

Battle of the Sexes

On September 20, 1973, a highly publicized tennis match was held at the Astrodome (Sports arena) in Houston Texas. There were over 30,000 spectators and a massive TV audience. It was billed as the "Battle of the Sexes", between a 29-year-old women's tennis champion and a 55-year-old men's former Wimbledon champion. It is estimated that this exhibition match was watched by over 90 million people worldwide. The woman, Billy Jean King, beat Bobby Riggs, the male opponent, in three straight sets.

To give some background, Bobby Riggs, a self-proclaimed male chauvinist, had been publicly boasting that the men's game was vastly superior and that even at his age, he could easily defeat the top female players. Earlier in 1973, he easily defeated top-ranked Margaret Court, prompting a frustrated Billie Jean King to accept his challenge.

In post-match interviews, King told how she felt the immense pressure of representing the viability and self-esteem of women's tennis and the broader feminist movement. In addition to legitimizing women's professional tennis, and elevating the profile of female athletes, on and off the court, her victory became a cultural catalyst for gender equality in the US. A phenomenon that is now rapidly spreading across the globe.

The event is still considered by many as more than just a significant moment in sports history.

Anyone familiar with the history of the age-old struggles of women for equality in a male-dominated world, may wonder why the significance attached to this "victory". Some may even dismiss the victory and its aftermath as just one in a long running battle. However, such a casual comparison of victories will be mistaken.

The **suffragette movement** of the 1900s was a specific, single-issue campaign focused almost entirely on securing women's right to vote, hold public office and own property, just as the law allowed the men. Their's was a struggle for **equal opportunity**. The suffragettes were not calling for women to assume male roles or vice-versa. They wanted women to be recognized and given equal social status, while still maintaining their traditional roles.

By contrast, the aims of the **feminist movements** started out as a broader, social and political campaign aimed at dismantling all forms of gender-based inequality. Over the years, this has gradually morphed into a campaign that seeks to blur the lines between the two natural genders of male and female. Sometimes going as far as advocating legislation to remove social differences between the sexes. We see this in the movement for integrated sports teams, of men and women, also known as co-ed sports. For example, a recent Seton Hall Sports Poll found that 57 percent of avid sports fans and 40 percent of the general population, in the US, would like to see more opportunities for women and men to compete together and against one another in professional sports.

Carefully considered, this shows that the new movement is campaigning for more than equal opportunity, or rights. It is calling for a removal of barriers; to *“bring both sexes down to the same playing field.”* In other words, the new objective is no longer about equality, but sameness (i.e. no differentiation). The supposed benefits of this call are couched in terms of eliminating discrimination, and social stereotyping.

As attractive as these benefits may sound, an objective thinker should also wonder about the possible side effects of such a socially engineered palliative. Common wisdom tells us that every solution invariably contains a weak spot, or drawback that may not be immediately evident. The popular saying *“The Devil is in the details”*, also alludes to this.

With that in mind, let us examine this new and growing phenomenon to remove the barriers between the sexes.

First of all, it is arguably creating frictions, at the individual and social levels. Frictions that manifest as friendly, and sometimes not-so-friendly battles between the sexes. For example, it is reported that social media algorithms frequently amplify highly inflammatory content, targeting the opposite sex. This is resulting in the rise of polarized online subcultures—such as the “manosphere”, and radicalized feminist spaces. Such polarization encourages distrust, promotes reactive rigid gender role perceptions, and fosters resentment. The result is diminishing the ability of young men and women to communicate effectively offline. Needless to say, such developments cannot bode well for the individuals trapped in a contentious relationship, or for society at large.

So, what is the best way forward to attaining the noble aims that gave rise to these movements?

Again, the answer has to lie in seeking a Spiritual path. Not in the sense of religion, or pop-spirituality/pop-psychology. The former led to the discriminatory practices against which the liberation movements have been fighting. And the latter are leading us to the battle of the sexes as they rage today.

The true Spiritual path has to be based on the laws or principles that operate in life, usually unappreciated by man, even though we apply them in many aspects of our material life. For example, the technological developments of the 20th century are completely dependent on man’s recognition and applying the laws of polarity in the fields of electricity and magnetism.

The same polarity that exists in the immaterial elements, down to their atomic level, also exists in the plant and animal kingdom. Indeed, all of creation reflects this polarity that we humans have described as masculine/feminine, or positive/negative. The principle of polarity applies to both our physical bodies, as well as our Spirit core. Therefore, any attempt to ignore this polarity, or to work against it is done only to our detriment. For example, despite human attempts at assigning a greater or lesser significance of the male and female role in the reproductive process, this can never occur without the two polarities being equally involved. The ancient elevation of “the seed” from the male was just as much a fallacy, as the current attitude among feminist of the more vital role of the women in the reproductive process. Reducing the masculine role to that

of a mere sperm donor whose role can be just as easily satisfied through invitro fertilization and insemination.

