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THEORETICAL STRATEGIES IN ANTHROPOLOGY OF SEXUALITY – TOWARDS LOCAL SEX / GENDER SYSTEM IN ROMA COMMUNITY IN SKOPJE

Abstract: In the text referring to sexuality, the focus is on determining theoretical strategies in anthropological research, in which, in the center of researcher attention is the local system of sex/genderness in the Roma community in Skopje. Although anthropology is a discipline that offers a wide range of opportunities for theoretical solutions, with all its strengths and weaknesses, we will try, in a summarized form, to give theoretical guidance as possible design.

Keywords: anthropology, sexuality, local sex/gender system, the third gender, intersexual, gender differences

“The nature of sex, I argue ... is the result not of biology but of our needs in speaking about it” (Laqueur 1990: 115).

Sexuality as a research topic belongs to those topics that are in a constant struggle to get out of the group “invisible”; it is topic that is being shunned usually in very elegant ways – especially in Macedonian ethnology and anthropology. Often employed is the excuse that sexuality can much better be elaborated on within another social-humanistic discipline because it is too modern for the taste of ethnologists and sounds very sociological, or, even more interesting, it is not serious enough because when speaking about sexuality, in principle, very obscene things are often being spoken. How to overcome it, and to justify the opposite?

In this paper, theoretical guidelines are presented that, we assume, would be of benefit towards the understanding of the issue of sexuality as part of sex/gender system in the Roma community in Skopje. So, here I will start with an idea of the proficient speaker of body materiality, the author who is by many things very close, but also very far from all other feminists of her time, Susan Bordo. Writing about her work, she always avoids talking about her comprehensive theory of bodies. She considered that the theory should be used promiscuously, “with undeniable preference for certain types” (Бордо 2007: 169). Bordo’s position in previous paragraph should be comprehend as an advice in realization of this paper as well, especially in the process of creation of the general attitude in the theoretical approach of sexuality. So that is how I will begin. I borrow Susan Bordo’s term *materiality of bodies*, which suggests a theoretical assumption that sexuality can be seen also as materialization of the idea of personal sex/genderness on the social level. Because this process is not identical in all aspects and levels, at some individuals a need appears to

change their bodies in physiological sense, pretending into change of the biological sex. If this change is not possible or individual deemed it as unnecessary, the biological sex is being arranged aesthetically. This assumption, written in the office, would not be valid unless confirmed by ethnographic material, through situations that will be discussed in a social context in order to understand their meaning. Thomas Laqueur, also, represents this idea writing: "Sex, like being human, is contextual. Attempts to isolate it from its discursive, socially determined milieu are as doomed to failure as" (Laqueur 1990: 16).

To avoid slipping into a stalemate of useless philosophizing and theorization, we will start dealing more precisely with the social context within which maleness and/or womanhood are being constructing, shaping and reshaping. The context is an essence, the field where individuals through personal sexuality express their sex/genderness in order to establish a relationship with others around them. Writing about the gender and the context, the author Marilyn Strathern says:

"By 'gender' I mean those categorizations of persons, artefacts, events, sequences, and so on which draw upon sexual imagery upon the ways in which the distinctiveness of male and female characteristics make concrete people's ideas about the nature of social relationships" (Strathern 1988: ix).

The above presented, underlines the fact that "gender symbolism" plays a major role in the conceptualization of social life.

So, what is sexuality and sex/genderness? How they are constructed? Should sex/genderness be understood as a single and unique entity? How can sex/genderness be expressed through personal sexuality? In what relationship with the body and bodiness are they? In what mutual relationship are all those in specific contexts? How is sex/genderness being maintained in practice and, in terms of sexuality? How is the idea of personal sex being maintained?

So the issue is, are we allowed to venture and to search through such a complex topic such as sexuality just because it is constantly around us? We listen about it and, of course and, in a certain way, we are directly involved in it on many levels?

Although many authors have been trying to consider sexuality from different aspects aiming with their professional texts to contribute to the theoretical consideration of its specific characteristics, these authors also raise many new questions that, according to a free estimation, for a long time will not be answered. It is also because of the fact that by the end of the twentieth century sexuality was not included as a full research topic in social sciences and the humanities. In anthropological theory sexuality was marginalized, excluding cross-cultural research where it had peripheral meaning. Namely, it was "so intimately linked to our bodies, it was relatively easy to relegate matters of sexuality to the realms of the biomedical and population sciences" (Parker and Aggleton 2007: 1). Although anthropology as a discipline deals with the "population", some authors have written that at that time it was seen as a science without great relevance to the issue of sexuality, and as a discipline enabled "to share the prevailing cultural view that sexuality is not an entirely legitimate area of study, and that such study necessarily casts doubt not only on the research but on the motives and character of the researcher" (Vance 2007: 41). That is why many of the authors were afraid, but also they were urged to avoid such issues. In that period, the small number university departments that have dealt with education in the fields of human sexuality research were unable even to construct proper way of com-

munication with anthropological knowledge about sexuality with the new generations of researchers. So, author Carol Vance, through personal example talk about what was the investors' attitude in 1977, who should but did not accept her project application related to research on sexuality in Japan (Vance 2007: 52, n. 1). This speaks about the overall researchers' attitude and the overall science and disciplines to this topic at this time as to the area where the researcher enters the danger to destroy her/his career. The constant ignoring of sexuality as a research topic was present until in the anthropological theory appeared new cultural and non-essentialist discourses influenced by certain close social disciplines, especially from the fields of history and theoretical works on marginalized groups. Then there was made basis for the creation of a new, constructivist theory, which today has a strong influence in anthropology. This was particularly evident in gender studies, where feminist efforts were focused on a critical review of certain theories where the reproduction was seen as a major link between gender and sexuality, confirming on that way "naturalness" of women's social subordination. This scientific attitude was generally basis for criticism towards biological determinism, and particularly, the idea of the biological basis of sex, as well as gender differences.

