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**THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS
OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY
ON THE POST-COLONIAL KENYAN WOMAN**

A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For
The Degree Of
Master Of Arts In Philosophy

By

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of any degree in any other University.




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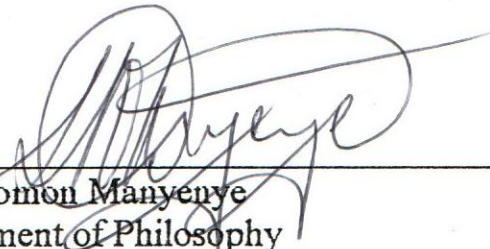
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DEDICATION

To all men and women in Kenya who share in the belief that, to give up the task of reforming Society is to give up one's responsibility as a free person.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this thesis was a collaborative effort. I would like to thank those most essential to its completion. First, I would like to thank Egerton University for the financial support it provided that enabled me to pursue my research.

For one year, my supervisor Dr. Walter Nabakwe patiently listened to my ideas influenced my thinking and in many unspoken ways inspired my thoughts.

There are other important people whose voices are present here in various direct and indirect ways and whose contributions are reflected on every page. For one, my mother, Shirley Kiyaka, a career woman, whose persistence in spite of the obstacles she faced, provided me with the encouragement to go on. I hope the pages of this work pay her tribute.

Some of my colleagues listened to partially articulated ideas, read earlier drafts of chapters and generally offered the encouragement and intellectual stimulation that enabled me to remain critical of my own work yet persevere. Mr. Muga K'olale of the Department of Philosophy, Egerton University deserves special mention.

I was fortunate enough to encounter the late Professor Henry Olela, who taught me both to think critically about what is and what to think imaginatively about what could be. My deepest regret is that he is dead. I hope these pages bring us closer together.

Finally, I am indebted to the people I interviewed who shared their experiences with me. Most of them requested anonymity. I am grateful to the insights they gave my work which I wouldn't otherwise have comprehended.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis tries to relate the philosophical ideas of Nietzsche to the historical background and cultural situation of women in Kenya. This ethic challenges the popular view of women as an abstract category, a view that has often obscured the nature and origin of the problems faced by women blaming the victims.

This study was provoked by the realization that since 1963, there have been few if any philosophical works in Kenya dealing specifically with women. The existing corpus of literature therefore tended to present a rather simplified and frozen picture of the nature and contradictions of women's exploitation, oppression and marginalization. Anthropological and sociological literature proved perceptive but they often lacked a philosophical dimension.

The purpose of the study was therefore to discover whether particular attitudes served to perpetrate oppression and thereby defined the context within which men and women negotiated their individual identities and relationships with one another.

Further the study sought to discover whether women in Kenya had been subjected to a variety of influences that induced the traits they exhibited. It was the purpose of the study to investigate whether the categories of sex differences had prevented the full development of human potentials and a richer culture, a culture rich in contrasting values.

To achieve this end the central hypothesis was that women are the main obstacles in the amelioration of their socio-economic restraints.

The study was divided into five chapters. Chapter one was an introductory to the whole study. It provided the theoretical framework for the entire research. Chapter

two provided an exposition of Nietzsche's moral philosophy and its fundamental tenets. Chapter three was a review of the condition of Kenyan women with particular emphasis on the question of sex roles. Chapter four focussed on whether Nietzsche's philosophy had adequately addressed the situation of women in Kenya. It also reviewed the ethical implications of this philosophy. The last chapter summarized the study and gave suggestions and recommendations on how to proceed in the analysis of the women question in Kenya today.

We adopted an analytical conceptual method. We organized and conducted the study within specific historical perspectives.

Our primary source was the library where we relied mainly on published and unpublished works including government policy papers, journals, newspapers, seminar papers, conference papers and some relevant books.

Despite three main problems namely, inadequate literature, hostility and unenthusiasm exhibited by male interviewees and the death of one of my main supervisors, the study established that what has contributed to the marginalization of women in Kenya is much more varied and complex and cannot be looked at only against the background of women being their own impediment to the quest for liberation. Other crucial factors which cannot be overlooked include poverty, religious fundamentalism, neo-colonialism and class domination, poor governance and lack of political will, the mass media, lack of consistency in maintaining the momentum of the struggle, lack of meaningful political involvement in national political process, inadequate education, structural and institutional barriers and women-child exploitation.

Kenyan history has proved that institutional differences inevitably lead to inequality and alienation. Therefore the study recommended that future research should contribute to a process of building a new self-image and societal image of women based on an egalitarian and liberation ethic.

Lastly a complete bibliography was provided.

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INTRODUCTION:-

This thesis tries to relate the philosophical ideas of Nietzsche to the historical background and cultural situation of women in Kenya. Nietzsche saw the task of philosopher as that of a man who destroys old values, creates new ideas and through them, a new civilization. He believed that human existence achieves authenticity only in acts of freedom. This is important for our study because injustice, exploitation violence and organized cruelty are man-made and therefore can be eradicated. According to Nietzsche therefore the individual is the evolving outcome of the interaction of possibility and circumstance, and his possibilities are therefore limitless.

The experience of women in Kenya is fundamentally different from that of men because women are treated differently from men virtually from the moment they are born. So Kenyan women have quite different expectations with regard both to their inborn natures and to the social roles they will fill. This division of roles and behaviour is instilled very early in the family. Boys are openly preferred to girls and girls are prepared very early on for roles of wives and mothers. This is especially true of the Maasai community where girls are threatened with forced marriages very early such that by the time pupils reach standard 8, some schools have no girls at all. In August 1997, the headmistress of A.I.C Kajiado Girls received cash and food donations from the Forum for African Women Educationist Staff to enable eight girls to remain in school over August holidays because they feared being married off by their parents if they returned home.¹ Housekeeping skills and docility were qualities appreciated in a young girl ready for marriage. A good formal education was of no consequence. Men and women in effect grow up experiencing and relating to society

in different ways. The feminine problem is that the patriarchal structure did repress and still repress female potentials and wholeness.

In Kenya, for instance, women outnumber men. 80% of adult women live and work in the rural areas where they play a significant role in both subsistence and cash crop agriculture – the mainstay of Kenya's economy. A large component of the Gross National Product (G.N.P) of Kenya is made up of goods and services produced and provided by women. Yet in spite of their numbers and contributions, women have continued to suffer higher illiteracy rates. School enrolments are lower for girls than for boys, and in higher institutions, opportunities for vocational and on the job training for women, are relatively fewer in both the traditional and modern sectors. Women in Kenya are doubly exploited. They suffer the same class exploitation and oppression as men, as members of the toiling masses under capitalism, and may suffer additional exploitation by virtue of their sex. For instance, in rural Kenyan districts, in the Kenyan highlands and in most forms of land tenure where agriculture is the main means of livelihood, women are generally excluded from any direct ownership of land or other property. The husband/father has the full rights of user (ownership) and in the privately owned lands, the right to bequeath it to his heirs, who are his sons or male relatives. Women are conditioned and given opinions by the prevailing ideology and social norms, which denigrate their role while consecrating male supremacy and chauvinism. The prevailing bourgeois ideology inculcates in the woman a false and subservient consciousness. Deluding her into succumbing and accepting male supremacy as intrinsic in his biological make-up, as something natural and immutable. The perspective of her own social status is thereby limited within the framework of her subservience to man.

This study analyses Nietzsche's moral philosophy and attempts to apply it to the experience of women in post-colonial Kenya. Morals have an important role to

play in the humanization of society. Moral imperatives are not external; they are internalized and adopted according to an individual's code. Nietzsche's ethics of humanism, which we will examine at a later chapter, challenges the view of women as an abstract category, a view that has often obscured the nature and origin of the problem by blaming the victims. Nietzsche's philosophy enables us to view women as people who within particular historical situations are continually making choices about how they see and align themselves.

The target group of the research and subsequent thesis is professional Kenyan women of African origin. Mostly educated, these elitist women belong to a number of local and international feminist² associations, FAWE, FIDA. They know their rights and they know the law. As members of the propertied working class they have money of their own. The toiling rural counterpart looks up to them for leadership and the provision of the necessary theory and framework for liberation. Incidentally, the tragedy of the bulk of rural women who are numerically superior is that they can neither provide political leadership for themselves nor independently chart out their development path without the intrusion of the elitist women. In the rural areas women are vulnerable to illiteracy, superstition, ignorance, unphilosophical conduct of ruthless husbands, and arrogant and intransigent public administrators.³ The rural women are the most exploited and oppressed sector of the Kenyan society. They are exploited as mothers, wives, peasants and workers. They are silenced by a combination of haphazard political knowledge, ignorance of their constitutional, democratic and human rights, sexist discrimination and philosophical unawareness in a male-dominated and directed nation. Although this study focuses on the post-colonial Kenyan women, references are made to the colonial period because the contemporary structures conditioning women's position in the Kenyan economy and society are rooted in the colonial era.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

All over Kenya, the unequal position of women is being radically challenged. This has inspired a considerable amount of scholarship in areas previously unexplored. Many books have been written from anthropological and sociological points of view whether dealing with cultural, social, economic or political issues that affect women. Most of this literature tends to present a simplified and frozen picture of the nature of development and contradiction of women's exploitation, oppression and marginalization. One net effect of this has been the portrayal of women as the problem rather than as part of the solution to their tribulations.

The dismal performance of women seeking political office in the just concluded general elections did not help matters any. One Kenyan put it this way:

"Women form the majority of voters in the country and the fact they did not make much impact in favour of the relatively few women candidates, would, sadly, suggest that women are guilty of discrimination against themselves, and must from now on strive to remove the lags from their own eyes before they can indulge in their usual hobby of pointing accusing fingers at their male compatriots whenever their fortunes fall below expectations"⁴

Another one put this way:

"It was ridiculous for women to ask to have leadership handed to them when they had the means to grab it."⁵

According to Wambui Otieno, a renowned feminist,

"Women have literally decided to be beggars of power instead of being distributors. In essence, women have been asking men to give them power while they have it in their hands."⁶

The primary task of liberation is seen to belong to women themselves. The problem, according to this popular view, begins and ends with women. For example, in the last general election, women who are the majority of voters, failed one of their own in her bid to capture the highest office in the land. This view suppresses the important creative record of what women have done and presents a misleading impression of women's actual circumstances. The philosophical question is; Do women

accept subjugation or is this a part of their own connivance? Is an individual a self-propelled force or conditioned by external influences?

The tendency to conform rather than to realize ourselves is a dominant theme in Nietzsche's works. The leitmotif of Nietzsche's life and thought, the theme of the individual who seeks self-perfection far from the modern world is important for our study for it, encourages us to look at self-emancipation vis-à-vis social emancipation. According to Nancy Friday:

"There is no changed history for women until each faces her own."⁷

Changing oneself is a part of changing the world. The above view suppresses the important creative record of what women have done and presents a misleading impression of women's actual circumstances.

Nietzsche's moral philosophy and ethical prescriptions contain certain value judgements that are deemed applicable and relevant to this problem. Personal self-realization is a vital element. The problematic is that it could be linked to the project of social emancipation or it could focus on the unfolding of personality as an end in itself. Nietzsche's interpretation maintains that the true subject of enquiry is the human being rather than the attempt to change external social institutions. Ethics is important because it determines the choices we make. We seek what attracts, what pleases, what invites viz. beauty, harmony, order and kindness. We recognize and shun the opposite of these things i.e. chaos, ugliness, dirt, cruelty.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Social and political activists on behalf of women have been calling for a moral revolution, asking that females be treated on an equal footing with males. Some reforms that are demanded are required by straightforward applications of familiar

moral principles. For example, that a woman and man should get the same pay for the same work.

Within traditional moral outlooks, it is sometimes not easy to make sense of some of these demands. Many people find the normal fervour and depth of feeling with which these issues are discussed difficult to understand. For example, some persons profess to be genuinely puzzled about why the use of the term “man” as used to mean human is offensive to many women. Many people still do not understand the demand for change in our ways of speaking about men and women. This shows the need for new moral categories: new ways of thinking about human beings.

The purpose of this study is to discover whether particular attitudes serve to perpetuate oppression and thereby define the context within which men and women negotiate their individual identities and relationships with one another. Do such attitudes prevent women in particular from acquiring the means to be self-determined?

This study strives to discover whether women in Kenya have been subjected to a variety of influences that induce the traits they exhibit. Are our personalities socially produced? Is there such a thing as “women’s nature” and what in effect constitutes a feminine personality?

It is the purpose of the study to investigate whether categories of sex differences have prevented full development of human potentials and a richer culture; a culture rich in contrasting values. Will the abolition of sex differences in society mean a sacrifice in its complexity?

If the social insistence upon different personalities for the two sexes results in so much confusion and disorientation, can we imagine a society that abandons these distinctions without abandoning the values that are at present dependent upon them?

Our interest in this study is philosophical. The concern is to draw up an agenda for action after concrete analysis. This goes over and above mere historical analysis

because, as a developed study and discipline, philosophy has for its purpose, the analysis and clarification of human aims and actions, problems and ideas.

Philosophy as a humanistic discipline is used to interpret, understand and govern human conduct in historical development. To engage in philosophical thinking is essentially to engage in thinking about the meaning and import of life. Philosophy comes out of life and is very often a reflection of life. A philosopher is one whose concern focuses on specific attention to the quality of human life and the evolution of his knowledge about the environment.

As a criticism philosophy boldly analyses and brings before the Supreme Court of mind prevailing human values; ideas and institutions. Every institution of society is based on philosophic ideas whether that institution is the law, government, religion, the family, marriage, industry, business or education. Hence the present study is informed by the fact that the problem of women in Kenya today is complex. Its problems are determined by varied, often contradictory historical forces, rooted in material reality and are sustained by multifaceted struggles. These forces and processes can only be unraveled through concrete analysis.

1.3 Related research

Nietzsche devoted very little of his work to the study of gender per se viz.: sex and sexuality. What Nietzsche had to say on the subject is contained in short essays spread throughout his writings. A comprehensive treatment of this subject will be attempted in chapter 2.

In works that deal specifically with women in Kenya, few, if any have been philosophical in nature. A lot of these works have been written from anthropological and sociological points of view whether dealing with cultural, social, economic, and political issues that affect women.

In Kenya, Studies include for example: A. Pala, T. Awori and A. Krystal, ed. The Participation of Women in Kenya Society. Kenya literature bureau, Nairobi, 1978; Cobbo. African Women, Their Struggle for Economic Independence, Zed Press, London 1980; and Z. Meghji, C. Kirayu and R. Meghji. The Woman Cooperator and Development. Maarifa Publishers, Nairobi, 1985.

These works are perceptive, but as in most anthropological and sociological literature, they lack a philosophical dimension. They tend therefore to present a rather simplified and frozen picture of the nature of development and contradiction of women's exploitation, oppression and marginalization.

There are some historical works dealing with women such as are found in the collections by Hay Sticher, Hafkin and Bay and Were. These include M.J Hay and S. Sticher, eds, African Women South of the Sahara, Longman, London, 1984; N. Hafkin and Bay E. eds, Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change, Stanford University, Stanford 1976; G.S. Were, ed. Women and Development in Africa, Journal of Eastern and Development, vol. 15, 1985.

These works appear overwhelmed by the fact of women's oppression. Women are portrayed as mere victims and not actors who are involved in shaping their own lives and destinies.

Among the few studies conducted on Kenyan women in general have been (a) Government Commissioned Reports (b) Independent studies presented at the 1985 U.N Women's decade and N.G.O's forum, both of which were held in Nairobi.

Government reports provide useful data but the interpretations offered are inadequate. Often they merely restate (and monotonously) that there is no official discrimination against women in Kenya. Examples of these report include J. Ojiambo, Training Women for Non-Traditional Occupations in Kenya, study on behalf of the government of Kenya and the I.L.O, Nairobi, July 1985; Ministry of Finance and

Planning, Central Bureau of Statistics Women of Kenya, Review and evaluation of progress, 1985.

The goal of these papers is not to provide systematic analysis but are merely brief statements of stocktaking. Questions regarding the participation of women are dealt with in summary fashion, yet sex and sexuality, especially in the institutionalized forms of courtship, marriage and the family are crucial in moulding individuals and cultures.

One Kenyan philosopher, Gerald A. Benaars in his book Ethics, Education and Development: East African Educational Publishers Ltd, Nairobi, 1993 has addressed the issue, although only four pages of this text analyses the gender issue yet it is an introductory text for students in African colleges and Universities.

Philosophers' reluctance to deal with sex can be traced to the Western philosophical tradition of rejecting the body and all things corporal. For example, in the dialogue in which Plato introduces the "war" between the philosophers and the poets, he has the prophetess advise Socrates that the contemplation of pure beauty "is the life of men to live."⁸

Aristotle (384-322 BC), who for 18 years was a student of Plato and considered among the great philosophers, was very contemptuous about women.

He had this to say:

"Woman is more compassionate than man, more easily moved to tears. At the same time she is more jealous, more querulous, more apt to scold and to strike. She is furthermore, more prone to despondency and less hopeful than man, more devoid of shame or self-respect, more false of speech, more deceptive and of more retentive memory. She is also more wakeful, more shrinking, more difficult to rouse to action and she requires a smaller amount of nutriment."⁹

Epictetus [C55 – 135 A.D], a stoic philosopher and moralist, argued that rationality and sexuality are incompatible, and hence there is no room for sex in a truly philosophical life. Like Plato, he regarded the sensual life as unworthy of serious philosophical contemplation.

Ancient philosophers tended to abandon sex to the poets because of the general feeling in those times that commitment to reason and the inherent unreasonableness of sexual passion, conflicted. Suppression of libido was regarded as intrinsically praiseworthy.

The great medieval philosophers, St. Augustine of Hippo [C354-430] and St. Thomas Aquinas [C125-74] followed the anti-sexual precedent of

Plato and Epictetus. However, their writings form a somewhat different tradition since they had their origins in Biblical writings and traditions. They analyzed and defended the institutions of monogamous marriage with a series of expositions and arguments that still shape contemporary views, not to mention the fact that they have provided us with one of the very few bodies of philosophical literature dealing with sex.

The typical expression of medieval thought is found in the works of Thomas Aquinas, who developed the traditional eightfold truth on the subject:

1. Seminal discharge defines the essence of sexual intercourse;
2. The only moral function of sexual intercourse is procreation (hence the emission of semen in any way that in itself prevents procreation is unnatural and immoral);
3. Procreation naturally completes itself in the generation of an adult;
4. Those who engage in sexual intercourse should provide whatever is necessary to rear any creature they procreate;
5. An adulterous monogamous marriage is the best environment for rearing offspring to become adults;
6. Females are inferior to males;
7. The male acts as the female's governor in marriage;

8. Divorce is improper¹⁰. [Note – Proposition 7 would render unjust a male's divorce of a female while proposition 6 would make a female generated divorce inappropriate].

Between them, the above propositions describe a monogamous, sexually unequal, paternalistic patriarchy that proscribes divorce and alternative marital and sexual relationships, including recreational and non-procreative sexual intercourse – for example, masturbation, contraception, oral intercourse, homosexual and lesbian intercourse.

True, contemporary society is neither as rigid nor traditional but it still partakes of the tradition more than might be apparent. For instance, the family may have many functions in our society but its true primary functions include: to provide for and protect an exclusive sexual relationship between a man and a woman, and to provide for the parenting of children. Neither of these functions, strictly speaking, would be required of sex partners in a contratraditional society. Sex partners in such a society may be permanent 'bachelors': there would be no sexual exclusivity or sexually determined parenting.

Contratraditional society may be mirrored in the communalistic world of Plato's 'Republic,' the libertine world of Marquis de Sade or the Harmonian world of Charles Fourier. This society would have a post-marital culture, one without families and different from any known culture that has played a role in any civilization known to history.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, most of the philosophers were bachelor males dedicated to the life of reason. Sex was viewed as an antirational distraction unworthy of serious comment. Sexual issues were addressed only to reinforce the traditional view of marriage. In "Of Polygamy and Divorces", for example, David Hume (1711-1776) defends classic Western marriage ("an engagement entered into by mutual

consent and has for its ends the propagation of the species”), argues that polygamy and divorce are inimical to those ends.¹¹

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) defends the tradition in his precritical work Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and the sublime 1763.¹² According to him, promiscuity “degenerates into excess and dissoluteness”. In matrimonial life the united pair should constitute a single moral person animated and governed by the understanding of the man and the taste of the wife. This is because woman is subordinate to man. Elaborating on the nature of women, he had this to say:

“The person who is silent as a mute goes to one extreme: the person who is loquacious goes to the opposite. Both tendencies are weaknesses. Men are liable to the first, women to the second. Someone has said that women are talkative because the training of infants is their special charge, and their talkativeness soon teaches a child to speak, because they can chatter to it all day long. If men had the care of children they would take much longer to learn to talk.....All this is by the way, we shall now pass to more weighty matters”¹³

The works of the major philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that is, Thomas Aquinas [1588-1679], Rene `De' Carte's [1596-1650], Benedict de Spinoza [1632-1677], G.W. Leibniz [1646-1716], Male Branche, John Locke [1632-1714], George Berkeley [1685-1753], Jean Jacques Rousseau [1712-78], Johann Gottlieb Fichte [1762-1814], E. Godwin, David Humē [1711-1776], Immanuel Kant [1724-1806], have very little writings of sex and its attendant institutions.

