

## Is Local Sphere an Opportunity for Gendering Social Citizenship?

### **1. Feminist Perspectives on Social Rights and Citizenship**

During the previous two centuries, the development and institutionalization of citizenship rights in Europe and US has evidenced the disparity of access of different social groups to it. Most importantly, these rights have been imbalanced between the two main parts of the population: men and women. Feminist historiography (Duby & Perrot, 1996) has shown that ever since modern debate of citizenship started, a leading issue regarding the exclusion of women was omnipresent and explicitly such<sup>1</sup>. The emergence of this historical reality, has opened the door to further research, which have examined how, this factual exclusion was accompanied by a gender biased philosophical account of citizenship. Moreover, the women's exclusion of citizenship has remained implicitly in the evolution of this concept until our time, including social citizenship. (Amorós 1987, Vogel, 1991).

Feminist literature has dealt with various aspects of this particular issue. Undoubtedly, Carole Pateman (1995 and 1996) has been the most referenced in the field. She introduced most of the topics and issues, which make up the feminist agenda proposed in this paper. In *The Sexual Contract* (1989/1995), the author defines the modern social contract (constitution of a free and equal fraternal society of citizens) as the constituent instrument of modern patriarchy by excluding women from civil status (through the marital contract). Pateman describes the characteristics of the modern citizen, focusing on two aspects that will be developed later and will be the main focus of this work. They are the Unitarian and the non relational nature of the ideal citizen. These two characteristics put diversity and dependency out of the thinking of citizenship. Moreover, Pateman reflects on the distinct meanings of the public-private dichotomy and the relationship between the two spheres. This essay adds to the former issues the problematization of the classification between the civil, political, and social rights as an element leading to the definition of a notion of citizenship, which is consistent with a normative feminist notion of rights and citizenship.

#### **1.1 The Subject of Citizenship**

##### ***b) About subject and difference (I.M Young)***

In Marion Young's reflection on the subject of citizenship can be extracted regarding the concepts of oppression and universality (Young, 1996, 2000). The author begins from the recognition of the

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<sup>1</sup> The issue of women's citizenship was in fact the subject of discussion at the beginning of the contemporary age and authors such as Olympe de Gouges and Codorcet denounced this exclusion and participated in the debates of the time. (Duby and Perrot, 1996; and Beltran Maquieira eds., 2000)

fact that the ideal of universal citizenship has guided the struggles for emancipation from our immediate past. Simultaneously, she asks the question of how industrialized countries, despite the presence of these rights, find oppression to be still widely spread. At the stem of this issue is the fact that by utilizing the universal ideal of citizenship, it has often been sought to eliminate oppression by demonstrating that differences between social groups are insignificant<sup>2</sup>. This means that there are abilities, needs, cultures and cognitive styles which are considered normal and others as deviants from the norm. This point of view?) is, by itself, a generator of oppression (Young, 1996).

Young explores several uses of the notion of “universality” applied to citizenship in order to emphasize the confusion between its different meanings. There are three different ways to speak about “universality”. Two of them link equality with identity<sup>3</sup>. The other allows for the development of a differentiated citizenship. In reference to the citizen subject, the meaning that relates equality as being equivalent to identity, is that of universality understood as opposed to particularidad. In other words, it is understood as what citizens have in common as opposed to what they have as dissimilar. This leads to the meaning of a citizen subject transcending individual differences and interest groups. Ultimately, it means the existence of an ideal subject, that expresses a general will. This application, which transcends from individual differences, reduces the plurality of subjects to only a single moral subjectivity, a single point of view that everyone should be capable of adopting. This definition legitimizes the oppression of the difference of each human being. It excludes social groups considered incapable of adopting the mainstream point of view. It rejects “the specificity from the bodies and the desires of women, racial and cultural differences, variety and heterogeneity of needs, individual goals and desires, as well as, the ambiguity and changing nature of feelings” (Young, 2000: 189).

This reflection does not imply, however, that it is not desirable to refer to a subject of universal citizenship. This notion is necessary for the articulation of social rights and a social organization aimed to eliminate oppression. It is possible one use of term “universal” that doesn’t imply the denial of differences in the political sphere. Young suggests a use attached with the concepts of inclusion and participation, that is be understood as *universal citizenship for all people*. Thanks to this idea, the author provide the necessary framework for differentiated citizenship. With this interpretation of universal citizenship, the individual citizen is recognized by his or her experience as a member of one or more social groups (which can be oppressed or not). The subjects participate in a political arena where a presence of dialogue from various viewpoints is possible

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<sup>2</sup> According to I.M Young, social groups are “a group of people who differ from at least one other group through cultural or practical forms or their way of life. The members of the group have specific similarities due to their experiences or forms from similar lives (...) The groups are expressions of social relations” (Young, 1996:77)

<sup>3</sup> Concepts used in modern political thought. The first is universality, which applies to laws and rules. The second and third are the ones, which Hill be presented in this text.

and also is feasible institutionalizing mechanisms for the recognition of these differences.<sup>4</sup> (Young, 2000)

**b) *The relational and situated Subject (S. Benhabib)***

The second feature that characterizes the subject in relation to their citizenship rights in the principal accounts of modern philosophy is the autonomy from the environment and others (Benhabib, 1990; Young, 2000; Amorós, 1991). In the mainstream view, individual citizens independently protect their own self-interest in an economic and political arena, from other citizens who autonomously protect their own, thanks to the rationality (which is universal and abstract). This idea, which is clearly a liberal one, discards as being insignificant, the human relations that imply dependency, which do not set as a priority the maximization of desired goods.