Big waves in the social sciences in the late sixties of the twentieth century happened as a result of the creation of the anti-war movement in opposition to the "militarized U.S. imperialism" (Rubin and Butler 1994: 63). Under the influence of Karl Marx and his followers similar ripples appeared in anthropology. In particular it was the case with the second wave of feminism when many of those authors who were involved in the movement, were trying to find a way to think and articulate "oppression of women" (Rubin and Butler 1994: 63). In this sense, the dominant paradigm among progressive intellectuals had become Marxism, which could be found in different variants. Thus, for anthropology is particularly important the early research period the author Gayle Rubin associated with her influential, and at same time, her first anthropological reading "The traffic in Women, Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex" published in 1975. This article was created as a result of her impressions by the course on tribal economies, held by Marshall Sahlins, as well as the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques M. É. Lacan and many others. In order to determine her importance in anthropology, author Judith Butler addresses her personally regarding to her text:

"...What I always found interesting in "The Traffic in Women..." was that you used the term gender to track that same kind of problem that came out of Lacan and Lévi-Strauss, but you actually took a very different direction than most of the –what I would call – sexual difference feminists who now work almost exclusively within psychoanalytic domains... what interested me in... was that you, by using that term, you actually made gender less fixed, and you imagined a kind of mobility... [s]o I think that what you produced was an amalgamation of positions which I very much appreciated, and it became one of the reasons I went with gender myself in Gender Trouble" (Rubin and Butler 1994: 67-68).

What Butler speaks in the previous excerpt from an interview with Rubin refers to the defined notional tools in her research, which help her in clarifying the part of social life where the oppression of women is being appear, of the sexual minorities, and in certain aspects of personality in individuals, as well. Besides inherited notional tools from the structuralists, the text "Traffic in Women...", its theoretical engagement reinforce-

es with one another, for the first time she used the term “sex/gender system”. Using the term, Rubin modestly says that it is not exactly the most appropriate, but it somewhat explains the notion of what can be defined as “set of the arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied” (Rubin 1975: 159). Many Gayle Rubin’s creative attitudes led our expectations and us in research work to move, literally, towards the idea that these systems are “products of historical human activity” (Rubin 1975: 204). Author Rubin was interested about the issues of their creation and maintaining as systems. In her subsequent texts she continued with the deconstruction of sex/gender system in two separate areas in which, sexuality and gender are recognized as separate systems (Rubin 2007). According to Rubin’s opinion, they represent specific phenomena that require special analytical frameworks. Namely, according to Rubin, gender theories cannot explain the theories of sexuality and vice versa. Although she separates them, she is still in dilemma, but acknowledging that they are interconnected in certain historical conditions. Generally, Rubin supports overall feminist position on sexuality, representing a derivative of gender inequality, making her feminist anthropology to change course, and put into operation of gay and lesbian studies, whose theoretical approaches are not of our interest now.

What we are interested in the theoretical guidance is the task of researchers of sexuality to perceive the expression of sexual behaviour and attitudes, and to explore how their deeper connections “are organized and interrelated within larger social relations” (Vance 2007: 43, 45), where members of the culture experience intertwining of gender and sexuality as a natural, organic and stable, and in the opposite direction, where and how in cultures are being provided “different categories, schema and labels for framing sexual and affective experiences”.

Therefore, when it comes to sexuality, it can not be avoided to speak about the body and bodiness, and to understand masculinity, it is necessary to understand and femininity. First let see what thoughts have given some previous scholars on this issue, and then we will try to contribute with some thoughts on sexuality, through the text for local sex/gender system in the Roma community in Skopje.

(Re) interpretations of the human body and the idea of sex differences

At the beginning of the text, I would like to see what the authors noted regarding attitudes about the sex/genderness in earlier periods, and what was that had a great impact on the interpretation of the human body, which largely remained in the tradition of later reading and understanding of sexuality and the sex/genderness. In theoretical terms, the issue of gender differences appears as very influential issue that, more or less, runs through the entire anthropological theory. This question has largely determined the direction of the authors’ disciplinary approaches till nowadays. Thus, some of the authors were relied as supporters of the idea that the sex/genderness and sexuality can be analysed through examples that speak of continuous creation and validation of the sex/gender differences through everyday life that somehow sounds logical. Some feminists, for example, author Judith Butler designates as “sexual differences feminists” (Rubin and Butler 1994: 67-68).

As a very important perspective on the subject in the early periods of human sciences, which will greatly help us in this part of the theoretical background is the work of historian Tomas Laqueur, *Making Sex, Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. This book attempts to take stock of achievements in terms of creation, creation of “sex” throughout the idea of gender differences, through the evolution of scientific thought, especially in medicine and biology, from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. He, actually, creates a critical view of the interpretation of the bodies and gender creating his own specific approach at same time. The category of “sex” is created within the social context, and it is always dynamic and resulting, in Foucault manner, throughout the discursive practices that give it special meaning: “The notion of ‘sex’ made it possible to group together, in an artificial unity, anatomical element, biological functions, conducts, sensations, and pleasures, and it enabled one to make use of this fictitious unity as a causal principle, an omnipresent meaning; sex was thus able to function as a unique signifier and as a universal signified” (Foucault 1976: 154, according to Moor 1994: 81; Фукко 2003: 197). Thus, according to Foucault, but according to other authors also

“‘sex’ does exist prior to its determination within a discourse in which its constellations of meanings are specified, and that therefore bodies have no ‘sex’ outside discourses in which they are designated as sexed. Consequently, the construction of fixed binary sexes, with fixed categorical differences is the effect of a specific discourse. What is more, if binary sex is an effect of discourse, then it cannot be considered as a unitary essentialism, and, more importantly as invariant or natural” (Moor 1994: 81-82).