British moralists' major essays on ethics in 18th century from Ralph Cudworth to Jeremy Bentham apparently did not consider sexual intercourse, gender roles, marriage or parental roles to be topics worthy of discussion.¹⁴

Basic sexual issues of the nineteenth century are exhibited in the works of Condorcet, Wollstonecraft, Godwin, Fichte, Mill and Nitzsche. Nineteenth century writers either had serious reservations about the traditional conception of sex, gender roles and marriage or defended the tradition in the face of objections of critics.

In the mid nineteenth century because of the rise of feminism as a political movement, the years between Des Gouges and John Stuart, saw a radical break with

the classical traditional philosophical works. The basic position was - Equality of gender roles through equal education; equal property rights; equal rights in marriage; and above all, absolute legal equality. Mill put this as his central point in *On the subjugation of women*:

“The principles which regulates the existing relations between the two sexes – the legal subordination of one sex to the other – is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement, and.... It ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting to no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.”¹⁵

Nineteenth century Counter – a revolutionary anti-feminism exhibited itself in the works of philosophical libertines as well as the writings of traditionalist. One such traditionalist being Johan Gottlieb Fichte [1762-1820], a German philosopher, whose theory of the nature of males and females has its roots in Aristotelian biology. In the *Generation of Animals*¹⁶, Aristotle argued that the female is a passive receptacle in procreation, while the male is the active generative principle.

Fichte develops the classic male chauvinist position in his writings on sexual philosophy and, especially on the nature of the female gender:

“As a rule, woman is either a maid or married... if she is married, her whole dignity depends upon her being completely subjugated, and seeming to be so subjected to her husband. Her husband is therefore the administrator of all her rights in consequence of her own necessary will; and she wishes those rights asserted and exercised only in so far as he wishes it. He is her natural representative in the state and in the whole society. She cannot even allow herself to think for the moment that she should exercise herself her rights in the state.”¹⁷

The substance of Fichte’s views are both contemporary and radical. The central thrust of his arguments is that, women are intrinsically the equals of men and that the female gender role (femininity) is essentially and anti-human. Thus far, his analysis is consistent with radical feminism.¹⁸ Like the radical feminist, he sees the situation as one in which a woman must sacrifice her femininity to her humanity or her humanity to her femininity. Fichte opted for the latter view because he was of the view that the interest of the species overrides those of its individual members. Because of the species’ self-preserving instinct, procreation demands the sacrifice of women’s’ humanity to their femininity.

Anti-feminist philosophical libertines works climaxed in A. Schopenhauer's [1788-1860] essay *On Women*, written after the feminist aspects of the libertarian revolutionary movements of 1848. He argues herein that nature has determined that the female is merely a mechanism by which mankind reproduces himself and since monogamy limits man's ability to reproduce himself, it must be replaced by polygamy;

"It is only the man whose intellect is clouded by his sexual impulses that could give the name of 'the fair sex' to that undersized, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped and short legged race; for the whole beauty of the sex is bound up with this impulse. Instead of calling them beautiful, there would be more warrant for describing women as the unaesthetic sex...."¹⁹

And since women exist in the main solely for the propagation of the species, and are not destined for anything else, they live, as a rule, more for the species than for the individual.

They form the 'sexus sequior' – the second sex, inferior in every respect to the first; their infirmities should be treated with consideration; but to show them great reverence is extremely ridiculous, and lowers us in their eyes. When nature made two divisions of the human race, she did not draw the line exactly through the middle. These divisions are polar and opposed to each other, it is true, but the difference between them is not qualitative merely, it is also quantitative.

In Nietzsche's [1844-1900] works, the subsidiary procreative role of women is a constant. Nature determines that a woman's role is the propagation of the species, any other activities by females are perverse;

"When a woman has scholarly inclinations there is generally something wrong with her sexual nature; barrenness itself conduces to a certain virility of taste: man if I may say so, is the barren animal."²⁰

If women are naturally incapable of creative intellectual endeavour and if as essentially herd creatures they threaten to mire males in herd mentality (and hence

must be subdued), they are nonetheless capable of fulfilling their procreative function in the service of evolution.

Twentieth century sexual philosophy begins with Bertrand Russell whose *Marriage and Morals* blends feminism, libertinism, and traditionalism. In 1943, Jean Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (chapter 3 section 2) contributes further to philosophical literature on the subject.

Apart from these, the only other major contributions were Ortega y Gasset's *On Love* (1939) Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and the chapter on "The body in its sexual being" in Merleau Ponty's *The Phenomenology of Perception* [1945].

Beauvoieur's, 'Second Sex' is regarded as a classic in modern feminist literature. Her insights were inherited by several generations of British and American feminists. Her views were a radical departure from libertinism and traditionalism. *The Second Sex* prepared the way for radical feminist claims that: Patriarchy is the universal constant in all political and economic systems; that sexism dates from the beginning of history; that society is a repertoire of manouvres in which male subjects establish power over female objects. It was claimed that rape, pornography, prostitution, marriage, heterosexuality, are all impositions of male power over women.

Major twentieth century philosophers not previously mentioned did not write anything on sexual philosophy. The major philosophers we have in mind are J.L Austin -, Rudolf Carnap, Martin Heidegger, E. Husserl, James Peirce, Alfred Whitehead and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

The *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (published in 1967) has no entries under 'adultery', 'contraception', 'engagement', 'marriage', 'feminism', 'liberalism', 'monogamy', 'procreation' 'sex' or 'women'.

After 1968, articles on sexual philosophy began to reappear in philosophical journals. This resurgence can be attributed to the newly emergent feminist movement dating from the foundation of NOW in 1965²¹ and the simultaneous rebirth of libertinism in the counter-cultural revolution of the late sixties. Social conditions were changing. Alongside this, a new philosophical climate was developing. Logical positivism had spent itself living Anglo-American philosophers in the 'analytic' tradition receptive of refocusing philosophical inquiry.

The existential-phenomenological tradition of Husserl, Heidegger, Satre, Merleau-ponty, Marcel, Ricoeur and Ortega retained its pre-occupation with man's concrete existence thereby challenging analytical traditions to address themselves to realities such as sex and gender. This challenge was taken up by Thomas Nagel in his pioneering essay of 1969 "Sexual Perversion" and others have since joined the discussion. These philosophers include Robert Baker, Michael Bayes, Marilyn Frye, Alison Jagger, John Mc Murtry, Sara Ruddick, Judith Jarvis Thompson, Richard Wasserstrom and D.P Verene.

Kenyan philosophers have yet to address themselves to the systematic rethinking of sex roles. Although the number of philosophical literature is steadily increasing, most of them do not address specifically, the women question. Most practising feminists do not have time for theory. Philosophy is believed to be a luxury for Ivory Tower intellectuals. It is our belief that this study will be better placed to confront a sexual ethics that sets standards for men and women.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.4.1 The Operational definition of Oppression

An act is oppressive only when it prevents a person from being more fully human. Oppression is denial of the right to be human. This act is cruel and unjust.

Throughout the research, the word oppression has been used to refer to any situation in which one person A objectively exploits one B or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person.²² Such a situation in itself constitutes violence because it interferes with man's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human.

Being oppressed implies the absence of choices. Many women in our society in Kenya today do have choices inadequate as they are. It is, therefore, necessary to clarify that the terms oppression, exploitation²³ and discrimination²⁴ more accurately describe the lot of women collectively in Kenya.

Many women do not join organised resistance against sexism²⁵ precisely because sexism has not meant an absolute lack of choices. This is particularly true of the middle-class women in Kenya today. They may know they are discriminated against on the basis of sex but they do not equate this with oppression.

The term 'oppression' is important because it places feminist struggle in a radical political framework. The rebirth of feminism²⁶ coincided with the use of the term 'oppression'.

Common sense daily speech does not speak about oppression but about a 'feminine' condition; it refers back to a naturalistic explanation: to a constraint of nature, an exterior reality out of reach and unmodified by human action. Oppression refers to a choice, an explanation and a situation that is political. It refers to a notion of political origin

1.4.2 Operational definition of Morality

The term morality as used in this research is to be distinguished from ethics. In our everyday language, many people use the terms interchangeably. Philosophers have generally, for the purposes of clarity, confined the usage of the terms 'morals' and

'morality' to the realm of practice. When they say that someone is morally good they mean that the actions of that person are praiseworthy.

Ethics is the Science of Conduct²⁷ and is a term that refers not directly to practice but to theory. Philosophers would not ordinarily say that someone is an ethically good person, but a good ethicist, meaning that the person's theories about ethics are worthy of serious consideration.

Nevertheless, we should also recognize that they are intimately connected with each other. Ethics is the theoretical examination of morality, and thus is the equivalent of what some philosophers have called "moral philosophy" or "theory of morals".

The term morality has been used throughout this research to mean "rightness or honesty of behaviour of an action."²⁸ But a moral action may be right or wrong.

The ethicist's interest is theoretical, that is, trying to understand the basic principles underlying a given subject matter. The interest of the moralist is practical that is, trying to help people become better.

1.5 Research hypothesis

Women are the main obstacles in the amelioration of their socio-economic restraints.

1.6 Methodology

This research adopted the analytical conceptual method. The justification for this is that the whole research was dialectically conducted within a specific historical perspective and time. It embraced both library and field investigation through interviews. Information was gathered from journals, newspapers, books, unpublished theses and seminar reports. Discussions were held with women in leadership positions at various levels. When sampling was being done we were careful to involve women whose work involved dealing with the

female gender on a day to day basis. These women were deemed to be in a better position to know what is yet to be covered.

A random selection of questions was asked with a view to obtaining a clear insight into changing attitudes and patterns of behaviour in relation to women. Most of the interviews were conducted individually. Some informants were interviewed more than once.

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CHAPTER TWO - NIETZSCHE'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Introduction

Freidrich Nietzsche was chosen for this study because his moral philosophy contains certain ethical prescriptions that are deemed relevant to the problems faced by women in Kenya today. His writings are best seen as belonging to the great tradition of European moral essayists and aphorists beginning with Montaigne continuing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with writers such as La Rochefoucauld and Vauvenargues and later during Nietzsche's formative years with the essays of A. Schopenhauer and R. W. Emerson. According to Earnest Jones,

Freud's biographer, Freud several times said of Nietzsche that he had a more penetrating knowledge of himself than any other man who ever lived and was ever likely to live¹

Throughout his works, Nietzsche touches on epistemological questions that are very much alive at present. Among these are questions raised by the sociology of knowledge, the relation between the truth of a doctrine and its historical or social genesis. Since Plato, indeed few can match the breadth, depth and passion of his mind.²

More than any other philosopher of the past one hundred years, Nietzsche represents a major historical event. His ideas are of concern not only to members of one nation or community nor alone to philosophers, but to men everywhere and they have had repercussions in recent history and literature as well as in psychology and religious thought. He is an essential figure in the history of philosophy, the iconoclast who heralded some of the most important philosophical movements of the twentieth century. He was a serious ethicist who called into question the very basis of the morality that Immanuel Kant and other

philosophers merely took for granted and analyzed. Nietzsche is not so much an object of scholarship as a mirror of self-reflection and a probe for self-identity. This is probably why his power has not been undermined by decades of the wrong kinds of readers, the kind of enthusiasts, the wrong of interpretations. Robert C Solomon puts it this way;

“For decades, scholars who understood the categorical imperative without asking about Kant’s drinking habits insisted on knowing about Nietzsche’s insanity (was it syphilis?). Philosophers who would never have ignored Frege for his anti-Semitism rejected Nietzsche because of his (posthumous) influence on the Kaiser and through his twisted sister on Hitler. Nietzsche’s notorious views on women are taken to be the refutation of his entire philosophy (are his comments any less nasty about Goethe or Socrates - his avowed heroes?) And then of course, there is Nietzsche’s - shall we say it - virginity! has anything ever served better to refute a philosopher - unless, of course, he is Kant?”³

Nietzsche was an impassioned and dedicated moralist and behind this research topic is a recognition of his renewed importance, not just as a rediscovered topic or tool for intellectual criticism for scholars but a profound source of inspiration to men everywhere. Nietzsche’s thoughts do not come to us in neat packages of systematic thinking. In actual fact his thinking is one great protest against the logical construction of a philosophical system. Reading and interpreting Nietzsche is not easy because there is not one way of getting him right but there are many ways of getting him wrong. For instance, a lot of European philosophers have not approached him in a scholarly manner. They have acquired the habit of assimilating Nietzsche, or rather some myth about him to their own concerns. As a result Nietzsche has become nearly all things to all men. Such symbiotic relations to Nietzsche can be found most notably in the ‘existentialist’ Nietzsche. (1936), of Karl Jaspers, in Jaspers further influential linking of Nietzsche with Kierkegaard, and in Martin Heidegger’s Ontological Nietzsche (1961). More recently, Michael Foucault, has placed Nietzsche in the

uncongenial company of Marx and Freud who, as a trinity, are said to have provided 'the postulates of modern hermeneutics'.

Karl Jaspers wrote of Nietzsche in 1936 that one had not thoroughly read Nietzsche until for every claim, he or she had also found the contradiction.⁴ Nietzsche shifted from idea to idea and from style to style. While his works add up to a life long masterpiece, his philosophy is not of a piece. For instance, his thoughts on the nature of man, religion, politics, music and art are scattered over many of his writings and only grow into coherent unity when viewed within the total design of his thinking.

Though a prolific writer, but partly as a consequence of such unevenness of temper and quality in his work, it is worth noting that some of his most significant philosophical perceptions have tended to suffer neglect by comparison with his more dubious and unsavoury utterances. In particular, his contributions to the understanding of mind and consciousness- for example, his conception of thought as answering to personal or social needs, his theory of language as determining fundamental attitudes to experience, his analysis in depth of systems of ethics as institutions developed by men for their own purposes and therefore always open to revision or replacement are only beginning to be fully or fairly appreciated.

Nietzsche's books are easier to read but harder to understand than those of almost any other thinker. The main reason for this is that Nietzsche's style makes impossible the systematic approach usually adopted in the study of other thinkers. The elusive style characteristic of Nietzsche's way of thinking and writing is

called manadologic.⁴ Some people have been quick to dismiss Nietzsche as a philosopher because he had no system. This argument is however hardly cogent. Schelling, Hegel, Spinoza and Aquinas had their systems; in Kant and Plato's case the word is less applicable. Moreover, there are many important philosophers who did not have systems. In this category fall Socrates and even the pre-Socrates.

Nietzsche had strong philosophical reasons for rejecting a system. Like almost all other philosophers and unlike Hegel, he believed that a system must necessarily be based on premises which it cannot by its very nature question. The system thinker begins with primary assumptions from which he draws a net of inferences and thus deduces his system; but he cannot from within his system, establish the truth of his premises. He takes them for granted, whereas those self-evident truths may not seem so to others. In this sense they are arbitrary and Nietzsche believed reducible to the subjective make-up of the thinker. Nietzsche expressed his own dissatisfaction thus;

“ The will to a system, in a philosopher, morally speaking, a subtle corruption, a disease of the character; a morally speaking, his will to appear more stupid than he is.... I am not bigoted enough for a system- and not even for my system”⁵

Nietzsche objects to the failure to question one's own assumptions. It is the most striking characteristic of 'dialectical' thinking from Socrates to Hegel and Nietzsche, that it is, a search for hidden presumptions rather than a quest for solutions. The starting point of such dialectical inquiry is not a set of premises but a problem situation, and Plato excelled at giving a concrete and dramatic setting to this. Nietzsche was more consistently “dialectical”- he was, like Socrates, a far

more rigorous questioner and was by no means prepared to admit that the systems of the past were overwhelmingly true. All assumptions had to be questioned. No less than Hegel, Nietzsche wanted philosophy to become scientific.

[Wissenschaftlich], Science, however, did not mean the same to both thinkers. Nietzsche when he spoke of science had in mind the “gay science” of fearless experiment and the goodwill to accept new evidence and to abandon previous positions if necessary. Many of his most promising insights were developed only after his death by other writers; Freud and Adler, Jung and Klages, G. Gundolf and Speingler, Scheler and Hartmann, Heidegger and Jaspers, Shaw and Satre and a host of others.

It would be false however to conclude that Nietzsche was a mere aphorist and not a philosopher in his own right. While it is true that he did not follow up on all his suggestions, he succeeded in building a coherent and noteworthy philosophy which could well surpass the systems of his successors in breadth, depth and originality. It is important for this study to give a brief outline of Nietzsche’s biography because some aspects of his life are admittedly relevant to a study of his philosophy.

2.2 NIETZSCHE’S BIOGRAPHY

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche[1844-1900]was born on October 15th. 1844 in Rocken, a small village in Prussian Saxony. He was the son of a Lutheran minister and grandson of two Lutheran clergymen. His father died when he was only four ,in a state of mental disorder. The family then moved to Naumburg where Nietzsche spent the rest of his childhood as the only male member of a

household which consisted of five pious women viz: his mother, sister, grandmother and two aunts.

It is very tempting to attach a psycho-analytical significance to these experiences and conclude that his philosophy is a reaction and a protest against his childhood. Indeed his attitude towards Luther Christianity, small town morals and women may well have had their roots in such early moral shocks. This kind of approach, while frequently adopted bars any adequate understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy. The thought of a philosopher may be partly occasioned by early experiences but the conception of strict causality is not applicable here. A philosopher's spiritual evolution cannot possibly be traced back solely to personal experiences.

In 1858, Nietzsche was sent to the famous school of Pforta where he was admitted on a scholarship. He did exceptionally good work in religion, German literature and classics. In 1864, he joined Bonn University where he studied theology and classical philosophy, composed music and fought with his professors until he transferred to the University of Leipzig in 1865. Actually, his most revered teacher at Bonn had been Friedrich Ritschl, whose research in antiquity determined for at least a whole generation, the standards of research in this field, and when Ritschl transferred his University teaching to Leipzig, Nietzsche followed him there. Friedrich Ritschl was greatly impressed by Nietzsche's studies in classical philosophy. His enthusiastic recommendations was largely responsible for Nietzsche being appointed to a chair at the university of Basle at the age 24. This was in 1869 when he was appointed professor of classics. Herein he was introduced to Cosima Wagner and they became friends.

He taught at Basel for ten years (from 1869-1879) when he retired because of poor health. This illness may have been connected with his brief military service in 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War. His previous military training in 1876 had been cut short by injuries contracted through a fall from his horse, and by 1870, he was a Swiss citizen. When the war broke out he volunteered for service as a medical orderly. While ministering and unrelieved for three days and nights to six men who had severe dysentery and diphtheria, Nietzsche caught both diseases and delivering his charges to a field hospital, required medical attention himself. The strain of his brief service in the Franco-Prussian war forced his early retirement.

The story of Nietzsche's physical sufferings also tempts us to assign a psychological significance to them. His frequent attacks of migraine, headaches ever recurring stomach ailments, long period of weakness, paralyzed his creative strength. They also had the unintended consequence of enabling him to resist the whims of his body by spiritual energies. In his will to overpower his illness, he even came to regard health without an inward spiritual substance as nothing but sickness, whereas an undefeated spiritual existence was only possible in resistance to physical obstacles of which he had more than his fair share.

Nietzsche's friendship with Wagner climaxed during his Basel period. He revered Wagner as an eminent composer but regarded him too as a kind of prophetic apparition in a drab age of mediocrity. To Nietzsche, Wagner was living proof that true genius is independent of time and circumstance. Wagner's hostility to the Christian faith and his bold revival of Germanic paganism in his

operas made a lasting impression upon the young Nietzsche. Traces of these influences can be seen in Nietzsche's later works, especially The Antichrist. According to Wagner, Christianity was alien to Germanic culture. It had Jewish roots. It created nothing but hypocrisy, the negation of the will to power: it would lead to shameful weakness and the ultimate cessation of life. Wagner believed Christianity to have choked off and stifled the artistic impulses of the German nation.

Nietzsche later turned at last against Richard Wagner whose folk mania, anti semitism and pompous self deification repelled Nietzsche more and more. Later he even attacked Wagner publicly in his writings.

Nietzsche's literary production began with The Birth of Tragedy (1872) - an attempt to interpret Greek art and drama in the light of Schopenhauer's philosophy. His Untimely meditations (1873 -1876) were critical and controversial, but the last two dedicated to Schopenhauer and Wagner presented appreciative interpretations of the two great minds. Human All too Human appeared in 1878. About this time, he resigned from the University once and for all, and was to live the rest of his life on a small pension. The Dawn of Day published in 1881 The Gay Science (1882). His mock-biblical literary masterpiece, Thus Spoke Zarathustra appeared in 4 parts between 1883 and 1885, Beyond Good and Evil (1886), Genealogy of Morals (1887), The Twilight of the Idols (1889), The AntiChrist, Nietzsche contra Wagner and Ecce Homo {Not published until 1908} Nietzsche collapsed in Turin in January of 1889, according to most sources, weeping and hugging a horse in the street to protect it from a beating. He never again regained his mental faculties. He had to be taken to Basel

and later to a Jena asylum. His mother died in 1836 and his widowed sister Elizabeth took him to Weimar and nursed him for the rest of his life. Nietzsche died on 25th August, 1900 at Weimar, right at the beginning of the century whose chaos he had so thoroughly anticipated.

From this brief biography we can undoubtedly say that the most strongly determining factors in Nietzsche's spiritual evolution were his enthusiasm for the world of Greek and Roman antiquity his interest in contemporary philosophy, especially in Schopenhauer; his enthusiasm for music, and his devotion to Wagner, passing as the friendship of the two proved to be; his passionate interest in every phase of artistic and literary life at Bonn and later in Leipzig together with the turbulent political events of his time.

