



*Asesorías y Tutorías para la Investigación Científica en la Educación Puig-Salabarría S.C.
José María Pino Suárez 400-2 esq a Lerdo de Tejada, Toluca, Estado de México. 7223898475*

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TÍTULO: El papel de las mujeres en una sociedad positivista: la transformación de las prácticas sociales de interacción en la sociología de Auguste Comte.

AUTORES:

1. Dra. Mariia Rubtcova.
2. Dra. Natalia Martianova.
3. Dra. Valentina Kaiserova

RESUMEN: El artículo aborda los aspectos específicos de la posición y papel de las mujeres en diferentes etapas de su trabajo desde el punto de vista del concepto positivista de Auguste Comte. El método de investigación es un análisis histórico comparativo de sus opiniones y revela la distinción de las funciones sociales de la mujer en las etapas teológica, metafísica y positiva del desarrollo de la sociedad y se lleva a cabo la sistematización de los puntos de vista del filósofo sobre la igualdad de género. Se da la característica del "culto a la mujer" como una designación específica de la posición de Comte en la etapa positiva. Se definen las funciones de una mujer como sujeto de transformaciones sociales.

PALABRAS CLAVES: subordinación de la mujer, culto a la mujer, igualdad de género, positivismo, realismo sociológico.

TITLE: The role of women in a positivist society: the transformation of social practices of interaction in Auguste Comte.

AUTHORS:

1. Dra. Mariia Rubtcova.
2. Dra. Natalia Martianova.
3. Dra. Valentina Kaisarova

ABSTRACT: The article addresses the specific aspects of the position and role of women in different stages of their work from the point of view of the positivist concept of Auguste Comte. The research method is a comparative historical analysis of their opinions and reveals the distinction of the social functions of women in the theological, metaphysical and positive stages of the development of society and carries out the systematization of the philosopher's points of view on gender equality. The characteristic of "woman worship" is given as a specific designation of Comte's position in the positive stage. The functions of a woman as a subject of social transformations are defined.

KEY WORDS: subordination of woman, cult of woman, gender equality, positivism, sociological realism.

INTRODUCTION.

The eminent French social philosopher, founder of sociology Auguste Comte (1798-1857) in his writings paid much attention to the women's social position and role. However, in sociological science, this line of Comte's activity has not yet been subjected to detailed analysis.

In the most general form, it is possible to divide the philosophical activity of O. Comte into three periods: in the first, he is a student and secretary of A. Saint-Simon; in the second, an independent thinker, the peak of creativity being the “The Course of Positive Philosophy”; and in the third, “the obsessed creator of a new cult”, described by him in “The System of Positive Policy”.

N. Mikhailovsky, in the preface to the publication of the letters of O. Comte, notes that many of his contemporaries had reason to doubt his mental health, with the result that he seemed to them "a certain high priest of mankind, writing letters to Emperor Nicholas I, giving some numbers mystical significance, seeing in the dogma of the Virgin some indication of the independence of a woman by means of a male-free birth, etc." (Mill, 1869, p.12-13). Many analysts associate this turnabout with his latest affair with Clotilde de Vaux, which had an extraordinary effect on his perception of the social role of women (Mill, 1870), (Lewis, Mill, 1967), (Filippova, 1898), (Aimel, 1889). Due to this influence, O. Comte devotes an entire chapter to the role of women in his work “The General Review of Positivism” and calls the women's issue “one of the main sociological issues, the main elementary basis of any social hierarchy” (Comte, 1912, p. 58).

In the positivistic concept of Auguste Comte, a serious place is given to the consideration of the status and role of women in the new historical epoch proclaimed by him - the positive stage of human development. However, in sociological science, this issue has not yet received much attention.

DEVELOPMENT.

According to O. Comte, that social progress is a consistent change of three stages of social development: theological, metaphysical and positive (Comte, 1912). Before moving to the last, most perfect stage, in which a woman is the main subject of social transformation, it is necessary to dwell on her position in the two previous stages.

To the theological stage, O. Comte relates a very long period, starting with the primitive (polytheistic) public associations, ending with the late feudal states. Theological form of thinking considers all natural and social phenomena as controlled by supernatural forces (pantheon of gods in polytheism, the one god in monotheism) (Robinet, 1898, p.96-99); (Rigolazh, 1898, p. 3-30). This is, relatively speaking, a «infantile» state of human development. This period is characterized by the idea of the natural role of women as wives and mothers.

