mentioned perspectives strengthened specific type of discourse in politics and power, which has become one of the factors facilitating the ideological exclusion of certain social groups from public life, e.g. women.

Depreciation of women in social life by defining the physical force and violence as an important factor of territorialism and tribalism, was the basis for determining the practices and the manner of the discourse on the public sphere as an area of political interaction. Obviously, it was not the only factor limiting women's participation in the public sphere. In addition to or perhaps simultaneously to this discourse we had to deal with consolidation of others, which affected the whole culture based on domination of what might be called "the male element." Three indicators which characterise that culture is: patriarchalism, sexism and androcentrism.[1] In the first case we are dealing with male dominance in the social sphere, in the latter case, the depreciation of woman as inferior to men, and in the last case with the model of masculinity, through which others are judged.

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[1] About patriarchalism, sexism and androcentrism in the context of the Christian religion writes E. Adamiak, *Kobiety w Biblii. Nowy Testament*, Biblioteka Więzi 2010; see also review of this book: J. Majewski, *Pierwszy feminista*, "Tygodnik Powszechny" 2010, No 28, p. 15–16.

There is also a different scope of the analysis of public sphere – on one hand it is a real sphere of social practices, on the other hand it is a kind of discourse about sphere. Establishing the dominant discourse affects not only the description, but also the type of participation or construction of social relations. As an evidence of this can be given present in scientific discourse division into private and public sphere, which can be associated with traditional politics.

It can be stared that one of the first directions of criticism of its dominance in public life was the reception of Marxism by feminists. Acquisition of the way of understanding of power comprised in the Marxian historical materialism has opened the door to criticism of male domination based on the possession of means of production. Another result was the assumption that the state – as a representative of the interests of the capitalist class – is an ally of the capitalists, and thus enables them to gain extra value with the use of disadvantaged groups. These two assumptions were the basis for S. Walby to present the concept of dual systems. On the one hand we are dealing with consolidation of patriarchy in the reproductive system of women's roles, but on the other hand there is made an emancipation in the capitalist economy in relation to the socio-economic activity of women. Therefore, in spite of market exploitation, and exploitation in the traditional family structures, emancipation of women supports capitalism in connection with the appearance on the market of cheaper labor.[2] These mechanisms, according to S. Walby, compose two systems, which do not have to create some cohesive whole. What is more, in certain historical situations they can be a source of conflict.

It should be noted that, despite the starting the first front in the battle for emancipation of women in public life, its effects related to private life. An example of it is the sphere of political and economic rights, which gave the possibility to go beyond the realm of women's home or family. A similar position was represented by S. Walby, who claims that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century witnessed a transition from patriarchy in the private sphere to public patriarchy. That can result from the fact that, according to the author, patriarchy in the private sphere was also sanctioned by the public sphere. Changes in the public sphere in the twentieth century by strengthening the rights of women, among others by law regulations, sanctioned a greater level of equality. Of course, there should also be mention other processes that occurred in the twentieth century such as a revolution in morals, feminist movements, intellectual waves of feminism, various forms of affirmative actions.

As part of the intellectual currents of feminist it should be noticed that some discussions try to redefine the public sphere, politics and power relations, so as to take into account the woman's perspective. The primary objection to the traditional perspective of politics and power is such that due to the dominance of men in political as well as scientific life, description of these categories and the practice took a particular form.

Radical Feminism and the postmodern trend negated the traditional approach of politics and power, pointing to the ubiquity of this type of social relations. Its result was the extension of the political to the social micro practices. Postmodern anti-essentialism

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[2] S. Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy*, published by Blackwell, Oxford 1990; S. Walby, *Gender Transformations*, published by Routledge, London 1997.

influenced critical views, e.g. the distinction between the public and the private, the institutional presentation of the power, narrowing the category of politics and power into the realm of the state. The most important is the transfer of the private and the personal to the public sphere, which is associated with an attempt to integrate the politics and power relations in social relations, which have never been interpreted that way before. Power and politics relations are present in sexual relationships, family relationships, as in art, language, etc.[3]

