

Female Genius:

PHANTOM or PHENOMENON?

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Vittoria Colonna:

I do not want to be a tree

That does not grow out of its own roots.

Female Genius

In Search of the PHENOMENON

*First let's chop our way through the Thicket of Conceptual
Confusion smothering the phenomenon of FEMALE GENIUS*



Quelle: AlMare - wikipedia.de

Dear Genevieve Kineke,

Whereas I appreciate your personal devotion to communicating the

Catholic Model of Femininity

of Pope John Paul II (Apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*),

I find fault with the title of your blog:

FEMININE GENIUS

Firstly, it is a contradiction in terms: The adjective *feminine* suggests tender, femininity in contrast to the

Intellectual and Creative Power of a Female Genius.

Secondly, the term *Genius* does not bear any reference to the women addressed in your blog:

Neither does *Genius* apply to *you*, as a mediator of the Pope's Ideal of a Catholic Woman. In this function you are certainly

No Self-Constituting Female Genius.

Dear Genevieve, I'd call you, a *Female Genius*, if independently from any male influence, in an act of *Female Self-Constituting*, you did propagate your *Self-Created Female Variety* of the Pope's male-made ideal Catholic woman or, if you at least had added improvements from your female point-of-view.

That was exactly what Vittoria Colonna, the *Genuine Female Genius* of Italian Renaissance, did.

Nor does *Female Genius* apply to your *female audience*, who are indoctrinated by you according to **John Paul's Enzyklika**

Mulieris Dignitatem. They are no female geniuses, but believers of the Roman Catholic Church.

I guess, the reason why you misapply *Genius* in the headline of your blog, and why you incorrectly combine the term *Genius* with the adjective *feminine*, is not a negligent use of terms, but a matter of straining after effect.

"Feminine Genius" assuages the female longing of being a self-fashioning individual, ineradicably engraved in the unfulfilled soul of a Bourgeois wife imprisoned in the everyday drudgery of her boring marital life, an unfulfilled longing even inherent in a Catholic woman, who is also denied the fundamental human right of pursuit of happiness by self-realisation, because, according to your formulation **"feminine vocation is a call to live as an icon of her Holy Mother Church."**

Yours sincerely:

Dr. Maria Musiol

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Quelle: Wolfgang Stuck – wikimedia.org

Levelling Down !

GENIUS in OUR BRAVE NEW WORLD

How Mr and Mrs Everybody go Genius.

THINK LIKE A GENIUS!

From: *Scientific American Mind* Volume 23, Issue 5

PREVIEW by the two authors:

“Women tend to choose work-life balance rather than the pursuit of eminence
– although the choice is not entirely freely made.

By Sandra Upson and Lauren F. Friedman

Try this simple thought experiment. Name 10 female geniuses from any period in history. Odds are you ran out of names pretty quickly. The message is clear: Something is rotten in the state of genius.”

*Dear Sandra Upson and Lauren F. Friedman,
The Cover-Photomontage of the Special Issue of the American Scientific Mind - THINK LIKE A GENIUS - is positivistic:
Putting Magic Glasses on the snub nose of an ambitious smarty-pants transfigures Bond Girl into Genius.*

Of course, your invitation to THINK LIKE A GENIUS makes an appeal to your bourgeois readership, women “cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in to” their midlife crisis, because in their jobs, though somehow managing “a work-life balance”, they have not been able to fulfil their innermost yearning after Self-Fashioning in a Prominent Top Position.

Perhaps they will get a better chance after being taught

by You Two

to

THINK LIKE A GENIUS.

but

HOW DO GENIUSES THINK??

And

HOW DO YOU KNOW??

FEMALE GENIUS

SHROUDED IN MYSTERY

Female Genius: Oh, the Words - the Sound!

Female Genius - melts on our tongues!

The two resounding words send shivers up and down our spines!

But only:

As long as Female Genius remains shrouded in a Divine Aura!

Try to describe Female Genius as a Human Phenomenon and you will destroy the Magic!!!

FOR THE SAKE OF TRUTH ??????

Dear Julia Kristeva,

Considering the widely spread discredit of the term GENIUS in our BRAVE NEW WORLD of Identical Human Products, considering the public outcry FEMALE GENIUS will arouse, rejected as it has been, as a mere feminist phantasm by an army of male misogynists, I admire your courage of choosing the title *THE FEMALE GENIUS - HANNAH ARENDT* for your biography..

Your explanation that you see in Genius

*a therapeutic invention that saves us from dying of
equality in a world without transcendence*

reveals *your creating a divine aura round your heroine to enhance her
singularity*, at the same time *highlighting your elitist and rather cryptic
mode of writing*, evoking the *individual complexity of Hannah Arendt*

in narrative, associative, intuitive mode of writing, *steering clear of a simplistic profile of this most extraordinary woman of the twentieth century.*

At the end of your introduction you are posing the essential question, whether Hannah Arendt owed what you, cryptically, call her *Atypical Genius* to her *Femininity*. Though emphasizing that the question is a legitimate one, you refuse the answer:

I do not want to answer it at the beginning.... I prefer not to give a definition at the outset so that the answer can distil itself after patiently considering a number of examples.