Both the ancient and the modern attitudes are wrong because they have mistaken the process or instruments as the real activity, which lies only in the union of the polarities! Therefore, to a knowing one, the brewing battle of the sexes is sad and futile because both parties will end up the losers. This recognition comes from a much deeper understanding of the broader and more pervasive importance of the masculine and feminine in the growth and development of the Spirit.

Abdrushin sheds light on this point in many lectures of The Grail Message. But here, we shall only look at excerpts from the lecture titled “The Weak Sex”, in Volume 3 of the Grail Message, in which he explains as follows:

“Today let us take the designation which is generally disseminated about womanhood on earth as being the “weak sex”. There will hardly be anyone among my hearers who has not already heard this expression. It is used in an affectionate way as well as sneeringly, kind-heartedly and also ironically, but it is always taken up without reflection as something that is established, and adhered to thoughtlessly, or at least without being examined

.....In reality, womanhood is just as strong as manhood on earth, only in a different way.

.....the actual concept of womanhood and manhood issues from the nature of their activity in Creation, i.e., that the nature of their activity is fundamental for this and determines the form which allows human beings on earth to be recognized as female or male.

..... These two species also give the meaning of the Living Cross, which in itself is perfect! The vertical beam of the Cross represents the positive, i.e., the active life, and the horizontal beam of equal length and strength represents the negative or passive life. The Living Cross bears both within Itself!

The Cross of Creation from out of which and around which the whole of Creation develops itself indicates the same. The vertical beam is the positive, active working, and the horizontal beam the negative, passive working.

In Creation, however, the active is separated from the passive as regards their working. Every spirit carries within itself either the active only or the passive only....

These work either passively or actively side by side, and yet they constantly strive towards one another, since the two species can only achieve something which is perfect through their joint activity. However, it only becomes perfect when the two work with equal strength and strive for one goal – towards the Light!

They do not need to live together in earthly marriage in order to achieve this, nor to be at all close together gross-materially – they need not even be personally acquainted! Only the goal must be the same – towards the Light!

I mention this particularly so that no wrong conclusions may be drawn from my lecture; for marriages and physical gross-material approaches in general are things entirely for themselves, which are not a requirement connected with striving for the Light, though if they are pure they do not hinder it either!"

Hopefully, these excerpts help to put the arguably misguided nature of today's ongoing battle of the sexes in a different perspective; at least for those who see the logic of this Spiritual perspective.

That having been said, it comes down to how do we repair the damages of centuries' long abuses and oppressive domination, that has created the deep distrust that exists today between the sexes. Surely, it will be unfair or naïve to expect women to give up the struggle for equality, in the hopes that men will be trusted to voluntarily offer it. By the same token, it is short sighted for women to expect to win the battle by trying to subjugate men, using psychological and emotional tactics like:

- **Guilt-Tripping:** A tactic used to make a partner feel responsible for the other's unhappiness or dissatisfaction, often coercing compliance, to alleviate those negative feelings.
- **Selective Withdrawal** (the Silent Treatment). Withholding communication, affection, or intimacy to punish a partner or force them into conceding to a demand.
- **Emotional Framing:** Presenting situations in a way that emphasizes the partner's role in the relationship's emotional health, which can subtly guide their decision-making.

While such tactics may influence their partners, for a while, they ultimately deepen distrust, foster hypocrisy and can lead to a backlash in the relationship, or at the level of society.

Additional Words

It might help to highlight the essence of this piece with these transmitted observations of a female departed Spirit, as she looked back at the masculine feminine interaction on Earth, versus her experience in her new ethereal home. In addition to affirming what one reads in The Grail Message, it may help those who are sincerely looking for a way to bridge this growing divide in an amicable way, and to bring themselves back into alignment with their appropriate roles, to swing in Creations law governing polarity, as it applies to the human Spirit.

Source: Xavier, Francisco Candido. Nosso Lar (pp. 122-124)

("Nosso Lar" , is on a plane that is very close to our physical Earth Plane. From the activities that are taking place there, it most probably belongs to what is called the Astral plane (or Medium Gross Matter), with the physical Earth being in Dense Gross Matter)

“The home (i.e. arenas of relationships – personal or social) may be compared to the lines of a right angle on the plane of divine evolution. The vertical line is the female sentiment, and has to do with the creative inspirations of life. The horizontal line is the male sentiment, concerned with achievements in the field of common progress.

The home is the sacred converging point where man and woman meet in order to understand each other correctly. It is the temple where individuals should join spiritually rather than just physically. At the present time on earth, a great number of scholars who are versed in social matters are advocating various measures, calling for a regeneration of home life. Some go so far as to state that the human family institution is threatened.