The consequence of anti-essentialism is also denying the developed bipolar pattern of sex allocation, which, according to representatives of radical feminism is a product of culture. As previously coherent human subjectivity in social life was denied, so now essentially circled gender identity based on biological grounds was negated. It is an expression of opposition to biological determinism and biological interpretation in general. Adopting such a position leads directly to the criticism of the biological justification of social roles and traditional relations of domination.[4]

J. Butler draws attention to the fluidity of gender identity, as a result of defining the sex as a set of reenacted practices. Thus, gender is created by the public discourse, and, given that the dominant discourse is the heterosexual matrix perpetuated by the masculine culture, the image of human sexuality is fairly fixed. The denial of sexual norms which have biological foundations violates the concept of heterosexual patriarchy and gender polarization.[5] The conclusions of these considerations are such that it is sufficient to change the social discourse, which can alter the repeated practices, and thus we can change the established relations of domination based on sexuality.

In conclusion we may indicate the transition from strictly physical area interpretations to a more theoretical approaches. Of particular importance here is the category of social area, which began to be recognized not only empirically but also reflexively. An example of such an approach may be the interpretation of the area made by M. Foucault, who pointed to the trend of demarcation of area, the determination of distances and relational. Interpreting M. Foucault, we can conclude that we are forced by various mechanisms of power to understand social and physical space in a specific way. M. Foucault uses the specific term of heterotopia, meaning "place of designating the place".[6] It can be considered that the social division of gender roles is a division between the public and the private and the masculine and the feminine. Heterotopia, although they do not exist in reality, they represent the interpretation and cognitive perspective of the reality. The effect may be that culturally sanctioned interpretive clichés can significantly create relationships in space – in this case, the social sphere.

Biological perspective of human behavior, limiting social mechanisms to competing for survival, introduces a metaphor for combat which is described by the potential strength. The struggle for existence, natural selection and sexual selection are to emphasize the legitimacy of characteristics which are important for the relations of power,

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[3] Cf. V. Randall, *Feminizm*, in: *Teorie i metody w naukach politycznych*, D. Marsh, G. Stoker (eds.), published by UJ, Kraków 2006, p. 109–130.

[4] J. Butler, *Uwikłani w płeć*, published by Krytyka Polityczna, Warszawa 2008.

[5] Ibidem.

[6] M. Foucault, *Inne przestrzenie*, "Teksty Drugie" 2005, No 6 (96), p. 119–124.

and for the construction of the politics. The effect of adopting such metaphors can be a hierarchy of higher evaluated and gratified social characteristics. Considering the fact that the strength and the fight is attributed to the activity of men, the activity of women is automatically of less value in the social discourse. Therefore, we can come up with a general thesis that biological metaphors support the enhancement of stereotypes of the traditional division of social roles, and thus constitute themselves a mechanism for discrimination, which is fixed in the structure of social and scientific discourse.

Environmentalism is a trend, which tries to identify the relationship between species and the environment. The unit which is the subject of study is a population attributable to a particular territory. The population is analyzed as a form of collective organization, whose basis of existence is in the common spatial dwelling, and the interdependence among its members is a consequence of their vital activities.[7] Description of the human population can take at least two forms – of morphofunctional or demographic description. In the first case the description refers to morphological and functional characteristics which are due to genetic diversity and variability of environmental conditions. In the latter case, the description focuses on the regularities of population development under certain environmental conditions, social, economic, spatial, etc. It should be noted that the "community" can be created only for the purposes of analysis, which means that it does not necessarily have to rely on methods of analysis solely connected with ecology, defined as the study of evolution of the population. However, one can point out some features which will characterize the demographic description of the population, e.g. (1) concentration, (2) structure, (3) mobility, (4) mortality, (5) reproduction, (6) fertility.[8]

The analysis of spatial distribution concerns the relations between the size of the population and the space, density and concentration. The factors affecting these relationships are primarily the movement/mobility, mortality and fertility. The mere fact of the selection of factors and, therefore, the scope of the analysis, establishes a reduction of social relationships to specific aspects of biological functions – in fact to the reproductive process. One can, therefore, assume that such recognition may affect the question of treating units that make up the population like objects. In addition, it can affect instrumentalization of the reproductive function of populations and individuals.