Seyla Benhabib analyzes the weaknesses of this type of conceptualization of the subject<sup>5</sup> stemming from two viewpoints. On the one hand, she explains the idea of the segregation of Man in regards to the world around him, relating it to the division between public sphere and private sphere. This vision of autonomy was based and remains being, in a policy which implicitly defines the domestic sphere as ahistorical, unchanging and unchangeable reality, away from reflection and discussion (Benhabib, 1990: 148). Thus, the author sophisticates the popular dichotomies of gender theory (which relates pairs such as public vs. private, reason vs. passion, man vs. woman, culture vs. nature) presenting a dichotomy between autonomy and nutrition, independence and in relation to the public and private duo. Benhabib shows how needs, emotions, and feelings are understood as individual features unappropriated for moral philosophy (and by extension, for the politics). And, connected to this fact, women -who belong to this disorder of the world of emotions- are outside the sphere of the moral and political. In short, at the moment of defining how the citizen subject, there is a fraction that shapes us, that becomes morally and politically invisible

Benhabib suggests that the subject's false autonomy is a result of an abstract conceptualization of it, that turns *the concrete other* irrelevant for the moral and political action. In main theoretical discourse about citizenship, otherness does not take a concrete shape but is understood as an abstraction (*the generalized other*). Every concrete characteristic of each concrete moment becomes irrelevant on moral or political decision-making. Moreover, the author analyzes in detail the absence of the viewpoint of *the concrete other*, and concludes that it implies a serious lack,

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<sup>4</sup> This translates, in a practical level to an existence of special rights for oppressed groups. The idea of special rights shouldn't be understood as a form of "helping people to get closer to a position of normality but on the contrary, as a way of "denormalizing," showing that in certain contexts, only in respond to differences, inclusion and participation of all groups in economic and political institutions.

<sup>5</sup> The author speaks about the moral subject, but for this work we will consider the political subject as an extension of the former.

because the subject doesn't have knowledge of contextual facts which, in fact, are essential to the judgment and action.

To address these limitations, Benhabib proposes an interactive universalism in relation to the notion of a subject, that implies: (1) the ideal role of the subject should be thought in the context of a real dialogue in which the agents communicate with each other, (2) there must not be a predetermined limit on knowledge: since the more one knows of a particular circumstance, the more rational will be the decision, (3) there is no privileged topic of dispute, it is to say that there isn't only a single dispute with others regarding goods, but by other constituent elements of our social life (Benhabib, S, 1990:145-147). It is a citizenship notion in which the context and the particular history are important, and it is a subject that is fundamentally dependent and emotional, for whom specific circumstances cannot be considered irrelevant to take a decision.

## 1.2 The Domain of Citizenship

Generally speaking, as it is well known, the fact that the feminist analysis of citizenship highlights is the bias of any proposal of citizenship that situates it in public sphere (of paid labour, monetized economy, politics and public institutions) ignoring the private-domestic sphere, to which are ascribed values and relations that can not be treated as political. Nevertheless, the scope of the motto of reference of the feminist movement which states that "the personal is political" is very diverse, and is dependent upon the theoretical-political orientation which will support it.<sup>6</sup> In any case, the least common denominator of what has been discussed on this theme, as mentioned by S.M. Okin, includes two ideas: "what happens in personal life, particularly in relations between the sexes, is not immune from the dynamic of power, which has typically been seen as a distinguishing feature of the political" as well as (b) "neither the realm of domestic, personal life, nor that of non domestic, economic and political life, can be understood or interpreted in isolation from the other" (S.M. Okin, 2003: 124).

Feminist analysis of this dichotomy find its origins in early liberal theories.<sup>7</sup> It has been a theoretical strategy to reclaim and clarify the central themes of these classical authors in order to study the continuity of dichotomies of contemporary liberal authors. Contemporary political theory, descendant of modern rationalism, does not clarify the limits or the characteristics of this

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<sup>6</sup> There is a variety of internal criticism (regarding the negative effects of the dichotomy and other possible uses) and external criticism (which defy the public-private distinction). The ambiguity has been highlighted among the descriptive and normative uses of the term (E. Beltrán 1994, Gavison, 1992). For the task at hand, our interest is in the approach of the internal criticism, which does not question the existence of these areas (public and private), but the attribution of certain features and functions of them.

<sup>7</sup> Many authors (Pateman, 1995, 1996, Okin 1991, Amorós, 1991) refer to Locke, who specifies this separation distinguishing political power relations and those, which occur inside the home. Likewise, in regards to the qualities associated with these spheres, Rousseau and Hegel are reference, which contrast particularistic altruism of the family with the necessity of an unbiased reason from the State and cites this contrast as the source of legitimacy of the masculine government in the domestic sphere.

dichotomy of spheres, but this division has not ceased to be present in the most prominent works (the most paradigmatic in this respect are the works of Habermas (Fraser, 1997) and Rawls (Benhabib, 1992). They continue the tradition of “separate spheres” through ignoring social relations that occur within the family unit, and economic power structures that occur within it (Okin, 2003: 119). Thus, the criterion that the family is “not political” is implicit in the fact that this is not the object of discussion in most political theory work nowadays (Okin, 1991: 119).

The ambiguous use of the dichotomy among the public sphere and the private sphere has been useful for this purpose.<sup>8</sup> The term “private”, has been used in three different ways (Beltran, 1994, Benhabib, 1990, Gavison, 1992). Firstly, there is the privacy understood as the sphere of moral conscience, which is the result of the historic compromise between the Church and State (the sense of “privacy rights”). Secondly, privacy understood as being free from state interference during economical transactions.<sup>9</sup> The third meaning of privacy refers to the family and the household, where the patriarch exerts a power without consensus since it is an area where questions of equality and justice are irrelevant. The liberal legitimacy of the privacy, understood as the right of protecting people from political norms in the economic or free consciousness senses, is, in fact, concealing “another privacy” characterized for its domesticity, where citizenship and rights do not have any significant role. This represents a paradox of enlightened thinking (Amorós, 1991).