In the Middle Ages, this role is complemented by the understanding of a special (sinful) female nature, when the clergy at the councils seriously decided whether a woman is a human being (This question was resolved as follows: "the gospel calls Jesus Christ "the human son", but his father was God, therefore, the adjective "human" refers to the mother of God. Thus, woman is human being") (Mill, 1869, p. 15). One of the few social institutions whose functions naturally "exalted" a woman at this time was chivalry, whose mission is defined by Comte as "selfless service to the strong for the benefit of the weak" (Comte, 1912, p. 95).

It was from here that he borrowed his subsequent "cult of the woman", the idea of serving one gender to another. The chivalrous custom of worshiping an inaccessible "beautiful lady" is certainly the merit of the Christian religion. However, with all its severity in this period, O. Comte finds many encroachments on the sanctity of the family and marriage bonds, citing as an example the troubadours' songs mocking them, the royal customs of the royal courts, etc. In other words, the "decrepit beliefs" were no longer able to protect the domestic life and hearth, which suffered more and more from "theological empiricism" (Comte, 1912, p. 78).

In the metaphysical (philosophical) stage, which characterizes social development in the period from the XIV to the XVIII centuries, the position of women undergoes some changes. The idea of the main "female vocation" is preserved in the absence; however, of the knightly romantic idealization. In addition, "sophistic" theories about women's rights began to appear.

O. Comte had a rather low opinion of contemporary philosophers, calling them “miserable sophists, rhetoricians, psychologists and ideologues who are incapable of any real reflection” (Comte, 1912, p. 75). He particularly regretted that the institution of the family and the “holiness” assigned to him in the theological period were under attack by philosophical sophistry doctrines (Comte, 1912, p. 78).

In general, it can be noted that the status of women in the theological and metaphysical periods was very low, primarily because the woman acted as an object, not as a subject of social relations. At the same time, even as an object, it was not protected from "theological impotence" and "metaphysical licentiousness". The fact that putting an end to the attacks on a woman and her mission should have been a new theory of marriage and family, which in turn was to be realized in the third stage of the development of human society - a positive one.

It makes sense to concretize the term "positive." A. Comte puts into it several meanings, the central of which is the meaning - “scientific, exact”. The thinker referred the term “positive” to the third phase (stage) of human development, in which moral standards such as religion (as opposed to the theological stage) and philosophy (as opposed to the metaphysical era) can no longer exist. The main authorities for a person at a positive stage of social development are good sense and the scientific method.

All that can be explained by good sense and the scientific method is true; all that does not correspond with these concepts is false. Therefore, his most famous six-volume work describing social transformations in the third stage of the development of society, O. Comte called “The Course of Positive Philosophy” (1830-1842). In particular, the term "sociology" was first used in this work in 1839. In the sociological tradition, the concept of O. Comte is denoted in turn by the terms “positivist sociology” or positivism.

The positive stage of social development begins in the XIX century, when the priority of scientific knowledge and "positive spirit" is affirmed. It is marked by numerous social transformations: the abolition of religious authorities, the development of science and industry, the flourishing of culture and art, a change in social consciousness, the rejection of military conquests and militarism. The ultimate goal of these transformations is to establish a social order based on the solidarity of all strata and groups, or in other words, social harmony. At the same time, women should become one of the most important social subjects, because they are able to lead humanity to this universal harmonious state.

Turning to the analysis of the women's influence on social transformations in this period, it is necessary to dwell on the specifics of O. Comte's attitude towards women in general. Numerous researchers of the biography of the philosopher emphasize the originality of his life and creativity: at different periods of his life, he adhered to unusual, often incompatible and radically opposite views (Comte, 1912, p. 78), (Mill, 1906, p.78); (Mill, 1869, p.19); (Filippova, 1898, c. 45).

Data and methodology.

The subject of the analysis of this article is the specifics of the position and role of women from the point of view of Auguste Comte's positivistic concept. The method of research is a comparative historical analysis of the views of O. Comte on the specifics of the position and social role of women at different stages of his work.

We have to refer to the literature published at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, as in later editions and comments Comte's teaching on the role of women in the positive stage of human development is given with reductions or completely forgotten.