2.21 The Nietzsche Legend

Before his death in 1900 Nietzsche had already become a myth. Indeed his life has attracted more attention from interpreters of his thought, major novelists, psychiatrists and others than the life of other major philosophers. Misrepresentations of every fact of his life have been crucial for they bear on an understanding of his significance. This situation has led to the assumption that Nietzsche lacked any coherent philosophy and that different readers are bound to come up with different interpretations. This is of course not true and there have been various books written that quite successfully attempt a constructive refutation of the above view. However for the purposes of this study it will suffice to account briefly for the origin of the legend.

Nietzsche's books can be divided into three categories:

(a) Works which Nietzsche completed but did not publish because he collapsed while still negotiating with publishers. In this class belong *The Antichrist*, *Ecce Homo* and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*. They may be treated as Nietzsche's other books:

(b) Notes which Nietzsche used for his lectures at the University of Basel; they are an important source of information concerning his relation to the ancient Greeks; they are full notes and can be read continuously.

(c) Mass of fragments and notes which include unpublished essays long continuous passages brief note books scribbles which were jotted down on alpine hikes and outline of projected works yet to be written. This third part can be further sub-divided into two classes (i) The material which never found its way into a published work and (ii) Notes which were eventually put to use and developed in his later works.

Until Nietzsche became insane in January 1889 his writings received little attention. Later on in the year, after a series of lectures given by George Brandes, his fame began to spread like bush fire. At this time he was lingering in his mother's house hopelessly mad. Elizabeth Forster Nietzsche became her brother's chief apostle and began to fashion the legend. Her interpretations of her brother's thoughts were immediately accepted almost everywhere yet she was a complete lay woman in all that concerned her brother's doctrine. Indeed right up

to the present , books which were violently opposed to her husband's heritage often failed to question the legitimacy of her fusion of this heritage with that of Nietzsche. She published edition after edition of Nietzsche's "collected works" ever rearranging the material and including something new. Nietzsche's last work *Ecce Homo* for example was withheld for years while she spiced her introductions to his other works.

Nietzsche's sister unwittingly laid the foundation for the myth that Nietzsche's thought is hopelessly incoherent, ambiguous, and self-contradictory: and by bringing to her interpretation of her brother's work the heritage of her late husband, she prepared the way for the belief that Nietzsche was a Proto-Nazi. Just when enough of Nietzsche's works and notes had finally been published to make possible a scholarly appraisal of his thought, the first world war broke out. This was a rather unfortunate time for a sober study of an explosive figure like Nietzsche. A lot of people adopted to him to their own purposes. His works had the unintended consequence of inspiring militarism and Nationalism. During those war years the superman began to be associated with the German nation and militarism and imperialism were read into Nietzsche's conception of power, though nothing could have been further from his mind.

Again these misinterpretations were supported and partly inspired by Nietzsche's sister. For instance she congratulated Mussolini on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday for being the noblest disciple of Zarathustra. Nietzsche was made to serve the ideology of National-Socialism and an extensive popular literature grew quickly that added the philosopher to the long line of spiritual

ancestors of the new political faith. William Hubben, aptly summarizes the whole scenario when he says;

“Much of Nietzsche’s contribution to the growth of national socialism was made through the intellectual thievery and compulsory enlistment characteristic of Hitler’s followers.”⁶

2.3 Views on Women And Critical Remarks About Them

Briefly, we shall here consider Nietzsche’s views on women and strive to show that they do not contradict the purposes of this study. Nietzsche devoted very little of his work to the study of gender viz sex and sexuality. What he had to say on the subject is contained in short sketchy essays unrelated to the heart of his philosophical doctrines. This trend can be traced to the Western philosophical tradition of rejecting the body and all things corporeal. Sex was viewed as an anti-rational distraction unworthy of serious consideration.

In his works, the subsidiary procreative role of women is a constant. Nature, according to him determines morality and traditions that are unnatural must be rejected. Thus since nature determines that a woman’s sole role is the propagation of the species, any other activities by females is seen to be perverse. Themes of libertinism abound in his works.

If women are naturally incapable of creative intellectual endeavour and as essentially herd creatures they threaten to mire males in herd mentality (and hence must be subdued), they are nonetheless capable of fulfilling their procreative function in the service of evolution. to quote him:

“Much has Zarathustra spoken also to us women, but never spoke he to us concerning woman. And I answered her: ‘concerning woman, one should only talk unto men’ ‘Talk also unto me of woman,’ said she: ‘I am old enough to forget it presently. And I obliged the old woman and spoke thus unto her: Everything in a woman hath one solution - it is called pregnancy. Man is for woman a means: the purpose is always the child. But what is a woman for man - Two different things wanteth the true man: danger and diversion. Therefore wanteth he woman, as the most dangerous plaything. Man shall be trained for war, and woman for the recreation of the warrior; all else is folly. Too sweet fruits ..these the warrior liketh not. Therefore liketh the woman; bitter is even the sweetest woman. Better than man doeth woman understand children, but man is more childish than woman. In the true man there is a child hidden; It wanteth to play. Up then ye women, and discover the child in man! A plaything let woman be, pure and fine like the precious stone, illumined with the virtues of a world not yet come. Let the beam of a star shine in your love! let your hope say: may I bear the superman” and, Though goest to women? Do not forget thy whip!”⁷ - thus spoke Zarathustra.

Nietzsche’s notorious views on women are taken to be the refutation of his entire philosophy: yet his comments are equally nasty about Goethe and Socrates who were ironically his avowed heroes. It must be understood that hyperbole, sarcasm and rave were his standard rhetorical devices. He could on occasions be very outrageous, often perplexing and it is such confusion that comes out of excessive style and exuberance. Consider this comment about women: “better to fall into the hands of a murderer than into the dreams of a woman in heat?”⁸

Little wonder that those who have focused on Nietzsche’s early writings on the inscrutability of language and ignored his personal commitment and passion have come to regard him as an intellectual trickster, and not an impassioned and dedicated moralist. It should be emphasized here, that the above comments on Nietzsche should not cast doubt on his whole philosophy. Neither should it be proffered as a reason not to take him seriously as so many critics in the past have suggested.

It is a fact that Nietzsche often gave expression to opinions which he had not questioned critically. In his writings and just as in those of any other

encyclopedic philosopher whether it be Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant or Hegel we must distinguish between the human and the all too human elements. Nietzsche's writings contain many all - too human judgments especially about women. To a Nietzschean scholar and a philosopher, such judgments are philosophically irrelevant. 'Ad hominem'⁹ arguments against any philosopher on the basis of such statements seem trivial and hardly pertinent. Nietzsche himself knew that the debauches and vices of the philosopher are always accepted first and made matters of belief¹⁰; and his injustices find exaggerators.¹¹ His views on women do not therefore, affect nor contradict the substance of this study.

2.4 Nietzsche's Philosophy of Power

An understanding of Nietzsche philosophy of power is crucial to an understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche envisaged the will to power as the basic drive of all human efforts. According to Nietzsche, it underlies all human activities.

Nietzsche believed the basic psychological drive to be the will to power. He approached the conception from two fairly distinct points of view. First, he thought of it as a craving for man's worldly success which he repudiated as harmful to man's interest in perfecting himself; secondly, he thought of it as a psychological drive in terms of which many diverse phenomena could be explained. For example, pity, gratitude and self-abasement.

He first used it as a principal to explain behaviour and did not picture it as a virtue. In fact, he used it generally to explain behaviour which he happened to

dislike. He did not exhort people to develop it nor did he speak of it as anything glorious. A later development of this principle was however, a sharp departure from this position.

The will to power was seen to exist both among the powerful - whose high esteem of gratitude Nietzsche would explain thus - and among the impotent whose desire for pity Nietzsche construes as prompted by a will to power.

According to Nietzsche, man wants neither power nor independence as such but freedom to act and realize himself. This point underscores the existential nature of subjectivity. Nietzsche was existentialist, as such he believed that a man becomes what he chooses to be and what he becomes does not follow automatically from heredity, environment, pre-established personality traits or social structure. What he becomes depends upon his freely made decisions to act and to think in a certain way. These decisions constitute his substance, never absolutely fixed but always revisable in new decisions.

When one focuses on existential subjectivity, what appears is a self in process, into which is built no final goal or essence. Man is essentially free, free to choose his own actions, his own projects in the world choices that he must make without guides. No God, no moral law, no political party, no external authority can make them for him. Nothing can be blamed on moral necessity, on the commands of god or even on one's human emotions. Nietzsche's conception of power is closer to the Hegelian notion of spirit because it is conceived essentially as a striving for freedom. Our tendency to conform rather than to realize ourselves is a phenomena Nietzsche tried to explain in terms of the will to

power of all the manifestations of the will to power, that is the elevation of gratitude to the status of a virtue: the desire of neurotics, Christian self-abasement ... of all these manifestations, Nietzsche approved of only the striving for independence and freedom.

The psychological consideration which led Nietzsche to the conception of the will power seems to suggest the possibility of new attempts to show how values can be generated out of nature.

Nietzsche conceded that the will to power may be ruthless and a source of evil doing while power itself does not corrupt but ennobles the mind. the powerful have no need to prove their right either to themselves or to others by oppressing or hurting others. Only the weak man wishes to hurt and see the signs of suffering. Nietzsche of course assumes that the powerful and the impotent are both imbued with the will to power and that extreme of prolonged oppression and frustration may easily pervert this drive and make the oppressed look for petty occasions to assert their will to power by being cruel to others. Nietzsche construed power also as the standard and measure of values. Nietzsche was not relativist. He believed there was a common element making comparative judgements of value about the moral codes of various societies possible:

“A table of good hangs over every people. behold, it is the table of their overcomings: behold it is the voice of their will to power. Praise working is whatever seems difficult to a people, whatever seems indispensable and difficult is called ‘good’ and.... the rarest, the most difficult.. that they call holy”.¹³

Nietzsche believed the pursuit of philosophy to be prompted by the will to power. In this case it is regarded as the will to overcome oneself. The will to

power is essentially a striving to transcend and perfect oneself. Nietzsche's opposition to the conception of a will to live or of a desire for self-preservation is due to this insistence that nothing that is alive is sufficient unto itself. This he states explicitly in Zarathustra;

“And life itself confided this secret to me: ‘Behold it said, “ I am that which must always overcome itself. Indeed you call it a will to procreate a drive to an end to something higher, further, more manifold: but all this is oneRather would I perish than forswear this : and verily where there is perishing there life sacrifices it self for [more] power whatever I create and however much I love it- soon I must oppose it and my love:.....will to existence ;that will does not exist....not will to life but.....will to power There is much that life esteems more highly than life itself”¹⁴.

Nietzsche concluded that men are ever willing to forego satisfactions and give up their lives, if only they could gain immortality which he considered a supreme degree of power.

Nietzsche sees life as essentially dialectical. It is the very essence of the living that it denies itself the gratification of some of its impulses, even that it sacrifices life itself, for more life and power.

Nietzsche believed that the reason that people obeyed the laws that others imposed on them was that they wanted power. They believe it is the way to get ahead and become influential and successful; they fear that an infraction of custom may cause society to retaliate and diminish their power.

Beyond the entire realm of morals, Nietzsche assumed only the weak need to rely on the rules of others. Man, being unique by nature, should be able to generate his own standards, if only he were powerful enough.

Nietzsche's point on this is well understood in terms of the contention that the will to power is essentially a creative force . The powerful man is the

creative man who is not likely to abide by previously established laws. A genuinely, creative act contains its own norms and every creation is a creation of new norms.

Great power reveals itself in great self-mastery. While a weak state may kill dissenters, a strong state should be able to tolerate them. Ultimate power consists in controlling, sublimating and employing one's impulses, not in considering them evil and fighting them.

All human beings have ideals of perfection which generally they find themselves unable to attain. People recognize norms and standards of which they usually fall short. People long for triumph over old age, suffering and death: people yearn for perfection and immortality and seem incapable of fulfillment. People would be 'as gods' but they cannot be so.

Nietzsche assumed this predicament characteristic of the whole cosmos. All nature was pervaded by an eros which he called the will to power. For example, the male insect sacrifices his life to beget offspring and thus to achieve a form of immortality. In the Indian ascetics and Christian martyrs, Nietzsche finds the same yearning for another state of being. They all crave neither the preservation of their lives nor merely freedom from something nor even power as a means to accomplish some specific end: what they desire is power itself: another life, as it were, richer and stronger; a rebirth in beauty and perfection.

Nietzsche was also aware that more often than not, the will to power manifests itself in more aggressive ways. Men dedicate their lives to the accumulation of riches; nations make wars to enslave other nations.

Nature is not perfectly rational and does not fulfill her own longing for perfection efficiently. Recognizing this, Nietzsche speaks of the will to power but he leaves us in no doubt that this drive is an eros and can be fulfilled only through self-perfection.

2.41 Will to Power Versus Pleasure

Nietzsche's philosophy of power entails the repudiation of the pleasure principle as a moral standard. Nietzsche accepts the paradox which recurs in the Gospels....'

"those whose actions express great power will through these actions develop their power"¹⁵.

Nietzsche wasn't hedonist but a proponent of the good life. According to him, men feel a life devoted to the pursuit of power to be a more satisfactory human life than a life devoted to the pursuit of happiness. 'Happiness' is to Nietzsche 'elastic'. Men can enjoy this feeling in a great number of different ways, and it is conceivable that power gives them the greatest possible degree of it. Nietzsche's notion of power is not anti-Christian. Nietzsche claims not only that the feeling of pleasure is an epiphenomenon of the will to power which, in turn, is independent of consciousness.

Nietzsche's conclusions are not that what man enjoys most is suffering rather, he insisted that man by nature strives for something to which pleasure and pain are only incidental. This is a position that can also be documented from the basic writings of Christianity and humanism.

The basic problem is that Nietzsche's polemics often obscure his basic contentions so also do his impassioned diatribes against Christianity which have led many to believe that whatever is Christian is not Nietzschean. In fact, in his keen appreciation of suffering self-sacrifice as indispensable conditions of self-perfection, Nietzsche seems more Christian than most philosophers.

Pleasure is seen as not only incidental to ultimate happiness, but actually renounced altogether as incompatible with the highest power which man yearns for most. Nietzsche's objection to the pleasure standard means, in short, that happiness and pleasure are not identical.

Nietzsche teaches us to differentiate between the real and apparent advancements of human happiness, how neither becoming rich nor being honoured nor being scholarly can raise the single one out of his profound disgruntledness at the worthlessness of his existence, and the striving of these goods receives meaning only through a higher and transfiguring total aim.

The good life is the powerful life, the life of those in full control of their impulses. the good man is the passionate man who is master of his passions. this distinguishes Nietzsche's from the stoic and so he himself thought, from the Christian view. Nietzsche envisaged the artist and the philosopher employing

their passion in spiritual pursuits and are the most nearly perfect of men. He believed that those who are dissatisfied with themselves usually project these dissatisfactions upon the world.

2.42 Views on Nature

Nature is purposive but inefficient. The processes of nature are not perfectly planned and thought out. Nietzsche believed that we could not say in truth that nature is entirely rational as many thinkers of the enlightenment assumed; but nature is not entirely irrational either for it forever strives towards the development of rationality. He believed nature to be nothing but the phenomenology of the will to power and its cravings for power cannot be fulfilled short of the development of reason. Both impulse [passion] and reason are manifestations of the will to power and we cannot speak of a marriage of two diverse principles but only of the self-overcoming of the will to power. His repudiation of the pleasure principle must be viewed in the whole context of his philosophy. He envisages man amidst nature and sees him striving to perfect himself. He finds in man and in all living creatures, an Eros-or a will to power.

Nietzsche is a naturalistic philosopher. He does not consider flesh and spirit entirely discontinuous. Man need not and cannot turn against nature.

Nature and life are not stable norms but dialectical forces: they are as Nietzsche sees them, processes of self-differentiation and self-overcoming. When man tries to master his animal nature and sublimate his impulses, he is only exemplifying a striving which is essentially natural.

2.42 Nietzsche's Cosmology

Nietzsche was a dialectical monist. His basic force (will power) is not only the Dionysian passionate striving, akin to Schopenhauer's irrational will but it is also Apollonian and possesses an inherent capacity to give itself form.

Both Hegel and Nietzsche expressly denied the peaceful self-identity of the basic cosmic force and considered strife a definitive feature of the 'absolute'.

The will to power is always at war with itself. The battle between reason and impulses is only one of countless skirmishes. All natural events, all history and the development of every human being consist in a series of such contests; all that exists strives to transcend itself and is thus engaged in a fight against itself.

Man would be perfect and have complete mastery of himself, though this involves a measure of asceticism and self-denial, and thus a kind of self-overcoming which seems essentially moral. Nietzsche's conception of morality thus has a cosmic setting.

2.5 Nietzsche's Moral Philosophy

Nietzsche maintains that self-overcoming distinguishes the moral from the non-moral. This is not something radically new; it is postulated in Kantian ethics and in the ten commandments. The principle of self-control is also essential to the utilitarian position.

Immanuel Kant, for example, insisted that man is not morally good unless his conduct is marked by the total absence of any psychological inclination and motivated solely by respect for reason. Kant opposed all other views of morality as sheer perversions.

The force and plausibility of utilitarianism are inseparable from its insistence that the individual must overcome himself and subordinate his own interests to those of the greatest number.

In 'primitive' moral codes too, the element of self-control and disciplining of the inclinations is present self-overcoming may thus be considered the common element of all moral codes.

Self-criticism, that is, man's critical reflection of his own intention and action is the core of morality.

Morality always consists in not yielding to impulses: moral codes are indeed systems of injunctions against submission to various impulses; and positive moral commandments always enjoin a victory over animal instincts.

Expediency, is no more than an important characteristic of some moral codes, conceivably of the best - but not, like self-overcoming, the very essence of morality itself.

Nietzsche pictured the triumph over the impulses in terms of sublimation. Reason and the sex drive are both forms of the will to power. The sex drive, however, is an impulse, and in yielding to it in its and sublimated form, man is still the slave

of his passions , and has no power over them . Rationality , on the other hand gives man mastery over himself ; and as the will to power is essentially the 'instinct of freedom ' ,it can find fulfillment only through rationality.

Reason is the 'highest' manifestation of the will to power in the distinct sense that through rationality, it can realize its objective most fully.

Nietzsche's view that reason is mans highest faculty is based on the power standard.

Reason is extolled, not because it the faculty that abstracts from the given forms universal concepts and draws inferences, but because these skills enable it to develop foresight and to give consideration to all the impulses, to organize their chaos, to intergrate them into a harmony and thus to give man power: power over himself and over nature.

In human affairs too, Nietzsche says, reason gives man greater power than sheer bodily strength. Also foresight, patience and great 'self-masterly'.

Rationality distinguishes the higher from the lower man. Hate of reason goes hand in hand with bad intellectual conscience.

Rationality is power: irrationality; weakness. His attack on 'systems' is based on this objection to the irrationality which he found in the failure to question premises.

Similarly, much of Nietzsche's attack on Christianity is based on what he took to be the christian repudation of reason and their glorification of the 'poor

in spirit'. the lack of reason, intelligence or spirit is a lack of power and Nietzsche charged Christianity with the supreme crime of having depreciated them.

Nietzsche considered philosophy 'the most spiritual will to power' and proposed to measure power and weakness in terms of man's willingness to subject even his most cherished beliefs to the rigors of rationality. Those who take refuge in irrationality, dogma, or systems which are based on unquestioned premises seemed slack and weak to him.

The man who can develop his faculty of reason only by extirpating his sensuality has a weak spirit: a strong spirit need not make war on the impulses: it masters them fully and is to Nietzsche's mind - the acme of human power.

The great rationality in all moral education was that one tried to attain the sureness of an instinct. This unconsciousness belongs to every kind of perfection .

A truly rational man subjects all opinions to rational consideration because this has become his second nature. The truly rational man need not go to war against his impulses. If his reason is strong enough , he will naturally control his passions.

Nietzsche's doctrine differs from classical rationalism . Reason is pictured as the fulfillment of the power and the irrational is not envisaged as something adverse to rationality but only as a weak form of rationality. It lacks the force , the rigor, and the power to be rational. The will to power is neither identical with reason nor opposed to it, but " potentially" rational.

Nietzsche was ever concerned with individual and his attempts at self-realization. In the meditation on Schopenhauer, Nietzsche pictured the ideal philosopher

“He destroys his earthly happiness through his courage: he must be hostile even to the human beings whom he loves and the institutions from those whom he issued; he may spare neither human beings nor things, though he himself suffers in hurting them”.¹⁸

Self-overcoming involves a measure of suffering and also cruelty, not only in the individuals relations to others but also in his attitudes toward himself.

The powerful man is the rational man who subjects even his most cherished faith to the severe scrutiny of reason and is prepared to give up his beliefs, if they can't stand his stern test. He abandons what he loves most if rationality requires it. He does not yield to his inclinations and impulses and is willing to give up even his relative and friends if intellectual integrity demands it.

Particular actions seemed much less important to Nietzsche than the state of being of the whole man and those who achieve self-perfection and affirm their own being and all eternity, backward and forward have no thought of the morrow. They want an internal recurrence out of the fullness of their delight in the moment.

The powerful man does not rely on heavenly powers to redeem him, to give meaning to his life and to justify the world, he gives meaning to his own life by achieving perfection and exulting in every moment.