Similar perspectives are presented in the socio-biological trend, which explains the behavior of different species, including humans, through natural selection. Sociobiology is a synthetic domain, and therefore combines the achievements of biology, sociology, ethology, ecology, population genetics, ecology, evolution, zoology, etc.[9] Due to connotations with so many fields of natural science we deal with a specific recognition of the human being in the social and spatial relations. The starting point is, of course, Darwinian theory, hence biology as the nature will be a primary determinant

[7] B. Szacka, *Wprowadzenie do socjologii*, published by Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2003, p. 55–72.

[8] J. Strzałko, M. Henneberg, J. Piontek, *Wstęp do ekologii populacyjnej człowieka*, published by UAM, Poznań 1976.

[9] Vide: E. O. Wilson, *Socjobiologia*, published by Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2000; E. O. Wilson, *Konsiliencja: jedność wiedzy*, published by Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2002; E. O. Wilson, *O Ljudskoj prirodi*, published by Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Zagreb 2007; P. Kitcher, *Vaulting Ambition Sociobiology and the Quest for Human Nature*, published by MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 1985.

in the division of gender roles. The results of sociological research become useful for the purposes of the formation of structures of domination, inter-group aggression, selfishness, altruism, etc. The successes of some representatives of this trend, for example R. Dawkins and D. Morris, caused that the metaphors describing human behavior in the context of selection was the inspiration for social science and mass culture.

Feminism assumes that socio-biological approaches strengthen the stereotypical division between gender roles,[10] hence the trend largely emphasizes challenging experiments in human behavior. Moreover, there are attempts to point to errors of interpretation in the description of the biological basis of human behavior as well as non-reflectiveness during the reception of this knowledge to the field of social sciences.[11]

Sociobiology will use space as a determinant of population behavior. Territorial behavior analysis will include among others to (1) battle for the preservation of living space, (2) the impact of congestion on the degree of conflict and aggression, (3) the impact of congestion on the development of domination systems, (4) the impact of space and season on mating cycles. The description of behavior will therefore be based on terms of strength, which will be rather attributed to males.[12] Biological categories of aggression and domination become an inspiration for attempts to understand the genesis of human politics, which to some extent supports strengthening androcentric interpretation of political and social practices.[13]

Bio-politics deals with the issue of controlling vital process. Its scope of subject refers to many considerations and social practices.[14] However, major issues and concepts that in some way refer to life include: racial anthropology, eugenics, ecology, health, research on the biological foundations of socio-political behavior, practices of disciplining the activities of the body.

The sociological thought of M. Foucault is here of particular importance. M. Foucault regarded disciplining the human being and practices of compulsion as the essence of the mechanics of power. Control over physical activity in a given time and space allowed, according to him, the negative stigmatization of individuals, and thus gave rise to the formation of roles and social hierarchies. More important is the attachment to the place and objects, which forms a functional relation. The quintessence of control over the activities of human flesh is the analysis of the idea of Panopticon on the example of the prison system, which was described by M. Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish*. The awareness of the fact that we are constantly monitored causes that the power over corporeality is extended to the power over our minds, which may constitute the essence of social control mechanisms.[15]

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[10] E.g. D. Morris, *The naked woman. A study of the Female Body*, published by St. Martin's Press, New York 2004.

[11] A seminar discussion entitled *Kto się boi Karola Darwina? Czyli o bio-fobii nauk społecznych* (main panelists: M. Szczygielska, A. W. Nowak, K. Arbiszewski), Poznań 5 May 2011.

[12] E. O. Wilson, op. cit., published by Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2000, p. 145–154, 310–311.

[13] Vide: R. Rosicki, *Ontologia IV RP – tragedia grecka*, in: *Władza i przywództwo polityczne w demokracji* eds. E. Nowak, D. Litwin-Lewandowska, published by UMCS, Lublin 2010, p. 153–167.