The study of feminist work has been known to affirm that requirements, labor, relations, and values, which belong to the private sphere, have been excluded from mainstream thinking and are significant in themselves, as well as, in the development of the public sphere and in the cluster of social relations. This work has been developed at least in three distinct ways. On one hand, it has become clear that in the private sphere a set of social relations—including sharing of labour and power—is not regulated by citizenship criteria. In this sense, it is pointed out the central role of marriage as legitimating institution to this exclusion (Vogel, 1991).

Secondly, the current mainstream attempt to extend the characteristics of the individual citizen formerly developed in the public sphere must be challenged. It must be thought what has occurred within the private sphere, especially with the produced work and maintenance of life in the public sphere. Ignoring this issue leads to an inevitable failure of the explanation model and a dead end for equality policies

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<sup>8</sup> The most distinguished work done in this field is by Carole Pateman (1996).

<sup>9</sup> The phrase, which Benhabib refers, is that of “privacy rights.” The second meaning, according to Benhabib, has to do with the historical process of corporatizing economic life and it corresponds with the dichotomy that Pateman specifies as explicitly liberal.

Thirdly, feminist literature has addressed the issue of values, relating them to labours, roles and relationships. It is debated that certain principles, must be taken into account to define citizenship if we want to avoid developing an unable explanation of genuine relations made between humans and their political consequences. This debate has many ramifications (Muraro, 1991; Gilligan, 1982; Amorós, 1991) and remains open for discussion.

### **1.3 Civil, Political and Social Rights**

To have a reference point of the idea of social citizenship (and for institutional arrangements to make it effective) one should refer to the T.H. Marshall's "Citizenship and Social Class." This book, written in 1950, defines, beginning with the case of United Kingdom, parts or components of citizenship: civil, political and social. these rights have been developed in three phases. Civil rights are those related to the freedom: of a person, of speech, thought, religion, property, contracts, etc. Broadly speaking, they were established in the eighteenth century. The political dimension of rights includes the passive and active rights to vote, which correspond to the nineteenth century. Social rights make reference to security and minimum economic welfare, and to "living a life of a civilized being by conforming to the predominant standards of society." The institutions which correspond with social rights are the educational system and social services, which are the former welfare policies. It appeared in the twentieth century (Marshall 1950). In Marshall's analysis these three components of citizenship is accomplished through a process of geographical fusion (with the gradual building of nation-states) and functional separation (with the progressive definition of these rights). Different works in the field of feminist political theory bring into question this scheme in two ways.

In the first place, some authors (Vogel, 1991, Walby, 1994, Fraisse, 2003) have highlighted that the account, which presents the history of citizenship as a single gradual history of all citizens, which unfolds in an inexorable form, is false. This "evolution" is supported only at the cost of presenting the history of women as an exception,. To do a proper analysis of civil, political and social citizenship, differentiation of the three types of rights should not be conceived as a progressive historical inheritance; it must serve, precisely, to analyze the differences of the diverse social groups in the heterogeneous acquisition of the ownership of rights. These rights did not arrive at the same time and in the same way for everyone, but different social groups partially obtained them at different periods (e.g., in the same country there are differences of access amongst white men and women and for men and women from ethnic minorities intertwining different axes of inequality (Walby, 1994).<sup>10</sup> An analysis of this kind allows for raising the theme

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<sup>10</sup> The author speaks of the "flow of restructuring the nation state." In fact, a feminist analysis of the acquisition of citizenship rights would require multiple discussions that have not been addressed yet. The two authors cited, for example, analyzed the contrast

of displaying different impacts of various conflicting rights, and how the contradictory situation in terms of political and civil rights for men and women, could change the agenda for social policies –and for its knowledge-.

On the other hand, Marshall describes how inequalities, which result from class division (in turn, marked by participation in the labour market) contrasts with the status it confers to social citizenship. This perspective, however, conceals other social inequalities. "Marshall asserts the rights of citizenship, but nowhere analyzes the problematic relationship between citizenship and dependency in the family as he does between citizenship and social class." (Pascall 1997:13). The recognition of participation in the labour market as an activity virtually unique to a social group membership explains the identification between worker and nuclear family, and hides the multiple social relations produced within this familiar group. Additionally, the resources necessary to obtain a level of acceptable living, centering only on a monetized economy, has been disputed by the extensive feminist literature through the reflection of care.

#### **1.4 Summary**

This paper will propose from this point forward—in reference with the previously conducted literature review—five criteria from feminist literature which will permit us to identify the existence of gender bias in policies that institutionalize social rights of citizenship. They are the following:

**c. I** The subject of citizenship must be understood as a construct that will leave space for actually existing diversity. The current abstraction has been falsely neutral with an inherently biased masculine, androcentric notion of citizenship. Citizenship as it relates to the masculine characteristics of a subject should be replaced by a different notion of subject, which can in fact, fit one or more social groups, oppressed or not, and participate in all spheres of society, public and private.

**c. II** In addition, a non androcentric subject will require the recognition of the fact that people are situated in a concrete context, which defines them and feeds them with information for political action. This context implies dependency among each other. The subject of citizenship is a situated and relational “Self,” against a mainstream ideal of a subject that presupposes autonomous and independent.

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between different political rights and the rest. While it is clear that civil rights have been denied, particularly to women, especially to married women, there are different ways of explaining the historical relationship between these and other rights.