Nietzsche rejected Christ and the concept of resurrection. He believed that the conception of life after death has historically furnished the basis for the depreciation of this life. The expectation of life in another world has made men condone their imperfection in this world. Instead of striving to become perfect here and now as Jesus had exhorted men to do, they put their trust in the distant future.

Moreover, to Nietzsche, the depreciation of this life could be carried to the extent of a complete disvaluation of anything a man might do in his life. For example, the Christian disvaluation of secular realm. The doctrine of the two worlds becomes a symbol of a double standard. For instance, there is a Christian world where one will be perfect and in which one must have faith and there is a pagan world which one perceives all round oneself, where one cannot be perfect. For the Christians, those who have faith and know that their sins are born by Christ are just.

Faith therefore takes the place of action: instead of perfecting oneself, one has faith that Christ was perfect and meanwhile there is a church which, instead of insisting that men leave father and mother and break with conformity insist that men conform to the church in matters of faith and to the state in matters of action.

Nietzsche believed that the concept of resurrection furnished the setting for a new doctrine of retribution, revenge and reward;

“And whoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, depart hence and shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.”¹⁹

Nietzsche charges that the Christian faith made it possible for men not only to persist in their unchristian behaviour but also to indulge their lust for revenge by hoping for the eventual torture and destruction of their persecutors. Nietzsche prefers reason to faith. He believes in the former's capacity for self-criticism.

Nietzsche values power not as a means for the attainment of some supreme possession, but as the state of being each man desires for its own sake as his own ultimate end. Truth he considered an essential aspect of being.

Self-perfection and ultimate happiness are not compatible with self-deception and illusion. Petty pleasures may depend on illusions and truth may spell discomfort and suffering but renouncing truth for that reason would be a sign of weakness and preclude our attainment of that state of being short of which we can never find lasting surpassing happiness.

Nietzsche's impassioned attack on Christian morals and his own ethic which is often misunderstood require a more comprehensive analysis.

His attacks were not directed against the Christian virtues as such. As a matter of fact, he greatly respected that practice which he considered Jesus' true legacy. What Nietzsche denounces is not sincere Christians, as well as those who superficially seem Christian in their practice but whose motivation and state of mind is essentially unchristian. He charges that Christian faith is refuge of the weak: he also condemns Christian morality as a morality of the weak but what he

proposes instead may be closer to the true Christianity than what he denounces as 'Christian'.

Nietzsche's critique of altruism is not anything new or sensational. For example, Plato, Spinoza and La Rochefoucauld alluded to it.. Almost all the great philosophers of the past from Plato to Kant had argued that self-perfection was the goal of morality. He says;

For Nietzsche, friendship is the means towards the self-perfection of the two human beings. Love can be fruitful if two persons strive together to perfect themselves and each other. Such a relationship seems to Nietzsche the highest possible relationship between two human beings.

The best that a friend can do for a friend is to help him gain self-mastery. that cannot be done by indulging his weakness. Friends should be educators to each other and educators must not be sentimental.

Nietzsche believes here is a personal necessity to suffering. A religion which preaches pity assumes that suffering is bad; it is in that sense a religion of comfortableness. Self-perfection, however, is possible only through suffering and the ultimate happiness of the man who has overcome himself does not exclude suffering. His critique of Christian morality is in keeping with his conception of the philosophers mission: he believes that ever since Socrates, the greatest philosophers have always uncovered how much hypocrisy was concealed under the best honoured type of their contemporary morality. What Nietzsche attacks in

other words is the state of mind which frequently hides behind the respectable facade of Christian virtue.

What is Nietzsche's alternative? His alternative is to be found superbly formulated in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*:

"The good man ought to be a lover of self, since he will act nobly, and so both benefit himself and his fellows, but the bad man ought not to be a lover of self since he will not follow his base passions and so injure both himself and his neighbours."²²
Nietzsche is not exhorting the mass of men to renounce traditional

restraints. But his opposition to Christianity cannot be seen in proper perspective apart from Aristotle's ethics. According to Aristotle, "He claims much but does not deserve much is vain."²³

Nietzsche's debt to Aristotle's ethics is quite considerable. He insists that greatness of soul cannot be separated from greatness of mind, this should not be permitted as it causes mischief. In crucial passage he explains...

"Hatred against mediocrity is unworthy of a philosopher; it is almost a question concerning his right to philosophize. Just because he is the exception, he must protect the norm and encourage self-confidence in all the mediocre."²⁴

Self-perfection involves non-conformity and not what Nietzsche calls the "Lazy peace" - cowardly compromise. The man who perfected himself has more to offer others than riches: he can give of himself.

Nietzsche's moral philosophy owes much to Aristotle and the Stoics. For instance, in his attempt to over-trump the sermon on the mount, Nietzsche goes

back to Socrates. Thus we find an epigram at the end of the first part of Thus Spoke Zarathustra [quoted again in the preface to *Ecce Homo*];

“The man who seeks knowledge must not only be able to love his enemies but also to hate his friends”.²⁵

Here we are immediately reminded of Aristotle's excuse for his disagreement with Plato [*Nicomachean Ethics* 1096 a]: it is a duty for the sake of maintaining the truth even to destroy what touches us closely, since piety requires us to honour truth even above our friends. He goes beyond Aristotle by urging his own readers. “One repays a teacher badly if one always remains a pupil only”. Like Socrates, Nietzsche would rather arouse a zest for knowledge than commit anyone to his own view. He emulates Socrates the model philosopher: what does a philosopher demand of himself first and last? To overcome his time in himself, to become timeless. He claimed he was the first to have uncovered Christian morality. He believed that after him no secular Christian system would be possible any more and he considered himself the first philosopher of an irrevocably anti-Christian era. His anti-Christianity does not seem to him essentially negative. He is no critic who would have things different. He believes things will be different. In effect, Nietzsche claimed that his wisdom consisted in his opposition to his time and in this respect he felt close to Socrates.

2.51 THE MASTER-SLAVE MORALITY

Nietzsche's most brilliant and sustained critique of morality is contained in his long essay describing the origin of two juxtaposed types; the master and

slave moralities. He marvels at how it was ever possible for meekness, humility and self-denial, modesty, pity and compassion to become values.

For that disintegration and dissolution Nietzsche used the word 'nihilism'. He wanted to abolish the strictly moral and wanted to put a set of purely natural codes into its place.

The bifurcation between master and slaves is the division between what debilitates and maims life versus everything that strengthens and invigorates it.

His objection to slave morality is that he it is hostile to life. slave moralities debilitate both slave and master. Part five of Beyond Good and Evil, the chapter on the natural history of morals; ends with a vicious attack herd morality and against democracy and socialism conceived as efforts to apply that morality to politics. Nietzsche finds this morality repulsive because he detests the specific values it promotes viz: pity and love, altruism and self-sacrifice, all of which he believes are different methods of ensuring mediocrity. According to him, pity is bad both for those who felt for those who are being pitied. It is bad for the pitied because it does not help them toward happiness, perfection and well-being. It even degrades, for pity includes a measure of condescension and sometimes even contempt. We do not pity those we admire. Moreover, the pitying one rarely understands the whole inner sequence and the 'entire economy of the soul.'

To be kindly when one is merely too weak and timid to act otherwise, to be humble when any other course would have unpleasant repercussions, and to be

obliging when a less amiable gesture would provoke the master's wrath that is the slave morality - making a virtue of necessity. Such morality would well go together with impotent hatred and immeasurable envy, with "resentment" which would like nothing better than revenge...a chance to outdo the master's insults. The graciousness of slaves who crave a heaven from which they will behold their masters frying in the flames of hell...that is to Nietzsche's mind no virtue.

The basic distinction which Nietzsche proposes is that between two states of being 'the overfullness of life' and the 'impoverishment of life', power and impotence. Nietzsche's point is that the weak are incapacitated for ultimate happiness. Only the strong attain that happiness which all men want.

The determination of who is strong and who is weak by the doctrines that affirm life or negate it, is at the heart of Nietzsche's philosophical enterprise. For instance his polemics against philistine morality and Christian ethics are in part mere corollaries of his belief that all established moral codes must ever be transcended by the creative. This point was expressed in Beyond Good and Evil to which he gave his title using a bold paraphrase: "Jesus said to the Jews: the law was for servants...what are morals to us sons of God' ".

Nietzsche believed that morality does not have one fundamental principle running through it: that on the contrary there have been and are many moralities: any attempt to think philosophically about morality must begin by recognizing its diversity and the fact of its having had a history like any other phase of human culture. One fundamental distinction arising out of his account of the natural

history of morals and forming the foundation of his immoralism, that between the master morality and the slave morality, whose characteristics he both enumerates.

Nietzsche believed that genuine moralities arise from the presence in any group of an aristocratic or ruling class element, which gives the meaning and the justification of society. This master group determines what is good. It creates values especially the value of power. The values of the common are usually pity, humility friendship and patience. If they are allowed to dominate then society will decay. The moral discrimination of values has originated either among a ruling group whose consciousness of its difference from the ruled group was accompanied by delight or among the ruled, the slaves and dependants of every degree. He says:

“Every elevation of the type man has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society and so it will always be; a society believing in a long gradation of rank and differences of worth among human beings and requiring slavery of some form or other. Without the pathos of distance such as grows out of the difference of classes, out of the constant practice of obeying and commanding, out of the keeping down and a keeping at a distance, without these, that other more mysterious pathos could never have arisen; the longing for the continued self-surmounting of man.”²⁶

From Nietzsche’s analysis of slave morality follows his thesis that the moral values of the slaves are responsible for their oppressed condition. Morality and moral values themselves are responsible for the fact that full human potential is never in fact realized, that our moral values are what prevent us from overcoming ourselves and realizing ourselves. Moral values are responsible for the mess human beings are in:

“So that precisely morality would be to blame if the highest power and splendour actually possible to the type man was never in fact attained? So that precisely morality was the danger of dangers?”²⁷

This is basically what our research is concerned with, that is, illustrating the above point more concretely and critically to try and discover whether it has any parallels to one phenomena of modern reality in Kenya today viz: the oppression of women.

To this end we shall investigate whether traditional moral and altruistic values ascribed to women's nature and sex roles are intimately tied to their oppressed condition. Are these values responsible for their consciousness and condition? Does it prevent their self realization?

2.52 Nietzsche's Ethics of Humanism.

Nietzsche as an ethicist was oriented towards humanism. Broadly speaking, humanism is a philosophy, the principle of which is a concentration on the welfare, progress and happiness of humanity in this one and only life.

This philosophy has existentialist undertones. The rejection of Supernaturalism and the seeking of man's fulfillment here in this world has a long and honoured tradition to which philosophers, poets, writers artists and religious prophets have all contributed.

the philosophic tradition started with democritus and Aristotle in ancient Greece, continued with Lucrecius in ancient Rome, was submerged during the dark ages and was revived by the Dutch philosophers Spinoza in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Philosophers of the French enlightenment, for example, Diderot and Voltaire carried on the humanist tradition. In the twentieth century,

it climaxed in the works of John Dewey [regarded as one of Americas greatest philosopher] and in the provocative writings of Betrand Russell. Most of these thinkers have sometimes been alluded to as naturalists. Naturalism , however, is practically synonymous with humanism. Along side materialism , naturalism, dualism and idealism, humanism stands as one of the major systematic philosophies in the history civilization . There ten basic principles of humanism that define its position and distinguished it from other philosophical view points . As a philosophy , it is one in which man is the centre and sanction.

Humanism believes in a naturalistic metaphysics. Nature is seen as the totality of being . Supernaturalism is regarded as myth. Nature changes constantly and is independent of any mind or consciousness. Man is seen as the evolutionary product of nature, of which he is a part. Man is a unity of body and personality and can therefore have no conscious survival after death. The ultimate faith of humanity lies in man. This has given rise to the belief that human beings possess the power or potentiality of solving their own problems primarily through reliance upon reason and the scientific method applied with courage and vision.

Humanism stands opposed to all theories of universal determination fatalism or predestination and believe that human beings while conditioned by the past possessed genuine freedom of creative choice and action and are within certain objective limits the masters of their objective limits. Humanism believes in an ethic of morality that grounds all human values in this earthly experiences and relationships the goal being happiness, freedom and progress here and now. Progress is seen in economic, cultural and ethical terms.

Humanism goal is the attainment of the good life. This is seen as a combination of personal satisfaction and continuous self-development with significant work and other activities that contribute to the welfare of the community. Humanism as a philosophy believes in the aesthetic experience as pervasive reality in the life of man. The belief in a far reaching social program that stands for establishment of democracy, peace and a high living standard is on other mark of humanism. Along side this is the complete implementation of reason and the scientific method in government and democratic procedures. This goes hand in hand with full freedom of expression and civil liberties throughout all areas of economic, political and cultural life.

Humanism as a philosophy admits of unending questioning of basic assumptions, and convictions. It is not a dogma but is described by its proponents as a developing philosophy. Humanism rejects the notion that human beings are moved merely by self-interest. It refuses to accept the reduction of human motivation to economic terms, to pleasure-seeking terms or to any one limited set of human desires. It insists on the reality or genuine altruism as one of the moving forces in the affairs of men.

Nietzsche's work yields insights and speculations of real humanist value, such as the vision of an eventual superman who will surpass present day man as man does the highest species of animals. In the words of Zarathustra:

"I teach you beyond -man. Man is something that shall be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him? All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves and are ye going to be the ebb of this great tide and rather revert to the animal than surpass man... Beyond man is the significance of the earth. I conjure you my brethren, remain faithful to earth and do not believe that those who speak unto you of super-terrestrial hopes! Prisoners they are whether they know it or not... What is great in man is that he

is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in man is that he is a transition and a destruction... Love him who worketh and inventeth to build a house for beyond-man and make ready for him earth, animal and plant: for thus he willeth his own destruction."²⁸

2.6 Nietzsche's Heritage.

Certain aspects of Nietzsche's critique of modern man may deserve serious consideration because increasingly a number of people seem to realize that their pleasures do not add up to happiness and that their ends do not give their lives any lasting meaning. His greatest value may well lie in the fact that he embodied the true philosophic spirit of searching into myself and other men. His philosophy is a sustained celebration of creativity and all genuine creation is, as we have tried to show, a creation of new values and norms. Socrates whom Nietzsche's admired as none other represented both the critical and creative function in the highest degree.

There is a sense in which every great individual is an embodiment of new norms, an incarnate value - legislation and a promise and challenge to posterity. Nietzsche's recognized this and it was this insight which inspired his 'monumentalistic' approach to history. This is a significant aspect of his heritage. This approach is a way of using history for one's own education.

For Nietzsche, culture is inseparable from education. When we say that Nietzsche confronts us primarily as an educator, this means that his primary concern is with the attainment of culture. This point is important for our study. More so because feminism in Kenya and in Africa cannot survive as a social movement with a theoretical and ideological foundation but no cultural base. Indeed for any social movement to succeed, clearly articulated cultural framework

is crucial. The leitmotif of Nietzsche's life and thought the theme of the individual who seeks self-perfection far from the morden world is important.

Nietzsche's central concern is with man, and power is to him above all, a state of the human being. The will to power is the backbone of Nietzsche's philosophy but the meaning he chiefly intended was not wealth and military power. These were in Nietzsche's mind never signs of great power. He realized fully that power involves a measure of self-discipline.

Towards the end of his life Nietzsche sought to attract attention to his work. The incredible influence which his ideas have exerted since then testifies that he did have something to say to all men. He transcends the boundaries of theology, philosophy, poetry and psychology to challenge the whole realm of human existance. The spiritual crisis which he foresaw is the root cause of the social and political anxieties of our time. He was passionately pre-occupied with tearing from man the masks of pretension and morality.

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2. Views expressed by Walter Kaufmann in Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist. World Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, 1956, pp 7.

3. Robert C. Solomon/Kathleen M. Higgins, Reading Nietzsche. Oxford University Press, 1988, pp5.

4. An elusive style characteristic of Nietzsche. It crystallizes the tendency of each aphorism to be self-sufficient while yet throwing light on every other aphorism. Central to Nietzsche's works is the idea and style of perspectivism. Unlike most philosophers who argue directly for the truth of a single idea or system, Nietzsche argues for a plurality of perspectives. We are confronted with a pluralistic universe in which each aphorism is itself a macrocosm. A single passage in Nietzsche may equally be relevant to ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of history, theory of value, psychology and half a dozen other fields.

5. Robert C. Solomon/Kathleen M. Higgins, Reading Nietzsche. Oxford University Press, 1988, pp6.

6. W. Kaufmann, Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist. World Publishing Co. , Ohio, 1956, pp 66.

7. "Child and Marriage", Chapter 28, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans. Thomas Common, pp 72-73.

8. "Old and Young Women", Chapter 18 of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans. Walter Kaufmann in The Portable Nietzsche [New York; Viking Press, 1968]., pp 68-69.
9. 'Ad Hominem' refers to a fallacy committed against the person. It is committed when the conclusion of an argument states that a view is a mistake and the reason given for the conclusion amounts to no more than criticism of the person maintaining the view.
10. The Gay Science, trans. W. Kaufmann [New York; Random House, 1974] book v, pp 99, 1882.
11. H. W. Brann has shown not only how Nietzsche's epigrams about women may have been connected with his own experiences but also how they were copied from Clamfort La Rochefoucauld and of course Schopenhauer.
12. A relativist is one who holds the position that, the basic ethical beliefs and value judgments of people and societies are different. Therefore there is no objectively valid rational way of justifying one against another; consequently two conflicting basic judgments may be equally valid.
13. The definition of the Holy seems to have been influenced by the final words of Spinoza's ethics. Overcoming is a transition of 'überwindung' and self-overcoming 'selbstüberwindung'.

14. Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans. Walter Kaufmann in The Portable Nietzsche

[New York; Viking Press, 1968], chapter ii.

15. Contained in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

16. Plato presents this view, that is, of Hedonism in the Philebus. The view that pleasure is the good, the true goal of every living being, and what everyone ought to aim at. Hedonism has had many proponents from the time of Eudoxus and Epicurus to the present. All Hedonists accept four propositions about the good ;

i) Happiness is equal to pleasure;

ii) All pleasures are intrinsically good, or whatever is pleasant in itself is

good in itself. A Hedonist may admit that some pleasures are morally bad or wrong, or that some are bad because of their results

iii) Only pleasures are intrinsically good, or whatever is good in itself is

pleasant in itself. A hedonist may allow things, even pains to be good as means, or even morally good or right.

iv) Pleasantness is the criteria of intrinsic goodness. It is what makes

things good as ends. It is not just a coincidence that what is pleasant is good in itself and vice versa.

17. Rationalism holds that intellect is a source of knowledge in itself. "Truths of reason" are held to be superior to those grounded in sensation. The intuitive faculty is a primary source of knowledge.

18. Untimely Meditations, Schopenhauer as Educator 1874 trans. James W.

Hillesheim and Malcolm R. Simpson (South Band Gateway Editions, 1965).

19. Mark 6.

20. Altruism is the principle of considering, the welfare and happiness of others before one's own.

21. The Gay Science transition of the aphorism of friendship to Zarathustra.

22. Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, W. Kaufmann, World Publishing Co., Ohio, 1956, pp 327.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid pp 329.

25. Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is, (1908), trans. W. Kaufmann (New York; Random House, 1967).

26. "On the Genealogy of morals" in Basic Writings of Nietzsche, W. Kaufmann (New York, 1906).

27. Ibid, pp 456.

3.1 Introduction

The Inequality of Women

Before we relate the philosophical ideas of Nietzsche to this thesis, we need to uncover the historical background and cultural situation of women in Kenya, to try and discover whether women are denied the opportunity to use their potential through retrogressive societal attitudes. Indeed human existence achieves authenticity only in acts of freedom.

Kenya is, on the whole, a male-dominated society and this is despite the fact that there are women prominent in the professions and in public and commercial life and others who are very active in their social communities. Women in the rural areas do a large part of the work. A few of these women found their way into a different life in urban centers and into paid employment. However most of them constitute a silent majority of the most overworked and underpaid of agricultural workers in Kenya.¹

The burden is increased by male migration into towns in search of paid employment, away from their home areas. Tasks originally performed by men in the traditional division of labour such as clearing land have to be assumed by women and added on to their activities. The 1969 census indicate the there could be as many as 400,000 rural households where the husband was away and the maintenance of the household and the farm was the responsibility of the woman.² In such households, we cannot talk of under utilized labour but rather a life of unremitting toil.³

A typical day in the life of a rural peasant woman illustrates this; she rises before sunrise to grind grain; she prepares breakfast and lunch, she feeds the family, goes ahead of the husband to gather firewood, cook dinner and begin another cycle of

backbreaking household work. In contrast, in wage employment and modern-sector self-employment, women find few opportunities. These have usually been confined to the lowest ladders, for example, as clerks and as sales persons. Many women are found in the informal sector. Moreover, they drop in and out of the labour force because of child bearing and rearing responsibilities. In Kenya, women earn an average 74% of men's wages.⁴

Cultural practices inherited from the pre-colonial past and developed under the aegis of colonialism placed numerous obstacles to women's large-scale entry into the wage labour force. Employers openly discriminate against women in hiring workers as a result of previous experience with male employees, itself a product of their patriarchal prejudices and preferences and women's reputation of being less reliable and more costly due to frequent maternity leave. In 1964 for instance, only 12.2% of the total labour force were female. This rose to 14.3% in 1970 and 19.75 in 1985.⁵

In politics, the scenario is not different, the instruments of government in Kenya is in male hands. A Nairobi law monthly report indicates that until mid 1995, Kenya was among the over 100 countries in the world without a woman at ministerial level. These problems are compounded by a preference in families for spending money on the education of boys rather than girls. It is not that girls are entirely deprived of education, but their educational careers are short. In 1975, for instance, girls made up 47% of pupils enrolled in grade 1 of primary school, but only 39% of these enrolled in grade VII. Girls accounted for only 37% of the pupils in secondary schools in 1976 though to date this proportion has certainly increased. There are regional differences in the participation of women in education, and is particularly low in pastoral areas and where Islam as a religion is predominant.