[14] Cf. M. Krivak, *Biopolitika Nova politička filozofija*, published by Izdanja Antibarbarus, Zagreb 2007; T. Lemke, *Biopolityka*, published by Sic!, Warszawa 2010.

[15] M. Foucault, *Nadzorować i karać*, published by Aletheia, Warszawa 1998.

S. Lee Bartky suggests that M. Foucault saw no difference in the different practices to the physicality of women and men, in the context of carnality creation.[16] Although it does not seem right that he did not see any differences at all, which may be due to the fact that he was more interested not in constructing forms of physicality but in forms of discipline generally. Of greater relevance here is the idea of the claim of power to regulate the processes of life, which triggers a reaction of resistance in the community. The claim to the legitimacy to its own identity and values is the main axis of political conflict with the universality of power. An example is the approach to homosexuals and women, where in the first case the concept of social and health standards were used, and in the latter one – the formula of the role and biological predestination. You can regard this as a product of existing at that time or continually operating structures of experience and knowledge, but in a different interpretation it can also be seen as an example of disciplining and controlling the phenomena of population (Government Technology) in accordance with the established formula of the natural (a metaphor of nature). The result of this is a two way political technology interfering in the identity of a type 'man – physicality' and 'man – the population'. Human sexuality is assessed not only in the context of ethical judgement, but as an utilitarian one, i.e. that consolidated gender roles were to prove useful for the population and to guarantee safety.

In this section religious issues, which usually have been described as primeval will not be described. For reasons connected with the form of this text, more attention will be paid to the monotheistic religions – in this case Christianity. This limitation arises from the important role which Christianity played in the cultural development of Europe, and the European socio-political thought influenced the development of contemporary democracies. Reducing the problem to the example of Christianity does not preclude a similar conclusion as to, for instance, Islam.

"Founding sins" of Christianity should be mentioned here, which were associated with the attempt to versatilify the ideas of Jesus, so as to make it more acceptable to the new followers. That sin is sexism, which was absorbed with the texts of St. Paul, which shows, among others First Epistle to the Corinthians. Although there is the text of "Hymn of Love" contained, there are also references to the subordination of woman to man, and their silence during the assembly of saints.[17] Despite exhortations to the brotherhood of all made by Jesus, the demand could not be realized due to the deep-rooted patriarchal culture of the contemporary world.

In the subsequent stages the sexist thought is perpetuated by the intellectual heritage of the Fathers of the Church and the practice of the representatives of the Church. Sexism in the Christian religion became the basis for the exclusion of women from public life and bring their activities to a family life – living in the area known as private. In addition, an influential religious discourse influenced the consolidation of the position and function of women in society.

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[16] S. Lee Bartky, *Foucault, kobiecość i unowocześnienie władzy patriarchalnej*, in: *Gender. Perspektywa antropologiczna*, t. 2 (*Kobiecość, męskość, seksualność*), R. E. Hryciuk, A. Kościańska (eds.), published by UW, Warszawa 2007, p. 51–75.
[17] *Epistula I ad Corinthios.*

Field and habitus

P. Bourdieu introduced to his sociological analysis the concept of field and habitus. By the field we should understand a system of social relations between positions, which in turn would be places in the system of all kinds of capital. Distinguishing a field is due to the specific nature of the rules (irreducible to those that occur in everyday life), and specific understanding of values. Referring to the metaphor of "game" it can be said that the fields determine the strategy of actions. On one hand, strategies of actions will be determined by the meaning and structure of capital in the field, while, on the other hand, actions of subjects will result from them possessing their own capital.

Different capitals, which may be characterized by considerable variability, are important for social relationships. Variability of capital importance stems from the change of assessment, what may be valuable and what may not. The major capitals, according to P. Bourdieu, include (1) economic, (2) cultural (3) social and (4) symbolic. Their meanings and hierarchies may be different depending on the different fields, for example the field of academic study or production of art.[18] Basic capitals mentioned by P. Bourdieu are characterized by the fact that they can occur in all types of fields. Moreover, individual capital can be "converted" to the last of the capitals, that is symbolic.