“This is, in essence, the argument Thomas Laqueur makes so elegantly in his recent book” (Moor 1994: 82). Namely, Laqueur, like many contemporaries, under the strong impressions of the critical discourse of Michel Foucault are trying to give their views on how certain interpretations of their bodies and their anatomy have been created, how the idea of sex differences has been created, than how the “sex” through the transformation of the idea of gender differences, and eventually, how the bodily features were “framed” and become one flesh body of a “woman” and another body of a “man”. According to him, and by other authors as we shall see later, these discourses are seen as socially hegemonic in the sense that everything about individuals is defined on the basis of certain gender differences, which are considered as “natural”. “...(A)n important aspect of many hegemonic discourses is their focus on an absolute, naturalized and, typically, hierarchized male/female dichotomy whereby men and women are defined in terms of the differences between them” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994: 18). But Laqueur idea is not to deny the reality of sex or of, that he calls it, *full dimorphism* as evolutionary process, but on the basis of the historical evidence to show that: “everything one wants to say about sex - however sex is understood - already has in it a claim about gender... *is situational; it is explicable only within the context of battles over gender and power*” (Laqueur 1990: 11). The literature that author Laqueur considers regarding the issue of gender, he mainly divided into two periods, the period before the Enlightenment and period during the Enlightenment, where he generally considered that in the period before the sex was understood as accompaniment, unlike to the gender which was of primary importance, considered as only “real”. As one of the most important interpretations of the late eighteenth century, Laqueur distinguishes so called formulation of female orgasm, which says that the

presence or absence of the female orgasm is an important guideline in determining biological sex differences. As extremely important he emphasizes the performance that is being considered as inherited and “common for thousands of years”, which is that “women have the same genitalia as men”. Following the opinion of Nemesius, bishop of Emesa from the fourth century AD, Laqueur writes that women organs are inside, not outside as it is the case with men. Thus, according to him “in this world the vagina is imagined as an interior penis, the labia as foreskin, the uterus as scrotum, and the ovaries as testicles” (Laqueur, 1990: 4). This understanding of the genitals was inherited from Galen from the second century AD, which brought that knowledge on the basis of the writings of Alexandria anatomist Herophilus of the third century BC. According these writings women, like men, have testicles with all the major channels, one from each side of the uterus. The difference was that at men they were contained in the scrotum, and at women they were not. So that was Galen’s important idea about the model of structural identity constructed on the notion of male and female genital organs, according to which women are considered as men with a lack of vital warmth, as a result of the halt occurred in the development of certain structures, so they stayed inside in the body. For such discourse Laqueur used the term “one - sex model (Laqueur 1990: 21), explicitly built in a circle of meanings...“. This definition is then due to that time policy in gender creation, according to which the social position of any of its members was determined exactly, gaining on that way the social status of a man or a woman. As a result of the primacy to the gender in that time social concepts, in the literature of the Enlightenment, can be noticed multitude of interpretations in terms of the unique structure of the human body - the man. Accordingly such views the bodies were treated, and those who had a penis were treated as men. With determination of the gender was determined sex/genderness of every individual on a social level.

Wishing to be thorough in elaborating his views on sex, the author Laqueur makes chronology, trying to compare with the period after, when, according to him, certain changes in scientific views occurred, particularly with the need to determine the differences between the two sexes. The early 19th century authors began to establish fundamental differences between male and female sex and, on the basis of visible biological differences, so they should be expressed through radically different rhetoric. This, in particular, was clearly presented in the literature of the founders of moral anthropology in that period. They felt that the achievements of Galen, Aristotle and their followers from the late 18th century, makes no sense. The authors of the early 19th century changed the claims that “(n)ot only are the sexes different, but they are different in every conceivable aspect of body and soul, in every physical and moral aspect” (Laqueur 1990: 18). So that is how, actually, occurred the change in scientific thought in determining sex differences, which essentially was different from the understanding of sex differences before, in a sense of grading, as gradation from one basic type of man. This change of perspective enabled to lay the foundation of a new, as calls Laqueur, model of radical dimorphism, which authors founded on, for them, clearly visible biological differences. So later, what has become important for the authors was anatomy, which carried the “facts” of the two stable, oppositional sexes, important for building further personal social status.

Influenced by the followers of the Enlightenment tendency, sex differences were found. In creating this Enlightenment scientific idea, great role played notions of *bodily fluids*, first, the idea of the monthly menstrual cycle at women, as well as of the idea of reproduction, while in men, it was the knowledge transferred from the writings of Aristotle,

the creation of sperm. As the most influential was the ability of women to bear children, a feature noted in the literature as the unique for the female body, establishing on that way new cultural policies, specific to the 18th century, when the reproduction has a central place in the creation of the new metaphors and interpretations of the female body in relation to male. Establishing sex differences through a process of continuous classification, leded towards "canonization" of the definition of male opposition to women's bodies. The opposition was determined according "something concrete and specific inside, outside, and through - out the body that" (Laqueur 1990: 133) which, according to him, supplied the basis for attraction of opposites. In fact, this can be seen as confirmation of the "canonization" of sex differences in this period, but also as a formalization of hetero normativity as the only supported attitude in the public, and the scientific area. Such equalization around the idea of gender disparities based on attraction of opposites Laqueur spotted in scientific circles even in the later periods, especially in the nineteenth century. Interpretations of the so-called "two - sex system", according to him could be read even in the works of Freud, as a "inheritor of its model of sexual difference" in which frames the "anatomy is destiny ...(and) the vagina is the opposite of the penis, an anatomical marker of woman's lack of what a man has" (Laqueur 1990: 233). According to this interpretation, determining sex differences is a cultural separation based on whether the individual owns or not the "symbol", which actually raises the meaning of it to rank of symbolic, cultural level. He considered that this meaning has a major impact in further social, sexual/gender positioning of the individual. This is, in fact, how the biological sex began to be recognized as part of "in the domain of culture and meaning as was gender" (Laqueur 1990: 134) so that is why the penis was not considered anymore as a status symbol, rather than a sign of a deep rooted ontological essence: *real sex*.