**c. III** In relation to the sphere in which citizenship play a role, and social rights are pertinent, it is necessary to deconstruct the idea that the public sphere is an arena where power relations and work are produced, and therefore the debate of relevant ideals takes place. We must abandon the centrality of the labor market (central institution of the public sphere) for a definition of social citizenship rights. This implies a redefinition of notions such as social stratification and the inclusion of new measures of fulfillment of citizenship rights beyond economical/monetarian ones.

**c. IV** It is necessary to make visible the private sphere as political , while recognizing how relationships occur in this domain. Public and private spheres are communicating vessels and basic political norms for one of them should have some degree of impact on the other. Therefore policies should be designed and analyzed in a manner which is consistent with a global viewpoint .

**c. V** Finally, in order to examine the scope and impact of the institutionalization of the citizen's social rights, it is necessary to assess how this impacts on people's reality influenced by an unequal reaching of civil and political rights.

Table 1.- Five criteria of feminist theory

	<b>Mainstream perspectives</b>	<b>Feminist Perspectives</b>
cI: Subject of citizenship (I)	Male subject	Differenciated subject
cII Subject of citizenship (II)	Autonomous subject	Relational and situated subject
cIII: domain of citizenship (i)	Public sphere- focused on labour market	Detached from labour market and with non monetary elements
cIV: domain of citizenship (II)	Blindness to the private sphere	Private sphere as a citizenship domain
cV: disctintion of civil, political and social rights	Single gradual history of all citizens	Conflictive interaction of civil political and social rights

## **2. Gendering social rights institucionalization :**

### **2.1 An agenda for gendering social policies:**

There is not only one feminist perspective on social policies and Welfare states. From the late 70's, a large group of researchers have empirically studied welfare policies of isolated countries

or, more frequently, by a comparative strategy. Obviously, within these 30 years, many changes (political and theoretical) have happened. Simplifying, it is possible to split the empirical literature about social policies in two periods: one linked to the theoretical background about citizenship-taking place in the 80's and early 90's<sup>11</sup>- and a second one from the 90's, which developed in dialogue with the mainstream literature about welfare regimes (Orloff, 1996, Sainsbury, 2000). From the beginning different perspectives of welfare policies took place. Despite of this, some issues and perspectives in common can be found. In this paper one general agenda of these set of works will be suggested, especially from the 90's to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. This general agenda allows seeing the strengths and weaknesses of the empirical literature from the point of view of the theoretical criteria exposed previously.

This overview of empirical literature on social policies from a gender perspective organizes the contents of these works by emphasizing three main issues: (a) the previous definition of institutional policies: Ideological configuration of policies as well as women's participation in the decision making process; (b) the agenda of policies considered important in the empirical study of welfare states; and finally (c) gendered outcomes, and the specific perspective -as well indicators- to measure them.

In general it is necessary to emphasize that the legal distribution of policies doesn't seem to be an issue for this Literature. The territorial dimension in each regime of social policies has not been target either. We can say that a feminist view of the proximity policies does not exist, neither a work frame that incorporates multilevel reality of social policies.

With reference to ideological frames of policies, male breadwinner model is the most widespread analysed frame in the social policies system and research (Sainsbury 1994, 1996, 1999, 2001, Daly, 1994). This is the presumption of the existence of households with one male breadwinner and one female care giver. This perspective frames the familiar wage, the double track system of social benefits, the privatization of care, the priority of economical benefits to services, etc. Another set of works focuses on the design of the social policies that promote women participation in the labour market, but doesn't pay attention to unpaid care work and, in general, to what happens in the private sphere. This is called institutionalization of the double feminine role (Showstack Sassoon, 1996).

With reference to women's participation in the configuration of the public policies agenda, two types of political actors have been studied: on one side, women organized at civil and political

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<sup>11</sup> Main authors: Elisabeth Wilson (1977) Helga Hernes (1987), Annette Borchorst and Birte Siim (1987), Nancy Fraser (1989), Jane Lewis (1989), Laura Balbo (1982, 1987), Chiara Saraceno (1987)

society (feminist and women's movement, unions and parties or others) (e.g. Hernes ,1987, Dalehrup,1987, Lewis 1992, O'connor et al 1999, Siim 2000) ; on the other side, organisms and institutions of equality (called state feminism) that try to introduce the gender perspective within institutional organizations from the inside. Also the relationship between both types of actors has been analyzed (e.g. Siim 1987, 2000).

From the point of view of the agenda of policies studied by empirical literature on Welfare States, the following issues are emphasized: (1) labour policies, and its commitment of women's incorporation and the maintenance of the labour market (e.g. Gornik, Meyers and Ross, 1997), (2) Care policies, frequently by research about the consequences of election between economic benefits or services (e.g. Sainsbury, 1993). It allows us to be acquainted with the role of the State in regards to the market and family, in the social task of caring. Also (3) the gender gap on income benefits (O'connor 1993). Studies take into account the idea of the collapse of the concept of *decommodification* (stated by Esping-Andersen, 1990,) and the problem of entitlement labour market based (e.g. Langan and Ostner, 1991, Lewis, 1992, Borchrost, 1994, Lister, 1997) Less frequently, we can see the study of (4) motherhood (and sometimes fatherhood) supporting policies (permits, benefits and services) and also (5) sexual and reproductive policies (e.g. O'connor et al 1999).

The interpretation and measuring of outcomes of social policies is done by several different ways. We emphasize three. First, the study of care work distribution and its relationship with a specific welfare regime. Second, the lone mother families access to social rights (for ex. Hobson 1994, Lewis 1997, O'connor et al 1999, Knijn 1994, 2003), as far as it is related to the male breadwinner ideology of social policies. Third, the stratification gender based (as opposed to mainstream social stratification, which is class based). (e.g. Orloff 1993, O'connor 1993, O'connor et al 1999).

