

УДК 3.21(477)

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AMERICAN SERVICEWOMEN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
[REVIEW OF THE MONOGRAPHY BY E. ARCHER “WOMEN, WARFARE
AND REPRESENTATION. AMERICAN SERVICEWOMEN IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY”.
(BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC, 2017. 256 p.)]

Abstract. The book considered the various ways the American servicewoman has been represented throughout the 20th century, and how those representations impact the roles she is permitted to inhabit. With the primary focus on the American case Emerald Archer also introduced a comparative element showing integration of women into the military in other countries including Great Britain, Canada and Israel.

Key words: comparative history, stereotype, interview analysis, integration, gender perspectives.

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АМЕРИКАНСЬКІ ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВИЦІ У XX СТОЛІТТІ
[РЕЦЕНЗІЯ НА МОНОГРАФІЮ Е. АРЧЕР «ЖІНКИ, ВІЙНА ТА
ПРЕДСТАВНИЦТВО. АМЕРИКАНСЬКІ ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВИЦІ
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E. Archer's study is neither a defame nor yet another retrospective view of the cultural shifts of the second part of the twentieth century. Postmodern feminist theorists have done a lot of scientific and empiric work into trying to combat traditional gender ideologies and to overcome naturalising claims of the “public-private” dichotomy.

The traditional view that women's place is in the home is based on the thesis that nature dictates that women's identity should be confined to motherhood, – that is “Anatomy is Destiny”, – and the boundary between the private and the

public was a dominant theme for mainstream feminism up to the 80's of the last century. Race, class, sexuality, gender, characteristic of the new millennium, tried to correct the simplified feminist construction (T. Chanter, L. Nicholson, A. Yeatman, T. Laqner, G. Flax et al). Still the ancient question of what it is fundamental or distinctive to be a "woman" not only remained under analysis but has become a crucial one. Making the significant departure from Lacanian theory and ideas of universal patriarchy, L. Irigaray, J. Kristeva, M. Wittig and J. Butler put "woman" into the psychoanalytic frame. Still postmodern feminists might feel that they should raise the question of women's identification to a further limit.

When Butler made a crucial supposition that the lines that establish coherence between sex, gender and desire had reinforced the conceptualization and constituted its contemporary legacy ("Gender Trouble"), many scientists shared her point of view that a "true gender" was a fantasy inscribed on the surface of bodies, with the effect that genders can be neither true nor false but are only produced as truth effects of the discourse of primary and stable identity [1, p. 337].

Generally speaking feminist scientists have presented postmodernism as a set of perspectives that go beyond that what traditionally was understood as "political" (A. Yeatman. J. Butler, T. Chanter et al).

This short introduction into the "essence" of the book "Women, Warfare and Representation" cannot avoid the problematization of history by postmodernists and the conventions of discourse. By no means the book by E. Archer is specifically focused on the historiographic metafiction. The guiding concern of the entire book can be depicted as responds to the questions posed upon the "situation of warfare" in relation to the representation: strictly speaking, in what way, in what contexts, under what kind of ethnic and class conditions gender is used as a sort of signifier to cover over the presented problems. What the author is talking about is obviously the problem of cultural representation. And here one more question arises: does the author want to identify hard reality with the production of meanings within manifold cultural cross-fields?

In brief, “Women, Warfare and Representation” considers the various ways the American servicewoman has been represented throughout the 20th century, and how those representations impact the roles she is permitted to play.

The author shows that while women have a relatively short history in the American Military, the last century presents an evolution of women’s direct participation in wars despite their patriarchal roles of societal and sexual character. The main focus is on the American context, but E. Archer also introduces a comparative element showing how women’s integration into the military structures differs in other countries including Great Britain, Canada and Israel. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the author draws on military history, theory and psychology to offer a more complete and integrated history of women in the army and their representation in society. Using an interdisciplinary approach the author uses a wide array of sources, methods and theories to explain the progress that servicewomen have made in gaining inclusion, the obstacles they have faced, and current day challenges, such as expanding rights for LGBT communities. However, we should mention that the attitude to the interdisciplinary methodology is rather complicated nowadays. “There is no such thing as interdisciplinary relations”, – assert some outstanding postmodernists in their critique of this method. [2, p. 53-74]

Obviously, this problem is a cross-disciplinary one with criticism favouring the application of “external” disciplines such as theory of psychoanalysis, cultural studies, etc. The primary allusion is here to Lacan’s axiom, indicating the impossibility of two subject positions, or disciplines to reach a perfect union between each other. On the other hand, it should be accentuated that today postmodern scientists work in the interdisciplinary theoretical field (“by the definition”), which includes psychoanalysis, theology, history, political theory, gender studies, etc.