Evidence also suggests that girls in Kenya come second to boys in access to nutrition. There is preference for the boy-child over girl-child. In a survey designed to

measure the incidence of 'protein energy malnutrition' among a sample of children aged between one and four years, male children generally appeared to enjoy a healthier nutritional status than their female counterparts.⁶ It was discovered in the survey that females had lower weight for-age values than their brothers in the same age range, regardless of who was older, but the gap was more pronounced when the girl was the younger of the pair.

One reason for the inequality of women is the double burden they shoulder of work and motherhood:

"Most women spend much of their adult lives in continuous cycle of pregnancy, child birth and dependency. Repeated pregnancies and prolonged lactation often leave women in a physical weakened state. The burden of high dependency ratio is particularly heavy on female adult population who have to provide constant care for the very young as well as to undertake much of the agricultural work to feed the family"⁷

The vagrancy act in Kenya, under which people are returned by authorities from towns to their home areas, bears particularly on women. Although directed at prostitution, its use can limit the scope of female participation in all informal sector economic activities, as well as in formal sector job seeking. Its justification, that vagrants in towns should seek their living in their home areas, is based on the myth of an access to land, which in reality no longer exists. "This is due to the deterioration of the land resource base in Kenya. If principle and practice elsewhere in the past are anything to go by, these changes will disadvantage women further and prejudice their access to land and complementary inputs in the future via the tendency for formalization of land titles to be done in men's names.

The repeal of the Affiliation Act in Parliament in 1969 manifests a derogatory attitude towards women. This act deprived mothers of illegitimate children of the possibility of securing maintenance from the fathers. Illegitimacy was an alien concept in African Society. The law was seen therefore as a colonial hangover, an argument that disregarded the fact that the rigid tradition societal mores no longer ruled. Another

fallacious argument put forward for its repeal was that women abused the law, securing maintenance from several men, for the same child, an argument which one commentator has observed, is like saying that “since robberies are too numerous, the law against robberies ought to be repealed.”¹⁰

It is evident, from the above analysis that there appears to be a pervasive ideology manifest in Kenya which supports discriminatory structures and procedures. From history we knew as a fact that no group of persons is able systematically to subordinate or deprive another group without appeal to a body of values, which makes the exploitation and disprivilege, the expropriation, and the degradation of human beings a ‘moral’ act. Sexual ideologies have the function of defining the inferior sex as ‘lesser’ or ‘expendable’ beings. Thus, they provide the rationale for the activities of deprivation and heal the breach in the value system. As philosophers, we are questioning the assumptions and beliefs about the nature of women. What, in effect, constitutes a feminine personality?

Is it true with regard to women in Kenya today that traditional moral and altruistic values ascribed to their natures and sex roles are responsible for their subjugation? Is it just a question of socio-cultural restraints?

The oppression and subsequent discrimination of Kenyan woman occurs within a world of philosophies, ideas, attitudes and cultures, which rationalize, gender equality. Chapter three tries to analyze these attitudes to try and discover whether it has prevented the realization of full human potentiality.

3.2 Moral Anomie in Kenya

Morality in Kenya is in a state of crisis. Reason being, the existence of a plurality of religions, philosophies and ideologies and consequently a plurality of moralities. We

cannot therefore talk of a uniform Kenyan tradition. This presents many problems that have yet to be fully appreciated.

Law reform, to give one example, is one area that is crucial for the promotion of women's interests. However, it is Ooko-Ombaka's contention that to understand the current legal system today, one has to take cognizance of the fact of the historical imposition of the British colonial legal system which destroyed some of our organic legal institutions while preserving others. The result is that two broad systems of law can be seen to exist in Kenya: Western type law (a heritage of colonial history) and Customary Law. He argues that the co-existence of two different value systems and ideological grids present a range of unique problems to the resolution of the women question today".¹¹ the lawyer and legislator argues that:

"Depending on the mood, whim or politics of the situation. African culture may be invoked to oppress women or modern society cited in efforts to eliminate the very cultural practices, which safeguard the rights of women"¹²

The point is clearly brought out when we consider the question of violence against women in Kenya today. Although generally aware that violence exists, the public does not consider it generally a big problem. Since cultural norms condone wife beating, it gets little attention compared to other developmental concerns like food, water, shelter, fuel and health.

In Kenya today, patriarchal domination through force is supported by moral order, which reinforces the husband/wife imbalance. This hampers a woman's struggle against domination and control. In some communities in Kenya, the traditional right of a husband to "control" his wife by beating is recognized in customary law. Neighbours and relatives often supervised beatings so that they did not exceed a 'reasonable' threshold. Struggling against beating was seen as an immoral lack of respect and loyalty a wife supposedly owed her husband.

This attitude is reflected best in the debate following the Marriage Bill of 1968 which attempted to clarify legal provisions against wife-beating, making it a criminal offence punishable by six months imprisonment.¹³ Parliamentarians, who were mainly male, and who were opposing the bill, argued that wife-beating was a normal customary practice and that such legal provisions would be tantamount to having the state interfere in domestic matters of a wife and husband.¹⁴ Such arguments ignore the changing contexts of these "normal customary practices".

Modern Kenya has been touched by other cultures and complications have arisen because of the borrowing of other moral standards from other parts of the world. There is an interplay between Judeo-Christian Morality and other moral values and practices from Western Cultures. The assumption from Western point of view has been that African Customs were evil and immoral, and definitely incompatible with Christianity and Western culture. This attitude and belief was taught by many missionaries during the colonial period and has persisted since. It involved a blanket condemnation of African customary rituals, for example, mode of naming, marriage, funerals, healing and war rituals. The European ideal was presented as the moral one.

This polarity occurs because modern morality is individualistic as opposed to traditional morality, which was socialist. G. A. Benaars brings out this point clearly when he says;

"In olden days in most traditional societies, morality was above all a social affair, a communal concern, in as far as religious and personal morality tended to be overshadowed, if not dominated, by social/morality. In traditional Africa, the sole criterion of goodness was the welfare and well being of the community. In short morality was really social morality. For their stability and maintenance, for purposes of law and order, traditional societies required an emphasis on social rather than individual morality. Any form of individualism was deemed to have a negative value; it was seen as potential threat and regarded as intolerable."¹⁵

Morality in the traditional African context emphasized wholeness. Wholeness and moral life was threefold. First, wholeness or moral life among ordinary people referred to

the situation where every man or woman is described as good according to the standards set by a given society. Morality consisted in one's efforts and devotion to the achievement of defined communal goals, and fulfillment of communal duties. Secondly, there was wholeness or morality among specialists; it was believed that there were, in society, people who were more whole more moral than others, especially by virtue of their enlightenment. In this category are healers, diviners, rulers, prophets and others; believed to have special powers for the sense of the community. Thirdly, wholeness or moral successful living which referred to the successful passing through the normal stages of development – A moral birth, initiation, marriage, naming, funeral and so on. The moral person was one who fulfilled all of one's obligations as defined by society.

In more recent times an individualistic trend has emerged to counter traditionalism. Individualism challenges the old order, which upheld the supremacy of society, over and above the individual.

Historically, its emergence can be traced to Ancient Greece. The Reformation and Renaissance period in Western Europe accelerated its momentum. In Lutheran Pietism and English Puritanism, religious individualism found expression and much later in American evangelism. In the economic sphere, it was manifest in liberalism and more specifically capitalism. Politically, it found expression in the American Declaration of independence (1776) and the French "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" (1789). These declarations were albeit concerned with democracy and political liberation but they were based on the freedom of the individual person.

Christianity, as it exists in Kenya today, has waged a constant war against African moral traditions. This has had serious consequences against the African personality considering that traditionally, moral matters were an integral part of communal life in Africa. G.A.Benaars points it out thus:

“... refusal to accept African traditional morality-For a Christian this was required. It implied a similar refusal to accept social life in its entirety, the value system included. The African became a displaced person, who had substituted for traditional social ethics a foreign kind of personal ethics”.¹⁶

Modern education reinforced the alienation from traditional morality. A new morality emerged, initially Christian-oriented but after independence became more pre-occupied with satisfying basic needs as food, shelter and security. This morality was fostered by education and encouraged by mass media. It was materialistic in outlook and private in character since the stress was on individual interest's vis-a-viz public welfare.

It is against this background that male hostility to feminism in Kenya must be viewed. Some men are of the opinion that feminism is a foreign ideology. Kenyan women have been accused of following their white counterparts blindly and not developing a program of their own but following Western analysis and program for liberation.

Of course, a lot of women disagree. One official of the N.C.S.W.¹⁷ whom the author interviewed and who requested anonymity put it this way;

“My persistent critique of patriarchal domination has been informed by my status as a member of an oppressed group, experience of sexist exploitation and discrimination, and the sense that prevailing feminist analysis in Kenya has not been the force shaping my feminist consciousness”.

An officer with the Federation of Grassroots Women Association in Kenya insisted that Kenyan women knew sexist oppression existed even before they heard about the feminist sentiments of the Western. She said;

“You would be surprised how women in Kenya who though uneducated, but live daily in oppressive situations, often acquire an awareness of patriarchal politics from their lived experience just as they develop strategies of resistance even though these may not be on a sustained or organised basis. Women who are truly oppressed know it, even though they may not be engaged in organized resistance or are unable to articulate in written form the Nature of oppression.”

Briefly, morality in Kenya today is complex as it attempts to cope with individual and social needs, traditional and modern values; religion and secular worldviews, with

dogmatism and pluralism. Not surprisingly, Kenya's Head of State remarked after the Beijing conference that, the Kenyan delegates who went to Beijing had gone to satisfy the ears only and should not bring back home what they discussed abroad. A Kenyan Minister (read female member of parliament) supported these sentiments who was the leader of the entire delegation who attended the conference.

3.3 The Kenyan Female Impasse: The Colonial Antecedents.

The contemporary structures conditioning women's position in Kenya economy and society are rooted in the colonial era. When the first President of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, took power at independence, he declared:

"The Government of an independence Kenya will not be a gangster government. Those who have been panicky can now rest assured that the future African governments would not deprive them of their property or rights of ownership. We will encourage investors to come to Kenya to bring prosperity to this country."¹⁸

When economic growth began, it was firmly within the structure established in the colonial period. The years since independence have seen enormous changes, but there has been a noteworthy continuity with the past. The colonial social structure remained essentially the same. This resulted in the alienation of the majority at the base (where women are found), gross inequalities between the wealthy few and the poor majority, sexual discrimination and unfair division of labour.

Independence should have meant liberation of the productive forces from foreign control but in Kenya, it was merely a change of guard from colonial economic, political arrangements and practices to more vicious neo-colonial arrangement. The colonized petty bourgeoisie received intact, the administrative structures of the colonialists. Their mission became that of overseeing the continuity of the colonial state in a new guise. The petty bourgeoisie inherited the same outlook formerly held by the imperialist bourgeoisie. The mode of production inherited was capitalistic.

Unlike other modes of production like feudalism, under capitalism, the exploitation of women is less overt. This is due to the Technological and Scientific Revolution, which accompanied capitalism. The result was that women were able to vote, run for public office, own and inherit property; two: The simplification of the drudgery of domestic chores because of the availability of labour and time-saving domestic devices – for example, laundry and dishwashing, micro-wave oven; three; the establishment of day care centers reduced the burden child care. Capitalism was regarded as more liberal because an individual could choose whether or not to sell his or her labour on the market.

A critical look at the position of women in Kenya under capitalism presents its own contradictions and finds these rights to be mere illusion. For one, modern technology is beyond the financial reach of the majority of women since Kenya's economy is an underdeveloped capitalism. The double workload therefore, and domestic exploitation of the woman is not solved. Ironically, it instead becomes a source of subordination because it reinforces the female role of domestic labourer. This is because capitalism finds it necessary to legitimize and institutionalize women's role as unpaid domestic labour workers. This is a vital ingredient for capitalism since family structures and domestic labour ensures future supply of workers and consequently regular supply of cheap labour. It is true that women are drawn into extra domestic activities outside the home but they are not released from domestic duties nor given shorter working hours in recognition of this.

Secondly, under capitalism, wage discrimination is hidden in the segregated labour market, which relegates women to lower jobs, for example as office cleaners or messengers. Thirdly, because of the capitalist need to maintain the domestic role of women, education for females, both formal and informal, is structured in a deliberate way making quality and quantity inappropriate or inadequate to gain access to powerful positions in public enterprise.

The Government became involved in formal education in Kenya during the colonial era. In this period, it was organized on a racial basis. The African curriculum stressed technical and industrial education. This was first recommended in the Fraser Report of 1909¹⁹ and reinforced in The Education Commission Report of 1919²⁰, the Phelps-Stokes Report of 1924²¹, and the Education Commission Report of 1949²² under archdeacon Leonard Beecher.

Industrial training was seen to be more relevant to the needs of boys than girls. These are such fields as carpentry, masonry, tailoring, blacksmithing and agriculture. Moreover, the government schools available were all boys' schools.²⁴

By incorporating a basic literary content in their curriculum, missionaries attempted to modify this policy, by introducing on a very limited scale, formal education to women. In the early 1930's there were about 67 central (mission) schools. Few of these were girl's schools, which trained women in literacy, cooking, sewing and childcare – tasks, which were seen as conducive to the spread of Christianity. These conditions, unfavorable as they were to African women delayed their participation in education and consequently in active social and political life. This was rather unfortunate considering the fact that the position they occupy and the quality and quantity of formal education they have had access to to a considerable degree determine what role and status women are accorded in contemporary Kenya.

The colonial legacy however was to all intents and purposes, an onerous one, for the majority of Kenyan women.

3.4 Kenyan Women and Class Contradictions

A central tenet of modern feminist thought has been the assertion that 'all women are oppressed'. It is important to clarify that women in Kenya do not share a common lot. Factors like class and religion create a diversity of experiences that determines the extent

to which sexism will be an oppressive force in the lives of individual Kenyan women. Under capitalism, for instance, patriarchy is structured so that sexism restricts women's behaviour in some realms even as freedom from limitations is allowed in other realms. Absence of extreme restrictions may lead some women to ignore the areas in which they are discriminated against and even imagine that no women are oppressed.

In the class society that Kenya is, there are certain contradictions inherent; these derive from different social, economic and political backgrounds. In some parts of Kenya, particularly in the remote rural areas, ways of life have changed very little from traditional days. In other areas, a high level of industrialization has been achieved. This is true of major urban centers in Kenya.

The urban educated woman is different from her rural counterpart. She knows her rights, and is a member of local and international Feminist Associations. As a member of the propertied working class, she has money of her own and owns a bank account.

The rural women, on the other hand, are singularly the most exploited and oppressed sector of the Kenyan society. They are exploited as mothers, wives peasants and workers. They are silenced by a combination of haphazard political knowledge, ignorance of their constitutional democratic and human rights, sexist discrimination and philosophical unawareness in a male-dominated and directed nation. These women are casually treated. They are called into active politics during "harambee" fund raisings and electioneering but are sooner relegated to the insignificant political limbo pending further abuse of their rights. Most of these women are misinformed, uninformed or disinformed. More often than not, they are forced to succumb to one injustice after another by masculine machinations without ever standing up to assert their rights as citizens and as human beings. As a result most of these women are simply misused. The magnitude of their ignorance, low levels of political education and philosophical awareness usually

render most of them helpless, dependent, unenthusiastic, conservative and hostile to progressive ideas. Although some are awakening, a majority are still mesmerized and overwhelmed by the fear that their difficulties arise from inherent natural failures and inadequacies rather than being the result of an artificial creation of the male-dominated society.

During the countdown to the Beijing Conference in 1995, most people interviewed by the media expressed concern about the lack of enthusiasm among the rural women even though rallies had been held in the countryside to sensitize them. To quote Simon Kanja,

“Most rural women think the talk about equality is only meant for the Educated and the working woman”²⁵

In one interview held, an NGO executive put it this way:

“The undeniable fact is that until the rural woman is educated to a point where she can overcome cultural biases which make her a virtual beast of Burden, the importance of the question of women empowerment will continue to elude her”²⁶

Given this background, it is not surprising that there are vast differences in the needs and aspirations of urban as opposed to rural women. For instance, the socio-economic needs of women belonging to middle-class are more social than economic and are therefore more complex. Sociological needs are more value-oriented. Many social problems are due to certain ambiguities in our social institutions, which are the basis of our social values and attitudes. Economically, the urban woman is now better off but concomitant social changes expected with an enhanced economic status has not come about. For example, in most parts of Kenya, there is still a total disregard or consideration towards women (educated or not) as equal partners in life and decision making. The needs of the rural woman are more economic and physical because many have not gone beyond the needs of the stomach. In this category belong agricultural labourers, casual

labourers, and those employed in petty and menial services. In effect the bulk of the Kenyan population comes from the rural setting.

The difficulties of interpreting and generalizing women's needs to this category was expressed by one district representative of the 'Maendeleo ya Wanawake' group of women. She posed a question: "How do we talk about equality to a woman who has no food and no water?"

3.5 Gender Socialization, Gender sex-role orientation and Cultural invisibility of The woman in the socio-economic process.

People in Kenya have long been preoccupied with what it means to be male and female. In all cultures, being a man or woman is not limited to one's biological sex. Being a man is synonymous with masculinity and being a woman with femininity. Every individual is concerned about fitting into the model of masculinity or femininity that the culture mandates. Ideas about masculinity and femininity go beyond individual socialization. These ideas determine not only what work each sex does but also who runs the major institutions in society.

Sex roles and gender roles are sometimes used interchangeably but they are markedly different. Sex role means behaviour determined by biological sex. Gender role means socially created expectation of masculine and feminine behaviour. These expectations are initiated and perpetuated by the institutions and values of society; Thus bearing and nursing children may be a feminine sex role, but raising children is a gender role defined by a particular culture and power structure in that in that culture. The difference between the sexes is based on the differential socialization of men and women.

Gender roles usually contain certain general characteristics, which include the expectation of certain personality traits. There are, for instance, individual and group

characteristics that are traditionally associated with the female role: Women are conventionally said to be supportive, non-assertive, dependent, attentive to others and "instrumental". In the political context of a male-dominant society, the expressive role is primarily a support one. Increasing evidence suggests that women are considered better at jobs such as elementary school teacher and social worker because they involve the kind of nurturing and sensitivity associated with femininity. Men may be considered better engineers and doctors because they are thought to be more logical and rational. These cultural defined expectations of the traits and behaviour of males and females are often expressed as gender stereotypes.²⁶

Masculine and feminine gender roles are often perceived in terms of opposites. For instance, if a man is considered to be independent, a woman is seen as dependent. In most Kenyan cultures, male traits seem to be more highly valued. To live up to the stereotype of being feminine, women must possess traits that are valued less by society and that may be seen as less mentally healthy. It is hard to conceive of a mentally healthy adult who is for instance, dependent and illogical.

Stereotypes differ by class and ethnic background. They do not only operate on interpersonal level but are also embedded in the structure for society, family, religion, the educational, economic and political system. Dr. K. Venkatarayappa puts it thus:

“ The ‘male’ in the man and the ‘female’ in the woman are artifacts; they are products of culturalized attitudes, legends, beliefs plus or minus values - socially induced, sentimentally upheld, institutionally inflicted and driven deep into the subconscious mind by every instrument of prejudice such as jokes, proverbs, folk tales, conventions, stereotypes, decorations, dress, taboo and arts of segregation.”

Ideas and impulses of our superficial mind guide a large area of our behaviour, that is, of mind socialized and culturalized. It is behaviour of conflict and co-operation

with other members of society, governed by attitudes, mood, directive tendencies, and volition largely conditioned from childhood by the social environs.

To quote Venkatarayappa:

“Society puts ready-made pictures into us which makes recognition and classification of socially discriminated status levels easy and Behavioural adjustments and anticipations economical and effective. Our social lives and behaviour are largely guided by currency in Society of stereotypes.”²⁸

A woman's idea about herself is largely dominated by systems of demands and expectations on the part of society, embodied in stereotypes, current in society which the women themselves come to accept and conform their behaviour to.

Stereotypes about women are hardened into pseudo-realities by literature, proverbs, custom and convention, manners, morals, taboo and legend. In Kenya currently, these stereotypes are conveyed in the images we come across in textbooks. It is well known fact that in Africa women contribute 80% of the Agricultural labour yet they are almost entirely absent from the K.I.E(Kenya institute of Education) agriculture textbooks. In fact in one of these textbooks, girls are mentioned under 10% of the time and boys over 75%. The examples given of a 'lazy' farmer and 'good' farmer are all men. This does not correspond to reality at all. The society depicted is not bisexual.

The image of the family portrayed in these texts is that homes are exclusively mother dominated. Women are usually in the house rather than out of it, always working even in the evening, at all manner of household tasks, particularly manual tasks. Their nurturing of children is material, not intellectual, and they are generally holding a baby. The significance of such images on an individual's psyche cannot be underestimated considering the fact that school is still an authoritative and prestigious institution in Africa and whatever is contained in textbooks is taken seriously by both teacher and pupil.