The following works served as data:

- Comte O. 1910. The Spirit of Positive Philosophy (a word about positive thinking). Per. with fr. Shapiro with a foreword by prof. Maxim Kovalevsky. Spb .: Publishing house "Bulletin of Knowledge" (V.V. Bitner),
- Comte O. 1912. General overview of positivism. Part 4. // The founders of positivism / Ed. E.L. Radlov. Per. A.I. Shapiro. Issue 4. Auguste Comte - SPb.: Brokgauz-Efron.

Also, we used the writings of his early commentators:

- Mill D.S. Auguste Comte and positivism / Trans. I.I. Spiridonov // Popular Scientific Library, 1906. №16 May 5. SPb.: Typography B.M. Wolf, 1906.
- Mill D.S. The subordination of women / Ed. by M. Vovchk with a foreword by M. Tsebrikova. With the attachment of the letters of O. Cont to D.S. Mill on the women's issue and the speech of J. Bright, delivered in Edinburgh on February 16, 1870, on the granting of voting rights to women. - SPb.: Publisher S.V. Zvonarev, 1870.
- Mill D.S. Subordination of a woman / With a foreword by N. Mikhailovsky. With the attachment of the letters of O. Cont to D.S. Mill on the female issue. SPb.: Publishing bookseller S.V. Zvonarev, 1869.
- Rigolazh J. Comte's Sociology as presented by Rigolazh. With the application of two introductory lectures by Comte in the Course of Positive Philosophy. Per. with fr. N. Lossky. SPb: Edition L.F. Panteleev, 1898.
- Filippova L.I. Auguste Comte and Clotilde de Vaux // MM Filippov, L.I. Filippova Comte and his method. Auguste Comte and Clotilde de Vaux. - SPb.: Porokhovshchikov Printing House, 1898.
- Aimel H. Aug. Comte et Clotilde de Vaux, Nouv. Revue 1889, 15 Oct.

Results. Ambivalence of Comte's understanding of the feminine nature.

The first thing that attracts attention in this and subsequent works is the well-known ambivalence of Comte's understanding of the feminine nature. On the one hand, in his earlier works, we may see a clear humiliation of women, the denial of her right to be a free, independent socio-political subject (Mill, 1869, 1870). O. Comte calls women a "sympathetic element", as well as an "affective gender" as opposed to men - "active" or "ruling" gender (Comte, 1912, p. 61-91).

All women in varying degrees are inherent qualities such as: "wise insight", tact, gentleness, integrity, "characteristic sharpness", the ability to love and be loved, and most importantly, tenderness. The latter is erected by the philosopher on a pedestal and is considered immanently inherent in women. "A woman deprived of tenderness is an even uglier social phenomenon than a man deprived of courage" (Comte, 1912, p. 74). Other abilities and qualities are denied to women. Moreover, significant mental abilities and even an overabundance of energy in any woman could only harm her and others due to the specifics of the female character and mind. The essence of a woman in the representation of O. Comte is exclusively a feeling, love: "everywhere I met the same characteristic features: a very weak ability to generalize, a tendency to arbitrary conclusions and a superiority of feeling over the mind" (Mill, 1869, p. 37).

On the other hand, in later works, O. Comte argues that in a new positive era, women should become not only full-fledged subjects of social transformation, but also the most important of them. O. Comte crowns his position with the creation of a kind of "woman's cult" (Mill, 1869, p. 96-100). D.S. Mill, analyzing the works of O. Comte, draws attention to this contradiction, emphasizing that "in his last plan of society, he no longer considers women as adult children, but raises them to the degree of goddesses: honors, privileges, benefits falls on them, but they lack one thing - simple justice" (Mill, 1906, p. 78). It can be said that such a dual attitude to the essence of women, its

simultaneous humiliation and praise, is the side of the same coin, - the desire to deny the equality between women and man.

The idea of gender inequality in general deeply affects O. Comte. It can be observed when analyzing the philosopher's personal letters, in which he, with a number of references to the animal kingdom, proves the legitimacy of the subordination of a woman as beings of the lower order. For example, "in all kinds of power, not only physical, but also mental and strong-willed, a woman is obviously inferior to a man, according to the normal law relating generally to the animal world" (Mill, 1869, c. 62).

