Oral Essay, Research Paper

LANGUAGE ORAL

Our oral exposition about male chauvinism will be based on the perspective of the different religions and cultures that exist or have existed around the

world concerning men and women.

The society we live in concentrates more on gender differences than similarities causing the actual disadvantage of women in most areas.

To explain and justify this fact it is necessary to establish differences between several concepts:

- Sex is genetically determined and the only possibilities are being either a man or a woman.

- Sexuality is any behaviour that involves anatomical and physiological conditions characteristic of both sexes.

- Gender is learned behaviour or social roles that culture associates with being male or female.

There is a gender hierarchy in our society with male domination and female subordination reflected in many aspects of our lives.

What we can be sure about is that male chauvinism is a multi-causal subjective position. However, we can only present hypothesis instead of solid foundations about the origin of its existence.

To begin with, men s corporal strength might be the major factor which establishes the differences between both genders. Therefore, women s biological functions are focused in reproduction of the species which deprive them from developing certain activities that are vital for their subsistence during long periods of time. As a result, women have been gradually discriminated by men, following the principles of their own cultures.

An even though the declaration of human rights establishes that…, prejudice and discrimination seem to be stronger than this.

All aggressive and dangerous roles are played by men. Culture itself makes that potential to achieve the maximum development.

Although nowadays the cultural part that constitutes us has more importance that the innate part, discrimination towards women continues to be a social problem that has repercussions in everyone of us and that can be observed constantly in everyday life.

Women s inferiority in most societies is caused by many factors, but we can also add that the organisation of this world was completely a male creation and that the laws that they have established help them specially.

Although neither in theory or in practice differences between men and women can be justified, this situation persists thanks to a long tradition reinforced by an education that still is discriminatory and also thanks to the fact that all the domestic and maternity activities correspond to women s assignments.

It is hard for us to accept these facts because is not in human nature the attitude of recognising our mistakes, that is why we will present examples from other cultures:

Sexual symbolism in Bangladesh

Men are associated with the right, the preferred side, and women with the left one. Rural doctors consider that basic sexual differences make them to take the pulse of men on their right wrist and of women on their left wrist.

Many people carry amulets to fight the illnesses caused by bad spirits; men tie up their amulets on their right arm and women on their left s.

When they visit a clairvoyant, s/he reads men s right hand and women s left s.

When they present a theatre play, although all the roles are performed by men, the public recognise the actors characters sexes because men are supposed to gesticulate with their right hands and women with their left s.

During religious celebrations, there are separated entrances to public places, so men have their avenue from the right and women from the left.

According to popular beliefs, it is said that young girls start walking with their left foot while young boys start with their right s.

In some cases, this association left-right indicates more than the social acceptation of a physiological difference, implicating extra connotations of prestige, honour and authority. Women that behave respectfully with their husbands, should be always to their left, when they eat, when they sit or even when they sleep. The same sign of respect must be exhibited with any person socially considered superior, those persons are riches and nowadays, people that have a good education.

That is how, the dichotomy right-left not only shows clearly the differences of masculine and feminine, but authority-submission. In Bangladesh the right side is considered to be the best one, the right shoulder is where the angels live to judge the good actions of each day while from the left shoulder, demons judge the bad ones. The concept of pollution is also linked with the left side. The Islam says that the left hand is the one that has to be used to clean the anus after defecation. That is why it can t be used to bring food to the person s mouth or to wash it with water before everyday prays.