When it comes to ownership of property, men in textbooks own camel, cattle, businesses, land and vehicles. They save, invest, borrow, buy and share and give away some of what they own: they have power to give. They give their children inheritance and they travel. Women are shown at home unremunerated. They are rarely depicted handling money despite the fact that women now head 30% of Kenyan households. In one G.H.C. book, 35 different examples of men are given but only 7 women in income generating roles. Men are bricklayers, policemen whereas women when not simply referred to as 'mother' are generally restricted to three traditional professions: teachers, nurses or typists.

In math textbooks, one constant feature is that if women are portrayed in income-generating activities at all, they are always in some very paltry business. One woman was seen to be selling pitiful little 'heaps of tomatoes'. A man saves 54,000/= but in the same text 20 women have to join together to raise only 8,000/=.

There is evidence to show that the images and ideologies society has caricatured about women's roles have militated against women holding decision-making positions in Kenya. As has been pointed out in the introduction, in the history of any class society, the justification of female subordination is based on certain superstructural social practices and beliefs. The social attitude that regards women as being ineffective decision-makers and being a "weaker sex" (both physically and mentally) persists despite the de facto legal equality of the sexes. In these closing remarks to a female audience of an international women's year seminar, a Kenyan minister said:

"I am forced to believe that the woman is lazy in her mind. She is too lazy to think. You women think and believe you are inferior to men. This is what it is all about. It is a psychological problem and 99% of women suffer from it."³⁰

This is a reflection of the general paternalistic association of women with physical weakness and moral innocence – traits not unique to any one gender.

In Kenya, sections of the constitution law gives legitimizing force to the whole state machinery and to many of the social practice discriminating against women including marriage, divorce, property ownership, inheritance, education and employment. Conventional law has also reinforced some customary beliefs and practices of African societies with regard to women. The belief that women are inferior to men is emphasized by a law, which exists in Kenya and other African countries, which lumps women together with minors implying that they are less than responsible adults.

3.5 Summary

From issues discussed in this chapter, it is quite evident that sex is as clear an attribute of mind as it is of body. We can safely conclude that the internalization of stereotypes by women has indeed militated against their achieving and exploiting their full potentials as human beings and as females. But only to the extent in which they have interiorized them. We have seen that stereotyping and categorization does not take place on the basis of the individual's personality, intellectual capability or inherent talent, but on the basis of membership of a class defined by a natural characteristic – sex. To the extent that these stereotypes are internalized, women will prefer the security of conformity to radical change – a necessary pre-requisite for any revolutionary changes. Another effect of the internalization of stereotypes is self-depreciation and low self-esteem. It's important to note that these stereotypes ascribed to women need not be factual. It is only important that they be socially accepted as being a “reality”.

Another effect is the development of a negative self-image. When one's role is constantly trivialized, it is difficult to achieve, let alone set high goals. In this sense, women can indeed be the main obstacles in the amelioration of their socio-economic condition.

A careful line should be drawn between those aspects of women's traditional experience that possess an integrity of their own and thus provide a basis for constructing feminist discourse, and those aspects of women's experience that reflect their accommodation to male power. These two dimensions of womanhood do not exist in isolation from one another.

Compassion, generosity, solidarity and sensitivity to others are crucial values; that they are often found in the oppressed than among the oppressors indicates that it is the dominant social order that devalues these traits and distorts them to serve the interests of the powerful. This distortion of powerlessness affect women's deepest psychic structures and cannot be dismissed as artificial external traits confining the real person.

The point we are making in this chapter is that the socio-economic and political consequences of male dominance are such that women learn the role of the subordinate and this role can easily become self-perpetuating to the extent that it becomes second nature. The skills that one then learns in order to cope with secondary status then reinforce that status. For instance, the feminine role is inherently depoliticizing, in that it requires women to internalize an image of themselves as private rather than public beings. Women have largely been spectators rather than participants in public life, and the more firmly they have been integrated into feminine role, the more removed they have been from the public realm.

Further, the point is that women are not powerless because they are feminine; rather they are feminine because they are powerless, and because it is a way of dealing with the requirements of subordination. Fredrich Nietzsche was dialectic he believed that men wanted neither power nor independence as such but freedom to act and realise himself. He was totally focused on the existential nature of subjectivity a man chooses what he wants to be and what he becomes does not follow automatically from pre-established personality traits or social structure. Nietzsche sees a way out for the self that

is in process In fact he approved only of the striving for independence and freedom nothing can be blamed on moral necessity on the commands of God or even on one's human emotions.

The next chapter focuses on socio-economic issues and how they affect women in Kenya plus Nietzsche's prescriptions on how to link autonomy and mutuality.

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**THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS
OF NIETZSCHE MORAL PHILOSOPHY ON THE
KENYAN WOMAN:****4.1 Introduction**

Nietzsche's philosophy provides us with plenty of philosophical insights that could prove useful to the experience of women in Kenya. He believed that nature determined morality and traditions that were unnatural had to be rejected. He regarded a woman's procreative role to be subsidiary to a man's role. He saw as perverse, all other activities by females, that were not geared towards the propagation of the species. To stretch this argument, Nietzsche held that equality¹ will never mean the balance of differences between sexes because nature seems to dictate otherwise. In fighting gender differences, Nietzsche would regard nature as more important than nurture. This is nothing new.

From the 1970's, research has been conducted to explore the prospect of innate biological differences between men and women that justify the gender stereotypes in our societies. Research to date, has not been conclusive but there is a trend towards using some branches of life science, for example, Psychology, anthropology, neurobiology and behavioral science to expand and reinforce the theory first fostered by Sigmund Freud that Anatomy is destiny.

Men and women have basic biological differences – genetic and glandular, meaning men and women have different chromosome patterns and their glands produce different quantities of sex hormones (androgens) such as testosterone and oestrogens. Hormonally speaking, men and women are very different. Men tend to have more testosterone in their nervous systems while women have more oestrogens. Neurobiologists

for instance have found that testosterone seems to affect male aggressiveness including their sex drive. Even the mystery of why women tend to be more linguistically agile than men might be found in the brain structure according to studies conducted by neuroanatomists like Laura Allen and Roger Gorski of U.C.L.A. ²

However, there is a lot of evidence to support the contrary view that differences between men and women have a lot to do with their environment and upbringing. We have seen in the preceding chapter that socialization and cultural pre-conception have a lot to do with how men and women to relate to each in society. Cultural values are absorbed and passed down from generation to generation. In Kenya certainly, culture, custom and attitude have played an important part in ensuring women are discriminated against.

Chapter 4 is expected to bring Nietzsche's philosophy to the situation of post-colonial Kenyan women. Questions it sets out to tackle are; Can Nietzsche's humanism promote a genuine sense of human solidarity? Can Nietzsche's philosophy help us advance the social and political goals of liberation? How do we link autonomy and mutuality? Is a woman's subjectivity related to culture or totally determined? Is an individual a self-propelled force or conditioned by external influences?

A discussion of the socio-economic issues as they affect woman in modern Kenya is important because we need to show that injustice, exploitation, violence and organized cruelty are man-made and can therefore be eradicated. Also we need to discover whether utilizing Nietzsche's philosophical ideas can help Kenyan women take their own initiative in transforming socio-cultural attitudes and values that obstruct their advancement.

Other factors that militate against the empowerment of women in this country include religious fundamentalism, poverty, neo-colonialism and class domination, poor

governance, the mass media, inadequate education, women – child exploitation, lack of consistency in maintaining the momentum of the struggle, structural and institutional barriers as well as lack of meaningful political involvement in the national political process. This is compounded by structural inequalities and temporal unevenness.

Apart from the peculiarities of the situation of women in Kenya, Nietzsche's philosophy of humanism could go along way in providing useful insights for the development of a human-centred ethic in Kenya which would certainly be gender sensitive. Nietzsche's views could well act as a mirror of self-reflection for a committed and visionary leadership in this country to enable effective co-ordination of women's activities.

The central issue of gender and development is not one of participation. Rather, it is a matter of human justice. The central issue is above all an ethical issue because although human beings undoubtedly need economic and political goals, they also need creative values by which to live.

4.11 Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism in Kenya manifests itself in all Christian churches whether Protestant or Catholic. Women are generally excluded from leadership positions and from the ministries of the church.

The recovery of an understanding of the Church as the whole people of God, men and women alike has led many to question the traditional policy, especially because of a growing recognition of the equality of men and women and of the innumerable ways in which that equality has been denied and thwarted in society.

In the Catholic Church, for instance, women are presently excluded from all formal ministries. This has significant implications for the empowerment of women

because morality today is Christian – oriented following a breakdown of African traditional morality.

Dr. Rev. Nyambura Jane Njoroge, Kenya's first Ordained P.C.E.A (Presbyterian Church of East Africa) woman minister affirms that there are lots of inequalities born in church and the society. Some of it in the church is due to wrong interpretation of the Bible in its historical and contextual perspective. She admits that there are parts of the Bible that portray women as inferior.³ For instance, Saint Paul's negative reference to women in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the Exodus story sees Moses as the only hero and it stands to reason that he could not have achieved so much without the contribution of Pharaoh's daughter and birth attendants.

Women are normally found in the lower echelons of parish leaders and not Bishops, Archbishops, Deacons and Diocese leaders. Those opposed to the ordination of women as priests in the Catholic Church point to the constant tradition of the Church, Jesus' own example and to the necessity of the priests' physical and spiritual resemblance to Christ.⁴ The argument is that Jesus did not call women, not even his mother, to priesthood; the ordained priest must act in the manner of Christ and therefore must be able to represent him physically as well as spiritually. The Orthodox refers to this as 'Iconic representation'. These arguments ignore that Jesus surrounded himself with women who followed him and served him.⁵ It was women, for instance, who were charged with announcing the resurrection 'to the apostles and to Peter'.

4.12 Poverty

In Kenya, a large part of adult women live and work in the rural area. In times of drought, they are the first to be hit by malnutrition and disease, the first to die and the first to be driven to destitution and prostitution. This is especially true of the Samburu

women. When drought hits, livestock die en mass. Many people then migrate to the districts urban areas of Maralal, Wamba and Bargo. However, life there is not any easier. Many end up making charcoal for peanuts. They face starvation and shelter becomes a big problem: as a consequence, some turn to prostitution. Loise Towon, chairperson of 'Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation' in Samburu district thus sees the problem of empowerment of women as largely economic. In her words:

“We have to find ways and means of making our women economically independent. This will give them self-confidence and power, while earning them respect from others in the community.”⁶

In the urban areas, women suffer the worst consequences of scarcity and price rises, struggling harder to feed their family on shrinking budgets, standing in long queues to buy essential commodities. For poor women, the privations are more pronounced, the labour input more backbreaking.

Women have always borne the brunt of poverty and malnutrition. A situation that has come to be referred to in Kenya as the feminization of poverty. The traditions built into the male-dominated society which make women to see their own lives as less valuable and to think that virtue lies in self sacrifice, mean the slow starvation of the women when the family is living at bare subsistence levels. Because of this devaluation, women accept as inevitable their double burden of work-paid and unpaid. Their daily toil begins hours before the man's working day. The burden of fetching water, for example, has always been a woman's burden. So when all nearby water sources dry up, the woman has to walk one to three kilometres, in search of this precious commodity. A Maasai woman for instance, has to walk 30 kilometres a day in search of water.⁷

Women in formal employment in Kenya are concentrated in low-skilled repetitive work without formal responsibility in the organizations where they are employed. They have far fewer prospects of promotion and advancement than male workers enjoy. In the

services sector, they account for far higher proportions of nurses and paramedics than doctors and of primary than secondary and head school teachers. There is an echo here of women's relatively greater deprivation at higher levels of education. Wage differential by sex increases with higher educational qualifications. In terms of social evaluation and reward, women occupy subordinate positions. A female employee of the Council for Economic Empowerment for women in Africa, has observed:

"As long as women remain confined to and identified with household work, their economic contribution will remain underrated, their contribution to material progress needlessly limited and their civic autonomy undermined by their lack of access to money. More matters because it is the route to the accumulation of wealth and power."

In agriculture, men tend to claim such advanced tools and machinery are available and women are relegated to "tending" tasks such as planting, weeding and threshing grain, where these are still done by hand.

There are far more male than female self-employed workers running their own enterprises and far more female than male unpaid family workers in such endeavours. Self-employed women are usually small timers because of little or no capital base. Winnie Mitullah in her paper, "Hawking as a survival strategy for the urban poor in Nairobi: The Case of Women, says the number of women hawkers in Nairobi is higher than that of men. These women sell fruits, vegetables and other odds and ends that can help ease their financial burden.

"Women are frequently the main or only providers of themselves and their children. An increasing proportion of women are entering both paid labour and self-employment in order to contribute to household income." ⁸

In the manufacturing sector, women carry out most of the assembly line, manual labour intensive operation in industry and they work as secretaries to managers rather than as supervisors and managers themselves. The prevailing wisdom that women's absentee rates are higher probably derive less from reality than from the ideological stereotype of the female role which requires them to give their families first claim on

their time over and above the demands of their jobs. The second dimension of sex differentiation in labour market is that women tend to be less educated than men according to the normal bias in educational provision in favour of males.

It is also part of the definition of femininity in most cultures that women should be modest, self-effacing and differential to their superiors to a greater extent than men. In society, women have great many superiors to defer to than men do in accordance to their inferiority, wealth and access to resources, returns to labour and in decision making powers.

An official of The Kenyan advisory organization has observed:

“Women’s lesser education and their expectations of receiving little training make them apparently suited to unskilled occupations and prepared to stay as such jobs however monotonous. Their docility makes them to explore the power they have in the production process.”

There is a proposition dating from Karl Marx that women as the ‘reserve’ part of the labour force are drawn into formal employment only when male labour is no longer available and are first to be expelled from the labour force when job opportunities fall back. There is plenty of evidence of the widespread acceptance of the view that women should have less access to employment when jobs are scarce. This view springs from the male breadwinner ethic. Family welfare is held to be less damaged when a woman loses her job than when a man does so, on the presumption that his wage is larger.

But as most family households depend on women for sustenance, the percentage of poverty borne by women has grown greatly. In Kenya, this has partly been a result of an uncertain global economic trend, persistent external debt problems and structural adjustment programmes. The extra burden on women stems from the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, land ownership and inheritance, educational and support services and minimal participation in decision making.

Women's overall health is compromised by poverty. Also too, domestic violence and poor nutrition. In Kenya, for instance, the chances of a woman dying from pregnancy complications are 1 to 23 compared to 1 to 4,000 in the West. Lack of food, deficient housing and inadequate access to safe drinking water pose a threat to women's health. In many developing countries, female life expectancy is lower than that of the male. A pregnant Kenyan woman is 180 times more likely to die than a Western European pregnant woman.

Poverty has another direct consequence on women. It makes them more vulnerable to abuse. Cases of abuse abound in the media. In one instance, a father turned his sixteen-year-old daughter in from one, into his lover and kept on raping her repeatedly until she got pregnant. When the mother protested, she was sent away.⁹ In another incident, a husband substituted his daughter for a wife following a domestic quarrel. The daughter was then, thirteen years old. She gave birth to her father's daughter when she was twenty. The mother (Esther) has since divorced her father.¹⁰ In both cases, the women relied entirely on their husband's support and were therefore rendered 'Voiceless' (to use Esther's words). They were powerless to do anything about their condition and did not have money to take their husbands to court to seek legal redress. They bore their humiliation in silence.

4.13 Neo-Colonialism and Class Domination

The situation of women in Kenya today cannot be understood properly outside the framework of the neo-colonial economic and political structures which are in effect colonial structures under another name. As we pointed out in the previous chapter, post colonial Kenya, economically and politically saw in reality a continuation of colonial structures.

Until the advent of the Second World War (1939-45), colonialism remained the dominant form of imperialism. The neo-colonial form into which a retreating European imperialism sought to establish itself was born due to various factors. In Kenya, one factor was the weakening of Great Britain by World War Two, the Upsurge of National liberation struggles [read Mau Mau movement] and internationally the increasing triumph of socialism.

By the end of the sixties, Kenya had completed the transition from a colony to a neo-colony. The dominant social stratum in Kenya today is located within a male bourgeois minority, which is still dominated by the West; by a Eurocentric bourgeois male and racial minority. The colonial social structure has remained essentially the same. Previously, the white settler community was at the top echelon of society, the Asian community occupied the middle and the broad base was occupied by the Africans. After independence, a select few have been able to move to the middle and the top. There was no social mobility downwards. This scenario has resulted in the political alienation of the majority at the base- men and women alike, in Kenya. This group still remains dissatisfied because to them external domination and internal repression still exist.

External domination is reflected in the Kenyan culture, for instance, in the kind of programmes encouraged in post-colonial Kenya. This culture reflects the dependence of the Kenyan economy and politics on outside influence. Post-colonial political practice enhances Western colonial domination. This can be seen for instance by what has been allowed on T.V, film and in our educational programmes.

To the colonialist, the native was sub-human, indeed the religious and ideological rationalization of colonialism was that of a civilizing mission. From this viewpoint the gender of the native did not count. In the Victorian culture women were perceived as inferior. They were disenfranchised and they lacked many rights. The native Kenyan was seen and treated as much lower species to her European counterpart.

The result of the economic, political and cultural alienation of the majority from their post-colonial rulers has been a perfect replica of colonial practices. In order for post-colonial Kenyan leaders to maintain themselves in power, they have had to repress democracy. This is in itself a contradiction, for in order for women in Kenya today to achieve equality, they have to fight alongside the men for democracy.

“In the neo-colonial situation and under the orbit of the dependent capitalism, the liberation of women in Kenya will certainly be the product of democratic struggles which have the potential to destroy among other things, sexual domination of women by men.”¹¹

That Kenyan capitalism is dependent is not in doubt. The same tiny group of financial, industrial and commercial interests from the West still control our economy. We have in mind IMF, World Bank, Firestone, Del Monte, Coca-cola, Esso, Caltex, Hilton International .. just to mention a few. Economic control goes hand in hand with political control.

Kenyans today are still on the whole struggling for the control of what they produce, a community wherein they can exercise control in the economics, politics and culture to attain self-determination. Women are very much a part of this struggle.

One proof of Kenya's operation as a neo-colony is seen in 1980 when the Kenyan authorities gave military base facilities to the U.S.A – a grave matter that was not even debated in Parliament. In fact Kenyans learnt about it from debates in the U.S Congress, yet it is the same Kenyans who had fought to get rid of all foreign military presence from their soil.¹²

Neo-colonial Kenya cannot therefore be autonomous. A neo-colonial regime is, by its very character a repressive machine. Its very being is in its refusal to break with the international and national structures of exploitation, inequality and oppression gradually isolates it from the people. Its real power base resides not in the people but in imperialism and in the police and the army. To maintain itself it shuts out all avenues of democratic

expression. All democratic organizations are outlawed or else brought under the rule in which case they are emptied of any democratic life.¹³

Neo-colonialism militates against empowerment of women because it works against the formation of a foundation of a shared set of human values that we can relate to and identify with as Kenyans. This is because it is representative of domination dependency and parasitism.

If economic and political liberation are crucial pre-requisites for the liberation of women in Kenya, then equally the liberation of our cultures, feelings, values and outlook are a necessary measure of the true extent of that economic and political liberation. This point is important because in a neo-colonial state, the same disregard for African lives continues unabated.

*"In fact under neo-colonialism, the cultural and psychological aspects of imperialism become even more important as instruments of mental and spiritual coercion."*¹⁴

In effect, imperialism in whatever form aims at the complete ownership, management and control of the entire system of production, exchange and distribution of wealth in its home base. Under neo-colonialism, this control is effected through a comprador bourgeoisie who can guarantee continued dominance of foreign interests.

Political and economic control is effectively facilitated by cultural dominance: The maintenance, management, manipulation and mobilization of the entire system of education, language and language use, literature, religion, the media, have always ensured for the oppressor nation power over the transmission of a certain ideology, set of values, outlook, attitudes, feelings and hence power over the whole area of consciousness. This in turn leads to the control of the individual and collective self-image of the dominating classes and nations.¹⁵

A small elite was educated with the culture, values, outlook and consciousness of the imperialist bourgeoisie. This petty bourgeoisie inherited the management of the

colonial state under a new flag. However, it received intact the colonial army, police, administrative structures and personnel, the judiciary and the entire prison system as developed and refined by colonialism. Their mission, in effect was to ensure continuity of the old colonial state in a new guise.

In Kenya today, the crop of women who have joined the elite ranks of this tiny comprador bourgeoisie class have become even worse oppressors of women. By virtue of the class, they are alienated from the majority of ordinary female workers. The latter because of this, view women lobby groups as elitist clubs which have little relevance in their lives.

The women's movement in Kenya has been undermined by the narcissism, greed and individual opportunism of its leading opponents, a majority of whom are in the top and middle classes. It has thus been reduced to a kind of concentration camp for women who are seeking to attain the kind of power they feel men have. These women leaders are obsessed by the consumerism of a capitalist culture and are no different from the men whom they seek liberation from.

While preparing for the Beijing Conference in August 1985, for example, the women leadership organized a fundraising meeting for grassroots women at the five star Grand Regency Hotel in Nairobi. Some of the delegates in the countryside could not believe their ears when they learnt the amount of money spent to entertain one delegate at the posh hotel. Indeed some at the time, expressed the feeling that it would have made more sense to give them the money so that they could have their meals in cheaper hotels. To worsen everything, the meeting raised less than one million Kenya shillings!