"By the nineteenth century, behaviour is irrelevant. The question of sex is biological, pure and simple..." (Laqueur 1990: 136). And not only that, but the sex "like nature", which was mainly determined on a basis of differences in the anatomy of the body, took upon itself the burden and the constant struggle between gender roles in society.

"When, for many reasons, a pre-existing transcendental order or time-immemorial custom became a less and less plausible justification for social relations, the battleground of gender roles shifted to nature, to biological sex. Distinct sexual anatomy was adduced to support or deny all manner of claims in a variety of specific social, economic, political, cultural, or erotic contexts. Whatever the issue, the body became decisive" (Laqueur 1990: 152).

This social consensus regarding the qualification of the bodies move towards the direction that all can be classified in terms of the biological characteristics of the body, because it was believed that they are crucial for constructing personal sex. Thus, if the construction was in the usual course of events, the acquisition of the sex should not be seen as a problem. Those beings, who possessed external penis, were declared as males and were allowed to get all privileges and obligations of that status, while those with internal penis, were attributed with inferior category, as girls. Based on the fact that women possessed "inner penis", whose function was to be penetrated by the men's "external penis", which additionally followed towards determination of their position as passive, was also determined their social status as an inferior category. This idea of passivity and inferiority of women was used as a solution for those cases in which people could not find another

explanation, especially in those cases where the two men, who according to the imagined gender role, referred to the socially inappropriate way. So Laqueur writes for such cases in Western literature, which referred to the sixteenth century. Then, “to become effeminate” was understood as a condition of instability of men, who being committed too much towards women, become like them. “Men can gain a ‘soft and womanish’, countenance through over refinement - curling their hair, plucking their brows, pampering ...Men of this sort seem to lose the hardness and stability of male perfection and melt into unstable but protean imperfection” (Laqueur 1990: 125). In more recent times, one of them became a “passive”, “inferior” and in public contexts is faced with social position for which were used terms in a pejorative meaning, aiming to warn or sanction in the public space.

Hermaphrodites or intersexuals?

Although not directly targeted by our interest in this research, as especially interesting we are mentioning the cases where people are born with physical, genital organs (the ones that were visible) that later were qualified as “vague”. These people were first labelled as “monsters”, “creatures”, and later medical science found a solution including them in one basket, in a list of *abnormalities*. Medicine, as well as all other disciplines at the time, followed the fashion of determining sex differences, with the difference that in medical rhetoric regarding to those who were considered as unclear cases, it sounds a bit harsh. One of those examples was the case with the individuals, who in medical science and in the medical context were marked as hermaphrodites. The term is a Greek word that is a combination of the names Hermes - the son of Zeus, messenger of the gods, the one that controls the dreams and protector of cattle, and Aphrodite - the Greek goddess of love and beauty. From a medical point of view, there have been taken into account at least two Greek myths, according to which, in the first one, hermaphrodite is a child of Hermes and Aphrodite, endowed with the attributes of both parents, so the inability to decide on his sex, was termed “Hermafroditos” (Ἑρμαφρόδιτος). According to the second myth, their child was a nice boy who fell in love in a sea nymph. Overcome by her great desire for him, she shrouded Hermes’ body with her body, becoming one.

Medical science has accepted this term, and even today it is used in medical rhetoric for individuals at whom it is determined the presence of “two human tissues, ovaries and testes, as ambiguous morphological criteria for determining the sex”¹. Thus, according to the medical classification, there is a kind of pure hermaphroditism, and more subspecies. All fall into the category of “disorders in a sex differences”². This medical terminology committed and still has a great influence on the social classification of people in general. But what it is good is that the medicine is not the only relevant area where people have been classified and judged. Also, not everyone dealing in the field of medicine sees the things on this way. Author Anne Fausto-Sterling, professor of medicine, a leading expert on the development of sexual identity and biology of gender, this phenome-

¹ Taken from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/dimidiate+hermaphroditism>

² “Disorder of sex differentiation”, see Williams Textbook of Endocrinology, taken from <http://shirlxslsm.blogspot.com/2012/04/revision-on-abnormalities-of-sex.html>

non sees as the result of a “society of normalization” (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 8), a society where hetero-normativity is a requirement, and medical science has been put into a function of the generally assigned social norms, dealing with anything that is considered as given “from the nature”. On the other side, many historians, philosophers, sociologists, and most importantly for us, ethnologists and anthropologists have interfered their fingers in the “scientific reasoning” about the sex/genderness, and thus contributed somewhat to constantly expanding of the horizon of scientific thought. For example, historian Laqueur moved even so far, saying that the real issue for these people is not what sex they really belong?, but, “in which gender it could be easiest to store the constitution of their bodies” (Laqueur, 1990: 135)? After, giving the answer by himself, he, at the same time, believes that is not quite easy to give the answer, because it is an issue that has complicated answer. “The problem is rather that in the imaginative world I am describing there is no “real” sex that in principle grounds and distinguishes in a reductionist fashion two genders” (Laqueur 1990: 128). Author Anne Fausto-Sterling, who carries out her researches based on medical records, in her book *Sexing the body ...* states the fact that the *importance* of having physical sex is received *from others*:

“how scientists, medical professionals, and the wider public have made sense of (or ought to make sense of) bodies that present themselves as neither entirely male nor entirely female. One of the major claims I make in this book is that labelling someone a man or a woman is a social decision. We may use scientific knowledge to help us make the decision, but only our beliefs about gender—not science—can define our sex” (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 3).