Dear Julia Kristeva,

Your cryptic, associative, idiosyncratic rather than diagnostic and analytical mode of writing aims at encrypting rather than unfolding the intellectual and psychic complexity of Hannah Arendt's personality, you, alone of all people, pride yourself of getting to grips with.

Anyhow!

Your mode of presenting fails the most extraordinary aspect of Hannah Arendt, who was so much more than just one more female intellectual.

HANNAH ARENDT WAS THE ONLY WOMAN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WHO ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE OF THE WORST MALE DESTRUCTIVENESS MANKIND HAD EVER

*EXPERIENCED: TO THE DESTRUCTION OF HER JEWISH
PEOPLE BY THE NAZI GOVERNMENT OF GERMANY*

Hannah Arendt's Female Genius

is NOT atypical.

Her female genius is **not divine, not a phantom nor a
phantasm**

Her female Genius is a

Human Phenomenon

*TOWARDS A PHENOMENOLOGY
Of
FEMALE GENIUS*

Never researched, let alone defined,

the Phenomenon of Female Genius

must be substantiated by distilling

the Common Features of Genius Women:

A.

Female Geniuses are *Self-defined, Self-Thinking, Solitary Heroines*, working as *FUTURISTS* in *Self-imposed Isolation* to propagate their *Authentic Female Ideas* about a *Better Life* in a *Better world*.

VITTORIA COLONNA

I do not want to be a tree that does not grow from its own roots.

SUSAN SONTAG

I think of myself as self-created.

HANNAH ARENDT:

I don't fit - Ich bin unabhängig. Ich gehöre keiner Organisation an. Ich spreche immer nur in meinem eigenen Namen. Ich habe großes Vertrauen zu

dem, was Lessing Selbstdenken nennt, das meiner Ansicht nach niemals ersetzt werden kann, weder durch Ideologie noch durch Öffentliche Meinung noch durch Überzeugung.

I don't fit – I am independent. I do not belong to any organisation. I only speak for myself. I put my trust on what Lessing called “Self-Thinking”, which in my opinion can never be replaced neither by an ideology, nor by Public Opinion, nor by any settled conviction.

Kristeva, Arendt S.183

B.

*Female Geniuses are Shakespeare's Spirited Sisters
excelling in creative intellectual liveliness:*

HANNAH ARENDT:

*The only life of the mind is the sensation of being alive.
Without thinking the mind is dead.*

SUSAN SONTAG:

*I'm afraid of passivity and of dependence. Using my mind
makes me feel active (autonomous) That's good.*

LA DUSE:

*Who knows how to comprehend, learns every day.
Consciousness is tantamount to strength and joy, pain and
liberation.*

C.

Female Genius versus **Male Genius**

Cognition, Renaissance, Creativity, Revival

against

Hardened thinking and rigid male dogmatism

Baldassare Castiglione on VITTORIA COLONNA:

*Her sublime, even divine intellect penetrates into matters hitherto unknown to
others.*

Imaginative female creativity

versus

Rigid Artefacts of Homo Faber

Indeed, the substantial difference of male genius and female genius originates in physical and psychic differences of the two sexes.

Both, men and women, conceive creative ideas as individual geniuses.

BUT

male geniuses objectify their creative ideas in cooperation, bent on construing ever-lasting, perfect systems of absolute validity.

Whereas

Women endowed by nature with the protection of life in its fullness, in its diversity, in its dynamism, and in its natural growth are averse to the

rigidity of male systems
and
male-fabricated artefacts.

Genius women turn inward to find *Authentic Humanity* engraved in their *Female Souls*, take their pens and create *Counter-Solutions* emerging from their *Female Imagination*, from their *Authentic Female Thinking*, and from their

Comprehensive Ontological Perspective.

Female Geniuses qualify **one-sided male artefacts**. They expose **male claims of absolute validity** to the

Dynamics of Life.

Their *Female Instincts* tell them that *LIFE IS CHANGE* and will override and has overridden all **male claims** to

**Eternal Permanence
of their male artefacts**

So far!

D.

Female Geniuses versus **male Intellectual Rigidity**

VITTORIA COLONNA

gave ample proof of her *Creative Liveliness* as a *Female Genius* in **opposition to male dogmatism** by refining **obsolete medieval mentality**, as a *Humanist* venturing on **sacrosanct religious myths, challenging Godfather** to answer for the shameful death on the cross he inflicted on his only son. *Vittoria* applied her extraordinary imaginative strength, her powerful intellectuality, and stupendous rhetoric to remake the **male medieval icon of the Godmother** into a *Lively Human Being and yet a Woman Divine*, lavishing on *Maria* the *greatest-possible liveliness* making her an unparalleled *Role-Model for Women* and a protective shield against male vilification of women in her patriarchal society, thus increasing the *Value of Femininity*.