Taking into consideration all mentioned above it is still necessary to stress the importance of the historical-comparative method, which is by all means is used by the author. No doubt, as the basis of the social research some informative

documents of economic and statistic materials should be used in such historical research, and here the validity of the biographical method is indisputable. Dialectics makes a scientist point out definite positive and negative features in the historical personalities, their inner development and external circumstances of their lives. History and literature both provide significant material for understanding radical changes in the social and cultural development of the country and people who live there.

With their focus on the complexity of the postmodern research theorists accentuate the political consequences of the work of art (or science) on the level of the “political unconsciousness” (M. Foucault, R. Barthes, F. Jameson and others).

The book proposes an argument that the combined result of these representations and narratives is that servicewomen are symbolically misrepresented in ways that alter the narratives of their actual roles. The books also produces an assertion that interdisciplinary research is indispensable to approaching questions that lie at the intersection of gender and conflict. Through the use of different methodologies each chapter aims to show a different layer of representation. Although this monograph is focused on women’s recent experience in the American Armed Forces, it incorporates a historical and cross-national dimensions. The discussions of women’s past and present military service naturally lead to the consideration of future. The book concludes with an argument that militaries, which adopt gender initiatives will become more competent forces in the twenty-first century.

To illustrate the contents of the book it is worth enumerating the chapters of the monograph (certainly, in a brief way): history of women’s participation in the armed Forces; comparative histories of women’s participation in the British, Canadian and Israeli Armed Forces; stereotype threat theory; in-depth interviews and revealing patterns of sex-role stereotyping in the US Marine Corps and US Air Force; women’s representation in war photography, etc.

Grand narratives and gender perspectives are also paid much attention alongside with women’s integration in the military innovations. The author provides lists of

figures, different tables, lists of graphs, which by all means help to comprehend the material. E. Archer not only responds to the questions posed by the contemporary global situation, at the same time she attempts to make visible the historical and institutional structures of the representative space from which she is called to speak: be it as a spokeswoman for the deconstruction of the stereotype of men as “warriors” and women as “passive participants” in the war actions. By using different methods – the interview questions included – the author accentuates the problem of representation and constitution of the problem “women and warfare”, moreover E. Archer turns her responses to the problems, stated above, into lessons in critical reading. The main issue, in our opinion, is obviously the problem of cultural representation, and whatever it is in the culture that constitutes the hidden agenda of the suppression of the ideological production. The author shows with the help of the scientific analysis of the array of the data that “man” disguises itself under an unproblematic cover of “Human”, and in this concept of man wars are not “human stories”, the “war” has the textuality or narrativity of the “gender sign”.

The particular concepts of martial femininity and the hegemonic warrior model are considered with regard to the military context with the accent on the idea that martial femininity is a type of femininity that is viewed as compatible within the military but never transgresses gender lines. This must be best modelled with the example of the military nurses which was established as the proper feminine role at the beginning of the twentieth century. By all means this did not require the revolution of the fundamental beliefs on the part of men.

Gender mainstreaming of the last decades of the twentieth century is known to reinforce the notion that gender is about men and women. Still NATO engagements in Bosnia (1995) led to the realization that conflict is experienced differently by men and women. Thus gender perspectives require both men and women to expand the analysis of what is traditionally considered important. Social, cultural, religious and economic practices emerge as issues to explore regarding the distribution of resources and power across groups. The analysis of the situation

from these multiple points can change the way military units address the problems. For example, when the notion of violence is expanded beyond traditional understandings to include sexual violence targeted at the civilians, a gender perspective could shape the tactics employed by militaries. Behavioural changes of servicemen and women along patrol routes, and consultations, with local community members may stabilize an operational area more than traditional methods could. E. Archer claims that merging gender and security in this way is transformative for militaries around the world. When combined with histories and cultural analysis, which include in-depth interviews and field experiments, one can begin to understand how representations of servicewomen have evolved over time, and how gender representations in particular have impacted the daily experience of women in the armed forces. Ultimately, the concepts of representation and narrative unite the chapters of this monograph, which have different actors and participants.

With this understanding of representation this monograph can be considered comprehensible and bright interdisciplinary history of women's representation in the American, Canadian and Israeli armed forces.

1. J. Butler, J. Gender Trouble, Feminist Theory and Psychoanalytical Discourse. *Feminism/Postfeminism*. Ed. L. J. Nicholson. New York and London: Routledge, 1990. P. 324-340.
2. Day R., Halloway R. "There is No Such Thing as an Interdisciplinary Relationship": a Zizekian Critique of Postmodern Music Analysis. *International Journal of Zizek Studies*. University of London. 2017. №3. P. 53-74.

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1. J. Butler, J. (1990). Gender Trouble, Feminist Theory and Psychoanalytical Discourse. *Feminism/Postfeminism*. Ed. L. J. Nicholson. New York and London: Routledge. P. 324–340.
2. Day R., Halloway R. (2017). "There is No Such Thing as an Interdisciplinary Relationship": a Zizekian Critique of Postmodern Music Analysis. *International Journal of Zizek Studies*. University of London. №3. P. 53–74.