Therefore, and according to her general attitude throughout her work, which can also be seen in her book *Myths of Gender*, is that she is suspicious, in general, towards the *exclusively* use of the term “gender” especially in a sense of its use in feminist literature. She believes that in this way has been created unnecessary dualism. In that context, she says: “the sex/gender dualism limits feminist analysis. The term gender, placed in a dichotomy, necessarily excludes biology” (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 21), that is not acceptable for her at all, **neither for us**. Therefore, she is trying to “cut through the Gordian knot of dualistic thought” about sexuality, as well as the conclusion of the historian David Halperin that sexuality is not a somatic fact, but that is a cultural effect (Halperin, 1989: 258), amending it with the statement that “sexuality is somatic fact created by cultural effect” (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 21). To this we would add, *that sexuality is somatic fact created as a cultural effect, through which one can understand how a person constructs the notion of personal sex/genderness and how it practices through social, cultural and economic relations, through which attempts to support her/his personal sexuality as part of the sex /genderness*).

Through the example of intersexuals, the author Thomas Laqueur, confirms his “elegant” conclusion why there is not require of different terms “sex” and “gender” usage because “precisely because the distinction has now broken down” (Laqueur 1990: 138). Thus both authors confirm that intersexuals are not an image of a border type between the terms sex and gender, but they are an example where could be clearly seen how assumed sex and/or gender differences/borders are being destroyed. Anne Fausto-Sterling, speak-

ing about the intersexuals³, (a term that she accepts as more appropriate for current social contexts) considers them as a true example of how the boundaries between "sex" and "gender" are being blurred, which undermines the idea of sex differences. "Since intersexuals quite literally embody both sexes, they weaken claims about sexual difference" (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 8).

With this, we are actually agree with anthropologist Henrietta Moor who is often "blamed" for her feminist stance, i.e. her two conclusions, that, first, "in terms of anthropological discourse, the distinction between sex and gender on which feminist anthropology has rested its case falls away" (Moor, 1994: 82). In accordance with her thought was also the Judith Butler' attitude, who initially agrees in her readings with the previous Foucault conclusion about sex, that "perhaps there is no distinction to be made between sex and gender" (Butler 2002). And secondly, according to the author Moor, "we cannot necessarily assume that binary biological sex everywhere provides the universal basis for the cultural categories 'male' and 'female'", because

"If gender constructs are culturally variable, then so are the categories of sexual difference... the social differences between woman and men may be located in the body as natural differences... these differences of gender are said to be located in all bodies, thus collapsing the distinction between sexed bodies and socially constructed genders" (Moor, 1994: 82).

Thus, according to her, "gender differences are internal to all bodies and are part of the process through which bodies are sexed" (Moor, 1994: 83). This theoretical discourse recalls of many anthropological studies concerning to non-Western societies, especially those in which the questions about the third sex/gender were considered. For many researchers, especially for feminist theorists in that period, "the instability of gender" (Butler 2002) was the main preoccupation, where they began to leave in their theoretical texts the idea of sex and gender categorization, and to construct new theory of sex/gender "otherness"; the queer theory.

Anthropological theory received especially relevance on a basis of the benefits of the French sociological school in the XIX and XX century, especially the liberal cultural relativism of Émile Durkheim and his followers, especially Marcel Mauss, and the benefits of cultural school of Franz Boas, and ethnographic research of his followers, who in cross-cultural studies have dealt with local cultural patterns.

Social sex and "deviant" in anthropology

Studies related to gender and its features were interesting for many anthropologists. Among them, of course, on the first place is Margaret Mead with her theories of gender and its social realization that are also, at same time, her beginnings in anthropological science in 1931. Her achievements in anthropology, continuously for decades, are undoubtedly one of the most important cross-cultural researches. As a representative of the Franc Boas cultural school, her main interest was to investigate "conditioning of the social personalities of the two sexes" (Mead, 1963: Preface). She hoped that her research

³ In her book, in a footnote on page 31, she gives details about her opinion on the terms hermaphrodite and intersexual.

would shed light on the social division according to the sex among the Arapesh, Tchambuli and Mundugumor tribes in Papua New Guinea. What she managed to find during her own two - year investigation, was related to “temperamental differences” i.e. “differences among innate individual endowments, irrespective of sex” (Mead 1963: Preface), including those “inappropriate gender specific” (Mead 1963). In relation to the discussion of sex differences, she considered important, first, to understand how society shapes all men and women with certain behaviour. After publishing the book *Sex and temperament in three primitive societies* in 1935, and even more after she issued the book *Male and Female* in 1949, discussing the sex differences, she was constantly accused, as she paraphrases, “of having believed when I wrote *Sex and temperament*... that there are no sex differences” (Mead, 1963: Preface), because, according to her, was “delicate to talk at the same time for both things, about sex in terms of biological given sex differences and for the temperament in a sense of individual innate granted”. In the direction of this discussion, she added that, undoubtedly, each individual on his/her own way belongs to a particular sex and possesses temperament, sharing them with other members from the opposite sex. In this way, Mead defines personal understanding of *social person*, suitable for both sexes. Striking features that appeared in some members have been specially designed for one, and were not allowed for the other sex. In this respect she considers the assumptions under which society divides “certain human temperaments that have been identified as key of masculine behaviour” from the components that have been identified as “key to feminine behaviour” (Mead, 1963: 287). Here she speaks about so called *temperament standardization* according to the sex, determined in her own field materials as well.