## **2.2 The presence of the criteria drawn from feminist theory:**

The presence of the five theoretical criteria in feminist agenda of social policies is not homogenous. Obviously, the need of a non androcentric citizen subject, (c I) is very present in empirical works. It is present in the researches conducted on gender bias at institutions (those that pay attention to its ideological and in the analyses of women participation in decision making processes). Also, it is present in the analysis of concrete policies, where it is studied which social rights (adult men's or all citizens'?) are satisfied through the public benefits and services. Finally, in the study of the outcomes on policies, the idea of the knowledge of the different impacts on women and men is present, whether through the study of social distribution of care work, or by

using indicators like the conditions of life of the women head of household, or gender based stratification.

However, unlike criterion I, the second criterion (II) (the different contexts and the relational nature of citizen), is insufficiently present in the empirical literature. Although care and dependency as part of social citizenship are ideas which are frequently raised, these concepts are understood from the point of view of the reproductive work, and not from the point of view of the relational character of the citizens and the rights that come out from this fact. That is the case of the studies of mother/fatherhood support policies, and those works that focused on the outcomes of the policies on the basis of the social distribution of care. Anyway, in general, feminist empirical works don't refute the supposition that citizens are static and not modified by the context and the circumstances.

Focusing on the domain of citizenship (III and IV), we find a relatively high presence of the third (III) criterion. In the first place, by dissociating social rights from labour market and conceptualizing rights beyond its monetarization. We find this idea in the study of the gender bias stemming from the central role of benefits (vs. services) in some welfare regimes, and in some cases, we find it explicitly a prescriptive option for the services over the benefits. It is deduced from the idea that public services must guarantee a non monetary right: the availability of time. Closely related to this 3<sup>rd</sup> criterion, we also find a wide presence of the 4<sup>th</sup> (IV), that is, the private-domestic domain as the citizenship sphere, even if it's methodologically complex to reach this goal. We find it in the researches of the ideological configuration of agenda –family-focused ideology and the double feminine role -and also in the study of policy execution: care and motherhood/fatherhood sexuality policies are studied. All these policies target on the private sphere.

Finally, we find a lack of attention on the "false" succession and coherent development of the different types of citizenship rights. There are two exceptions. First, the study of the policy design under the point of view of the actors who take part. It is studied from the point of view of the impact of the presence of women's organizations (or institutional feminism) on social policies, or making an approach to an inverse causal relation. In any case we find a challenge of the relationship between political and social rights. The second case is the approach of sexual policies and the outcomes in terms of rights to motherhood. Sexuality and motherhood could be easily understood as civil rights. Despite this, they require social policies to be institutionalized. This evidence increases the agenda of welfare policies, taken from a gender perspective.

In summary, the agenda analysis of the empirical literature does not take up the set of questions raised by theoretical literature. In this sense we could say that more attention is given in the first period (80's and early 90's), but it tends to disappear in line with the increase of the dialogue within the mainstream literature. Simplifying, we can say that there are two main conceptual insufficiencies in the empirical literature stemmed from the lack of reflection on two theoretical ideas. The first one is the 2<sup>nd</sup> (II) criterion: contextualized and relational nature of the citizens. Second one is the 5<sup>th</sup> (V) the different access of men and women to civil, political and social rights and its influence one each other.

### **3. The new role of local governments in welfare provision**

Although less prolific than feminist literature on social policies, it can be found a set of academic works, which states an increasingly prominent role of the local level in public policies. Part of this literature is focused on welfare policies. Although it is a heterogeneous set, it can be resumed as a collection of coherent contributions referring to the local governments' role in provision of welfare, and to a specific local understanding of social inequalities. We will generically call this perspective it the *Welfare localism*.

After the debate of the welfare crisis we find some social and institutional changes, and consequently, an increasing diversity of welfare policies around Europe. Following Adelantado, five different processes take place; the last one modifies the role of local government. They are: big changes in social protection regimes as well as labour regimes; new policies - related family relations transformations; diversification of social actors and collective identities. Also, in public debates the narrowness of class stratification based social policies arises. New and more diversified demands emerge. They are postmaterialist and complex (Gomà and Subirats, 2001). Related to these previous processes, the Nation-State reference becomes weaker and gives up to a multilevel arena. The Nation-State no longer has a regulative and symbolic monopoly. This transformation towards multilevel governance implies new political phenomena as the creation of global socioeconomic agencies and the Europeanization of Welfare policies. Also, in parallel to these events, a regional and local based decentralization is produced, through social programs. (Adelantado, 2000).

This decentralization is related to two tendencies. *New localism* and *local sphere repolitization*. On the one hand, within the framework of a multilevel government, the local governments acquire a new role thanks to strengths like the capacity of using the endogenous resources as economical, social and political capital in relation to other administration levels (EAP, 2000:6).

This is called the New Localism (Goetz and Clarke,1993). The second tendency is the repolitization (Brugué, 2008, Stoker 2002) .Local administration politicizes its role by dealing with the new social conflicts in a specific local way. The answers to the increasing complexity –social and technological- became specifically local, debated (sometimes through participative processes), and clearly political and non-technical. Sometimes city strategic projects are approved. Although the evident weakness (the economical resources) the strengths of local administration are the proximity between administration and population and the affordable territorial dimension. These specific characteristics allow recognizing differences and complexity and governing it without standardizing. The following table resumes the new challenge faded up by local governments.