The symbolic capital is associated with a specific form of violence, i.e., symbolic violence. This concept was introduced to distinguish it from pure forms of violence or coercion, which was depicted as immanent elements of governance. A feature of the symbolic violence is to act behind a 'veil', i.e. its essence are operating in secret mechanisms of reproduction of order. An example would be the institution of the school, which is primarily responsible for the reproduction of social order. In this sense one could speak of the political character of education field in society. In this context, the impact of school can be examined in at least two aspects. In the first case, the school helps to legitimize the order through the acquisition of the desired patterns of thinking and conduct (e.g., legitimacy of the method of distribution privileges.). In the second case the school perpetuates the divisions, and thus is responsible for the unequal opportunities to acquire competencies (e.g. lack of capital development associated with education).

Another important category is habitus, which is a produced pattern of practices, perceptions and evaluations. Its responsibility is to refer to the experience, hence it facilitates the adoption of specific strategies within particular fields. Habitus develops through the participation of a subject in social life, i.e. as a result of contacts with other subjects. The mechanisms, rules, restrictions, standards, etc., may be reflected in the subject, hence P. Bourdieu writes about interiorization of the exterior. However, this is not the only noticeable process, since the habitus is also associated with the manifestation of accepted patterns of practices or perception. P. Bourdieu defines this phenomenon as an internal alienation. This alienation defines certain "social valves", i.e. external patterns which have been subjected to interiorization are creatively adopted to

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[18] P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, published by Columbia University Press, New York 1993; A. Matuchniak-Krasuska, *Zarys socjologii sztuki Pierre'a Bourdieu*, published by Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2010.

the practices, perceptions and evaluations. This presented by P. Bourdieu process implies that the reproduction of schemes may occur with an unspecified element of creativity of individuals, which is to prove a creative dimension of habitus.[19]

Fields of male dominance

Politicality in spatial perspectives of relationships of entities in particular fields would depend on ensuring the symbolic dominance, whether in the field of power or others – culture, science, education, economy, etc. Important are possible actions of an individual in conjunction with established capital in relation to capitals, which have different entities, or those that are important in the system of the field. A determinant of e.g. a field of politics is social capital that allows to establish a broad relationship; additionally one can also think about what will be presented in such a situation the value in the policy field – whether the authority itself or the possibility to obtain public support for political projects. In the case of the field of study, for instance social sciences, it is essential to gain symbolic dominance based on long term reproduction of social theories.[20] An example of such a situation may be specific concepts of power and politics which shaped the discourse in this field. As a result of such reproduction of various social theories they could be reflected in social practices, e.g. in the context of constructing public sphere and certain political institutions.

Of great significance for constructing the field of politics and science was particularly formed social capital, which was not available to women to such an extent as for centuries it was available to men. This involves different facts, which may include among others: (1) limiting access to school or university education, (2) predestination of certain areas of science based on gender, (3) the lack of women in various departments of science, (4) in the case of social science, the dominance of men influenced a specific way of interpreting such categories and phenomena as power and politics. With a particular interpretation of these categories is also connected a special way of dividing the social sphere into the public and private ones. Attachment to a specific division may be due to the legacy of Roman jurisprudence, which introduced a division in the law into the public and the private – this division is commonly ascribed to Ulpian.[21] Of significant importance was the interests of the state (i.e. the public interest), which was above the others. Ius publicum was a starting point, however, ius privatum had significant growth. The scope of ius publicum involved – using a contemporary interpretation – constitutional, administrative, criminal law. In addition, public law was linked to religious law, which regulate, among others, issues related to burial.[22]

There stands the question whether the division, which was used among others in Roman law, into the private and the public was reflected in the actual social practices. It is

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[19] P. Bourdieu, *Zmysł praktyczny*, published by UJ, Kraków 2008, p. 72–90.
[20] P. Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, published by Stanford University Press, Stanford 1988.
[21] *Digesta Iustiniani* (D.1,1,6,1).
[22] *Lex duodecim tabularum* (Tables: IX and X).

assumed that in the context of the politics the public sphere was associated with what might be called the area of civil rights, while the private sphere was associated with private life and individual interests. Considering the fact that some world of culture, be it ancient Rome or Greece, was based on patriarchalism, we cannot speak about any particular sphere of private life of women. Considering the fact that the dominant position of men in public life facilitated greater accumulation of different types of capital and establishing rules governing various fields of social activities, we can say that the scope of women's activities was correlated with the needs of men.