“The material suggest that we may say that many, if not all, of the personality traits which we have called masculine or feminine are as lightly linked to sex as are the clothing, the manners, and the form of head-dress that a society at a given period assigns to either sex” (Mead, 1963: 280).

As a member of the new theoretical flows in anthropology, which can be seen from her writings, there was a tendency to minimize all these differences in her general approach, viewing them as unimportant, because “...two variations of human temperament, a hatred of fear or willingness to display fear, they have been socially translated into inalienable aspects of the personalities of the two sexes. And to that defined sex-personality every child will be educated, if a boy, to suppress fear, if a girl, to show it” (Mead 1963: 287). All the facts before, show that in fact, that it does not matter whether or not she recognizes the two social sexes, but that as an anthropologist, she recognizes the fact that in all cultures she met, they could be recognized and further create throughout the concepts so called, local cultures. Comparing the ways of regulation in cultures, Mead found that, even when some characteristics are attributed to one social sex, and other characteristics are attributed to other social gender, in other cultural context the situation is completely different. According to her, the social sex characteristics are relative; they are changing depending on the cultural context. Those approaches are very important in anthropology, because for the first time authors began to think that sexuality should not be treated only as a “natural phenomenon”, “as ascribed destiny”, but as a set of human characteristics that vary depending on the social context. Such an approach author Robert A. Padgug noticed in Mary Douglas writings about sexuality. “Contrary to the common belief that sexuality is ‘natural behaviour’, nothing is more essentially transmitted by a social process

of learning than sexual behaviour, as Mary Douglas notes” (Douglas 1993: 93, according to Padgug 2007: 22). This is actually how the female authors understanding of sexuality has moved from the domain of nature, in the field of culture. This sound would later become part of anthropological research of the followers of the cultural achievements in anthropology, which I surely agree. A man or woman within a culture acquires social sex through his/her particular, appropriate or inappropriate “role” in that culture. One of the most important achievements of Mead related to the characteristics of social sex is determining the individual temperament as an important precursor to its appearance and construction. In her view, if there is a person with an individual temperament inappropriate for a certain social sex, then it is word for an individual with internal *pre* disposition that is opposite with the established “social person” in that culture. In this way Margaret Mead discusses the understanding of *socially deviant*,

“...who because of innate disposition or accident of early training, or through the contradictory influences of heterogeneous cultural situation, has been culturally disenfranchised, the individual to whom the major emphases of his society seem nonsensical, unreal, untenable, or downright wrong” (Mead 1963: 290).

This type of definition, Mead calls as blanket definition, in which “two quite different concepts have become blurred and confused, each one rendering the other nugatory” (Mead 1963: 291). Within the established category deviant, she distinguishes the group in which there are certain physiological “ambiguities”. Such an occurrence, Mead as well as other that time authors, as Ruth Benedict, has analysed it as a separate, but side topic. According to Mead, in a widely perceived deviant category, which according to her is inevitable for any society, situates also those that are “physiological inadequate”, including those who “have practically all of the physiological equipment of the opposite sex” (Mead 1963: 291) and also because of the possible organic weaknesses they are part of a group, which “which deviates to far from human cultural standards (...) for effective functioning”. But Mead did not follow the construction of the sex in a one direction, but also in reverse. “Only to the impact of the whole of the integrated culture upon the growing child can we lay the formation of the contrasting types” (Mead 1963: 280). So, some authors wrote for him, “... she was interested from first to last in how it (Zab.I.C.R. is related to the small child) becomes *cultural* - when she seems... (Zab.I.C.R. term) cultural in a remarkably, sophisticated, meaningful, and modern sense” so from that time concepts it is, “a contemporary concept of culture that would come the closest to what she had in mind would perhaps be that of Clifford Geertz” (Langness 1975: 102). Others, her idea of “socialization of the individual” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994: 34) can be considered as part of not founded and universalistic views.

“God may have made the intersexuals, but man has made the rest”

(Geertz 1983: 84).

Intersexual humans

According to many anthropologists, the main reasons for the change in action in the field of anthropology, was the large number of theoretical disagreements during the sixties of the XX century. Many authors, also author Sherry Ortner (Ortner Sherry), as a bridging “key symbol” in a theoretical orientation emphasize the “practice” or, as it is called, “the action”, for which it is said that “this is neither a theory, not a method ... but rather, as I said, a symbol, in the name of which a variety of theories and methods are being developed” (Ortner 1984: 127). The drive to reformulate anthropological discourse was aimed to provide, at same time, two important segments in the methodological activity: firstly, to unite theory with practice from the beginning, and secondly to monitor each cultural system from the perspective of the participant. According to these affinities, we support Geertz’s theoretical move when saying that

“culture is not something looked inside people’s head, but rather is embodied in public symbols, symbols through which the members of a society communicate their worldview, value-orientations, ethos, and all the rest to one another, to future generations - and to anthropologists” (Ortner 1984: 129).

The focus of his anthropology geared at addressing the issue, how symbols influence in shaping the ways how the social participant sees, feels and thinks about the world. With the support of Geertz’s research standpoint “from the perspective of the participant” (Geertz 1975), it can be verified the claim that “culture is a product of the activity of social beings who are trying to make sense of the world in which they live” (Gerc 1998). Namely, when trying to understand a culture, it is important to take a position “by which, the culture is created”. This position allows to understand

“its logic, which derives from principles (principles) of the relationships that are created among its elements ... that comes from people acting within particular institutional norms, and they interpret their situations to operate coherently with them...” (Gerc 1998; Ortner 1984).