Both anatomy and physiology, according to O. Comte, show that in almost all animals and mainly in humans, the female organization is in a state of "perfect childhood", which puts it significantly lower than the male organization. From a purely sociological point of view, a contemporary author's life, distinguished by industrial activity and a "positive spirit," should lead to the further development of the main differences between the genders. In addition to biological analogies, O. Comte also provides a logical proof of the primitive development of women, raising the question: "How else would you explain the constant social subordination of the female gender" (Mill, 1869, p. 41)? Indeed, just as humankind reigns over the entire animal world by virtue of his superiority, the male gender dominates the female because of the women's natural weakness, which nothing can blot out, and which is more pronounced in humans than in other higher animals. The continuous evolutionary development of society only exacerbates the difference between the genders.

In addition, of course, O. Comte's analysis of public life only confirms this thesis. Women, in his opinion, are equally incapable of managing large commercial or industrial enterprises, some important military operations, scientific research, and even in their household, they are capable of performing only secondary duties. "They can be neither managers nor performers in any important

matter; they can be usefully used in meetings and for making private changes...” (Mill, 1870, p. 37-38).

O. Comte emphasizes that if women, having forgotten their natural purpose, would like to compete in abilities with men, this would have two disastrous consequences for all. The first is that women simply will not stand competition with men in practice. At the same time, some specific feminine qualities, such as, for example, “small sharpness” will become completely useless (Mill, 1870, p. 38). The second is that they will lose most of their appeal to the "ruling sex." After all, the natural attraction of men to women is caused by both the organic distinction of the sexes and the social distinction, which is possible only with the passive position of the woman. D.S. Mill here regretfully admits that the egoistic instinct taught men to use the fact that "meekness, humility and surrender of one's own will into the hands of one man" became an indispensable condition for female attractiveness (Mill, 1869, p. 37).

As for the sphere of art, the inability of women to it is especially noticeable here, since “is it not obvious that in the last two or three centuries many women have been very happily furnished and sufficiently prepared in this regard, and nevertheless did not really produce anything outstanding neither in music, nor in painting, nor in poetry” [6, p. 39]. Here, O. Comte habitually contradicts himself: first, explaining that the majority of small poetic and musical works should still be created by women in order to strengthen their “moral character”, which is inaccessible to men due to rudeness; secondly, appreciating the positivist work of the aforementioned Mrs. de Vaux, whose premature death, according to O. Comte, “will mourn with me the entire civilized world” (Comte, 1912, p. 102).

However, the natural secondary and subordination of women is at the same time the source of their victorious power in a positive stage of social development. This strength consists: firstly, in indirect, imperceptible influence on men with the aim of their moral improvement; secondly, in the

development of the main principle of positivism, the predominance of public interest over personal. As you know, positivism is in the position of sociological realism: it recognizes the real existence of society and its absolute priority over an individual (Lappo-Danilevsky, 1902), (Comte, 1910), (Lewis, Mill, 1967). Public interests should prevail over private, egoistic ones. O. Comte emphasizes that “as soon as our heart gets rid of the oppression of the theologians and the dryness of metaphysicians, it will easily understand that real well-being, both private and public, consists mainly in the greatest possible development of a sense of community” (Comte, 1912, p. 71).

The development of sense of community will be ensured by the moral influence of women, as only they are inclined to “give away” and also to think more about the common good than about the personal (Rubtsova, Martianova, 2012, p. 155). A man, in most cases, is unable to restrain his egoistic aspirations, to subordinate his personal, egoistic interest to the public good. The ability to do this is the natural superiority of women. If in the previous stages the female gender was obviously underestimated, then in the positive, women become on par with other important subjects of social transformation - philosophers and proletarians, without claiming; however, to the activities of the latter.

The sphere of the family is still attached to the woman, and the main woman's duty is now completely independent of reproduction. "Positivism should in all respects consider a woman simply as a man's girlfriend, expelling; first of all, her maternal function from her assessment" (Comte, 1912, p. 79). In order to fulfil this role, women need to receive the same education as men. Without leaving a family, women should participate in a peculiar way in the “moderating power” with the proletarians and philosophers, refusing, even more decisively than the latter, to take up any leadership role even in domestic life.

It is of interest how women will be able to influence philosophers, namely, to pacify their “dryness and ranting”, as well as on the proletarians, to “reduce the abuse of their inherent energy” (Comte, 1912, p. 76). Together they form a kind of transformative union, and women in it are given the most honorable place. Comte calls women subjects of moderating power, “the natural priestesses of Humanity” (Comte, 1912, p. 74), whose function consists mainly in the direct cultivation of the affective principle of human unity. In other words, a woman, according to O. Comte, being a full-fledged element of society, should become the highest regulator of human life.