H. Arendt wrote that the private sphere, understood as a family/home, was a natural community to protect life. This community emerged as the result of the necessity to satisfy the basic life needs, which can be regarded as a sin of incorporation, as the public sphere, according to the author, was based on freedom.[23] We can extend the meaning of the "necessity" and note that the community of life and the life of this community, however, were shaped by men. H. Arendt writes that the public sphere was based on equality; however, the private sphere was based on inequality, but we can say that it was based on exploitation. Evolving of the private sphere into the public sphere happened, among others, as a result of strengthening the economic mechanisms. The result is blurring the bipolar division between the public and the private, also connecting politics with the management of life processes.

The assumption of H. Arendt that the public sphere was the quintessence of freedom is debatable, even if we reduce it – as the author wanted – to a political community, and not to a society. It should be noted that the Greek political community was limited to the freedom of citizens, and not everyone was a citizen of the polis. Hence it will be not misappropriate to state that women were a group excluded from the benefits of equality in the public sphere. In this case it must be assumed that the political practices and ideas of the politics were shaped by the male part of the society.

If we adopt the Marxist interpretation of the economic domination, and, therefore, also political and ideological ones, we will deal with an efficient mechanism to build rules for society functioning. If we reject the assumption of Marxist class structure of society in ruling, and we will simplify it to group ruling – in this case a male one, we will still receive an effective tool in analyzing the transformation of public and private spheres in the context of gender. The economic dominance which men gained in society has become one of the most important mechanisms to control women.[24] This thesis was particularly emphasized by the Marxist feminist thought. A similar assumption was adopted by I. Wallerstein, who suggested that sexism was one of the mechanisms of exclusion, social hierarchy and economic exploitation.[25] Social exclusion of women resulted in their absence from public life, and these restrictions affected to a varying extent the lack of women in education, higher education and the economy. The lack of

[23] H. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, published by University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 22–78.

[24] Vide: H. Bradley, *Płeć*, published by Sic!, Warszawa 2008, p. 50–55, 141–173; *Sex and Class in Women's History*, J. L. Newton, M. P. Ryan, J. R. Walkowitz (eds.), published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1983.

[25] I. Wallerstein, *The Essential Wallerstein*, published by The New Press, New York 2000, p. 350–351.

representatives in various areas also hindered the opportunity to present their own opinions and the interpretation of social problems.

Both feminism of the second and third wave proposed a different view over public space/sphere, although the most radical approach was proposed by post-feminism, which focused on the analysis of asymmetrical sexual relations in a sequence of micro practices. We deal here with dispersing the phenomena of governmental authority and sex domination in various spheres of human life. The second wave of feminism demanded making the private public, i.e. the politicization of the private sphere; while some suggest that post-feminism retreats to the level of the analysis of social micro practices, which are not connected with the public sphere.[26] It does not seem that this shift is a refuge from the public sphere; it is at most redefining politicality itself, as a unit of the social structure organization, as well as a statement that an established social discourse influences the consolidation of asymmetrical gender relations and the positive and non-reflective narrative in many planes. Hence, it should be stated that a new dimension of politicality is connected with the struggle with narratives which perpetuate the masculine paradigm of interpretation in different spheres of socially constructed knowledge and science. The radicalism of post-feminism will be here manifested in the interference in various areas of knowledge which have not been previously challenged – such as biology.

