



Global Ethics
Save the Planet Earth

***International Meeting and 2nd Intermediate Congress of EFUCA
"Global Ethics and Equal Opportunities:
Women's Contribution to the Development of Europe and the Mediterranean"***

Attachment 1: Workshop "Women and Culture"

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It clearly emerged during the meeting, featuring speakers from Italy, France, Nigeria, Israel and Romania, that, despite being vital, the contribution of women to culture has often been overlooked, especially with respect to the past. The personal story of an entrepreneur, who then became the founder of the Fondazione Cosso, attests to the importance of recalling times when life was certainly more difficult for women, including in the not so distant past. On the same line, formalising a decade-long commitment to defending ethical working practices and the right to a healthy living environment, representatives of the association I Culur employed art to call attention to the story of the IPCA colour factory, which over time has generated great suffering, caused the death of hundreds of people and deeply damaged the surrounding environment. Keeping the memory of this story alive is crucial to ensuring that "no one can claim not to have known" in the future.

Historical memory is **precious**, so that women are aware of the **progress made**, despite there still being a lot to do.

So, what can still be done? As referred by the representative of the Inner Wheel of Lagos, the status of women in Nigeria is still extremely difficult, both in relation to culture and to basic civil rights, such as those concerning inheritance. Women participating in the workshop brought experiences differing in type and countries of origin, but all sharing the desire to continue on the path towards a single common objective. Underlying all of this is the financial independence of women, which is indispensable to their freedom. The critical points to be worked include:

- 1) the image of women in the media
- 2) workplaces for women
- 3) women with disabilities

We propose the following solutions:

- 1) to eliminate gender stereotypes and sexism
- 2) fight to stop violence against women
- 3) equality in access to employment
- 4) ensuring the participation of women in political and public decisions
- 5) participation of women in the management of businesses and cultural institutions, in order that places are not reserved exclusively for men
- 6) protection of individual rights in order for democracy to function
- 7) respect for the legal state
- 8) international monitoring of directive implementation.

During the meeting, the - female - governor of Inner Wheel District 204 illustrated the association's important contribution to culture through the restoration of numerous works of art. During the workshop, the research and restoration of works of art by women and no longer (only) by men was viewed as the next step in this praiseworthy commitment.

In this regard, representatives of the H/F movement and La Clef provided France's contribution on the importance of beginning to speak of "matrimoine" (perhaps translatable with "mothermony") and not just of "patrimoine" [patrimony] to ensure that women are aware of the efforts, in this case artistic and cultural efforts, made by their predecessors and to ensure that future generations of women will not always be forced to start from scratch. In respect to this, the British also refer to history/herstory. The achievements of women have not been forgotten as a result of the lack of value of the same, but because they were accomplished by women.

In relation to this, the initiative of the Inner Wheel Club di Monza, which, together with the Politecnico di Milano created the cultural website www.regineditalia.net on powerful women in Medieval Italy, has been extremely useful. This fruitful collaboration has also led to the establishment of the Premio Policultura contest (which from 2006 until date has collected more than 1000 stories created by more than 30,000 students aged between 4 and 18 years). The contest also includes the Premio internazionale Inner Wheel Club di Monza section, dedicated in 2013 to "Women in history and culture". The Inner Wheel di Monza also promotes participation in the Expo 4 Women project.

Everyone is familiar with Leonardo, Picasso, Oscar Wilde or Mozart, but few are able to indicate the names of equally excellent women. The list of omissions of females in common knowledge is very long, however, this is not due to the being a lack of great female painters, writers, musicians or cultured women: what is clearly missing is a widespread perception of their existence and their work, almost as if contributing to culture is an exclusive prerogative of men. There is therefore still a long way to go before important contributions by women are recognised and become widespread common knowledge. Correspondingly, the road to Ipazia, Ildegarda, Artemisia Gentileschi and others being included in school programmes and books, and studied together alongside their equally illustrious colleagues, is still long. In addition to accurately portraying numerous brilliant minds, such an innovation would contribute significantly to enriching our culture with important facets. It can, in fact, be claimed that **the contribution of women to culture should become a subject of study to be introduced in schools**, where until date only the quarter of the moon illuminated by the work of men has been illustrated. Today, there are means and models to aspire to, in order that the light from the other quarter of the moon, which has surprisingly been ignored for too long, can be seen, so that not only the moon, but also culture, can claim to be "full".

During the meeting, the vital importance of translation, often performed by women, also emerged in this process. The United Nations General Conference in Nairobi, on 22 November 1976, adopted a recommendation which reads: "translation promotes understanding between peoples and co-operation among nations by facilitating the dissemination of literary and specific works...across linguistic frontiers and the interchange of ideas". This recommendation has been embraced by the representative of the Italian Association of Translators and Interpreters and further extended in the association's code of professional conduct. It is precisely translators and interpreters, who continually observe diverse languages and cultures, who are able to become the promoters of a **feminisation of language**. A feminisation committed to assigning names to female functions, since the unnamed does not exist, supporting, for example, the use of "councilloress" and "mayoress" instead of "councillor" and "mayor", thus underlining the difference and preventing it from disappearing in a male noun or the ambiguity of a neutral term. All women, in fact, should follow suit, so as not to have to indiscriminately take on the male order. If society envisages itself as a "society of men", women will be outsiders in any part of the world. This is why the idea of the difference applies and must apply to all, even to men called, together with women, to respond to the contradictions of a symbolic order that does not take the latter or the relativity of the two subjects - masculine and feminine - into account.

The individuals and associations present at the meeting are favourably disposed to building a network for future projects relating to the subject. To this end, it is recommended that any such network be open to existing networks of women and the valuable work already achieved by the same, in order to draw attention to, promote and share their achievements.

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