Table 2. Contextual changes and impacts in the local sphere

<b>Contextual changes</b>	<b>Basic Contents</b>	<b>Impacts in the local area</b>
Social fragmentation	New structures of the inequity	Community articulation of vulnerable social exclusion processes groups
Restructuring the identity references	Reorienting the strategies of identity towards the shared experience	Emergence of a community dimension of welfare political culture
Changing the productive paradigm	From the <i>fordist</i> model to the flexible and reflexive accumulation	Quotidian/everyday life linked to crisis of labour. Strategies of endogenous development. Flexibility in offering policies.

Source: Adapted from Brugué and Gomà (1999)

This new pattern shapes local social policies. From the 90's the Personal Services Areas become a general frame of local welfare policies. The PSA strategy avoids the old policy fragmentation of the former administrative strategy. It joins in a common strategy some or all the following policies: social attention, housing, public health, education, culture, participation, occupational promotion, and policies aimed to specific situations of some population groups (Serra, 1997).<sup>12</sup> The underlying idea is the social inclusion that understands inequalities as the lack of economical/material resources linked to the lack of cultural/social resources. Therefore it tries (1) to integrate the policies of access to the cultural, social and educative capital, (2) to institutionalize specific spaces of citizenship for groups that have been outside the hegemonic type of citizen in traditional policies (young people, immigrants...) and finally (3) to take immediate action against concrete situations of exclusion.

<sup>12</sup> Nowadays the PSA have been followed some times by Citizenship Areas or by Social Inclusion plans. nevertheless the new frame share the main ideas

Thus, PSA are not only a set of policies. It is a strategy that suits with a specific idea of welfare (what we called Welfare localism) and has several implications in its operative structure. The policies show a selective and diversified nature, which are developed from certain political values, in spite of having a weak legal frame. They develop flexibly in their design and implementation processes. They require specifically local diagnostics of demands and needs, and they match the specific political decision with a previously decided city social model. (Gomà and Subirats, 2001).

Table 3. Standardized universal services versus personal services

	<b>Standardized universal services</b>	<b>Personal services</b>
Main values	Equality	Inclusion
Territorial value	Low	High
Needs - Demands	Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Type of offer	Standardized	Diversified
Organizational structure	Sectorial	Transversal
Method of production	Rigid	Flexible
Normative base	Strong	Weak
Administration	State	Local

Source: Adapted from Brugué and Gomà (1999)

Are these specific elements an opportunity for the political implementation of some of the criteria of feminist theory on social citizenship?

The **social inclusion** concept gives a new perspective of inequalities, by adding communitarian, material, and relational resources. It does not refer to a *top-down class based* logic, but about an *inside-outside* (multivariable) logic that shows the complexity of our society. The dynamics of exclusion are changing with time, potentially affecting a large part of the population and taking place by crossing different axes of inequality.

Therefore, the goal of the administration is not to guarantee equal resources but to use the different local network resources to provide specific goods to exercise the specific forms of citizenship. It means that we talk about a citizen subject who needs the relations with the others to enjoy welfare (II). On the other hand, this approach allows to add to traditional measurement of rights, monetary resources access, another type of resources, non monetary (III), for example the availability of time, the existence of activities of free time of quality, mental, physical and social well being, etc. On the other hand the inclusion-exclusion dynamics happens in all spheres of every day life (IV). The inclusion idea links social rights with civil and political rights since it includes elements like the access to political participation in the community. Also it is understood

that different access to civil rights, it modifies the social exclusion risk. (For example, immigrant populations, children, and in some specific cases, women). Therefore, the social inclusion notion overflows the traditional notion of inequality. (V)

The second characteristic pointed out is the **high value of territory**. That is, geographic, political, cultural and relational reality as a source of organization of welfare policies (in front of its weak legal basis).

It is possible to point out to a suitability of this value to criteria I and II. Proximity between public policy and social demands makes possible to avoid the standardization of the subject of policies. The different social groups play their concrete experiences and demands in the local political arena. It can be translated in specific treatment policies. The territorial proximity, key role in a non androcentric citizenship has been emphasized by some academics like Bodelon (2005) and Rubio (1997). These authors point out the link between abstract citizen subject and formal equality as a reference concept, and the Nation-State as an institutional frame. Local dimension and top-down politics are shown as an opportunity for recognition of differentiated subject. Bodelon exemplifies it with the case of gender violence, as follows:

La experiencia de los movimientos de mujeres locales se convirtió en los años noventa en un instrumento muy útil para las administraciones y los/as profesionales. Las respuestas jurídicas contraídas desde marcos normativos abstractos y desvinculados de las problemáticas locales, dejaron un gran espacio para la construcción de un espacio social y jurídico vinculado con las prácticas y experiencias de las mujeres. Se trata de una forma diferente de construir lo jurídico y los derechos, una construcción de lo jurídico que parte de la experiencia de las mujeres y los/as profesionales y que se va adaptando a las necesidades de la realidad concreta.” (Bodelon, 2005: 151)

Territorial dimension, understood as an opportunity for a non androcentric subject is closely linked to a relational and contextualized feature of feminist citizenship. Each local environment implies a relational network that informs it, and therefore, this specificity is observed at the moment of institutionalizing, through policies, people's social rights, as we have seen in the example described by Bodelon.

On the other hand, the relational and territorial perspective brings out the idea of a map of everyday life relations where the position of each subject is not only in the labour market. It plays a role as important as the other necessary set of activities for the individual lives and social networks. It is produced, henceforth, a displacement of labour market as a source of social inequalities, and social rights (III). At the same time the relevance of multiple elements of the *private sphere* in both, social demands/interests and political answers is considered (IV). The accessibility to knowledge about what happens in private sphere is a complicated task for public

administrators. The confusion between “private” in the sense of “privacy rights” and “private” in the sense of “domestic” is a challenge. The local sphere means to be an easier level to distinguish both senses and act on the second one and not on the first. Also the fluidity between public and private allows a non strictly monetary approach (c.III). Let us take for example like dining room services for children, cultural spaces for free time, formation in psycho-social health, day-care centres, and domiciliary attention services... These policies break the strict distinction between the public and private and are addressed to the citizen as a subject of everyday life, not only as a worker or as a dependant.