SUSAN SONTAG

Turned her back on the **rigid male-dominated academic system** to become a *Self-Defined Freelance Female Intellectual*, grounding her essays on her *Female Subjectivity*, albeit of exemplary validity, to counteract **stifling reactionary Philistinism of interpretation**. According to her female intuition, she proclaimed:

In the place of hermeneutics we need an erotics of art.

HANNAH ARENDT,

the Female Genius living in the darkest period of history was challenged by **male destructiveness of hitherto unimaginable dimensions:**

**the extermination of her Jewish People
by the Nazi Government of Germany.**

A male challenge without a precedent!

Hanna Arendt mastered the unparalleled provocation of a Female Genius with the capacity of self-thinking, with extraordinary insight and cognitive capacities, with the determination to act in her personal authentic way, with her readiness (as an independent,

self-reliant woman) to cast obsolete Jewish conventions over board, because they did not provide adequate solutions.

Even in these excruciating circumstances Hannah Arendt demonstrated the courage of her convictions, in spite of being aware that her Un-Jewish answer to the Nazi Horror would scandalize the male Jewish Establishment entrenched in Judaism.

Only Hannah Arendt's Headstrong Reaction, Unexpected and Misunderstood until this day, rose to this extremely challenging, extremely horrifying occasion, without a precedent in the whole of Human History.

In her interview with Joachim Fest Hannah Arendt said about the Holocaust and Auschwitz:

"It should not have happened. One cannot cope with it!"

According to her, Eichmann should have been put on trial at an International Court for Human Rights. She declined the Jerusalem show trial against Eichmann, because eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth retaliation, is in need of equilibrium between perpetrator and victim. The crime must be repaid in the same coin. But Eichmann was not a demonized villain like Macbeth or Jago or Richard III.

Instead Eichmann was only a cog in the machinery of the Final Solution and certainly not one of the masterminds.

The punishment of one morally, personally and intellectually deformed Nazi functionary, who refused to plead guilty, because he was forced to obey the order of the German NAZI Government to organize the deportation of a million Jews into the death camps, did not fit this genocide of unparalleled dimensions in Human History, but debased the Human Dignity of the million Jewish victims in Hannah Arendt's view.

Yet she accepted the assignment by the American magazine THE NEW YORKER to travel to Jerusalem and to report about the Eichmann trial. Later, Hannah Arendt again and again emphasized in her interviews that she had even read the interrogation records covering 2000 pages, before she formulated her *Phenomenal Phrase of the BANALITY OF EVIL* and used it as the subtitle of her report. The Phrase caused an outcry of indignation and scandalized the Jews entrenched in Judaism, who reproached Hannah Arendt for making light of the Holocaust, whereas the opposite was true:

The Jerusalem Show Trial gave Eichmann the opportunity of pleading his innocence, because he performed his "duty" as a functionary in zombielike obedience to the Nazi Government.

The execution of just one "ethical Hanswurst" (Arendt!), a mere functionary of the true perpetrators, who split the extermination of the Jews up in diverse actions performed by many functionaries, was no adequate way of recompensing the extermination of a million people. Hannah Arendt is right: genocide could not be revenged by the Hebrew law of retaliation.

How did Hannah Arendt manage to live on, herself?

Like all other *Female Geniuses* she put her trust in the

Dynamics of Life

to overcome **male destruction.**

She wrote two books to enhance *Personal Intellectual Liveliness* as the self-protective bastion against totalitarianism. One of her books deals with *Active Life*. A second book deals with *The Life of the Mind*.



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Heraklitus

Everything flows and nothing remains.

Female Geniuses *Timeless Sisters of Mind*

It is an ironical turn of fate that the glory of most male geniuses, for instance of inventors or of politicians, of Napoleon, Bismarck, Hitler, who claimed eternal fame for the changes they brought about in the world for better or worse, vanished, because their artefacts thought to be permanent, collapsed before long.

The Dynamics of Life

have always got the better of
static artefacts
of

Homo Faber.

However,

Female Imaginative Creations

originating in

Female Understanding and *Participating*

in

Genuine Humanity

have resisted **Decay**, because they are

Timeless.

*Feminine Calls
For
Liveliness*

cannot be **objectified**

but must be *poetised*

Therefore

all Female Geniuses,

in chronological sequence,

in varying historical circumstances

have made the same demand

FOR

Liveliness

endangered

by

male-made artefacts

By qualifying

**male rigidity, abstraction,
one-sidedness, dogmatism**

in their

Imaginative Literary Counter-Worlds

from their more

Comprehensive Female Outlook

on

Life.

Genius Women

have always *appealed* and will *never cease to appeal*

to

male world makers

to

restore Liveliness

and

to protect

Life in its Fullness.

As their

Cassandra Calls

have been

in vain.

*New Female Geniuses
will repeat them.*

*Of course,
Following Apollinaire we can go on
dreaming of a*

Woman on Wings

*Rising out of Mankind,
Pushing aside
male world makers
Renewing
Our man-made world.*

Better

we dream of

male and female
Cooperation

for a

Humanized World

Populated with

Spirited Human Beings,

on whom

Nature

lavishes her

Cornucopia of Life.