The majority of terrestrial couples spend the sacred hours of the day living indifferently and selfishly. When the husband is at ease, the wife seems desperate. When the wife keeps humbly silent, her companion tyrannizes her. The wife makes no attempt to encourage her husband along the horizontal line of his temporal work, nor does the husband try to accompany his companion on her divine flight of tenderness and sentiment towards the higher planes of creation. In social circles, they put on appearances, but in their private life, one takes long mental trips to faraway regions while the other talks about work. If the wife talks about the children, the husband thinks of his business. When the husband tries to study some difficulty at work, the wife’s thoughts drift to the fashion designer’s office. In these circumstances, it’s obvious that the divine angle is far from being properly drawn. The two diverging lines are endeavoring in vain to form the sublime vertex in order to build a new step on the great stairway of eternal life.”

I felt these concepts deep down. Highly impressed, I remarked: “Laura, these concepts open up a whole world of new thought! If we only knew all this down on earth!”

“A matter of experience, my friend,” she replied. “Men and women will learn these lessons through suffering and struggle. For the moment, few realize that the home is an essentially divine institution, and within its doors we must live with all our heart and soul.

When ordinary people are crossing through the flowery regions of betrothal, they regard each other while displaying their souls’ best resources. That’s why it is said that all beings are beautiful when truly in love. The most trivial subject has a peculiar charm even in the most frivolous conversation. During their courtship, the man and woman blend their sublime energies, but soon after they receive the nuptial blessing, most of them rend the veil of desire and fall back into the arms of the old monsters that tyrannize hearts. There are no mutual concessions; there is no tolerance; sometimes they don’t even regard each other as friends. The luminous beauty of love dies out when the couple lose their comradeship and the joy of talking to each other. From then on, the polite ones respect each other, while the antagonistic ones can hardly stand each other. There is no mutual understanding. Questions and answers are formulated in terse sentences. No matter how united their bodies are, their minds have already separated and have gone off in opposite directions.”

“On the physical plane in the planet’s present evolutionary phase, there are very few unions between twin souls¹ and only a few more marriages between kindred souls, but there is an overwhelming percentage of expiatory relationships. Most human couples are made up of prisoners in shackles.”

¹ What are described here as “twin souls” and “kindred souls” are explained in great detail in the book “In The Light of Truth” (The Grail Message)

The causes of disaffection in relationships, described above, may well be the root of many young women's reluctance to enter into marriages these days; although the public reasons given is attributed to younger women preferring to seek self-actualization in their careers than in marriage. Yet, despite the rising appeal of the single lifestyle, married women are consistently more likely to report being "very happy" with their lives (87%) compared to single women (69%).

The key unasked question is how men see, or are engaged in this issue. There appears to be a higher level of ambivalence among men, since, in spite of the gains made by women, men are still in the advantaged position. Therefore, it is understandable that they may see themselves as the gracious benefactors, when they accede to women's demands. Unfortunately, this attitude indicates that men have a greater work to do on themselves, in terms of recognizing the importance of the feminine role. Silently granting women's demand does not equate to understanding, and recognizing the importance of creation's principle of polarity. In fact, such grants can be revoked, to plunge society back into the vicious cycle. The US, especially, is currently facing this particular risk. This apprehension is captured in the very popular television series titled "The Hand Maid's Tale", that many watched anxiously wondering whether life will imitate art!

But, Abdrushin's warning, in the lecture titled "Watch and Pray", in Volume 2 of The Grail Message, is unequivocal on this point.:

"No nation and no people can flourish and prosper where the man is unable to look up to the woman in her womanliness!"

Therefore, the real battle of the sexes needs to be an internal one. For each person to grasp a deeper appreciation of their own gender role and purpose. If we fail in this, we will continue to hinder our individual and mutual development, while finding faults with the other sex, or assuming an air of arrogant superiority. Meanwhile our spiritual development will stagnate, and our existence will continue to be miserable. But if we face the task at hand, we should be encouraged with the following observation from the book Nosso Lar:

..... we must bear in mind that the home is in the middle of a sublime conquest, which humankind is slowly winning. After all, where in the circles of the planet can we find a real domestic institution that is based on true harmony, where rights and duties are legitimately shared?

It is on this optimistic note that we want to end this article. Recognizing that though the rift or distrust is wide and deep, those who genuinely wish to bridge the gap, despite the difficult work ahead, can, with the reawakening of their Spirit, and recognition that creation's principle of polarity also applies to human beings, gradually will begin to see the value, as well as the indispensable need for the other gender in their own life. As Abdrushin said, this recognition does not have to involve a marriage. The simple recognition of each sex's role will enable everyone to live their respective roles.

Those who are still blinded by their own past experiences, will eventually come to this recognition after much physical, psychological and emotional suffering; because the laws of creation cannot be averted by any creature!