The weak normative base is an opportunity to face the conflict between civil, political and social rights in the daily reality (v). Civil and political rights are usually considered as established in higher institutional levels. Nevertheless rigid regulations of penal or civil law contrast with a much more fluid daily reality that local administrations are required to face. For example, in Catalunya, legal status of citizens is not a determinant factor for some kind of proximity policies such as access to school, basic health , etc. In these cases, probably, local sphere is more capable to act than any other.

***Diversified offers and answers to heterogenous demands and needs***, are a consequence at the policy design level of the exposed *inclusion* idea. Again, it tries to recognize the difference (I), and to understand the contextualized character - from physical and the relational and temporary context - of social rights (II). In the local level difference is easily expressed in the political agenda if local administrators have the will. This means recognizing the rights of citizens as acting in different roles and domains inside the municipality, public or private. It also means using different sorts of resources –material and nonmaterial- in order to reach social inclusion (III and IV). In the same way the diversification is an opportunity to give answers to the conflictive political and (lack of) civil rights interaction, that take place integratedly as a whole in each individual (V). We can find many examples of it. One of them is the case of projects addressed to the improvement of physical and mental health of women older than 55. It is proven that this kind of resources not only improves their health but also can give some of them (the most vulnerable of them) resources of self realization and throughout this, the opportunity to demand their civil and political rights.

The last features of PSA are ***Transversal organization and flexible production***. These features represent significant change as compared to the traditional organization of welfare policies. This change means a centralization that allows giving a strategic direction. This includes the integration of former sectors (seen from a horizontal point of view) and the erosion of hierarchical division of administration levels (seen from a vertical point of view). Although this must be

studied, we can say that a "gender mainstreaming" strategy must be more easily applied in a non sectorial frame, or put differently, in institutions with strategic goals and coordination. Therefore this fits the first, and the fourth criterion of political feminist theory (I, IV).

The flexibility as an operative characteristic, tries to face two facts pointed out before: (a) the context matters, and therefore modifications of the surroundings change the subject of rights, and (b) it is necessary to take care of the communitarian element, that is, the collective and relational dynamics that shape citizenship in a specific way. The fantasy of a subject that persecutes his interests in a constant way throughout time is rejected (c.II). In addition, transversal strategies face the social inclusion beyond the formal vertical or horizontal legal compartmentalization of policies in the scope of achieving well-being of citizens (even if it implies making civilly or politically specific policies). (c V)

In summary, the New welfare localism, with its social inclusion underlying idea, shows not only economical, but also cultural, housing, educative, elements on its understanding of social policies. The transversal treatment of all these issues is an opportunity to institutionalize social rights of differentiated subjects. It is done by taking account of human and social relations and the domain of everyday life that includes public and private spheres. This perspective, thus, tries to break the logic of the hierarchical split between male head of household and the rest of the population. From this perspective it is necessary to use endogenous resources and specific approaches for the community, beyond the formal split of civil, political and social rights.

#### **4. Conclusion**

During the 1990's, in the context of a so-called crisis (or reorganization) of the Keynesian welfare state, there took place different ways of reflecting the growing complexity regarding the notion of social citizenship institutionalized through welfare. There was an increased academic awareness of social policies and a more detailed attention to the various ways in which different countries addressed welfare policies and also the challenges that came along with them.

The task undertaken by mainstream literature on social policies has offered a view based on the idea of three (sometimes, four) welfare regimes (liberal, conservative and social democratic). It is stated by pointing out different elements: the relationship between market and state, the stratification class based and the class mobilization and political coalitions. This perspective has been challenged by new viewpoints, which has added a higher level of complexity to this description.

On the one hand, a vast body of literature has focused on gender bias in social policies, which has brought to evidence the fact that mainstream analysis has ignored the different policy impacts on men and women; and also has been blind to the role of the family (and its logic of male breadwinner/female caregiver). In part, this body of literature came up of feminist discourse regarding justice or citizenship (e.g. Fraser, 1987, Wilson, 1977, Balbo, 1982 and 1987, Lewis, 1992). However, from mid 1990's mainstream literature has acquired more importance to gender perspectives as an academic reference.

On the other hand, it has appeared, more modestly, certain literature which demands a new role from local authorities. It has stated the progressive dissolution of the traditional classification of local governments (French vs. English model) and has offered a more dynamic vision. In this particular literature, prominence has been given to the idea of multilevel governance and has been highlighted the potential of local authorities. This has been supposed to happen in a framework that would progressively cease to be guided by the rigid competitive distribution, in order to adjust political guidance toward strategic objectives in relation to the territory and the population. It can be said that this view has challenged the territorial understanding of KWS. In some contexts (in particular, in the Catalan one), this perspective has been related to the strategy of Personal Services Areas. In this article we have generally labeled this literature –and policies– as Welfare Localism.

Also from the 90's, the development of the feminist perspectives regarding the social citizenship provides key elements to understand the welfare restructuring. Some of the main traditional concepts of citizenship and justice have been challenged. Mainly, they are the political arena boundaries and the characterization of the political subject, and the reflection of the role of needs, constraints and interdependencies. During a conference, which took place in Barcelona in the year 2005, Nancy Fraser<sup>13</sup> referred to the importance of tackling these theoretical discussions in a way that enforce women social rights, especially in a historic moment (as it was the 90's) of threat of these.