In Kenya, there are women leaders who have appropriated feminism to advance their own selfish interests. Some have in fact achieved their desired ends and are not interested in feminism since it has not had a revolutionary impact in their lives. They have in fact more or less attained the equality they are looking for. They may have a

different agenda altogether than fighting for the women's cause. For instance, there was no rich woman who volunteered to pay her way to Beijing despite their financial capability.

"The past has proven that the women's leadership is divided and lacks focus. It seems they are driven by the promise of grandeur and wealth more than by the women's cause."¹⁶

A physically disabled female expressed it thus:

"I am pessimistic about the Beijing Conference because experiences such as the fiasco that the mini- Beijing was showed there is no immediate respite for rural women until we cleanse ourselves of those propelled by personal gain."¹⁷

According to the chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Kenya, it cost between 215,000 and 250,000 Kenya shillings to send one delegate to Beijing. Most people interviewed by the media at the time felt it did not make economic sense to spend a quarter of a million shillings to send a rural woman to China especially when her immediate financial need revolves around hundreds of shillings.

The point we are making here is that women in the dominant class in Kenya may be no different from the men in that class in as far as their capitalistic tastes, conspicuous consumption habits and values are concerned.

4.14 Poor Governance and lack of Political Will

In Kenya rural women never seem to figure as an important component of development programmes. While development projects are meant mainly for men, social welfare schemes cater mainly to women. The latter generally include talks on family planning, health and childcare which are regarded as women's issues. This kind of compartmentalization of programmes are purely man-made. In K.A.N.U. [read the ruling party] for instance, there is a "Women's Wing" where affairs deemed to be dealing with women are consigned.

In most development programmes that target women, there is too much government control therefore corruption and red tapism set in. This has stifled economic progress and the empowerment of women. The situation has been compounded by the lack of basic skills and experience required to efficiently administer these projects. This has militated against the majority of women gaining from collective efforts.

If development loans are made available to these women, most of them are in no position to understand the repayment schedules nor the gainful use of the same. A majority of these women lack a relevant education therefore these projects end up being poorly planned, ill-managed and poorly accounted for. The donors and the government do not follow up these loans to establish the availability of the right infrastructures which may facilitate the utilization of the loans. Consequently gross mismanagement cannot be escaped and what began as a noble undertaking instead becomes an exercise in the perpetuation of underdevelopment.

Reacting to the President's statement to the delegation just return from Beijing that "they had gone to feed their eyes and they should not bring what they saw back here," the editor of the Nairobi Law Monthly responded:

"Beijing must jolt governments like Kenya from gender insensitivity to obstacles stacked against women's aspirations and to embark on dismantling them. It is a call to affirmative action. The is due is not resources at first, it is political will. Let us have the policies first."¹⁸

Programmes and policies of the government indicate that efforts are directed towards perpetuating inequality and strengthening the position of the economically powerful. How else would one explain the governments attempt to put up an airport in Eldoret, a project costing millions of shillings at a time when more than 5,000 villages across Kenya are without drinking water or when thousands of people in Tana River District are faced with starvation.¹⁹ A good percentage of the budget is spent on white elephant projects whereas the budget spent on providing irrigation facilities is

substantially less than this. The mass of women in this country has been reduced to utter destitution and powerlessness.

Our point here is that unless the government stops paying lip service to the women's cause, women will not move far. Indeed the laws of the country seem weighted in favour of the propertied to whose benefit they operate.

The idea of the women's party which seems to be gaining currency in the media from early 1997 was first floated in the build up to the last General Election in 1992. It was shelved in favour of the existing parties which were seen to have developed a network. However, women at the time were hoodwinked into believing that the parties would implement their manifestoes which advocate for equal representation in the elective posts. The Winning Party (read KANU) reneged on its promise and did not appoint any woman to a full cabinet post. In fact the appointment of Mrs. Nyiva Mwendwa just before the Beijing Conference was seen by political analysts as a political gimmick whose aim was to try and straighten Kenya's human rights record.

One more evidence of the lack of government commitment to women issues is seen in the lack of enforcement of the Ban by President Moi on Female Genital Mutilation. Despite this ban, the practice is far from diminishing. Among the Maasai and Samburu communities, the number of girls circumcised is almost 100%. Despite the well known documented risks, the government turns its back. Speaking out against this practice is a task left to a few school teachers and church leaders who are considered enemies of culture among their own people.

Most people in Kenya expressed shock when in December 1994 and January 1995, youths masquerading as custodians of culture terrorized married women in Mount Elgon district by hunting them down and forcibly circumcising them. The government remained indifferent.

In an age where women are struggling for equality and respect, community and political leaders continue to use allusions to female circumcision to demean, threaten and punish women and girls. For example, in February 1993 because of activist Wangari Maathai's outspokenness on the government's treatment of ethnic class victims, a Member of Parliament, the late Paul Chepkok, warned her that if she ever set foot in the Rift Valley Province, she would risk being circumcised according to Kalenjin custom.²⁰

Professor Maathai was not wrong when she asserted:

"As long as women are poor, homeless and unhealthy, governments cannot pretend to take women's issues seriously."²¹

In the same breadth, lawyer and legislator, Martha S. Karua, a woman activist maintains:

"The key to women's empowerment is still good governance and the political empowerment of women. Whether one wants a better education policy, an improved health programme or more development-oriented economic agenda, what is essential is still getting women into more decision-making positions."²²

The vagueness of Culture Minister Nyiva Mwendwa's speech of September 8, 1995 at the official Women's Conference (read Beijing Conference) conveyed the government's lack of commitment to women's empowerment. This underscored the belief that Nyiva's appointment as minister was more a matter of tokenism and political gimmickry. The fact that most of the resolutions passed in the 1985 conference on women held in Nairobi were never implemented implies lack of political will on the part of the government, and its commitment to the women's cause.

4.15 The Mass Media

Newspapers in Kenya under-report or never report what is happening to the poor and especially women in this country. Facts are given occasional coverage to provide titillation by sensationalizing atrocities committed on women. This is unfortunate given

that we have to rely on this same media for reports on what is happening on day to day basis.

In one Beijing coverage on Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), our state owned media corporation, fared poorly. As the women delegates were on the way to Beijing for instance, KBC ran a series on "who-was-who" in the government delegation. In a previous review mini series the "Road to Beijing" was reactive; the women covered talked more about what they were doing preparing for Beijing and then KBC fell short of material and went off air. Occasional flashes came through the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) "World Today" on KBC but nothing was heard on the Kenyan Delegation. By their action, KBC seemed to say that women had no business going to Beijing. The electronic media kept people ignorant about the platform for action on the programmes that existed in Kenya for the economic empowerment of women. One of the women directors of FemLink, a woman's media organization put it this way when interviewed about her feelings:

"An institution that marginalises the majority of the population, in actual fact 52%, stands to ridicule as being reactionary and retrogressive."

A cursory glance at newspapers in Kenya shows a scenario that is no different. Most space is pre-occupied with tracing the political games of those in power. The political parties make political capital out of people's misery.

The mass media has a critical role to play in shaping people's attitudes and outlook. When women's issues are shelved the net effect is the isolation of their struggles and so they do not get forged into a widespread movement. One example is the media coverage on the stripping of women at Freedom Corner, led by Koigi Wa Wamwere's (a Kenyan political prisoner) mother, demanding the unconditional release of all the political prisoners. The isolation of small local struggles demoralizes and breeds a feeling that nothing is being done to bring about change and that nothing can change.

The mass media gives more coverage to the Presidents various appointments, many vague empty pronouncements by ministers than to the starvation of people, the rape of women, domestic violence, and defilement of minors. Is this just a question of mistaken priorities? It would not be wrong to argue that it represents a systematic attempt by the media to make some people into larger than life figures. Building cults around them and making the power games of a handful of such people seem the only events of importance in the national life. The potent anger of thousands of people against inhuman living conditions seem insignificant compared to questions of power balance in society. The feeling of helplessness and of struggling in isolation against the ever increasing might of those in power are important factors in making people (read women) accept their predicament.

Admittedly, more women in Kenya today work in the media but few make policy decisions. The mass media still gives a distorted picture of women and their issues, their contribution and their roles. One such distortion can be seen in the coverage of the National Council of Women in Kenya (N.C.W.K) elections held in March 1996. The media alleged that the aborted elections were due to the conflict between rural versus urbanite or elite versus non-elite thus trivializing and distorting the issue. An objective analyst on women's issues presented a different picture:

“The aborted elections were primarily about governance and constitutionality on matters pertaining to membership, electoral laws and procedures and the question of power struggle.”²³

She was of the opinion that the problems encountered by women should be viewed within the broader national context within which such organizations operate. Said differently, women's organizations are part and parcel of our own undemocratic national society characterized by poor governance and lack of transparency.

By relying on stereotype images on women, the mass media continue to reinforce outdated news. The media is generally controlled by men and on the whole therefore reflect men's perceptions and priorities. Very few television news items, for instance, deal with women and three quarters of such items are presented by men. This is a very unfortunate scenario given the fact that the mass media is a very important means in modern society of disseminating information to masses of people and sensitizing them on issues that affect them most.

4.16 Lack of consistency in maintaining the momentum of the struggle

The lack of consistency among the Kenyan women leadership in fighting for their cause is due mainly to two factors. One being the intra-class conflict among women which has given rise to a leadership crisis among them. There is in effect, no acceptable women leadership in Kenya today. The second reason is the lack of meaningful political involvement in the national political process.

Modernity in Kenya today has created a new system of stratification. Thus there is talk of urbanite versus ruralite. Modernity creates status differentiation and hence inequality. The term 'modern', in keeping with conventional usage, means the attainment of higher levels of variables such as education, per capita income, urbanization, political participation, industrial employment and media participation. Because elements of modernity are valued, they form the basis of a new stratification system in Kenya. Those who are modern can successfully claim higher social rank in contemporary African societies than those who lack the attributes of modernity. Modern roles such as teacher, clerk are given a higher prestige than the roles of traditional societies like craftsmen etc.

Studies of elite formation suggests that those who possess the attribute of modernity can successfully lay claim to high status in many indigenous society. Individuals tend to be evaluated along the dimension of modernity. People who are more

wealthy, better educated and more urbanized tend to be envied, resented and sometimes feared by others and the basis for these sentiments is the recognition of their position in the new system of stratification. Among women in Kenya today, this inequality arises because of the generation of new individual opportunities and the promotion of individual self-interests.

The conflict between the women's movement in Kenya today is one of the major obstacles in the struggle for equality. The contradictions inherent in a class society is one thing responsible for the factionalism among women groups. There are, for example, vast differences in the aspirations and needs of the urban as opposed to the rural woman. This is because individual women belong to various social economic and political backgrounds. It is no wonder that for the illiterate rural woman, the urbanized women leadership is as removed from them as the national government.

The problem for women, given this background is aptly summarized by Maria Nzomo.

Given these differences among them, when women attempt to unite around issues that affect them as women, they become easy targets for manipulation and suppression by the dominant economic and political class, which quite understandably is dedicated to the preservation of the status quo.²⁴

These differences came to the fore after the Dakar Conference. Misunderstanding among the women leaders who attended the Conference culminated in some accusing the leader of the delegation, Mrs. Grace Ogot of 'doctoring' the report they had compiled jointly.

What we are referring to as the women's movement in Kenya today encompasses 'Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization' formed in 1952 – it became the first national women's organization in Kenya with grassroots linkage; in 1964, the National Council of Women of Kenya was formed to co-ordinate other women's organizations with

implementing projects; in 1975, the women's Bureau was created immediately after the Declaration of the United Nation as Women's decade. It was created to serve as the government's arm of co-ordinating women's groups activities countrywide.

Before 1992, when analysts of the 'women question' discussed the issue of an umbrella women's organizations, it is these bodies that were referred to. Subtle power struggles and leadership rivalries remained a subject of study and interest until the end of the eighties.

In the post 1991 period (after the reintroduction of political pluralism) other national women's organizations emerged. For example the National Council of Women in Kenya, the National Commission on the status of Women, FEMLINK, the Kenya Anti-rape Organization, FIDA, just to mention a few. After the euphoria of multi-partism faded, reality set in. The realization was that the struggle for empowerment would be long and protracted. Coupled with this, the political environment was not gender friendly nor even accommodating as in 1992. The net effect of this was that some women withdrew while others adopted different strategies for the struggle. One feminist put it thus:

Since 1992, it has become increasing evident that the Kenyan women's movement is not a homogenous monolithic entity, but a heterogeneous combination of diverse groups sharing a common gender oppression, but having different visions and ideologies about processes and strategies for overcoming that oppression. It has also become evident that women like men are engaged in power struggles that manifest most clearly at the highest levels of national leadership, where the stakes are high over who has the power to speak for and on behalf of other women countrywide and control resources. Furthermore, the history of the Government co-option of top leadership of women's organizations continue to bedevil the women's movement, women's participation of politics in Kenya,

as evidenced in the long history of its close involvement in Maendeleo's internal affairs, including its national elections.²⁵

The inconsistency among the women leadership in Kenya in maintaining the momentum of the struggle had created the lack of a common vision, power struggles and external political interference. Consensus among women has been seriously lacking even on crucial matters of national importance.

4.161 Lack of meaningful political involvement in the national process

In Kenya politics has generally been the preserve of men. Women in 1963 obtained equal civic and political rights but, though we are legally citizens, we continued to be ruled by our families and had few, if any official relations with the government. The world of politics has the taste of the 'forbidden fruit'

Our history reveals that before independence, women were active politically. Between 1913 and 1914, a patriotic Kenyan woman Me Katilili, led the anti-colonial uprising by the Giriama along the Kenyan Coast. In 1922 when Harry Thuku (then leading trade unionist) was arrested with others in suppression of their socio-political and economic demands against British colonial authorities, it was Wanjiru, a patriotic Kenyan Woman who led protest against the British colonialists by urging the immediate release of Harry Thuku and others. Some of the protesters sacrificed their lives when colonial police opened fire on the crowd, which had gathered in front of the police station to demand the release of Harry Thuku and his compatriots. During the heydays of anti-colonial nationalists struggle as spearheaded by the Mau Mau movement in central Kenya, the women peasants and workers played an important part in their capacity as cooks, scouts, messengers and even as actual fighters in the forests alongside their male counterparts.

Further, during the post Mau Mau era, women fully identified themselves with the nationalist cause. The emergence of the "mama uhuru" group, a category of women who

variously helped to mobilize both women and men in preparation for independence, attests to this fact.

In the post-colonial era, however, women were eventually relegated, to the background of national policies. This has inhibited the exploitation of their potential because in Kenya, participation in national policies is inseparably tied with property ownership.

Since the majority of women are poor, their participation can only be peripheral. The evidence adduced from the number of women engaged in national politics is unchangeable. Many women from the propertied classes have joined the ranks of those engaged in national politics. The fact that many women are interested in politics but thwarted in their aspirations by the lack of money and property can be seen by the number of women engaged in civic politics.

Apart from the fact that women have no incomes to support their campaigns and that political parties rarely support women candidates, few women have political skills and moreover they will hardly vote fellow women since they have not been sensitized enough. Because customary law and traditional practices are discriminatory to women, their status and self-esteem tends to be low and the public expects them to be followers rather than leaders. This fact is supported by one statistic of women members in Parliament from Independence. In 1969 to 1974 there were 172 seats but 2 women candidates; In 1974 to 1979 there were 172 seats but 6 women candidates; In 1979 to 1983 there were 172 seats but only 5 women; In 1983 to 1988 there were 188 seats but only 3 women candidates; In 1988 to 1992 there were 188 seats but only 2 women; In 1992 to 1997 there were 202 seats but only 7 women candidates.²⁶

The women in politics in Kenya are in a state of blind euphoria and cannot therefore participate meaningfully in the political process. They think they have escaped the usual fate of women and have slipped through a breach into the world of men. Trying

to acclimatize themselves into this world, they began thinking that setbacks were due to their own ignorance. In this frame of mind they are not ready to question male values, much less the politics of the day. This attitude is exhibited by Zipporah Kittony, Chairperson of the 'Maendeleo Ya Wanawake' Organization. She was quoted in the media as saying that Kenyan women should vie for any electoral seat in Kenya but the Presidency. The reason she gave was that Kenyan women were already too close to the President that it would be redundant for them to have a woman President.²⁷

Some women leaders have founded women's charitable Organizations and tried vainly to bring women into political life. These women saw the problem solely at the level of national power. Politics was a world of deputies and ministers. Women were excluded and that was unfair. Not understanding women's interests makes them traitors to their own sex. A Member of Parliament Phoebe Asiyu was quoted as saying:

"Ford Kenya should have had me their Chairman by now if they were serious about being gender-sensitive as I am one of the most experienced politicians in that."²⁸

They presented themselves as women without any consideration of political tendencies, affiliations, programmes – the essence of the political game. Some of these women politicians in fact use standard male modes of thought to regard women and therefore they become alienated. They prefer their hard won identity as members of the party to the less prestigious identity of being committed revolutionaries.

Women in Kenya have a double struggle; the struggle for democracy alongside men and the struggle for their own emancipation. Women as a social group are not created from one day to the next but are produced by their history and an awakening of their doubly exploited status and by their patient and constructive commitment to the national cause. One interviewee expressed it thus;

"Women in Kenya represent 52% of the population and they have revolutionary potential. Only a privileged sector of women in Kenya has had the occasion to prove this. For the empowerment of women to be a reality, women must shake themselves out of their political lethargy"

In Kenya, this has proved difficult because some of these women leaders have not worked their way up the political system due to actual work among the people but were drafted at different levels because of their contacts with persons of power and influence. One net effect of this general lack of awareness and understanding of the basic problems affecting women in society. Another, is inadequate awareness and initiatives, in posing these problems before the government. Where there have been initiatives, they have been vague and couched in terms not easily made into a political package.²⁹ Another net effect is lack of empathy and commitment to improve the conditions of the less fortunate rural woman who is only used as an instrument for research and a means of attracting Donor funds.

The point we are making is that women's movement in Kenya has failed to be political. Politics is seen here as struggle for power to control policy formulation, resource distribution and to chart the path of nations. Because of this, women's concerns have failed to make an impact on the legislative agenda.

4.17 Inadequate Education.

Education acts as a catalyst and agent of social change. It determines the levels of aspirations, technology, productivity, and efficiency, which constitute some of the basic factors in the process of development.

No serious attempt in Kenya has been made to ensure that at least some minimum level of literacy reaches all sections of the population. Yet there can be no effective planning of a nation's economy if nearly half of its population is neglected in the developmental process.

Women remain ignorant because of the low literacy rates prevalent among them and also because of the inadequacy of our educational systems to meet our development needs. The lag between an out-dated education system and the growing needs of a developing nation is ever widening. There is an increasing recognition in Kenya today of

the need for our programmes 'formal' and 'non-formal' to take care of our social objectives and cater to both men and women as an integral part of our society.

Education is a vital pre-condition for a fully productive life in the modern world. Health and education in Kenya are in effect the main indicators of male and female social status. Ignorance militates against the empowerment of women. For example, laws exist for protection, but these laws must be given social expression for them to become meaningful. This requires an understanding of them. Ignorance works to the detriment of women because it ensures their lack of access to legal information. In cases of abuse they cannot therefore seek legal redress. This situation is compounded by inadequate efforts by public authorities to enforce existing laws on women; for instance in cases relating to violence against women. In Kenya, present or former partners commit more than a half of all the murders of women.

There is enough evidence to prove that some of our educational policies was not drafted with women in mind. The inflexibility of admission procedures when a girl has to drop out of school due to pregnancy and consequent child-care resulting from it attests to this fact. Moreover, the teaching schedules and time are very rigid. Women who are married and have families, and who would like to take time off to be with sick children cannot cope and therefore have to drop out.

4.18 Structural and Institutional Barriers

Structural inequalities and temporal unevenness in our institutions have been a contributory factor in ensuring that women are discriminated against. Section 82 of our constitution, paragraphs 3 and 5 do not mention sex as one together with race, tribe, colour, creed e.t.c. As one of the grounds on which a person can be discriminated against. By being vague over sex, the constitution makes it possible for Kenyans to be discriminated against because of gender.

Women in Kenya have equal rights to work; to the same employment opportunities as men to equal remuneration including benefits and to non-discrimination at work on the grounds of marriage and maternity. But while our Employment act provides two months maternity leave with full pay for women employees, the same act undermines this by providing such a woman employee has to forfeit her annual leave in that year.

Women suffer discrimination in property rights too. Traditional African practices denied them property rights, and while the Kenya law does not specifically discriminate, it nonetheless does not empower women expressly because it has not eliminated ambiguities on the Succession Act which invokes both Statutory and Customary law. Moreover, the Succession Act does not apply to Muslims in Kenya whose religion has discriminatory Succession provision for women and girls.

Kenya has four systems of Marriage Laws all of which subject women to various degrees of discrimination as they are based on subjective interpretation. Family Law in Kenya discriminates against women in Kenya because it does not provide for unmarried women and their children.

The principle of reproductive choice as a basic human right is now widely accepted. In Kenya, there is no constitutional guarantee that gives the right of success to family planning. The government's programmes only imply such a right. Clear legal direction in this area is solely needed.

There is no legislation in Kenya that has been formulated or motivated by feminist concerns. Most political leaders have always maintained that laws of Kenya provide for the equality of sexes and that is up to the women to take advantage of this equality. The ideology of equality has operated as legal fiction, which has helped to legitimize the status quo.