In that sense, Geertz also speaks about intersexuality as “cultural challenge” (Geertz 1983: 81), so the interpretations in different cultures, it appears in different variants. Geertz this relates to the interpretation of the immediate experience, which has been historically constructed and ‘subjectivized’ in the already defined standards of judgment. This perspective is very important for our research in which the participant, and thus his/her local culture, occupies a central place.

Individuals with the prefix “trans ...”

In the social sciences and humanities there is a great number of publications deal-

ing with “social deviancies”. Among the most important are those of Victorian taxonomist Richard von Krafft – Ebbing, also of Karl Westphal who wrote about “opposite sexual feeling” and Max Marcus’s writings on “motive, drive for gender transformation”, Magnus Hirschfeld on “sexual intermediaries” and Ellis Havelock about “sexual inversion”. According to many authors, one of the most important periods in discipline is associated with Freud’s scientific work of in the early twentieth century, as well as the work of his followers and opponents, all part of the team that created the widely influential contemporary concepts in psychology and psychiatry.

“Since the middle of the last century, specialized medical literature on the issue of what is the ‘sense of dissatisfaction with gender dysphoria’ may be related Harry Benjamin’s work and his colleagues Robert Stoller, Richard Green and John Money. The top in their work these authors reached in the 1980s, when there was approved newly defined clinical subject “gender identity disorder”” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 13).

One of the most important studies that connects Robert Stoller and Richard Green’s work with one of the most important names of that time in sociology, Harold Garfinkel is the study about Agnes. Garfinkel, in this study, explores the issue of transition and managed organizing of a sexual status of intersexual individual. The author in his study “illustrates how individuals maintain social roles of men and women, but as all produce reliable generic for themselves, and gender with certain attributes to others” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 58) and in this sense, “how people construct a sense of reality through their daily encounters with the world”, following the case of “sex change” of a feminine girl, born with “male” genitals and “female” developed breasts, that acquired as a result of hormone therapy she began to receive before the teenage period. Medical personnel, in this case Robert Stoller and Richard Green, identified rare intersexual condition at her, in where Agnes’s body began getting female characteristics during puberty as a result of moderately high oestrogen activity. Agnes’s idea was that, at the end of the whole process, she will become and than will be treated as “normal”, women, and than medical doctors will help Agnes to get vagina. This transformative process of genital surgery for Garfinkel is an indicator of how, in this example, patients and doctors with mutual cooperation “support the common sense about what is appropriate notion of ‘a woman’” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 58). According to the authors, this confirms Garfinkel’s theoretical determination of gender as “managed implementation”, as well as “interactive social process”, within which frames, Agnes was seen as “young, savvy girl who precisely marks the relations of power in which frames she negotiates and actualizes the sense of self” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 58). Many authors dealing with medical records and cases are also talking about the size and importance of social archives. Especially important, for empirical research, were ethnographies of previous centuries, where the European egocentricity can be seen, reinforced through constant admiration of “the many ways that connect the physical sex, subjective gender identity, social gender roles, sexual behaviour and intimate status created in different places and at different times” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 14).

Throughout these archives social sciences met with

“(t)he mysterious mujerados and morphodites who populate the earliest accounts of European exploitation of the America, (that) ... they are, just as importantly, categories of deviant personhood constructed by a European imaginary

(...) *Eurocentric culture has been treated to a parade of gender exotics, culled from native cultures around the world: India hijra, Polynesian mahu, Thai kathoey, Brazilian travesti, Arabian xanith, Native American berdache — and on and on*” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 14).

This Eurocentric approach to sex / gender differences in local, generated within the social and human sciences creation of a transgender theory, which is one of the more recent theoretical approaches to gender and gender identities, which aims to understand the life experiences of transgender and transsexual individuals. Originating in America (Ekins 1999: 3, according to Wilson 2002: 430), the term ‘transgender’, ‘transgenderist’ was first used in Queensland, Australia in the early 1990s, by the Australian Transgender Support Association Queensland (ATSAQ), selected as the most appropriate term, when members of this Association talked about the target group of their organization. So the term was used to mark specific transcontinental identities related the sex/genderness, in the sense that was used by many activists on different continents, for example by the US he/she activist Sandy Stone, in which, according to him/her it can be included “everything that cannot be covered by cultural terms ‘man’ and ‘woman’. Partial list of individuals who may be included in such a definition, are transgender (pre-, post-, non-op), transvestites, people who cross dress, individuals with ambiguous genitalia, persons with ambiguous gender, and those who chose not to possess gender in all kinds”⁴. According to another view, it “is a state of a gender identity (self-identification as woman, man, or one or both) that does not coincide with the attributed sex (identification by others as a man, woman or intersexual based on physical / genetic sex)”⁵. This confirms the view that this theory “stands by emphasizing the importance of physical flesh, created through the integration of constructed personal and social aspects of identity through live experiences” (Brzuzny and Nagoshi 2010: 432). Transgender concept, “as an umbrella”, was accepted by many authors, but all authors do not agree with the transgender theory and the use of the term “transgender”, especially the universal one “transgenderism”. Many of the authors were radically negative especially towards the term, because they considered it as a part of the policy of managing of the Western world, “... without a doubt, it is with the origin of the first world, which is currently being exported for consumption in the Third World” (Stryker and Whittle 2006: 14). But due to the impacts of global politics, these terms are part of the policy of many organizations and activists, especially in the societies where these individuals are “non-existent”. Unfortunately, when speaking on this subject in Macedonian society, these individuals are still placed in the field of medical diagnostics. Thus, this approach to individuals is widely used in civil society organizations in the Republic of Macedonia that are dealing with the various issues related to lesbian and gay individuals, bisexual, transgender, intersexuals and queer people (LGBTIQ). In the frames of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Macedonia, among other things, there is a “transgender support group” (Program Director 2013), or “trans group” in which members are of different ethnicity, “trans women and trans men, and also peo-

⁴ <http://sandystone.com/trans.shtml>, 1999.