J. Butler, writing about an attitude of a person to the public sphere refers to the thought of L. Althusser in the so-called interpellation. Interpellation is a mechanism to call a subject who is forced to take a position which was assigned to him/her socially. According to J. Butler and L. Althusser adopting a given position happens unconsciously and without thinking; however, this mechanism decides on empowering of an individual, as much as it forces the individual to observe certain rules.[27] Identity of individuals in this case is a social and ideological product, and, therefore, an individual has limited privacy a priori. L. Althusser does not leave many options to an individual in counteracting the ideological structures in their own liberation. However, any structures of authority give rise to counter processes, which means that authority, at the same time, triggers resistance to itself.[28] It can be stated at this point, saying that the opinion that the aim to emphasize own identity, is one of the possibilities to define what is political and what is not. This is mainly due to the assumption represented by H. Arendt, who claimed that the public sphere is the sphere of freedom, which in principle would be the essence of politics in her approach. The opportunity to participate in the public sphere and laying claims would determine politics.

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[26] About the change in perception of the public sphere in: K. Więckowska, *Płeć a sfera publiczna. Koncepcja relacji między płcią a sferą publiczną w myśli Judith Butler*, in: *Płeć w życiu publicznym. Różnorodność problemów i perspektyw*, M. Jeziński, M. Wincławska, B. Brodzińska (eds.), published by UMK, Toruń 2009, p. 11–17.

[27] J. Butler, *Walczące słowa. Mowa nienawiści i polityka performatywna*, published by Krytyka Polityczna, Warszawa 2010, p. 7–53; J. Althusser, *Ideologie i aparaty ideologiczne państwa (wskazówki dla poszukiwań)*, published by Komisja Kształcenia i Wydawnictw RN ZSP, Warszawa 1983.

[28] Ibidem.

The question is: what is the relation of the public sphere to human sexuality? On the basis of post-feminism of J. Butler, it can be stated that determining the matrices of sexuality causes that all other identities are seen and described from their angle. The heterosexual matrix becomes a starting point for the evaluation of any other difference or identity. Thus the narratives about femininity, homosexuality, bisexuality, etc., will always be a relationship of "masculinity and femininity", "masculinity and unmanliness", "heterosexuality and homosexuality". Any claims to the plurality of sexual identity in this case will be treated as a threat to the traditional identity, as well as an attempt to deconstruct the implanted androcentric narrative. Thus, the claims to the pluralism of identity can affect the public sphere in two ways: (1) through political practice demanding equality in participation in public life, (2) by violating established phallogocentric fixed narrative.

The text presents an analysis of categories of public and private sphere, which are connected with the social division of roles based on gender. The sphere was recognized as a sphere of participation, i.e. as a special kind of interaction, presentation, and legitimacy of collective or individual identity. It is important for the analysis to indicate that a particular discourse, within science and in society, strengthen the interpretation of human life and specific practices. Consolidated in this way discourse facilitated the exclusion of women from public life, and, therefore, also reverse process, that means emancipation (subsequent waves of feminism).

In the text three elements that could affect the consolidation of sexism were presented: (1) demographic descriptions of the population, (2) religious exclusion, (3) social practices within specific areas of activity. Demographic description of the human population, which can be found in the various fields or trends, such as environmentalism, sociobiology and bio-politics, affects quantitative interpretations. Qualitative elements were brought to the analysis of human reproductive functions, and the woman in the analysis had a definite role in society. However, the religious exclusion was only stressed on the example of Christianity. An analysis of exclusion in the case of religion may be considered on two levels – internal and social. In the first case we deal with the exclusion of women within the church structure itself, in the second case we deal with using the ideological content to shape the roles and functions of women in society. The last element contributing to the perpetuation of sexism are defined social practices described on the example of the concept of fields and capital of P. Bourdieu and the idea of economic, political and ideological domination of Karl Marx.

It should be noted that the dominance of men in society influenced the possibility of significant accumulation of capital (e.g. social, cultural, symbolic). The presence of men in many spheres combined with the exclusion of women, helped to set up rules, practices and interpretations of social reality in accordance with an androcentric matrix. It affected to a large extent the assignment of women to certain social roles in public and private area.