Naturally, the question arises, what do women get in return for the performance of their public duties. The reward is extremely high: first, it is the traditional happiness of the consciousness of the fact that they perform an important social function that is fully consistent with their natural nature; second, the worship of the female gender by the male. The latter deserves special attention.

“The cult of the woman”, proclaimed by Comte, arose, of course, in imitation of the chivalrous motives of the Middle Ages, and was supplemented by a positivist idea of the superiority of feeling over reason and egoism. Even, the well-known quote “love as a principle, order as a basis, progress as a goal” (Comte, 1912, p. 143) shows the importance of feelings, especially love, and therefore women, as their natural guide and catalyst. The cult of a woman should be universally implemented both individually (at the level of each individual man) and collectively (at the level of society as a whole).

Women positivists everywhere must gain the purest respect and sincere affection. Every man since childhood should learn to see female representatives as the main source of human happiness and improvement, both public and private. An active gender, created for action and imbued with a consciousness of its power over the real world, will believe its supreme happiness in worthy submission to the beneficial moral influence of the loving gender. In other words, “a man will bend knees only in front of a woman” (Comte, 1912, p. 97). This cult is akin to a religious one: prayer to

God should be replaced by the prayers of Women. Men were recommended to observe these prayers daily in order to curb their egoistic thoughts. This need is naturally fulfilled by the social cult of the Woman, which can become more fruitful than the cult of God; moreover, the cult of the woman prepares the man for the real cult of Humanity, and not only by empty words, but by constant gentle reverence.

Discussion.

Many critics agree that the ambiguity of O. Comte's views on the women's issue was also influenced by the vicissitudes of the thinker's personal life. It is known, for example, that he addressed Madame de Vaux only as "my holy Clotilde" (Comte, 1912, p.103). Many researchers emphasize that the influence of his personal feelings on speculation turned his philosophy into religious ecstasy. From the moment of Clotilde's death and until his death, O. Comte honored her, "as a fiery ascetic honor his Madonna" (Mill, 1906, p. 78), (Filippova, 1898, p. 51-53), (Aimel, 1889, p. 67).

The French philosopher had no doubt that women themselves would have liked their new position very much. Firstly, they are exempt from any practical activity of providing themselves with means of livelihood, therefore, from any serious responsibility. All women must be supported by their husbands or, in their absence, by the state (Comte, 1912, p. 89). Secondly, women become the subject of social transformation and perform the most important social function, inaccessible to men. Thirdly, their entire personal and social life will be imbued with a "cult of the woman", universal worship is akin to a religious one. According to O. Comte, this is an incomparably better position than the one held by women in theological and metaphysical stages. And in general, positivism encompasses everything that a woman could only dream of. Undoubtedly, however, if any representative of the "loving gender" suddenly wanted for herself something else, for example,

the authorities, decisive voting rights or management opportunities, then this would be interpreted as a dangerous deviation for society.

CONCLUSIONS.

Thus, we can conclude that O. Comte paid great attention to the position and role of women in his writings, adhering to ambivalent views on this issue. On the one hand, he proclaimed women the most important subjects of social transformations and the moral regulators of individual and social life. On the other hand, the thinker denied women the very possibility of equality with men, as well as the right to make any independent decisions; that is, to be true "subjects" of social relations.

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DATA OF THE AUTHORS.

1. Mariia Rubtcova. Associate Professor in the Department of Social Management and Planning at the Saint Petersburg State University, Russia. She got her Candidate (PhD) Degree in Sociology of Management in St. Petersburg State University and the Doctoral Degree in Herzen State Pedagogical University. E-mail: mariia.rubtcova@gmail.com

2. Natalia Martianova. Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology in Herzen State Pedagogical University, Saint Petersburg, Russia. She got her Candidate (PhD) Degree in Theoretical Sociology in Herzen State Pedagogical University. E-mail: n.a.martianova@gmail.com

3. Valentina Kaisarova. Associate Professor in the Department of Management and Planning of Socio-Economic Processes, Saint Petersburg State University, Russian Federation. She got her Candidate (PhD) Degree in Economics in St. Petersburg State University. E-mail: v.kaisarova@gmail.com

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