⁵ Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. “GLAAD Media Reference Guide - Transgender glossary of terms”, “GLAAD”, USA, May 2010., taken from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender>

ple with fluid sexuality and unique approach to the subject” (Coordinator, LGBT support Center 2013).

Transgender theoretical base was created in accordance with the idea of harmonization of feminist and queer theories with practical social work and law, “not only in terms of working with transgender people, but also with issues related to group identity and social oppression” (Brzuzy and Nagoshi 2010: 431). Thus, feminist and queer theoretical approaches through transgender theory formed its own characteristic practical approach in social work, including the ideas of “body fluidity, social construction, and constructed aspects of a personal social identity, along with the dynamic interaction and integration of these identity aspects within the narratives of live experiences” (Brzuzy and Nagoshi 2010: 432). Anthropologists who support the transgender theory, their own theoretical frameworks base on the idea of a “third sex/gender”, where “the third” is understood as “a way of expression, a way to describe the space of possibilities” (Garber 1993: 9; Wilson 2002: 426). According to them, the use of this term does not necessarily mean that in the human classification are possible only the three categories, but this also includes the idea of a multitude of categories and gender ambiguities...” (Herth 1994: 20, according to Wilson 2002: 426). This “third” gender model or “alternative gender model”, understood by researchers as “alternative gender space”, in the researches of everyday experiences of the interlocutors, was understood as a “phase” that needs to be passed and overtaken (Wilson 2002: 426, 427), period of a liminal stage, when “sustainability of liminal identity is problematic”, in accordance to the Mery Daglas’s opinion. According to ethnographic materials, features the “time liminal phase” can be noticed only in those instances where the interlocutors made intervention and changed the biological sex, those who started the process of change and those individuals who have a desire for change. In contrast, there are many examples, as well as most of my interlocutors, who actually do not want to change their biological sex, because they like to provide sexual services as “women”.

“Third gender”

It was previously mentioned one of the major achievements in the Indian and world anthropological literature, for which we can freely say that stands for “humanity” in its approach and “refers to the key conceptual issues in the study of gender and sexuality” (Wikan 1991: 721). Author Serena Nanda in her research on Indian hijras – “the hijra”, speaks of “institutionalized third gender role in India, neither man, nor woman, which includes elements of both genders” (Nanda 1986: 35). In the research, Nanda’s approach stands aside of western concepts, setting a new anthropological discourse, “making ... to see how the western concept of gender is rigidly divided into two (and only two) permanent categories, which are fundamentally related culture” (Wikan 1991: 721), and according to cultural regulations, individuals are pressed to choose one or the other category. Other authors writing about Nanda approaches confirm this. “Nanda is able to relativize many of the assumptions that have been associated with the notions of transvestism and transgendered identities in contemporary Western societies, and to suggest some of the ways in which other cultural assumptions may lead to very different readings of the whole notion of sexual difference” (Parker and Aggleton 2007: 6). In her research, insti-

tutionalized gender role is being considered through cultural and individual dimensions, which throughout the method of comparison, will help in construction of our comparative ethnography, especially in the part dealing with the interlocutors roles as “women” in the male community, but also “the role” of “men and women” in the Roma community in Skopje. Therefore, the concept of “third gender” as a “way of expression”, “way of describing the space of possibilities”, may contribute to understand the local system of sex/genderness, seen through the systems of kinship and local economies of the interlocutors doing sex work as “women” - “(female) sex workers”. The possibility that enables this concept is great, because it allows interpreting subjective representations of individuals involved in the research, to enter into the characteristics of the local system of sex/genderness. If the notion of the body as a “*representation of one whole and one body economy*” (Laqueur 1990: 114) is taken into consideration, construct specific sex/gender identities *in* and *outside* the Roma community in Skopje.

About the position in the scientific discussion about sexuality: conclusion

Many authors, including those less experienced, consider ethnology and anthropology as a wide research field, in which, every social and cultural phenomena can be part of it. But discipline itself carries certain weaknesses. Namely, many times they can be recognized, and some of the keystone authors in the field of anthropology wrote on that. So, Clifford Geertz writing about contemporary anthropology emphasized that “despite all its achievements and all that represents, it is determined in the belief that people who are not shaped toward customs ... actually no, (a) never and there were no “(Geertz 1998: 50, 63). According to him, the very nature of things has such specific that is very difficult to determine the boundary between what is natural, universal and constant in humans and what is conventional, local and variable. The withdrawal of a line may lead to a false or misleading representation of what man is, especially towards the issue of sexuality. Therefore, we are trying to deal with sexuality, not treating it as an exception, but as a segment of the social and cultural life, a segment that is in relation to all other segments in the context that gives it meaning.

The authors, who have dealt with sexuality in relation to the sex/genderness, say that a basic principle in anthropological studies is the researcher position, or “anthropologists finding ways of learning how others see the world” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994: 2). In harmony with relativistic thinking, the authors inspire us to think broader about the categories that are related to sexuality, in this case understood in a wider and narrower social context of the Roma community and its environment in Skopje. According to them, which could be important for us, primary it is important to determine the “conventional categories that dominate in the thoughts of a particular subject”, then to keep an eye if our conclusions rely on “detailed descriptions of social interactions,” and, in that sense, to be careful “how social labels are used in different social contexts” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994: 2). This comparative follow up on sex/gender categories within the on-going social interactions, provides an opportunity to avoid the danger of falling into continuous essentialist interpretation because the dichotomy man/woman cannot explain the sex/gender variants. It is because cultural forms can never be repeated identically, even when

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