The empirical literature regarding social policies from a gender perspective, however, has partially taken the ideas from the theoretical field. Some of these concepts are present in these empirical works, for example: criticizing the androcentric subject, including the private domestic sphere on the political agenda, displacing the central role of the labour market. However other issues are not as present in empirical work. According to the literature review undertaken, there are two main ideas in theoretical work that are insufficiently incorporated in the empirical work.

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<sup>13</sup> "Dialogue with Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young about women and the transformation of justice" organized by the University of Menendez Pelayo (CUIMPB)

One is the dependency amongst citizens and their contextualization within the particular environment. The second is an adequate conception of citizenship where civil, political and social rights are considered related to each other in a conflictive form, given the diverse development of it for men and women.

The above-mentioned lack results to be problematic for the introduction of gender perspectives on social policies. Confronting gender inequality in an insufficient conceptual framework limits the capacity of understanding the phenomenon, and consequently, affects the proposals of welfare policy establishment.<sup>14</sup>

In fact, the empirical literature on social policies from a gender perspective does not dispute an important bias from mainstream literature. It is the nexus between citizenship rights and the idea of the nation state as the institutional framework to make them effective. Therefore, we can say that a multilevel approach has not been adopted. And thus, it misses:

- a) To permit knowledge of welfare policies at the local level. It includes the social conflicts that occur in specific ways, and the concrete political strategies to face it. This is an analytical lack.
- b) To permit a specific localist perspective, raised from local knowledge that provides a greater understanding of gender relations. Henceforth, this is a theoretical-normative lack.

There are several possible reasons for the analytical lack. Some of them could come from the negligence of local level in mainstream literature. Feminist literature has its own analytical goals, but it is influenced by the mainstream academic and methodological priorities which set up welfare systems apart from the knowledge of local authorities. Another possible explanation for the lack of attention to the local level is that there may be an insufficient existence of a multilevel institutional reality. In any case, whether the institutional reality of government supports a multilevel logic or not, the agenda for the study of social policies should allow for shortcomings and establish concrete gender opportunities raised from this multilevel and localist framework.

This work has focused on the second of the constraints identified, namely the normative lack. We have emphasized the contributions of local social welfare policies –SPA-, to a general framework

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<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that in both cases these are the elements, which challenge the notion of citizenship and the subject who has the rights from a feminist frame of reference, with a range that exceeds the scope of gender inequality, that can be linked to other areas of thought of policy and action, such as environmental paradigm (in the first case) and criticism of the peripheral thoughts of ethnic minorities within a Eurocentric context (in the second case).

of Post-Keynesian policies. Through this, we have also been able to identify how this Welfare Localism brings an opportunity to gendering social policies.

Welfare Localism (with its background values and its organizational and feature) enable a framework for the implementation of policies more suited to the feminist theoretical literature. Specifically, local welfare policies are a good formula to translate the idea of a relational subject (cII), attending the no monetary or labour related dimension of social rights (III), and pave the way to the consideration of privacy and domestic domain into concrete policies (cIV). It also facilitates the approach of different kinds of rights (civil, political and social) in related way (cV).

Two of these three criteria, (cII and cV) are insufficiently present in gendering social policies literature. Local policies on welfare are an opportunity to address this as they are conducive to an understanding of social citizenship invisible to statist mainstream perspective. This perspective has not been either questioned by empirical feminist literature. Therefore, it can be noted that the local perspective is an opportunity for the Post-Keynesian welfare state that satisfies a demand for gender equality, which is more complete and coherent.

In summary, we have approached an idea of local welfare, using five criteria of the feminist theory, to verify that, indeed, locality offers opportunities for gendering social policies. We must say that local contribution to social policies with a gender perspective is produced despite itself. We must not lose sight of the fact that the local perspective in general has ignored the contributions of feminists or gender sensitive analysis, both on a theoretical and empirical level. This fact deserves more attention of a deeper and specific analysis, beyond the purpose of this text.

This paper has argued, from a theoretical perspective, that local welfare policies are an opportunity to use a "feminist lens" in regards to social policies. Obviously, it will be necessary to find out empirically if this opportunity has been taken advantage of, through the study of concrete local social policies. It is necessary, in short, to identify if those involved in local governance, bring about new perspectives of welfare policies to face the challenges of a progressively complex context in which we live, where old and new forms of inequality coexist.

Table 4: Summary. Criteria of feminist political theory on social citizenship. Presence in feminist empirical agenda on social politics and PSA suitability.

FEMINIST AGENDA ABOUT SOCIAL POLITICS			CRITERIA OF THE FEMINIST THEORY				
			(I) Differentiated citizen subject	(II) Relational and situated citizen subject	(III) Detached from the market and with non monetary elements	(IV) Private sphere as a citizen domain	(V) Interaction of civil, political and social rights
Institutional design	Ideological elements	Male breadwinner model	***	*	***	***	*
		Institutionalized double role	**	**	***	***	*
	Actors	State feminism	***	*	*	*	***
		Social feminism	***	*	*	*	***
Political agenda	Labour		***	**	*	*	*
	Benefits		***	*	**	***	*
	Care		**	**	***	***	*
	Maternity/fatherhood support		***	***	**	***	*
	Sexual policies		***	*	**	***	***
Outputs (perspective)	Maternity as right		***	***	**	***	**
	Gender stratification		***	*	*	*	*
	social organization of care		**	***	***	***	*

\*\*\* High presence  High *welfare localism* suitability  
 \*\* Medium presence  Medium or low *welfare localism* suitability  
 \* Low presence or No presence

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