One Kenyan lawyer Opined thus:

· In historical context in which women have been discriminated against, formal equality means actual inequality. Real equality demands affirmative legal initiative to correct the historical imbalances. We must go beyond juridical equality and fashion out operational norms to ensure equality in opportunity.”³¹

4.19 Women – Child Exploitation.

Our Kenyan government has neglected the plight of the girl-child. Child prostitution in Kenya is a common sight in border towns, tourist resorts and major urban centers of Nairobi and Mombasa. These child prostitutes are normally aged below fifteen years.

Child sexual exploitation and abuse occur in a variety of ways; One being the indecent exposure of children to pornographic material, child prostitution, child-sex tourism, incest, rape, child-sex trafficking and voyeurism. It is a situation where the child is taken advantage of such that her physical and mental health is put at risk and best interests and rights violated. The cases of child abuse and teenage prostitution are numerous all over the country. The mean age for most of these children is eleven years and perpetrators are mostly above the age of 35 years, married with children of their own.³²

A lot of street children, mainly girls, are taken advantage of by unscrupulous people for sex trafficking, pornography, sex tourism and organized prostitution. An investigation carried out by a team from UNICOM (United Nations international Children Environment Fund) in 1988 cite Nairobi, Mombasa, Malindi, Kilifi, Namanga, Busia, Kisumu, Kajiado and Lamu as having the highest incidents of child sexual exploitation.

Effects of child abuse include sexual transmitted diseases which lead to infertility and to the less fortunate victims – AIDS (acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, aggression, and fear abound in the victims. One girl, Louis, who was for instance continuously raped and beaten by her

father, grew up unable to cope with her past. She turned to alcohol and drunk herself to death.³²

Child welfare in Kenya is critical issue yet the government has not adequately addressed the problem of child-sexual exploitation. In most cases the offenders go scot-free. In fact to some individuals, it is booming business. In all these incidents, the girl-child is most vulnerable and most at risk, they are therefore rendered ineffective for participation in national life.

4.2 The development of a human-centered ethic in Kenya.

The central issue of gender and progress is not just one of participation. Increasingly it has come to be regarded as a matter of human justice. The central issue is ethical. Gender disparities and prejudices are deeply entrenched in Societies structure, cultural norms and values. A radical change is required to overcome them. This change calls for a new Society based on the principles of equality and justice. This calls for the empowerment of women, for popular participation in socio-economic development and the distribution of wealth through new economic structures and systems. Only in such a situation can Kenyan women become meaningful participants in development that encourages true self-reliance.

A radical change that is social, cultural, political and economic in nature can only be realized if it starts from a strong ethical base. An ethic is human-centered is required to eliminate gender discrimination and to erase the continual marginalization of women and to eradicate poverty, hunger and disease. This ethic must be oriented towards humanization because ultimately ethics and human morality provide the basis for all human development.

The principle of self-overcoming is the essence in Nietzsche's philosophy. His central concern is with man and his attempts at self-realization. If reliance on government

has not proved useful in the past, individual Kenyan women can find autonomous standards of empowerment independent of government. They can take their own initiative in transforming socio-cultural attitudes and value that obstruct their advancement. In effect in justice exploitation violence and organized cruelty are man made and can therefore eradicated.

Nietzsche's true subject of inquiry was the human being rather than attempts to change external social institution his focus was on self-emancipation vis a vie social emancipation. He believed changing oneself was a part of changing the world. If nothing can be blamed on moral necessity, on the commands of God or even one's human emotion, then individual Kenyan women can rid themselves of the tendency to conform to the environment, heredity, pre-established personality traits or social structure, for the self is a process into which is built no final goal or essence.

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CHAPTER FIVE. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A sporadic unthinking response to injustice has little practical force. For a women's movement to succeed, there must be an angle from which to begin weaving feminist theory, a foothold from which action can be initiated so as to take on meaning and strength.

In this chapter, we have tried to adopt Nietzsche to our purposes, we have drawn on his moral philosophy to provide us with an ideological foothold from which meaningful discourse on feminism¹ in this country can be initiated. We have also pointed out difficulties involved in blatantly assimilating Nietzsche to our purposes without critically assessing our particular historical circumstances.

Chapter five provides a summary of the study. We shall also state our findings and develop policy implications for the national planning process and recommendations to scholars, future researchers and the government. Lastly, a complete bibliography of our sources is provided.

5.12 The Philosophical inheritance of the Working models of Feminism in Kenya

Modern Kenya Philosophy has its roots in the colonial era. In reality, it owes much to colonialism than to traditional African society. Philosophy in Kenya has developed along the models of the Western Philosophical tradition. When a woman in Kenya first identifies herself as a feminist, knowingly or unknowingly, it is often as liberal feminist, asserting her claim to the equal rights and freedoms guaranteed to each individual in democratic society. In doing so, she follows the tradition of the 19th Century feminists who found in the democratic ideals of equality and liberty (that marked the change from feudal Europe to an industrial economy) a coherent systematic body of

doctrine from which to argue for women's right. These ideals reflected in and inspired by bourgeois revolutions in the United States and France, took shape in the political writings of philosophers such as Locke, Rousseau and Bentham. All men were to be equal before the law which would only be imposed with consent of those who were to obey it. The vote pragmatically represented for all aspiring groups the minimal sign that their members were fully functioning and self-determining in the new civil society.

The real beginnings of the feminist movement can thus be traced to the growing emphasis on individual rights and democratic philosophy in the 1800's. While women were not specifically included in the ideal of human rights for men(males) the whole principal of individual dignity and freedom encouraged women's desire to free themselves from laws that made them little more than property and left them subject to men's control. Whether they fought for reform of the marriage laws, equal educational facilities or emphasized the importance of suffrage as a means and expression of equality, the trend of thought behind the shades of feminist opinion was the liberal and democratic ideology.

John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau and the utilitarians had fashioned a world in which men could be free and equal, a civil society in which men would determine their own fates. These ideas were taken up by reformers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Harriet Taylor.

In the first great wave of feminist activity in the 19th Century, the primary issue was suffrage. Other issues were, for example, property rights, but democratic theory encouraged feminists to see the vote as the most practical way of achieving their goals. When suffrage was granted, women would be able to vote for the legislation that would correct injustice to women. In arguments for a society in which the interests of every man would be protected, J. S. Mill and Harriet Taylor found the justification for a corresponding feminist revolution. These arguments were to provide the agenda for the

next two hundred years of liberal feminism. Women should be granted all political privileges and the right to run for public office. According to the principles of democratic theory, such reforms would eventually lead to equality.

The above argument was stated by Mill's utilitarian mentor, Jeremy Bentham. Human affairs are regulated by pleasure and pain, and because society is a collection of pleasure-seeking and pain avoiding individuals, a just society is one in which the maximum amount of pleasure is produced together with the minimum amount of pain. The primary political goal of the utilitarian philosophical radicals was, therefore, the extension of suffrage. The vote would set into motion the mechanisms of self-interest that would ensure a just society.

The social contract theory of Locke and Rousseau added further arguments for the importance of the vote. Locke was more specific than Bentham as to the nature of the transition from an aggregate of self-interested pleasure-seeking individuals in the society. Men, realising the impossibility of achieving reliable pleasure in the anarchy of a 'state of nature' agree to co-operate for their mutual advantage. However, an individual only enters into a social contract with its attendant duties and responsibilities on condition that through representative institutions, he will have a say in the making of law. Only if everyone makes the law will it be legitimate and binding.

The utilitarian contemporary of Bentham, Adam Smith, saw utilitarian pleasures as real, countable, physical and not inclusive of any mystical satisfaction in poverty and self-denial for their own sake. Pleasure means productivity, industrialization and more consumer goods. The more productive a society, the more the pleasure and according to utilitarian principles, the more justice. Only with a free and open market for the exchange of goods can the most efficient production be guaranteed. Each will buy according to his pleasure. Each will compete in the open market for jobs.

In Smith's economic theory, a mechanism was thus provided to bridge the gap between Bentham's self-interested individuals and the greatest happiness of society; not only a social contract but also economic law turns selfishness into social good. Only if everyone is self-interested and tries to get as much for himself as possible will the interests of society be served. When each person is free to pursue his own interest and each person integrity as a consuming unit is preserved, separately striving egotisms will fuel the requisite expansion of an ever more pleasure-producing economy.

The utilitarian principles were used to argue the case for women's liberation in Taylor's 'The Enchafranchisement of Women' and Mill's 'The subjection of women.' Women's suffrage was the mechanism by which other reforms could be achieved and women's interest be served. The right to a voice in the government was seen to be the basis for democratic institutions. In Kenya today, the influence of utilitarianism can be seen in the desire by women to get adequate political representation using the vote, to further their interests. It is this desire that is behind clarion call by some women activists for the formation of a women's party in Kenya.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This study began by providing a theoretical background to the philosophical interest in women. This was to enable us construct a working model. The study maintained that since independence, there has been very little philosophical interest in women. A lot of philosophical literature has been devoted to the analysis of sex, sexuality and gender. Kenyan philosophers have been very silent about women and when they have addressed the gender issue at all, it has not been as part of the central body of the works. Their refusal to deal with sex was traced to the Western philosophical traditions of rejecting the body and all things corporeal. Sexuality and rationality were regarded incompatible. The sensual life was seen, therefore, to be unworthy of serious

philosophical contemplation. In view of these shortcomings, the study deemed it absolutely necessary to reactivate philosophical debate on gender issues, especially since sex and sexuality (in the institutionalized forms of marriage and the family) are crucial in moulding individuals and cultures. It was also observable that the forces and processes that militated against the empowerment of women could only be unravelled through concrete analysis. This is more so because the problems affecting women in Kenya are determined by varied, often contradictory historical forces, rooted in material reality and sustained by multifaceted struggles.

The views of one philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, was brought to bear on the experience of women in the post-colonial Kenya. Nietzsche was chosen for this study because his moral philosophy contains ethical prescriptions that were deemed relevant to an oppressive situation existing among the Kenya women today, especially since the goal of his philosophy of humanism is the pursuit of life's enrichment despite the debasing forces of dehumanization.

We proceeded from the hypothesis that traditional moral and altruistic values ascribed to women's nature and their sex roles were intimately tied to their oppressed condition.

The study was directed to all those men and women who are at the fore front in trying to rehabilitate women's concerns and bring them into the main stream of development initiatives. Also targeted were planners at national level, professional scholars and researchers who should understand most clearly the factors that work towards the dehumanization of women in Kenya.

Prior to the study, we defined our research problem, the hypothesis, the justification for the theme and the purpose of the study. A literature review was then outlined to further augment our theoretical basis. The method we used in the inquiry, that is, the analytical conceptual method was regarded as most suitable.

5.3 Major findings of the study

The hypothesis we started with in our study has been invalidated. The null hypothesis stands. The study has principally established that the marginalization and consequent oppression and discrimination against women in Kenya are attributable to various factors stated here below:

a. Religious Fundamentalism

The Church has remained most resistant to change. Centuries of tradition within religious bodies continue to enhance women's subordinate status. Following the breakdown of traditional morality, modern christianity in all its forms, is a moral force in Kenya today. The churches can successfully claim moral authority. That women in Kenya continue to suffer discrimination in this area, speaks volumes about their condition.

b. Poverty

Women constitute a larger percentage of those recognized as living in poverty in Kenya. As most family households depend on women for sustenance, the percentage of poverty borne by women has grown greatly. This has been as a result of an uncertain global economic climate, persistent external debt problems and structural adjustment programmes. The scenario is enhanced by the absence of economical opportunities and autonomy, land ownership and inheritance, education and support services and women's minimal participation in decision-making processes. Poverty has had the effect of making women more vulnerable.

c. Dependency and class domination

Life under private ownership in Kenya is oriented towards possessions, whose desire, become a basic drive and motivation. The relationships between men and women have been permeated by motives of possession. Attitudes centred on property presuppose

a particularist personality – an individual who strives primarily to maintain himself under given conditions, even against others if need be. Morality has thus tended to develop along the individualist personality and its function is to regulate particularist ambitions, subordinating them to more universal requirements and interests. The motive of possession is one of the principal manifestations of alienation.²

As long as there are groups of people in Kenya who hold institutionalized undemocratic power over others, femininity will continue to be a trait that characterizes the subordinate populations (read women) and the vision of a liberated community of autonomous individuals will be denied.

d. Poor governance and lack of political will

Gender insensitivity on the part of the government has ensured that the mass of women in this country have been reduced to destitution and powerlessness. Women's concerns are given mere lip service. Programmes and policies of the government indicate that they are geared towards perpetuating inequality by strengthening the position of the economically powerful.

Also considering that women outnumber men, the number of women appointed to key positions are more symbolic than significant and speak of tokenism instead of equal partnership.

e. The mass media

Although more women work in the mass media in Kenya today, few are in a position to make policy decisions. The result is that the media still gives a distorted picture of women, their role and contributions. Relying on stereotyped images, they tend to reinforce outdated views. The media are generally controlled by men and may therefore reflect men's perceptions and priorities. The mass media has a critical role to play in shaping people's attitudes and outlook. When women's issues are shelved, the net effect is the isolation of their struggles.

f Lack of consistency in maintaining the momentum of the struggle

The intra-class conflict among women has given rise to a leadership crisis. There is no acceptable women leadership in Kenya today. This has led to power struggles, external political interference as well as lack of a shared vision. The women who appropriated feminism to advance their own opportunistic causes have achieved their desired ends and are no longer interested in feminism as a political ideology. Many women who remain active in women's organizations refuse to critique the distorted analysis of women's lot in society. Since these women leaders are not really oppressed, they can support a woman's movement that is classist since they see no urgent need for radical change. Some women in the upper bracket in Kenya have come closer to obtaining social equality with men, but the capitalist patriarchal system unchanged. It is still sexist and oppressive.

g. Lack of meaningful political involvement in the national political process

The instruments of government in Kenya are in male hands. Politics has generally been the preserve of men. The problem of women in Kenya is largely political and the solution has been geared towards the politicization of the women's movement. The women's movement in Kenya has failed to be political so their concerns have also failed to make an impact on the legislative agenda. Politics is about the struggle for power to control policy formulation, resource distribution and chart the path of nations.

h. Inadequate education

Almost two thirds of all illiterate people in Kenya are women, the majority of them being rural adults. Despite this, no serious attempt has been made to ensure that at least some minimum level of literacy reaches all sections of the population. There can be no effective planning of a nation's economy if nearly half its population is neglected or

iii-equipped to participate in the development process. Moreover, education acts as a catalyst and agent of social change. It determines the levels of aspirations, technology, productivity and efficiency which constitute some of the basic factors in the process of development.

i. Structural and institutional barriers

Structural inequalities and temporal unevenness in our institutions have continued to ensure the marginalisation of women. Our constitution, for instance, makes it possible for Kenyans to be discriminated against on the basis of gender.

j. Women – Child exploitation

The girl-child in Kenya is often treated as an inferior. Evidence suggests, girls receive less encouragement than boys to participate in and learn about social and political processes. Moreover poverty is the parent of child prostitution since children are often sold into prostitution for money. Child prostitution in Kenya is a common site in border towns and the major urban centers. Thousand of children are forced into prostitution annually. Most of these girls involved are rendered ineffective for participation in national life.

The chief way Nietzsche has been of importance to us in this study is ethics of humanism, which embodies the creative realisation of human needs and desires. The goal of this philosophy is the pursuit of life's enrichment despite the debasing forces of dehumanization.

Utilizing Nietzsche's ethics would enable us develop a feminist humanism that combines an egalitarian ethic and a liberation ethic. Translated, the egalitarian ethic means the sexes are equal and therefore sex roles must go. Our history in Kenya has proved that institutionalised differences inevitably lead to inequality and alienation. Sex roles stereotypes have long been anachronistic. Strongly differentiated sex roles were rooted in the traditional division of labour whose basis has been torn apart by modern

technology. Their justification was rooted in the subjection of women to the reproductive cycle. This has been destroyed by modern pharmacology, all individuals have room to develop independently. The liberation ethic maintains that not only should the limits of sex roles be changed but the content as well. Nietzsche's ethic of humanism thus provides us with a vision worthy of devotion.

5.4 Recommendations

This study has been emphatic on the fact that if economic and political empowerment of women are crucial pre-requisites for the liberation of women in Kenya, then equally the liberation of our culture, feelings, values and outlook are a necessary measure of the extent of that economic and political liberation. This requires a total rehumanization and remoralization of institutions in society. Moreover, women and men alike should be totally reeducated to enable them work towards the formation of a foundation of a shared set of human values that they can relate to and identify with as Kenyans. We believe that our recommendations will go along way in making the study policy-relevant.

A. Recommendations for the National Government

- a. The Kenyan government should pay specific attention to the development, implementation and evaluation of the impact of government policy on women in order to create a new social climate and should recognise the central role that women play in the economic and social development.

- b. Government should ensure that effective laws and agencies prevent violence, harassment and discrimination against women by encouraging tolerance in society.
- c. Restructure and target the allocation of public expenditure to promote women's equal and more equitable access to productive resources and revise laws and administrative bottlenecks to give women full and equal access to economic resources.
- d. Provide national access to basic education by a big percent of primary school age children, so as to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education this should work to reduce the female illiteracy rate . in addition to this, non-discriminatory education and training facilities, including vocational training should be developed, especially in science and technology.
- e. Design and implement gender-sensitive health programmes. Priority should be given to the provision of affordable primary health care to all. Funding for health and social services should be increased
- f. Adapt and implement laws against gender based discrimination in employment in line with this, the enactment and enforcement of legislation to guarantee the rights of women and men to equal pay for equal work is necessary.
- g. Promote and support businesses run by women and strengthen their access to credit and capital.
- h. Establish policies of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees.
- i. Promote women's equal participation in the media by encouraging and recognising women's media networks. The promotion of research and implementation of an information strategy for ensuring balanced portrayal of women should also be put in place.

- j. Encourage efforts to promote changes in negative attitudes and practices towards and protect girl children from economic exploitation by defining a minimum age for admission to work.

To sum it all, the government should work to ensure the elimination of all institutionalised dominance, subordinate relations. A thorough re-education of all citizens is necessary so as to foster the realisation that individuals have a common, rather than competing goals and interest.

B. Recommendations to the women Leadership

- a. Encourage accountability from elected public representatives on commitment to gender concerns.
- b. Build and strengthen solidarity among women through information and education. A priority area today is training women to make better use of information technology.
- c. Encourage women to fight alongside men for the elimination of all dehumanizing forces in society. The women's movement cannot afford to be apolitical because women want change, an end to exploitation and better living conditions. The development and deepening of political consciousness among women should therefore seen as a primary task.
- d. Women leaders should be re-educated to see that the feminist struggle does not contradict the process of self-realisation. The contemporary framework of feminism should be viewed within a larger and more powerful cultural system that encourages women and men to place the fulfillment of individual aspirations above the desire for collective change. This is important because in the past feminism in Kenya has been undermined by the narcissism, greed and individual opportunism of its leading exponents, and has thus been imprisoned within the very structures it had hoped to change.

C. Recommendations to Future Scholars

- a. Philosophers should try and demystify the theory and practice of philosophy to dispel the negative image that philosophy is a luxury for ivory tower intellectuals. This will facilitate dialogue. Philosophical theory can be transformative it can help people live well if it is used to rethink and reshape possibilities by resisting the official definition of reality. This is only possible if it is clarified and rendered intelligible to the mass of men who find complicated jargon confusing. An adequate philosophical theory can help provide the much needed clarity and vision.
- b. Future researchers in this area should be encouraged to develop wholistic view of the nature of feminist theory. This is crucial for the formation of a feminist philosophical theory. It is no longer possible to identify feminist theory as theory concerned solely with what happens to or has happened to women, just as it is no longer possible to segregate women's issues from the broader issues of politics. Feminist theory is simply about women. But about the world seen from the usually ignored and devalued vantage point of women's experience. The multi-disciplinary approach to the question of women should therefore adpted because it is most likely to bear fruit.

5.5 Summary

Nietzsche enables us, as a society to see ourselves historical contingencies rather than as expressions of underlying a historical human nature, or realizations of supra-historical goals. In order for liberal culture to develop in Kenya one acutely aware, of its own historical contingency, Kenyans need to fuse the private, individual freedom of the ironic philosophical perspective with the public project of human solidarity, as engendered through the insights and sensibility of this great philosopher.

If we share the belief with Charles Fourier and Karl Marx that the degree of the humanization of a society can be gauged by the relations between men and women a social movement must develop which leads to the liquidation of all forms of alienation. The criteria for humanness in the new organ human community will be equality, reciprocity, free choice and approaching others as ends in themselves. If Nietzsche's ethics of humanism can adequately be translated both by philosophers and other men and women of good will to a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination that permeates culture on such levels as sex and class, and to a commitment to reorganising society so that the self- development of people can take precedence over economic and material desires we shall consider our utilisation of his work a success.

Finally, there are a lot of themes that dominated Nietzsche's work and made him a figure of great magnitude but perhaps none more so than exhorting the mass of men to live by the fundamental dialectical principle that, progress only comes from struggling to resolve contradictions.

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1. A broad movement embracing numerous phases of women's liberation. More concretely it is the freedom to decide one's thoughts fully and to convert them to actions. Feminism demands the acceptance of women's right to individual conscience and judgement. It postulates that women's essential worth stems from her common humanity and does not depend on other relationships of her life.
2. Alienation is the discrepancy between human essence and existence, the development of the material powers of mankind at the cost of the depletion of the human essence of individuals and entire social classes and strata.

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